

LEAVES
FROM THE
ANNALS OF THE SISTERS
OF
MERCY

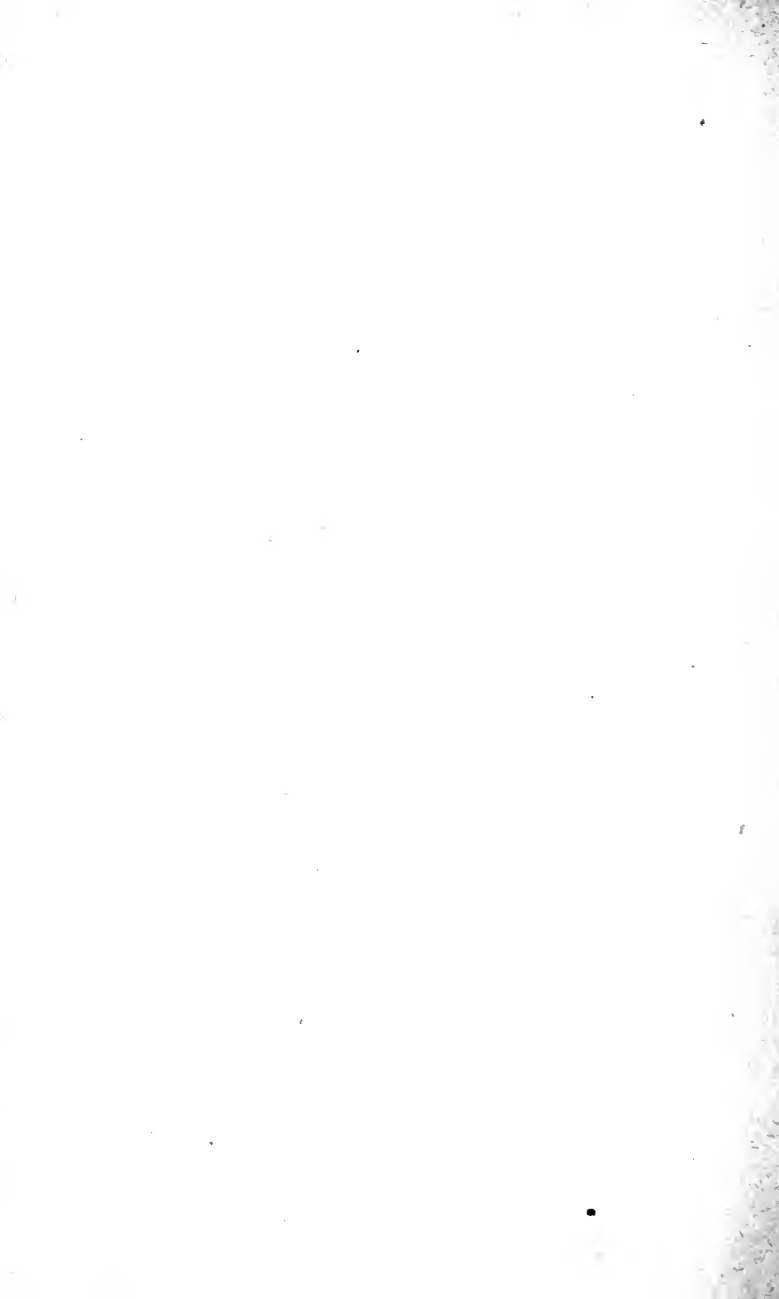
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LEAVES

FROM THE

Annals of the Sisters of Mercy.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOLUME II.:

CONTAINING SKETCHES OF THE ORDER IN ENGLAND,
AT THE CRIMEA, IN SCOTLAND, AUSTRALIA,
AND NEW ZEALAND.

BY A MEMBER OF THE ORDER OF MERCY,

*Authoress of the "Life of Catherine McAuley," "Life of St. Alphonsus," "Life of Venerable
Clement M. Hofbauer," "Glimpses of Pleasant Homes," "Happy Hours of
Childhood," "Angel Dreams," "By the Seaside," etc., etc.*

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TO THE
SISTERS OF MERCY
IN EVERY LAND,
THESE SIMPLE RECORDS OF THEIR HOLY INSTITUTE
ARE
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED
BY THEIR HUMBLE SISTER AND SERVANT, WHO,
AS THE BEST REWARD FOR HER LABORS,
COVETS THEIR CONSTANT PRAYERS.

CONVENT OF OUR LADY OF MERCY,
ST. ALPHONSUS',
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA, DECEMBER 12, 1881.

PREFACE TO VOLUME II.

THE title, *Leaves from the Annals of the Sisters of Mercy*, shows that these volumes are not to be regarded as a complete history of the Order. We have merely described what we have seen or what circumstances have brought to our knowledge. And we have kept chiefly to its earlier years, and placed upon the candlestick to shine to all the household those valiant groups who now rest from their labors. Should any inaccuracies have crept in those who perceive them are cordially invited to communicate with us.

The immense sale of the first volume was a genuine surprise to the writer, the more so as the work was originally intended for private circulation only. We have been deeply affected by the extraordinary appreciation, and even indulgence, with which it has been received. The discriminating sensibility apparent in several "reviews" of the work in both hemispheres, and the words of affectionate encouragement and discerning criticism which have come to us from many sources, are such a response to our views in putting it forth as gives the fullest, rarest joy to an author who has accomplished a most difficult task solely to do good.

It is gratifying to us that our subject was our success. Not as if it reflected credit on us, but because it shows that the heroines of Christ who, for the glory of His Name and the moral and intellectual progress of the peoples among whom they toiled, sacrificed all that makes what is called *life*, can be made as interesting to the world as its own votaries. Nor can the world afford to lose a single gleam of the light it may receive from the holy souls who have devoted themselves to its regeneration with such heroic ardor, and who, rather than swerve from the high and narrow path, would joyfully have suffered martyrdom in the cause for which they prayed so hopefully and struggled so bravely.

CONVENT OF OUR LADY OF MERCY, NEW ORLEANS,
Feast of St. Catherine of Siena, 1883.

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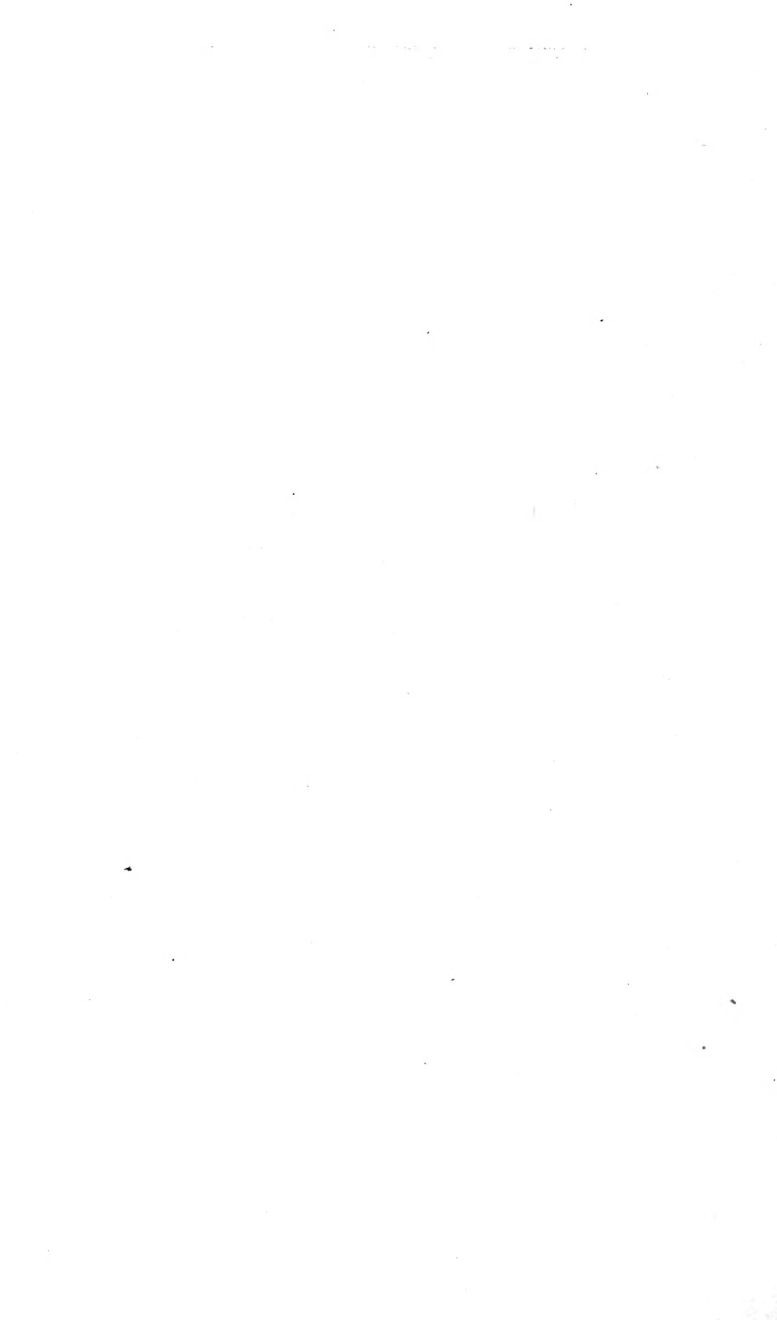
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Auckland and Wellington—Gift of Lord Petre—Schools—Bishop Viard—Father O'Reilly's Labors among the Savages—The Bishop's Death—New Zealand Poetry—Bishops Moran and Redwood—The Convent reinforced—Mother M. Cecilia goes to Europe—She receives a Gift from the Pope—Success of her Mission—The Wellington Schools unsurpassed—Schedule—Prizes offered by the Bishop—Great Encouragement given to higher Education by his Lordship—Also to domestic Work—The Maori of 1850—Taught of God, the converted Women aspire to the angelic Gift of Chastity—They reproduce the Virtues of the early Church—Catholics alone have been able to reclaim the savage Races—The Order of Mercy the first Manifestation of the religious Life in these Islands—Still laboring for European and Maori—The New Zealand Evening Hymn, 633

APPENDIX, 643



LEAVES FROM THE ANNALS

OF THE

SISTERS OF MERCY.

CHAPTER I.

BERMONDSEY AND ITS PASTOR, FATHER BUTLER, FOUNDER
OF THE FIRST CONVENT OF OUR LADY OF MERCY IN
ENGLAND.

Interest which the Mercy Institute excited in England—The first Convent erected in London since the Reformation placed at the Disposal of Mother McAuley—Bermondsey—Its ancient Glories—To-day—Peter Butler—Birth and Parentage—Zeal of his Father—Conversion of his Mother—Devotion to St. Joseph—A pious Artisan—He loves to work on Churches—He is cured of his only worldly Propensity, Love of the Theatre—Edmund Kean—Peter goes to College—Incidents—"Give me the poorest Mission in the District"—The Chapel-house—A generous Minister—Baroness Montesquieu—Cholera in '32—Father Butler begins to realize his early Dreams—His Disciples grow weary of well-doing—Lady Barbara Eyre, the first Sister of Mercy received and professed in England.

THE establishment of the Order of Mercy awakened so lively an interest in English Catholics that, long before its Rules and Constitutions were confirmed, a convent, the first built in London since the Reformation, was placed at the disposal of the holy foundress by Bishop Griffiths, Vicar-Apostolic of the London District. With the story of this convent, situated in Bermondsey, we shall open our second volume.

Bermondsey, though the poorest quarter of the metro-

polis, is far from being destitute of beautiful historic traditions and religious associations. In the stormy days of the Norman, Plantagenet, and Tudor dynasties, before London, like a gigantic vampire, had sucked in all the sweet rural villages, once the pleasaunces of her warlike nobles, wealthy merchants, and princely bishops, Bermondsey was a charming and healthy suburb. The gentle Matilda of Boulogne, a munificent queen, whose benevolence* extends into our own time, was cradled in the lordly Abbey of Bermondsey. In the same sacred abode the hapless Katharine the Fair awaited the "fearful conclusion of her long and grievous malady." And, when the tragedy of her life was nearly over, Elizabeth Woodville, "to whom all griefs were known," came hither for seclusion and devotion, and found repose in life and death within these hallowed precincts.

The Mercy convents in Ireland are, to some extent, built on holy and historic sites, and the first Convent of Mercy erected in England stands amid clusters of beautiful memories on the ancient abbey lands of Bermondsey, recalling the days when saints trod English soil. And, indeed, the modern Bermondsey, with its teeming populations and myriad wretchedness, was a fitting spot on which to inaugurate the Order of Mercy.

Little now remains to recall the monastic glories of Bermondsey Abbey, suppressed by the cruel grandson of the "queen of many sorrows," save the nomenclature of its more wretched quarters, as Crucifix Lane, Cross Lane, the Long Walk, the Grange Walk, Abbey Street, St. Saviour's Docks, and the Abbey Courtyard, now known as Bermondsey Square. The Rood of Bermondsey has disappeared; the abbey gateway, with its arch, turret, and postern, may still be deciphered in pictures of London of the olden time. The monastery gardens, once gaudy with flowers and fragrant with medicinal herbs, have given place

* Enjoyed, however, by a "persuasion" of which the royal foundress never heard.

to labyrinths of dirty lanes and dingy alleys swarming with the lowly and the destitute. The abbey leeches who treated all diseases in what our self-sufficiency may style the pre-scientific ages have passed away; and the fragrance that refreshed the warlike Normans, and the chivalrous Plantagenets, and the imperious Tudors has long since been replaced by the sickening odors of the Bermondsey tan-yards.

When the Sisters of Mercy established themselves in Bermondsey in 1839 it was more wretched than now, though not quite so crowded; but a few market-gardens and fields, with a windmill here and there, gave it a more cheerful appearance. A huge, unwieldy structure in a state of dilapidation, known as King John's Palace, did duty as a monster tenement-house, every nook of which became familiar to the nuns in their visits to the sick. But the Palace has recently been pulled down; and nothing remains of the fields save a patch of dull green dignified by the name of Southwark Park. Buildings have arisen upon every available spot.

The idea of erecting a convent in Bermondsey originated with Rev. Peter Butler, a priest undistinguished for genius, wealth, or high birth, but revered for holiness of life and untiring zeal in the cause of God. Though "a plain, blunt man," who left the carpenter's bench to study for the priesthood, Father Butler was more followed by the upper classes, and more successful in winning them to the true faith and the religious life, than any other priest of his day.

He was born at Blackheath, October 15, 1799. His father, son of a respectable farmer in the south of Ireland, was brought up a carpenter, going faithfully through the apprenticeship of seven years which produced such thorough tradesmen. Obligated, on account of religious persecution, to leave his country, he settled in London, married, and gained a comfortable subsistence by his trade; and, while adhering rigidly to his religion, he won universal respect

by his industry and trustworthiness. He was glad to work gratuitously for the poor Catholic chapels then in London. Mrs. Butler, being a Protestant, endeavored to bring up the children in the same persuasion, and had some of them baptized by her minister; which the father no sooner learned than he had all four baptized at the earliest opportunity, and gave them such a strict Catholic training that the wife, seeing how well his practice coincided with his belief, soon became one in faith with her happy family. Peter distinctly remembered the day of his conditional baptism, on which occasion he took the name of Joseph. To the end of his life he had a singular devotion to the glorious foster-father of Jesus, and often said he had obtained extraordinary favors through his powerful intercession.

Bred a carpenter like his dear St. Joseph, Peter felt a particular satisfaction in working on churches or altars. He was highly esteemed by the priests of Moorfields Chapel, where he performed his religious duties with exemplary devotion. His education was of the plainest description, but he made up for its deficiency by devoting most of his spare moments to reading good books. Already he passed for a superior young man, being remarkably reserved, and declining to take part in the worldly amusements which the youths of his acquaintance regarded as necessary relaxations. In one such propensity only did he indulge—a love for the theatre, where he was always to be found when Edmund Kean acted. Kean's father, like his own, was a carpenter; and Peter's first visit to Drury Lane was doubtless due to his interest in the success of a man he had known as a strolling player. He was cured in the following way: Going one evening to the theatre, a friend met him and said: "Why, Peter, where on earth are you hurrying so anxiously?" "I am going to Kean's benefit," he answered. "And," continued his friend gravely, "will you go to your own benefit?" These words made such an

impression on him that he at once gave up an amusement he had hitherto considered harmless. He even drew good from his short season of theatre-going, for listening to the superb elocution of Kean greatly improved his own, so neglected in his boyhood.

God was pleased to reward the fidelity of His servant by calling him to the priesthood. He went to Old Hall College in 1824, and studied there seven years. He had many obstacles to overcome. Like St. Ignatius and St. Camillus, he had to learn the rudiments of Latin in the junior class, and the small boys did not spare him. But, as always happens to persons of solid virtue, our scholastic speedily gained the esteem of all his associates. Such was his regularity as a student that he was never absent from morning meditation but once, and that was after he had sped across the country at midnight in search of remedies for the president, Dr. Griffiths, who had become suddenly ill. The weather was very inclement and the roads bad; and while performing this act of charity Mr. Butler contracted asthma, from which he frequently suffered in after-years, and which ultimately caused his death.

Bishop Bramstone, who greatly loved and valued Mr. Butler, ordained him, December 17, 1831. The venerable prelate was at that time greatly perplexed to find a suitable pastor for the united parishes of Bermondsey and Rotherhithe, and, knowing the courage and perseverance of the newly ordained priest, he said to him: "Now, sir, if you saw a wagon at the foot of a hill which the horses were unable to drag up, what would you do?" "I would put my shoulders to it and strain every nerve to push it up," was the reply. "Well, then," continued the bishop, "here is a mission precisely in that state; will you undertake it?" "Here I am; send me," said Father Butler, in the words of the prophet.

This appointment came in answer to prayer. Father Butler wished only for two things outside his personal

sanctification : 1. To be sent to the poorest mission in the district. 2. To establish a community of pious women for the instruction of the ignorant and the relief of the poor. And his wishes were realized beyond his most sanguine expectations.

One 21st of December Father Butler said his first Mass and began his labors in Bermondsey. The religious aspect was most discouraging; everything Catholic was dying or dead; the old chapel was as poor as the stable of Bethlehem; and the wretched Catholic population, who made, or failed to make, a precarious living in the tanneries or loading and unloading vessels at the river-side, were morally and socially in keeping with the surroundings. But the result of his indomitable energy was soon apparent. No disciple of St. Francis ever practised greater poverty. The chapel-house was bare of everything; it did not contain even a bed for the new incumbent. His only sister, then working in the family of a Protestant minister, supplied what was absolutely necessary, and the minister, charmed with the "pluck" and courage of a young priest determined by God's grace to succeed despite such obstacles, made him several valuable presents, among them a horse and chaise which proved useful when cholera prostrated hundreds of his flock. It was the same liberal clergyman who assisted him to buy the ground on which the church and convent now stand. The bigoted owner, on learning the use to which it was destined, said in angry tones: "Had I known my land was to be thus employed I should not have taken my hat full of diamonds for it."

Father Butler's labors in times of exceptional distress exceeded all bounds. During the cholera he ministered to the temporal as well as the spiritual wants of his flock, and many a time when the undertaker refused to touch the disfigured corpse he lovingly performed the last sad offices for the poor remains. On Sundays he said two Masses, giving an exhortation at each, besides a sermon in the

evening at the *Rosary*—a devotion he warmly advocated out of his wonderful love of the Blessed Virgin. When he extolled her privileges it was with an eloquence and enthusiasm which stirred the hearts of his hearers and bore fruits of conversion.

In 1833 Baroness Montesquieu, happening to call on Father Butler, was amazed at the abject poverty of his house and the wretched shell which served for his church. This lady admired the young priest's frankness, good-humor, and zeal so much that she became a frequent visitor. Ashamed to think that she lived in cedar while the true Ark of God was not as respectably lodged as her horses, the venerable lady contributed liberally to the erection of a church, and bought and gave to him the ground on which the old presbytery stood. The church, begun in 1834, was finished and solemnly dedicated to the Most Holy Trinity in 1836—the first Catholic attempt to erect a Gothic building, and the first Catholic edifice built on a public highway since the Reformation. Father Butler was architect, builder, and clerk of works. His hands regained their early cunning, and he labored at the carpenter's bench and fashioned all the woodwork used in the sacred structure.

He now sought to realize his early dream of banding together some pious women to teach the children, instruct ignorant adults, and relieve the sick. Much trouble and many disappointments waited on this enterprise. Many ladies came, worked for a while, and then grew weary of well-doing. It seemed impossible to find the right kind, yet Father Butler never gave up. In 1836 Miss Louisa Murray offered herself, and, though she did not persevere, God made use of her to attract to His immediate service one who became a corner-stone of the spiritual edifice. This was Lady Barbara Eyre, second daughter of Francis, Earl of Newburgh, a nobleman of singular piety. His wife, Countess Dorothy, being a Protestant, Lord Newburgh

took special pains to have the truths of our holy religion deeply impressed on the minds of their children. Lady Barbara was educated partly at home and partly at the Convent of Taunton; but little is known of her early youth, save that her waywardness was a source of anxiety to those who loved her. She became deeply attached to the nuns, and to her latest breath loved to speak of the gratitude she owed them for the pains they had taken to perfect her education and win her young heart to God. And when, towards the close of her life, through a spirit of detachment she declined to correspond with her nearest relatives, she would write to these dear teachers and expatiate on her obligations to them, attributing whatever was good in her to their prayers and efforts—a beautiful trait, and all the more beautiful because so uncommon in these days, when exaggerated notions about our rights and forgetfulness about our duties make many ungrateful to God and man.

CHAPTER II.

LADY CHARLOTTE AND LADY BARBARA EYRE—THE NUCLEUS OF A CONVENT.

Singular Piety of Lady Charlotte—Her Death—Lady Barbara under the Direction of Father Butler—The projected Sisterhood—Difficulties—The senior Member steadfast—Discussions—Result—Convent planned by Pugin—The Order of Mercy selected—Bishop Griffiths writes to Archbishop Murray—Two Ladies sent to Ireland to learn the Secrets of conventual Life—"Geraldine"—Sir Andrew Agnew—An all-accomplished Woman—"Katharine Graham"—Arrival of the English Sisters in Cork—Sketch of Bishop Griffiths, the first English Prelate to invite the Mercy Institute to his native Land—His "Madness."

WHEN Lady Barbara was removed from the convent she found in her own home distinguished models of virtue. The earl was strictly pious, as were his two sons, to whom their sisters were devotedly attached; but the gem of the family was the elder sister, Lady Charlotte, who, as far as the duties of her high station permitted, gave herself up to works of piety and charity. This good lady made clothes for the poor, visited and relieved the sick; and her sister, who was her ordinary companion, imbibed from her that love of the poor which so strongly characterized her after-life.

The early death of this precious sister, a bitter trial to Lady Barbara, had the blessed effect of weaning her entirely from the world, and, hearing of Father Butler's project of forming a community of ladies for the instruction and relief of the poor, she felt inspired to devote herself to the good work. Her friends, on account of her delicate health, strenuously opposed her, but she was bent on accomplish-

ing what she believed to be God's will. Her natural firmness of character aiding her, she bade a last adieu to her happy home, and on the 25th of August, 1837, presented herself to Father Butler at the Old Chapel-House, East Bermondsey, to devote herself and her wealth to the immediate service of God under his direction.

Other ladies came full of zeal to share the same vocation, among whom were Miss Charlotte Collingridge, Miss Elizabeth Constantia Agnew, Miss Mary O'Connor, and Miss Maria Taylor. They adopted a costume consisting of a plain black dress and a white cap and veil, and Father Butler gave them some rules for the maintenance of order and regularity. Not being under any special obligation of observing rules, several found great difficulty in conforming, and Miss Murray withdrew to Norwich to engage in similar occupations without the restraint of rules, taking with her Miss Elizabeth Boyce, who had been acting as lay Sister. Miss Collingridge, whose health was failing, withdrew soon after.

Lady Barbara was now the senior member, and upon her devolved the direction of affairs. Upon coming to the Old Chapel-House she had laid aside all semblance of her worldly rank and assumed the name "Sister Mary." The ladies kept school in the Old Chapel, the gallery of which, divided into cells, became their humble dormitory. They suffered much in this poor dwelling—little better than a ruin—and underwent great labors and fatigues in ministering to their poor clients. But the more they tasted the sweets of the religious life the more they desired to become real religious.

A good deal of prayer and some discussion relative to selecting an Order likely to satisfy the ardent aspirations of this zealous band now consumed much time. Some wished for a more contemplative life, others for a more active. One lady, whose vocation seemed wholly contemplative, was irresistibly attracted to the Order of Mercy by the magni-

ficent promises Jesus Christ has made in favor of those who serve Him in the suffering members of His Mystic Body. Meanwhile ground was selected for a convent, plans were procured from Pugin, and the first monastic structure erected in London since the Reformation went up rapidly under his direction.

Postage was slow at this period, and there was little or no steam communication between England and Ireland, so that good enterprises had time to mature in one country before their fame reached the other. Yet the new Order was known very early in England. A priest on the London mission had sent Mother Catherine the first English convert received in Baggot Street, in 1830. Bishop Griffiths and Father Butler were so well pleased with its scope and spirit that they selected it as the Order best adapted for the sanctification of the ladies under their direction and the benefit of the poor. And so well did the choice agree with the taste or vocation of the ladies themselves that one of them wrote :

“I am happy to imitate that holy man who for years had been endeavoring to form a congregation of religious men who should be missionaries, teachers, and divines, but, when he heard that St. Ignatius had founded the Society of Jesus, blessed God that another had been found more worthy to accomplish that good work for the greater glory of God.”

Early in 1838 Bishop Griffiths applied to Most Rev. Daniel Murray for leave to send some ladies to learn the rules of religious life and be regularly instructed in the duties of Sisters of Mercy under his grace's direction. The Cork house was finally selected, as being more remote than Dublin and less liable to interruption from visitors.

The ladies sent to Ireland to study conventual life were Elizabeth Constantia Agnew and Maria Taylor, both converts of mature years, born respectively in 1798 and 1805. Many circumstances combined to make Miss Agnew a sort

of public character. This lady had recently published two volumes of *Geraldine*, a controversial novel, which created an extraordinary sensation. The writer was supposed to be the heroine of her book, and the "Mr. Everard," so pleasantly and piquantly introduced, her uncle, Sir Andrew Agnew, a celebrated antiquarian and member of Parliament for Wigtonshire. Few women have been so richly dowered as our postulant, often called, after her book, "Geraldine." A fine linguist, a brilliant conversationalist in scientific, literary, and artistic attainments, she was the wonder of a circle which included the choicest spirits not only of England but of Europe. Versed in severe classical music, and a proficient on harp, organ, piano, and guitar, "Geraldine" possessed that delicate musical sensibility which could extract the aroma of poetry from the simplest ballad, and still more from the touching hymns of the Church. There are some living (1883) who affirm that they never heard her performance on the harp excelled, and that her pure, rich, *timbre* contralto might have made her the prima donna of Europe. All gifts, save one, had been profusely showered on her cradle. But those whom she chose to fascinate by her charming manners soon forgot that she was plain almost to insignificance. Nor was there anything picturesque in her plainness. Her book, not to be too life-like, marries her to Sir Eustace de Grey; but she had resolved, even when a Protestant, never to marry, and, to the chagrin of her relatives, had refused high nobles in England and more than one foreign prince.

Nor was this all accomplished woman deprived of the "fruit of the tree of life" for having eaten too greedily of the "tree of knowledge." Every social and religious virtue seemed to have a home in her highly cultured mind. And such was her grace of language that her companions in the humble Irish novitiate in which she became a scholar bore her the beautiful testimony that she was never known to utter an uncharitable word.

Geraldine is immeasurably the best work of its kind. It is as popular to-day as when it was written nearly fifty years ago, and has never been out of print. It is a treasure for those anxious to gain information on the controverted points of our holy faith, yet unwilling to read the ponderous works which treat of them in detail. Curiously enough, while the book kept its place its authoress and heroine dropped into oblivion. She lived into her eighty-fourth year, regarded by the few who knew her with that melancholy interest which attaches to a distinguished individual who has already begun to be a portion of the past.

Miss Taylor was said to be the "Katharine Graham" of *Geraldine*. But that estimable lady was as commonplace as her celebrated companion was brilliant; nor had she anything in common with the "Scotch Amazon" who figures so grotesquely in the *Tale of Conscience*.

While our aspirants are speeding their way across the Channel, and receiving the hospitable welcome of Bishop Murphy and their new Sisters, aliens in race but one in faith, we shall give our readers a sketch of Bishop Griffiths, the first prelate to establish the Order of Mercy in England.

Thomas Griffiths was born in London, June 2, 1791. No lustre of high birth shone around the cradle of this predestined child. His parents were poor, but laborious and upright. The elder Griffiths, a most bigoted Protestant, sought to impress his own views on the little Thomas, who, to his dismay, showed a strong preference for the religion of his mother. Distinguished from infancy for a degree of meekness and gentleness seldom found save in characters moulded by a saintly mother, he nevertheless sturdily resisted his father when he would have him read Protestant works, and absolutely refused to go to church with him. Despite the most terrible threats, he followed his mother to Mass every Sunday and holiday, and even became an altar-boy. He loved to recall in after-years that he served, in

St. George's-in-the-Fields, the first Mass celebrated by his predecessor in the London vicariate, Bishop Bramstone.

But Mr. Griffiths thought it part of his dignity as an Englishman to be master in his own house, and opposition but intensified his determination to be obeyed. Adjusting the means to the end, he one Saturday night visited his son's bed-room and spoke strongly of the obedience children owe their *father*; and having commanded him most imperatively not to leave the room till he should call him next morning, characteristically removed his shoes and stockings and locked the door, certain that the little prisoner was now in the safe predicament of being unable to disobey orders.

But Thomas knew he was bound to obey his parents only in what is not sinful, which he had scrupulously done; "and how," asks my informant, "could such a child commit a sin?" The father hoped he had succeeded at last; besides, he was sure Tommy could no more go to Mass than if he were immured in Newgate.

Vain hope. Ere daybreak the prisoner was up, devising means of egress. Getting out of the window, he swung from one projection to another, and finished by a jump which landed him in a mud-hole half-way across the narrow street. He was seen by the few early risers in the neighborhood, running, hatless and shoeless, through the filthy streets, willing to suffer pain and shame rather than offend God. When Mr. Griffiths, after indulging in the long sleep with which he was wont to begin the "rest" of the "Sabbath," unlocked the door, the boy was serving Mass at St. George's. His indignant surprise gave way to admiration as he reflected that the gentle, timid child had the courage of his convictions. And from that wet, murky Sunday till the day of his death he never attempted to thwart wife or child in the exercise of Catholic duties. A call to the priesthood was the reward of such heroic virtue on the part of a child, and to this his prayers and studies

tended. While at school in Crucifix Lane,* the only Catholic among a hundred boys, his fellow-pupils used to style him "the Bishop," and submit their disputes to him as to an umpire from whose decision there was no appeal. When he removed to St. Edmund's College, in his fourteenth year, all his young confrères followed him weeping, and could not be consoled for the loss of a companion they so dearly loved. The parting between the gentle boy and his widowed mother was most affecting. They clung to each other, and kissed each other again and again, and seemed unable to separate. A venerable priest, late of Sedgley Park, who was present, loved to recall the touching scene. "How little I thought," said he, relating the incident to the mother-superior of Coventry Convent of Mercy, "that ere our next meeting the weeping boy would have become a holy bishop whose blessing I eagerly knelt to receive!"

Young Griffiths' life at college was a bright example to ecclesiastical students. He made the best preparation for the duties afterwards to devolve on him by advancing in holiness. Yet, knowing that personal sanctity, though most essential, is not sufficient to make a good priest, he was a severe student, and his deep knowledge of Sacred Scripture, dogmatic and moral theology, was the result of the intense study of early years and constant reading and thinking. His proficiency in less professional studies, as music and mathematics, often surprised those who enjoyed his friendship.

Thomas Griffiths became president of the college in 1818, four years after his ordination. In this position he displayed great energy and peculiar tact for winning the confidence and affection of the students. He was so singularly gifted as a confessor that most of them placed themselves under his direction, and he labored to form in

*The location of the first school he attended places Bishop Griffiths' birth in Bermondsey. At that time more than half the streets of London were named after saints, mysteries and emblems of Catholic devotion.

them his favorite virtues, humility, charity, and purity of heart. "His instructions," writes a Sister of Mercy who profited well by them, "were given in a low, earnest, yet gentle tone which sank deeply into the hearts of his penitents." In 1833 he became coadjutor to Bishop Bramstone, whom he succeeded in 1836. Placed by the Holy Ghost to rule in the Church, he sacrificed himself for God and for souls. Relaxation was almost unknown to him; when he could not be immediately engaged in duty, as when traveling, he seemed absorbed in prayer. Those over whom he extended his hands in confirmation or promoted to orders could feel, as it were, the Spirit of God descending on them through the ministry of a truly apostolic bishop.

Such was the prelate who "had the madness" to open a correspondence with Mother Catherine regarding the introduction of her Institute into England. He remained through life her steadfast friend, and often during his last illness, when his pains were soothed by her children, spoke of her as being high among the saints of God. "What a reward your holy mother must have," he would say, "for having founded your blessed Institute!" It is hardly possible now to appreciate the courage it required in 1838 to introduce nuns into London, especially Sisters of Mercy, who, as Faber says, "for love of Jesus Christ in His poor and suffering members deny themselves the peace and protection of the cloister." Father Butler's best friends refused to aid him in "the mad project," and the bishop's "madness" was commented on by practical Catholics.

Bishop Griffiths was of medium height. His face was oval, forehead broad and lofty, his complexion fair, his eyes large and prominent. There was nothing imposing in his aspect, but his expression was meek and devotional. A fine engraving of the bishop now lies before me through the kindness of a friend, once his penitent, to whom are due several details now printed for the first time. Owing,

perhaps, to the fairness of his complexion, the portrait looks younger than his actual age. His reputation stood higher for piety than for learning, yet intellectually he has scarcely been surpassed by any of his successors, except Cardinal Wiseman, who ranks among the greatest churchmen of the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER III.

IN A CATHOLIC COUNTRY—THE CORK COMMUNITY, 1838.

Breathing more freely—Greeted by Bishop Murphy and Father Mathew—The infant Band—Arrayed in bridal Robes—Reception—Pilgrims visited by the holy Foundress—Descriptions of Mother McAuley—Mother M. Clare Moore—Miss Agnew and Miss Taylor—Visitors—"A Heart of Gold and a great Head"—Profession a Foretaste of Heaven—A Tour through the Convents of Mercy in Ireland—Courtesies—Incidents—Arrival in Dublin—*Geraldine* still in our Libraries.

ON the evening of the 4th of April, 1838, Miss Agnew and Miss Taylor reached Cork, and they were not long in "the beautiful citie" before they expressed much of what another convert—Newman—has since attributed to an imaginary English Catholic whom he lands at the same place:

"He breathes more freely from the thought that he has left a Protestant people behind him and is among his co-religionists, who will not despise him for his faith's sake; who name the same Sacred Names, and utter the same prayers, and use the same devotions as he does himself; whose churches are the houses of his God. . . . He recognizes an innocence in the young face, and a piety and patience in the aged voice, which strikingly and sadly contrast with the habits of his own rural population. . . . He finds the population as munificent as it is pious, and doing greater works for God out of their poverty than the rich and noble elsewhere accomplish in their abundance. . . . And he finds himself received with that warmth of hospitality which ever has been Ireland's boast, and, as far

as he is personally concerned, his blood is forgotten in his baptism."

Bishop Murphy, Father Mathew, and Father Delany—now bishop—were among the first to greet the pilgrims, which they did with a warmth for which these ladies were quite unprepared. Sedate and undemonstrative as they were, the cordiality of the welcome offered on all sides affected them to tears. Being converts, and no longer young, they were at first treated with a degree of deference uncommon in the strict novitiate of which they formed, in conventual parlance, the infant band. Their conduct, however, gave unlimited satisfaction, and in July they were allowed to enter on the ten days' retreat that precedes reception, having previously made a distant retreat of three weeks. Not the least observance was omitted by our zealous candidates. Like other Sisters going on retreat for reception or profession, they knelt to receive the blessing of their mother, and, after a sisterly embrace from each member of the community, with mutual promises of prayers, repaired to the choir for the opening meditation, most of the spiritual exercises in the Order of Mercy being made before the Blessed Sacrament.

When the important morning arrived the elegant decorative taste of Mother Josephine Warde was called into requisition to array the novices-elect in rich bridal costumes. They were led to the altar by Mother M. Clare and her assistant, and Bishop Murphy, who took the deepest interest in the projected London house, officiated at the affecting ceremony. The sermon, by an eloquent Capuchin, was a beautiful exposition of the duties of a Sister of Mercy. With their worldly dress they changed their names for Sister M. Clare and Sister M. Augustine.

Many of the interesting incidents and anecdotes related in the third volume of *Geraldine* occurred during the novitiate of these ladies.

Mother McAuley visited Cork *en route* for Limerick, ac-

accompanied by Mother M. Elizabeth Moore, Sisters Mary Vincent Hartnett and Aloysius Scott. A lady then a novice, now mother-superior of a convent in England, thus graphically describes several of the *dramatis personæ* :

“THE HOLY FOUNDRESS.

“Rev. Mother McAuley had a very handsome countenance, deep blue eyes, features delicately formed but not too small, and a very sweet expression about the mouth. Her manners were dignified, yet easy and perfectly natural. Her conversational powers were remarkable ; she could converse on any subject and suit herself to any one—priest, nun, lawyer, commercial man, student, traveller. She was easy of approach, always sweet and amiable, and very cheerful at recreation. Quiet and gentle in her movements, there was not the least appearance of hurry or excitement about her. Externally she was a perfect religious.

“Her soul was exquisitely tender, but without a shadow of weakness or softness. Strong yet sweet, full of thoughtfulness for others, and by nature most unselfish, religion had ennobled all her fine qualities and developed them into true charity and perfect humility. It was her habit to give the credit of every success to others. When any arrangement was praised she would say : ‘Such a one planned it or was the cause of its success.’

“MOTHER M. CLARE MOORE.

“Mother M. Clare Moore was fine-looking, complexion dark, features good, eyes very dark and prominent, figure tall and slight. Her manners were stately, but without the calm repose which characterized the foundress. Naturally of an excitable temper, she was very energetic, though her health was delicate. Her exterior was that of a perfect religious, but those who knew her well could perceive that her self-control was acquired, not natural. There was

about her an inclination to irritability which, in one so really humble and holy, must have been permitted to keep her in abjection. She was naturally severe to herself, and, as superior, rather exacting with others, especially in her young days; but this arose from a zeal for their advancement, not from any want of feeling or affection. She was a very strict disciplinarian, but kind withal. Her abilities were superior and highly cultivated. Even in youth her judgment was very mature. I took her to be thirty when I entered (1837), though she wanted several years of it. She certainly had a very grave, sedate appearance for twenty-five. Her notions were very strict—in fact, all the early superiors were on the severe, which, no doubt, Providence permitted lest there should be any danger of the young Order falling from its first fervor before it was well matured.”

Mother M. Clare was not even twenty-five in 1837. She was born in Dublin, March 20, 1814, of Protestant parents, and at her baptism received the name of Georgina. Her father died in 1817, and the family continued Protestant until 1823, when Mrs. Moore and her children had the happiness of being received into the Catholic Church. Even as a child Georgina was remarkable for great firmness of character and a desire to choose the best at any sacrifice. After her conversion her deep religious earnestness increased to a degree surprising in a child not yet in her teens, and when once convinced of her duty she would go through fire and water to accomplish it. She had a great zeal for God's honor, and such a dread of sin that she could not endure the appearance of evil, and would sternly reprove even grown-up persons who attempted to say or do anything wrong in her presence. Yet she had an exceedingly prepossessing countenance, and such gentle, engaging manners as at once won esteem and affection. At the age of sixteen she joined Mother McAuley, and was

among the first seven professed January 24, 1833, being then nearly nineteen years old. She was most tenderly loved by the foundress and all the early members; indeed, there was some irresistible attraction about her all through life which gained hearts wherever she was known. Many persons were attracted to the Order of Mercy by the mere grace of her looks. One ancient superior writes: "Being in doubt as to what Order I should apply for admission, I called at Baggot Street with a venerable priest; we were shown into a room in which were seated three or four religious employed in different ways, and I was so impressed with the recollected demeanor of one of them in particular that I instantly resolved to become a Sister of Mercy. That religious was Mother M. Clare Moore."

In 1837 the future foundress of the Order in England established the Cork house, and from that time till her death, thirty-seven years later, she was never released from the superiorship. Yet she had a dread and dislike of that troublesome charge which continued to the last. "It would have been useless for me," writes Mother McAuley, "to take such a long journey, if I did not remain until my poor Sister M. Clare got fixed in her new office; and I know you feel very anxious about her and would not wish me to leave her too soon. She continues extremely timid, and will not appear on the most trifling occasions to visitors, etc., without me. She promises to overcome this, is in excellent health, thank God! and looks remarkably well. I am quite surprised to find no remark made as to her youth in any quarter." The poor superior was then only twenty-three. Dr. Griffiths, who made her acquaintance about this time, mentally selected her as the person to introduce the Order into England. No doubt this had something to do with the choosing of the Cork house for the novitiate of the English Sisters.

Our novice of 1838 will continue her photographs:

“MISS AGNEW AND MISS TAYLOR.

“Miss Agnew was an exceedingly fervent novice and a model of humility, so that I wonder much at certain points of her subsequent history. She was a great favorite with Mother M. Clare and with us all. Miss Taylor was nothing like her, not at all a clever person. It was supposed that a disease from which she suffered in childhood was a mild form of epilepsy ; for she was subject at long intervals to that kind of internal convulsion which sometimes results from that malady after its cure.”

Mothers Josephine Warde and Elizabeth Moore and the “most angelic Sister M. Aloysius Scott” have been described in our first volume, and Mothers M. Vincent Deasy and Aloysius O’Connell we shall meet on the English mission. Of Mother M. Vincent Hartnett a friend writes : “She had a heart of gold and a great head ; she was large in person and rather plain, but her eyes were very lovely.” It is not often that so many richly dowered women meet in court, cottage, or convent.

Early in August, 1839, Mother McAuley writes :

“The English novices are to be professed on the 19th inst. I must assist, as the bishop says it will be necessary, and that every aid must be given to England and every mark of interest shown.”

Mother McAuley reached Cork in time to instruct her children for their holy profession—a ceremony which many circumstances combined to render impressive. The bishop was the celebrant, and so great was the crowd of clergy that only one secular could gain admittance to the chapel—the venerable Barbara Goold, foundress of the convent, who, though she had not openly and by assuming the religious habit “despised the empire of this world and all the grandeur thereof,” lived the life of a hidden saint. Other pious seculars filled the corridors leading to the chapel, eager to give sympathy and the support of their

presence to this final preparation for the establishment of the Order in London. One of the ladies professed was heard to say with enthusiasm : " It was all like a foretaste of the communion of saints."

Mother-foundress was delighted to renew her acquaintance with "Geraldine," whom she found humble and unassuming as a child, splendid in conversation, and, like herself, fond of music and intensely susceptible to its influence. The days of her coveted visit were days of sacrifice for all. It was a sacrifice for the newly professed—strangers a few months ago, but now most dear children of the household—to leave a land of which they had said with ardor : " Warm-hearted Ireland can prove a strange land to no one who possesses a heart to respond to kindness." The old home in Rutland Street had for them the charms which every religious finds in the house of her novitiate, and inspired a love not readily transferred. But a special sacrifice was asked of their companions, who were broken-hearted on learning that Mother M. Clare was judged to have the qualities essential to the arduous mission of establishing the Institute in London. This eminent religious was passionately beloved by her subjects, though, despite a meekness deemed extraordinary, she could try them to the heart's core ; and those who came unscathed from the ordeal when she refused to fascinate and declined to be fascinated were strong spirits indeed. True, they would rather be tried by her than flattered by another, and hence, however crucial the test, the final issue was seldom doubtful.

Before leaving Cork the missionaries examined the workings of all its convents, which were then few ;* and desirous of giving them as much experience as possible, Mother McAuley brought them to all the houses of her Order. They passed a few delightful days in Limerick,

* Several Orders have since been added, among others the Sisters of *Bon Secours*, whom the less educated classes somewhat ludicrously call the *Bone-Suckers*.

and gained new friends in the sweet band then preparing for profession. One of the Limerick nuns thus photographs "Geraldine" through a vista of forty-four years: "She was of middle age; being a convert was the chief thing about her that drew notice. Her manners, of course, were those of a lady—grave, rather reserved, intelligent when conversing. Our holy foundress was very partial to her."

At Tullamore the missionary party was welcomed by Mother Marianne Doyle. An ancient lady who remembers the visit gives some interesting particulars of the foundress of that house and the members who received our pilgrims:

"I have a dim recollection of Miss Pentony—she left her friends, fearing lest the love she had for them might interfere with her duty to God. Mother M. Gertrude Barnwall, my mistress of Christian doctrine, gave Sunday lectures to men and women in a turf house belonging to the old convent. I often wondered that she knew so well how the poor lived. Poor husbands badly treated or neglected by their wives had all her sympathies. She was very comical. At one time she would have her hearers in roars of laughter; then she would soar to the sublime and carry them with her. She had a satellite named Nancy, who made the most grotesque gestures when seating people. . . . Dear Mother Doyle! I can well recall her gentleness and humility; we were taught 'to take the wall' when we met our superiors on the stairs, but she would stand aside for any child. She was the last person I saw when leaving home; my mother took me to the convent to get her blessing.

"In what words of praise and admiration shall I speak of my dear Mother M. Teresa Purcell? She taught me reading, writing, and arithmetic. She was beautiful in person as well as in mind, and what a conscientious teacher she was! Mother Delamere was the quintessence of neatness; Miss Deverell was a convert, as were also her mother

and her grandmother, Mrs. Whiteside ; and Mrs. Pilsworth, who seemed to us a giantess.

“I often speak of the system of teaching in the Tullamore schools. Everything was practical, nothing superficial ; every study was taught thoroughly and every teacher well up in her part. Much of the teaching of to-day seems *sham* in comparison.”

Needless to say how Mother McAuley and her party * enjoyed the grotesque Nancy and the wild audience assembled to hear the extraordinary lectures in the turf house. They soon had enough of turf in these regions, nor were they particularly charmed with the unpicturesque collieries and the mossy peat tract known as the Bog of Allen. So little did they appreciate the lazy delights of canal travelling that Very Rev. Dr. O’Rafferty offered to escort them in private conveyances to their next stopping-place, Carlow, through more lively sections of the Pale. As the cavalcade drew up in Maryboro we can imagine Mother Catherine telling of her dear friend Bishop Nolan, who caught his death-sickness in that historic town while holding his visitation ; and the agony he endured returning

* Later they would have found in Tullamore “the old saint,” Mrs. Hoey, a postulant of seventy, once proprietress of a great hotel on the high-road between Dublin and Galway. She had been a generous benefactress of many good works, and had at her sole expense educated several students for the ministry during the thirty years of her widowhood. Her two daughters were Carmelite nuns before the foundation of the Mercy Sisterhood, and she herself was prioress of the Dominicanses of the Third Order, who live in the world.

Even in these troublous times Mrs. Hoey was accustomed to hear Mass and communicate daily ; she would go to the house or chapel in the district in which Mass was to be celebrated. The ancient lady and her bright lantern were familiar objects to the peasants on the wayside in the dark, wet mornings.

So great had been her mortifications that the religious life was almost a life of ease to her ; it pained her to take her ordinary meals or remain in bed till the bell. Her greatest cross was to be deprived of daily Communion, which is not usually allowed in the novitiate. Despite her universal self-denial and rigorous austerity, Sister M. Elizabeth Hoey was a pleasant, delightful companion, very active, and a dear old grandmother to the young novices, whose clothes she would mend, and to whose charges she would give a finishing touch, “doing more for us,” writes the sole survivor of these happy early days, “than our own mothers or grandmothers would think of doing.”

to Carlow, where his case was pronounced hopeless* in consequence of a strange physician having prescribed the now obsolete remedy of bleeding.

The Carlow clergy showed every courtesy to Mother Catherine and her guests. Bishop Haly celebrated the community Mass during their stay. The English ladies were particularly struck with his sanctity, his gentlemanly bearing, and his kind, fatherly ways with his children. Dr. Fitzgerald, president, and Dr. Fitzpatrick, dean, of the college, delivered some beautiful discourses on the religious life. The visitors were taken everywhere and shown everything. They learned many particulars as to the incessant labors of the bishop and clergy, for whom they could not conceal their admiration. "How hard these holy men work for God!" they frequently exclaimed.

Unusual éclat surrounded one of the guests as the author of *Geraldine*. Her plainness was commented on, and the aged Dr. Fitzgerald was ungallant enough to tell the foundress that the English ladies were not to be compared to his Carlow nuns—true enough as to external attractions, for the illustrious writer and her less favored companion, like the king's daughter, had all their comeliness from within.

After a delightful sojourn of six days the party, consisting of Mother McAuley, Mother Clare, Sisters M. de Sales White, Clare Agnew, and Augustine Taylor, left Carlow by the mail-coach, and had several courtesies from Peter Purcell, the liberal proprietor of so many lines of travel, cars and coaches, that he was known as the Colossus of Rhodes (Roads). They made a short stay at Naas and

* Dr. Nolan died October 14, 1837, at the early age of forty-four. Almost with his last breath he said to Father Maher, pointing to the Sisters who were nursing him (both still living): "Take care of them." He had led the life of a saint, especially during his episcopate. The silent hours of the night he was wont to spend in converse with God. After his death the instruments of penance were found with which he used to discipline his slender frame, and which bore unmistakable traces of constant use. R. I. P.

saw the school-house in which the Sisters were soon to make a lowly beginning. In Dublin the missionaries had more experience to acquire and more lights to receive. Not satisfied with the active practice of the duties which St. Mary's afforded, reverend mother allowed them to visit and examine the workings of almost every charitable institution in the metropolis.

Indeed, convent ladies seemed seized with a universal desire to see "Geraldine," which Mother McAuley gratified, nothing loath, since utility might be combined with pleasure. Besides, from many sacred abodes prayers had ascended for the reconversion of England, and the nuns were ready to regard "Geraldine" and her companion as among the first-fruits of their intercessions.

The third volume of *Geraldine*, just published, was in the hands of every one, from the primate to the school-girl. Baggot Street was besieged with applications for introductions to the gifted writer. "Nothing ever exceeded the sale of this work," wrote Mother McAuley—"not a copy to be had in Dublin." Several editions were sold with amazing rapidity in England, Ireland, and the United States. Nor was its extraordinary popularity undeserved. It was the first work of its class, and there has been no second—none of its numerous imitators has been worthy to stand on the same plane. Hardly a Catholic library is without the book to-day, and in many it is duplicated again and again. So numerous are its beauties that it would be ungracious to point out the few blemishes Brownson enumerates. A book which will please all has yet to be written; and if it were a law in the republic of letters that no one should publish an unfavorable critique till he had produced something superior to the work he criticises, few would be the criticisms on *Geraldine*. How many of the books published to-day will find readers fifty years hence?

CHAPTER IV.

OTHER WANDERINGS—DEPARTURE FOR ENGLAND.

“Dear old George’s Hill”—Reminiscences—Journey to Newry—The Poor Clares—Mother McAuley covets Bishop Blake’s Blessing for the English Sisters—The old Convent in High Street—“The Hill”—The pretty Clanrye—The Newry Arms—The ancient Vicaress—Bishop Blake—His Portraits—Newry Convent of Mercy—A pretty Description—Dundalk “opens the Gap to the North”—Sister Fanny prompt and promising—Excitement in England when it was known that the Nuns were coming—A Thousand Cautions—Disturbances in England—Friends in Need—Letter—Details.

MOTHER MCAULEY conducted the pilgrims to “dear old George’s Hill,” where they were welcomed by her late superior, Mother Frances, whose gentle ways seemed little in keeping with her commanding figure. Deeply were they edified by the story of her penitential life; often when the vigilatrix aroused the community of a dark winter’s morning the discipline was heard doing duty on her aged shoulders. The party visited the poor oratory—since replaced by a beautiful chapel—in which the first band of Sisters of Mercy had made their vows. What an eventful life had been Mother Catherine’s since that blessed TWELFTH OF DECEMBER when she tore herself from the hospitable entreaties of these same holy nuns eight years before!

Mother McAuley was anxious that the Sisters destined to begin the Institute in England should receive the special benediction of Dr. Blake; and, knowing that this best of friends wished to see her in Newry, she wrote to ascertain

whether the Poor Clares could accommodate three Sisters of Mercy for a few days. On receiving a most courteous affirmative they set out for Newry, about fifty miles due north of Dublin. They left early Saturday, October 5, in a curious conveyance styled the "Newry Lark," and after passing through many a quaint town and hamlet—the first nuns seen in these regions since penal times—they reached their destination about dusk.

Newry was then a centre of Orangedom. Priests had avoided it in bygone days for the safer shelter of the dreary wilds of Connaught or the heather-clad vales of the Galtees. It covers ground venerable in Celtic lore as being once shaded by solemn yews which St. Patrick planted, and from which it derives its name. Being an abbatial town, its arms, a mitred abbot seated between two yew-trees, may be seen to-day on its official documents and newspapers. St. Clare's Convent is on High Street, once the chief street of the town, and still flanked by lofty, old-fashioned mansions in which the poorer families room. The front remains as it was when our visitors knocked at its venerable gates, save that it has become nearly half a century older. From a hill in the rear the view is magnificent—the approaches, north and south, marked by the pretty Clanrye, which flows beside the Newry Canal, a continuation of Carlingford Bay; the gray old town backed by hills east and west; the warehouses, to the very doors of which vessels bring up their cargoes; the Mourne Range and Slieve Gullion keeping watch and ward in the blue distance.

The lady-abbess, Mother M. Tracy, made her guests most welcome and took a special interest in the English band, to whom she gave every information likely to be useful in their great mission. The vicaress or assistant of the present abbess, who remembers the visit, writes: "I was only a few months clothed with the holy habit when dear Mother McAuley gave me some beautiful instructions.

She was most cheerful. Mother M. Clare was a person one could never forget. I well remember what a happy week we spent while these dear guests were with us. Their visit was a source of the greatest pleasure and edification to all."

Newry Convent contained fourteen cells, a small chapel, choir, refectory, community-room, and novitiate. It was bounded by a meeting-house belonging to a sect the poor people not very accurately styled *Swaddlers*, a police barracks, a famous Orange lodge, a watch-house, and a public-house. Most of these have since fallen to the nuns. The prospect from "The Hill" marks the progress of the faith in this ancient stronghold of Orangeism—the handsome Gothic cathedral of cut granite, the fine new church and priory of the Dominicans, the convents and schools, the Mother of Mercy's Home with its lovely garden sloping southward, always bright and pleasant-looking, in which some sixty old people and children, of ages ranging from two to a hundred, are made comfortable and happy. A far different view our party saw from "The Hill" on a crisp, hazy October afternoon, 1839, when the purple mountains* bathed in the sheen of the retiring sun, and the scattered trees with foliage of every hue, from palest yellow to deepest crimson, made a glorious landscape.

The chief charm of the visit arose from personal intercourse with Bishop Blake, then sixty-four years old, but hale and active as a well-preserved man of forty. When "Geraldine" beheld the crown of white hair, the piercing dark eyes, and the bent form of this model prelate, she felt herself in the presence of an apostle.

A striking picture in the Newry Convent of Mercy represents Dr. Blake somewhere between forty and fifty, when he was the active friend of his dearest spiritual daughter,

* Down, or the *hilly county*, was doubly interesting to the English Sisters as bearing much resemblance to Westmorelandshire.

Miss McAuley. The features are rather large, but strong and well formed, the eyes dark and penetrating, shaded by bushy brows prematurely gray ; and the contour of the rather large head seems to indicate unusual intellectual ability. Looking at this picture, it is not easy to conceive that Michael Blake was ever the DUNCE, though he certainly was the SAINT, of the college. This *Dunce*, however, achieved eminence, while the very name of the smart student who applied to the timid boy so insulting an epithet is unknown.

A painting in the High Street Convent gives Dr. Blake as he was in 1839. He is seated and wears his episcopal robes ; the large brown eyes have a piercing, almost stern, expression ; his hair is abundant, but white as cotton bursting from the pod ; he seems to have lost his teeth, for the under-lip protrudes ; the forehead is broad and lofty, and the cheeks beginning to sink. The face and head are remarkable in both pictures and could belong only to a master in Israel. But neither of these represents the Dr. Blake whom the Newry people love so well. A spiritual child of his old age writes : " He had the most penetrating look in his deep brown eyes. The picture of St. Alphon-sus as he is usually depicted, bending over his prie-dieu, is exactly like his lordship kneeling at his thanksgiving after Mass, as I have seen him hundreds of times. But our bishop had large, lovely brown eyes, hair as white as snow, and a very fresh complexion."

Another spiritual daughter writes : " Dr. Blake was not very tall, but bishop-like. It needed not much acquaintance with him to perceive that all his views were fixed on the interests of Jesus. His manner, though kind and affable, had a tincture of unworldliness and asceticism. To the end of his long life he always spoke of our holy foundress with cherished memory." Another remembers only his great brown eyes, his crown of white hair, and the reverence he bore to the memory of the holy foundress.

Mother McAuley's shadow fell upon Newry with benedictions. A convent was established there in 1860, several of whose inmates were baptized, confirmed, prepared for First Communion, received into the Order, and professed by Dr. Blake ; and these grateful souls have preserved with affectionate reverence several mementos of the holy man which they regard as relics. When the convent was founded he was nearly eighty, and, unable to exert himself as of old, he gave a hearty sanction to Rev. Patrick O'Neil to work for their interest. This good priest, who was regarded as a saint in Newry, where he possessed unbounded influence, was constituted their guardian by the holy bishop, and to him they are deeply indebted for the prosperity they enjoy. Among the little girls then playing with their dolls in and about Newry was one who, some fifteen years later, became foundress of the Mercy Institute in California—a member of a truly levitical family, well represented among the clergy, of which three daughters became Sisters of Mercy. The teachings of Bishop Blake have borne rich fruit beside the Golden Gate, whither the beautiful traditions of Mother McAuley's faithful friend have been carried by one who, like another Paul, sat at the feet of this Gamaliel from childhood, and imbibed there, as at the fountain-head, the true spirit of Catherine McAuley.

Despite the eagerness of Bishop Blake to possess some daughters of his cherished penitent, it was not Newry but Dundalk,* the frontier town on the marches of the Pale, that had the honor of "opening the gap to the North." A convent dedicated to St. Malachy, patron of the diocese, was founded, 1857, by Rev. Dr. Coyne, who gave a spacious house and garden to the Sisters and built fine schools. The ground covered by these splendid institutions once

* In 1316 the adventurous Edward Bruce, the last monarch crowned in Ireland, was crowned in this town, where he resided in royal splendor till he was killed in an engagement with the English, 1318.

belonged to the Gray Friars, part of whose monastery may still be seen near the garden-wall. It was given by Cromwell to one of his troopers, and, having passed through many hands, was used as an excise office when purchased for its present purpose by Dr. Coyne. The Kelly family in this neighborhood have been such benefactors to the convent that it partly owes its existence to their munificence. The mother-superior of this house, who is mentioned in the holy foundress' correspondence as "Sister Fanny, prompt and promising," was one of those to whom she imparted her dying benediction and her wise and saintly counsels for maintaining perfect charity in the Institute. As Mother M. de Sales Vigne this lady has governed Dundalk Convent nearly thirty years. To her kind and prudent administration, singularly blessed by God, the Sisters attribute their prosperity and the happy relations that have existed between them and the ecclesiastical authorities and the people of the town. Dr. Kieran, Archbishop of Armagh, was also a generous benefactor. His grace died in 1869, reverently nursed in his last illness by the nuns for whom he did so much. He bequeathed to them for their orphans all he possessed. Dundalk Convent has always been famous for the large number of converts, especially the military, under instruction within its walls. Six schools for the poor and two for the upper classes are attached to this convent.*

But to return to our English missionaries.

After a delightful sojourn in the north final preparations were made for their migration to London. Reverend mother's letters at this period are eloquent in their praise. One of them she describes very prettily :

"Sister A—— is a delightful addition——always recollected,

* At the recent Golden Jubilee celebration, presided over by the primate, many convert soldiers made their First Communion, sharing the indulgences and other privileges granted by Rome on that occasion. In the chapel, which is very beautiful, repose the remains of Mr. and Mrs. O'Regan, through whose pious munificence it was erected.

but never too solemn ; no show of any kind, but everything valuable shows itself continually. She yields to the opinions of others like a little child, and you are irresistibly attracted to hers by the very manner in which she submits. She teaches me by her example genuine meekness and humility, and the adage, 'Never too old to learn,' is a great comfort to me."

Bishop Griffiths named November 18 for their departure, Mother McAuley, with her usual spirit of poverty, having previously written to Father Butler that two rooms would suffice for a beginning. Meanwhile it was bruited about London that the nuns were coming, and the mere prospect of such an encroachment on the rights or tastes of Britons created an excitement that was a foretaste of that which greeted the re-establishment of the hierarchy eleven years later. The papers were full of the awful subject and the very air smelt gunpowder. Archbishop Murray, who, as usual, counselled meekness and patience, feared physical violence for the meek representatives of the Institute he now deeply loved. Father O'Hanlon took issue with the prophets of evil. His tall, clerical-looking form swayed to and fro with agitation ; his grave countenance was graver than usual, and words of alarm and caution dropped from his lips. A true and warm friend—though few could perceive the ingredient of warmth—Father O'Hanlon used to visit the foundations in a sort of semi-official character, and was never so happy as when he could contribute to the extension and prosperity of our little Institute. Dean Gaffney, terrified at the outburst of bigotry evoked by the mere surmise that "the nuns were a-coming," offered to accompany his dear friend and her little flock to England. Political excitement also was rife at this period. The Chartist risings, the "agitators" who threatened fire and sword, the dreadful outbreaks at Birmingham, the chronic discontent in which such upheavals originate, the strikes to which it gave rise—herein were dangers more dreadful than the en-

croach of "popery" against which the demagogues declaimed: dangers which called for the highest order of statesmanship, not to be found, unhappily, then or since. For miseries of all kinds among the working classes and the poor have grown with the growth of that godless civilization of which they are one of the saddest outcomes. November 17 Mother McAuley writes:

"The six travellers leave dear Ireland to-morrow in tolerable health and more than tolerable spirits: Sister A——rejoicing, Sister T—— in raptures, and their mother all animation; Sister M. Cecilia greatly improved in health, and Sister M. Teresa gay as a lark. I have my list of songs ready for the journey. We had long and most kind visits from our poor archbishop, and a cordial leave-taking, with fervent prayers for our safe return. Nine Masses to be offered for us to-morrow, thank God! Father O'Hanlon is alarmed at the angry things said in the English papers—he gave me a thousand cautions. He and Dean Gaffney sail with us to-morrow."

On Monday, November 18, at five P.M., the Bermondsey party left the *Alma Mater* for Kingstown, where they took berths for Liverpool in *The Queen*. About seven they were fairly under weigh, and, after a stormy passage, during which they paid heavy tribute to Neptune, *The Queen* steered through the forests of masts that arose from the Liverpool docks about half-past seven Tuesday morning. Their first mishap was to lose the early train; they had to wait for a second, which started at ten. "I was glad of the delay and said it was permitted for my good," writes the only survivor of this little band; "for I was sick and cold, and there was a fine fire in the waiting-room." But the others, anxious to reach London by daylight, did not share her too natural sentiments. Now began the railway journeyings of the pilgrims, all comparative strangers to this mode of transit. The weather was raw and bleak, and the journey of over two hundred miles southeast would

have been cheerless and weary but for the bright, genial ways of the foundress, whose sea-sickness vanished as soon as the ark began to float on the broad, smooth bosom of the Mersey. She cautioned the Sisters not to call her *reverend mother*, or distinguish her in any way, and her companions were puzzled how to address her. The difficulty was obviated in an amusing way. "My travelling title," she wrote, "was Friend Catherine."

CHAPTER V.

CHEERLESS ENTRY INTO LONDON—THE FIRST ACCESSIONS.

Songs unsung—The Sisters of Mercy enter Babylon as Mary and Joseph entered Bethlehem—First Night—Illness of Father Butler—Bishop Griffiths—His Love for the Sisters of Mercy—Their Obligations to him—Pugin Structures—The new Convent a huge Mausoleum—Will not be dry in three Years—Letters—Choir and Lay Postulants—Confessors—The Chill and Damp tell heavily on the Foundress—Letter—Edifying Incident—The Countess of Newburgh and the Dowager—The Widow of General Agnew—Miss Caroline Agnew—Converts—Lady Olivia Acheson—Lady A. Acheson—Miss Hill—The Earl and Countess of Arundel and Surrey—A Relative of the Wife of George IV.—Attention drawn off from the arrival of the Sisters by the approaching Royal Marriage.

“FRIEND CATHERINE” had little use for her list of songs. Far different was her reception in England from her experience on similar occasions in her own hospitable land. No crowds of gentry in showy carriages, no smartly-dressed townspeople or gay peasants, came forth to welcome this first expatriated branch of her little Institute; no bishops, priests, and acolytes to lead the “walking nuns” in triumphant procession to the nearest church and pour forth their gratitude to the good God in the soul-stirring strains of the glorious *Te Deum*. No pæan of triumph here. Into the great Babylon they went as unnoticed and unknown as Mary and Joseph into Bethlehem or Peter into Rome. From the station, at which there was not a human being to welcome them, they wended their way towards Dockhead and Hickman’s Folly, the stars of the cold November sky shining brightly, but the howlings and hustlings of many a London crowd making the night hideous,

The din increased as they proceeded. It was near midnight when they reached Father Butler's house. Some refreshment was kindly offered by his sister. They soon adjourned to the shell which was to be their home, and took what rest they could in the only furnished room. No preparations had been made for their reception.

"We had many trials to endure," writes one of this zealous band, "but all were permitted by God that His house might be firmly established and grounded on the cross."

It was not the fault of the zealous Father Butler that they had so much to endure. He was lying on what was supposed to be his death-bed. He had been ailing several weeks, and, being asked to preach a charity sermon at Poplar, November 10, he was imprudent enough to consent. The effort, coupled with his anxious exertions to have the convent ready by the 19th, almost cost his life. Though he had burst a blood-vessel and was so ill that his death was hourly expected, his joy at the arrival of "his own nuns" was so great that he imagined himself better and was busy about their affairs sooner than was prudent. A relapse was the consequence, and the foundress did not think he could survive more than a day or two.

On Thursday, the Feast of the Presentation, Bishop Griffiths said Mass for the Sisters and blessed the convent—the first ceremony of the kind his lordship ever performed. He confirmed Mother M. Clare Moore as superior, to which office she had already been appointed by the bishop of Cork. Between Dr. Griffiths and Mother McAuley a warm friendship existed; they were kindred spirits and readily understood each other. To the last day of his life he spoke of her with reverent admiration. It was the privilege of her children to nurse him and repay by unremitting devotion the delicate attentions of eight years. "For Sisters of Mercy in particular," writes one of his spiritual children, "he always showed a marked predilection. He selected them to nurse him in his last illness and to receive his last sigh—

a striking proof of his undying affection." He used his influence at Rome for the confirmation of their Rules, and aided the foundress on several critical occasions. For these favors all Sisters of Mercy owe this holy prelate a debt of gratitude, but those of Bermondsey and its filiations are specially bound to revere his holy memory.—R.I.P.

There was at that time in England a sort of craze for the Pugin style, than which, as then applied to dwellings, nothing could be more comfortless. The impracticable people who would have nothing but the "old ecclesiastic" never thought of combining the conveniences of modern civilization, or rather its absolute requirements, with their bald Gothic barns, cheerless enough anywhere, but most melancholy amid the London fogs. The heart of the foundress sank as she walked through the bleak corridors of the unfurnished mansion. The nuns were chilled through and through whenever they attempted to roam from the corner they inhabited. The poor mother grieved, knowing how little they could do if health failed them. But what matter? The house, more like a tomb than a modern dwelling, was in the monastic style of some far-away century—a Pugin building, by the great architect himself. Even in the finished parts it was so damp that Mother McAuley doubted if it would be dry in three years; but she cheerfully added that the incessant occupations of the Sisters contributed to ward off the bad effects of a vault-like atmosphere rarely purified by a stream of health-preserving sunshine. Here are extracts from her London letters:

"The convent is not more than half finished. I do not admire Mr. Pugin's taste, though so celebrated. It is quite for the heavy old monastic style. He was determined we should not look out of the windows—they are up in the ceiling; we could not touch the glass without standing on a chair. We have one good room finished, with brown walls and a long table. The schools are not commenced yet.

They intend to put cells over them, which are much required, for the part completed is not well laid out—too much room in some places and too little in others. The refectory is very neat, with tables like those in Cork. The noviceship very small, the kitchen fit for a castle; it is boarded, and is nearly the best room in the house. The enclosed ground will be very nice when settled; at present it is not even levelled. We are obliged to go to the church to say office, but it is perfectly free to our use, and nearer to the community-room than the choir in Baggot Street is to the parlor. We have a private door; however, it is certainly cold and bleak for a few.”

Short indeed was the period when Bermondsey was inhabited by only a “few.” Six ladies who had been doing duty in the Old Chapel-House entered a week after the arrival of the colony—Lady Barbara Eyre, Miss Mary O’Connor, Miss Latham, and Miss Weller as choir postulants, Miss Teresa Boyce and Miss Sarah Hawkins as lay Sisters. Mother McAuley alludes to these in the following:

“The day after our arrival the bishop visited us. He was exceedingly kind; said the Irish Sisters should be entertained by him, and insisted on giving me a fifty-pound note. In vain was he assured that all we had been accustomed to was provided; he would not be refused. . . . He appointed Thursday, the Twelfth of December, our first profession-day, for the reception of the six Sisters, who had been waiting with pious anxiety more than a year for the establishment of the Order; and as they were led to expect us on the 24th of September, it would not be fair to keep them any longer in expectation. You may be sure the poor habit-makers have a busy time. Worldly dress has also to be prepared, and net caps, bibs, and tippets for two hundred poor girls of the schools who are to attend the ceremony.”

Mother McAuley had more than enough to do in pre-

paring the six novices-elect for the holy habit. It was a season of unusual suffering with her; her own fine constitution was the first on which the chill and damp told heavily. "Our dear mother had a miserable time of it," writes Mother Teresa White, "being almost constantly ailing. I always thought the Bermondsey foundation was the beginning of her death-sickness, for she was never perfectly well after. Being a great lover of holy poverty, she would never allow the least attention to be paid to her more than any other Sister. I have known her frequently to be called away from dinner, and if the refectorian attempted to keep her portion warm in the kitchen she would not be pleased, for she desired that no notice should be taken of her. While she was very ill and confined to bed in London, one morning I prepared her breakfast and brought it to her; but because I brought the best I could get—white sugar, china tea-pot, and cream-ewer—she said: 'My heart, why did you not bring me a little tea in a mug, as you would to a poor person?' Scarcely had she spoken when the tray upset and everything was spilled on her bed. Then she said pleasantly: 'Now you are punished for not remembering that your old mother is only a poor nun.'" She had other trials in London. Even now there was, on part of one of her companions, a tendency towards the introduction of novelties. "This, to my mind," continues Mother T. White, "never shows a sensible head. I often heard our poor mother say: 'Destroy the simplicity of our Institute and it is gone.'"

The holy foundress could seldom take the repose her debilitated condition needed. Persons came from all points to confer with her, and the poor, whom she had always with her, were not her only visitors. The Countess of Newburgh and the Dowager Countess frequently called; the latter became a convert. The widow of General Agnew and her daughter Caroline, sister of "Geraldine," who

were what we should now call Ritualists, came to converse with the holy mother on the "apostolic succession." The elder lady averred her daughter Elizabeth had "gone over" in too great a hurry; she should have waited till both religions came to terms, as they must indubitably do ere long, and then all parties would be satisfied. Mrs. Agnew, a superior woman, had many interviews with Mother McAuley, and Miss Caroline, who drank in all the reasoning advanced on both sides, became a most fervent Catholic. Among others a near relative of Mrs. Fitzherbert called and spoke of that exalted personage as the recently deceased queen of George IV., so unworthy of that superb woman. Mother McAuley was supposed to have a special grace for dealing with converts, which descended abundantly on her children in Bermondsey. That convent has never been without persons under instruction for reception into the Church. In the early days they came by hundreds, many of them having lost everything that makes life dear* by embracing the true faith. Lady Olivia Acheson made her abjuration in the convent chapel. Trials of every species rewarded her fidelity to her convictions, but she died peacefully and happily, and was buried in the Catholic cemetery with her sister, Lady A. Acheson, also a convert. About the same time Father Butler received into the Church Miss Caroline Hill, who had also much to suffer. The nuns aided Father Butler in every way to lighten the burdens of these and many other courageous converts. Among the early visitors we may notice the Earl of Arundel and Surrey (afterwards Duke of Norfolk) and his countess, a convert. By this visit many were made happy, for they gave a large sum for the sick

* A daughter of Sir Thomas Lethridge, Bart., who became a Catholic in 1840, was driven from her home and obliged to seek employment as a governess, which she found in the family of Lord Stourton. Her relatives refused to receive her unless she abjured the Catholic faith. One can scarcely understand such bigotry and cruelty, yet the Sisters had to deal with many similar instances.

poor and provided a sumptuous feast for the school-children.

Despite the furious outcry raised by the English papers at the bare mention of the new Order in England, the nuns took possession of their convent so quietly that the incident was scarcely noticed—perhaps because public attention was riveted on the approaching marriage of Queen Victoria, then an open secret ; and England had never seen the marriage of any of its sovereign ladies, except poor Queen Mary, besides whom only three sovereigns married since the days of Henry VIII. The excitement such an event awakened was in proportion to its rarity.

The Sisters of Mercy were therefore able to begin their works in tranquillity. But oh ! what a difference between the objects of their mercy in England and the poor whom they had learned to love in Ireland. It was an inviolable rule with Mother McAuley never to find fault with the peculiarities of the people among whom she labored, but rather to praise what was good in them and win them by kindness and love. Yet she must have seen as clearly as Mother Margaret Hallahan, who wrote a little later : “ When I returned to England . . . I saw vice around me everywhere. Every face seemed to bear the stamp of mortal sin. At first I thought it had an effect on the sun, and that it was the sins of the people that made the air so dark and foggy.”

CHAPTER VI.

A GRAND RECEPTION—SIMPLICITY RESTORED.

A Function of unusual Splendor—A graceful Act of Charity—Elaborate Costume of Lady Barbara Eyre—The Newburgh Jewels—The Choir from Warwick Street—Bishops and forty Priests in Attendance—Nobility and foreign Ambassadors—Showy Decorations—Full Dress—The Queen's Hairdresser—Descriptions—A Protestant Girl of thirteen—The Comic Papers give Illustrations—Yards of Lady Barbara's Hair clipped off by a Cardinal—Letter—Sister M. de Sales—A cold Déjeuner on a cold Day—Fires out—Lord Adolphus Fitzclarence manages the Bellows—Ludicrous Scene—Mortified Hostesses—Candidates—A Granddaughter of Zephaniah Holwell—The Black Hole—A second Clothing—A special Blessing for Bermondsey—The English Poor as described by English Non-Catholics.

THE first reception at Bermondsey was a function of unusual splendor. No public ceremony had taken place in England since the Reformation. This was to be an introduction of the religious life and the new Order to English Catholics, and probably the only ceremony at Bermondsey which the holy foundress could honor with her presence. The senior of the band to be received was the first gentlewoman of the rank of an earl's daughter who had entered an English convent for centuries. In deference to the wishes of her family and the families of her sister-novices the bishop decided that this "clothing" should be an occasion of unusual *éclat*.

Mother McAuley commiserates the poor habit-makers, who had a busy time making every article of the religious dress for so many on so short a notice, besides a uniform of brown cashmere and white capes for the poor children

who were to attend in a body. The sewing-machine was then a thing of the future. The graceful act of charity by which the princely Newburghs * provided a warm outfit for two hundred poor girls was more pleasing to the holy foundress than the other arrangements.

The novices-elect were elegantly attired according to the fashion of the day for brides. Lady Barbara, who had appeared on earth with the opening of the nineteenth century, was more elaborately costumed than her companions. Her dress was a heavy white silk material of great richness, behind which flowed a long train of pale lavender moire-antique heavily bordered with golden acorns. From the jewels † with which she was bespangled to the morsel of perfumed lace of priceless value which was now and then raised to her tearful eyes, everything she wore was gorgeous, but abstractly in exquisite taste. Her tall, slight form seemed to bend under the weight of all this finery, but her pale face was flushed with happiness as the hour approached for which she had so long sighed. Owing to her height she looked most imposing, and the wondrous richness of her toilette contrasted well with the simple elegance of her younger and fairer companions.

Though the Bermondsey community possessed at least three distinguished musicians—"Geraldine," Mother M. Clare Moore, and Mother M. Cecilia Marmion—yet as none could be spared from the ceremony, the choir of the Church of the Assumption, the finest in London, was invited for the occasion. Several bishops and about forty priests were in the sanctuary, all in the richest robes. The church was gay with the court-dress of the ladies and the decorations of the nobility and foreign ambassadors, who, as specially invited guests, occupied the seats nearest the

* Maria Cecilia, Countess of Newburgh in her own right, was also Princess Giustiniani. Her son, the present earl, is Prince Giustiniani-Bandini.

† The Newburgh jewels sent to Lady Barbara a few days previous by a confidential servant, who took a receipt for them, were said to be of immense value, the tiara of diamonds alone being worth fifteen hundred pounds.

sanctuary. Dr. Maguire, then considered the most eloquent preacher in London, delivered the sermon.

This ceremony marked a new era in the religious history of England. No sacred function at all approaching it in splendor had been seen in Great Britain since the pre-Reformation times. "It was altogether too grand for my taste," writes the only survivor of those who took an active part in it. And Mother McAuley seems to have been angry with herself for not insisting on greater simplicity. One thing especially annoyed while it amused her: the services of the hairdresser of the maiden-majesty of England were deemed necessary in arranging the *coiffure* of the senior novice-elect. Mother McAuley wrote a pleasant description of that gentleman and his assistant, *Messieurs les Friseurs*, dressed in the latest Parisian style and redolent of attar of roses; the principal dividing his attention between the ceiling and the morning paper, directing an occasional glance of sublime indifference towards the work of his meek, deferential subordinate; now gazing into vacancy, again smiling, no doubt, at the thought of the obligations under which he was placing every member of the Newburgh family. The condescension with which the great man touched a small feather which bent perhaps a quarter of an inch in an unfashionable direction seemed to affect his assistant deeply. The whole scene is described in Mother Catherine's inimitable style in a letter unfortunately lost. Perhaps such a group never before met in a convent parlor.

Many descriptions of this reception appeared. Here is one:

"The most edifying and useful Catholic institutions which the present days have seen revisit our soil, to spread the gifts of mercy, are to be found in those sacred receptacles for pious women who, abandoning home and despising the world and its fascinations, its prospects and its joys, have devoted themselves to the worship of God and to

labor for the spiritual and temporal comfort of mankind. On Thursday a most imposing ceremony was witnessed in the metropolis. It was one to which England has seen no parallel since the days when the passions of Henry VIII. made war upon the decrees of God. We allude to the reception of six Sisters of Mercy in Bermondsey. The weather was unfavorable, yet so great was the anxiety to be present that, notwithstanding the heavy rain, a great number arrived in the church at nine. All the approaches to the convent were lined with carriages, and the whole neighborhood wore a festal appearance. The church was crowded to an inconvenient pressure. The ceremonies began at eleven with a Solemn High Mass, and the procession to the altar was one of the most imposing we ever witnessed. A great number of reverend gentlemen attended, each wearing surplice and stole. When Mass was over the bishop ascended his throne before the high altar, and all eyes were directed to the door leading to the convent by which it was known the postulants would enter. In a few moments the processional cross appeared, followed by the six postulants and the ladies of the convent. . . . When they appeared for the last time attired in the trappings of the world it was impossible to resist the deep, almost painful sentiments their presence inspired. Many a tear stole silently down the flushed cheek of youth and the furrowed features of age, as they gazed on those who offered themselves willing victims to the glory of religion and the exercise of charity.* They wore the garb of earth's gladness for the last time; they were about to assume another which would never be laid aside, even when

* Divines wrote with their accustomed heaviness on this "popish" ceremony, important as opening a new era in the religious history of England; and the wits, coming to the aid of the doctors, did justice to the scene in their own peculiar way. The tall form of Lady Barbara appeared in a comic paper, bending before a very pronounced cardinal in full dress, who, with a huge pair of scissors, was cutting off imaginary yards of my lady's hair. Nor were her princely relatives, the Giustiniani, forgotten by the caricaturist.

the grave closed over their remains. No tear was shed by them for leaving all the world calls charming, for they knew they had chosen the better part. Long may they live to serve their Divine Master, to edify and comfort their fellow-creatures! May renewed health be the portion of the zealous pastor by whose exertions a poor and densely-populated district has been blessed by their presence. . . . We never beheld High Mass celebrated with so much grandeur."

This ceremony created a sensation in England,* and many a Catholic and not a few Protestants felt impelled to follow the example of the zealous band. Mother Catherine informs her children that five thousand persons were present. "The organ and choir are very fine," she adds. "The hymn *O Gloriosa* was chanted, and we advanced in procession to the sanctuary—Sister M. Teresa carrying an immense cross; Sisters M. Cecilia, Clare, and Augustine in a line to make the most of a few; Mother Clare and her valuable assistant, with the six postulants, following. The altar is the highest I ever saw—nine steps, two platforms. The bishop stood at the top in very rich episcopal robes. Mother M. Clare and I had to ascend and descend † with each postulant in the full view of thousands. . . . The sermon, explaining the nature of the Order and the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, was preached by Dr. Maguire. I am told it will be published. Nothing

* "I was a Protestant girl of thirteen at the convent in Scorton, then considered one of the best schools in Yorkshire," writes the foundress of the Sisters of Mercy in the Channel Islands, "when I heard an account of the clothing of Lady Barbara Eyre read in the refectory, and at recreation the girls spoke so enthusiastically about the new Order that, Protestant as I was, I determined to be a nun. The last of my school days I spent at York Convent, where I quite made up my mind to be a Sister of Mercy."

† "I visited Bermondsey Convent," writes a devoted daughter of Mother McAuley, "and with a holy reverence ascended the triple tiers of steps leading to the altar of the adjoining church which our holy foundress ascended so often at that first ceremony. That part of the city is old and crowded. The convent has all the defects of the old Pugin style. The community carry poverty to a greater extreme than ever I saw even among the Poor Clares—veils, etc., darned but clean."

could exceed the joy manifested by all at living to see the Institute established."

During the ceremony, which was very long, every fire in the convent went out, and when the guests adjourned to the community-room to partake of the *déjeuner* prepared for them no tea or coffee or warmth could be had. As the materials were at hand, the noblemen present, pitying the discomfiture of the hostesses, quickly made themselves useful. Lord Augustus Fitzclarence, son of William IV., made himself master of a pair of bellows, which he laughingly but firmly refused to relinquish to any one. These he blew manfully and perseveringly till he succeeded, greatly to his own satisfaction and that of the other guests, not to speak of the Sisters, in producing a blazing fire. Mother M. Clare, who did not like to speak of grand people or hear them spoken of, told this incident several times, because it tended to her own confusion. She could never understand how she came to invite people to breakfast and forgot to ask some one to keep up the fires and prepare warm food. The affair turned out to be much more pleasant than if it had gone on in the ordinary way. Perhaps it was the first time the son of a king kindled the convent fires or helped to prepare coffee for the guests of nuns.

Lady Barbara Eyre, now Sister M. de Sales, "was very humble and lady-like," writes the cross-bearer of that day. "She assumed no airs, was delicate. I liked her very much." "Sister M. de Sales," wrote the foundress, "has commenced her novitiate in the most edifying manner—quite a model of humility and obedience."

Many ladies visited Mother McAuley with a view to joining the ranks. Of these five were speedily admitted: Cecilia Beste, of Bath, daughter of a Protestant minister; Frances Burroughs, who had eagerly desired to see the Institute in England and become a member; Louisa Birch, who had long prayed to be a nun and practised the works

of mercy towards the poor of her neighborhood ; Amelia Ellis, a convert, who from her conversion had been under the guidance of Father Butler ; and Anna M. Ross, a young lady from the Isle of Wight. Miss Birch was granddaughter to the celebrated Zephaniah Holwell, Governor of Calcutta, 1756 ; Surajah Dowlah imprisoned him and one hundred and twenty-five other Englishmen in the famous Black Hole, a prison twenty feet square. Next morning only twenty-three were alive, the governor being among the survivors. His granddaughter often horrified the nuns with the fearful details of that terrible night as she had heard them from her grandfather.

The community increased to fourteen, but there was work enough for treble that number. Father Butler built the schools, which were crowded as soon as they were opened. During the Paschal solemnity, 1840, the Sisters prepared many children and immense numbers of adults for confirmation. Many of the latter had spent long lives in ignorance and consequent neglect of their duties ; others were converts. Several receptions took place ; one was noticed as follows :

“ The ceremony was the most striking and imposing we ever beheld. His lordship was attended by many clergymen from the London chapels. . . . At the sound of the convent bell the nuns were seen to enter by the convent door which opens into the church. . . . The candidate was young and beautiful ; her dress was very handsome and well arranged in everything becoming a Christian lady. She seemed perfectly collected and in full knowledge of the part she was enacting. If the countenance be an index of the interior we feel convinced she was really happy. Trinity Church is well adapted for rendering the ceremonies of our holy religion effective. Its elevated altar and spacious sanctuary, all seen by every individual within its walls, gave to all present a full view of the grand and brilliant spectacle. . . . The assembled spectators,

many of whom were Protestants, looked on with breathless silence, and a religious reverence seemed to take possession of every one present. The bishop's discourse was heard throughout the spacious church. He took his text from the seventy-second Psalm : 'Thou hast held me by my right hand, and by Thy will Thou hast conducted me, and with glory Thou hast received me,' and confined his address to the novice kneeling before him. It is consoling to reflect on the immense good this holy Sisterhood does and its great success in Bermondsey, and we are credibly informed that neither church nor convent is a fraction in debt, and that the latter has secured sufficient funds for its perpetuity."

Simplicity reigned henceforth at the toilettes of the postulants. Plain white silk or satin, lace and flowers, all of which could afterwards be devoted to sanctuary uses, was the richest costume allowed. The *Morning Herald*, describing a reception May 2, 1842, notices that "the novitiates," Miss Baxter and Miss Kellet, were dressed in embroidered muslin and wore chaplets of white roses as the head-dress. The same authority (Tory) adds that during a very affecting discourse by the bishop on the text, "Every one that hath left houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive a hundred-fold, and shall inherit life everlasting," the young ladies "showed no signs of agitation, nor did their countenances betray any symptoms of reluctance, but, on the contrary, appeared to be lighted up by an expression of enthusiastic feeling."

Father Butler was considered in a dying state when Mother McAuley bade him farewell, but God was pleased to raise him up again to watch over the Sisterhood he so fondly cherished. He completed all conventual arrangements, supplied everything required, and was ever thinking how he could best promote the spiritual and temporal welfare of his little flock.

The holy mother left a special blessing on Bermondsey. The room she occupied is now a sacristy, opening on the new chapel. It was in this room Mother Clare died. The Sisters wished that a spot so sacred to them should become, as it were, part of the sanctuary. The devotedness of this Sisterhood to the poor was wonderful. "You little know," writes J. Spencer Northcote, "what is being wrought in our own day and in this very country by Catholic self-devotion. You have no idea how much has been done by . . . a religious Sisterhood . . . working in the very depths of London poverty." * Since then many eloquent Protestant writers have told us what the English poor are —no perfume of poesy or divine philosophy about *them*; heathens, in fact, though unversed in the finer subtleties of unbelief and incapable of understanding agnostic or positivist, or eclectic tendencies; in rural places hardly superior in intelligence to the animals they guide; in factory districts and the crowded alleys of great cities beneath the Esquimaux in civilization; reaching a degree of degradation impossible in a Catholic country, for no man, woman, or child who knows the catechism and receives the sacraments can ever be utterly debased or lack some degree of intelligence.

* *The Fourfold Difficulties of Anglicanism*, etc., 1846.

CHAPTER VII.

TERRIBLE VISITATION OF TYPHUS—MARTYRS OF CHARITY.

Continued Illness of the Foundress—Letter—Bishop Griffiths seeks to prolong Mother M. Clare's stay—Bishop Murphy fond of Books and Nuns—His Friendship for Bermondsey and Father Peter—His Death—Bishop Griffiths wants more Sisters—The Foundress makes another Sacrifice—Three of the Sisters attacked by Fever—Sister M. Ursula O'Connor—A beautiful End—Letter of Condolence from Bishop Griffiths—Sister M. Scholastica Burroughs—Her Death—Grief of Mother M. Clare—Letters—"His Ways not our Ways"—Acceptable Sympathy—Lines—Vacant Places filled—Severe Winter—Parlors crowded with Converts—A Sister publishes a Work of Instruction.

MOTHER MCAULEY reached Dublin, January 14, 1840, quite broken in health from the privations and fatigues of her recent mission. On the 30th she wrote to Carlow :

"I have been confined to bed since my return ; not down-stairs till yesterday. Then my old mouth complaint kept me on infant's diet for eleven days."

The holy mother was never seriously ill before. The mouth complaint was an occasional inflammation of the gums, more inconvenient than dangerous. The sacrifice of her life seems to have been the great cross destined to consolidate her Institute in England. Her remaining twenty-two months of life were months of martyrdom.

"My poor Sister M. Clare," she writes, "is superior in London till the 20th of August. They will be anxious to keep her, if Bishop Murphy consents. The bishop of

London is greatly pleased with her ; he said he never saw so much maturity in so young a person, and that she had judgment in her countenance. She is, thank God ! perfectly indifferent as to where or how she shall be." On June 30, 1840, she writes from Galway :

"Thank God the Sisters here are comfortable before I leave them ! . . . Bishop Murphy has written to Sister M. Clare to say he will go for her in August, though he adds : 'Your place is well supplied.' The bishop of London wishes her to stay another year. 'Let their lordships settle it between them,' she writes ; 'I feel no anxiety.'"

But the holy foundress felt much anxiety. "If I had it as I wished," she wrote, "I would not have left her in London after myself, since she was not to remain. She has already been left there too long; a change hereafter will be dangerous; but it will be a lesson for other foundations. God will direct all to His greater glory." Events proved these words prophetic. So far was Bishop Griffiths from consenting to Mother M. Clare's return that when Bishop Murphy went to London to conduct her home, he and Father Butler representing the still unsettled state of the convent, Bishop Murphy allowed her to remain some time longer, and even promised to use his influence with Mother McAuley to persuade her to lend some professed members to Bermondsey. Father Butler's zeal for the religious state endeared him to Dr. Murphy, whom Pope Gregory XVI. designated "the bishop fond of books and nuns." Whenever he came to London he visited Bermondsey with singular pleasure, and always spoke with warm affection of his "dear Father Peter." On the 12th of October, 1840, Mother Catherine wrote :

"I had a most interesting letter from the bishop of London asking for two professed Sisters to forward some views he does not fully explain. I suspect they design to open another house in a more central situation, though this has not been unequivocally stated. However, he

asked the favor so much in the name of God that it was impossible to refuse, though most distressing to comply. Drs. Butler and Maddock arrived here to conduct them to London. I saw my poor Sisters on board, and, though the cabin was full of high-toned persons, the good little stewardess at once recognized us and said most triumphantly: 'This is *The Queen*, that you went in to found a convent in London.' I feel quite deserted this morning. May God bless them and receive the offering to His greater glory!"

Whatever projects the bishop entertained had to be laid aside for the present. Three of the Sisters caught a most malignant fever from a stricken family. The first attacked was Sister M. Ursula O'Connor. On the 21st of October, the Feast of St. Ursula, she received the last sacraments. It was soon apparent that she was beyond the reach of human aid.

But little is to be said of this young martyr of charity. Mary O'Connor had from childhood ardently desired to consecrate herself to God. She joined the ladies destined for the Order of Mercy in Bermondsey in 1838, and during the year and a half she remained at the Old Chapel-House she edified all by her meekness, zeal, and assiduity in the schools and among the sick. Her novitiate was distinguished for entire obedience. So great was her charity that she was never known to say a word that could give the least pain to others. She delighted to have the poorest things allotted to her use, and to serve all was her pleasure. In her illness she showed a degree of resignation and joy which surprised the physician. For several days she would not suffer the crucifix to be taken out of her hand. When the bishop visited her she exclaimed: "O my lord! how could you come to such a sinner as I?" It was a great comfort for her to see him and receive his blessing. To a priest in whom she had much confidence she said: "Sunday [All Saints'] will be the day of my profession."

And on that glorious feast her holy soul passed away. Describing the last scenes, "Geraldine" wrote: "Her death was triumphant in faith, hope, and charity. A little before her departure she exclaimed: 'O my God! Thou knowest I have never refused Thee anything. Call me now, and receive me into Thy bosom.'"*

Bishop Griffiths wrote the following letter of condolence to Mother M. Clare:

"DEAR REVEREND MOTHER: I seize the first opportunity to congratulate with you and all the dear Sisters on this first martyr of charity offered to Almighty God. Greater love than this no man hath, that one lay down his life for his friend. Sister M. Ursula exercised this great charity, and is now, I trust, enjoying its infinite reward from her benevolent Saviour, who has promised to recompense even a cup of cold water given in His name. I have offered the adorable Sacrifice in thanksgiving for this especial blessing bestowed on her, and likewise in expiation of any imperfection which may have accompanied the sacrifice of herself.

"Though the temporary separation be painful to her Sisters, they will not fail to thank God for this greatest of blessings vouchsafed to their house; it is, I hope, a pledge of future graces. Mention my kindest regards and most fervent prayers for every blessing to all the Sisters, especially the two invalids; and, if your duties allow you time, I shall be happy to receive a letter from you by Monday's post, which will, I hope and pray, contain a favorable account of the sick Sisters and of your own health.

"Believe me, with sincere gratitude and respect, dear reverend mother,

"Yours very faithfully in Christ,

"✠ THOMAS GRIFFITHS."

* Father Butler bore a filial love to the old bishop, on whose death, Maunday Thursday, 1847, he showed the sincerity of his friendship by having many Masses offered for his soul. As soon as the rubrics permitted he had a grand *Dirge* and *Requiem*, for which, at his request, the Sisters supplied the music—a touching tribute to a bishop who on his death-bed specially asked that the Sisters of Mercy would attend his obsequies. This they deemed it a privilege to do, though they rarely attend any public function in a church, unless it adjoin the convent.

Sister M. Ursula died on the 1st of November and was buried on the 4th. In five days Sister M. Scholastica followed. Her death was most holy. The bishop came several times to console her, and Father Butler was unremitting in his attentions. Sister M. Scholastica had endeared herself to all by her piety and fervor. She was forty years old, and had spent much of her life in religious houses on the Continent as a parlor boarder. She would have entered religion sooner, but she found no Order to suit her until she heard of the Sisters of Mercy; besides, she wished to reserve her labors for her own country. She had a particular devotion to the holy angels, and delighted to instruct poor children. Our Divine Master was pleased to accept her good-will, and reward according to her heart's desires.

On the 14th of October Mother M. Clare had written to the holy foundress announcing the safe arrival of the Sisters, and thanking her for sending such truly good religious, well acquainted with all the duties and very capable of discharging them efficiently. Everything was progressing most happily. But now followed letters announcing the sickness and death of these promising novices. Heretofore the cross had not been planted sufficiently deep to render the foundation permanent.

This succession of trials completely prostrated poor Mother Clare, but she was sustained by prayer and by the consoling letters of the foundress. The following passages occur in letters to Carlow about this time :

"We fancied Sisters M. de Sales and Xavier were going for some additional good work; but God has arrested the progress, no doubt to give us a greater contempt of earthly plans and more animation to work with increasing fervor, seeing that life and death are so intimately united. I have just got a third letter from my poor Sister M. Clare, who says: 'Picture us to yourself going to the vault with one dear Sister, Wednesday, and another the following Satur-

day. The third remains in a very doubtful state. They caught this malignant fever attending a poor family [a widow and her eight children], all of whom recovered. My poor Sister is in deep affliction. She says, 'My heart is gone.' You would not know her writing.

"I look forward to their greater progress now, to show that His ways are not our ways, nor His thoughts like our thoughts. This is the way of God's providence. All will go on well now, to show that what we consider a drawback will be followed by greater progress. My poor Sisters M. Xavier and De Sales have been of the greatest assistance. What a scene of sorrow we sent them to!"

The greatest sympathy was shown the Bermondsey nuns in their sorrow and bereavement. Strangers and non-Catholics paid them several visits of condolence and offered their services when they could be of any assistance. A person, whose name never transpired, handed some original lines to the portress, from which we extract a few. It is scarcely necessary to add that only the kindness and sympathy of the writer could give value to such "poetry":

"Death entered the convent—two victims were fated;
They sickened, they sank, ere they laid down to die,
Round their beds the sad Sisterhood kneeling awaited
The last look, the last word, the last long-drawn sigh.

"King of terrors! thy summons was sudden and fearful;
It startled us, thrilled us, and filled us with dread.
Our souls are still dark, our eyes are still tearful:
Five suns—a brief span—and two spirits are fled."

God abundantly rewarded the resignation with which His servants bore their great bereavement. Four subjects entered almost immediately, and all was prosperous as before. But the cross never departed; whatever they undertook was marked by this Saving Sign. The winter 1840-41 was exceptionally severe. "I never saw such frost," wrote the foundress from Birr, January 12, 1841;

“the cold is intense—every place covered with snow. Sister M. Clare says they have a more severe winter in London than has been for a century. What sailors call ‘the white swan’ (a cloud of snow floating in the air) has been seen off Winchester. She expects two Sisters immediately, daughters of the principal merchants in Portugal.” Despite the severity of the weather, the community continued healthy, and their labors in the schools and among the sick were ever on the increase. Halls and parlors were crowded with converts and others wanting instruction; and this duty left the nuns little or no leisure. To facilitate the instruction of poor children Sister M. Clare wrote and published that most useful little work entitled *The First-Communicants*, which she dedicated to Father Butler. In the form of a story, the principal actors being the nuns and their pupils, a short course of instruction on the truths of religion and preparation for the sacraments is pleasantly and ingeniously given. The book is invaluable for the teachers and pupils of First-Communion classes. Another work by the same, *Tales of the Sacraments*, is still more interesting. These little books should never be wanting in a children’s library. They aid Sisters of Mercy, in particular, in fulfilling their holy vow to instruct the ignorant.

CHAPTER VIII.

LADY BARBARA EYRE QUASI-FOUNDRESS OF BERMONDSEY CONVENT.

First Sister of Mercy received and professed in England—Mother M. Clare tries her Vocation severely—She is not allowed the slightest Privilege—Relatives intercede—The Foundress inflexible—Strong Vocation—Contrast—Perfection with which Sister M. de Sales Eyre practised Poverty—Her Labors—Presentiment—No Rapine in the Holocaust—Last Days of this illustrious Lady—Her Death—Laid under the High Altar—Character—Her great Humility and Retiredness—Beautiful Deaths—Sister M. Elizabeth Ellerker—Edifying Reminiscences—Louisa Birch—Smallpox—Sister M. Ignatius—Sister M. Teresa Holden—Sister M. Agnes Cunningham—Sister M. Placida—Sister M. Gonzaga—Duchess of Leeds begs the Sisters to attend her Husband—The Duke abjures his Errors—Attention to Benefactors—The Sisters attend the Marchioness of Wellesley at the Request of Bishop Grant.

ON the 22d of April, 1841, Sister M. de Sales Eyre made her vows, being the first Sister of Mercy ever professed in England. As this lady was in some sense the foundress of the Bermondsey convent, we shall continue the sketch of her life.

Although as superior of the little band that awaited the coming of the Sisters of Mercy, and as a postulant, Sister M. de Sales had given every satisfaction, yet the mother-superior tried her vocation very severely, and continually warned her not to think of engaging herself by the vows of the Order without fully weighing the momentous consequences. When she prepared to enter on distant retreat, in February, 1841, these warnings were repeated with increased solemnity; Mother M. Clare besought her not to allow any human feeling to lead her on, unless she was firmly determined to adhere to the Rules of the Order and

the customs of the house, and even pressed her to have regard to her delicate health, which could not be so carefully treated as in her own luxurious home. The only effect of all these representations was to confirm her good purposes. There was some question as to legacies which, as Lady Barbara Eyre, she had long been accustomed to receive and disburse ; but Mother McAuley required that the strictest rules of poverty should be observed, nor would she allow the slightest privilege to her any more than to the lowliest member that ever begged admission at the convent-gate. Being the first titled lady that had entered an English convent for centuries, no longer young, and in delicate health, some of her relatives thought the arrangements rather strict for an earl's daughter. To say she did not feel them so would scarcely be true, but her vocation was of the strongest. When Mother M. Clare expressed anxiety to Father Butler, who had been her director for years and knew her thoroughly, he said with energy : " If you were to turn Lady Barbara out of the convent I am convinced she would lie down at the gate and die there." " Lady Barbara is professed at last an humble Sister of Mercy. She found it hard to relinquish all, but no other terms would be agreed to," wrote the foundress.

Certainly the subsequent life of this religious derives much lustre from the contrast between " the pomp and circumstance " she renounced to become, as far as she could, the last and least in God's house. She had hard interior struggles, especially regarding poverty and the spirit of detachment ; but under the pressure of grace she relinquished first one object, then another, till at length her poverty surpassed that of the humblest lay Sister. Everything but absolute necessaries she put from her ; and of necessaries, when a choice was allowed, she selected the poorest and meanest. She renounced not only the visits of seculars, but all correspondence with her nearest rela-

tions; for the smallest matters she coveted the blessing of obedience; and, despite her delicate health, she endeavored to assist at the most laborious duties of the Institute. She gave religious instruction in the schools, crowded with the children of the lowliest, and she visited and consoled the sick poor with great devotedness. The closing two years she had a presentiment, or at least a very lively impression, that her death was not distant; and her spiritual *attrait*, always subject to obedience, was to select practices and spiritual reading referring to the last awful passage. She had made a great sacrifice to become a great saint, and she would never allow her mind to be turned from that goal. When the first bell sounded she failed not to respond, no matter how wearily the night had passed. She suffered much during several years from sleeplessness. Faithful to every duty, she practised many mortifications, and continued to go on with ever-increasing fervor till her sufferings forced her to seek remedies.

The natural pride of Lady Barbara's character had led her to supply herself with an immense amount of clothing, that after entering the convent she might never have to ask for any. This her superior affected not to notice. But by degrees, as she became more enlightened, all was relinquished; she would bring now one thing, now another, to give it up, until she was divested of all. Mother M. Clare used to say that she was obliged to be very cautious of what she said in her presence, for after every instruction Sister M. de Sales was sure to find something to give up. This high-born lady utterly renounced all. No beggar's wardrobe was more scant; and no religious of any Order ever died more really poor and detached from earthly things. She had a great love of holy recollection, and at length, to live for God alone, declined to receive the visits of her dearest friends or correspond with them, contenting herself with recommending them to God daily, perhaps hourly.

When Mother M. Clare told her she could not survive much longer she received the announcement with gratitude and joy, and turned her whole attention to prepare for the last sacraments. Most of her time was occupied in prayer, but if unable to pray she would kiss the crucifix with loving devotion or press to her heart the rosary, which through love of the Blessed Virgin she always kept at hand. Her sufferings were excruciating; violent pain in the head scarcely ever left her. A few days before her death it was discovered that she had a tumor in the arm, which, eating into the bone, must have caused her intense agony, yet she never spoke of it. On Palm Sunday she heard Mass in the chapel for the last time. She often said to Mother M. Clare: "I am equally willing to live or die; let all be as God pleases." She lingered till April 13 (1849), and in sentiments of love and resignation passed sweetly to her Heavenly Spouse. Four days later she was laid in the vaults of Bermondsey church* with her religious Sisters who had preceded her to heaven. Often she spoke of the comfort it gave her to reflect that she would be buried under the high altar of that church of which she had been a munificent benefactress.

Sister M. de Sales Eyre was deeply regretted. "She was a most amiable person," writes one of her companions. "No one would have guessed she had ever been more than others in the world; not a word to that effect ever escaped her lips. I loved her, and I revered her as a saint. She was always most kind to me. Throughout her religious life she was most retiring. When I was appointed for the Chelsea foundation I went to bid the dear invalid good-by, and I shall never forget her last fond embrace and farewell."

Many holy deaths occurred in dear old Bermondsey, and

* The spacious vaults of Bermondsey church were used as a burial-place for the deceased Sisters till the passing of an act of Parliament which declared there should be no more burials in London; since that period the deceased of Bermondsey convent repose in St. Mary's Cemetery, Kensal Green, about seven miles distant.

all grades and classes were represented in its contributions to "the community in heaven." In 1843 died Sister Elizabeth Ellerker, a postulant, a fervent and useful member. The resolutions she had written in the previous retreat were shown to the bishop, who characterized them as "the resolutions of an angelic mind." Her sweet, fair countenance was so radiant with angelic innocence and purity that one felt sure her baptismal robe was still unsullied. An only child, it had cost her much to leave parents who idolized her, but, convinced that God called her to the religious life, she courageously followed the invitation to leave all and give herself entirely to Him ; nor did He suffer Himself to be outdone in generosity.

Other dear Sisters followed. One during her last illness strove to keep from any conversation that might hinder her uniting her heart more closely to God. Another was much devoted to poor children and employed herself indefatigably in all that was conducive to their welfare. Active and earnest in the duties of the Institute, she never sought rest or exemption. Another, whose great charity endeared her to all, was particularly remarkable for regularity and exactness in her duties. Another, in spite of constant ill-health, was observant of every regulation, loved the poor with the tenderness of a true Sister of Mercy, and never was tired of helping them. Another, remarkable for great piety from childhood, was a model of every religious virtue in the convent.

Sister M. Agnes Birch, whom we have already mentioned as Governor Holwell's granddaughter, had been from childhood eager to give herself to God and His poor, and waited impatiently for the establishment of the London house. She was examined and accepted by the foundress herself. Her life in religion was exact even to scrupulosity. She had great talent for music and drawing, was conversant with several languages, ancient and modern, and had much facility for composing and translating. Yet

she loved to be employed in the meanest work, and was never so happy as when charged with the duties usually allotted to lay Sisters.

The cross of sickness tried the community severely. In 1844 three of the Sisters caught among the poor that virulent type of smallpox known as the black confluent. But, after untold suffering, it pleased God that all three recovered.

In April, 1860, Sister M. Ignatius passed away. Being delicate, she was unable to work steadily at the duties of the Institute, but her fingers were never idle. During her long illness painting and illumination, in which she excelled, became her chief occupation. She had always desired to go to God on the Feast of the Resurrection, and just at the rising of the paschal sun she died so calmly that those who knelt around were not aware that the spirit had fled. In 1864 Sister M. Teresa Holden was summoned to her heavenly home, after a life of humble labor in God's service and continual prayer. Her chief devotion during her illness was to renew her vows, which she did almost incessantly. Her death was full of peace and joy, with surprising self-possession. She often told the Sisters who visited her that she would pray for them in heaven. Bishop Grant wrote of her: "She was very quiet and peaceful in conscience. I do not think she ever lost her baptismal innocence."

Sister M. Agnes Cunningham, though stricken with consumption while a novice, struggled on faithfully at her duties for more than five years. She had charge of the Pension School, and endeared herself to the children and their parents by her kindness and earnestness. Through her instruction several families were won to the Catholic faith.

Another of these holy deceased, Sister M. Placida, though naturally of a proud and hasty temper, would humble herself and ask pardon for the least offence or failing. Her unvarying fidelity to every duty, and her strict attention to silence at the prescribed times, caused her to be

regarded as a model. Nor would she willingly lose a moment; when not teaching she diligently wrought with her needle for the altar or the poor.

Another sweet Sister, when unable for active duty, employed herself in printing, illuminating, or embroidering for the altar, in all of which she was an adept. During her last illness she was most exact never to omit her spiritual exercises. On the day of her death she made her usual meditations.

All these Sisters had imbibed from the foundress a special love and reverence for the poor of Jesus Christ, but the poor did not entirely monopolize them. In May, 1859, the Duchess of Leeds begged Mother M. Clare to send Sisters to attend her husband, the duke, then in failing health, her grace hoping that their prayers and attentions might attract him to the truth. The fervent wishes of this "believing wife" were granted: a week before his death he abjured the errors in which he had been reared and became a member of the true Church. The Sisters who soothed the last days of this nobleman were edified at his piety and resignation; he regretted that his conversion had occurred only at the eleventh hour.

Sometimes the nuns were summoned to the death-bed of a benefactor. In May, 1860, Bishop Grant entreated them to nurse a pious gentleman near London. After his death they remained several days to comfort his aged mother. Of this household the bishop wrote: "It is one of the best families I ever knew, long famous for generous acts of religion and charity." In gratitude these good people bestowed many gifts on the convent, and for years brought the choicest flowers of their conservatory to adorn the altar for exposition. In 1853, at the request of Bishop Grant, to whom her ladyship had appealed for their assistance, the Sisters nursed the Marchioness of Wellesley in her last illness, remaining with her till her holy death.
—R.I.P.

CHAPTER IX.

BERMONDSEY CONVENT NOT SUSTAINED BY THE ARM OF FLESH.

The Convent in a Springtide—Fish caught in the Refectory—A Horse walking through the Corridors—Bermondsey Convent to-day—Bundles of clean Rags—Schools—Parents converted by their Children—Mother M. Clare leaves London—Innovations—Enclosure not necessary to the religious Character—Eccentricities—Funny attempts to create Uniformity—Back to back—Too many earthly Advantages—Complaints—Some rather wear a Hair-Shirt than clean out à Grate; rather pray than dress a Cancer—Works of Mercy generally more mortifying than other Penances—Bad Smells, loathsome Diseases, more disagreeable than the Discipline—No Perseverance in personal Work for the Poor without great Love for God—Anecdote—A Mania for Change—The Devil transformed into an Angel of Light—Peculiarity mistaken for Inspiration—Charity set in order—Extraordinary Abilities of Mother M. Clare—Her Forbearance—Sister—goes to the Trappistines—Subsequent Career—Bishop Baines—A Warning of the Dangers of the Mystic Life—Sudden Death of our Recluse.

MANY entered Bermondsey novitiate in its earlier years, and few failed to persevere. Never was any locality in greater need of Sisters of Mercy. But in the exterior there was little to attract subjects. The convent looked like a prison. It is so near the Thames that the springtides which periodically occasion so much distress do not always spare it. In 1852 the water was two feet deep in the kitchen and other apartments of the lowest story, and fish were caught in the refectory. Milk was brought by a man on horseback, and while he was delivering his freight the animal, getting tired of disporting himself in the water, walked into the convent, to the great discomfiture of the portress and the amusement of the rest. Despite its draw-

backs, never was convent more deeply loved by its own inmates or more truly revered by other Convents of Mercy. Save that the house has been renewed and enlarged, there is little change in its aspect since the foundress looked her last upon it forty-three years ago. A recent visitor writes :

“At ten we crossed Blackfriars Bridge—and a fine one it is—and at ten and a quarter we were in Bermondsey Convent. It is just what dear Mother McAuley described it so many years ago—gloomy as you please, the windows being high, the passages narrow ; even the late additions are in the same style. We went out to the adjoining church, and I counted the steps she describes in her account of Lady Barbara Eyre’s reception. Many of the first Sisters are buried in the vault under the high altar.

“From the infirmary I heard the Children’s Mass at half-past nine. The window overlooks the altar. The boys occupy one aisle and the girls the other, the nave being filled with grown persons. I saw the Sisters arranging the children in their places, opening the books of the smaller ones ; when all was ready each took her place near the end of the church. The children sang appropriate English hymns at several parts of the Mass. We were shown a manuscript meditation-book copied by our holy mother during her novitiate. The Sisters had it well bound in crimson morocco, with gilt ornaments, and a sheet of fine paper between each pair of leaves to preserve it. I was shown a small quantity of her hair. A dear old Sister told me she once had a great deal of it, and other things belonging to the foundress, but foolishly destroyed them through mistaken notions of detachment.

“Besides the choir opening into the church, a cold enough place, there is a private choir in which the Blessed Sacrament is reserved and Mass said once a week. There is a cloth curtain in addition to the ordinary door at the entrance of the choir. In every room there we found pic-

tures of Mother McAuley and Mother Clare. There is a dear old Sister, considered a saint, who knew the foundress. I thought she ought to know which portrait bore most resemblance to her, and she pointed out one evidently taken from the *American Life*. A large oil-painting representing her with her eyes raised towards heaven is very striking.

“The schools are good and well filled—almost too full. The infants, one hundred and sixty in number, sang and clapped with spirit—some of them mere babies.”

Mother M. Clare was a great lover of holy poverty, in which her children imitate her. A recent visitor noticed their clothing to be of the poorest description allowable, and so patched that it might be described as bundles of clean rags. Some would consider it carried to extremes. Time being the most precious of all commodities, it does not seem altogether praiseworthy to spend the three hours daily allotted to spiritual lectures and recreation darning a pocket-handkerchief that originally cost twopence, or a pair of stockings that cost scarcely more; especially in a convent where there is always so much artistic work to be done for the altar. But “let every spirit praise the Lord,” and let us all pray that no greater defect may ever be found in any convent than an excess of holy poverty.

The Bermondsey Sisters visit Guy's and St. Thomas' Hospitals, and the workhouse, and the sick poor of an extensive neighborhood. Their adult instruction classes, consisting largely of converts, have always been very large. The thoroughness of the religious instruction imparted in the Bermondsey schools has often been remarked. Many of the pupils have become little apostles in their humble homes. One, after several rebuffs, induced her mother to attend to her religious duties after thirty years' neglect. Another, though beaten by her father for begging him to go to Mass on Sundays, did not desist till she brought her whole family in triumph to church. Her parents had not

knelt before God's altar since their marriage. But conversions through the little ones are of frequent occurrence in connection with the schools of the Institute all the world over.

The time allotted for Mother M. Clare's stay, though prolonged again and again, passed all too quickly. On June 14, 1841, Father Butler escorted her to Dublin, to the intense regret of her little community. Bishop Murphy met her at the *Alma Mater* and insisted she should come home immediately, but was prevailed on to allow her to remain a few days to confer with reverend mother, who wrote June 19: "Our old beloved companion, Sister M. Clare, leaves this on Monday, accompanied by Dr. Butler, who goes to Carlow on Dr. Taylor's invitation. She avails herself of this opportunity of visiting you. The house in London is well established, thank God!"

Yet, as the holy foundress predicted, a change in the government of that house proved dangerous. But God watched over its interests. And though the new incumbent was the medium through which innovations were attempted, the subjects remained faithful to their vocation as Sisters of Mercy, and endeavored to maintain the spirit of the Rule, which had just received the sanction of the Vicar of Christ. Ere long letters came which alarmed the foundress, who wrote to a mutual friend: "Sister — is given to extremes in matters of piety; that is her greatest error." Again, she regrets the necessity of "taking down some of Sister —'s self-importance with regard to opinion."

Duties incompatible with the Rule were gradually introduced. As though enclosure, which is comparatively of recent date, were a condition necessary to the religious character,* it was proposed that the members who felt a

* Pope Gregory XIII. declares that simple *perpetual* vows are sufficient to constitute those who make them real religious; they are as binding on the conscience, as acceptable to God, and as meritorious as solemn vows.

more than ordinary *attrait* for contemplation should live between their cells and the choir ; while the others, though living in community and bound by the essential vows of religion, were to be pious workers rather than real religious. This naturally became the subject of unfriendly strictures ; but the new superior seemed indifferent to hostile criticism. Mother McAuley's suggestions, however delicately conveyed, were unheeded. Was not the voice of God superior to the voice of a human being, however holy, and were not the changes our favored friend proposed "the results of direct inspiration" ? It was immaterial that all the direct superiors, as bishop, foundress, confessor, deeply versed as they were in the theory and practice of high spirituality, thought "the improvements" came from an enthusiastic and rather restless temperament, and had no more claim to divine origin than has mortal sin.

Once private inspiration displaced the Rule, no one knew what would come next. Stories got abroad which were probably untrue, or at least greatly exaggerated. Our new official was good, but thoroughly unfit to govern. Her eccentricities increased. It was said that, finding some members tall and some short, and her zeal for uniformity in externals not being able to endure ups and downs in the rows of Sisters as they sat at office or lecture, she wished the shorter ladies to put a sort of padding under their veils to raise themselves to the height of their taller companions. To induce the community to be more recollected and prayerful at meals she had the refectory tables placed close to the walls, that the nuns, sitting back to back, should never be distracted by an involuntary glance at a *vis-à-vis*. Sometimes a novice was going on very well, but an inspiration came and her place knew her no more.

In truth, Bermondsey had too many earthly advantages. It is doubtful if any convent ever equalled it in the number of subjects of rank, wealth, talent, and influence that

crowded to its cloisters. Humiliation was necessary that these gifts should bear fruit in patience, and it came. For some time Father Butler could not see things as they were. Changes were put before him so plausibly that he deemed them improvements. A London priest having written to Mother McAuley that the Bermondsey ladies, however excellent in other respects, were not all Sisters of Mercy, she begged Father Butler to tell her how matters stood. The good priest replied that nothing could be more satisfactory than the administration of the convent, and counselled her to ease her mind on the subject. But she had earlier and better information. In August, 1841, she wrote to Sister M. de Sales White :

“ We shall leave this house so badly provided when going to Birmingham that we thought it would be necessary to get you and dear Sister M. Xavier home before we left ; but I am now satisfied to wait till my return, though, indeed, I see the necessity as clearly as those who do not deem it prudent to wait so long. But we will get you both so much improved by the good example you will have had, and the *active practice of our duties*, that you will soon help us to get all in order.”

Mother McAuley's ideal of religious poverty included *love of labor*, and here is the rock upon which so much false spirituality is wrecked. Perhaps there are few superiors who have not found subjects who would rather wear a hair-shirt or penitential bracelet than clean out a grate or sweep the refectory ; who prefer prayer and recollection *out of ordinary times* to cleaning the rooms of the sick poor or dressing their sores. The works of mercy in which nine-tenths of the Sisters of Mercy have always been engaged, as instructing the ignorant, visiting and tending the sick poor, are in themselves more mortifying than most penances. Nature would gladly exchange them for disciplines and armlets. To commune with God in a beautiful chapel, where every decoration pleases the

æsthetic eye, is easier to nature than to kneel beside the bed of a patient whose surroundings are redolent of filth and disease. A Protestant Sister said to the writer in the St. Louis prison: "Are you satisfied that I should come among the prisoners and into the homes of the poor?" "Oh! yes," was the reply, "provided you do not tamper with their faith. For either you will soon give up *personal* work among the sick poor or you will become a Catholic. Without grace no one can persevere in these labors." *

Mother McAuley thought that those of her children who went freely among the sick poor, and encountered with a holy joy the fetid atmosphere of hospital and prison, were nearer and dearer to God than the few whose *attraits* kept them comfortably at home engaged in self-imposed devotions. Bishop Griffiths, after advising with her, said emphatically: "I do not want any change." But the inspirations would come. Often one contradicted the other; but no matter, the last could be obeyed. There was a sad falling-off in the respect and affection with which Mother McAuley's words were formerly received. The present ruler did not invite or permit interference. The holy foundress might do well for other houses, but she could not understand the peculiar circumstances of this, nor would she see that "the inspirations" came from above. A mania for change seized the Bermondsey head: to-day she wanted perpetual adoration, to-morrow a different religious costume. On the vexed question of direction she had peculiar views, and her whole method of procedure was at variance with the sweet simplicity inculcated by the holy foundress.

Very soon Father Butler saw that the inspiration to keep the Rule in its letter and spirit is the most valuable a religious can receive, and that any "inspiration" of a contrary

* The alternative did not answer our hopes, or rather our wishes. For soon after the lady-superior was led, not figuratively, to the nuptial altar by the brother-director, and as it took all in the treasury to provide a trousseau worthy of the occasion, the other ladies returned to their friends; another episode of Protestant nuns closed, and the "Sisters" were seen no more.

tendency is likely to come from the land where no order but everlasting horror dwelleth. In the mind and soul of the foundress charity was set in order. Anything against rule and established custom was a disorder that must be removed. But while stigmatizing certain things as subversive of her Institute, she practised and counselled the utmost forbearance. She was tenderly attached to her first English house, for it had cost her dear, and she loved to prophesy its future success.

In the beginning there was too much of the arm of flesh ; certain props had to be removed, that all might know it was not sustained by the titles, or the genius, or the wealth of its members, but by the almighty arm of God. Those once most relied upon fell away, and good came out of evil. Now, indeed, it was plain that the foundation was the work of God, otherwise it could never have withstood such shocks.

Father Butler's eyes were fully opened at last. The lady about whom we have been speaking acted strangely enough in writing to the Trappistines to seek admission among them. The answer came directed to "The Superior, Convent of Mercy." There was then no letter-box for the convent, and the letter went to the presbytery. As Father Butler was sometimes addressed in that way, the letter might be for him ; he chanced to open it, and thus came to the knowledge of the intended departure. He at once went to Dr. Griffiths, and it was agreed that he should repair to Cork and beg Bishop Murphy to allow Mother Clare to return. She returned December 10, 1841,* and in less than twenty-four hours things were as the foundress had left them—a difficult task, and perhaps Mother M.

* Mother M. Clare never returned to Ireland. She devoted herself heart and soul to the conversion of England. On March 17, 1870, she describes with great gusto the honors paid to St. Patrick in Bermondsey : Triduo, Benediction every night, sermon by Father Clare, S.J., "all our children decked with Patrick's Crosses, exerting their lungs singing round and round the garden in a grand procession with banners and pictures of St. Patrick, and our foundress too!"

Clare was the only one who could accomplish it. Her powers of governing were great—equal, probably, to greater occasions than ever exercised them. She could have governed a kingdom, and had she been a royal heroine the whole of her administration, or even the bulk of it, would never have been left to a prime minister. Nevertheless she was the most womanly of women. Her colossal force of mind, united to a frail body, was tempered by an exquisite tenderness. There was something essentially *royal* in her character, at once strong, firm, and sweet. The great effort of her life was to submit unreservedly to *grace*, and the best lesson she taught her children was constant fidelity to rule and observance.

Soon after Mother Clare's arrival Father Butler conducted our contemplative friend to a Trappist nunnery at Staplehill, Dorsetshire. Under a combination of circumstances of which we have never met an instance, such a transfer would be allowable. It was said—I know not on what authority, for all the actors in this drama have passed away—that she was encouraged by Bishop Baines to join the Trappistines and again to leave them, which she did in less than a year. She now tried to establish an Order combining works of charity and perpetual adoration, with the Benedictine Rule. Dr. Baines, himself a Benedictine, had a power of fascination which proved a dangerous gift. "Assent to his plans," says Cardinal Wiseman, "was the condition of being near him; any one that did not agree, or that ventured to suggest deliberation or provoke discussion, was soon at a distance. He isolated himself with his own genius, had no counsellor but himself, and . . . at last found himself alone, and fretted a noble heart to a solitary death."

The sudden death of Bishop Baines is said to have been a terrible shock to the poor lady, who expected to found a new Order under his patronage. But as one *fact* is worth a thousand assertions, his sending four ladies to Bermondsey

to make their novitiate, and then return with some experienced members to open a convent in Bristol, seems to prove that he preferred the Mercy Institute in its primitive simplicity to the conglomeration his ingenious penitent proposed. This eloquent prelate was among the earliest applicants in England for Sisters of Mercy.

Bishop Baines was found dead in his bed July 6, 1843, to the great consternation of his household. It is a curious coincidence that the lady so often alluded to was also found dead in her bed December 10, 1881. About a year previous she had been almost burnt to death, and was so dazed by the flames that she sat looking at them fixedly, unable to move. She started an Order in Rome, "Recluses * and Handmaids," for contemplation and action respectively, of which she constituted herself the lady-abbess. They removed to London Road, Southwark, after the death of Bishop Griffiths; but not succeeding, the projector "resigned all jurisdiction" to Dr. Grant and betook herself once more to the Continent. At Nice she endeavored to form another community under the modest title of *Les Dames Anglaises*, and advertised as a boarding-school.

Although Cardinals Acton and Fransoni, Abbé Gerbet, the king and queen of Naples, and other distinguished personages interested themselves for her, she was never able to succeed in any of her monastic projects, but she always led a holy life. There were those who believed her to be *non compos mentis*. Others thought her only extremely changeable and eccentric. It is remarkable that she always spoke of the foundress of the Sisters of Mercy as "the sainted Catherine McAuley," and affirmed that she had many visions of her immediate admission into glory.

* "The Recluses" were to make solemn vows, which made no difficulty when these ladies disbanded, as the Church can dispense the solemn as well as the simple for sufficient cause. The vows of all religious who do not vow enclosure are simple, as the Sacred Heart, the Good Shepherd, etc. Many also who do vow enclosure make simple vows, as the Carmelites in several countries, the Visitation nuns with a few exceptions, etc.

Let us hope that she erred in weakness rather than wilfulness, and though she has become, as she once feared, "a warning to fervent hearts of the hidden dangers of the mystic life," still we may well believe that God received her poor soul, so suddenly set free from the prison of her body on that cold December night, after a weary pilgrimage of over eighty-three years.—R.I.P.

CHAPTER X.

FOUNDATIONS—DEATH OF BISHOP GRIFFITHS.

English Catholics take to the new Order—Old Catholic Families well represented in it—First Convent founded from an English House—Benefactors of Chelsea Convent—Mother Clare's Trust in Providence—Incidents—Convent founded in Coventry—Branch at Gosford Green—The Godiva Processions—Convent at Brentwood built by Countess Tasker—Foundation at Bristol—Reception of Postulants—The only Sister of Mercy who entered the Nineties, Miss Beauchamp—Mother M. Cecilia Marmion visits Bermondsey—Mother M. Clare unable to supply the Demands made on her—Last Visit of Bishop Griffiths—Threatened Blindness—He chooses the Bermondsey Sisters to nurse him—Edifying Details—His Promise to Mother M. Clare—She asks him to accept her Services as Jesus did those of Mary and Joseph—She consoles him—He desires to enter Heaven on the Assumption—Sacred Relics—His Death—His last Thoughts revert to his early Friend, Mother McAuley.

IN proportion to the number of Catholics the Mercy Institute progressed as rapidly in England as in any other country, but it was never able, even with help from Ireland, to supply a tithe of the demand made upon it. Bishops and priests, unable to procure branches or wait for them, were obliged to invite other Orders to undertake the management of their schools and institutions. The English Catholics took directly to the new Sisterhood. In many places they were the first religious seen since the Reformation. Convents multiplied rapidly, and in them were found representatives of the old Catholic families—Mostyns, Cliffords, Petres, Chudleighs, Gerards, Blounts, Vavasours, etc., with a fair sprinkling of converts.

The first convent from an English house was founded at Chelsea, April 1, 1845. It was projected by a holy *émigré*, Abbé Voyaux de Franous, who prayed that God would

send nuns to take care of his poor children, and when he died bequeathed an endowment for their support. Joseph Knight, Esq., a devout Catholic, and his wife concurred in the good priest's design, and contributed munificently toward the erection of a convent and schools. These wealthy members of the Chelsea congregation furnished everything necessary and useful, and dedicated the institution to the glorious St. Joseph. Mother Clare, during the eight years Chelsea house remained attached to Bermondsey, came every month to examine accounts and confer with the Sisters individually; and the illness should be serious that would deter her from this coveted visit. Once she came when so ill that the Sisters reproached her for coming, and she was forced to let herself be nursed on her return. But even when confined to her cell she attended to the business of the community as far as possible.

Mother M. Clare's generosity in acting for God made her regard the dispensations of His providence as a confiding child regards the arrangements of a loving father, secure that, whatever happens, His watchful eye is ever on her to ward off evil and bring good from every circumstance. She was ever anxious that her children should cultivate a loving trust in His goodness. The Sister-superior of Chelsea was made almost unhappy by her dread of fire. Mother M. Clare told her to "act carefully, but be not over-anxious. Trust in the care God has of you. What would all our solicitude avail without Him? 'Unless the Lord keep the city the sentinel watcheth in vain.'" Another Sister having made a remark that suggested a want of reliance on God's providence, she said half-playfully, half-reproachfully: "O fie! where is your faith? Do you not know that God is always watching over His servants to keep them from harm?"

In the division of the London District Chelsea fell to the diocese of Westminster. It has been a most prosperous foundation. It has large poor-schools, a middle-school,

and an immense amount of private instruction and visitation of the sick. In 1862 the Coventry* convent was founded from Chelsea. It was projected by the Benedictines many years before its establishment, and it is more than a mile outside the town, as it was intended to build a church beside it and form a second mission. Public Mass is celebrated in one of the large school-rooms every Sunday and holiday. This foundation was made in great poverty and under such a complication of difficulties, ever increasing, that it was long doubtful if it could be continued, but after a few years of hard struggling it took firm root. The schools have been from the first well attended. Protestants and Jews patronize them because they are reputed the best in the town for educational progress. The Benedictine Fathers supply chaplains. A member of the Coventry Sisterhood, mentioning some of the trials and persecutions to which they were subjected after being "sent to Coventry,"† writes: "Our enemies, not being able to succeed against us, have left off trying. Our dear Lord has taken good care of us; many benefactors we could not have, as the Catholics are nearly all poor."

A branch convent has been opened at Gosford Green for the education of the wealthier classes, which has prospered greatly. Valuable additions have been made to these convents to render them in all things suited to their purpose. As Coventry is inhabited chiefly by silk-weavers and watch-makers, the depression of the silk and watch trades keeps the town in great poverty. But as the manufacture of bicycles and tricycles has recently been introduced, an improvement is already apparent.

Coventry was once so famous for its conventual establishments as to derive its name from them—Coventry sig-

* Coventry, at one period a favorite residence of the kings of England, was celebrated for its tournaments and shows for the entertainment of the court. It is in Warwickshire, near the Avon, and almost in the centre of England.

† "Sent to Coventry"—an English term for being banished or abandoned by one's friends.

nifies convent-country. Many will remember it in connection with the Godiva procession, the modern substitute for the glorious processions of the Blessed Sacrament, carried out with extraordinary splendor, which once formed so charming a feature in the devotional exercises of the convent-country.

From Chelsea was established the Convent of Mercy, Brentwood, Essex, at the request of Very Rev. John Canon Kyne, November 15, 1872. In 1873 a convent was built for the Sisters close to the church by Countess Tasker, Middleton Hall, called St. Helen's, Helen being the Christian name of the countess. This zealous lady also built spacious schools. Poor-schools, school for the middle classes, a girls' orphanage, extensive visitation of the sick, and instruction of adults are the chief works of mercy carried on at Brentwood.

Bristol was the second foundation from Bermondsey. One of the last acts of the too short life of Bishop Baines was to send four ladies to make their novitiate preparatory to their helping to introduce the Order into Bristol. Their clothing is noticed in the Catholic Directory :

"Four ladies of high connections, named Beauchamp, Pallot, Dawson, and Savage, took the veil at the chapel in Bermondsey. The ceremony was marked by affecting solemnity. Right Rev. Dr. Griffiths officiated, assisted by Bishop Morris, Very Rev. Drs. Cox, Brindle, and Lima, Rev. Fathers Foley, Harrabin, Bowman, Butler, Collingridge, Telford, Savage, O'Neil, Marshall, Lee, North, Wareing, Cotter. . . . The sermon was preached by Dr. Brindle, of Bath. . . . A long train of carriages drawn up outside the chapel showed how interesting the ceremony was to the higher classes."

The ladies must have looked very lovely when they appeared for the last time in the best "rags of fashion," for the reporter calls them *young* ladies, whereas Miss Beauchamp was in her fifty-third year, and her companions

each some ten years younger. All these ladies are still living (1883), Miss Beauchamp being the only Sister of Mercy who ever entered the nineties, and her companions, with two or three exceptions, the only ones who sported among the eighties. Of Mother Jane Frances Beauchamp a contemporary writes: "Though advanced in age and accustomed to exercise authority over many, in the novitiate she was as docile as a child. All four were in every way most edifying members, and I have always been glad to have known them."

During their novitiate these dear Sisters had the advantage of conferring with that dearly loved daughter of the holy foundress, Mother M. Cecilia Marmion, who visited London, September, 1845, with the Sisters forming the first foundation for Australia. Perth was the destination of these courageous souls.

Mothers M. Clare Moore and the Sisters for Bristol left Bermondsey February 20, 1846, under the care of Very Rev. Dr. Brindle, V.G. The Western District was then without a bishop. Right Rev. Bishop Baggs, who succeeded Dr. Baines, died 1845. They reached Bristol on the same day, and began their labors almost immediately. The convent is situated on Dighton Street. Bristol is now in the diocese of Clifton, which includes Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, and Somersetshire, districts rather sparsely peopled by Catholics. Although Bristol has declined in importance since the rise of Liverpool, it is still a town of commercial consequence, having much foreign trade, especially with the West Indies. As it is built on hills and in valleys, visitation of the sick is rather a fatiguing duty on such uneven ground. The convent is served by the Jesuit Fathers, St. Mary's on the Quay. Among other institutions the Sisters conduct an orphanage and a home for girls from the workhouse.

Mother M. Clare was not able for the present to fill any of the other applications for her children, and the Bris-

tol house was the last founded during the life of Bishop Griffiths. On Whit-Tuesday that holy prelate visited Bermondsey Convent for the last time, after administering Confirmation in the church. His sight had been gradually failing, and he had recently been entirely deprived of the use of one eye. The loss of the other being likely to follow, an operation was suggested, and he toiled incessantly to prepare for it, doubling his ordinary labor, that his vicariate might not suffer during the compulsory cessation from work following such an ordeal. Now it was that he strove to practise that virtue which he constantly inculcated upon others—perfect submission to the will of God. At the prospect of total blindness, that most awful of calamities, he would say: “The will of God be done. I will serve Him in darkness or light, as He pleases.”

Towards the end of July he was unable to leave his house. Feeling seriously ill, he sent to Bermondsey for Sisters to nurse him. Mother Clare and three others remained with him by turns till the end, grateful for the privilege of waiting on their beloved and venerated bishop. “To soothe the last moments of a dying saint,” said one of them, “is genuine happiness, however great the regret at parting.”

Eight days before his death he said to Mother M. Clare as she entered his apartment: “My daughter, suggest to me the prayers and aspirations I should make during this illness.” But he gave her little opportunity of doing so, for he scarcely ceased to pray, and said few words save to God. “At first, as you may guess,” wrote Mother M. Clare, “I was afraid to offer the bishop the least assistance, but I took courage and reminded him of the dependence of our dear Lord on His Blessed Mother. He then permitted us to render him every service, with entire submission and such gratitude you would have thought him some poor beggar.”

On account of his violent retchings he could not receive Holy Communion, and this was the only privation he seemed to feel. Mother M. Clare perceived that he kept his eyes raised towards one particular spot. This she afterwards learned to be the place where the tabernacle rested in his private chapel overhead. In the most excruciating suffering, he never complained. Once he mentioned his blindness, and then it was only to prevent Mother M. Clare's taking the trouble to darken his apartment. Just before receiving Extreme Unction he said to her: "Pardon me, my child, if by any sigh, word, or movement I have shown impatience." During the administration of the sacraments he joined in all the prayers most fervently. If he chanced to sleep his first care on arousing was to make the sign of the cross. His usual aspirations were: "Jesus, I wish to live for Thee, I wish to die for Thee. Every moment of my life I consecrate to Thee. How bitterly I regret that I ever lived one instant without loving Thee!" Sometimes he would cry out with St. Austin: "Too late have I loved Thee!" He would pray for hours without apparent fatigue, which was the more remarkable as speaking to any visitor at once brought on the retchings. He spoke of the Blessed Virgin with the tenderness of a child, remarking that he had said his first Mass on the Assumption. "Perhaps," he would say, "I shall be in heaven on that glorious day."

The bishop's desire to spend the Assumption in heaven was well known. Father Faber, speaking of a similar wish of St. Stanislaus, adds: "The late lamented bishop of the London District, Dr. Griffiths, expressed the same wish with touching earnestness shortly before his death."*

Once, when Mother Clare washed his hands, he said: "These hands are now useless: they can no longer offer the Adorable Sacrifice." In his greatest agony he would exclaim: "What am I suffering compared with what our

* *Essay on Canonization and Beatification*, p. 88.

dear Lord suffered for me?" When she whispered, "Our sweet Lord is giving you a share in His cross," "Ah! no," he replied, "I suffer nothing." He prayed frequently to St. Aloysius, his patron for the year. As the members of his household knelt weeping and praying around his bed, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. He asked Mother Clare to pronounce the name of Jesus in his ear, should he become unconscious or unable to say it, adding: "And I promise to make you hear it in your last hour." "He would use as many expressions of gratitude towards us," said her companion, "as any of our poor people in return for the little services we felt so happy to render him." "May God bless you!" he would say fervently; "I can never repay you. But I will pray for you in time and eternity."

Sometimes Mother Clare thought he wandered, but on leaning over him she could recognize only the words of prayer. Frequently he would exclaim: "O my God, what a happiness to be loved by Thee! I am but a child, but, dear Jesus, I am Thy child." Then he would kiss his crucifix, indulged for a happy death, and again break out into ecstatic aspirations of divine love.

No fear disturbed his last hours. He spoke with the greatest confidence of going to heaven, "to my God and good Father." On Wednesday he frequently asked the hour. Mother M. Clare said his sorrowful pilgrimage was near its close, adding: "When once you are with God, father, you will forget all you are now suffering"; at which words he was overjoyed.

On learning that Thursday, August 12, was the Feast of St. Clare he prayed fervently to her. Perhaps it was to this great saint, whose devotion to the Blessed Sacrament was so wonderful, that he was indebted for the happiness of receiving Holy Viaticum. Mother M. Clare had the Masses and communions which, according to conventual custom, were to be offered for her, given to the dying pre-

late. At the same hour in which the Sisters were receiving our Divine Lord in the Bermondsey chapel Dr. Cox gave communion to the dying bishop—an unexpected favor which so filled him with rapture that he burst out into that beautiful canticle, *Nunc Dimittis*.

Noticing how agitated Dr. Cox became during the last prayers, the bishop said in a consoling tone: "Have confidence." He continued to pray aloud till about half an hour before his death. Even then whenever Mother M. Clare, in accordance with his pious wish, whispered the holy name of Jesus in his ear, he tried to repeat it after her. Almost in the act of kissing his crucifix he gave up his soul to God, so gently that she was the only one who perceived that he had expired. The calm, placid expression which distinguished him during his illness still beautified his countenance after death.

His dearest spiritual daughter adds a few more details:

"When I brought the dressing for his blister Wednesday night he said: 'Daughter, it is the last time you will do this for me.' Next morning, though I had it ready, I could not get near to put it on. He prayed so constantly that I was astonished. On kissing the crucifix he would sometimes exclaim: 'O my affectionate God!' He never expressed the least uneasiness about anything. Often have I heard him say: 'I have always sought to do Thy will, my God. I have never desired anything but to please Thee.' . . . I had the great honor and comfort to close his eyes. Sister M. Helen admired his patience, but I was wholly taken up with his constant prayer. . . . You know I have assisted many and many pious souls in that last hour, but I never met any one who died as he did. I trust he is now praying for us in heaven."

Strange to say, of all the holy people the bishop had ever known, the only person he spoke of in his last illness was Mother McAuley, whom he deeply venerated and loved. Tenderly and reverently nursed by her daughters,

he seemed to think continually of the cherished friend to whom he owed their ministrations. "O my children," he would frequently exclaim, "what a blessing your Institute is, and what a reward your holy foundress enjoys in heaven for having established it!"

Bishop Griffiths was but fifty-six years old when he died. He was buried in the bishops' vault at Moorfields.—R.I.P.

Some years before his death Dr. Griffiths made the Bermondsey community a most valuable present of a large and handsome reliquary containing a relic of a saint for every day in the year; pieces of the true cross, the holy sponge, and the lance; a piece of Our Lady's veil, a relic of St. Philomena with her effigy, all the bones of St. Vitalis, a child-martyr. Bishop Grant obtained the privilege of having this holy martyr honored with a feast in Bermondsey on the last Sunday after Pentecost each year. The Sisters make a novena in honor of St. Vitalis, which they offer for the school-children. The relics are annually venerated in Bermondsey Church on the Feast of St. Vitalis.

CHAPTER XI.

BISHOP WISEMAN PRO-VICAR-APOSTOLIC—THE ORDER OF MERCY IN THE CHANNEL ISLANDS.

Dr. Wiseman visits Bermondsey—A Convert from Quakerism—Bishop Walsh receives a Postulant—His sudden Death—His Friendship for Mother McAuley—The Hierarchy—Bishop Wiseman translated to Westminster—Dr. Grant introduced to the Sisters as Bishop on the Eve of the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy—"Cheerfulness in all Times and Places"—Father Butler's last Illness and Death—Tenderly nursed by the Sisters—He passes away to the Music of the *Angelus*—A great Loss—Mural Tablet—Foundation at Brighton—Sister Teresa Boyce—Letter—Sister Joseph Hawkins—Guernsey—Extreme Poverty—Our Blessed Lady appears to a devout Client—Father Guidry's Efforts in behalf of the lonely Rock—Sisters of Mercy found a House in Guernsey—Intense Bigotry—Delancey—Twelve do the Work of Forty—Schools in high Repute—Alderney—A Prophecy—Father Guidry summoned by the Defence in the Tichborne Trial.

BISHOP GRIFFITHS was succeeded by Right Rev. Nicholas Wiseman, who was transferred from the Central to the London District August 29, 1847. Almost immediately his lordship visited the Bermondsey nuns, and on the 6th of October he gave the habit to Miss Anna Priscilla Fox, a convert from the Society of Friends, who had been baptized by the late bishop, and had since continued under the direction of Father Butler. After the usual probation she was admitted to profession; but her health gave way, and on its first anniversary she received the last sacraments and died a holy death.

Dr. Wiseman was most kind and fatherly. Sometimes his visits were hurried, but he required the Sisters to be seated even when he himself stood. Once when he came at recreation hour, seeing all the Sisters engaged in needle-

work, he said: "You may call this recreation, but I call it work." He often spoke of his cousins, members of the Mercy Institute in Ireland and America, with whom his early days were spent near Waterford, and to whom he was deeply attached. Once he spoke very sadly of the terrible evils which threatened the Church and the Holy Father, and urged the Sisters to pray much for both. This was before the flight to Gaeta. Whenever he breakfasted at the convent he conversed cordially with them, though he always suffered much from poor health.

When Right Rev. Thomas Walsh was transferred from the Central District to London Bishop Wiseman continued his coadjutor. On the 10th of June, 1848, Dr. Walsh visited Bermondsey for the first time as its bishop and presided at the reception of a postulant. Later he examined two novices for holy profession, according to the decrees of the Council of Trent, and promised to come in a month to receive their vows. But the heavenly Master in whose vineyard he had so long and so faithfully labored summoned him rather suddenly to his true home, February 18, 1849. His age is variously stated seventy-three and eighty. Bishop Walsh was an ardent admirer of Mother McAuley and her Institute; it was at his request she established a convent in Birmingham.

The re-establishment of the hierarchy robbed Bermondsey of Dr. Wiseman, who became Archbishop of Westminster September 29, 1850, and was created cardinal next day. In 1851 Dr. Grant, first bishop of Southwark, visited Bermondsey, the oldest convent in his diocese, and he afterwards recalled with pleasure that his first introduction to the Sisterhood was on the eve of the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy. He gave an exhortation on the text, "Be ye good stewards of the manifold grace of God," showing that the gifts of God were to be employed in His service. A favorite maxim of his was, "Cheerfulness in all times and places for nuns."

This third successor of Bishop Griffiths in the Sisters' regard our good Father Butler did not live to welcome. In 1848 his health was so impaired that it was with difficulty he could attend the convent as confessor. Yet he exerted himself for the welfare of the community, even when he was considered in a dying state. July 27 he received the profession of a novice whom Dr. Wiseman had previously examined. On the 17th of October he went to Chancery Lane to arrange some temporal affairs of the convent. Later he was delegated by the bishop to examine three novices for profession; and this was the last service he was able to render to the community which he loved as the apple of his eye. In every sense he was its father and best friend. He arranged the convent affairs in such perfect order that it has always been self-sustaining, and not obliged to depend on precarious sources of revenue, as many convents have.

Whenever he spoke to them in the retreats he usually gave he would dwell on the advantages of a religious vocation and the necessity of being faithful to its every duty. For several months dropsy, a frequent termination of asthma, had been slowly creeping upon him. In October his sufferings became intense. But our sweet Lord supported His afflicted servant, and gave him patience and conformity proportioned to the anguish that consumed him. He prayed fervently and incessantly to his holy Mother and his dear St. Joseph, and continued to recite the Divine Office almost to the end. When really unable to say it he refused to read anything else, saying the breviary was the last book his eyes should rest upon. He received the last sacraments November 13, though he entertained some hope of recovery. He took remedies, but with the most entire resignation, saying again and again to Mother M. Clare, who scarcely ever left him: "I am ready and willing to die this moment, if such be the will of God. I have nothing to live for now but to do more for the convent."

Unable to lie down, he remained in a chair day and night, without power of motion, but perfectly conscious. At 3 A.M. Saturday, November 18, he fell into his agony and he calmly expired at six while the convent-bell was tolling the morning *Angelus*. He was forty-nine years old, and had spent seventeen years, his whole priestly life, in Bermondsey. By a rather singular coincidence he died on the anniversary of the day the Sisters left Dublin for Bermondsey in 1839. His remains lie in the vaults of his church, which, with the convent, may be regarded as his life-work and his monument. Save the death of the holy foundress, this was the greatest loss Mother Clare and her community ever sustained. A white marble tablet in the porch of Bermondsey Convent commemorates this good man—Father Peter Butler, who built and founded the first convent of Our Lady of Mercy in England.—R.I.P.

The Sisters bowed their heads in resignation to the divine will, and prayed for the dear departed who had so many claims on their prayers. Meanwhile their labors increased, but God strengthened their hands and attracted many fervent souls to their assistance. On the 11th of June, 1852, Mother M. Clare founded a convent at that well-known watering-place, Brighton,* at the request of Bishop Grant. To Brighton Mother M. Clare sent among others Sister Teresa Boyce, the last of the Old Chapel-House Sisterhood, and the first lay Sister professed in England. Sister Teresa used to attend to her in illness, as far as she would allow; for, though her health was most delicate, she would never permit any exemption in her favor except in absolute necessity. In grateful remembrance of

* Writing in 1873 relative to the half-jubilee of Mother M. Angela Graham, of Brighton, Mother M. Clare writes:

“I do not think she will live to celebrate her golden jubilee here on earth. I do not imagine that many of our Institute will celebrate their whole jubilee—our work takes away strength too surely. And the clergy do not think of that in many places, where our Sisters are often overburdened with work, day and night—no cessation, no rest, for mind or body.”

her little attentions, and to comfort her, Mother M. Clare often wrote to her humble friend. Here is one of these gracious epistles :

“DEAREST SISTER TERESA: I must begin by wishing you many happy returns of the holy day of your clothing, and that you may be clothed with all virtues in this life and with a robe of immortality in the next. High up in heaven your holy habit will shine brightly and have as many jewels all over it as you will have made acts of love in God’s service. You and little Sister Joseph are now the two first Sisters of Mercy clothed in this powerful land, and before the court of heaven you are greater than any earthly queen, if faithful to your vocation. So you must kiss your habit very devoutly to-morrow, and pray that we may all wear it worthily and be true children of our revered foundress, whose holy profession we celebrate to-morrow, as well as the foundation of our Institute. We are to have Mass offered in honor of Our Blessed Lady for that intention, and our general Communion of course, and Benediction in the evening. We shall have recreation, and supper in the community-room, and a fine fire. We have set many favorite verses of our holy foundress to music, and shall sing them after supper with great glee. I wish you could spend the evening with your old-fashioned relatives in Bermondsey—should we not give you a hearty welcome? Now I have to ask your prayers for dear little Sister Joseph’s mother, who died a holy death on Friday.—R.I.P.”

The dear little Sister Joseph (Hawkins) mentioned above died February, 1882, at Eltham. She was born of Protestant parents. When her father died she conceived a great desire to become a Catholic. At eighteen she joined the community as a lay Sister, but had such a child-like appearance that she attracted much attention, people judging that she was much younger than she really was. Her mother, who was present at her reception, thought she saw a halo of glory encircling her child’s head during the ceremony, and she resolved to become a Catholic. During the Crimean War Sister M. Joseph and two others were

sent as a reinforcement to Mother M. Clare. Ash Wednesday (1882) this dear little Sister began Lent by prayer and fasting; she visited the sick as usual, and was most cheerful at recreation. Next morning while at meditation she fainted, grew rapidly worse, and, having received the sacraments, expired while the priest was giving her the last blessing. Mass was offered for her before she was removed from the spot on which she lay. So fresh, smiling, and childlike did her beautiful countenance look in death that many refused to believe she was really dead. Though scarcely twenty minutes ill, no blessing by which holy Church consoles her dying children was wanting to her—in answer, perhaps, to Bishop Grant's prayer that none who went to nurse the sick at the Crimea should die an unprovided death.

From 1839 to 1879 seventy-five Sisters were professed in Bermondsey and twenty-two died. But the corner-stone, Sister Teresa Boyce, who began the good work with Miss Murray in the Old Chapel-House, 1834, is still (1883) an active member.

From Brighton the Order of Mercy spread into the Channel Islands, beginning at Guernsey.

Up to 1868 no nun's foot had rested on Guernsey soil for over three centuries. The pastor, a priest so holy and zealous as to be styled a second Curé d'Ars, was anxious to have a convent, but felt timid in inviting nuns to so poor a country. Meanwhile he continued to hope and pray.

Among his penitents was an elderly maiden, a Creole by birth, who had lived many years in Guernsey, Mlle. G—. This lady was rich, generous, and pious, but, though she had never entertained any thought of marriage and lived like a saint in the world, she had a devout horror of convents and their inmates. One morning while she was praying in the church Our Blessed Lady appeared to her and said: "Ma fille, soyez de mon Ordre"

(Daughter, be of my Order). The poor lady was deeply distressed at this command, but the Blessed Virgin insisted, and, opening her immaculate heart, showed her client therein several religious, in what she afterwards learned was the garb of the Sisters of Mercy, instructing the ignorant, protecting orphans, visiting the sick, and performing other works of mercy, and then desired her to tell the priest to establish a convent of "*my Order.*" Father Guidry, ready to obey Our Lady's behest, wrote for Sisters to every Order in England, but all declined to risk their subjects in that dreary, impoverished region. At last the good mother of the Brighton convent, touched by his zeal, resolved to give the lonely rock a trial, as Bishop Grant particularly wished. Four Sisters arrived on the island December 30, 1868, and opened a school. Week by week pupils increased till the school-rooms, twice enlarged, became too small. Sodalities to secure the children's attendance at Mass and the sacraments were formed, and effect much good by keeping the young people under the guidance of the nuns after they have left school.

The bigotry of the Protestants of these islands is so great that many are enrolled in a society which binds them by oath "never to speak to a priest or a nun, and never to enter a Catholic church." Some converts made since the opening of the convent have been obliged to leave the island, so great was the persecution to which they were subjected. Conversions of bad Catholics, however, are frequent, many being of the *libre-penseur* class. The spiritual wants of the island compelled the nuns to open a second house at Delancey. A small cottage sufficed for convent and schools. Their work lies chiefly among the stone-breakers and their children. A good deal of visitation of the sick is accomplished on Saturdays and Sundays, and, as occasion requires, after school-hours on other days. Despite the perpetual strain on some twelve or

fifteen Sisters obliged to do the work of thirty, the schools have acquired a good literary reputation. Every year the inspector reports them as "excellent," and in 1876, and on other occasions, the prize awarded by the Catholic Poor-School Committee to the best school in each diocese was won by these schools.

Mlle. G—— presented the community with the house that became the first convent established in the Channel Islands since the Reformation. She then offered herself to the Order, and is still (1883) engaged in the works of mercy which she undertook at the command of the Mother of Mercy herself. A Dominican who gave a retreat to the Sisters in 1875 remarked that he never knew a poorer or a happier community.

Father Guidry,* who never left Guernsey, had led such a quiet life that he was supposed by his friends in the outer world to be dead. Believing this to be the case, the too famous "Claimant" averred he held the marriage-certificate of Sir Roger Tichborne and Miss Kate Doughty, signed "A. Guidry," who performed the ceremony privately. But it being ascertained that our pastor was still alive, a telegram brought him to London to aid in unravelling what he calls an "abominable conspiracy." In a letter to the Guernsey reverend mother, dated February 29, 1872, he mentions his weariness of London and his desire to get home; that his supposed certificate, a forgery, was Orton's trump-card till that impostor learned he was still alive; that he had begged the solicitors not to delay him, though he had little hope of getting off soon, as the "brief examination" of old Lady Doughty consumed an entire day. The good priest seems to have had some reputation as an expert, for, by order of Sir John Coleridge, some of the counsel examined him all day in moral theology bearing on the case, for the attorney-general's information and private

* Father Guidry had been chaplain to the Tichborne family before he took pastoral charge of Guernsey.

satisfaction. For news he tells of the approaching marriage of the Marquis of Bute and a daughter of Lord Howard ; of the several great families with whom he was obliged to dine—"much against my inclination"—and he concludes :

"I hope the good Sisters will pray for me during my absence. It is so truly unavoidable that, much as I feel the inconvenience to myself and others, I can have no scruple about it. Good-by. I bear you all in my heart before God at the Holy Sacrifice. Believe me, dear reverend mother,

"Yours very faithfully in Christ,
"A. GUIDRY."

But if Guernsey were a poor mission, what shall we say of Alderney ?

Among the Sisters from Brighton was a novice who became so ill that it was determined to send her back to England. On the homeward voyage she begged her companion to watch for the isle of Alderney and tell her when it came in sight. The boat was soon sufficiently near to enable them to take a grand survey of the weird and lonely scene. The poor invalid gazed as one transfixed on the dark rock rising out of the seething waves. "Look, Sister," she exclaimed, clasping her hands, "there is Alderney. Soon there will be a Convent of Mercy on that isle, and in that convent I shall die." "The sweet Sister spoke in a spirit of prophecy," says my informant, "for we had not then the least idea of founding a house on that desolate rock."

A convent, poor and humble as the stable of Bethlehem, soon crowned "the desolate rock," and there the sweet Sister died, May 14, 1875, verifying her own prediction ; having been, writes a companion, "a model of self-sacrifice, and the perfection of patience and generosity."

CHAPTER XII.

THE STORY OF ALDERNEY.

Alderney—Communication with the Mainland—Grandeur of the Scenery—Legends—St. Patrick—Longevity of the Islanders—St. Vignalis—Wreckers—Murderers—The Hanging Rock—Language—Religion—Superstitious Practices—From the Known to the Unknown—Stores—Illustrations—Little Convent—Worst Consequence of Poverty—Little Alderney Cows—Difficulties—Free from Debt—"Fear not, little Flock"—Canon Wenham—Official Report—Sick—Calls in Alderney—As little known as Crim Tartary—Johnny Plait-il, *mon coquot, mon chou-fleur, mon jou-jou*—*Gros-Jean*—The *Gandion*—In the Court—Denis and Pierre—Jean-Paul—Basil the fisherman—"No person more quieter den my Wife"—Anecdotes—A beautiful Flower on a barren Rock.

ALDERNEY Convent, though perhaps the poorest in the Order, cannot be dismissed in a paragraph; a whole chapter will scarcely suffice to do justice to the one establishment on the rocky isle. Alderney rises above the North Sea, nearer to England than Guernsey, ten miles from the coast of France, and from the now important port, Cherbourg, eighteen. Therefore, in case of war, it would be a place of greater consequence than any of its five sister isles, Guernsey, Jersey, Sark, Herm, and Jethou. Its latitude is $49^{\circ} 44' N.$, and its longitude W. from Greenwich $2^{\circ} 25'$. It is four miles long, nearly two across, and about twelve in circumference. Strong currents and tides make navigation dangerous in its waters, and it is almost encircled by a belt of terrible rocks upon which many a noble vessel has foundered. The Channel Islands are hardly more known to the outer world than the Fijis or the Galapagos, and Alderney is the most remote of the twenty-four distinguished by special names. Twice a week, weather permitting, a small steamer brings passengers from Guern-

sey, and cattle and goods from Cherbourg, and the islanders are happy if they get mail once a week, which can happen only in favorable weather. The approach to the northwest is truly grand: cliffs shining with grit and porphyry, three hundred feet high, fall perpendicularly to the sea, and scattered about the coast dark, isolated rocks rise high above the water. The soil is very productive, the crops luxuriant, but the isle is generally bare of trees. Legends affirm that when that indefatigable traveller, St. Patrick, was wrecked on its coasts he cleared the island of venomous animals and forbade their return. Recently a man of little faith, having imported a live toad from Jersey to disprove the saying that no reptile can live in Alderney, was punished for his temerity by seeing the toad die on the ledge of a rock "in horrible agony." As a rule these islanders live to extreme old age. The Alderney cow is the pride of the island.

Alderney formerly belonged to the diocese of Coutances. Its patron saint, St. Vignalis, established Christianity in it in 515 and made it an island of saints. But it soon declined from its high estate. Wreckers, Danish sailors, who feared neither God nor man, plied their wicked craft on the southern coast; their dwellings were caves made secure from the sea by holy hermits, whom these Danes murdered. Once a richly-freighted vessel struck these rocks, decoyed thither by the treacherous lights of the wreckers. A Benedictine priest and a few sailors who had escaped a watery grave were horrified to find they had fallen into a danger more terrible than that which they had escaped, for these wretched men were in the act of murdering such of the crew as they had brought to shore. The brave priest placed himself between the trembling captives and their murderous captors, and spoke to the latter in their own dialect with such burning words of holy indignation, mingled with awful threats of the divine vengeance, that one by one they slunk out of the cavern, not knowing where to

hide themselves. The monk, following, exclaimed: "Why do ye linger here, murderers as ye are? Away with ye! Leave us unharmed." But the leader, recovering from his sudden terror, boldly answered: "Shall we be scared by thy priestly threats? Know, craven-hearted friar, that this land is ours and thy life is in our hands. Follow me to the cave, my bold comrades, and let us finish what we have begun." Scarcely had these words escaped him when an enormous rock fell forward and would have crushed the wreckers had not the holy man stretched forth his right hand, crying out: "Brother rock, I forbid thee to slay the just with the unjust." The rock was arrested in its awful descent, and the awe-stricken robbers fell at the feet of the monk and became truly contrite. But the rock hangs, as it were, in mid-air to this day, and is called *La Roche-Pendante*—the hanging rock. One must have strong nerves to stand beneath it as it inclines downward at a considerable angle.

The language of the natives is a peculiar *patois* of Normandy, and their manners savor of the ancient dukedom. But, unhappily, the religion of many is a ranting form of Methodism spiced with superstitious practices which are evidently distorted remnants of Catholic traditions. They use the sign of the cross as a charm over sick cattle; they drink water from holy wells fasting, first throwing a cupful over the left shoulder; and they invoke St. Longinus and his spear for the cure of sore eyes or the breaking of an abscess.

Strange situation for a convent, amid a people unknown to the rest of the world, most of whom have never left their native soil. One of the Sisters, a successful teacher of the "little Alderney cows," as the children call themselves, writes: "When we attempt to describe a town, river, mountain, or railway we cannot follow the system of leading from the known to the unknown. The nearest likeness to a town is High Street, with its one butcher's

shop and large 'store' where every want can be supplied—fishing-nets, Holloway's pills, ladies' boots, tea, coffee, tinware, stationery. The swiftly-running gutter illustrates the rivers of America, and the highest rock does for the Himalayas." The convent is a tiny house, having one large school and several small rooms, one a chapel,* one a community-room, the rest cells.

The struggles of the poor Sisterhood for the past eight years to keep this little bark afloat have been continuous. For a good while they were deprived of the Blessed Sacrament, and this was the most painful consequence of their poverty. The church is two miles from the convent. The priest who invited the Sisters thither left, not being able to endure the isolation of the place. The bishop who sent them died. Two priests left in quick succession, and it seemed as though the Sisters must leave too, for how could they do without Mass and the Sacraments? For six weeks the bishop vainly sought a curé for Alderney; in the seventh an invalid priest offered to go for a while, if the Sisters would take care of him. To do this they were obliged to break up their little home and live in a hut at "Crabby." In a few months the invalid found the air too strong for his chest. He was succeeded by a Father H——, a *quasi*-invalid, who brought over two boys to whom he was tutor.

Though no parochial aid was given to the schools, the nuns could never be induced to abandon this forlorn mission. The earthly tenement of one dear Sister rests there. She was devoted to Alderney and pined to spend herself for souls in that deserted spot. "It may be foolishness

* "Since we have the Blessed Sacrament," writes one of these holy souls, "I have been intensely happy. The chapel is so small I have our stall close to the altar-step; I could almost touch the tabernacle from where I kneel. . . . If there is any want unsupplied in your dear soul, go get thrown ashore on a rock, and, after waiting a year, get a tiny wee chapel in which you can kneel at the feet of Him who fills the universe. You will not be able to speak a word to Him for some time, but oh! the joy of looking where He is."

on my part," writes one of these devoted women, "but I always feel she would be alone if we abandoned the mission." Once, when obliged to relinquish their abode at "Crabby," they had to withdraw to Guernsey till another could be procured. "The Alderney cows are better off than we," said a nun, "for they have their sheds." "We love the poor children so much!" writes another; "they are dear children, and they can never get a Catholic education if we desert them. Besides, so much good may be effected with their parents."

The Alderney convent can boast neither founder nor foundress, yet there is no debt; food and clothing are paid for over the counter of the little shop in High Street. If there is little money in the purse, the dinner is less in consequence: what the poor Sisters cannot pay for they will not buy. Were it not for the generous charity of several convents in England, Ireland, and far-off America, who occasionally send, unsolicited, a few shillings to help them, the establishment must have suspended long ago. May God bless in the future all who help them, as He has richly done in the past! Forty pounds a year from the family of one of the members and some precarious school-fees form the regular income. Sometimes the elder houses have expostulated with the nuns who keep up this forlorn hope, on the risk of living on a rock so difficult of approach. The reply is always the same: "We did not seek this hidden corner of our Lord's vineyard: *we were sent.*" The endowment Bishop Dannell gave them on sending them forth was the motto, "Fear not, little flock!" "In thee, O Lord! have I hoped; let me not be confounded." And, verily, He who feeds the sparrows, and decks the wild flowers with their beauty, has this *little flock* in His own keeping.

One joyous occasion annually breaks the peaceful monotony of their Alderney life—the official inspection of their schools. Canon Wenham, a zealous and indefati-

gable priest, has inspected the schools of the diocese since Southwark was separated from Westminster, 1851. He has examined the Catholic poor children during three or four generations. His wonderful memory enables him to recognize a child from year to year, and follow her progress in religious knowledge from the time she lisped her prayers on the infants' gallery to her final examination when, in elegant caligraphy, she describes the journeys of St. Paul and tells all she knows about the sacraments. Here are some reports signed by ✠ JAMES, Bishop of Southwark, and Canon Wenham :

MISSION OF ALDERNEY. 1880. SISTERS OF MERCY.—
—Schools classed as “excellent.”

The schools continue in excellent condition. The new Syllabus and catechism have been followed, and all the work is well known.

Order and Discipline.—Very good. An excellent and promising set of children.

Knowledge of Religion.—A large number, though it was Saturday and the queen's birthday, were presented, and all, with scarcely an exception, answered well and intelligently.

REPORT FOR 1881.—Repetition remarkably careful and accurate. Children extremely well-behaved and orderly, and passed a very good examination.

(Signed) JOHN CROOKHALL, *Vicar-Capitular.*

These schools have no government grant, though some of the Sisters hold government certificates.

As this region is scarcely better known than Beloochistan or Crim Tartary, we will give some illustrations of the work of the Sisters among the islanders.

Here is a sick-call :

Johnny Plait-il, a little pupil, is dying of meningitis, brought on by his having pushed a living blue-fly into his

ear. "Ah! mon Dieu," cries his mother on seeing the Sisters at his bedside, "he is eat up *tout-à-fait* in his head. Sistare, he nevare see you more in dis world; he is all for de next. Tell Sistare, mon pigeon, who spoil you." The poor child tries to clasp her neck as he whispers: "*My mover.*" "Now look you, good Sistares," says the *mover*, as she strikes an attitude peculiar to these large Alderney women—viz., planting the backs of their hands on their hips, turning out their elbows, and shutting their eyes by way of emphasizing their broken English—"dare is a chile who nevare say noting to no one; he nevare raise her hand to strike no one—would you believe it possible dat a man trow a stone at dat sweet chile? Eh?" And the closed eyes suddenly open, one foot advances, and her face nearly touches that of the Sister in her eagerness to hear the reply.

"Impossible, Madame Plait-il."

"Ah! ma Sœur, you see dat rock is tied to a leetle boat. Ah! you see, *mais* you see not de rope. Well, no mattare; it is dare all de sem. My Johnnie play wif dat rope, an' de big villain, *Gros-Jean*, he trew one stone at my beauty. Eh, *mon coquot!*" (smothering the child with kisses). "*Dites, mon petit chou-fleur, qui le gâte, mon chou-chou, mon jou-jou?*"

"Surely *Gros-Jean* did not mean to hit Johnny," expostulates "Sistare," taking the child's head to a safer resting-place than his mother's embraces.

"Ah! my Sistare, I make him pay it. Regard"—and she shakes her fat forefinger and shuts one eye—"I meet his cart; I hold his donkey wif my two hand, an' I say, '*Gros-Jean*, come down.'

"'Wat for?' say *Gros-Jean*."

"'Come down.'

"'I won't.'

"'Eh bien,' says I, and I begin to take de donkey out of de cart."

“ ‘Diable ! wat for you make dat ?’

“ ‘You shall see, *mon brave*.’ An’ I send de donkey flyin’ over de common. I *renversé Gros-Jean* on de sand, an’ I swich, swich wif his whip, and he twis’, twis’, twis till he twis’ hissself on his feet an’ run for de donkey—” And madame’s peals of laughter shake the cabin to its foundation. The Sisters soothe poor Johnny, who is not quite sure whether his mother is laughing or crying.

“ *Gandion* [the official name of the one policeman in Alderney] visited you after that, Madame Plait-il ? ”

“ Ah ! I was before him. I go to de juge and get a summons for *Gros-Jean* for trowin’ a stone at my Johnny.”

“ And *Gros-Jean* summoned you for beating him ? ”

“ No, Sistare. *Gros-Jean* know I would cut him in pieces if he summoned me. We meet in court, and de juge say to *Gros-Jean* :

“ ‘ *Cochon, que tu es, wat for you trow stone at Johnny Plait-il ?*’

“ ‘ ‘Cause he loose my boat from its moorings on de bay, and all my new fishing gear aboard. I shouted ; he hear not, an’ I trow a stone to say I was comin’.’

“ When he say dis,” continued the aggrieved dame, “ I shake my two fist in his face and say : ‘ Remember, *Gros-Jean*, de trashin’ I gave you on de common. You vill ‘ave anoder.’

“ ‘ Did you trash him ? ’ say de juge.

“ ‘ Ask him,’ say I.

“ ‘ Did she trash you, *Gros-Jean* ? ’

“ ‘ *Un petit peu,*’ say he.

“ ‘ Well,’ say de juge, ‘ if she take de law in her own hand you must gif her one franc for takin’ de trouble to correc’ you.’

“ But he will nevare trow a stone at my Johnnie in dis worl’,” cries madame, with a burst of wailing as loud and prolonged as her late fit of merriment. “ Only one stone for my pigeon now. Eh, Johnny, one stone at thy head

in de grave were papa lie. Say, *bébi*, shall maman 'ave a beautiful grave for '*tit coquot*?' The poor woman sobs at the prospect, and Sisters get an opportunity to speak: "We will pray for Johnny, and Johnny will turn his poor aching head this way and say *Notre Père*, etc." And the poor child joins his hot hands and says his little prayer with all his heart.

The ubiquitous Irishman thrives in Alderney. Here is another scene:

Denis is breaking stones. Seeing the Sisters approach, he politely takes the short pipe from his mouth and plants it in his hat-band.

"Good-morning, Sisthers. I'm proud to see yez out this fine day."

"Good-morning, Denis. How hot you must feel! Why don't you work in the shade?"

"An' how can I carry the stones over there, ma'am?"

"Suppose you ask the carter to tilt them on the shady side."

"Sisther, he's Frinch, an' I wouldn't be behowlden to him for that much civility. Besides, wid me in the shade, *yees* 'ud have to walk in the broiling sun; an' there's One above knows I'd stan' there till I'd be blisthered, that *yees* might have the shade."

"Denis, why not make friends with Pierre?"

"I'd as soon make frinds with the ould boy—axin' yer pardon."

"O Denis! if all Irishmen behaved that way where would religion be?"

"Thru for ye, ma'am. Where 'ud dacency and civility an' religion be if—but I won't boast. Ye know an Irishman can convert the biggest haythen and thrash the Salvation Army to smithereens, but St. Patrick himself wouldn't touch Pierre wid the tongs by way of convartin' him."

"Why, Denis, don't you say St. Patrick was a Frenchman?"

“He was, Sisther, till he saw what haythens they wor. Then he hid in Alderney, but he found ’em as bad. ’Twasn’t till he went to Ireland that his mind was at rest.”

Meanwhile Pierre came up with a cart of stones for Denis to “crack.” The sun was scorching, and the good mother told Denis to tilt his cart by the old wall for the shade. Denis, having affectionately saluted Pierre as an “ould frog,” asked him to land the stones in a more umbrageous locality.

“Comment?” roared the wondering carter.

“Come on yerself, ye skinflint,” returned the complimentary Denis, “an’ help me to back the horse.”

“Pierre,” said the good mother, “can you tilt the stones in the shade?”

“Certain, my Sistare; it is one pleasure to help M. Denis, *mais, ma Sœur, il n’est pas poli, ce monsieur-là.*”

Denis pulled out a flask and offered a drink to Pierre, who replied:

“Tank you, *mon ami*; I nevare drink.”

“Pardon me, Sisther, for axin’ him. I did it to thry him. Sure there’s nothing in the bottle.”

“Sistares,” says Pierre, “you lofe me not because I not go to Mass; and you lofe not Denis, for he drink once. Now, I go to Mass avery Sunday dat M. Denis drink noting de week befo’.”

Denis drew from his pocket two chisels and crossed them on the palm of his right hand:

“As throe as them cowl-d-chisels crass wan another I’ll keep the bargain.” Pierre did likewise: “Sistare, I tank you vera moch for de trouble you take wif us. My wife will be moch delight.”

The nuns who live in streets will learn with surprise that visits to the poor of Alderney are mostly made on the scene of the laborer’s work. The ploughman is accosted at a corner of his field:

“*Bonjour*, Toussaint. How is it that Jean-Paul is not at school?”

“My Sistares, Jean-Paul is vera wicked. I tell him: ‘*Mon fils*, it is my duty to follow de plough to-day, and it is de duty of my son to go to school. It is for me to get bread to fill de stomach of my son, and it is for my son to get learnin’ to fill his ’ead. Derefore, *mon petit* Jean-Paul, *il faut* dat you go to school.’ Ah! *mes Sœurs*, since my leetle boy larn Eenglis’ he say vera bad words. Ven I say, ‘Vill you go to school?’ he answer, ‘Not if I know it.’ ’Tis one vera bad Eenglis’ word he larn in de Salvation Army.”

“Does Jean-Paul follow the Salvation Army?”

“He do, Sistare.”

“Ah! Toussaint, it is your fault that *le petit* is not at school, that he follows the Salvation Army, that he says bad English words. You never go to church, you have not made your Easter for years; and your poor wife, who died such a holy death, must blush for you in heaven.”

“Pardon, *mes Sœurs*; *ne me grondez-pas*. I am to change—you will see. I shall be *bon garçon* yet. Leave me not in despair. I will send Jean-Paul to-morrow. *Je le promets*.”

Here is Basil the fisherman sitting on a rock, mending his nets.

“Good-day, Sistares. For why you not send me de sermone de good Englis’ priest *prêche* Sunday? My leetle Englis’ wife was altogeder desolate because she not read it.”

“Ah! Basil, the old story. The English wife does all the religion, and Basil tries to be a bad Frenchman and lose his soul.”

“Pardon, Sistares; my wife is so good she vill not go to ’eaven widout me; she vill send *Notre Dame* to save poor Basil from purgatory. I know it. My wife has great power wif de Blessed Virgin. She say de chapelet avery day.

She wear all de scapulaires, she fast Saturday, nevare eat meat Friday. Ven I correct her she nevare say noting, but prays for her poor Basil like an angel as she is. An' in *choche* is dere one person more quieter den my wife? Bah! Sistares, she vill see me in 'eaven."

"But, Basil, should you die before your wife? If your boat went down, you having no time to call on God for mercy—"

"Don't be afraid, Sistares; I vill be good. My wife is strong in her prayers for her poor Basil."

"*Eh bien. Bonjour*, Basil; you will be good, I know."

Though communication with the outer world is often impossible, always irregular, one is glad to think poor Alderney has not been deserted. And when we view the lonely, desolate life led there by three or four Sisters of Mercy, who daily offer themselves to God to spend themselves and be spent for the abandoned souls so dear to Him, we are reminded of the burst of enthusiasm with which St. Alphonsus hailed another convent:

"I did not expect to find so beautiful a flower on this barren rock!"

CHAPTER XIII.

MOTHER M. CLARE LEADS THE FIRST BAND OF SISTERS TO THE CRIMEA.

Terrible Sufferings of the Soldiers in the East—Bishop Grant applies to Bermondsey in their behalf—Letter—Mission accepted—Expense defrayed by Lord Arundel and Surrey—"Flight into Egypt"—Bishop Morris—Journey to Paris—Miss Nightingale—Occupation in Paris—Letter—On to Constantinople—Dangers—Arrival—Stowed away in the Turkish Barracks—A Chair without a Back pays a double Debt—The Soldiers share their Rations with the famished Nuns—Water spangled with Tea-Leaves—Invisible Bread—Utter Desolation—Miss Nightingale leans heavily on Mother M. Clare—Difficulties—No clean Water for six Weeks—Among the Redcoats—Mother M. Clare's Generalship astonishes the Army—Kindness of Bishop Grant—Motley Groups—"Johnny"—The Armenian Bishop—Visitors from Galata—Chapel opened—Joy of the Sisters on having the Blessed Sacrament—Devotion of the Soldiers—Silence in Parliament regarding Convent Bills—Feast of Our Lady of Mercy, September 24.

IT is pleasant to think that one of the First Seven was spared to guide the first band of Sisters of Mercy to soothe the sufferings of the sick and wounded soldiers of the Crimean War.

At home and abroad Bishop Grant* took the greatest interest in soldiers. The harrowing details of their sufferings in the East touched him to the quick; he not only sent them priests, but would send nuns too.

No sooner had he received this inspiration than he came to Bermondsey, the oldest convent in his diocese, and the only one which carried on the visitation of the sick. "I have plenty of work for you now," said he to Mother

* Dr. Grant had travelled with his father's regiment when a boy. Sergeant Grant and his wife were pious Catholics from the North of Ireland.

M. Clare, October 14, 1854—"to nurse the wounded soldiers." The good mother, who knew nothing of the dreadful condition of these poor fellows, thought the bishop was jesting; but when he explained the horrors of the Eastern hospitals she offered to go at once to the seat of war. His lordship thought it impossible to spare her, but finally consented to her benevolent project. October 16 he wrote :

"MY DEAR DAUGHTERS IN CHRIST: In times of real difficulty the children of Mary must be ready to imitate her in her journey with haste into the mountains. Five of your number must start for Turkey to-morrow to nurse the sick. Our dear Mother will guard those who remain, and as the lot of those who go will be more difficult, it is necessary . . . that your reverend mother should be one of the five."

The expenses of this sudden expedition were defrayed by Lord Arundel and Surrey. Father Collingridge kindly presented to each Sister a travelling-bag and a railway rug, and a few necessary articles and books of devotion were hastily gathered up. All thought of the Flight into Egypt, and many were the points of similitude traced between the flight from Bermondsey and that sad journey of the Holy Family. Bishop Morris,* who came from St. George's to offer assistance, was affected to tears at their *naïve* confidence setting out on an expedition whose dangers and difficulties were happily hidden. "Who is to take care of you from this to Turkey?" asked his lordship. "Our angel guardians," was the reply. If this kind prelate could do little for the pilgrims, he did much for those left behind. From that time, 1854, till his death, 1872, he never failed to attend Bermondsey every week as ordinary confessor, in which office he succeeded Bishop Grant.

* Bishop Morris acted as a sort of voluntary coadjutor to the diocesans of Westminster and Southwark. He was always ready to help any one who needed his assistance. "We live only to aid each other," he would say. "Count on me if you can get no one else."

Early on the 17th, Mass and Holy Communion over, five Sisters set out after a farewell visit from Bishop Grant. The passage to Calais and the journey to Paris were full of suffering, as they were without an escort and unaccustomed to travel. Yet, as they gratefully acknowledged, they everywhere met with kindness and attention. When they reached Paris, the Hôtel Meurice, to which they had been directed, had not a vacant room. They therefore wended their way to a Mr. Goldsmid, to whom the bishop had given them a letter of introduction. But that gentleman had retired, and no entreaties could prevail on the *concierge* to disturb him. Great was their perplexity; the porter, seeing their utter helplessness, offered to conduct them to the Hôtel Clarendon. Here they were kindly received, and, after a few hours' rest, set off in search of the nearest church as soon as it was daylight. They heard Mass in thanksgiving for the mercies vouchsafed them and to beg a continuance of the divine protection. On their return they found Mr. Goldsmid, who showed them all the affection of a brother during their stay.

On Sunday, 22d of October, Miss Nightingale called and expressed her gratitude and satisfaction in being associated with such colleagues, the more so as she foresaw many difficulties in her unwonted position. During the week they spent in Paris the Sisters studied the duties they were to practise and provided various articles likely to be useful in their future work. To the Sisters at St. Roch's they were indebted for much useful instruction; and every possible courtesy was shown them in their visits to the great hospitals. Among other implements of their art they procured several cases of the surgical instruments used in military hospitals, which proved a valuable addition to their little stores and a great convenience to the medical officers under whom they worked. Every post brought words of consolation and encouragement from Bishop Grant and a few tender lines from the orphaned

Sisters at Bermondsey. To these latter Mother M. Clare wrote :

“We are very happy and merry, and pious enough, as we have two Masses every day and benediction. I have been thinking very much of you all, my dearest Sisters, and praying for you. I know you grieve, but I dare say our good bishop has told you all about us, and it is a comfort to him to know that the government has consented to employ nuns *as nuns*. Now, pray that we may do everything very well and give great satisfaction. Try to keep all at Bermondsey well and happy—Sisters, children, and all. I have you all within my heart, and say an *Ave* for you all three times a day, besides the accustomed devotions. Keep in peace, dearest ones, and beg our Blessed Lady to be indeed your mother and superior. She will help you in all things.”

On the appropriate Feast of St. Raphael,* October 24, the Sisters set out once more, journeying by rail to Lyons, where they passed the night. Proceeding to Avignon, they steamed down the Rhone, and reached Marseilles Thursday, 26th. Friday they embarked on the *Vectis*, and, the weather being stormy, Mother M. Clare became so ill that the Sisters feared she must die. When they stopped at Malta to take in coal the passengers were allowed to land, and the nuns, rejoicing in the hope of hearing Mass, repaired to the famous church of St. John, but at the *elevation* were hastily summoned back to the ship. They were hardly out of sight of Valetta when a fearful storm washed away the deck-cabins, and the passengers had no more cheerful prospect than a watery grave. Mother M. Clare had an inspiration to promise five Masses to the holy souls, if her party of five, consecrated to the Five Wounds of our dear Lord, should reach

*In many houses of the Mercy Institute the members are wont to begin their journeys with seven *Aves* in honor of St. Raphael, patron of travellers—a pious practice in vogue among their pupils also.

their destination and be enabled to accomplish the designs of God in their regard. From that moment the wind abated and confidence took sudden possession of the passengers and crew. Mother Clare had these Masses said at Scutari.

The vessel reached Constantinople November 4. The news of the arrival of the Sisters brought crowds of spectators, who divided to let them pass, and under the eager eyes of thousands they climbed the steep hill from the landing-place to the Barracks. Here they were met by Father Cuffe, who welcomed them most cordially. Amid the blessings of the soldiers, who at once surrounded them, he conducted them to their future abode. An immense building, known as the Turkish Barracks, and capable of accommodating five thousand, had been given by the Sultan as a *dépôt* for English troops. It was built so as to enclose a courtyard six hundred and sixty by five hundred and ninety feet, and was occupied by sick and wounded soldiers, whose numbers in the winter 1854-55 varied from nineteen hundred to twenty-five hundred. Their beds, with the intervals between, extended over a space of about four miles.

At each angle of the building was a tower in which were some rooms and a hall. Miss Nightingale and her party took the northwest tower, and one large room was appropriated to the religious. It is scarcely possible to describe the desolation of this apartment; it was absolutely unfurnished, save an old chair, which, being without a back, served also for a table. Not a whole pane of glass in any window, and, though the weather was intensely cold and the piercing wind howled day and night through the dismal solitude, there was no means of procuring a fire. The commandant, Major Sillery, kindly lent such bed-covering as he could spare, and sent a few mattresses, while the soldiers generously gave part of their rations to the famished nuns.

More luxurious fare, however, was at hand. A private,

understood to be an adept in cooking, treated the guests of the regiment to a cup of tea, the very thought of which proved exhilarating to the poor Sisters, feverish and worn out with sea-sickness. A can of warm water, sparsely spangled with tea-leaves, made its appearance; and this delightful beverage, unsullied by milk or sugar, was ladled out to each Sister in a copper basin. A slice of military bread, so small as to be almost invisible, completed this ethereal repast. The energetic soldier who presided as host, having done his best according to his lights and opportunities, was ever after regarded by the nuns as a "friend in need."

From first to last Miss Nightingale's difficulties were great. Her nurses were for the most part discontented, troublesome, and insubordinate, and the purveyors were unwilling to place the hospital stores at her disposal. She does not seem to have known how to go about the complicated business entrusted to her, and relied so much on Mother M. Clare that she often said she could not have managed at all without her. Sisters M. Gonzaga and Anastasia were sent to the General Hospital, about a mile off, on a bleak, rocky hill infested with wild dogs. The patients numbered one thousand. Mother M. Clare, with two Sisters, worked in the Barracks Hospital. In the severest weather, when the snow lay deep on the ground, they were without fire, and the food was so bad and scanty that they were often faint from hunger. But want of water was the greatest of their sufferings. They were unwilling to seek remedy or redress, feeling how important it was that they should set an example of patient endurance. If they had mouldy bread, and meat unfit for consumption, their hapless patients had no better. But want of cleanliness is a mortification to which the Sisters could not accustom themselves. And if, for six weeks, a draught of clean water was a luxury not to be procured, what shall we say of the scarcity of water for washing purposes?

Will it be credited that amid these privations Mother M. Clare established regular observance and gave the poor room a conventual appearance? Not even the morning lecture was omitted—she read it to her children during their hurried breakfast. When they went to their work she filled the rôle of rectorian and arranged the business of the Extra Diet-Kitchen, where she remained for hours daily to answer requisitions on the stores. No nurse was allowed to enter this department. Mother M. Clare had sole charge of supplying demands made by medical officers and nurses. Some items of the daily average issue may be gathered from the official report: “Twenty-five gallons beef-tea, fifteen gallons chicken-broth, forty gallons arrow-root; two hundred and forty quarts barley-water; one hundred bottles port wine mixed in the proportionate quantity of arrowroot.”

To receive, prepare, and give out these Mother M. Clare had a contingent of Greeks, Italians, Turks, French, besides soldiers employed as *orderlies*, styled by the nurses *Alderneys*. As ruler of this motley throng Mother M. Clare showed a generalship that astonished the army. Nothing was neglected; the work was done with military precision; not a loud word was heard, not a command given; everything seemed to go of itself; a glance from her dark gray eye, or, in graver cases, her uplifted finger, controlled this odd crowd—a task from which many a woman capable of being a constitutional sovereign would shrink in dismay. The Greeks and Turks obeyed her as exactly as if they understood every word she uttered.

The Sisters' time was spent dressing wounds often gangrened, or attending the sick. At two they dined, after which they returned immediately to their work. The fatigues of the wards over, they were forced to stay up till midnight to free themselves from the filth and insects they got by contact with the poor sufferers. And when they threw themselves exhausted on their couches the enor-

mous rats that infested the place allowed them little repose. Two of them who caught the hospital fever from the patients oscillated between life and death for many days. As they were convalescent by Easter, they earnestly begged not to be sent home, which was readily granted.

Their position, beset with peculiar difficulties, needed all the solace and strength their beloved bishop could impart; hence we find him keeping up a full and sustained correspondence with his absent children. He had heard of Lord William Paulett's prohibition about speaking on religion even to Catholics, but desires them to take no notice of it, as being contrary to the express agreement made with the government. Should he put it in writing it would be their duty to return home at once, as it would reduce them to mere nurses and thereby destroy their spiritual position. "Everything at Bermondsey," he continues, "is satisfactory. You are rewarded in all your labors for the poor by the goodness of your Sisters at home. . . . I hear your children at Brighton have spread everywhere a devotion of three *Aves* in honor of the purity of our dear Lady, to beg that one mortal sin may be prevented in the world." And after some advice concerning devotion to the Passion, to St. Joseph, and the souls in Purgatory, he concludes: "May He who sends snow like wool make the winter mild for your Sisters and your sick." When the hot weather came, with its peculiar evils, his lordship wrote: "I hope the Sisters will not suffer much from the heat. When it oppresses them they will think of our dear Lord going about this same Asia, healing the sick, obliged to rest at the well, and asking the Samaritan woman to give him to drink. When you give out the linen think of Him who provides all our raiment as He clothes the lilies of the field."

Many miseries common to all engaged in this work cannot be mentioned here, yet the strangeness of the Sisters' position aggravated their difficulties. At home,

save for visitation of the sick, they were cloistered ; here they dwelt among thousands of soldiers, mixed up with foreigners of all nations, freely accosted by the Turks with the appellation they bestowed on all English-speaking people—*Johnny*. The extreme reserve and caution necessary at all times, the impossibility of enjoying a moment's solitude, and the extraordinary trials that came now and then were a strain on mind and body that seemed unbearable.

They had all manner of visitors. Once an Armenian bishop came to make known his kindly feelings and sympathy, and to warn them against the schismatical Armenians, who boasted of visits made by European Catholics to their churches, doubtless in ignorance. Sometimes a priest or friend going to the seat of war would call and give them news of the outer world. Occasionally the Sisters of Charity from Galata paid them cordial, affectionate visits. They were cheered, too, by the piety of the soldiers, whose fidelity in profiting by the spiritual helps offered them was a subject of thanksgiving. A chapel was opened, and the nuns seemed to feel no more trouble. "The Blessed Sacrament is reserved," wrote Mother M. Clare, "and we have a little lamp before it. What a blessing to be able to go there sometimes !" The soldiers contributed for a cope and some ornaments, and the nuns sent from Bermondsey six handsome candlesticks, a ciborium, thurible, and other necessary articles. On the eve of the Assumption, 1855, the soldiers helped the nuns to decorate the chapel, and joined with devout fervor in the rosary and the chanting of the Litany of the Blessed Virgin. Bishop Grant was often on the point of recalling his dear children, though he finally concluded to leave them "for the good purpose of protecting the nuns in England from Convent Bills, with which they have been so often threatened." To Mother M. Clare he wrote on the feast of her patroness, August 12, 1855 :

“Bless the Sisters for me, and tell them that during this last session of Parliament no one has dared to say a single word against convents or religion, although the bigots have been otherwise very active. This silence is attributed, through the divine blessing, to the Sisters.” And our indefatigable correspondent does not fail to write again in September, and felicitate his dear children on their coming great festival, and recall to their minds with mutual pleasure that he had seen them for the first time on the eve of the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy.

CHAPTER XIV.

“THE RETURN OF MOTHER M. CLARE IS THE GREATEST BLOW I HAVE HAD.”—*Miss Nightingale.*

Dreadful Outbreak of Cholera—Miss Nightingale begs for more Sisters—Three sent—Christmas in the East—Dangerous Illness of Mother M. Clare—Sisters summoned to the Front—Their Beds covered with beautiful Snow—They “laundry” the Chokers of the Protestant Chaplain—And iron them with a Teapot—His Gratitude—Miss Nightingale’s Account of the Sisters—Unpopularity of that Lady—Her Reliance on Mother M. Clare—Return of the Latter—Letters of Miss Nightingale—Remarkably deficient in Talent for Governing—Considers Mother M. Clare far above her in Fitness, etc.—Poor Praise—Extraordinary Ability of Mother M. Clare—Hooting turned to Cheering—Approbation of Government officially expressed—More pleasing to the Nuns were the Soldiers’ Letters—Dr. Grant commemorates in a Pastoral the Sisters’ Return—The Mission from Bermondsey a private Charity—Distinct from the larger Mission which followed it.

A TERRIBLE outbreak of cholera in November made it necessary to strengthen the hands of the Sisters, and Miss Nightingale besought Mother M. Clare to procure more aid from Bermondsey. To this she gladly assented, and, the Secretary of War and Cardinal Wiseman, through his agent, Dr. Manning,* agreeing, three Sisters came to the rescue. The deaths from cholera averaged from twenty to thirty a day; several doctors were carried off, and the greatest alarm prevailed. Yet this did not hinder the Sisters keeping up Christmas celebrations. Mother M. Clare wrote December 27 :

“We had our little chapel very grandly adorned Christmas Day. Some of the police being Catholics, and some

* “Who acts for the cardinal as the superior named by His Holiness,” wrote Bishop Grant.

not Catholics being our friends, they took out fatigue parties of prisoners and brought us a quantity of lovely green boughs. One of the men, who is really good and pious, decorated the chapel so that you might almost imagine the grotto of Bethlehem. The image of Our Lady which you sent us was fixed on a little side-altar in a bower of green with white flowers. We had some beautiful bunches of real flowers from the same pious soldier. All the Catholic soldiers were waiting from four A.M. for the Mass celebrated at half-past six; we had second Mass at seven, and the troops paraded for last Mass at nine. At benediction in the evening the *Adeste* was sung. . . . The men all enjoyed themselves."

Extremes of climate and incessant fatigue told severely on several of the nuns, and Mother M. Clare, always frail and delicate, became dangerously ill. Three Sisters who were summoned to the front bade her a sad farewell Good Friday, never expecting to meet her again in this world. They were assigned Left-Wing Hospital, Land Transport Corps, at Karain, consisting of huts on the hillside. They had a hut to themselves and two nurses to help them. Though it was Paschal-tide, it snowed heavily during the next few weeks. Often on awaking after a few hours' much-needed repose they found their beds white with "beautiful snow." Once as they were shaking off the delicate flakes a gentleman on horseback dashed up with a useful present of half a dozen eggs tied in a handkerchief. It was the Protestant chaplain, Rev. Mr. Holt, who by this and many other acts of kindness showed his gratitude to the nuns for washing his "chokers"—not an easy task, as they were obliged to use a teapot, filled with hot water, as a smoothing-iron.

The account given by Miss Nightingale of the Sisters at the front cheered Mother M. Clare :

"The Sisters are quite well, cheerful, and most efficient. Dr. Taylor expressed to me yesterday in the strongest

words his feeling of the reform they had worked in his Land Transport Corps Hospital. 'They do more than medicines,' he said."

It will be news to most readers that Miss Nightingale was exceedingly disliked in the East. Her efforts to improve the hospital system were regarded with suspicion, and she experienced treatment amounting to insult. Though ably sustained by the home government, she often said that without the support and comfort she derived from Mother Clare, who sincerely sympathized with her, she could not have borne her position. She was now to be deprived of that solace. Father Bagshaw wrote to the bishop that Dr. Cruikshank considered Mother M. Clare's immediate return to England the only means of saving her life. This drew from his lordship a command, in obedience to which she set out for England April 28 in the screw steamer *Victoria*, an immense floating hospital, containing two hundred invalids, a troop of artillery, some doctors, ladies, and children, and many invalided officers. Several times she stopped to take in sick soldiers, so that the Sisters were not without occupation. On the 3d of May they had the consolation of hearing Mass in the famous Church of St. John of Jerusalem, where they had prayed so sorrowfully on their way to Scutari. After leaving Malta the vessel was in such danger that had she not "tacked and lain to," after several ineffectual attempts to make headway against a storm which lasted thirty hours, she must have been lost. Our travellers attributed their safety to the Blessed Virgin, whom they ceased not to invoke. During a tempest off the coast of Andalusia all gave themselves up for lost, but the Sisters consoled the seamen by affirming that all would reach England safely; Mother Clare threw her medal of Our Lady with some blessed candle into the foaming sea, and the danger passed away, the weather becoming more calm than it had been since they left Constantinople. May 16 they landed at

Portsmouth, and the same day reached Bermondsey, to the intense delight of the Sisters. A letter from Miss Nightingale, dated Balaklava, awaited them :

“MY DEAREST REVEREND MOTHER : Your going home is the greatest blow I have yet had, but God’s blessing and my love and gratitude go with you, as you well know. . . . I do not presume to express praise or gratitude to you, reverend mother, because it would look as if I thought you had done the work, not unto God, but unto me. I will ask you to forgive me for everything and anything I may have done which could ever have given you pain, remembering only that I have always felt that it has given me more pain to reign over you than you to serve. . . . I trust you will not withdraw any of the Sisters now here till the work of the hospitals ceases to require their presence, and that I may be authorized to judge of this.

“Dearest reverend mother, what you have done for the work no one can ever say. But God will reward you for it with Himself. If I thought that your valuable health would be restored by a return home I should not regret it. But I feel that unless you give up work for a time . . . your return to Bermondsey will only be the signal for greater calls upon your strength. However, it matters little, provided we spend our lives to God, whether, like our Blessed Lord’s, they are concluded in three-and-thirty years or whether they are prolonged to old age.

“My love and gratitude will be yours, dearest reverend mother, wherever you go. I do not presume to give you any tribute but my tears ; and as I shall soon want a ‘character’ from you, as my respected Sister M. Gonzaga would say, I am not going to give you a character. But I should be glad that the Bishop of Southwark should know . . . that you were valued as you deserve, and that the gratitude of the army is yours. And believe me, dearest reverend mother, ever gratefully, lovingly, overflowingly yours,
FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.”

The six nuns who remained in Russia continued to devote themselves to the sick ; many officers and medical men were among their patients, and they were particularly pleased to render service to a General de Sales, who was

descended from the family of the holy Bishop of Geneva. The last band left on the *Ottawa* with a hundred sick in July and had the happiness of exercising their duties of charity all the way home. Two patients died and one was left at Malta in a dying state. The vessel reached England July 27, 1856. Several pleasant letters from Miss Nightingale were received at Bermondsey, in one of which she assures her "dearest reverend mother" that "no one even of your own children values you, loves you, and reverences you more than I do"—which was doubtless true, though it was saying a great deal. The same lady paid a just tribute to her friend's extraordinary administrative abilities, averring that it was a misfortune that she had not been placed over the whole nursing staff. "You were far above me in fitness for the general superintendency," she wrote, "both in worldly talent of administration and far more in the spiritual qualifications which God values in a superior."

That this generous acknowledgment was strictly true was not high praise to the Bermondsey superioress. If talent for governing be gauged by success with the governed, seldom was any mortal more poorly endowed with such talent than the well-intentioned Florence Nightingale, who was never able, while in the East, to devise such measures as would give satisfaction to those among whom she worked. Comparisons, proverbially odious, would be unjust in this instance. Mother M. Clare had learned to obey before she undertook to command; she had, moreover, spent a seven years' apprenticeship under Mother McAuley, who continued to guide her by the pen from the time she selected her for the Cork house. From that all-accomplished superior the young religious learned to govern by a look, a sign, a suggestion—to rule while seeming to submit, to practise for God's sake the self-control of a diplomat, to cultivate from the same motive the blandness of a courtier. Mother M. Clare was in every sense a superior woman.

and when she mingled with other women she naturally rose to the top. This was particularly observable during the Eastern campaign. Persons who never before had intimate relations with an Irishwoman, who despised a papist, who deemed the terms *nun* and *impostor* synonymous—men said to be jealous of superior women, and women reported intolerant of any superiority unrepresented in their own persons or minds—all, with glad accord, acknowledged the superiority of this remarkable woman, whose mission was to represent among them in a special manner the suavity and benignity of Christ, and whose chief characteristic was HUMILITY—true humility in an extraordinary, perhaps heroic, degree.

Several communications were received by Bishop Grant and the Bermondsey community * expressive of the approbation of the government “of the devotion displayed by the Sisterhood in mitigating the sufferings of the sick and wounded soldiers in the British hospitals in the East.” And the bishop commemorated the happy return of his dear children in a pastoral, dated Rosary Sunday, 1856 :

“The close of the war has brought us back the Sisters whose devoted charity carried them to the encampment of the Crimea and the hospitals of Scutari, and who have earned for themselves, not, indeed, the perishable glory of earthly victory, but the promise of everlasting rewards and unfading crowns.”

The Sisters returned in detachments, lessening the nursing force as the patients decreased in number. The “Guards” on their return were accompanied by some Sisters of Mercy, and when the vessel reached England the commanding officer asked them to share their triumph by walking at the head of the regiment from the ship to the barracks, a short distance. On the way the people who had assembled to cheer the soldiers began to *groan*

* More pleasing to the nuns were the scores of letters received from their friends, the soldiers, to whose recovery they had contributed.

at the religious, whereupon one of the men became so exasperated that he sprang from the ranks and called upon his comrades to defend the ladies who had stood so faithfully by their dying brethren-in-arms. The regiment to a man placed themselves in a threatening attitude, with their rifles levelled at the crowd—a serious position, as all were supplied with ball-cartridges. The commander stepped between the regiment and the people, and in a few well-chosen words explained the relation in which the nuns were to them, the labors, fatigues, and indescribable sufferings they had endured for love of humanity. The hooting then turned to cheering, and the nuns as they marched on became the unwilling objects of an ovation. From that day Sisters of Mercy can walk through London not only unmolested but respected.

The Sisters who went from Bermondsey as a private charity, over a month before the great excitement about the miseries of the sick and wounded called forth responses from every part of Great Britain and Ireland, may be said to have maintained their private character to the end. They never mingled with the larger mission which followed, and so absorbed were both parties in their duties to the sick and wounded of their respective sections that they never met but once during the whole campaign.

We shall now devote some chapters to the second band of Sisters of Mercy, collected from Liverpool, Dublin, Chelsea, Kinsale, Charleville, Carlow, and Cork, who, at the invitation of her majesty's government, betook themselves to the Eastern hospitals in December, 1854.

CHAPTER XV.

SEARCH FOR MISSIONERS—HORRORS OF THE WAR.

Bishop Grant too conciliatory—Sisters of Mercy in Ireland decline to respond to his Appeal—The Secretary of War applies to the Parent House—Immediate Response—Interesting Letters—Dr. Yore—Formalities—Bishop Quinn's Account of the Search for Missioners—"Good by, Papa"—Horror of Alma and Inkermann—Terrible Suffering of the Sick and Wounded—"Can the Women do nothing for us?"—London searched for Nurses—Miss Stanley escorts a second Party—The Crimean War popularly believed to be a quasi-religious War—A little Reason for this—Great interest excited—The Holy Places—The Czar, the Sultan, and Louis Napoleon—The Protectorate refused the Czar.

IN holiness of life and devotion to his priestly and episcopal duties not many churchmen surpass Bishop Grant. But he seems to have had the amiable defect of being too conciliatory, too desirous of giving complete satisfaction to a government which cared little about him or the interests he had at heart, and too much elated when that government condescended to adopt any of his wise suggestions. When the Secretary of War in an official communication allowed his lordship to double the number of Sisters of Mercy originally agreed upon for the nursing staff of the Eastern hospitals, he thought he had but to apply to Ireland, and that any number would be forthcoming at a moment's notice. His letters could not reach Ireland before the 20th or 21st of October, and as there was no post on Sunday he indulged a lingering hope that the Sisters would answer in person and be ready to leave London on the 24th. But the Irish bishops, though one with Dr. Grant in faith and race, were not disposed to act without considering the matter in all its bearings; nor did they place

the same unbounded reliance on a government which had so often proved perfidious as "the Angel of the Church" of Southwark seems to have done. It was agreed that the business should be arranged only when the Secretary of War made application to the parent house, and the mother-superior was directed to show willingness to accede to the request on such conditions as might hereafter be agreed upon. The following correspondence will therefore explain itself :

From the mother-superior of the Dublin Convent of Mercy to the mother-superior of the Carlow Convent of Mercy, October 20, 1854 :

"MY DEAR REVEREND MOTHER : Enclosed you will see our communication with the government, which was dictated by one of our friends here, in order that there might be a written document for sending out religious, which, it is supposed, will be of service to the Catholic cause in Ireland hereafter.

"The government has virtually applied for Sisters and offered to defray their expenses ; and as there is no time to lose, I beg of you to send your candidates on Tuesday or Wednesday to St. Catherine's, and if their services be not required they can return. The eyes of the whole world will be on the poor nuns. I know you will select those you think will give most glory to God. They will want a supply of clothing, etc.

"Five Sisters have gone from Bermondsey to the war as a private charity. Let me have a line by return saying how many can come for certain. I saw Bishop Haly. He will not make much difficulty. Give all the aid you can, and believe me, dear reverend mother,

"Affectionately yours in Christ,

"SISTER MARY VINCENT WHITTY."

From the same to Very Rev. Dr. Yore, V.G. :

"VERY REVEREND SIR : We have heard with great pain of the sufferings of our countrymen engaged as soldiers in the East in the service of the queen. We know it

must be difficult, if not impossible, to procure for them skilful nurses speaking their own language and sympathizing with their habits and feelings, and that care and attention in a strange land which would be so well supplied at home.

“Attendance on the sick is, as you are aware, part of our Institute; and sad experience among the poor has convinced us that, even with the advantage of medical aid, many valuable lives are lost for want of careful nursing.

“It has occurred to us that, as the French Sisters of Charity have been found so useful and acceptable to their countrymen in the hospitals of Constantinople, we too might render similar services to our countrymen and help to mitigate their sufferings in the English hospitals.

“We therefore, reverend sir, through you and with your permission, in the absence of the archbishop, beg leave to offer our services to the proper authorities to act as nurses in the care of the sick and wounded, under the direction of the medical officers.

“Our services must necessarily be gratuitous. Only let us be transported to the scene of our labors and maintained there, and the survivors brought back to our own country.

“Hoping to receive a favorable answer, I am, respectfully and sincerely yours in Jesus Christ,

“SISTER MARY VINCENT WHITTY,

“*Mother-Superior, etc.*”

Dr. Yore to the Secretary of the War Office :

“SIR : I have just received the enclosed letter from the Sisters of Mercy, making an offer of their services to attend our sick and wounded soldiers in the East.

“They have addressed the letter to me in my character of vicar-general and charged with the administration of the diocese in the absence of the archbishop. I need not say that their proposal has my hearty concurrence, and if the government will accept it I shall be happy to give my best services in carrying it into effect.

“I do not anticipate that we shall be able at present to send more than from ten to twenty nuns, and it will be necessary that they be conveyed to the scene of their labors and maintained there, and that they be accompa-

nied on their passage by a chaplain, who should continue during their stay and return with them, receiving the usual appointments of a chaplain. W. YORE, V.G."

All formalities complied with, and instructions received from Archbishop Cullen, then in Rome, the business was concluded with a briskness Bishop Grant himself could not surpass. Dr. Yore appointed Dr. Quinn, subsequently bishop of Brisbane, to accompany two of the Baggot Street nuns in search of volunteers for the Crimean mission. Bishop Quinn often narrated this incident at the antipodes. We give it in his own words :

"While sitting with a few agreeable friends I was informed that two ladies in a carriage outside wished to speak to me. I went immediately to ascertain who they were and what might be their business. I found they were two Sisters of Mercy, and, after exchanging salutations, one said they would be obliged if I would get my hat and cloak and accompany them. I asked where to. She replied there was no time for explanation—they were already in danger of being late for the train; they would tell me on the way. It appeared that a number of Sisters of Mercy were wanted as nurses at the Crimea, and the government applied to Dr. Manning to obtain them, and the two Sisters already mentioned were on their way to the south of Ireland to collect them. After travelling all night we arrived at Kinsale very early in the morning. Having seen the Sisters to their convent, I went to the church to perform my devotions. I soon fell into a sound sleep where I knelt, and so continued till aroused by the commotion of a number of persons around me. These good people looked perplexed and alarmed at seeing a stranger dressed as a priest in such a helpless, inexplicable condition. I felt bound to allay their concern by explaining how I came there, by which they seemed greatly relieved. I may as well tell you, too, the result of the visit. When the reverend mother had heard the business on which the Sisters

had come, she sent to request that the bishop would be good enough to come down from Cork to settle the matter. He arrived within a few hours, and the whole community, commencing with reverend mother, begged on their knees to be allowed to join in the perilous expedition. All they saw in the dreadful accounts which had reached home from the Crimea was that it afforded a short cut to heaven. The bishop allowed the superioress, with two of the Sisterhood, to accompany us. Another joined us—a young lady of two-and-twenty. Her father, being absent, could not take leave of her; but a friend telegraphed, and he met us at the railway station of Mallow. We were made aware of his presence by hearing him call the name of his daughter as he ran along the platform. Coming breathless to the carriage-window, he inquired excitedly why she was leaving and where she was going. The young Sister, turning calmly to the mother-superior, said: 'Reverend mother, may I speak to papa?' 'Certainly, dear,' was the reply. The conversation was short; he soon learned the facts of the case. He declared that she had his full approbation and blessing; that he had given her to God and would never repent of it. A gentle voice said: 'Good-by, papa; take care, the train is moving.' And we rolled on."

Were Dr. James Quinn's relations with the Sisters unknown it might appear that they treated him rather cavalierly in summoning him off so suddenly. In truth, he was a life-long friend. From his ordination till his consecration he was chaplain or confessor to the parent house. Previous to the opening of the Mater Misericordiæ he was appointed by Archbishop Cullen to accompany the three Sisters of Mercy who went to Amiens to study the hospital system in 1852, and made a tour of inspection of the principal hospitals in Europe, that the great hospital they projected might have the benefit of the most recent improvements, and that those destined to conduct it should have the fullest knowledge of hospital management.

The eagerness of the nuns to repair to the East, once they were properly summoned—*asked* and *sent*—must have pleased and edified the zealous Dr. Grant. But, indeed, the appeal from the East no Sister of Mercy could resist; and highly privileged did those deem themselves who were chosen for the dangerous enterprise. The details were simply harrowing. The hospitals teemed with the dead and dying; the trenches were filled with the stark and stiffening corpses of many a frozen warrior. No food save the vilest could the brave men procure—very often no medicine, no attendance. Reports of the dreadful condition of the wounded of Alma (September 20) and Inkermann (November 1) horrified the humane and wrung tears from the tender-hearted. Neither linen nor lint could be found to dress their gaping wounds. “Orderlies”—so called, it would seem, derisively, who could as easily have written a Greek poem as bandaged a broken arm properly—were the sole nurses. For the twenty-five hundred sick and wounded at Scutari there were ten physicians, who certainly could not, with the best intentions, do much for these hapless patients. Neither tongue nor pen can describe the agony and anguish of this awful crisis. “Our allies” did not suffer in this way: they summoned their Sisters on the first appearance of sickness. And the questions were constantly asked: “Are there no such nurses in England? Can the women do nothing for us in this fearful emergency?” But the women only waited to be asked. Lady M. F——, the widowed daughter of an Irish nobleman, engaged three nurses, furnished money for their outfit and expenses, and offered to take them to the East herself should no one more competent be found. Some sixty nurses were gathered up in London, but of these only eleven were selected, most of the applicants being of doubtful character. Meanwhile each post brought offers, and a second band was soon organized, consisting of nine lady volunteers and twenty-two paid nurses. Fifteen or

twenty Sisters of Mercy were expected to join them, and Miss Stanley was requested to go out with the party.

The Crimean War excited more interest than any other war within the memory of present generations. This was especially the case in Ireland, as there is a certain amount of truth in the oft-repeated assertion that it had in some manner originated on religious grounds.

Year after year there had been dissatisfaction among the Christians in Jerusalem on great festivals because the keys of the chief entrance to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and consequently the best positions in the interior, were given by the sultan to Greek schismatics of his empire, while the Latin Christians had only side-entrances and "back seats." Early in the reign of Napoleon III. the French ambassador obtained from the sultan, after some protestations from England, Prussia, and other Protestant states, that the keys and chief places should be given alternately to Greeks and Latins. At this the czar, who claimed to be the head of the Greeks, made a protest against "the want of good faith" which the Turkish monarch showed in his concessions to the French, and demanded the right of protectorate over the whole Christian population of Turkey. The sultan's refusal gave the emperor a plausible pretext for seizing the Danubian provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia. The Allied Powers were unable to check him without war, which was declared when his armies occupied these territories. England and France had prevailed on Turkey not to declare war pending certain negotiations. Of course there were other causes, but a quarrel might be based on the Greek *status* any moment, Nicholas being ambitious to carry out the programme laid down in the will of Peter the Great: "Conquer Turkey and annex it to your empire." Naturally it became the policy of France and England to check the increasing power of Russia in the East, and on the declaration of hostilities the fleets of these nations entered

the Dardanelles at the Bosphorus to protect Constantinople and prevent the Russians from pushing onward. To have given the czar the protectorate for which he modestly asked would virtually have deprived the sultan of one-half of his subjects.

CHAPTER XVI.

CONDITIONS ACCEPTED—GOING TO THE WAR.

Carlow offers the first Contingent—Rules—Father Malachy's Penitent—The Patriarch himself—Anecdotes—Letters—F. Lucas, Esq.—Pleasant Incidents—Curious Medley at London Bridge Station—F. Ronan, S.J.—Lady Herbert—Hideous Costumes of the "Ladies and Nurses"—The Nuns look fashionable beside the Women in gray—Letter from Paris—From Athens—From Galata—Mary Stanley—Scutari—Constantinople—Kou-lali—"Miss Stanley will certainly be a Catholic"—A Prophecy.

THE news that the Sisters of Mercy were sending aid to the sufferers in the East was received with universal satisfaction. Carlow, the first house applied to, chose two from the volunteers, and to these Bishop Haly gave his heartiest blessing. On November 29 Dr. Dunne, of the College, said Mass very early at the convent to give them an opportunity of receiving Holy Communion to strengthen them for the journey. Accompanied by the mother-superior and her assistant, and laden down with everything their dear companions imagined useful, they set out, amid tears, prayers, and blessings, at half-past seven A.M., and reached Baggot Street at ten. Here they learned that the superioress of the mission had left for London the day previous with ten Sisters. The rest were to follow next day.

Everywhere the volunteers made the same preparation, and "the Sisters going to the war" created a great stir in the quiet little towns from which they were mostly selected, crowds of all classes following them to the train with blessings and good wishes. The following rules were drawn up by the mothers at Baggot Street, and a copy given to each Sister :

1. The Sisters are to attend to the spiritual and temporal wants of the Catholic soldiers in the hospitals, but to the temporal wants only of the Protestant soldiers.

2. They are not to enter into controversy or discussions, but to inform the chaplain of any person (not a Catholic) desirous to be instructed in the Catholic faith.

3. The interests of religion being so nearly concerned in the union and good order of the Sisters, they are to observe that silence in the hospital which their Rule directs. They should be reserved and guarded in their manner with the sick, and avoid conversations relative to battles, etc.

4. With regard to internal and spiritual matters, and the daily distribution of time, they are to obey their superior.

5. On account of the very peculiar circumstances in which they will be placed the Sisters will not be bound to the recital of the office till they return to the convent. Their daily spiritual duties will be regulated by their superior according to circumstances.

6. Remembering the words of their Rule: "The founders and institutors of all religious Orders have been differently inspired to compose that admirable variety of rules and observances which decorate the Church of God," the Sisters will avoid speaking of the peculiar observances of different Orders, and even of different communities of their own.

7. All letters to and from the Sisters are to pass through the hands of the superior.

Sister M. Aloysius S——, one of the Sisters sent from Carlow, had been brought to the convent by Rev. Malachy McMahan, who heartily blessed the Crimean expedition. This venerable priest had been a stanch friend of the holy foundress and a warm advocate of her Institute. A young lady could not pay him a greater compliment than to ask him to accompany her from her home to the cloister. By preaching and praying he drew innumerable souls to God, and, if other means failed, he would go to poor sin-

ners and make them begin their confession, which usually ended in conversion. Every summer he went to Dublin to visit all the foundresses, who were saints in his eyes. On his return all the young people of his parish (Sun-croft) were entertained with a minute description of each Order. This was his way of fostering vocations for convent life; though he never used undue influence over them, but left all to God's inspiration.

He would do anything to prevent sin, and had such a keen scent for heresy that he would know at once if there were any heretics present. Once he was with a party benighted at a farmhouse, and, the weather being such that no one could venture out, the hostess asked if he would allow a guest to occupy a second bed in his room. He consented. A fine young Protestant preparing for "orders" was ushered in, and the priest, perceiving that he lay down without going on his knees, shook him vigorously and exclaimed: "O murder! murder! Surely you'll not lie down like the beasts of the field without asking God to protect you?" "I have no prayers," replied the candidate for the ministry. "Well, child, kneel down; I'll teach you." So he gave him a lesson, saying each prayer in a loud voice, and making the youth repeat every word. This could be heard all over the house, and guests, cooks, and housemaids had the pleasure of hearing the embryo minister answering each salutation of the Litany of Loretto with wonderful emphasis.

A poor boy of his parish having asked Lady Mulgrave for work—she was then residing near the Curragh, at Normanby Lodge, Lord Mulgrave being viceroy—she brought him to the house-steward, who gave him as a help to the scullion. By some accident he cut his hand, and the doctor, who was called at once, spoke of lockjaw, arteries, tendons, till the poor little patient became weak with terror and shouted for the priest. "O Lord!" exclaimed Father Malachy on entering the room, "could none of you get a

cobweb to stanch the blood, without calling a doctor to frighten the poor little fellow? There, my boy, take some bread and milk and go to sleep, and you'll be well to-morrow, with the blessing of God."

The Countess of Mulgrave, to whom all was faithfully reported, asked to be called when next he came, and she left many distinguished visitors to receive him. He blessed her as he would any poor woman of his flock, and when she returned his visit she begged to be allowed to aid him with his poor. He would accept no money, but suggested seed potatoes and clothing for some destitute persons. The lady was charmed with his genuine goodness and begged to introduce several friends. There were some conversions among this group soon after.

When Father Malachy was appointed to Suncroft in 1809 the chapel was a hut. Desirous of building a decent one, yet not wishing to press the people, he denied himself the comforts of a home and accepted for fourteen years the hospitality of a pious widow. He was thus able to build a church out of his income, and he added three schools, all still in good working order. Towards the end of his life his limbs were contracted with rheumatism so that he could not stand, but he had his chair wheeled into the sanctuary every morning, that he might hear Mass. He heard confessions daily till five days before his death, which occurred January 18, 1868, at the age of one hundred and ten years. Though he had spent eighty-four years in the unremitting service of the altar, he had not money enough to defray his funeral expenses. His flock erected a marble altar to the Blessed Virgin as a memento of their affection for the holy patriarch.

The prayers and blessings of this wonderful old man followed the Sisters to the East. Here is a letter from his former penitent, dated Chelsea :

"MY DARLING REVEREND MOTHER: We arrived here last night about twelve, and were most affectionately greet-

ed by reverend mother, who was expecting us. We had a rough passage, were very ill, but are now as well as ever, thank God! The sea-sickness will do us no harm. . . .

“Our future reverend mother welcomed us this morning in the kindest manner. I do not think we heard half enough good things of her; I have great hopes our mission will go on gloriously under her guidance.

“This is a nice little convent—*little* in comparison to Baggot Street, but quite large enough for its number, and its inmates large-hearted enough to accommodate many more.

“Our Sisters of Bermondsey now in Scutari have abundance of the choice visitors I so often promised Sister M. Stanislaus—*rats*. I feel, if possible, more delighted than ever about the Eastern mission. Pray, pray often for us, and accept our warmest thanks for allowing us to come, and providing so amply for our comfort. With a thousand loves to each dear Sister as if named, I remain,

“My dearest reverend mother, your affectionate child,
“SISTER M. ALOYSIA.”

And here is one from her companion :

“MY DEAREST REVEREND MOTHER : I did not see the magnificent green waves since we left Kingstown. I remained on deck while we steamed out of the harbor, to give perhaps a last look at my native hills and feast my eyes once more on our own beautiful bay. But my head began to reel, and I was obliged to adjourn to my cabin till the captain announced Holyhead. We soon took the train for London. Mr. Lucas,* editor of the *Tablet*, under whose care we had been placed by his relative, Mother M. Vincent Whitty, looked after our luggage, etc., and was most kind and attentive. Indeed, I don't know what we should have done without him. When he left us we told him we should offer a special prayer for him. He said he was sure we would on the score of universal charity, but he had no other claim on us. I am sure the Sisters in the old house at home will pray for him.

“Will you, dear reverend mother, pray every day to the Blessed Virgin that we may have health to discharge our duties well to the poor sick soldiers? If any of us got

* Frederick Lucas, Esq., M.P. for Meath, a convert from Quakerism.

delicate at Scutari it would be a great upset. Thank the dear Sisters a thousand times for their great kindness. I can never forget it, and will endeavor to repay it by remembering each in my prayers. The reverend mother here is a sweet creature, and all the Sisters as kind and attentive as we could desire.

“This morning we were introduced to our Eastern mother, a fine, warm-hearted woman. I loved her the minute I saw her. Last night I prayed that I might like her and *that she might like me*; and I think my prayer was granted. Sister M. X. — did not overpraise her. We had a chat at breakfast to-day, and in the midst of it what should walk in but a fine specimen of the feline race, quite a John Bull. Seeing he was not intruding, he made his way to my side, and, assuming a most imposing attitude of mendicancy, gave a low, sweet *mew*. I could resist no longer; poor puss felt he had a friend, and it was with difficulty we parted when the refectory duty was performed. Fond love to all, and believe me, my own dearest reverend mother,

“Your devoted child,

“SISTER M. STANISLAUS.”

“MY DARLING REVEREND MOTHER: In the morning we leave London for our glorious mission. It will be carried on in a manner worthy of religion. Our sweet, dear reverend mother seems to have been specially selected for it. We travel in our veils, in the face of proud, bigoted England—no disguise whatever: will not this be a triumph for our holy religion? Everything seems conducted by the hand of God; we are receiving blessings all day and hardly have time to ask who sends them. Dr. Manning gave us a beautiful exhortation this morning. How I wish you heard him! He is heart and soul in the mission, and said so many beautiful things about the amount of good to be effected that you would long to be of the happy band.

“One remarkable feature I must not omit—you would imagine all the Sister-missioners are from one convent, all are so united.

“Mrs. Sidney Herbert came to-day; she is the wife of the Secretary of War. We received our certificates of qualification from her hands. Each ran thus: ‘Mrs. ——— to serve in the hospitals of Scutari or elsewhere.’

“You can have no idea of the sacrifices the charity of the Sisters led them to make. Imagine several of them sleeping on boards in order that we may be accommodated. They feel it an honor to give us hospitality, and make nothing of the discomforts necessarily entailed on themselves.

“This is a shabby note; my next will be from France. . . . Pray that God may preserve our future mother to guide her poor children in this arduous undertaking.”

She next mentions the fast travelling of the Sisters through France, “but not half quick enough for our desires.” The farewell visits of Dr. Manning, “a most saintly-looking convert”; the installation by the vicar-general, Dr. Whitty,* of Mother M. Frances Bridgman as superior of the Eastern mission, she being “peculiarly fitted for the undertaking”; the introduction to the chaplain, Father Ronan, S.J., are pleasantly described. Father Ronan was obliged to remain a few days to finish his arrangements with the War Office—“a fine, strong young priest, very cheerful and good. He gave us his blessing, after which he knelt to reverend mother for her blessing, saying he was her child and on that ground claimed it.”

“Lady Herbert,” continues our scribe, “paid us a visit. She was most affable and kind. I believe this lady is on the highroad to Catholicity. If we succeed in gaining her to the Church she will be a noble accession to our ranks. She is a perfect model of grace and beauty, her manner most captivating, and the *tout ensemble* such as one cannot easily forget. You would be inclined to exclaim on looking at her (like St. Gregory, you know): ‘What a pity so much beauty should be in the hands of the enemy!’” Lady Herbert became a Catholic.

Long before dawn, December 2, 1854, the Sisters of Mercy left their pleasant convent for the London Bridge Station, where they formed part of as curious a group as even Lon-

* Cardinal Wiseman had just gone to Rome to be present, on the 8th of December, for the expected definition. Very Rev. Dr. Whitty, then his vicar-general—brother to Mother M. Vincent Whitty, of Baggot Street—has since become a Jesuit.

don ever witnessed. "The ladies and nurses" wore a most extraordinary costume, consisting of gray tweed wrappers, worsted jackets, white caps, short woollen cloaks, brown straw bonnets. This hideous uniform seemed to be contract work ; whether it fitted or not was immaterial to the unæsthetic devisers, whoever they were, and an appearance partly weird, partly absurd, was given to each figure, draped fully or scantily according to the caprice of the fitter—the short people with long garments, the long people with short ones—by a frightful scarf of brown Holland embroidered in red with the words SCUTARI HOSPITAL. It was ridiculous, but painfully so, and more outlandish than anything ever planned for the humors of *Mardi-Gras*. That ladies could be found to walk into such a uniform of their own free will was already a triumph of grace over nature. The long train of nuns in their habits of coarse black serge and flowing veils looked almost fashionable beside the piebald hues of the gray-robed volunteers.

Writing from the Hôtel des Princes, Paris, our Sister says :

"The servants and people seemed in ecstasies, so glad were they to see *les Sœurs*. They were quite demonstrative in their attentions. I love the French, they are so kind and affectionate. The country looked well ; winter has not advanced much in this favored land. To-day we walked through the streets in our veils, nor did this cause any sensation. The Parisians are accustomed to all manner of costumes. It is delightful to be travelling as religious ; indeed, we could never be recognized as such in our bonnets and cloaks. All at the hotel most courteous—every one on the alert to anticipate our wishes.

"Dearest mother, you'll be glad to hear your children are good travellers. I think God guided you on this point ; no matter what our qualifications might be, without health we should be no use on this mission. Reverend mother is making us take good care of ourselves ; she says we shall have mortification enough in Scutari. She is very fond of all the Sisters ; you would think they were her

own children, and all love and respect her. We heard Mass and went to Holy Communion to-day in the Church of Notre Dame. The decorations magnificent; music very grave—so much that I thought it was a *Requiem* till I remembered it was Sunday.

“Every hour brings us nearer to our work; I wish we were at it now. A dear lay Sister from Liverpool thought our sea-travelling was over when we reached Boulogne, and was frightened, poor thing! when she heard it had hardly commenced. The houses here are of such a height Sister M—— could never reach the top corridor where our cells are. The [rooms] are grand. Each contains a looking-glass in which we could see ourselves from head to foot. Very different shall we be at Scutari; still, we shall be better off than our Blessed Lord at Bethlehem—we have warm clothing; He had none. O my dear mother and Sisters! do pray to our Infant Saviour for all the graces we need in this undertaking. Good-by. We are going to Vespers. . . .

“Such a delightful service as I witnessed! A person in military costume wearing a cocked hat was cross-bearer; little boys in red uniform followed. The music was solemn yet varied, and never monotonous; the harmony delightful. The preacher was young and very energetic; he thundered anathemas against the unrepentant sinner, but spoke so very fast that only the natives could follow him to the lower regions. Being ardent and enthusiastic, he excited my devotion. The candles on the altar were yards long; hundreds were lit in the Lady Chapel—votive offerings. We have been promised numerous Masses in England. Ireland will not be backward in praying for her daughters. We are weak, but, aided by God’s grace, always given to earnest prayer, we can do all things.

“Our courier says we shall have a short stay in Marseilles. He is most respectful. A very kind surgeon is appointed to take care of us. All augurs well for our reception in the hospitals.

“Farewell, dearest reverend mother. Pray, pray for us. Heaven is worth laboring for, but we must pray, or we cannot labor so as to reach it.”

The next letter is dated Hôtel de l’Orient, Marseilles, December 6, 1854:

“ Here we are, my own darling reverend mother, safe and sound, and in great heart to have made so much way to the term of our journey. We stopped a night at Lyons, sailed down the Rhone to Valence, took the train to Avignon, thence to Marseilles. To-morrow we shall be on the dark waters of the Mediterranean. Pray that all may go well ; so far all promises fairly. The country is lovely. I saw a lady sketching some beautiful scenery along the Rhone ; how I wished for the sketch, to send it to you ! We saw Vienne, where Pontius Pilâte died ; also the famous Mont Blanc. The Rhone is magnificent.”

The next is from Athens :

“ We are now near where St. Paul preached—not landed, but resting at anchor, and viewing the classic land which once boasted so many heroes, philosophers, poets, and orators. Could they look beyond the tomb and speak, what would they say of our mission ? Some, no doubt, would approve, but I fear among the cynics, like their imitators in the nineteenth century, we should not meet many friends.

“ Several ladies have gone ashore to view the remains of what once was great. They sent us fine oranges, very welcome to weary travellers.

“ We had a dreadful storm on the 12th, our foundation day. The seamen said it was only rough, but it was great enough to create intense alarm, and for hours we thought we should be lost. The waves dashed in on all sides ; our cabins and all in them drenched ; the engineer’s hut was washed off deck. We prayed as we *never prayed before*. Our prayers were heard: morning was calmer, but we could not proceed ; so the captain turned into the harbor of Navarino.

“ When the sea became calm we started again. We threw miraculous medals into the waves, said *Memorares* innumerable, and invoked the Star of the Sea to be our guide. Reverend mother, though delicate, kept up wonderfully. The ladies—that is, the lady nurses—like her immensely ; indeed, any one would like her, she is so warm-hearted and motherly ; added to this she has a most captivating manner and address—things not to be despised where one has to make her way and win the good opinion of such high functionaries as the deputies of her majesty’s government.

“Though just in humor to give you the benefit of my thoughts, I am unwillingly obliged to draw to a hasty conclusion, as our stay has been limited to half an hour.”

A letter, December 19, from Constantinople gives other particulars :

“Here we are, actually in a convent—Maison de la Providence—surrounded by kind, loving Sisters, all most anxious to make us happy. Reverend mother is a prophetess : she told us that on our arrival we should receive a welcome, and an Irish one, too.

“But you say : Why not at Scutari, nursing the soldiers ?

“Gently, my dears, and I will tell you. The War Office has misunderstood Miss Nightingale. She had written such doleful news about work and overwork that the heads at the Horse Guards interpreted it in a way not consistent with Miss Nightingale’s views, and sent help before room could be had for them. Miss Stanley applied to the British Embassy, we to the Sisters of St. Vincent. It seemed to impress the English ladies and all with a deep reverence for our holy institutions when they saw the well-known white bonnets coming across the bay in a boat to bring us away—‘There seemed,’ Miss Stanley said, ‘such a spirit of union amongst them’—and all were amazed that our application for hospitality to those on whom we had no claim was answered so promptly and with such an overflowing of kindly and sisterly feeling. *Deo gratias!*

“Miss Stanley is High-Church. I think she’ll soon be whole church, she is so good and earnest. You will pray for her ; she has been most attentive to us. At first she could not understand why we wished to be *ensemble*, but now she sees the utility of the arrangement.

“We got a fine ducking in the storm that night of nights. We had three *garçons* in the cabin throwing out water, the Sisters helping as best they could, all presenting to the Sisters on high the strangest figures. The confusion of sounds bore a strong resemblance to what one might imagine Babel to have been.

“The Scutari hospitals are crowded, yet room must be found for eight hundred who are coming from the Crimea. The prevailing fever is a low typhoid, produced by over-fatigue. An Irish soldier who was wounded at Inkermann told us the hospitals had improved very much since the arri-

val of the Bermondsey nuns. At Athens we were visited by a Greek priest, who seemed very glad to see us, and said he would send us a souvenir. Shortly after two Sisters of Charity brought a fine basket of oranges for the Irish nuns whom the *padre* had blessed.

“Constantinople is gorgeous. Till you enter it you are as if in an enchanted land, but as you make your way along the dirty, ill-paved streets the illusion vanishes. Nothing is comparable to its magnificence viewed from the sea; you could gaze at it for hours without being weary. Nature and art have rivalled each other in making it a queen. The mosques, the minarets, the gilded palaces, the gardens, the cemeteries—all blend and contrast so beautifully that you would think some fairy landscape-painter had planned it.”

The next letter is dated British Embassy, Therapia :

“We left the good Sisters on Holy Innocents, that day so full of funny recollections, and steamed down the beautiful Bosphorus, accompanied by our good, kind friend, Miss Stanley, who continues to provide everything for her ‘dear fifteen,’ as she fondly terms the Sisters. It is a common saying with travellers whose descriptive powers are not of the highest order, ‘*It was so lovely* that I cannot describe it.’ If others have taken refuge in this hackneyed phrase I need not be ashamed to use it speaking of the Bosphorus. Looking from one side to the other, from Europe to Asia and *vice versa*, you become bewildered by the rapid succession of villas, mosques, gardens, vineyards, kiosks, and cemeteries—these last very handsome, yet solemn. They are planted with sombre cypress, beautifully contrasting with the showy tombs, of which there are vast numbers in Turkish cemeteries. No grave is available for more than one individual, and all are dug about three feet from the surface. We are in a house belonging to Sir Charles Napier; but while we reside in it, it is the Convent of the Nativity—it did not receive that title from the War Office. It is beautifully situated on a gently rising ground, a few yards from the sea, and surrounded by delicious plantations. We sometimes ascend the heights to feast our eyes on the magnificent scenery around us, of which neither tongue nor pen can give an adequate description.

“We go to Mass every morning to the Naval Hospital, a

distance of about two miles and a half. The walk is delightful, though it sometimes snows so hard that it is difficult to make one's way; but we rather enjoy this little variety. We are to have charge of a hospital at Koulali, about three miles from Scutari, and nearer to the seat of war. It is a Turkish barracks, situated at the water's edge, given up to the British."

The next letter is short :

"At last we are at the glorious work. There is a good staff of army surgeons—the P. M. O. being Dr. Tice, a Catholic. Another Catholic here holds a high position, Dr. O'Connor. The medical officers are for the most part Protestant Dissenters ; *all* are exceedingly polite and kind. Each Sister has a paid nurse to assist her. I have the good fortune to have a fine middle-aged woman, whom I like very much, and she seems well pleased to be with me. This is egoistical, but you know I am telling all. We are literally up to our eyes in work. Miss Stanley continues as kind as ever. *She will be a Catholic.*"

And now we part company with our pleasant correspondents. They have no longer time to write at any great length to the dear ones at home, who follow them with prayers and blessings. Every moment is absorbed by the sick soldiers, who pour into their wards by hundreds.

CHAPTER XVII.

BEAUTIFUL LETTER OF DR. MANNING—"THE HUTS WILL ARRIVE IN JANUARY, THE FURS IN MAY."

Fuller Particulars—The *Egyptus*—Troy at Sunset—The Golden Horn—"God send them safe home to us"—Letter of Dr. Manning—Horrors of a Winter Campaign—Destitution—The hired Nurses insist on Equality with the Lady Volunteers—Incidents—"I likes Goose and Gravy"—The white-gloved *Garçon*—"The Cabbage comes *alouk*"—Miss Nightingale finds the hired Women unmanageable—Miss Stanley more successful—Lack of Discipline—Testimony of the *North British Review*—Injustice of a Comparison—Opinion of a Lady Volunteer—Letters—Four Thousand Patients, and more coming—Father Ronan—Conversion—Anecdotes—"Whatever you advise, Ma'am"—A Soul saved.

OTHER letters gave fuller details of the Sisters from the moment they left Ireland. The hospitable greetings of their London Sisters; the friendly and fatherly visits of the large-hearted cardinal; the attentions of many from whom they expected none; the tender farewells; the rough passage across the Channel; the delicate kindness of the fishwomen at Boulogne; how the steamer ran aground in the Rhone, and how picturesque the Provence peasants looked dancing by torchlight; how the pilgrims embarked in the *Egyptus*, a vessel so much out of repair that she would have been in the docks but for the great demand for troop-ships to convey soldiers to the seat of war; how they saw Stromboli and anchored off Messina; how they passed the plains of Troy at sunset, entered the Dardanelles, and remained some hours at Gallipoli; how they passed Scutari, and dropped anchor in the Golden Horn, on which were unfurled the flags of all nations save the Russian—all this was enlarged on again and again. The

letters of the loved absent ones were read at recreation amid smiles and tears, and many a hearty "God send them safe home to us!"

The troubles, difficulties, and privations of their new life could not be put into words, but the character of the mission they had undertaken had not been in the least concealed from them. They knew it from several sources. The following communication from Dr. Manning will be read with interest, though it be nearly thirty years since the circumstances which called it forth have become matter of history :

"78 SOUTH AUDLEY STREET, Dec. 1, 1854.

"MY DEAR SISTERS IN JESUS CHRIST : It seems but right that a few words of encouragement should be addressed to you who have so generously offered yourselves to go on a new and difficult mission, in which many unusual and unforeseen trials may come upon you.

"You will, however, always bear in mind for whose sake you go forth and to whom your services of consolation are rendered. This thought, without such words as I, at least, can write, will suffice to strengthen and to cheer you under all you may have to endure. Nevertheless there are certain points on which you may not think a few words without their use.

"At first you may perhaps meet with many privations and inconveniences in leaving the quiet and order of your simple convent home to enter upon a life of travel, activity, and labor, sometimes, it may be, with slender or bad provisions for food or dwelling, and with rough fare even in the few things your ordinary life requires.

"You will not, I know, let privations or hardship overcome you or draw from you a word of complaining. But you will bear all those things with a cheerful heart for His sake who often had not 'so much as time to eat' (Mark iii. 20), nor had where to lay His head (Matthew viii. 20).

"Again, in conversing with many people, as you needs must do, you cannot fail to meet with many trials, from the ill-temper of the evil, the slights and injustice of adversaries, the rudeness and censure of many who are good in many ways.

“Prepare yourselves for this mortification, and offer it gladly to our Divine Lord, who bore all manner of contradiction for you.

“Another subject about which you will need to exercise yourselves in the spirit of patient and glad compliance will be the work of learning how to treat medical and surgical cases.

“All of you have probably had experience in nursing ordinary sickness, and that alone is enough to make you feel how much more will be required of you than you have yet had opportunity to learn; you are going, therefore, to work as learners, with a spirit of exactness and humility, and you will receive, I well know, the directions of physicians and surgeons with a prompt and cheerful readiness. We need never be ashamed to learn, and every lesson we acquire is a new gift which we may lay out again in the service of our Lord. Begin your work, therefore, from the beginning, from the simplest rules of practice, and learn accurately everything which relates to the care of the sick, the dressing of wounds, the handling of special cases of medical or surgical treatment. Being already called to the grace of the more perfect life, be not content with an imperfect or ordinary knowledge and skill in the nursing of the sick and wounded, but strive to be as perfect in this ministry of consolation as in the life of the counsels.”

The reverend doctor goes on to say that if it be God’s will that the nuns return from the scene of their labors, they may be called to other works of mercy to Christ’s suffering members which will inscribe their names on the love and gratitude of their country—a hope which should cheer them under trials and mortifications, and keep them from being disheartened by any humiliations or vexations they may have to bear.

“Remember,” he says, “these things are crosses, and that name will make them light, even precious, to you.

“And, lastly, be not discouraged at the change from the recollection and tranquillity of your cloister and choir to the ceaseless motion and publicity of the world of work in which you will have to live. God is able to make the hospital a cloister and your own heart a choir. His graces

will be with you in the measure of your daily and hourly need. If you leave Him in the silence of your convent it is to find Him by the bedside of the wounded. You leave Christ for Christ, and wheresoever you go for His sake He will be with you.

"Many prayers will be put up for you without ceasing, and oftentimes the Holy Sacrifice will be offered for you that you may 'spend and be spent' with glad hearts for our dear Lord's sake, and receive from Him the reward of joy which is laid up for those who serve Him in the least of his brethren.

"May His loving care bring you safely home again! If not I trust there will be more crowns in heaven:

"Forgive these words from one who has no worthiness to be your counsellor, and give me a place in your prayers; and may the grace of God be with you all!

"Believe me, my dear Sisters in Christ, your faithful and humble servant for His sake,

"HENRY EDWARD MANNING."

The trials promised by the holy doctor did not fail. Many considered, with a distinguished member of the Coalition ministry, that the Sublime Porte "had chiefly himself to blame for his misfortunes, through his senseless policy and reckless misgovernment." The consequence of this cost several Christian nations oceans of blood and treasure. Historians have expatiated on the gross mistakes of the British government; indeed, the leader of the Opposition in December, 1854, used language no less true than severe: "You have chosen a winter campaign, and what have been your preparations for it? In November you gave orders to build huts. You have not yet sent out that clothing which is adapted to the climate. . . . You have commenced a winter campaign in a country where it most of all should be avoided. You have commenced such a campaign—a great blunder—without providing for it—the next great blunder. The huts will arrive in January, and the furs will probably meet the sun in May. These are your preparations!"

The reports which filled the papers of the want of proper food and clothing for the healthy, and the suffering, privations, and neglect for which the British hospitals were earning a most unenviable notoriety, brought grief to many a household whose dear ones were among the twenty-six thousand men fighting, or lying sick, or freezing in the trenches in a foreign land. The arrangements for nurses, hardly inferior in importance to physicians, reflected more honor on the hearts than on the heads of those who originated them. The lady volunteers, who were of good families and most earnest in their desires to help the sick, were placed on equality with the hired nurses, many of whom were the vilest creatures that England could produce. On the journey out only amusement came of this. For instance, when all sat at the *tables d'hôte*, as the party travelled through France, there was many a war of glances between the nurses and the *garçons* whenever the latter attempted to change the plates of their uncouth guests. "Wat's the use of eatin' one *think* by itself now, and then another?" said an elderly woman in the tweed uniform, as the white-gloved fingers of a *garçon* "whipped off" her chicken and inserted some unknown condiment in its place. "Now, I likes goose and gravy and beans and things together." "An' I means to 'ave wat I likes," persisted another, who, to the intense astonishment of the polite waiters, laid "wioient" hands on "that 'ere fowl" and refused to invest in it till the accompaniment of cabbage "came alonk."

But when all were housed together at Therapia, and it became necessary that cooking, washing, and ironing should be done, the nurses flatly refused to put their hands to household work, averring rather fiercely that they had come to nurse the soldiers, not to sweep or wash. These people were a terrible trial to Miss Nightingale. Over sixty per cent. of those who accompanied her from England were sent back in less than six months, chiefly for miscon-

duct ; though grave indeed should the irregularity become before the delinquent could be detected and dismissed. So worried had she been in dealing with these poor creatures that she feared to employ the second band, allowing them to remain idle for a whole month. She urged, and with truth, that the nurses could not be left in the wards alone. Miss Stanley, however, obviated that difficulty by arranging that one or more nurses should be given as assistants to each nun or lady volunteer. Unlike Miss Nightingale, Mary Stanley was so fortunate as to challenge the respect and esteem of every one. She showed much skill in dealing with the difficulties of the situation, which, indeed, were all but insurmountable for several reasons, but especially total lack of discipline in the material upon which she had to work. As time rolled on comparisons were made between the Sisters and their colleagues, not to the advantage of the latter. In truth, there was much the same difference between them as between the regular army and a mob. "It has been remarked* that while in the Crimea our hired nurses disgraced themselves by incompetency and disobedience, and many of our volunteer ladies were obliged to return home ill or worn out, the Sisters of Mercy held on with unflagging spirit and energy—never surprised, never put out, ready in resource, meeting all difficulties with a cheerful spirit, a superiority owing to their previous training and experience."

But it is not fair to institute a comparison of this kind. "The superiority† of the Catholic Sisters of Mercy showed itself over all other classes of nurses engaged in the East. . . . To them work among the sick and suffering was no new thing undertaken in the heat of enthusiasm. To live for the poor had been for many years the resolve of each heart ; for this they had gone through a long pro-

* *North British Review*, February 2, 1862.

† *Eastern Hospitals and English Nurses*. By a Lady Volunteer. London: 1857.

bation of four years and a half, and during that time had been content to learn all they would hereafter be required to do, to guide or to teach. Hence the perfect unity of their work, the facility that existed of one taking up what another might be interrupted in.

“Now, most of the ladies had had no experience whatever of nursing the sick and poor, and those who had had learnt it in their own way, and in that way only could they carry it on.

“Again, with regard to the superioress of the nuns : she was not one placed suddenly in a new and untried position, incapable of entering into the difficulties of those working under her. For before being selected to rule she had learned to obey ; and however great her natural talents for governing and for organizing work, without that complete control she had long since acquired, there never would have been seen to so much advantage the remarkable feature, that the act of one was the act of all, which was so observable in the Sisters of Mercy. No one regretted more than our superintendents themselves their want of previous experience—their need of having learnt practically the work of nursing before they were called on to superintend a nursing staff.

“Trained to a life of hardships, the health and strength of the Sisters withstood the shocks under which the health of the ladies sank, and they could continue the strain of work to which the latter were wholly unequal. Routine they were accustomed to, and to the absence of the comforts of life they had become inured. Obedience was with them a habit ; therefore they were not likely to fail in the rigid obedience required by the medical officers.”

Insubordination is a peculiarly Protestant sin, and, as all the lady volunteers and nurses were Protestants, the poor physicians suffered from its developments. Making all just allowance for want of training and experience, women of any rank who would keep patients cleanly and quiet, see

that their food was well prepared and suitable, and *obey the doctors*, ought to have been very useful. And any person of ordinary intelligence is capable of so much.

We have endeavored to explain from various sources the state of things in the Eastern hospitals. We shall now give some of the hurried letters of the Sisters to the loved ones at home. In the following the busy writer, having described the abundant spiritual consolation she enjoyed at the midnight Mass, the singing, the baptism of an Eastern princess, continues (January 21, 1855): "Father Ronan approved of all our dear reverend mother had done. He is determined that all will go on so as to promote the glory of God. Wherever we are we shall have an oratory and the Blessed Sacrament. We told Miss Nightingale that Father Ronan had been appointed our chaplain and guardian by the bishops of Ireland and England.

"This hospital was formerly occupied by Russian prisoners. We have unlimited leave to give instruction to Catholic soldiers. I have charge of a store-room. Miss Nightingale says she could not give this charge to any but a Sister. She would be rather a nice person had she been properly managed in the beginning. We have four thousand patients; more are constantly coming from Sebastopol. They suffer beyond description from the cold and frost; their feet are sometimes in such a state that in the attempt to remove their boots parts of their feet remain in them. I cannot describe the respect and attention paid us—indeed, we have nothing to complain of. Dear Miss Stanley is as good, kind, and affectionate as ever. Will you not pray that our good God may reward her by bestowing on her the gift of faith? She is greatly pleased with Father Ronan; indeed, his Order may be proud of its representative in the East. He is to explain a chapter of our Holy Rule every week in each of our houses; is it possible for us to fail of being very good between his instructions and our constant attendance on the dying? This hospi-

tal is tolerably comfortable, considering the number in it. Some of the Protestant ladies who came with us are going to Balaklava, and will take charge of the sick soldiers on their way here. I think that for this act of charity God will bless and reward them with the gift of faith. No one can tell what these poor fellows suffer during the voyage.

“I feel quite at home when I meet the poor Irish. The other day one of them said: ‘O ma’am, do they give ye enough to eat?’ and when I said ‘yes’ he was quite delighted. It seems strange to see Sisters of Mercy going to Mass every morning, surrounded by officers and soldiers, who always stop to look at us, as if they had never seen us before. In my department I have sometimes an opportunity of instructing men who come for clothes. I asked a poor fellow yesterday if he were lately at his duty. He said ‘no,’ but his wife went regularly, which he thought would do for him. There is such a world of good to be done here that we are filled with joy at the prospect of being able to get on.

“We never stop, always attending or preparing. At one time you see a Sister, laden with jars of lemonade, going to the patients in her ward; again, with an assistant, bringing arrowroot, rice, or sago; again with her sleeves tucked up so as to resemble the old-fashioned leg-of-mutton sleeves which some of you remember; a stiff apron with pockets, scissors and surgical instruments at her side; sometimes going through her wards with the doctor, receiving his orders, or holding up a poor frost-bitten limb for his inspection, which she dresses, binds up, and bandages. Another gives out wine—a solemn proceeding: first you see the nun, then the sergeant of the ward, then the orderly holding an immense can of wine, which he measures out in gills to those to whom it is ordered; closing up the rear, another orderly carrying tin vessels for the patients to drink from. The Sisters must see that what-

ever is ordered is duly administered ; hence all this form. Besides, wine is a tempting beverage ; it would not do for the orderlies to give it out without an *inspector*. To close my sketch, imagine you see us in the evening, after the day's labor, seeking the poor Catholics to give them instruction and consolation. The poor patients have a kind of low fever, and no wonder ; after the awful hardships they went through, their constitutions have been undermined, and they are bad subjects for any disease.

“The Englishmen are grateful for the smallest service, and some express their respectful gratitude in the nicest form. One said to me : ‘I care not for creed or difference of opinion ; to me you are all angels of mercy, and on part of my comrades I express my grateful acknowledgments.’ He said much more expressive of the same feeling. I never thought my eyes should become so familiar with death ; every day we see some poor soldiers going out, sewed up in a coarse blanket or coverlet, to be buried. If death be awful everywhere, it is truly so in a military hospital.”

The precious cross greeted the Sisters at every turn. Complaints were made that they aided the Protestants “religiously.” A burst of bigotry assailed them. The patients, when questioned, declared that they could not believe any one wicked enough to use such a pretext to deprive them of the Sisters' services. They were well aware of the engagements the Sisters had made, and how faithfully they had kept them. Nothing could exceed the caution of these poor fellows in avoiding the least thing that might be unpleasant to the Sisters. Not an angry word or curse did they ever hear save one, and when the culprit turned about and saw a Sister behind him he said : “Ten thousand pardons, madame ! I'd much rather curse before the minister than before you.” The nun kindly explained that it is not well to curse before any one, for God always hears.

“If we kneel beside a poor Catholic to whisper a prayer,” writes a nun, “though the great majority in the ward are Protestants, there is a thrilling silence; this is the more remarkable as silence is by no means observed when the minister attends the dying. Conversions are silently going forward. Some send for the priest at the last moment, and all attribute their conversion to us. Among the last set from the Crimea was a lad quite delirious from the pain of his frost-bitten feet. The poor child was shouting for his mother. I showed him a crucifix, spoke to him of the Passion and of his mother in heaven. He became quite calm. Next morning when I went to the ward he called out to me, extending his hand, I thought, for an orange, as I had some. I put one in his hand; he dropped it, and in a tone of disappointment said: ‘It is not the orange I want, but to shake hands with you.’ I shook hands with him heartily. A few beds from him I found a man of fifty who had lately come in. When I inquired how he felt he said: ‘Your kindness to that boy quite touched me. I must tell you all about myself.’ His mother was a good Catholic, his father a Protestant. A priest cured him of some disease he had when a baby, on his mother’s promise to bring him up a Catholic. She kept her word, but after her death he apostatized. ‘But, oh!’ he said, ‘the sight of ye has brought a dreadful feeling on me. And then ye are so kind; I never saw any one like ye out of the church.’

“‘Well,’ said I, ‘what do you want to do now? Your religion must be marked over your bed; will you have *Catholic* or *Protestant*?’ ‘Whatever ye advise,’ he said. I replied that we had come out under a promise not to interfere in the spiritual concerns of Protestants. ‘I cannot break my word. If you are marked *Protestant* I will attend to your bodily wants, but cannot speak to you of your soul. When the orderly asks your religion you are free to profess what you consider best.’ ‘Then,’ said he

firmly, I'll be marked a Catholic, though it will stand against me in my regiment.' He kept his word. I instructed him. He went to confession and received Extreme Unction. Next day he became delirious and died.—R.I.P. I could tell you volumes of this kind."

CHAPTER XVIII.

INTERESTING DETAILS—CONVERSION AND SUBSEQUENT CAREER OF THE ZEALOUS MARY STANLEY.

Miss Stanley gives full Control of the General Hospital to the Nuns—Arrow-root under Difficulties—The Angels must have helped—Landing of the Patients—Complete Prostration—Vermin—The Light Infantry—The Heavy Dragoons—Gratitude of the poor Sufferers—"Reminds me of my Mother"—Easter Day, 1855—Hospitals entirely dependent on the Nuns—*Times* Correspondent—Quiet Discipline—The Pope asks for News of the Sisters and sends them his Blessing—Archbishop Cullen—Old Soldiers coming for Lozenges—"Bono"—Sheep-bells—Connaught Rangers—Eighteenth Royal Irish—The new Purveyor, J. Scott Robinson, Esq., places all his Stores at the Discretion of the Mother Superior—He is kind as a Brother—Insomnia—Horrors of the Night in Koulali—Intense Cold—Soldiers unable to draw a Trigger—Terrible Suffering in the Trenches—The feet of one Soldier frozen to those of another—The "Unspeakable Turk"—Disgusting Women—They recur to the Sisters rather than the Doctors—Earthquake—Ludicrous Scene—Imams *salam* to the Nuns—The swarthy Sultan salutes them—Warm Friendship between Miss Stanley and the Nuns—Converts—The *Mary Stanley Bed*—The Model Hospital—Memorial of Dean Stanley to his Sister—Her good Deeds—Opinion of the Countess of Denbigh—Lady Herbert—Mary Stanley dies before the brilliant Dean, for whose Conversion she prayed.

"AT first there was plenty of confusion in our hospital, as we tried to cook for our patients as well as nurse them, but all was harmonious between us and the doctors, nurses and ladies, and dear, *dear* Miss Stanley. It was proposed to open the General Hospital, and Miss Stanley wished us to have charge of it; four hundred and ninety were admitted at once from the Crimea, and such desolate, worn-out beings in the shape of soldiers you could not imagine. While awaiting their arrival Miss Stanley and

I made some arrowroot, though we had no cook, no vessels, no kettles; large caldrons there were, but no way to take out the boiling water except in ladles which would not boil arrowroot. Well, at last I thought we would dissolve the arrowroot in a large caldron on the floor, and get the soldiers to tumble the contents of the one on the fire into it; in this way we mixed one-third of a large case, adding three bottles of port and a due proportion of sugar. The head doctor said he never saw arrowroot so liquefied before; he feared it would spoil. I begged leave to assure him it was right. I have little doubt the angels had some hand in making it, for more delicious arrowroot was never tasted. He begged some for the sick doctors, and it quite established my character with the faculty. Ever since I can get plenty of arrowroot and port for the poor men when they land. This landing of poor patients is most interesting and consoling. We have to wash their faces and hands, and cut their hair, etc., and the dirt is such that the sheets look as if they had been used to scrub the floor. Before two days most of these poor creatures are so prostrated as to need spoon-feeding with wine, sago, etc. If these things were left beside them they would not take them. They feel a kind word and sympathy so much on their first arrival, after so many cruel hardships, that they often begin to cry, and seem more grateful for that than for all else. One poor fellow replied to my inquiry how he had spent the night: 'Oh! I do like to have you come and see me that way.' Another said: 'Sister, is it wrong for me, ma'am, to say the way you take care of me reminds me of my mother?' He feared the comparison was not sufficiently respectful."

The vermin in the Eastern hospitals was fearful. The blankets were brown with fleas, which the soldiers aptly called *light infantry*; a more disgusting insect which, unfortunately, abounded in these historic regions they

styled *heavy dragoons*. It was long before the Sisters could enforce cleanliness, and the final establishment of it was not the least of their victories.

“*Easter Sunday, 1855.*—We had a hundred men at Holy Communion this morning. One, whose mother had assured him he had never been baptized, makes his First Communion to-morrow. Father Ronan baptized him quietly in our little oratory.

“Well, all the spiritual good, to say nothing of the temporal, which God in His mercy daily permits us to see should reconcile us to more of the cross than we have. Miss Taylor, one of the lady volunteers, told the *Times* correspondent that the two hospitals here depend entirely on us, and that most marvellous are we in getting through our work. ‘Marvellous indeed,’ he repeated; ‘but their quiet discipline fits them peculiarly for hospital duty.’ Archbishop Cullen has written from Rome, stating that the Pope takes the deepest interest in our mission, requiring his grace to translate for him the letters he received from this place. His Holiness condescended to say that he desired more information by return of post, and our priest begged me to write a statement of our mission, which I did, at some length, as it will be read for the Pope. His Holiness graciously sent us his Apostolic Benediction.

“I have just distributed three hundred eggs in honor of the festival to the men who did not get any from the diet-roll, and the poor fellows were so pleased! Sometimes we get lozenges from England, and it does amuse me when an old soldier comes up leaning on a staff, and says quite gravely, ‘Mother, have you a few lozenges in your pocket?’

“We get benediction to-night in real missionary style, without monstrance, cope, or thurible. Several new companies have come in. Some men asked Father Ronan ‘where was the convent,’ which amused him greatly. All go to confession to-day, and Communion to-morrow for their Easter, please God. They promise to be very good

and do all we tell them. Sometimes we meet Turks. Their salute is *Bono—good*. We seldom meet a woman or child. The hills are very steep. Nothing is more lovely than the flocks of sheep; they remind us of the patriarchal times. Each has a bell suspended from the neck, and the beautiful harmony of bells is most thrilling.

“We have many of the Connaught Rangers and the Eighteenth Royal Irish, and wild, brave fellows they are. There is some talk of our going to the Crimea. God sees that we wish only His will, and He will direct us to the best. We have a new purveyor-in-chief, J. Scott Robinson, Esq. He is a kind and powerful friend, and has already added to our accommodations and comfort. He has placed entirely at our discretion all his stores, food, clothing, etc., and desired me to act as if the hospitals were my own. Will you not pray this truly good Scotchman into a good Catholic? He is a stanch though liberal Presbyterian. To me he is really as kind as a brother. That will, I know, secure for him your constant supplications. He says we need not concern ourselves any more about reports sent to the War Office, as he will answer them for us and will be trusted.

“The weather is very hot. I suffer most from want of sleep. It seems as if we go to bed to become the food, not of worms, but of fleas, flies, bugs, ants, mosquitoes, and be entertained by the music of rats, dogs, and donkeys, and the roaring of cannon, which are discharged seven times to announce a fire in Constantinople and vicinity. In the late gunpowder explosion this hospital had a narrow escape of being blown up.

“We have just received some hundreds of poor creatures worn out with sufferings, frightful beyond what you could imagine, endured at the Crimea, where the cold is so intense that a soldier described to me the Russians and the ‘Allies’ in a sudden skirmish, and neither party able to draw a trigger; so fancy what the poor soldiers must endure

in the trenches, lying in water or snow, never seeing a bed, eating raw beef and biscuit—never anything hot or cooked, not even a drink for days together. A poor soldier with frost-bitten feet told me that, when lying ill at Balaklava one night, when he tried to stir his feet he found them frozen to those of another soldier whose feet were against his. Many lose all the toes, many the whole feet, and not a few die of this frightful frost-bite. And even if they get healed, should they catch fever or any other disease they seldom recover.

“Here the men are quite comfortable. If any want be felt it is owing to the circumstances of a semi-barbarous country, as Turkey is. You could hardly class the Turks as Europeans, or believe you are in a European country when passing through Constantinople. These people seem quite savage, and the women disgusting in appearance. But intercourse with the West is already improving them. The Turks about here are quite polite to us. They favor us with their surgical cases in preference to the doctors, and entertain a high idea of our skill. They call us *Mother*. When they bring water to our quarters they make known their arrival by shouting, *Johnny!* They are really hewers of wood and drawers of water here, and seem a most degraded people. Their dress is very ugly, untidy, and dirty. Whatever be the result of the war, they cannot be worse off than they are.

“Wherever there is a Turkish barracks a hospital is beside it, built in a square, with cloisters or corridors, the windows large and numerous. Our trials are many and bitter, but our consolations numerous. We are treated with extraordinary respect and confidence by patients and doctors. Orderlies and others apply to me even in matters in which it would not be prudent to interfere. They say: ‘O ma’am, one word from you would settle it all.’ If we ask the doctors anything the reply is: ‘Do anything, give anything, you please. You will give nothing wrong.’ The

presiding physician gave orders that my requisitions were to be honored as his own ; that he would be accountable.

“We have just had some shocks of an earthquake. I was in one of our wards when suddenly the windows began to dance and make a strange noise, and the floors to tremble. It was really awful, but, like everything awful here, was soon blended with the ludicrous. As I went towards the oratory a stream of men moved towards me, striving to reach the door which led to a square in the centre. I never saw such a combination of the awful and the ludicrous—the poor creatures in their various degrees of toilette, some tottering, some hobbling, all looking so eager to reach the door, more terrified than if they had seen the Russians coming. A fit of laughing seized me, and, do what I might, I could not control it. I had to hide my face with my hands. The thought of the British army making such a display is still enough to set me off. The shock lasted three minutes ; we had also four slight shocks during the day and one at night. I was kneeling at a poor fellow’s bed, instructing him for First Communion, when a slight shock took place. It seemed as though I were on the conductor of an electric machine, so strange and thrilling was the sensation that passed up my spine. If we could only get together all we are instructing for First Communion we should have a fine class: Life here is not worth a day’s purchase.

“Since the hot weather not a green thing to be seen ; the grass is parched to the roots, the lovely hills are like heaps of earth. We go about in our religious dress ; it secures us respect and attention everywhere. People are amazed at the difference in the respect Protestant patients show to us and to the secular ladies, and how much they prefer being under our care. Poor fellows ! I shall ever feel grateful for the courtesy and reverence they manifest to us. If possible the Protestants and Presbyterians show more than the Catholics.”

Indeed, reverence was the rule everywhere. From Turkish women, whose dull faces were half-shrouded by the *yachmaks*, to the Imaums, descendants of Mahomet, robed in sacred green; from pashas and beys in crimson fez and richly embroidered dresses to the white-turbaned menial of the sultan's palace, every one had a *salaam* for the nuns—mysterious personages in the eyes of the followers of Islamism. Once only they came across the Sublime Porte himself, and his dark, weary face lit up with unwonted interest; nor did the Sacred Majesty, before whom the highest dignitaries lie prostrate in utter abjection, and whose lazy hand only the descendants of the Prophet are privileged to kiss, deem it beneath him to salute as gracefully as he could the procession of dark-robed nuns whose labors in his empire he thoroughly appreciated.

The closest friendship existed between the Sisters and Miss Stanley, who was loved and esteemed as she deserved. The relations between her successor, Miss Hutton, and the nuns were equally pleasant, though Miss Stanley was always the favorite. "Miss Hutton," writes the superioress of the nuns, "I cannot praise too highly. I never had dealings with a more honorable, upright mind. We never had the slightest difficulty with these ladies or with the medical officers. As to the soldiers, their devotion to us was quite chivalrous. Their delicate tact in shielding us from any disagreeable incident was quite marvellous. Many, indeed, are worthy of honorable and grateful mention in connection with that mission of ours." It is singular and significant that this graceful pen, which delights to record acts of kindness, has no word of praise for the lady whose name is so widely known in connection with the Eastern hospitals, either in the general letters to the religious or private letters to the brother of the writer, a distinguished ecclesiastic in India.

From the first converts were numerous, though the nuns, scrupulously observant of their contract, used no means

to promote conversions save the legitimate influence of example and the all-powerful means of secret prayer. In their letters they continually beg prayers for those who befriended them in this desolate land. Where they failed to draw souls to the faith—for *no man can come to Me except the Father draw him*—they at least removed prejudices and gained friends. Recently Baron Napier,* a Scotch nobleman, after describing their zeal and devotedness to the sick of every religion, takes care to observe that, though religion was the motive of all their actions, they never attempted to make a single convert. "But," continued his lordship, "they made one convert—they converted me, not to believe in the Catholic faith, but in the Sisters of Mercy." It was universally admitted that they knew no distinction of race or creed; and no event of modern times did more to remove the absurd prejudices of the English and Scotch than the devotedness of the Sisters to suffering humanity during this war. Here, at least, they drew honey from the rock and oil from the flinty stone. But far greater consola-

* Lord Napier and Ettrick frequently bore testimony to the fidelity with which the nuns kept to their contract of non-interference. At Edinburgh, on a recent occasion, he said: "At an earlier period of my life I held a diplomatic position under Lord Stratford de Redcliffe in Constantinople. During the distress of the Crimean War the ambassador called me one morning and said: 'Go down to the port. You will find a ship there loaded with Jewish exiles, Russian subjects from the Crimea. It is your duty to disembark them. The Turks will give you a house in which they may be placed. I turn them over entirely to you.' I went down to the shore and received about two hundred persons, the most miserable objects that could be witnessed, most of them old men, women, and children, sunk in the lowest depths of indigence and despair. I placed them in the cold, ruinous lodging allocated to them by the Ottoman authorities. I went back to the ambassador and said: 'Your excellency, these people are cold, and I have no fuel or blankets; they are hungry, and I have no food; they are very dirty, and I have no soap; their hair is in an indescribable condition, and I have no combs. What am I to do with these people?' 'Do!' said the ambassador. 'Get a couple of Sisters of Mercy; they will put all to rights in a moment.' I went, saw the mother-superior, and explained the case. I asked for two Sisters." She ordered two from her presence to follow me. They were ladies of refinement and intellect. I was a stranger and a Protestant, and I invoked their assistance for the benefit of Jews. Yet these two women made up their bundles and followed me through the rain, without a look, a whisper, a sign of hesitation. From that moment my fugitives were saved. No one saw the labors of those Sisters for months but myself, and *they never endeavored to make a single convert.*"

tions were vouchsafed them. The charity of several English ladies was, perhaps at their prayer, rewarded by the greatest of gifts—the gift of faith. Of these fervent converts we shall mention one—Mary Stanley, daughter of the late bishop of Norwich and sister to the more celebrated dean of Westminster Abbey. This is the Miss Stanley for whom prayers are asked in every letter from the Sisters to their convent homes.

These prayers were most fully answered. That distinguished lady not only became a Catholic, but dedicated her life to holiness and benevolence. Her change of faith, though not acceptable to her brother and her dearly-loved sister-in-law, Lady Augusta Stanley, did not interrupt the warm friendship that existed between them. Some will remember the memorial to his sister which the dean placed in the sanctuary she built among the mountains of Switzerland, which so often witnessed her devotions, and its motto, chosen by himself: *Levavi oculos meos in montes, unde veniet auxilium mihi.*

This illustrious lady survived her Eastern experiences some twenty-five years. Among the monuments suggested to enshrine so holy a memory, that proposed by her friend Lady Herbert has been adjudged the most appropriate—a perpetual bed, to be called *The Mary Stanley Bed*, in the Hospital for Incurables, Great Ormond Street, London. “Her large-minded charity,” says the Countess of Denbigh, “and her self-sacrificing devotion to the relief of human suffering, were well known in the East during the Crimean War, and in her later years among the poor of London.” There is a peculiar significance in choosing this hospital for the “Mary Stanley” monument, as it was partially founded as a thank-offering for the work of the Sisters of Mercy in the East, and its first superior and earlier members had served the sick and wounded in Turkey and Russia during the Crimean War.

Miss Stanley organized several charities. A home, a

lodging-house for women, a laundry at Westminster, a penny savings-bank, a society to collect and distribute flowers to the poor and to hospitals, are among her benevolent works. She was a contractor at her own risk for government clothing, thereby supplying work to soldiers' widows and other poor women. She rendered valuable help during the Lancashire cotton famine, also to the Society for Aid to the Sick and Wounded.

It was well this charitable lady passed away before the brother for whose conversion she had sighed and prayed. It would have been anguish to her to see him die as he had lived (July, 1881). Yet perhaps this would not have been the case had the last moments of this brilliant representative of the versatility of Anglicanism been soothed by his saintly sister, so loving and so beloved.

The Koulali hospitals had been only nominally in charge of Miss Nightingale, who never once visited them. Miss Stanley, whose arrangements were acceptable to every one, remained in the East longer than she intended, partly that she might be of service to the nuns, and partly at the request of Lady Stratford. On her return to England Miss Nightingale resigned the *nominal* charge, and Lord William Paulet appointed Miss Hutton in her stead. Both Miss Stanley and Miss Hutton left the whole direction of the nursing to the mother-superior of the Sisters of Mercy, under whose administration "it became," says one of the lady volunteers,* "the admiration of all who visited it, the pride of the ladies and nurses who worked in it, and the model hospital of the East."

Miss Stanley was baptized by Rev. W. Ronan, S.J., at Koulali. She yielded to her convictions against her inclinations, which were as anti-Roman as possible—so much so that, after years of fervent practice of Catholicism, her Catholic friends thought they could still discern something of the Puritan about her.

* Miss Taylor.

Another lady volunteer, Miss Fanny T——, was a diligent and earnest searcher after truth, to which, when once found, she clung with a childlike and affectionate devotion. "It is my firm persuasion," wrote a Sister, "that Miss T—— was always a Catholic, though she knew it not. Holy Church, I believe, holds many such in her invisible pale, and awaits the time marked out by Providence to name them of her communion."

A Sister from whom we have largely quoted apologizes because her letters are not more interesting. "Owing to our peculiar position we thought it best to suppress several *entre-nous* occurrences." This charming letter-writer continues playfully: "You must not infer, however, that we are guilty of overdoing anything. We had the happiness of the direction of the Jesuit Fathers during our mission, and we endeavored to imbibe their spirit of prudence."

CHAPTER XIX.

SISTERS OF MERCY AT BALAKLAVA—TWO OF THEM ENTER THEIR REST.

Sir John Hall invites the Mother Superior to take charge of the General Hospital—Father Woollet, S.J., escorts the Sisters to Balaklava—Regrets—In the Black Sea—The Huts—Sir John Hall visits the Nuns—Inducts the Mother Superior as Superintendent of the General Hospital—Every Tribe and Tongue and People—Kindness to Strangers—Letters from the Bosphorus—Inimitable Epistle of Mr. John James Hopkins—His Feelings and those of the Sergeant of the Rifles are in-com-pre-hen-si-ble—He cannot “congregate his good Wishes”—Remarks—The little Drummer Boy—His Lines on the Battle of Alma—Soldiers beg for “a bit o’ writin’”—“Cannot keep the Flames in Rank”—The stern Realities of War—Death of Sister M. Winifred Sprey—Letter—Funeral—Cholera furiously raging—Sisters turn from the Dead to the Dying—Requisitions for Night-watching—“Not amputated, but cut off”—Orderlies turned Cooks—Their Devotion to the Sisters—Amusing Incidents—Words like Jewels—Death of Sister M. Elizabeth Butler—Letter—Soldiers released from Parade to attend the Funeral—A Contest as to who shall have the honor of erecting a Monument—The lonely Graves marked by marble Crosses—Lines by an Orderly.

AFTER the fall of Sebastopol Sir John Hall asked reverend mother to take charge of the General Hospital of Balaklava. Miss Nightingale had informed him that her nurses would be withdrawn before October. As the patients had now become very few in the Turkish hospitals, and as the Sardinians were in need of one of them, Miss Hutton, though deeply grieved to part with the Sisters, as indeed they were to part with her, said she could not in conscience retain them while so little was to be done at Koulali and so much at Balaklava. Father Woollet came from the camp to escort them.

They had now to leave a place endeared to them by many touching associations. Their pretty chapel, its altar

raised on a divan, was especially dear, not only because they found in it the *Divine Prisoner*—far more to them than “a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night”—but also because *there* the main part of their mission was accomplished in the thousands whom they had induced to make their peace with God. The two Masses on Sundays were crowded, as was the evening benediction. Convalescents thronged the daily Mass, men off duty came when possible, and the Sisters had the satisfaction to know that no Catholic ever left Koulali without receiving the sacraments, nor did a single Catholic die without the consolations which Mother Church reserves for her dying children.

On the 8th of October, 1855, the nuns left Koulali, and on the 10th they came in sight of Balaklava, in time to encounter a terrible gale, which kept them tossing in the Black Sea some days longer. The mother-superior, who would not be kept away from her sick soldiers, ventured to land with one companion and the chaplain—a proceeding which nearly cost them their lives, as the swell was fearful. The others followed later. On the 12th Sir John Hall visited the party, whom he cordially welcomed, and immediately inducted the mother-superior superintendent of the General Hospital. Here and in some fourteen huts in the vicinity were motley assemblages of patients. The soldiers had had some attentions, but the sick civilians were regarded as intruders, though attached to the army as mule-drivers or in some other capacity. Among them were Maltese, Greeks, Italians, Americans, Germans, and negroes. The Sisters, without neglecting the soldiers, showed special attention to these poor fellows—strangers in a foreign land, they had the greater claim to compassion.

Not only prayers, good wishes, and blessings followed the Sisters, but letters from such of their former patients and orderlies as could beg, borrow, or “annex” the stationery—a rare commodity. The following inimitable production was dated Scutari :

“DEAR SISTER : I write to send my best respects to you, hoping they will be acceptable. For me to draw any inference from how very good and civil you were to me, it is that makes me think you will not be vexed with my audacity in enclosing a note for you ! ! But if it displeases you, all you have to do is, to tell Tom Connors that I should not enclose a note for you, and you will be obeyed !

“But, dear Sister, I cannot Congregate my good wishes for you as a very NOBLE LADY !

“Dear Sister, the Sergeant of the Rifles and myself unite in sending you our best respects.

“Our feelings on this point are IN-COM-PRE-HEN-SI-BLE ! We cannot express how Lonesome we are since you left Koulali. Please do us the Honor to write to us, dear Sister. I have the Honor to Be Your obedient humble Servant,
“JOHN JAMES HOPKINS.”

From this bewildering epistle it will be inferred that clearness is not the most salient characteristic of Mr. John James Hopkins' style, which, to use his own energetic expression, is sometimes incomprehensible. It would be rather late to tell Mr. Tom Connors about a note already despatched, even could that gentleman be found, which was exceedingly unlikely. It is to be hoped, however, that the feelings of Mr. John James Hopkins became less incomprehensible, and that he was able “to congregate his good wishes,” when he received by return of post a relic for his prayer-book in the shape of a very pretty letter. From this he no doubt drew the inference that the NOBLE LADY was far from being vexed at his audacity, though she may have found his style a little hazy.

The soldiers were most ambitious to possess “a bit o' writin'” from the Sisters. When a nun gave a prayer-book she was asked to enhance the gift by a word on the fly-leaf. “Ah ! then, Sister, I'd rather one bit of your writin' than the whole book,” said one. Another varied the request : “Write in it, ma'am dear, if you please. Sure I'd rather a line from you than the Victoria Cross.” Naturally they used military language in season and out of sea-

son. One orderly complained to a Sister who was teaching him to cook that the flames in the oven wouldn't keep the ranks!

But to return to our friend. Mr. John James Hopkins had under his protection a drummer-boy who had the misfortune to lose his father in the battle of Alma—a sad event which, however, turned him into a fine *Pote*, as his guardian enthusiastically declared. This pleasing fact caused Mr. John James Hopkins to adorn his affectionate letter with a postscript, desirous that the Sisters should enjoy a literary treat which he had found no less interesting than elevating:

“P.S. The piece of poetry by a Comrade on the Death of his Father at Alma I send with my best respects”:

LINES ON THE BATTLE OF ALMA.

I.

“ Oh ! welcome, hoary Christmas,
 With all thy gladdening train ;
 A thousand welcomes to you,
 Were my father back again !
 A year ago he shared in all
 Our juvenile delights,
 But now, alas ! he sleepeth
 On Alma's gory heights.

II.

“ I mourn him, gay old Christmas,
 For he was kind to me ;
 And though a daring soldier,
 A father's heart had he.
 I weep not that he left us
 To guard his country's rights,
 But that he found so early
 A grave on Alma's heights.

III.

“ He bade me, when we parted,
For his safe return pray,
And strive to cheer my mother
When he was far away.
On my ear his words still linger ;
I dream of him o'er-night,
And fancy I can hear him
On Alma's crowded height.

IV.

“ As yet I'm but a stripling,
Unused to war's alarms ;
But when I'm grown to manhood,
With strength to carry arms,
I'll go and join the forces,
Be foremost in the fight,
And then revenge my father,
Who fell on Alma's height.”

The simple pathos of the orphan boy's lines touched many a heart less soft than that of poor Mr. John James Hopkins. Alas ! how many wives were widowed and children made fatherless in that awful war. The news of victory was received with wild bursts of exultation, but the lists of the killed and wounded brought the stern realities to many a happy home. One would like to think the brave young poet had a happier fate than his father, and that his good friend Mr. John James Hopkins was able to restore him to his poor widowed mother whom that beloved father had charged him to cheer “when he was far away.”

A violent outbreak of cholera kept the Sisters busy night and day, and one of its earliest victims was selected from their band—Sister M. Winifred Sprey, of Liverpool, a most useful and devoted lay Sister. The following, written by her companion, Sister Magdalen, to the lay Sisters at Liverpool convent, describes her precious death :

“BALAKLAVA GENERAL HOSPITAL,
October 21, 1855.

“MY VERY DEAR SISTERS: I am quite anxious to let you know the circumstances of our dear little Sister's departure. . . . She did not seem ill till the 19th. Reverend mother sent her to bed immediately. On the 20th the doctor pronounced her disease cholera, but thought it a light case. All day our poor reverend mother watched her so closely that the Sisters could scarcely get her to her meals. She herself washed her and put on her last clothing. Our poor Sister had every attention any creature could have, from priests, doctors, Sisters, and all. She died quite calmly and happily about half-past eight the evening of the 20th, just as Father Woolet was finishing the prayers for the departing soul. Poor thing! she told me not to be fretting, and she asked pardon of reverend mother and all if she had shown any impatience while the mustard-plasters were on. She was carried to the grave by four Catholic soldiers, who begged as a favor to be allowed to do it, and the *navvies* dug her grave. Three priests and several doctors attended her funeral. . . . I helped to put her in the coffin. This is a great cross, but, thank God! Sister Elizabeth was not the victim. Pray that we may be with you all again, if it be the divine will, and ever believe me,

“Your affectionate

“SISTER MAGDALEN.”

The same post brought a letter from mother superior :

“MY VERY DEAR MOTHER: I send our Blessed Lady* herself to announce to you the sad news I have to communicate. God has taken dear Sister Winifred to Himself. She is the first part of a holocaust accepted by Him—His holy will be done and His name blessed and glorified! She finished her course by cholera, after one day's illness. Though it is a dreadful shock and a severe trial, it is to me no small alleviation that she was with me, that I could nurse her myself and see that all possible aid, spiritual and corporal, was lavished on her. Had I left her at Scutari, and had she died there at a distance from me, the trial would have been still more bitter.

“Our dear Sister had not been well when we left Scutari, but after the sea-voyage seemed better. . . . She died

* There was a picture of the Blessed Virgin in the letter.

sweetly and peacefully. Next day the funeral took place, conducted as at home—the Sisters in procession, wearing church cloak and carrying lighted tapers—all preceded by the cross. Fathers Moloney, Unsworth, and Woollet attended. Father Woollet blessed the grave; it is situated on a rocky hill in sight of our hut. . . . The cholera now raging is of a most fearful character. We never leave the patients a moment, day or night.”

Indeed, poor Sister M. Winifred had scarcely breathed her last when a request came for two Sisters* to sit up with a new cholera case. Such was the extreme violence of the epidemic that for a time there was no such thing as recovery. The doctors, having agreed to try chloroform as a remedy, felt they could not do so unless they had nurses at once careful, vigilant, and thoroughly reliable as to obedience. Hence the requisitions for night-watching. The mother-superior signed the names of those selected to watch; we give a few:

“Dr. L— requests that a Sister would sit up with his Dutch patient in No. 9 ward to-night.” Now, as one Sister never entered the wards alone, it was necessary to appoint two. The above was signed: SISTER M. ELIZABETH.
SISTER M. ALOYSIA.

Another request—always equivalent to a command—would come for “Sisters to sit up with the Maltese and the Arab.” Another informed “the Sisters that their kind attendance on *Jones* every night would be necessary until a notification to the contrary be given.” Various written directions would be left for the watchers, as: “Please give the alarm to Dr. H— in case of danger.” “Keep the stump † moist—a little champagne and water to be given

* “It is strangely touching to think of their turning from the terrible scene of cholera patients in their agony to the sight of her who lay so calmly there, arranged for her burial, holding the parchment on which were written the vows she had made to devote herself to God and her suffering fellow-creatures. She had finished her work; theirs lay yet before them.”—F. T.

† The orderly who helped to take care of “the stump” was regarded by his comrades as a funny fellow. A Sister asked him, before the patient’s limb had disap-

during the night." "Blackman may have one gill of brandy beat up with an egg, or any other stimulant the Sisters may suggest." "Eliot to be watched all night; the powder every half-hour; wine in small doses, if necessary." "The Sisters are requested to attend the boy Keicher, in No. 8, all night."

Never had workers more sympathetic subordinates than the Sisters had in their orderlies. As a good deal of cooking for the more delicate patients fell to the nuns, these gentlemen were constantly heard in the kitchen: "Musha, miss, 'tis killin' yourself you are this day; lave me do it, now." When Sister M. Aloysia, conscious that virtue should be rewarded, made a Christmas pudding for her orderlies and fatigue-men, they declared they "couldn't stand it to see a real lady working for them." Some of them learned to cook nicely, and one, who achieved the feat of making transparent jelly, would bring his tray of "shapes" in triumph to "his own Sister," and say, not without ulterior design:

"I'm afeard, ma'am, it's not clear, now."

When the expected reply came, "Really, William, it's beautiful; I couldn't make it clearer myself," the amateur jelly-maker—who, by the way, was a big dragoon of six feet five—would blush and simper like a bashful school-girl bearing off her first prize, and, deprecating the praise he so eagerly coveted, would say: "Oh! no, ma'am; the boys could never do anything as nate as you."

It was well known that the nuns would never complain of the orderlies or have them punished, but this only made the men more zealous in their service. A word of displeasure from the Sisters was worse to these poor fellows than a flogging. Sister M. S——, having occasion to correct an orderly, prefaced her remarks thus: "Perhaps, James, you do not wish me to speak to you a little se-

peared: "Do you know, Thomas, if Robert's leg is to be amputated?" "O Lord, no, ma'am," cried out Thomas, excitedly; "it's only going to be cut off!"

verely—" "Troth, Sisther," interrupted Mr. Doherty effusively, "I *glory* in yer spakin' to me. Doesn't it show ye take an interest in me? Sure the day I came to Ballyklava I cried with joy when I saw yer face."

One, who happened to have taken a superfluous glass, was so mortified on meeting reverend mother, whom the soldiers called their commander-in-chief, that he wept and sobbed like a child. Another under a similar difficulty was so afraid of meeting her "before his sinses came back intirely" that he hid for several hours between the shelves of the linen-press. He had never hidden from the "enemy"; a medal with three clasps bore eloquent testimony to his bravery. "You know, dear," said a Sister to another, "I don't like to say anything harsh—" "Spake, ma'am," interrupted the delinquent; "the words out of yer blessed mouth are like jewels fallin' over me."

Early in 1856 rumors of peace cheered the Sisters, but God demanded another sacrifice from that faithful band: Sister M. Elizabeth Butler was called to a martyr's crown. This Sister was specially beloved for her extraordinary sweetness of disposition; the holy calm about her impressed every one. She had no wish but to do God's will and be in His hands for time and eternity. She caught typhus in her ward and expired most tranquilly on Saturday, February 23. Death seemed to have no sting for her. She was always renewing her vows and making her profession of faith. She had not the least repugnance to die or wish to live, feeling *sensibly* she was in the arms of her Father. "He will do for me what is best," she whispered, "and His will is all I desire."

Just before she died she said earnestly: "Reverend mother, I could never express how happy I feel; there is not one drawback." Reverend mother said: "Now, dear Sister, you know our many necessities; will you not help us when you see God face to face?" "I surely will," answered the dying religious. "You know all who have

done good to us in this mission ; will you ask God to reward them with eternal life ? ” “ Indeed I will. ” “ Well, ” proceeded reverend mother, “ as our divine Lord wishes us to pray in this world for those who persecute and calumniate us, perhaps it may be equally pleasing to Him to do so in the next. Will you, then, ask Him to forgive and convert those who have tried to do us harm ? ” “ I certainly will, ” she replied, so full of earnest faith that one might suppose she was engaging to bring a message from one room to another.

She thanked all the Sisters most affectionately, embraced and took leave of them, retaining her senses to the last. She had no agony—the fever simply consumed her.

“ What better death could a Sister of Mercy have, ” writes reverend mother, “ than to die in the fulfilment of her vocation ? I desire nothing better for myself. If sympathy be a consolation—and what human consolation is greater ?—we have it in abundance. My heart is full of gratitude to all here. I could not describe the various delicate ways in which sympathy, affection, and kindness are being poured out on us. ”

The death of Sister M. Elizabeth was announced by the chaplains of the different divisions after Mass. They added that the Office would be at three P.M., and the funeral after. The Eighty-ninth begged Father Unsworth to ask the colonel to excuse them from parade, that they might attend, which that officer willingly did. Detachments from every regiment joined them. The Eighty-ninth requested “ the honor ” of bearing the coffin. One officer earnestly desired to be among the chosen, but thought he was not worthy, as he had not been at Holy Communion that day. The chief medical officer had the medical staff on parade to attend the funeral. The Sisters of Charity at the Sardinian Camp sent five of their number to express sympathy and condolence. The holy remains rested in the hut on the top of the hill till three, when hundreds of soldiers

formed a double file on each side of the passage from the hospital to the hut, where eight priests, the Sisters, and the soldiers chosen to bear the body had assembled. Every head was uncovered and bent as the procession passed down the hill to the chapel. The coffin rested on a platform before the altar till the Office was said, after which all ascended the hill in order. It was a thrilling sight. The multitudes of various nations, ranks, employments; the holy silence, unbroken save by the voice of tearful supplication; the groups, still as statuary, that crowned the rocks above the grave; the sullen Black Sea beneath, moaning dismally—all combined to make a weird and beautiful pageant never to be forgotten by the thousands that took part in it.

“O dear mother!” wrote the superioress to Mother Linguori, Liverpool, “never shall I forget that death-scene, though I have knelt by many a death-bed. She sank gradually and tranquilly, as the lamp consumes itself before the tabernacle.

“It was a wild, wild night; the storm-wind penetrated the chinks so as to extinguish the lights and evoke many a prayer that the death-bed might not be left roofless. Oh! it was awful beyond expression to kneel beside her during those hours of her passage, and hear the solemn prayers for the dead and dying mingled with the howling of the winds and the creaking of the frail wooden hut. Then the contrast—the storm without, which *disturbed all but her*; the imperturbable calmness of that happy being, for whom earth’s joys and sorrows were now at an end, and whose summons home had not cost her one pang, one regret. It was a beautiful picture of what our religious life should be—one long (or short) death-like indifference to the storms that disturb the exterior world.

“A contest arose between the medical staff and the soldiers as to which should have the honor of putting a cross on her grave. The soldiers insisted it was their

right, as the Sisters had come out for them ; the doctors insisted it was theirs, the Sisters being regarded as members of their corps. We took no part save to feel truly grateful for the kind feeling of which all this is additional evidence.”

The graves of these cherished Sisters were tended with loving kindness when those of more distinguished individuals were forgotten or neglected. A chaplain who visited the place long after the Sisters had left found these lonely graves on the brow of that rugged hill enclosed by a high iron railing set in cut stone, the whole being visible from the Black Sea beneath. They were decked with beautiful flowers and evergreens, planted by the loving hands of the soldier-friends of those who sleep in that distant clime, and marked with white marble crosses bearing their simple epitaphs. On the arm of the cross at Sister Winifred's grave the priest found a paper on which were written the following lines, composed, as he afterwards learned, by one of her orderlies :

“ Still green be the willow that grows on the mountain
And weeps o'er the grave of the Sister that's gone ;
More blessed its lot than to droop by a fountain,
And bespangle its green leaves with gems not its own.

“ Much more glorious its lot to point out to the stranger
The hallowed remains of the sainted and blest ;
For those angels of mercy had dared every danger
To bring to the soldier sweet comfort and rest.

“ They left their own homes when war's trumpet was blowing,
When hunger and cold laid our brave comrades low ;
Their pure hearts were filled with Heaven's brightest glories,
As they came here to banish fell sickness and woe.

“ Still be hallowed their memories ! They'll ne'er be forgotten,
Though their bones lie so far from their green island home ;
And should e'er these wild hills be by Erin's son trodden,
Thou'lt point out, green willow, who sleeps here alone.” *

* Sister Winifred was English by birth ; Sister M. Elizabeth, Irish.

CHAPTER XX.

LETTER FROM BISHOP DELANY—GOING HOME.

Answer to a Letter of Mother Bridgman's—Definition of Philanthropy—Continuation of the Story of the War—The Healthy envy the Sick—Soldiers see the Sisters by Stratagem—Peace proclaimed—Death of the Emperor of Russia—Birth of the Prince Imperial—The Nuns decline to work with Miss Nightingale—They prepare for Home—Stormy Scene—Affection of the Soldiers—Accusations—Reverend Mother writes to Lord Raglan—Officers ask Furlough to escort the Sisters Home—Lord Pakenham—His Cousin becomes a Passionist—Grief of the Men remaining after the Sisters' Departure—The Jesuits at Malta—Gibraltar—Bishop Hughes.

WHEN the old accusations were renewed by some ministers whose "occupation was gone," Madame Bridgman mentioned the circumstance to her bishop, who kindly forwarded the following letter, dated Kinsale, May 8, 1856:

"DEAR REVEREND MOTHER: AS I find at the convent they are about writing to you, I cannot refuse myself the gratification of slipping a line under cover of their letters. I received your letter, and would have instantly replied, but that I perceived the matter which had been causing you uneasiness seemed to have been settled. Your work is so manifestly the work of God that we must expect various contradictions as a matter of course. Whatever they may be, there is always one even course to be followed: bear up cheerfully and happily against them all, be firm in your just rule of acting, and do not leave your post. It is only when you have returned to your native home, full of merit before God, that you can begin to enjoy fully the happiness of your present mission. The works you are engaged in would in themselves seem of sufficient importance to justify all the labors you have endured and all the risks you have encountered. But there will be results, and from what I hear they are even now beginning, which will

be glorious to religion and beneficial to Catholicism in the minds of our fellow-subjects. It is scarcely necessary for me to say anything in confirmation of the duties and calling of a Sister of Mercy. Noble as benevolence undoubtedly is, you are not mere philanthropists in the ordinary and restricted meaning of the term; though in its true sense the philanthropist is one who would minister to the comfort, the true and great comfort, of the soul no less than to the wants of the body. Your calling is from God, and principally for the salvation of souls, and you could not undertake the mere task of nurse-tending unaccompanied by the higher functions of your Order. If necessary, it might be done for a short while, in the expectation that by some delay all might be brought about right at last, should occasion arise. I conceive your course would be to protest against it. Submit to it so far as to exercise the corporal works of mercy for a time. Meanwhile write home for instructions, thereby to gain time. Then have an effort made to set matters right, and shape your course according to success or failure.

“Will you kindly assure the good Sisters of the most lively interest I take in their individual happiness, and tell them how deeply we all feel the benefit they are conferring on the cause of religion. I thank God most fervently for the manifest protection afforded you in your many trials, and hope to see you all return home soon and happily.

“I remain, dear reverend mother, with sincere regard,

“Yours very truly,

“✠ WILLIAM DELANY.”

Because there were many conversions it was often assumed that the Sisters interfered religiously with the non-Catholic patients, and reports to that effect were at various times made to the War Office, the commander-in-chief, and others, by Protestant ministers. The inconvenience arising from these reports once became so serious that mother-superior wrote to Lord Raglan, explaining the strictly conscientious attitude of the Sisters under every aspect. His lordship expressed himself pleased and satisfied. Indeed, the Sisters never had the slightest difficulty or misunderstanding with the military or medical heads. These

gentlemen, all Protestants, were not less enthusiastic in their praise of the nuns than the soldiers themselves.

No one could hold intercourse with the mother-superior without recognizing in her the highest rectitude of principle and practice. She had given her word not to attempt to convert non-Catholics, and rather than violate that word every one who knew Madame Bridgman felt she would willingly be roasted over a slow fire. Never was mortal more thoroughly imbued with that glorious principle of Catholic theology, that we could not lawfully purchase the salvation of the whole world by the commission of the smallest wilful sin. There was, therefore, no danger of her violating her contract, even when attempts were made to encroach upon her own rights.

This strong yet gentle spirit, who gave the details of Sister M. Elizabeth's death with so much pathos and beauty, will continue the story of the war:

“We have not a cross here with any one. The medical officers all work beautifully with us. They quite rely on our obedience. Sir John Hall, the head medical officer of the army, is loud in his praises of the nuns. We are quite independent of Miss Nightingale, and have no secular ladies or nurses here. We scarcely ever see the face of a woman but our own. Only fancy your poor Sister marching constantly through rank and file, officers, transports, sailors. The hospital and its huts are scattered over a hill. We spend our days in the face of the world—our eyes, of course, cast down; still, we cannot but see the caps of officers and men raised as we pass. The respect of all for the Sisters is intense, and seems daily increasing. Don't be shocked to hear I am so accustomed to the soldiers now, and so sure of their respect and affection, that I don't mind them more than the school-children. The drollest things happen. We have a hut for a chapel, daily Mass, benediction every Sunday, Rosary every evening. The Catholic soldiers are proud of their faith now.

We have crowds of Communion every Sunday in each division. The men are quite proud of the Sisters. You may see a fine, brave fellow doff his cap, make a low bow, and say: 'I belong to yees, ma'am,' or 'to you, ladies.' The Protestants, who are equally enthusiastic, envy the fortunate Catholics who claim property in the nuns. The improvement in their morals is, I am told, wonderful. The proportion of Catholics increases."

The soldiers in the camp did not choose to leave the Sisters wholly to the sick. They tried by stratagem every now and then to have a few words with "our Sisters." "Please, sir," they would say to the chaplains, "do send a couple of us on an errand to the hospital to get a sight of the nuns."

"Truly," proceeds our ardent scribe, "we have many, very many, causes of gratitude to our good God for all He has done for us in this mission. In us He has chosen the weak things of this world to confound the strong. Pray much for my own sanctification, and that the constant anxieties, distractions, and vicissitudes of this time may make me fitter to go to God."

Peace was accelerated by the death of Nicholas I., Emperor of Russia. After the birth of the poor Prince Imperial the terms of its proclamation were concluded. The thought of getting home once more did the poor patients more good than medicine. Though there was now no serious case of illness among the soldiers, the medical officers were anxious to detain the Sisters to the last, that the convalescents might have the benefit of their care. But a circumstance occurred which brought matters to a close. As the Koulali hospital was closed, and the sick at Scutari reduced to a handful, Miss Nightingale thought proper to come to Balaklava and assume charge of an institution which she had already resigned, and which, under other administration, had become a model. History has not yet discovered the causes of that lady's uninvited and

unwelcome descent on Balaklava "when the cruel war was over," but rumor assigned many, among others a desire "to have the rule" of the all-accomplished Madame Bridgman, whose name and fame were on the lips of all. The last we shall quote from our graphic correspondent is dated April 8, 1856 :

"Peace is proclaimed, and we are going home at last. I have resigned my charge to Sir John Hall.

"You know we were here independent of Miss Nightingale, and directly under the medical authorities, with whom we worked most cordially. . . . She has come here, to the great disgust and annoyance of all, by whom she is heartily disliked. She *pressed* me to work with her, but I know her too well now to have any connection with her. She threatened me with public opinion. I told her I cared not for it. She said I should have a lame story going home. I said I could support it on a crutch of conscience. Well, I could not tell all, but I was determined. All here approve of my resolve and are delighted at our firmness. The seal is fixed on her unpopularity by this move."

As quarrels are for the vulgar, our readers will approve of the dignified part the mother-superior took in quietly resigning to the head medical officer, Sir John Hall, the authority with which he had entrusted her. Although there was little to be done and all faces were turned homewards, yet the odium of being the occasion of the resignation of a corps of most competent nurses, idolized by the patients and trusted in the highest degree by the medical staff, fell heavily upon "the superintendent" and caused her short sojourn in the Crimea to be not a little unpleasant. "The officers and men without exception," writes a lady volunteer, "regretted the *cause* of the Sisters' departure."* But a longer stay would not have been necessary under any circumstances.

It is an ungracious task to overthrow a popular idol, but

* *Eastern Hospitals.* By Miss Taylor. London, 1857.

certainly the above particulars cast a new light on the superintendent's career in the East—a career which, if the work from which we have just quoted be correct (and we never heard its accuracy questioned), was a tissue of mistakes. Well did she say that she lost her right hand when Mother M. Clare returned to England; for that mother's advice saved her from many an imprudence. Had she been still with her this last mistake would scarcely have been made.

“I could not express,” writes a Sister, “the cordial manifestations of feeling and kindness we receive on all sides. The grateful affection of the soldiers is most touching—often ludicrous. They swarm around us where they can get down like flocks of chickens: a black-veiled nun in the midst of red-coats, all eyes and ears for whatever she says to them, is an ordinary sight at Balaklava. Our doors are besieged by them to get some little keepsake; a book in which we write, ‘Given by a Sister of Mercy,’ is so valuable an article that a Protestant declared he'd rather have such a gift than the Victoria Cross or Crimean medal. Sir John himself has gone to arrange our passage. We leave this week in the *Cleopatra*.”

Many officers of rank and title asked leave of absence or furlough to accompany the nuns home, but few were allowed the privilege. Lord Pakenham,* whose request was granted, used often to tell them of the difficulty he had “to get home in the same ship with the nuns.” He made himself most agreeable and showed them every possible courtesy. He spoke with respect and affection of his cousin, Hon. Charles Pakenham, once a captain in the Guards, who, exchanging a sword of steel for the sword of the spirit, was received into the Church by Cardinal Wiseman at Hastings and became a Passionist Father.

The Sunday after their departure the men who came to

* Those who could not get off with the Sisters contended for the honor of escorting them and carrying their luggage to the quay.

the chapel sobbed and cried as though their hearts would break. When the priest turned to speak to them and ask their prayers for the safe passage of the nuns, they could not control their emotion. "I was obliged to cut short my discourse," wrote the chaplain, "else I should have cried and sobbed with my poor men."

One of the Sisters threw into rhyme a narrative of these events for the entertainment of the dear ones at home. It will be found in the Appendix.

Returning by Gibraltar, the nuns reached Malta late in the evening. Early next morning two Jesuits came from their college to convey them ashore. When they had heard Mass and communicated at the famous Church of the Knights, they had the privilege of sharing the hospitality of the good fathers. The Jesuits had then no church in Malta, but officiated at St. John's. At Gibraltar Bishop Hughes and several priests came aboard to bless and congratulate the Sisters.

CHAPTER XXI.

INTEREST EXCITED BY THE CRIMEAN MISSION—LETTERS FROM HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS.

Those to whom the Nuns were amenable not of the Faith—Lynx-eyed Watchers—The Lady Volunteers and the Sisters—Miss Stanley and her Successor defer to them on all Occasions—They learn Cooking from Reverend Mother—Prayer without ceasing—Universal Anxiety among Catholics concerning the Nuns—The Deputy Purveyor in Chief—Sir John Hall—Letter from him—Letter from Sir William Codrington to Madame Bridgman—Sir John Hall loved to recall his Connection with the Sisters—He kindly chaperones Sisters of Mercy going to New Zealand—But one Opinion of the Sisters in the East—Colonel Connolly—Mr. Bruin—A Duel averted—Lord Panmure sends Thanks and cordial Approval to the Nuns—Enthusiasm—The Nuns obliged to steal into their Convent Homes—Bonfires—High Festival—The Red coats besiege their Sisters—Letters from them—The Sultan sends the Sisters a Present which they hesitate to receive—Their Services wholly gratuitous—Letter from Cardinal Wiseman to Mother Rose Strange—Letter from Bishop Grant to Archbishop Cullen—To Sir B. Hawes—Letter from Bishop Walsh—Mother Rose confers with the Cardinal in London—Letter from Lord Panmure—The Gift of the Grand Turk the only royal Gift offered—Military Phraseology.

NEVER was a mission undertaken by any Order or Congregation which excited more interest than that of the Sisters of Mercy to the sick and wounded of the Crimean War. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the eyes of the world were on them. Those to whom they were understood to be amenable as to their duties to the sick were, without exception, not of the household of the faith. Nor were the glances directed towards them from other points invariably friendly. Rather they were for the most part unfriendly, and had there been the smallest flaw as to efficiency it would readily have been detected by the lynx-eyed men and women who watched their every

move and gesture. It was well known, even by those who asserted the contrary, that they scrupulously adhered to the conditions upon which they had accepted this mission from the government; but it could not be denied that their manner, bearing, and services attracted non-Catholics to the true faith. From the first the lady volunteers, not one of whom was a Catholic, gave the nuns that meed of praise which women are said to be slow in bestowing on each other. "Few of us," writes one of these ladies, "had ever visited nuns before, and we often remarked among ourselves the bright, joyous spirit which pervaded them, one and all; in their work evidently consisted their happiness, and we often marvelled at their untiring industry. They never seemed to pass an idle moment."

The superintendents, Miss Stanley and Miss Hutton, treated them with extreme deference, and instead of directing them were eager to learn of them. "For," writes Miss T——, "the Sisters' long experience in all matters concerning the poor and the sick gave them great superiority over us; but they were ever ready to show us their methods and to enter into our difficulties. . . . The superintendent and the lady in charge of the kitchen begged reverend mother to give them lessons in cooking, which she kindly did; they both went up to the General Hospital, watched the routine of the kitchen, and then tried to introduce it below. The Sisters were universally beloved and respected. They received all who called on them with utmost courtesy and sweetness."

Every ecclesiastic in the English-speaking world, from the great-hearted cardinal entrusted by the Pope with the arrangement of the mission to the humblest curate, looked with more or less anxiety at this venture. If the nuns failed to win universal respect, if the least incompetence or want of prudence appeared in any one of them, it would be felt as a sort of humiliation by the dignitaries of that religion which they were supposed to represent. And the

superiors who had sent them out, and the communities from which they had been selected—who can describe *their* anxiety? From nothing in the past could they predicate of the future. Never before had their Sisters been in such circumstances. And so the hands of these good mothers were ever, like those of Moses, uplifted for their children; “prayer was made without ceasing” for them, and the prayer of the righteous prevailed.

From the commander-in-chief to the private soldier, from the first medical officer to the simple dresser in the surgery, all was as a chorus in praise of the untiring, judicious, and gentle nursing of the Sisters of Mercy. It was in no boastful spirit—oh, God forbid!—that the workers told the anxious ones at home of the applause their labors had won. Nor was it from that sweet, *sinless* vanity which makes a child who is successful abroad desire that the gray-haired couple and buxom youths who have never left the hearth of home should know how well their prodigal has done, and how highly the great ones prize him. Amiable though that vanity be whose greatest ambition is to give pleasure to the loved ones at home, it entered but slightly, if at all, into the relations of the nuns. They wrote chiefly to quiet the anxiety that feared lest they should fall short of the mark in these new duties—lest the true religion, whose progress was their dearest thought, should be shamed by any shortcoming in those who appeared before the world in her garb. Hence the joy in every convent home when strictly official authority had naught for them but the highest encomiums. In a report to the War Office, December 24, 1855, D. Fitzgerald, Esq., deputy purveyor-in-chief, writes: “The superiority of an ordered system is beautifully illustrated in the Sisters of Mercy. One mind appears to move all, and their intelligence, delicacy, and conscientiousness invest them with a halo of extreme confidence. The medical officer can safely consign his most critical cases to their hands—stimulants

or opiates ordered every five minutes will be faithfully administered, though the five minutes' labor were repeated uninterruptedly for a week. The number of Sisters, without being large, is sufficient to secure for every patient needing it his share of attention. A calm, resigned contentedness sits on the features of all, and the soft cares of the woman and the lady breathe placidly throughout."

Sir John Hall paid a farewell visit to the nuns, partly to thank them for all they had done to raise the General Hospital to a high state of efficiency, but chiefly to tender his respectful sympathy and offer his services to make every possible exertion for their comfort on the homeward voyage. He also forwarded to the mother-superior the following letter as an enduring record of his high appreciation of her able administration in the important office he had confided to her .

"BALAKLAVA, April 5, 1856.

"MY DEAR MADAME: I cannot permit you and the Sisters under your direction to leave the Crimea without an expression of the high opinion I entertain of your ministrations, and of the very important aid you have rendered to the sick under your care.

"I can most conscientiously assert, as I have on other occasions stated, that you have given me the most perfect satisfaction ever since you have assumed charge of the nursing department in the General Hospital at Balaklava. And I do most unfeignedly regret your departure; but after what has occurred I would not, even with that feeling uppermost in my mind, urge you to stay.

"I enclose a letter from Sir William Codrington, commander-in-chief, expressive of the sense he entertains of your services and those of the Sisters under you, which I trust will be acceptable to your feelings; and I feel assured you must leave us with an approving conscience, as I know you do with the blessings of all those whom you have aided in their hour of need.

"To Him who saw all our outward actions and knows our inmost thoughts and wishes I commend you. And

may He have you, and those under you, in His holy keeping is the prayer of

Yours faithfully,

“JOHN HALL,

“*Inspector-General of Hospitals.*”

“MADAME BRIDGMAN, General Hospital, Balaklava.”

LETTER OF SIR WILLIAM CODRINGTON.

“SIR: I regret very much to learn that circumstances have induced Madame Bridgman, the mother-superior of the Roman Catholic nurses, to quit the General Hospital and proceed to England with the ladies who have been so long associated with her.

“I request you to assure that lady of the high estimation in which her services and those of her Sisters are held by all, founded, as that opinion is, upon the experience of yourself, the medical officers of the hospitals, and of the many patients, both wounded and sick, who during the fourteen or fifteen months past have benefited by their care. I am quite sure that their unfailing kindness will have the reward which Madame Bridgman values—viz., the remembrance and gratitude of those who have been the objects of such disinterested attention. Your obedient servant,

W. CODRINGTON,

“*General Commander.*”

“SIR JOHN HALL.”

This distinguished medical officer often recalled with pleasure his connection with the Sisters of Mercy in the East, and continued to take the deepest interest in their Institute. When some candidates for the Sisters of Mercy happened to be in the same vessel with him going to New Zealand, he no sooner learned their destination than he took them, as it were, under his protection, paid them the most polite and fatherly attention, taught them little games, and did all he could to vary the monotony of the long voyage. But, above all, he awakened their enthusiasm by speaking of his acquaintance with the Sisters in the Eastern hospitals, and giving brilliant instances of their heroism during those perilous times,

The military men were not less enthusiastic. When Colonel Connolly, brother-in-law of Mr. Bruin, a Carlow aristocrat, was travelling, after his return from the war, near the Bruin estate, a fellow-traveller spoke disrespectfully of nuns. The colonel, a Protestant, not only made a warm defence of the ladies who had nursed him in Russian and Ottoman regions, and, for their sakes, of all other nuns, but handed the assailant his card, saying: "If you say another word against these saintly gentlewomen I *shall call you out directly*. Choose your weapons." The slanderer subsided very quickly, and we are bound to add that our hot-headed defender rather "regretted not having a shot at him."

Even the government expressed approbation of the Sisters' work, and Lord Panmure requested that they "might be informed of his satisfaction at the work which they had performed with so much zeal and devotion." His lordship, moreover, desired that "the expression of his thanks and of his cordial approval of the services rendered by them to the sick and wounded of our army in the East might be conveyed to them." All this, however, was done privately. But as the nuns had worked for Him who seeth in secret, and who will reward even a cup of cold water given in His name, it troubled them not to learn, as indeed few of them did, that at public meetings and Crimean banquets all laborers among the sick were mentioned with praise and honor save themselves. Nevertheless, so great was the enthusiasm about them in towns which expected their return that they were obliged to get home, as it were, by stealth, to avoid the ardent demonstrations of which they would have become the objects. Their friends were not so easily baffled: no sooner was their arrival known than joybells rang out their merriest peals, bonfires blazed on the neighboring hills, shouts and cheers rent the air, and the people kept high festival for days together. The soldiers, above all, continued to show their love for "our own nuns," and the corridors and chapels of Convents of Mercy were enlivened

by groups of red-coats. Every post brought touching letters from those who could not come in person. One of these brave fellows writes :

“I thank you kindly for all your goodness to me. I hope your reward is in store in heaven for you and the remainder of your dear Sisters that served God, and with His help saved many a poor soldier’s life. When far from a friend, in a distant land, our meek Sisters brought the heavenly smile and the Spirit of God into the ward among the broken-hearted soldiers. I can never forget your kindness. The Lord may reward you for all your goodness and kindness to me.

“No more at present, but I remain, your faithful servant,
“CORPORAL JAMES BRASIL.”

When the quondam patients and orderlies ventured on matrimony their friends were sure to be informed ; nor were they left in ignorance of those interesting domestic occasions which added a little angel to the humble household. “Sister, if it wouldn’t be making too bold, ma’am,” wrote one, “we’d like to call our baby for you.” The reverential love and devotion of these grateful fellows might well be deemed the richest reward the nuns could receive outside of heaven ; and they thanked God for all as a grace that smoothed the difficulties of their path and rendered duties terrible in themselves sweet and delightful.

In December, 1856, the convents were notified that Bishop Grant had been officially informed the sultan graciously wished to present the Sisters, who had nursed Turks as well as Christians in the Ottoman Empire, with a memento of his appreciation of their services. Lord Panmure, in making this communication, besought the bishop to “express to the Sisterhood the sense entertained by her majesty’s government of the devotion displayed by them in attending and mitigating the sufferings of the sick and wounded soldiers in the East.” The nuns, whose services had been wholly gratuitous, declined to accept any gift

which might be construed into a remuneration ; but as a decided refusal might be offensive to a foreign potentate whose expressed appreciation of their services was entirely unexpected, they laid the matter before authority. The following is Cardinal Wiseman's reply to the mother-superior of the Carlow house :

“ LONDON, December 17, 1856.

“ MY DEAR COUSIN AND REVEREND MOTHER : After mature consideration I decided that the nuns of Bermondsey (on their coming to our hospital) should accept the reward, it being quite understood by the War Office that it was not bestowed on the individual nuns, but on pious works through the hands of their communities.

“ This being the case, why refuse to accept a sum, however small, for the poor which, if refused, will only go to Protestants for worldly purposes? I own I do not see why.

“ In Ireland there may be reasons which I do not know, but here there are not. I could not consistently allow or advise one house to accept and tell another to refuse.

“ I must, therefore, reply to your note that I think you should accept and apply the money to some charitable purpose. Your affectionate cousin and father in Christ,

“ N. CARD. WISEMAN.”

Bishop Grant wrote to Dr. Cullen on the same subject December 15, 1856 :

“ MY LORD ARCHBISHOP : I beg to thank you for your goodness in sending me your affecting pastoral on the university.

“ The War Office has taken great pains to arrange the sultan's gift in the way least likely to make it difficult for the nuns to receive it. They told me to write the accompanying letter, which was to express that the Sisters received it for distribution to the poor, and in no way for themselves. And I am glad that your grace has seen no difficulty in allowing the Baggot Street community to receive it.

“ The Sisters of Mercy in other convents in Ireland objected, but I think that the enclosed letter guards them

sufficiently, especially when it is considered that they have received no communication from our own government, and that they remain, therefore, as they were, free from any gift or reward.

“If your grace approves, will you represent this to the bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, so that his Sisters may not object to receive the gift?”

“Yours sincerely,

“✠ THOMAS GRANT.”

TO SIR B. HAWES.

“The revised lists of the Sisters of Mercy who attended the hospitals in the East are now in your hands, and in the name of their respective communities I beg leave to express their gratitude to the government for having allowed them to assist their brave fellow-countrymen during the war.

“It is pleasing to them to reflect that their desire to undertake the duties assigned them, solely from motives of charity and without any personal remuneration, has been admitted and recognized by their country, and that therefore, in being permitted to distribute the gift of his imperial majesty the sultan amongst the poor and infirm, they will not lose the honor which they so highly prized of having been allowed to devote their services, without hope of any earthly reward, to the alleviation of the sufferings and the care of the sick and dying soldiers of the Eastern expeditionary army.

“If you still intend me to receive the gift of the sultan, it will be my duty to forward the letters to the respective communities to whom it is sent, or to restore it to the War Department.

✠ T. GRANT,

“*Bishop of Southwark, London.*”

Most Rev. Dr. Walsh enclosed the above to the mother-superior of the Sisters of Mercy, Carlow, December 20, with a few words from himself:

“The enclosed letters show that our decision regarding the expediency of receiving the sultan’s gift was founded on a false presumption.

“It seems now that the money is for the poor, that the Sisters are to be the almoners, and that their heroic charity

has been the occasion or cause for selecting them to distribute amongst the poor the bounty of his sublime majesty of Constantinople. Would it not appear, then, that there is no compromise of either feeling or principle in accepting the donations for distribution amongst the distressed?

“You can let me know your views, dear reverend mother, and return the letters, that I may send them back.

“Yours sincerely,

✠ JAMES WALSH.”

As business brought the Carlow superioress to London about this time, she had an opportunity of conferring in person with the prelates who were arranging this business. Cardinal Wiseman visited her several times, and kindly presented her with some precious relics and a valuable collection of books, including copies of his own works. His eminence recalled with evident pleasure the happy days he and his mother and sister had spent at her father's home, Aylwardstown Castle, near Waterford.

A letter from Lord Panmure to Bishop Grant closed the correspondence with the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for War relative to the gift of the Sublime Porte :

“Her majesty has been pleased to approve of my offering to the religious houses from which the nuns who assisted in this work proceeded the sums of money stated below, being the shares of such gifts proportionate to the numbers sent out from each establishment:

“To the Sisterhood of Bermondsey, £80; Liverpool, £30; Charleville, £20; Cork, £20; Kinsale, £30; Dublin, £20; Carlow, £20; Chelsea, £10.

“The general agent, Sir John Kirkland, has been accordingly directed to pay you the sum of £230, and I have to request that you will undertake the charge of conveying these sums to the establishments to which they have been thus severally allotted, and, further, that you will express to the Sisterhood the sense entertained by her majesty's government of their devotion, etc.

“I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

“PANMURE.”

We may observe *en passant* that Bishop Grant's policy of conciliation did not gain him as much courtesy as might be expected. Although there was no Anglican prelate to be offended by Dr. Grant's assumption of the title of bishop of Southwark, Lord Panmure addresses him simply as *Sir*, even when asking future favors and thanking for past.

The whole number of Sisters of Mercy who labored in the East was twenty-four. Two of these, called to a martyr's crown, await the resurrection among the heights of Balaklava; the marble crosses marking the sacred spot are visible from the Black Sea, and scarcely a vessel that enters the basin-like harbor fails to salute them with reverence. The return of the rest was celebrated in their respective convents by Masses of thanksgiving, sermons, solemn *Te Deums*, and other religious ceremonies in which numbers united; also, of course, by a first-class recreation day.

Long after the war the Sisters would now and then speak and write in military style, especially to the old chaplains. Here is a charming and most touching extract from a letter written to a Jesuit Father by a dear Sister who had just been informed that her recovery from consumption was hopeless:

"Another of your volunteers has been summoned to the last campaign, and, conscious of a deficiency of supplies, is sending to all the friendly fortresses for aid. I am going to die, and am asking prayers of all my charitable friends that I may fulfil God's holy will in all things unto the end. There is no one to whom I can apply with more confidence than to our kind drill-master. I will pray for you in heaven, please God."

Curiously enough, the two hundred and thirty pounds allotted to the Sisters who had labored for the sick of all nations, classes, and creeds in the Eastern hospitals, 1854, 1855, and 1856, by no less a personage than the GREAT TURK, was the only royal benefaction these ladies had occasion to accept or refuse!

CHAPTER XXII.

CARDINAL WISEMAN FOUNDS A HOSPITAL FOR INCURABLES,
WHICH HE PLACES UNDER THE SISTERS OF MERCY—
HIS HOLY DEATH.

Opening of the Hospital—Sermon of the Cardinal—Letters from him to Mother Clare and Mother Gonzaga—His extraordinary Goodness to the Sisters—Their Devotion to him—His Birth and Parentage—His intense Love for his Mother—Papal Aggression—"A Papal Definition" of the English—The Cardinal's Sister, Countess Gabrielli—Her Account of their Mother's Death—Letters of Mother M. Gonzaga Barrie describing the Cardinal's last Illness—His wonderful Holiness and Simplicity—"Like a School-boy going Home for the Holidays"—"No one ever tired of the Stars"—"Death will come like a Flash of Light"—"*O Dios Mios!* God, *my* God!"—Was the Apostle of the Blessed Sacrament communicated by Angels?—The Rosary—Justice done to the great Man after his Death—He passes his Devotion to the Poor as an Heirloom to his Successors—"Calm Equality."

SEVERAL applications for colonies awaited Mother M. Clare on her return from the East, one of which, from Cardinal Wiseman, partook of the nature of a command. His eminence had known and loved the holy foundress, and had been a kind and powerful friend to her Institute from the beginning. The projected institution was the now celebrated Hospital for Incurables, the first of its kind ever established in London. The Sisters took possession on the 18th of November, to be ready to open the following day, the Feast of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, under whose patronage it was to be dedicated, and which, by a happy coincidence, was the anniversary of the foundation of Bermondsey seventeen years previous—1839—1856. Five Sisters of Mercy under Mother M. Gonzaga Barrie were duly

installed by the cardinal archbishop, who celebrated Mass in the new establishment and preached an eloquent sermon expressive of his joy and gratitude that the work he had so long at heart had now begun. After breakfast he solemnly blessed and dedicated the house.

Nothing could exceed the kindness and delicate attentions of the great cardinal to his little flock. He was always thanking them for leaving Bermondsey and coming to Great Ormond Street for his sake, adding that he could never be sufficiently grateful to Mother M. Clare for sending them. When they were getting the house and ground into order he helped them every way he could, and once, when he chanced to overhear them speaking of laying out a little garden, he went out himself and bought gardening tools, which he presented to his children with expressions of fatherly kindness. On the very day of the opening he wrote to Mother M. Clare :

“MY DEAR REVEREND MOTHER: I take the first opportunity to express to you my sincere gratitude for having so charitably and so kindly parted with a portion of your flock to aid us in our necessity and found our poor hospital. I can only beg our good God to thank you for me by repaying you a thousand-fold, and giving you daily increase not only in number but in every good and spiritual gift. Please to convey my warmest thanks to all your community for this great charity, and to recommend me to their prayers.

“I am, ever your affectionate servant in Christ,

“N. CARD. WISEMAN.”

And on the 20th of November, not satisfied with all he had done on the 19th, his eminence wrote to the new mother-superior :

“MY DEAR DAUGHTER IN CHRIST: I take advantage of the first leisure moment after opening the hospital yesterday to convey to you and to your infant community the assurance of my sincere interest in your welfare, and in the

success of the great and holy work which you have so generously undertaken. You have sacrificed much to come to the help of my poor, perhaps more than when you made your first religious profession and abandoned your homes for Christ's sake. For then you exchanged a worldly for a spiritual abode ; more, certainly, than when you left this for the East, for that was only a temporary separation. But now you have consented to abandon the house in which you had promised to serve God all your lives—a house, too, in which everything was provided for the peaceable discharge of your religious duties—and to begin, in a manner, your lives over again, with little comfort and small provision for your temporal welfare. For all this disinterested charity I can only entreat of God to bless you Himself and reward you, for nothing that I can say or do can be even remotely adequate to this. I can only assure you of my constant and affectionate support and encouragement, and of my unceasing endeavors to make up by paternal solicitude and kindness for the loss of that maternal care which you experienced in the edifying house from which you have voluntarily and generously separated yourselves. The hospital and its community will always be the object of my warmest interest, and will be fostered by me with all the tenderness they deserve. I hope, therefore, that you and your zealous Sisters will not be discouraged at the bleakness of your new situation and the difficulties and troubles which always accompany and consecrate a new work of charity. Your divine Spouse will console you, and you will always have Him with you, as well as His poor. To His loving care I commend and commit you, and after Him to His Immaculate Mother and the Blessed St. Elizabeth. I shall be happy to grant all the permissions for benediction, etc., which you may desire.

“Recommending myself humbly to the holy prayers of the community, I am, ever your affectionate father in Christ,
N. CARD. WISEMAN.”

Love and tenderness for the poorer* portions of his

* The cardinal, in his beautiful letter relative to the Papal Aggression, speaks thus : “Close under the Abbey of Westminster lie concealed labyrinths of lanes, and courts, and alleys—nests of depravity and ignorance—whose atmosphere is typhus, whose ventilation is cholera. This is the part of Westminster which alone I covet . . . in which a bishop's goodly work is to be done of consoling, converting, and preserving.”

The Protestant bishop of London spoke about the same time, in his charge, of

flock ever characterized the great cardinal. It was soon necessary to increase the accommodations of the new hospital. The adjoining house was purchased and razed, and upon its site arose a church and convent ; the former, a perfect gem of Italian architecture, was erected through the munificence of Sir George Bowyer, Knight of St. John of Jerusalem. The new institution was opened June 24 by the cardinal, who on that auspicious occasion delivered a beautiful sermon on the text, "Heal the sick." His eminence spoke most movingly on the solicitude the Church has always shown in all countries for the sick poor of the flock of Christ, and gave a graphic sketch of the grand institutions at Rome and elsewhere for this pious object.

This hospital is a model of neatness and comfort. It contains about fifty patients, twenty of whom are usually children. There is no crowding ; every one has room enough. Each ward has a book-case. The children have hobby-horses and toys enough to fit up a store. Over each bed are three small shelves ; on the top shelf are the medicines ; on the second, cup, saucer, knife, fork, spoon ; on the third, liniments and other necessaries. Under the shelves hang two cards, on one of which is written the medicine, on the other the diet, the doctor has prescribed for the patient. There is a sliding door through which the patients hear Mass and even sermons. From the third ward they can look into the sanctuary. The stairs are of freestone and the passages flagged or tiled. It is a real home for the poor. Wherever you go you hear the voices of children, and there is no grandeur or extra polish anywhere. Only incurables are received, but many belie the name and get well, owing to the excellent nursing they re-

"multitudes of perishing sinners who are suffered to remain in an almost worse than heathen state."

But the cardinal, in his visits to these abandoned regions, never encountered the bishop of London, the archbishop of Canterbury, or any other representative of the state church.

ceive. As none but charity cases are admitted, there is unbounded gratitude to the nuns on part of the patients.

The Sisters hope to be able to enlarge the hospital considerably so as to accommodate a far greater number of incurable or chronic cases. The hospital is one of the few Catholic establishments which have seen royalty face to face, the Prince and Princess of Wales with their daughters being among its recent visitors. Their royal highnesses expressed the warmest approval of the kindly care taken of the patients, to many of whom they spoke affectionately. The altar of the adjoining church is the gift of the grand master of the Order, and several sets of vestments, especially some presented by Pope Pius IX., are superbly beautiful.

Cardinal Wiseman well redeemed the promises he made to the nuns of Great Ormond Street. But short was the reign of this beneficent prince of the Church over them. Yet "better a year of England than a cycle of Cathay"—better a few years under such a man than a dozen lustrums under an ordinary guide. Envious indeed was the Mercy convent which his eminence founded and loved with so great a love. Its members were really his children, and by his own request they always addressed him, not "eminence" or "my lord cardinal," but simply "father." Among them he found sympathy, gratitude, and reverential affection. There was a charm in his way with them, always sweet and gracious, which made them regard the measure of intercourse his high duties allowed as the blessing and consolation of their lives. As the cardinal was a friend and benefactor to the foundress and the whole Institute, a few words regarding him will not be misplaced here.

Nearly a century ago Lawrence Strange, of Aylwardstown Castle, settled in Cadiz, and James and Patrick Wiseman, merchants of the neighboring city of Waterford, in Seville, in mercantile and banking business. Two sisters of Lawrence Strange married the Wiseman brothers. The parents of the future cardinal were James Wiseman and

Xaveria Strange. He was born in Seville, August 2, 1802, as he loved to boast, on the Feast of St. Alphonsus. His father dying while he was a babe, his mother took him to her old home, and at the house of his uncle, Peter Strange, Esq., he spent many happy days. At a school in Waterford he learned "the rudiments of his mother-tongue as completely as a child could learn it." Several years later his mother placed him at Ushaw, and settled in Durham that she might be near him. Nor did she desert him when he went to Rome in his seventeenth year.

Whether as child, or boy, or man, Nicholas Wiseman loved his mother with all the tenderness of his bright, enthusiastic nature. He loved to tell how, as an infant, she had laid him on the altar of the Blessed Virgin in the cathedral of Seville; how she had imbued his mind with stories of the persecutions his sires had borne for the faith of Christ; how she had drawn him from the mob that hooted him in Durham* because he was a Catholic. At a banquet in Waterford, 1858, he gracefully alludes to his cherished mother:

"From her to whom I owe my education, whose warmest recollections and most affectionate feelings were connected with this city and the neighboring place where she was born, I remember to have heard histories which remain engraven on my memory, that tell me what my ancestors had to endure to preserve the faith. . . . Friends since then have thought it a kindness to find in the Record Office in Dublin the original decrees of confiscation and spoliation of the property my ancestors possessed here; but all this has been nothing to the tales she told me of the secret, unseen sacrifices by which some of her ancestors preserved the faith to themselves and to their children."

Dr. Wiseman's career in Rome is well known, and his action in the restoration of the hierarchy is recorded in his-

* The Durham inn outside which an election mob assailed the boy became a Convent of Mercy.

tory. His return to England in 1850 as cardinal archbishop of Westminster evoked hostility amounting to frenzy. Lord John Russell stigmatized this daring "aggression of the Pope on Protestantism" as "insolent and insidious." The Anglican prelates petitioned the queen "to discountenance" the claims and usurpations of Rome; the ministers besought the bishops, and the bishops advised the ministers. The populace began a stirring no-popery campaign against the enemy, represented in a very special manner by the new cardinal. The Pope was completely mystified at the turn events had taken. His Holiness had been under the impression that he had been paying high compliments to England. "What!" he exclaimed to an English ecclesiastic, "so you English imagine I meant to insult Queen Victoria and violate the laws of your country! You are a very strange people. *You seem to me to understand nothing thoroughly but commerce.*"

The new cardinal was as a wall of brass before this vehement manifestation of indignation and alarm. Once only did he condescend to notice the hideous vaporings of the frenzied mob—when some were dastardly enough to attack the fair fame of his saintly mother. "I have," he wrote, "borne much calumny and railing against myself, and I am ready to go on enduring still more for what I believe to be the cause of God, but I cannot allow to pass unnoticed any slander of one to whom I owe all good in life, and whom God's commandment enjoins me to honor, and consequently to shield from dishonor. Although nearly an octogenarian, my venerable parent retains still full possession of every faculty and a keen sense of honor, having passed her days with the respect and esteem of all who know her."

Xaveria, sister of the cardinal, always called in the family Fasquita, married Count Gabrielli of Fano, near Rome, and it was with her that the "venerable parent" lived. By a singular coincidence the holy matron passed from

earth the day the "Ecclesiastical Titles Act" * was brought into the House of Commons, February 7, 1851. The widowed Countess Gabrielli communicated their mutual loss to his eminence in a letter dated Fano, February 10, 1851. The writing is very delicate and beautiful, but the English is naturally a little labored, as the writer was accustomed to express herself in another language. It is written in English throughout, save the words in italics, which are Italian in the original. As the cardinal and the Sister of Mercy to whom he gave the letter have passed away, there can be no indiscretion in condensing here so edifying an epistle. Few save his nuns knew that, during the white heat of the No-Popery agitation, his great heart was rent by a private sorrow the most bitter that could come upon him :

"MY BELOVED BROTHER : After my letter of the 5th inst. you will not be surprised at learning the melancholy news I am now obliged to impart, but which is certainly mitigated by the reflection that our beloved and lamented parent had arrived at that period of age when life is almost a burden, and by the assurance that, if she be not immediately in possession of the bliss of heaven, she soon will, for, as the curate said, *It seems to me rather the transit of St. Joseph.* After I closed my letter on the 5th I found her in a state of great suffering arising from the pain in her right side, which had not molested her since Saturday. Eight leeches were immediately applied, which temporarily relieved her, but towards ten P.M. it increased to such an excess that the doctor considered it necessary to draw a few ounces of blood. He said at that advanced age bleed-

* A measure which made it penal for any Catholic to style himself bishop of any place in England, etc. It remained a dead letter ; not the slightest attempt was ever made to enforce it. But it gratified the vindictive bigotry of the no-popery people. It was at the risk of life and limb that the Sisters passed through the streets at this time. They were sometimes saluted with a line from Shakspeare which Lord Campbell had quoted at a dinner :

"Under our feet we'll stamp the cardinal's hat."

But the ordinary salutations that greeted them are not found in any classical writer. They abound in the dialect known as Billingsgate.

ing is dangerous ; *but I cannot let her die in that agony*, as it then clearly appeared that the right lung was disordered and a *pulmonito* established. . . . Several times she wanted to go to Loreto. She knew people, especially her darling Randalino, whom she kissed even the morning of her death, saying, *How beautiful he is!* Padre Vito gave her Extreme Unction in presence of the doctor and all of us. He reminded her of the promise she had made him make so often, not to let her die without the sacraments and not to have any difficulty or delicacy about it. This good padre and another were always with her. She continually kissed her crucifix, and as Padre Vito was saying, *Madame, paradise awaits her*, she stretched out her arms, raised her eyes to heaven, and quietly expired, T.G. without agony, convulsion, or contortion, at half-past eleven Friday morning, at the very hour in which for so many years she was always in the chapel of the M. *Adolorata* at St. Peter's—a coincidence very remarkable, and [which] shows the protection of the Blessed Virgin for her devout client.

“Although it may appear absurd at her time of life . . . to excuse the cause of her death, still it must have been somewhat hastened by her going out in this severe cold; *three* times a day she was in the church, though she could scarcely walk. She was at confession and Communion the Friday she fell ill, made a general confession to Padre Vito, and in fact thought of nothing but preparing for death. It really was the death of the just. Some ladies who were in her confidence say that all you have suffered since your return to England preyed dreadfully upon her and afflicted her to the heart ; in fact, I often found her crying and most anxious upon your account. . . . She had given positive orders concerning her interment, and had even prepared her clothes, etc., so that everything was found ready, even the scapular of M. del Carmine. She desired not to be taken to St. Peter's, but to the parish church, and gave as the motive that it would give me pain to go there. She repeated all these instructions to Pergolino, and made him give his word that he would see everything faithfully executed ; and I feel a melancholy pleasure in seeing even her smallest wishes fulfilled by him with respect and affection. She was accompanied to the church by the *Zaccolante*, etc., twenty priests, the servants of the Berlozzi, Mariotti, etc. (relatives of the *Casa Gabrielli*), and laid on the ground,

according to her directions. . . . The crowd was immense, and the common people all said, *She is a saint*. Her piety has given general edification, and indeed, my dear Nicholas, her charity, for she used to spend a good deal of money in charity and Masses. She had nothing left, not even clothes. We kept back her money at one time, but as it used to displease her we did not do so any more. . . . I can only repeat that the care, the attention, the tenderness with which she was assisted in her last moments were unparalleled; every precaution, every consolation, spiritual and temporal, were used at the moment they were required, and I feel confident she will bless and protect us from her heavenly abode and be an advocate for her children.

“Andrea desires his best love. He will send an article to the *Gazetta di Roma* giving an account of mamma’s death. He felt it more than I would have thought, and we cannot prevail on him to go out even for a walk. It is not yet known when the council will be convoked. We were all in such joy* when this mournful event came on that the tumult of contrary feeling is sensibly felt. I wish you would write a line to Aunt Harriet† and give her the first news. Receiving it first from you will assuage her grief. . . . No means, human or divine, were spared for our beloved parent; but the lamp was indeed burned out, and had she lived every day would have been one of pain, especially with her active mind. Randalino was in great affliction and cried bitterly for his grand-mamma, who adored him. He begs your blessing, and Pergolino demands *to kiss with all respect your sacred purple*.

“Believe me, my dear brother, yours ever affectionately,
“F. GABRIELLI.”

Verily it was not wholly without a model that the cardinal drew the picture of the pious matron Lucina in that exquisite creation of his genius, *Fabiola*.

We shall close our notice of one who deserves so well of the Mercy Institute with a few words on his last illness and death.

* In the hope of seeing the cardinal.

† Mrs. Butler, sister to the deceased lady. Her other sister was Mrs. Patrick Wiseman. Mrs. Butler’s daughter, Anne, was the fourth first cousin of the cardinal’s who became a nun in the Carlow Convent of Mercy. She died young, a religious of much promise.

Towards the close of 1864 the cardinal suffered from a local irritation which hindered his taking any active exercise. He rallied, but on January 12, 1865, erysipelas appeared, and he sank so rapidly that on the 15th he was anointed. He was nursed by the Sisters of Mercy of the hospital he had founded, the superior of which, Mother M. Gonzaga Barrie, scarcely ever left him. Of this lady Canon Morris, now a Jesuit, says :

“More perfect nursing than hers I suppose there never was. A noiseless step, a gentle hand, a steady, audible voice, but rarely, and never unnecessarily, heard, a most watchful eye, great endurance of fatigue, and the conviction that in a sick-room nothing is trifling, are qualifications conferred as a natural gift with the taste for nursing, and improved by long practice as well in the hospitals at Scutari as in the wards of Great Ormond Street; but there was added the devotedness of a religious engaged in her special vocation, and, as Dr. Manning called it, ‘the singular reverence’ of a daughter engaged in her labor of love. All the cardinal’s friends owe her a deep debt of gratitude, and I know not how it can be paid unless by rendering still more efficient the admirable charity of the Catholic hospital, in which the cardinal has always taken so great an interest.”

During the intervals of his paroxysms the cardinal employed Mother M. Gonzaga as his secretary, and commissioned her to give daily news of his condition to his relatives in Ireland. These letters have been kindly placed at our disposal. We will give some extracts :

January 6. “I fancy the doctors make the most of his lameness because he *will* over-exert himself if allowed to go about. He does a good deal of dictating and business, and I know it tires his head. I wish he had more *idle* visitors and amusement. It is very stupid work lying on a sofa all day. He can neither read nor write comfortably lying down; however, his spirits are good. I think writing

your play and getting it ready was a great pleasure and amusement to him ; you should have seen him packing up the box. He was then confined to bed, more to make sure of his keeping quiet than that he could not stand. I can quite understand your wanting to know everything ; he is one that the more you know the more you must love and reverence. His wonderful holiness and simplicity, his charity and kindness, his cleverness, all show themselves more and more every time one sees him. You *can't* love him more than I do, or have greater reason to be grateful to him. He is a real *father*, kind and thoughtful and sympathizing, understanding how little things are often the greatest anxiety and trial. There never was anybody like him, and never will be again."

January 17. "He is very weak and low, but the mind is as clear and active as ever—too much so : we would rather he kept quite quiet. He is so kind as to let me take the night-nursing. In manner he is quite himself and has been able to take a little food. . . . I am writing in an awkward position by his side. He is asleep now. If you want a lesson in patience, consideration for others, and mortification, here is the place to learn it. Even when delirious not a word of impatience ; his first thought when he could speak was to want to send every one to bed. He is always thinking of others, and anxious to give no trouble—as if it *could* be a trouble to do anything for *him*. He made *me* write two or three notes to people he thought would be anxious and not likely to get the regular information. He seems to think of every one but himself.

"He told me I ought to have written to you yesterday to get prayers. I *could* not write yesterday. I know it sounds wicked, but I could not sit down to write in the fear and anxiety we were in. All Sunday night I gave him medicine every quarter of an hour, and the doctors were fearing reaction. Last night he slept real sleep, and, though it was a long, dreary night for him, he was out of immediate danger.

The eruption has come out well ; his poor eyes are quite closed, but they will soon be right again, I think.

“ My great anxiety is his over-exerting himself ; the improvement is marvellous, but still he must be frightfully weakened. There is much to make one uneasy, but more to be thankful for. These days seem like weeks. It is a great honor to be here, and I am most grateful for the privilege.”

When it was known that the cardinal's illness was serious his door was besieged from morning till night by anxious inquirers. Among these were the queen of France, Marie Amélie, and other members of the family of Louis Philippe; the ambassadors of Austria, France, Greece, etc., on part of their respective sovereigns; clergymen, nobles, literary people and artists of every shade of political and religious opinion. The newspapers gave daily bulletins of his state up to the moment of going to press. There were Masses, Communions, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament for the recovery of the great high-priest “ who raised up for us walls that were cast down, and set up the gates and the bars ; who rebuilt our houses.”

January 19. “ The cardinal goes on fairly. . . . He had a very bad night, but is decidedly better again, and I hope a good rest to-night will bring him back as far as he was. . . . I am sure he will be pleased at the anxiety and affection every one seems to feel. The door is never free from inquirers, and Masses are being said all over England for him.

“ He is at this moment comfortably asleep, and I hope will remain so for some hours ; quiet sleep will do him more good than medicine. . . . They are going to send me away for a night. I don't like going, but I suppose it is wiser to have one night in bed in a week, and I am too thankful to be here at all to grumble. He received Holy Communion, and perhaps it helped to tire him, as he

fasted four hours; but it was a great comfort to him, and he seemed to revive so afterwards. Seeing his goodness is something to frighten one, for fear of not profiting by the grace.

“Please consider no news good news, as I have many letters to write. He is out of present danger, if he does not relapse.”

In the next letter other matters are mentioned :

“S—— was here. We gave her money to go home, but she went to Gravesend. I did not think her mind was affected, but that she was proud and disobedient. The things she said of M—— were such as we couldn't listen to. What the cardinal alluded to was my taking a poor lunatic to Belgium. Some one took it up, and there was a chance of my being sent to prison. However, it was proved that we had not broken any law—that is, we really had, but there was no *legal proof*; so after four months of worry and annoyance the affair has dropped, I hope for ever—not that I would mind picking oakum; it would be rather a rest after my present work.

“The hospital goes on pretty well; one great drawback is those blessed —— people. . . . Never say anything to the cardinal about ——, he has had so much trouble and annoyance on the subject. . . . We have several invalid Sisters, knocked up with over-work. The incessant work and being up all night is what kills our Sisters. We have no quiet, for the work is always going on—not like schools. It is very delightful work, so don't think I'm grumbling; but it is also very trying.

“I was obliged to go to Edinburgh on business, and there made friends with our Sisters; they are such a very nice community, and so hard-working, without fuss. I was delighted with them, especially reverend mother.”

The cardinal's rally was deceitful. We give the next entire :

“8 YORK PLACE, January 24, 1865.

“MY DEAR MOTHER ROSE: My eyes don't feel up to writing much, but you will be glad of even a word. The doctors seem tolerably satisfied. The cardinal is no worse, and for a man of his age to keep his ground is a good deal. He does not improve much, but continues very weak and exhausted. This morning he is not quite so well, having had no sleep the first half of the night, and an attack of heart-burn; but there is no change or bad symptom. He said such nice things about religious vocation Sunday night, but to-night he has not spoken at all. I do not think you need be alarmed, but his recovery is very *slow*; our real hope is in prayer. It seems selfish to wish to keep him on earth, but what would become of England without him? It is very pleasant to see the universal anxiety about him. This illness will remove many of the prejudices some still have against him personally. Please give me a corner in your prayers, if only that I may keep up as long as wanted, and profit by this time.”

January 25. “I fear my last letter may have frightened you; the doctors would say I had no business to raise your hopes, but as I have begun to hope again I may try to cheer you. The cardinal has rallied a little; there are no good signs medically, but he feels himself better, and you know a sick person's expecting to recover is always a great help. I don't like the carbuncle at all. . . . The great anxiety is a spot on the temple, in a place where it can't be operated on with any hope of success, even if he had the strength. I cannot but hope—so many prayers are being said; and then he does not feel as if he were dying, and, in gradual sinking, I have generally found people do. One unspeakable comfort is, we know if we do lose him it will be his gain and he will help us from heaven.

“There is a novena of Masses, Communions, and benedictions being offered for him in some of the chapels. God must have mercy for us, I think; he is too necessary and valuable to be taken from us. He is just rousing and I must [poultice] the eye. Good-night.”

In a subsequent letter Mother M. Gonzaga asks prayers "for our chaplain, Rev. Griacus Herdel, a very holy man, and always so kind to us, who has just died suddenly." She proceeds :

"The cardinal is not nearly so well. The gathering over the eye had to be opened, and they fear carbuncle, which on the head is usually, if not always, fatal. I have never been so frightened as the last forty-eight hours. He is extremely prostrate and exhausted. He bore the cutting in the most beautiful manner; it was terrible pain, but he never moved or groaned. The dressing is most uncomfortable and disturbs his rest, but he never complains. If you were to imagine a saint's sick-room, it would be just his. His very goodness makes me fear sometimes that he must go. We can only pray and try to be resigned. I may be over-alarmed, but I can see the doctors are very uneasy, and he certainly loses strength. He was much pleased with your sister-in-law's [Mrs. Strange] letter. . . .

"The cardinal is very much worse. A few days will end his sufferings. He is quite conscious, but gets weaker and weaker. I got him last night to give his blessing to you and yours. I do not think I can ask him again; he is too weak to talk much. He requires such incessant attention now that I do not expect to be able to write again. If there be no change for the better I will not write, and you will know my silence means the worst. God's will be done! I had trusted in the innumerable prayers offered for his recovery; but I won't be selfish and grudge him his crown. God only knows what the loss is to me!"

Truly the closing scene was near, and she who tended "her father" with more than filial devotion felt that he was always praying, always absorbed in the thought of God. When he spoke it was to say beautiful things which showed her that he enjoyed, as it were, a foretaste of Paradise. Death was but a transit from exile to home. "I feel," said he, "like a school-boy going home for the holi-

days." And again: "Heaven is my home—I long to be dissolved and to be with Christ." When asked if he wished to live he said in touching accents: "It is better to be with Christ." Once he spoke of "rushing through the angels into God." And speaking of eternity: "I never heard of any one who was tired of the stars."

He made his profession of faith, adding that he had never had any doubt or hesitancy regarding the mysteries of religion. Though anointed in the beginning of his illness, he desired to be anointed again, as he had since rallied and was now in a new danger. This was done. When told he might still linger he exclaimed: "O Lord! send me here my purgatory." He wanted all the forms the Church prescribes—Litany, holy water, everything. His greatest trouble was when his condition or the medicines administered prevented his receiving Holy Communion. Once he cried out sadly: "They little know what they deprive me of; fasting would tire me less than this longing."

The following, written when all was over, contains affecting details:

"The cardinal was rather brighter on Sunday and told me to amuse him; so I told him I was always having letters from you and other convents asking about him, and how you were all praying for him and would like his blessing. He said: 'Well, you may give it without asking me, for I do bless them from my heart and thank them for their prayers and affection.' I never had another opportunity of asking his blessing. On Saturday they opened his eyelid, which relieved the pressure on the brain very much, though he had great pain in the eye afterwards. Sunday he wanted to receive Holy Communion, but they were afraid he could not swallow. 'It will come like a flash of light,' he whispered. I asked, 'What?' 'Death,' he answered. 'I shall see my God; it will be a sudden light, but first He will come to me here. I shall receive my God *here before* I see Him.' I was very anxious they

should try to give him Communion with a small particle, but, unluckily, Canon M—— was away and every one else was afraid. So I said: ‘Father, the doctors will be here in a few moments; you had better wait.’ ‘Oh! of course,’ he answered; ‘I prefer waiting. *I don’t want them to break in on my thanksgiving.*’ He never again mentioned the subject. They gave him some wine, and I suppose he found how difficult it was to swallow.”

We would rather suppose that this *man of desires*, whose highest ambition it was to be the Apostle of the Blessed Sacrament in a country in which It was systematically blasphemed, was invisibly communicated by angels. God would scarcely give such yearnings and fail to satisfy them. His thoughts sometimes reverted to his youth, to the happy days at Aylwardstown, his mother, his friends. And he often murmured, in Spanish, his favorite aspiration, *O Dios, Dios mios!*—O God, *my* God!—with wonderful unction. On Monday evening his agony began, and he died Wednesday morning at half-past eight—no struggle, no change; simply he ceased to breathe. Canon Thompson and Dr. Manning said Masses for him just before he died, and Canon Morris and Mgr. Searle immediately after.

“I cannot feel sorry,” proceeds his bereaved daughter, “I am so sure he is with his God now; He could never send such a loving, trustful soul from His presence even for a short time. . . . He generally said four or five rosaries a day during his illness. He gave me his rosary and said: ‘You will not value it the less for seeing me use it in my last illness.’ He had it under his pillow when he died.

“It would be impossible to convey an idea to strangers of what he was. The great beauty of our father’s illness was the wonderful simplicity and quietness; and how could you tell about simplicity? . . . And how could I repeat to any one the nice talks we had on holy subjects?”

Three weeks after the death of the great cardinal Mother

M. Gonzaga wrote : " I deserve you should be angry with me, but I know you won't, and I dare say you know the state of weakness that shrinks from any exertion and from *memory*. I dare not think of the cardinal ; it is all like a horrid dream. Not but I have been made to know it is true by annoyances about —. G— could not wait for the funeral to be over before he began again the annoyances by which he had teased the cardinal for the last six months ; but I must not think of him or I shall fail in charity. I never believed a Catholic could have spoken of his bishop and of religious as he has done of the cardinal and of us. I don't believe, if half were known, any Catholic constituency would let him represent them. . . .

" After the cardinal's death we touched his body with beads, etc. I will send you some. I had a note from Mrs. Chapman [a cousin of the cardinal's, *née* Strange]. I fear she has been hurt by —'s letters. You must not mind him—he knows no better. He thinks it all zeal, and that it proves what a good business man he is. The worst for us is that he has locked up my hair [some of the cardinal's hair she had cut off], and I am rather despairing of ever getting it back ; but you shall have some if I do.

" We are still Sisters, and I hope you won't drop me. The cardinal always wished us to be friends, and once had a plan about your coming over here ; besides, we are not going to love him less in death than in life. It is to me like a second orphanhood. I loved him really like a father, and as I never can our future archbishop, however kind he may be. The cardinal helped me through so many difficulties ; it was by his advice I struggled through to the end of my stormy novitiate. He mainly was the cause of my sister's conversion and most holy death, and he was always ready to hear my troubles, difficulties, and temptations. I know he is a loss to his nuns the world little suspects—his kindness and sympathy were so great. But I

must not go on; I generally end in a cry, and that is not good.

“I think you have great comfort in his remembering you so nicely—that [*Witch of Rosenberg*] was the last thing he *wrote*, for his Shaksperian lecture was dictated.”

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE CARDINAL'S NURSE, DOROTHEA BARRIE, SISTER M.
GONZAGA.

The Funeral—The *Pall Mall*—The *Sun*—*John Bull*—The *Patriot*, etc.—
“The greatest among England's great Men”—Adaptability of the Cardinal—Personal Appearance—Legacy—Mother Gonzaga completely disheartened—Her Picture in York Place—Letters—How the Cardinal befriended her—She sketches an unflattering Portrait of a Prelate—She asks a Baronet to scrub the Hospital Stairs—She loses some Locks of the Cardinal's Hair—The Cardinal and her precious Mother—Her great Virtue—Trials and Persecutions—The Introit of Easter Wednesday for her—Mother M. Clare glad to see her Darling safe Home—Her beautiful Soul passes from Earth—“Come, ye Blessed of my Father.”

MORE justice was done the cardinal in death than in life. Crowds came to look upon his face as his remains lay in state in the drawing-room of his residence. From the pro-cathedral he was buried, February 23, eight days after his decease, not among his ancestors in holy Ireland, nor with his sainted mother in Rome, so truly the city of his soul, but in England, which had the best right to him, for England broke his heart and drew forth the finest fragrance of his sublime virtues. Around him in Kensal Green has since been grouped all that is mortal of many of his sons who tearfully followed him thither on that bleak February day.

It is pleasant to think that Cardinal Wiseman's noble heart and fine intellectual abilities ultimately conquered his bitterest enemies. There was no sovereign, no literary or scientific man, no ecclesiastic in the world whose removal would have called forth more appreciative and reve-

rential sympathy. The *Pall Mall*, doubtful if the imperishable Church can continue in England, wrote: "It may be fairly predicted of the cardinal's posthumous reputation that he will be recognized hereafter as the man who could have restored Catholicity in England, if its restoration had been possible." The *Times*: "In learning, in benevolence and piety, it will be long ere the English Roman Catholic hierarchy can expect again to find the like of Nicholas Cardinal Wiseman." The *Sun*: "His reputation was more than European. He was conspicuous for more than merely rare abilities. He was endowed with more than simply a capacious and vigorous intellect. He was a man of genius." *John Bull*: "His comparatively early death will be felt by all, even the most sturdy Protestant among us, as a national loss." The *Patriot*: "None have questioned the simplicity and sincerity of his faith; and when he said in dying that he 'felt like a child going home,' something reveals itself which happily belongs exclusively neither to the Roman nor the Protestant world of thought and experience. We feel the touch of nature which makes the whole world kin, and can join very heartily in the pious ejaculation many readers will utter this day over his grave: May he rest in peace!" *Hull Advertiser*: "The greatest among the present generation of England's great men has ceased to be numbered with the living." The *Star*: "He bore himself amongst us like a gentleman and a scholar, and all must surely regret the death of one who had so many splendid intellectual qualities and so many exalted and Christian virtues."

To quote a tithe of the eulogies bestowed on the *great priest* by the Catholic and Continental press would be to write volumes.

Speaking of the adaptability of Cardinal Wiseman, an American periodical remarked: "He would talk with a cabinet minister on terms of calm equality, as if his rank must be self-evident, and he delighted to set a band of

poor school-children playing around him." Intellectually and morally, what cabinet minister of the age is worthy to stand on the same plane? And socially, apart from his position as a prince of the Church, his rank might have been higher if the ancestors of some "cabinet ministers" had not confiscated or stolen the lands that should have descended to him.

Cardinal Wiseman had a fine, portly figure, and, before intense bodily suffering combined with years and trials began to affect his personal appearance, was judged eminently handsome. Mother McAuley knew him in his prime and found him wonderfully attractive and gracious. But his manners were so simple and elegant, and his conversation so fascinating, that his face was overlooked, unless when one observed the light and joy that often illumined it. In his family he was considered to bear a remarkable personal resemblance to his uncle, Patrick Wiseman, the Waterford merchant who, with the cardinal's father, formed the well-known firm of Wiseman Brothers. It was thought he inherited his unusual intellectual endowments from his mother. The Stranges of Aylwardstown, County Kilkenny, had a local celebrity for gifts of intellect above the average. Several members of that distinguished family known to the writer possessed fine abilities and high culture. This was especially the case with three sisters, daughters of his uncle, Peter Strange, who became Sisters of Mercy.

His devotion to the poor the cardinal left as an heirloom to his successors, with a piece of plate having an inscription of which we give his own translation :

"Who, after me, more worthily of Christ dost feed the sheep,
Remembrance of thy duty even at the banquet keep ;
Nor when, for thee, with genial friends the festive board is spread,
Let Lazarus before thy door sink faint for want of bread."

The ardent Mother M. Gonzaga was completely dis-

heartened by the loss of her revered cardinal. "Pray hard for us," she writes; "we have had so many disagreeables lately, and we have no friend now. . . . I think my best plan is to endure in silence, and hope that the new archbishop, whoever he may be, will help us. I can't help sometimes feeling quite out of heart and desponding—it was so different before; we had our troubles and annoyances, but we were always acting with our superior and knew he approved, and he had always time to give a few words of encouragement if he could not write a long letter. I can't tell you how I miss him and what a blank there is; it seems to grow drearier and drearier every day. . . . I never spent a more penitential Lent."

Poor Mother M. Gonzaga had good reason to bewail the cardinal, the only ecclesiastic that ever thoroughly understood her; and her life from the hour of his death was a series of crosses, some of which were brought on by herself. The dear soul was of the rough-diamond class and had an inconvenient habit of always speaking just as she thought. Even as a young girl there was something strong and original in her character. Her uncle was an admiral, and she was brought up partially in a dock-yard. When Dorothea Barrie and her sister became converts the cardinal showed them kindnesses of every sort, but from first acquaintance he was particularly attracted to the blunt ways of Dorothea, whose genuine worth he recognized through the veil that hid it from older friends. There is no denying the girl was terrible. It was even reported to the cardinal that, like her uncle and other sons of Neptune, she could easily be provoked to use the strongest condemnatory expressions and other naughty words. Once when some "things" got in her way she consigned them, in the fewest possible words, to perdition. This was told to the cardinal, who regarded it rather as a vulgarity than a sin. "*Things* cannot be damned," corrected his eminence when he heard that his *protégée* had cursed.

She had a fine mind and a very superior education, but her facility in sketching sometimes brought her into trouble. Once she toyed with her pencil till she had a very clever caricature drawn, in the midst of which her guests were horrified to perceive the austere countenance of Dr. Grant. Some one was ill-natured enough to relate this to the bishop of Southwark, and it is said that the artist was never quite forgiven. It is certain that he always had a prejudice against her, which, unhappily for one of her temperament, was shared by other prelates.

Sir George Bowyer made her a Knight (*sic*) of St. John of Jerusalem, and her full-length portrait, clad in the long cloak and *stole* of the Order, decorated with Maltese crosses, hung in the institution which owes her so much. It is strange that one so impulsive with every one else was a babe in the hands of the cardinal and her superior, Mother M. Clare Moore, both of whom loved and valued her for the wonderful innocence and goodness which her brusque manners concealed from persons of less penetration. Once, when a certain baronet gave her a sum of money for her hospital, he said: "It is easy enough to help you with money. But I wish I could help you with my hands, for you sadly need assistance." "All right," she answered, as though she were speaking to one of her sailor friends of early days, "there is the scrubbing-brush; just try it on these stairs." Thus she sometimes vexed people by too literal an interpretation of their offers of assistance. One may guess how it was with a lady of this style when she no longer had the cardinal to befriend her. He knew her too well to be angry with her on any account. There is something childlike and pathetic in the simplicity with which she bewails the loss of the locks of his hair she had cut off as relics after closing his eyes. He once desired her to get her portrait taken and send him a copy. "To my great mortification," she writes, "I hung in the dining-room at York Place till I was sent to the back stairs [when the

photograph faded]; the cardinal said I was so ugly I must be put out of sight. I wish I could get the thing, for the new archbishop will think it strange." Never, indeed, could she expect another to be the same to her as her first father; though, in his humility, he had assured her she would never have to do with a worse bishop than himself. With her he was always fatherly, often playful. He appreciated all her difficulties even when he laughed at her droll way of describing them. He wished her to know his friends and relatives, confided in her to an extent those nearest his person never suspected; his man Roper and his little dog Muff were on Mother Gonzaga's list of friends.

It was the greatest joy of her life to be allowed to soothe the dying moments of this glorious but humble prince of the Church. He had attracted her to the faith, explained away her doubts and difficulties, and been as a lamp to her feet during her strict and painful novitiate. The honor and happiness of waiting on him to the last cast a halo over her after-life which brightened its darkest moments. Canon Morris relates a touching scene which she has not given in her letters:

"About half-past five A.M. Thursday, February 9, he said: 'Reverend mother, take hold of my hand. I want you to promise that you will obey me.' 'Yes,' she said. 'Promise to tell me whatever I tell you to tell me, whether you like it or not. . . . I wish to die as an act of simple obedience, and I desire you to tell me to die. But first ask me, Do you desire to be with Christ? And I shall say, Yes. Do you desire nothing on earth but the enjoyment of God? When I say "Yes" to that you are to say, If you desire nothing more on earth, go to God.' Reverend mother put the first question to him, but she broke down in the middle of the second. In a few minutes he said: 'You did not do what I told you, or I should not be here now.'"

The following is a translation of the mortuary notice,

which Mother Gonzaga described as the saddest production she ever read :

Commend

To the Divine Goodness and Mercy,
And help with the Holy Sacrifice,
The Soul
Of our dearly beloved Father in Christ,
NICHOLAS CARDINAL WISEMAN,
Who, in sweet peace, yielded up his life
to
His dear Lord
February XV., MDCCCLXV.,
Aged LXII. years.
Farewell, great Prelate,
Noble in life,
Most noble in death.
In your home with God
Pray for us,
And aid your sorrowing spouse,
The Church.
Vale!

It is somewhat strange that the cardinal, who was so devoted to this noble, impetuous creature, showed no special liking for Mother M. Clare, though he always treated her with reverence. There was apparently little or no sympathy between them. Perhaps there was so much of self-control, reserve even, as to deprive her otherwise beautiful character of the charming grace of childlike simplicity so conspicuous in his own. This may have resulted from the restraint she felt on coming to England and living in an heretical atmosphere and among people whose manners were so different from the genial, hearty ways of her own country. Perhaps, too, fear of making a mistake, and thereby injuring the grave interests confided to her, caused her to appear unnecessarily guarded. Mother McAuley observed in her a certain stiffness, which she hoped would wear off, and found the over-cautious superior of Ber-

mondsey less charming than the bright, joyous superior of Cork. The two people on earth whom our precipitate friend loved best were the cardinal and her precious mother, as she always styled Mother Clare; and it was as a cloud to her usual brightness that his eminence "was not devoted to Mother M. Clare." But she made him give her a token of his good-will on his death-bed for her precious mother, and then her triumph was complete: these two great souls understood each other at last.

The life of this generous, affectionate creature was full of suffering. This was partly owing to her disposition; she expected to find love and generosity in others, and God permitted her to find only disappointment. "She had, besides, so lively an imagination," says Mother M. Clare, "that she felt keenly what others would not have noticed; often, indeed, her crosses were made up by herself—I mean she took up things never intended, and she was frank to an excess, so that her words were generally misconstrued and her inconsiderate ways brought upon her a heavy cross in the troubles about the hospital where she was superior ten years. In 1867 we brought her here, and she took her place below the youngest professed, cheerfully working in the meanest and most laborious employments, though her health was far from strong. No one could be more exact and attentive to her duties, no one more submissive and faithful. She was chosen for the office of assistant, but at the end of one triennial she asked our bishop to take her name from the list of vocals. His lordship had been prejudiced by various reports, and he complied readily. She continued as exact as before; her great joy was to visit and comfort the sick and dying poor. During the last year of her life we had many trying cases, and she was always the first to offer herself. Whenever I was at a loss I had only to go to her; she was ready for any work at any moment. Since her happy death we have not gone to any of our poor without hearing of their

regrets for the loss of this dear Sister. In the workhouse especially she was a favorite, even with Protestants, and with the Protestant master and matron, and we are indebted to this kind feeling for a key which opens all the wards and passages, and saves us journeying up and down steep stairs. She was so grateful to God for His goodness in bringing her to the true faith! Her family were very Protestant. She had a yearning after Catholicity from childhood, but was obliged to wait till after her twenty-first year. Her mother died when she was only eleven, her father five years later, and she was left with a rich uncle, who provided amply for the other members of the family, but almost cast her off when she became a Catholic, and when she resolved to become a nun he reduced her portion to a bare life-annuity of thirty pounds. She had other trials, and separations harder to her, which she made heavier by keeping all to herself. Our divine Lord permitted all for her sanctification, I trust, and she certainly evinced great patience, obedience, and resignation during the twenty-eight days of her last illness. She never uttered a word of complaint or a moan. It was astonishing how tranquilly she endured such great pain. She received the holy habit Easter Tuesday, 1849, and Easter Tuesday, 1873, was the last day of her life, for she died at three in the morning, Easter Wednesday. She had prayed from the first that she might not lose her senses or her patience, and all were astonished how she maintained her consciousness. I had been much up at night, and on Tuesday they begged I would not sit up. When leaving her I told her to send for me. 'Oh! what is the use of disturbing you?' [she said]. But as I begged her she smiled and assented."

Within two hours she said to the infirmarian, "I am dying." Mother M. Clare was at her side in a moment. About a quarter before she expired she said, "Glory! glory!" Mother M. Clare thought she wanted her to say

Gloria Patri, but she shook her head and repeated, "Glory! glory!" Speaking of Our Lady, she said: "Oh! she is a mother to me; she does me good." She was always soothed and relieved when her "precious mother" gave her a few drops of water from the Grotto of Lourdes, saying an *Ave* the while. She never took any food or medicine, even from the Protestant doctor, without making the sign of the cross. On the Feast of St. Joseph she took typhus, and on the Feast of the Seven Dolors she received the last sacraments. After Canon Bamber, the officiating priest, withdrew, she wanted to see all the Sisters once more. She knew them and tried to speak to each, asking pardon for the bad example she said she had given them. They were all struck with the peaceful, happy expression of her countenance; they had never seen anything like it. When they retired she said to the infirmarian: "Oh! this has been such a happy day. God is so good to me! It seems as if He could not do enough to show how much He loves me!" When in the greatest pain she would say: "This is very little to suffer for my sins"; and her constant motto was: "Whatever God pleases." She had always had a great spirit of prayer. The Sisters used to joke her about the number of rosaries she said going up and down stairs. And of indulgenced prayers she said quite a bookful every day. In her sickness prayer was her only comfort, and the only thing for which she asked; being wholly taken up with God, she seldom spoke save to her precious mother, and very little even to her. It seemed as if she could not be grateful enough for the smallest favor. Every action, every word was that of a perfect religious.

When the fever became complicated with congestion of the lungs the doctor said there was not the slightest chance of recovery. Mother M. Clare remarks how smiling and lovely she looked after death, and goes on to say:

"The late Cardinal Wiseman loved darling Sister M. Gonzaga as his own child. When he died her great trials

began. The —— wished to put S—— in place of our Sisters, which was against the agreement made and signed by all parties. Then the hospital was closed and the patients heartlessly sent out, some in a dying state. For nearly two years this trouble went on. The hospital reopened November, 1868, but the funds were withdrawn and everything done to hinder. However, one good was attained—there was no L—— Committee to quarrel or lay down laws. The Sisters have to seek funds for their patients, but they are free from lay control.

“Our dear Sister M. Gonzaga was well tried and purified during the last years of her life. It is extraordinary the number of Masses and prayers offered for her during her illness and since her death. We feel it is a reward for her immense charity* in praying for others and being so ready to help all, no matter at what risk to herself. Canon Bamber said the introit of the Mass was for her, Easter Wednesday: ‘Come, blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you.’

“Her death was full of consolation, yet it was a heavy trial and a very serious loss in many ways; but I could not wish it otherwise, even if I were allowed to choose. God's will is always the best for us.”

The anguish which followed the cardinal's death, as well as the persecution of which she was the object, would have made the life of poor Mother M. Gonzaga intolerable had she not turned all things to her soul's profit and been as gold tried in the furnace. Her melancholy forebodings

* Mother M. Gonzaga's letters are full of her best-loved *protégés*, the sick poor: the woman with cancer, whose daughter Mary kept her so beautifully clean, but Mary was un-Irish enough to hate wakes; the poor woman in consumption whose baby died with her—no one sorry but the father, and he was glad soon; the dying Eliza, who had always longed to be a Catholic without knowing why, and who, when she recovered, was called the wonder; another who had never had any instruction, and yet led a pure, upright life—it was the grace of baptism working in her; she went to the Catholic church when she could, and always felt happy there, though she understood nothing of what she saw; another who came in for all the troubles of father and step-mother and tried to smooth every one's feelings—“she had a sorrowful life, and I hope it was her purgatory.”

after her best friend's death had a terrible realization, but her precious mother sustained and consoled her. Between these two, so dissimilar in every way, there was never the most transient estrangement. "No one but myself," said Mother M. Clare, as she gazed on that face so calm, so lovely in death, "knew the transcendent beauty of our darling Mary Gonzaga's soul; no one else knew the perfection, the intimate union with God to which she had attained. Thank God, I have seen her safe home!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE WIGTON AND OTHER FOUNDATIONS—SPIRIT OF MOTHER M. CLARE.

Bishop Hogarth applies for a Foundation—Visit to Sunderland—Miss Aglionby—Canon Brown—The Orphanage—Details—Very Rev. Dr. O'Toole asks a Foundation for Abingdon—Father Driscoll for Gravesend—Eltham—Account of the Place—Difficulties—Spirit of Mother M. Clare—Letters—She is consulted by Many—Some of her Decisions—Her Interest in her "Grandchildren"—Bishop Grant—His Confidence in her—She never failed him—Nobody likes to leave delightful Bermondsey—As the Days of Persecution pass away the Sisters lay aside the Bonnet and Cloak, and appear in their Religious Dress, with the addition of a Face-veil—Bishop Danell's Esteem for Mother M. Clare—Her Intervention often invoked in Difficulties—Clifford.

THE Wigton foundation, for which Bishop Hogarth made application in 1856, was arranged the following year, and on the 31st of August, 1857, Mother M. Clare set out from Bermondsey with the nuns destined for the Lake country. They remained some days at Sunderland, where they were entertained with the greatest affection by Mother M. Aloysius O'Connell (professed under Mother M. Clare in Cork) and her community; also by Bishop Hogarth, who treated them with unusual distinction and cordially welcomed them to his diocese. On September 4 they reached Wigton. The convent was founded by Miss Aglionby, a convert, sister of a minister. She had long been anxious to establish an institution in this little town, which was wholly destitute of means of Catholic education for the poor. The pious lady was encouraged in her design by Canon Brown, the zealous priest of the place, and his brother, Canon Joseph Brown, chaplain to the Carmelites

at Darlington. The convent was close to the church; Miss Aglionby had spared no expense in its erection and endowed it for the maintenance of five religious. The Diocesan Orphanage is attached to it. Much good has been done in Wigton, especially with converts, with whom still more might be done were it not for "horrid human respect." An early letter says: "The orphans are increasing; we have nineteen now. I wish we had nineteen Sisters."

The convent is a very large, quadrangular building, with a pretty garden in the centre, and a greenhouse on which the nuns rely much for the decoration of their beautiful chapel. Though the establishment is built on a grand scale, it is always neat and tidy, having "a place for everything and everything in its own place, except the Sisters, who ought to be in the empty cells." The air of Wigton is bracing and delightful; the scenery beautiful. From the upper windows the lofty summit of Skiddaw is distinctly visible. "The land of valleys" is a charming region in which to pitch one's tent, and a Sister who is sixty and expects to live some years yet, as her parents have not yet been called away, notices that Sisters who were quite weakly in London regain their strength in the mild air of Cumberland. The fine voices of the school-children are heard to advantage in the church, and the Sisters are described as bright, cheerful, and happy, notwithstanding their hard work.

In September, 1859, Bishop Grant asked for Sisters for Abingdon, in Berkshire, at the instance of Dr. O'Toole, the pastor, and shortly after Mother M. Clare established a convent in that place. In 1860, at the urgent entreaty of the pastor, Rev. F. Driscoll, the same holy woman founded a house at Gravesend. The people contributed very generously, especially Mr. George Arnold, who has ever been a kind and generous friend to the community. Abingdon has just sent a branch to Aldershot.

Though of an exceedingly delicate constitution, Mother

M. Clare worked on till within a few days of her death, with a fervor that never cooled and an energy that wore out her frail body. Being the oldest mother-superior in existence, as to years in office, and a cherished daughter of the holy foundress, Mother M. Clare was often consulted on delicate questions regarding rule and observance, to every one of which she replied with lawyer-like clearness and precision. Being asked whether it was in accordance with the rule to teach the children of the rich, she answered: "If the bishop approves of your instructing the children of respectable persons, why should you trouble yourself reflecting any more upon it? The blessing of God is with the blessing of obedience, and you have it—that is everything. Besides, are not those children 'the ignorant' as well as the poor children? Therefore it is as great a work of mercy to instruct them, often greater. . . . At present you might hinder all good by declining this. . . . It would be strange if you did not meet difficulties and troubles, since you go forth each day to meet Christ with His cross on His shoulders. Yet trials come so unexpectedly that a poor superior is often led to say or do something that seems to have no good result. But Almighty God will bring good out of it. Experience is the best teacher—we grow wise through our blunders."

"Let superiors see all," she writes again, "dissemble much and correct little. This is St. Bernard's doctrine, and a useful one it is. Do all with an upright intention, and never look back. And if you want certain practical details take the advice of our revered foundress:

"Let no crosses vex or tease,
Meet them all with peace and ease;
Mark the faults of every day—
Mark them in a cheerful way.
If you *seriously* complain,
Let us feel it gives you pain.
Mind but one thing at a time;
You've sixteen hours from morning prime."

“See now, dearest grandchild, I have taken you at your word, and here is a letter of liberty ; but you will not take offence. Trust in God. . . . Even if you were the wisest and holiest of beings you are not thereby secured from trouble or from being considered imprudent, etc. Was not Christ, the Eternal Wisdom, treated as a fool? Be very cheerful and patient. We are not angels; faults will be committed, mistakes made. Well, they can be remedied by quiet patience, and cheerfulness above all. Always look on the bright side of everything, and don't let anything trouble you.

“Our Rule is so full and explicit about the novitiate that we want no more. If we only practise what it contains we shall be great saints. This little word must be your poor grandmother's Easter letter. Fear not ; our loving Lord is with you. He will bless your work, your Sisters, and yourself. Go to Him lovingly and confidently.”

To a superior anxious to throw up the reins in a difficult mission and return to the quiet of the parent house she writes :

“Do not think of a change of any kind, place or office, for yourself. ‘Stay in thy place.’ The *Imitation* says truly : ‘The imagination and changing of place have deceived many.’”

To one who had difficulties of another kind she says :

“Let us not seek to send away those who trouble us, for ‘if we fling away one cross we shall find other and heavier instead.’ We must expect these disagreeables, and some saint says : ‘A troublesome religious is worth his weight in gold.’* That has always been a consolation ; for, as we are all poor [creatures], when any one is tiresome I begin to congratulate with myself, and when that one comes right I feel certain another will take the place ; but all passes in

* Such a religious is not *marketable*, however ; no sensible person will take him even “for what he is worth,” or be anxious that he should continue to cumber the ground.

the sixteen hours of the day, and what we had yesterday won't come to-day."

To one under a heavy affliction :

"Our divine Lord has permitted this to purify His chosen ones. You were all going on so happily perhaps you did not know or reflect how greatly you stood in need of God's helping hand to keep you up. The old enemy was jealous and tried to annoy you. Now you will annoy him by returning to your peaceful, happy ways. Now, send away the *dismals*. I must confess it makes one's blood mount up when people go on in such strange ways. Old Bishop Morris used to say : 'Poor human nature!' and then by way of explanation : 'Well, this is the nineteenth century !'"

A letter dated November 13, 1869, contains some particulars of the last few days Bishop Grant spent in England :

"His lordship sent us some work. He asked if I had remembered the recreation on Sunday. I was obliged to say no. He handed me pen and paper, and I was obliged there and then to write to you. I was tempted to date St. George's, that you might know my dignity to be allowed to write in the bishop's presence.

"He starts to-morrow. Duke of Norfolk is paying Canon B.'s expenses to be his companion ; his brother, a medical man, goes with him, and Lord Edward Howard pays a courier. The duchess has given him a fur coat, etc. Everybody is trying to make him well provided against cold. A lady sent him fifty pounds, which he declined, fearing she could not spare it. She doubled the gift. I told his lordship I would ask all to help us in praying for those who had done him good, that God may bless and reward them. He is most cheerful, and he feels that, divine Providence having taken such care of him, his journey must be for good.

"We are saying special prayers for him, and will be most thankful if you add even an *Ave*. He begged us [to

pray] that he might never, through any weakness or human respect, give a vote contrary to God's will and designs, and he added: 'If you are keeping your Rule you will be helping most to the success of the General Council.' "

December 4, 1869: "I enclose a copy of the bishop's letter, as it contains some messages for you. He is a good father: he does not forget us. Thank God he is better! The visit to the Holy Father was a privilege, as he was allowed to see His Holiness alone. We were so rejoiced to hear from him that we knelt down and said an extra rosary, and we shall have recreation at supper this evening.

"As to silence, we speak at breakfast Christmas, New Year's Day, Easter Sunday, the Assumption, and the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy; at dinner on these feasts and church cloak days, except Holy Thursday; at supper more frequently. Our holy foundress wished at first that we might finish our serious work by the end of Matins (half-past six P.M.), and, like the poor, have our rest after labor. But Archbishop Murray, who had power from the Holy See to ordain the regulations, told her to allow a short recreation after dinner."

December 15, 1869: "I will gladly do anything to help you, but my abilities are of the lowest order. . . . Rev. Mr. Wenham gave out six medals, and would have given out more, but fever has thinned our school to two hundred and ninety. Canon Bamber has gone to buy some prizes, and we are working wonders at church pictures and other fine things to reward our poor children. All our going-out bonnets* of years gone by were sent to a poor woman, who transformed them into twenty-four hats to be trimmed in the fashion for our youngsters. The Sisters gravely kept two bonnets in case of accident. I said, 'May be the

* The bonnet and cloak of the early members, not being part of the religious dress, but merely a disguise for it which recalled the days of persecution, were laid aside wherever the religious could go abroad freely. A face-veil is substituted.

council will order us to resume the becoming attire, and what shall we then do?"

February 25, 1870: "As to the bishop, we have only to say, May the holy will of God be done! He knows best. We assembled to say the rosary, and at the fourth decade it came to my mind that it was the feast of St. Walburga, to whom the bishop has great devotion. I at once felt a kind of confidence and joy, and we said three *Aves* in honor of that saint, committing all to His divine will and the infinite compassion of our heavenly Father, and trying to feel as contented as the angels in heaven. For we know what God wills must be the very best thing that can happen to us."

March 29: "If St. Joseph obtains a favorable grant to our petitions [for the bishop] we shall have a Mass in his honor; all to give up sugar for a week, that each may have a share in providing the alms. . . . I am expecting Mother M. Gonzaga home to-day. She has been four weeks with Lady Mostyn, but the oculist delays the completion of the operation on her [Lady Mostyn's] eyes. As her son and his wife intend to settle at Hooley Lodge, she will have their care. The new Mrs. Mostyn is very pious and kind.

"We are likely to be called on for a foundation soon. Nobody likes to go from this delightful Bermondsey. However, we shall find elsewhere what we came to seek here, if we go in a generous, obedient spirit. . . . I have just been told of a man who cut his throat through being so totally deprived of every help that he was starving. His brain must have been turned, poor creature!"

Bishop Grant died sweetly and peaceably in Rome, June 1, 1870, and in him the Order of Mercy lost a devoted father. Like Bishop Griffiths, he had the highest opinion of Mother M. Clare and spoke of her as a superior woman in every way. Bermondsey, the oldest religious house in his diocese, was his favorite convent. His confidence in Mother M. Clare was boundless. He consulted her on the

most delicate, intricate matters, and many a secret known but to God and himself he committed to her prudence when wrong could be rectified through her intervention. "I have real confidence and esteem for every one at Bermondsey," he said. "When unusual labor and self-sacrifice were required in his diocese," writes a dear friend of his, "it was to the mother-superior of Bermondsey he had recourse. Over and over he said in my hearing, 'She has never yet failed me, never once disappointed me!'"

Equally appreciative of this holy woman was Bishop Danell, the fifth and last prelate under whose pastoral care Bermondsey fell during her thirty-five years' superiority. Like his predecessors, he often employed her as his secretary, especially when their joint intervention was invoked in relation to convent business. To a superior who had many troubles she writes: "As you asked me, I took the liberty to speak to our dear, kind bishop, who is full of concern and sympathy for you. I trust before this reaches you the direction his lordship has given may bring comfort to your anxious heart and peace and joy to all. . . . M—— must take up the cross generously for the love of God and for your sake. In a very little while all disturbed feeling will be quieted and every one will find the old spirit of joy and happiness which was your great blessing."

Like her namesake and early friend, Mother Moore, of Limerick, Mother M. Clare Moore founded twelve Convents of Mercy—viz., Cork, Bermondsey, Bristol, Chelsea, Great Ormond Street, Brighton, Wigton, Abingdon, Gravesend, Clifford, Hunslet-in-Leeds, and Eltham. At Clifford the Bermondsey nuns merely replaced their own Sisters from Dublin, who were obliged to concentrate their forces upon Hull. And they noted with a holy joy the graves of two of the first Sisters, decorated with handsome crosses and sparkling with dewy primroses and forget-me-nots, in the bright springtime, 1870. The delightful, old-fashioned

gardens of Clifford were a treat to nuns from smoky Bermondsey. When the chaplain asked them whether they had walked in their grounds yet, they replied that they did not know how far they might venture. The boundaries were quickly ascertained, and they found themselves among hardy perennials, and unpruned kitchen vegetables, and abundant tufts of green leaves with spring flowers blossoming up toward the sun. And the bushes, now quite leafy—currant, gooseberry, and raspberry—and the low, spreading boughs of the apple-trees, beautifully decked with blossoms, all of which we who live among luscious mangoes, and shade ourselves with the broad, pale-green leaf of the banana, look back at, through a long vista of years, with such loving regret—how delighted our Bermondsey Sisters must have been with the bright, green village of Clifford in the first spring and summer of their residence!

Mother M. Clare visited Clifford* again, at the earnest entreaty of the bishop and her own dear children, in June, 1873, when the uncut grass was greenest and the gardens and hedges gaudy with fragrant syringas, and flaunting, scentless hollyhocks, and wild rose-bushes hopelessly tangled and huddled together in picturesque confusion. How she enjoyed that visit, and how her children enjoyed it! From foggy London she wrote, after her return, to her dear grandchild, the superior of Guernsey convent: "Your great heart will be glad to know that the little community at Clifford is flourishing; they are loved by all. Their convent is beautifully situated. You have many advantages in that way, but *we* must look forward to finding them in heaven, where we shall be satisfied to the full." Like Mother McAuley, Mother M. Clare had a pretty trick of telling her correspondents any nice things she happened to hear of them. "I was quite rejoiced," she writes, "at the bishop's words: 'Your community [Guernsey] is one

* The little Clifford convent was built by a Puseyite clergyman who afterwards became a Catholic and is now a priest of the Order of Charity.

according to my own heart.'” Shortly after this sweet affectionate creature writes to her old friend Sister Teresa, of Brighton: “We are united in spirit, but it would be such a pleasure if we could have one little chat together! Ah! well, we must be like the priest who said he kept all his bread and butter for heaven. So many have gone before us that the greatest number of our friends are in heaven, we trust, though our merciful Saviour *raises up others to supply for them. . . . I wish we could all see your beautiful Calvary or that you could come here and make one. I have been describing yours to our clever people, but none of them are so clever as you to make grand things out of nothing.”

Mother M. Clare mentions another Sister M. Teresa, who, she says, “succeeds well at Clifford; she has our best working Sisters, so that we have to work hard here to make up for our loss.” Mother M. Clare always selected the Sisters to go on foundations from her very best.

CHAPTER XXV.

DECISIONS OF MOTHER M. CLARE—HER HOLY DEATH.

A Priest who wants to be Reverend Mother as well as Reverend Father—Mother Clare throws Oil upon the troubled Waters—Consoling Message from the Bishop—It is convenient to be a Block but not a Blockhead—Too easily cast down—Absurdity of confounding the ecclesiastical with the personal Superior—Mother M. Clare never had a Difficulty with an Ecclesiastic—Her Opinions on various Points—Her profound Knowledge of Human Nature—Her Freedom from Human Respect—Pleasant Incidents—She writes a Play—Egyptian Darkness—Curious and amusing Questions—All this a Comedy for those who have no Interior—“We make our Vows to God”—Eltham—Mother M. Clare’s last Illness—Her beautiful Spirit passes away to the Music of the Name of Jesus.

WHEN a young clergyman, not overburdened with prudence, wished to become reverend mother as well as reverend father of a community, the matter being referred to Mother M. Clare, she wrote: “No priest can be the same to you as your lamented founder. The little troubles of these few weeks will put Mr. — in his right position, and the more separate you keep within the community or convent the less trouble you will have. Our late revered bishop said we never rightly become friends with some people till we have had a good quarrel with them. Mr. — has been led into a misapprehension, partly by your good-nature and partly by your illness. S— has no doubt suffered from the loss of F—, and we often don’t know what strange things we say and do when we are out of sorts that way. Could you but hear how affectionately the bishop spoke of yourself, dearest mother, you could not imagine he would believe a word to your disadvantage; and he does not. He is quite grieved for your trials. You have his blessing and his prayers.

“Now I am going to give my grandchild a little scolding for looking at the black side of the clouds instead of putting on spectacles to see that they are all lined with the brightest gold. But it is because you are a poor sick* *little one* now. Yes, indeed, we must have pity on ourselves, and not believe in half the ghosts we see at such times. Did you think you were to march off to heaven and leave poor old me behind? No, truly; I will pray that you may be a jubilarian! Our good Sister P—— never forgave her nurse who saved her life in childhood, because she would have gone straight to heaven then, whereas in after-years she had a firm conviction she would go to purgatory; she would say St. Teresa had been there for a while.

“His lordship told me to assure you of his sincere regret for your illness. He telegraphed that evening to make sure of your knowing his directions. ‘She is all heart,’ said he, ‘ready for anything good, but if she meets a trial she is too soon cast down. Her heart is too easily touched.’ So you must send—where?—to buy a big wooden heart not so susceptible. It is very convenient to be a block, not a blockhead. . . . Forgive your old grandmother if she has said anything to grieve you.”

Several letters refer to the difficulty of establishing new convents in places not easy of access; of the mistake of sending any on foundations but the very best; of the careful training and assistance which young, inexperienced superiors require, and which the mother-house should bestow; of the error of “shelving” the superioress for the ministrations of a priest, however holy. This eminent religious had strong views as to the absurdity of confounding the ecclesiastical with the personal superior; the office of the former being to see that nothing erroneous creeps in as to faith and morals, of the latter to direct the whole daily

* Mother M. Clare was fond of reminding her sick friends that, as St. Joseph Cupertino says, “God proposes to Himself some great thing in sending us sickness, either to take away some fault or imperfection or give us means of acquiring greater virtue.”

routine. Like St. Teresa and the Venerable Anne of St. Bartholomew, but not half so strongly as either—strong language on these points is common in every language but English—she deprecates very much the havoc made in communities that for their trial or their punishment fall under the direction of meddling, inexperienced persons.* She thinks, however, that a prudent superioress can prevent or neutralize most misfortunes of this nature. This she illustrated in her own person, for during her long administration she always acted so wisely, or met with such sensible, amiable men, that she never had a difficulty with any ecclesiastic, young or old, and gave perfect satisfaction in all the difficult relations her office supposes.

Among the authors whom she recommends for retreats are Bourdaloue, Nepveu, and Pergmayer, S.J. She considers it best for superiors to retain the novices and the management of things for over three years, and says this was the custom from the beginning. She congratulates a Sister who has been released from a busy office, yet, with a deep knowledge of human nature, adds: "If S—— expressed a little dreariness it was only because of that changeable kind of feeling that comes over us all. We should like to be what we are not—anything for a change at those times. Such is our poor nature; we always imagine our peace depends on surrounding objects, instead of convincing ourselves that it depends on our being content with what God's will ordains for us." The wise mother

* "The less notice you take of those who annoy you," she writes to an ultra-sensitive superior, "the sooner they will leave off their tiresome ways. Those people hurt only themselves (?); their example has no real influence (?)—even the youngest can see they are doing wrong. . . . Have patience and courage, and great confidence in God. He is your true friend. 'Go make a great noise at the door of the Tabernacle.'"

Finally she says: "It is the cross of superiors to have daily anxieties, but we have One who is always at hand to help and guide us, no matter how destitute of earthly friends and advisers we may think or feel ourselves to be, and our loving Saviour never fails to bring us through the difficulty, if we only have recourse to Him with confidence."

advises a timorous superior in certain cases “not to think of what a Sister will feel or not feel, but pray earnestly and do what you know to be right. You will not be able to give satisfaction always—that is part of a superior’s penance, and you must accept it cheerfully.”

Questions curious and amusing came to this wise virgin for solution, and it would seem as if several prelates got out of difficulties by referring to her those who proposed them. One lady superior wants to know whether she ought to agree to a sort of compromise whereby she gets one-half of the obedience due her and some one else the other—her part being to direct as to eating, clothing, and other bodily requirements, whereas in all that regarded the soul she must not even venture a glance. Another has a subject who needs very minute direction for her spiritual guidance; others claim the same privilege, “and,” continues the aggrieved lady, “not to be left out in the cold while others were at the white heat of fervor, I followed suit, and thus became merely a good-natured matron.” To those hapless creatures who have little or none of what spiritual people call *interior* all this is more amusing than a comedy.

A person who had made a vow of obedience to her director having entered a convent, it happened that he was delegated to receive her vows, and, desirous of keeping up the relations of former years, she asked if she could name him in that sense in the Act of Profession. Mother M. Clare answered in her clinching way: “We make our vows to God, as you well know—to God *only*. It is required that our profession be received by an authorized person; hence any priest delegated by the bishop is the authority under which we are allowed to make our vows. The Holy Father, as divines say, is the immediate superior of every religious, and he delegates the bishop in certain points to govern religious, or gives jurisdiction as marked out in Orders. But the Act of Profession says expressly that we make our vows *according to the Rule*, and that obliges us to

obey the *mother-superior*. Therefore in our Act of Profession we do not promise to bishop or priest, but he has authority to receive our profession as our bishop, or the priest delegated by the bishop. . . . Your feeling has a precedent in the Sisters who founded H—— convent.” And our exact writer says these Sisters asked if they should write their vows under the authority of their own bishop, and “in presence of” the presiding prelate; these Sisters having made their novitiate in Dublin for an English house. But Archbishop Murray said such a wording of the vows would be incorrect. The Sisters in question were of course under his jurisdiction till transferred to another. “Good-by, dearest mother,” concludes this missive. “I have answered you stupidly and clumsily. When you look at this ill-written letter you’ll say I must be drowsy. See what it is to be an old grandmother. May God bless you and your charge!”

A lady-superior once imposed—rather injudiciously—as a penance on two rather refractory members that they would tell her every evening if they had noticed any fault in her during the day. The penance was not performed—perhaps they had perceived none. The matter coming before Mother M. Clare, she wrote to the lady-superior :

“Though it does seem obstinate to refuse the proof of sincerity you ask, I would venture to hope it was not through a spirit of obstinacy, but rather from a feeling of respect towards you. You know how many temptations we have to censure others, and what talking about them goes on within us. It would not be suitable to tell all to the persons of whom we had been forming disadvantageous opinions. I remember hearing of a novice in some Order where they were required to tell all that passed in their minds, and her mistress, asking her what she was thinking of, received for answer : ‘I was considering how very ugly you are.’

“I ought not to say foolish words to you, dearest mother,

when your trial is so painful, your cross so heavy ; I only meant to excuse the two who have caused you pain. . . . Your letters are always so edifying that it is only when they bring news of your being ill or in anxiety that they do not fill me with joy."

Mother M. Clare enlivens her rather serious letters with pretty bits of convent news : "On Holy Innocents' all the seniors grew young and went out to throw snowballs in the garden. You should have seen Sisters Margaret* and Monica racing like little juveniles. We had a quiet retreat, and on New Year's Day a little concert and lottery. I drew a whistle and a short pipe ; Sister M—— a trumpet, which she employed rather noisily. There were Noe's arks, balls, and other useful articles for the infants.

"Last week we celebrated Sister M——'s half-jubilee, and now she looks as old as Mathusala's sister. The festivity came quite unexpectedly, beginning at breakfast with a verse and chorus to the tune of 'Merrily O !' which we changed to 'Jubilee O !' We placed pictures or presents from each, with congratulations, in a large open basket ; she had a crown of roses. Hot rolls put on our plates—to be eaten !—completed the breakfast festivities.

"I have been busy adapting a story and composing a prologue for our children's play. The moment I finished reading the pieces a dozen little girls cried out, 'May I be Olga ?' (the heroine). With quiet management we satisfied the dear children. One tiny, naughty boy would go on asking for a part ; and he led up another scrap of four, only a week at school, to make the same request.

* Mother M. Margaret Byrne, a distant relation of the foundress, entered Bermondsey Convent in 1841. She was trained to works of mercy by her, and still remembers the great mother as a very beautiful lady in 1822 and later, teaching poor girls to sew, selling to her wealthy friends the pretty baby-linen they had made under her direction, and reading a pleasant spiritual book to them while they worked. And, no race being excluded from her benevolence, the ancient religious, then Antoinette Byrne, remembers Dr. Armstrong asking Miss McAuley to prepare "a poor black man" to be received into the Church, and how assiduously she worked at her labor of love and mercy, as her dark *protégé* was to sail from Dublin in three days.

“To-day the Londoners have been living in the thickest darkness—I was going to say Egyptian ; not always black : a tinge of yellow, or that wretched wet, dense mist, varies the scene. I imagined we were going to have light, and so turned off the gas and wrote tickets for some to go to our worst sick, but friend fog is coming back. Sister M—— is attending her aged father, who is near death. She went to Kingsland yesterday, and coming back was a dangerous business. Her companion said she had never before formed the idea of what the plague of darkness could be like. They could not find a cab, and lost themselves twice after crossing London Bridge, on our own side, quite near home ; only for a good man they might have wandered far enough. The fog grows more dense ; excuse all blots and blunders.”

When asked by the Carlow mother-superior to receive some young ladies who were to take ship in London for New Zealand, Mother M. Clare wrote : “We shall be delighted to accommodate your brave postulants who are going to undertake such a long journey for God’s glory and the salvation of souls. They can go from London Bridge Station to Gravesend for their ship quite readily, as we are near the station.” Writing to the same, she says : “Our late revered bishop [Grant] had a very special veneration for the memory of our beloved foundress. He recommended us to have a few words of blessing in her handwriting photographed from one of her letters, that each Sister might have one.”

Mother M. Clare had always been delicate, but as she increased in years her fervor made her forget her health altogether ; nor would she suffer anything to be done for her save what was absolutely necessary. She attended to every community exercise, and was usually the first in choir in the morning, saying the Stations before the *Angelus*. She spoke readily and with real eloquence when instructing her children on their obligations. Being full

of lively faith, anything relating to the altar, however indirectly, excited her reverence. To be under the same roof with the Blessed Sacrament was a joy and a privilege she never wearied of extolling. She would have everything in the convent kept neat and clean, to be worthy of Him whose palace it is. "He does not ask us to be always on our knees before Him," she said, "but He does ask us to remember that we are in His own house and should consequently comport ourselves with reverence and love as His domestics and faithful friends, always under His care. He asks us to correct that temper which cannot bear a word, that pride which makes us unwilling to submit to the smallest contradiction. To be in the same house with the Blessed Sacrament should make us reverent and humble, banish from our minds everything unworthy, and preserve in us that modest, quiet, and cheerful manner which should appear in our deportment."

Mother Clare wished the Sisters to study the Rule on *Charity*, and was fond of saying that every religious house should be a copy of the Holy House of Nazareth, where peace and serenity reigned—a heaven on earth. True, every one has something to bear from others, owing to difference in education, manners, and other circumstances, but all are children of God and should assist each other in every way. We should seek the most disagreeable duties for ourselves, and remember that giving good example is a true exercise of charity, though justice obliges us to it. For we are admitted to a religious house only on condition of complying with the Rule and keeping up the good order established in it.

Speaking of the schools, Mother Clare said: "We should have a great and tender charity for the little ones of Christ. We are their mothers while they are entrusted to us, and they should find us such by our kindness and earnestness in teaching them." If we be not earnest she thought we might hear our Lord reproach us at the Judgment Day

for souls we could have saved and did not. "We should spare neither labor nor trouble," she would say, "but be willing to go to the end of the world for the salvation of a single soul." She often spoke of the kind manners we should cultivate towards the sick, showing the deepest interest in them and their families, not thinking of the fatigue we go through in visiting them, since our duties to our neighbor are done for God. They are for us acts of obedience as well as acts of charity, and should be performed with zeal and earnestness; but we must never allow them to send from our remembrance our first duty—that is, to attend to our own perfection. A good religious, without apparent abilities, will advance God's glory and the good of souls more than another with many talents but without the spirit of her state. Holiness alone distinguishes us as religious in the sight of God. It is only by attending to our first duty—that is, striving to become perfect according to our state—that we shall gain God's full blessing on our labors.

The twelfth and last house founded by Mother M. Clare was at Eltham, in Kent, once a place of considerable importance. To-day may be seen a portion of the ruins of an old palace and part of the moat, with an ivy-covered bridge. The manor belonged to the crown and is still called the Royal Manor. A great portion of the old park has been built upon. Edward IV. kept Christmas here in great state in 1483, entertaining daily at his own charge two thousand persons. His daughter, the Princess Bridget,* the last royal lady that became a nun in England, was born at Eltham. Henry VII., Henry VIII., and Elizabeth dwelt here; but as the last gave the preference to Greenwich, Eltham gradually ceased to be a royal resi-

* Princess Louisa Stuart, daughter of the Winter-King, Frederick (of Bohemia), and granddaughter of King James I., renounced her place in the English succession to become a nun in France. The descendants of her sister Sophia have ruled England since 1714.

dence and declined to its present state of almost utter ruin.

In this historic place Mother M. Clare established a convent and an industrial school, 1st of October, 1874. "I am now busy," she writes on St. Teresa's Day to her old friend Sister Teresa Boyce, "trying to get the things the Sisters want at Eltham;* and they want everything They are worse off than we were here in the beginning." Eltham is nearly nine miles from Bermondsey. Mother M. Clare had to visit it frequently to complete the necessary arrangements, and, the winter being very severe, the additional fatigue and anxiety soon proved fatal to her already broken constitution. Her life had been one of labor and self-sacrifice in the cause of God from early youth, and it was His holy will that this work of charity should be her last undertaking for Him and His poor. On December 2 she caught a severe cold and was forced to go to bed, but afterwards rallied and said: "Oh! a cold doesn't last for ever." On the 5th she played the organ at the services in the convent chapel. On the 6th she wished to rise for early Mass, but the infirmarian would not allow her. She went to the ten o'clock Mass, but was obliged to go to bed when it was over, with a violent pain in her side, which the doctor pronounced pleurisy. The inflam-

* In a letter written a month before her death Mother M. Clare says: "The bishop called upon us to take charge of Eltham, and we could not refuse. Our predecessors left it in such a state of destitution that we have been obliged to take from our own barely sufficient quarter's income almost half. We had to buy necessary furniture, and you would be amused at the scanty supply; clothing for the poor children, whose garments are next to rags; bed-covering and food, besides begging three months' credit from butcher, baker, grocer, etc.; afraid to light fire enough to warm us or cook our provisions. . . . On Sundays we are obliged to wait for Mass and Holy Communion till ten." Certainly Mother M. Clare might have said with the holy foundress that she would retire from business without having made a fortune. She describes some of the children: "One only eight years old had stolen a perambulator with a baby in it; another a waterproof, which she sold at a rag-shop. What a blessing for these to be with us, but what an anxious charge for us! Already they are attached to the Sisters and grateful; they see we do all we can for them. I have been there six or seven times—no little cross to me, who do not care for travelling. We must accept our cross whatever it is made of, even a railway carriage."

mation was removed from the side, but she sank from exhaustion, being too weak for the remedies, and on the 10th received the last sacraments. On the morning of the 12th she sent the infirmarian to tell the Sisters to have recreation at breakfast, saying: "They ought to rejoice on such a day." This day had always been spent with great joy and ceremony in Bermondsey, but now more than ever it was consecrated in the minds of her beloved children. About noon, all being assembled in her cell, she gave her blessing to each and whispered a few tender words. To all she said in broken accents, for her breathing had already become short and labored: "I am so grateful—oh! so grateful—for all your kindness to me—for all you have done for me—for the poor. I have nothing to say but what I have said so often—keep the Rule—that is everything—and be united—all our turns must come—it may please God to raise me up again, but it is not likely—be united—do not mind the little difficulties that must come—be faithful to your duties—to your classes—and I pray that God may bless you and make you good—oh! so good."

After this exertion the dying mother was very much exhausted, and it was touching to think it was on that day which she used to keep so joyfully since the profession of the holy foundress, December 12, 1831, she was to give her last advice and take her last farewell of those for whose welfare and perfection she had labored so long and earnestly. Sisters from Ormond Street, Chelsea, Eltham, Gravesend, and Abingdon came to catch the last utterances of their great mother; never before had they witnessed anything so affecting, so saintly. Several ecclesiastics called; Bishop Danell was unwearied in his attentions. He brought her the crucifix which Dr. Grant had held when dying, and this gave her the greatest pleasure. Sunday wore on drearily. She kissed and blessed her dear children again and again, but towards evening her failing sight could no longer recognize them, and each who came

was obliged to repeat her name. Yet she understood and remembered every little circumstance; as she lived, so was she to die, thinking of every one but herself and wholly absorbed in God. She was to receive Holy Communion next morning, and she spent her last night on earth longing and praying for that last Communion. But she was not so absorbed in heavenly things as to forget those who had lovingly kept anxious vigil during that last night. She sent them to bed, saying it pained her to think how worn out they must be; otherwise she spoke of nothing but Holy Communion, asking whether it was yet morning, and if Canon Bamber had forgotten to bring her Lord to her. A little after seven the infirmarian asked whether she wanted anything. "Nothing," said she, "no one but my God—*my* God." Her longings were gratified. She received Holy Communion at half-past seven, and, as she had some difficulty in swallowing, a few drops of water were given her, the last thing she took. After a silent thanksgiving she said slowly the "Our Father," the "Hail Mary," and several simple aspirations. About nine o'clock a change passed over her face; the last prayers were said, followed by the rosary, to which she had always been greatly devoted. When Mother Benedicta bent over her she said impressively, "We must give an account of our talents," and these were the last words she spoke aloud. One could not call what followed an agony. All her children had gathered quietly around the bed; a heavenly expression illumined her emaciated countenance; her lips moved in prayer and she kissed the crucifix with unspeakable devotion whenever they presented it. Towards the mid-day *Angelus* there were three breathings, each slower than the other; the Sisters exclaimed, in devout chorus, "O Jesus!" There was not the slightest quiver or movement, there was no change on the face, save that the smile had become sweeter, but the assembled Sisters knew that our Lord had welcomed His dear spouse.

This involuntary exclaiming of the *Name of Jesus* was, as the Sisters afterwards remembered, the fulfilment of the holy Bishop Griffiths' prophecy. "I shall be present invisibly to help you when you come to die," said he on his death-bed to this precious soul; "and if you whisper the *Name of Jesus* in my ear so that it will be the last sound I shall hear upon earth, I promise that the same sweet Name will be the last word you shall hear in this life."

From December 14 till December 18 hundreds, or rather thousands, came to pray beside her sacred remains and strew flowers on the bier, the poor especially, to whom she had been so tenderly devoted. She died in the sixty-first year of her age, was forty-four years and a half in religion, and had filled the office of superior for thirty-seven years. Everything that love and reverence could suggest was done to enshrine her holy memory. Dirges and Masses were offered for one who had always striven to live so as to need them little. The bishop presided at the obsequies and sang the Mass of Requiem before the funeral. The grand but sad ceremony was not over till two P.M.; the weather was severe, the ground covered with snow, and it was dark when the mournful cortège reached Kensal Green. A new grave was opened for this dear and precious mother. It is marked by a white stone cross, and filial hands keep the holy spot constantly decked with the choicest flowers, emblematic of the good odor of Jesus Christ which their precious mother diffused in life and death.

"I am old, and have grown old with my dearest mother," writes a Bermondsey nun; "and though I say God's holy will be done, and grudge her not the enjoyment of her reward, yet I cannot recall the one great sorrow of my latter years without tears. Pray that I may live so as to deserve to rejoin her in the better land."

"What a month we have passed!" writes another, January 15, 1875. "It seems like years. We feel our loss more each day. Oh! how we miss her smile, her encouraging

look, her very step ; it seems as if we could not do without her. Even when the doctor said there was no hope we could not believe that God would take her, she appeared so necessary to us. It was such a comfort to me that even when she could not speak she knew me, and held my hand in hers, and looked so lovingly at me."

Mother M. Clare's great friend and admirer, Bishop Danell, did not survive her many years. Nothing could exceed his kindness to the community. When he could not call he wrote frequently, like a good father and friend, to inquire how all his children were, how their works were progressing. He was full of zeal for the faithful observance of Rule, and would often say : " No one should be in a convent who is not obedient." " Teach the novices humility and obedience," said he to the novice-mistress ; " all other virtues will follow." He had a special devotion to Our Lady of Mercy, to the holy souls, and to praying for those in their last agony. Bishop Danell * was a man of noble presence ; his countenance was benevolent and he had a fine voice. He was naturally very cheerful.

A marble slab in the porch of Bermondsey convent asks prayers for the soul of the " Rev. Mother M. Clare Moore, who founded this convent and governed it thirty-five years " —1839-1874.

Mother M. Clare published in 1868 a collection of the sayings and instructions of Mother McAuley.† Though she translated and composed several works on the spirit-

* Bishop Danell died June, 1881. He had long been in a precarious state, but felt better the day before he died, dined with his clergy, spoke cheerfully to his doctor. He sat at work over business papers till half-past ten ; went to his room at eleven. Next morning the housekeeper, receiving no answer to repeated knocks, opened the door and found the bishop kneeling, dead, at his bedside, his beads in his hands. Hemorrhage had evidently come on suddenly ; there were signs of his having walked across to the wash-stand and taken a towel. Everything was soaked with blood, and it was supposed that he died of suffocation. Like Bishop Grant, he had said Mass up to the very last, and the sacristan had just made the altar ready for him when word came that he had gone to our Lord.

† Part II. of *Sayings and Instructions* was published in New York, 1878 ; also a second edition of Part I.

ual life, which are still used in her convents, the above was the only work she published. She was a woman of extraordinary ability and culture—a linguist, a musician, an artist. Her letters, though hurriedly written, are always accurate in construction, and often full of genuine eloquence. Like all the early members, Mother M. Clare's reading was something to rivet the ear; her voice was rich and sonorous, and she read so as to give its full force to every word she uttered. And, what I have not perceived to be common, her singing voice was fully equal, in volume and sweetness, to her speaking voice. Her children often spoke of being consoled by the mere sound of her voice, and the rare charm of her conversation was felt by all who approached her. In the abstruse and most difficult art of governing she came, perhaps, as near to perfection as is possible here below. She never used her authority to harass or oppress; largeness, and adaptability to all manner of dispositions, she had imbibed from the holy foundress; she explained obedience to be true liberty, not a degrading yoke; in short, she *governed without seeming to govern*. Towards the close of her career the over-strictness noticed in early days had given place to a gentle, sweet tolerance of the less perfect, inexpressibly touching in one who had struggled so hard with her own high spirit and fervid affections, and her ardor and enthusiasm were sweetly subdued under the dominion of grace. Her singular influence over others drew many a most unlikely subject to a life of perfection. But, above and before all else, she gave to God what she had most power over—herself: to be His, and only His, was her one absorbing idea. Beautiful but simple aspirations continually hovered on her lips. To the Holy Name of Jesus she had an extraordinary devotion; it was the last sound she heard on earth, and in the effort to pronounce it her beautiful spirit passed away to the music of the Name of Jesus.

CHAPTER XXVI.

FOUNDATION OF THE CONVENT OF MERCY, BLANDFORD SQUARE.

First Convent in London proper—Fruit of Prayer—Why seek ye the Living among the Dead?—Seven Ladies make their Novitiate in Dublin—Hon. Arabella Petre joins them in Queen's Square—Other Subjects—Mother Agnes O'Connor—Archbishop Hughes—Deaths—Removal—Letter of Cardinal Wiseman—Dedication of the new Convent—Cardinal Wiseman and Don Miguel, ex-King of Portugal, meet there at Breakfast—Smallpox—Martyr of Charity—Orphanage—Death of the Cardinal—Middlebrough—Lady Georgiana Fullerton and the Marchioness of Lothian ask the use of the Community-room—Cardinal Manning sends Anglican Sisters to make a Novitiate at Blandford Square—Deaths of Foundation Sisters—Mother M. Catherine Macdaniel—Sister M. Liguori Philips—Always in a Muddle—Kindly Interpretations—“It is his Road to Heaven, my dear.”

BERMONDSEY, being on the Surrey side, not in Middlesex, cannot strictly be called the first Convent of Mercy in London. That honor belongs to the Blandford Square convent, of which we shall now give some account. Its foundation dates from 1842, and was attributed, under God, to the prayers of a holy Benedictine nun who, knowing the spiritual destitution of London, fervently prayed that God would inspire her two friends, Fathers J. and E. Hearn, of Lincoln's Inn Fields Chapel and Warwick Street Chapel (brothers), with the design of introducing the Sisters of Mercy into the London district. Her prayer was heard, and in 1842, without any intimation from her, both priests suddenly conceived the idea of establishing a convent of the Order, and proposed their plan to five young ladies, Misses Fanny and Anne Hearn, their own sisters,

Catherine Macdaniel, Maria Philips, and Sophia Boyton. Finding them most willing to co-operate in the good work, Bishop Griffiths, who warmly approved of it, sent them and Miss Elizabeth Hercy, a sixth candidate, to Dublin to prepare for the great work, in the spring of 1842. They received the holy habit from Archbishop Murray July 28, 1842, the Rev. J. Hearn preaching on that occasion a most eloquent sermon on the text, "Why seek ye the living among the dead?"

In 1843 a seventh candidate entered—Miss Teresa Hercy, sister of Elizabeth, for the London house. All were professed in due time, and on the 31st of July, 1844, they proceeded to London, Mother M. Cecilia having lent two professed members, Mother M. Agnes O'Connor and Sister Teresa Breen, a lay Sister, until the new house should be fully established. Their temporary convent was a large dwelling-house, 32 Queen's Square, Bloomsbury, where many of their friends and relatives had assembled to welcome them. Next day Bishop Griffiths celebrated Mass in the convent and blessed it. The community increased so rapidly that the novitiate was opened on the eve of Our Lady of Mercy, September 23, 1844. The first choir postulant that joined the Order of Mercy in London was the Honorable Arabella Petre, daughter of Lord Petre. Misses Frances Meyer, Mariana and Emily Testar, and several others followed in rapid succession. Sister Emily Testar lived but one month in the community when she caught typhus on the visitation of the sick, and died a martyr of charity.

In January, 1846, Mother M. Agnes O'Connor left London; she had been lent for a year, but at the expiration of that period her stay was prolonged at the request of the community. Indeed, Bishop Griffiths begged her to remain permanently, as Mother Clare had done in Bermondsey, which she might have done but for the following circumstance. The bishop of New York, being desirous of estab-

lishing a Convent of Mercy in that city, had obtained a promise of Sisters from Baggot Street, which, however, had no Sister to spare who was fitted for the office of superior. Mother M. Cecilia Marmion applied to Mother Agnes, asking if, for the greater glory of God, she would accept the charge and thus remove the only obstacle to the realization of this holy design. Doctor Hughes was in London almost as soon as the letter, and after an interview with him she decided to go.

In December, 1846, the young community sustained a severe loss by the death of Rev. J. Hearn in the forty-third year of his age. Gifted with rare talents and devoted to God from childhood, he was known at college by the name of Seraph. But the love that burned in his heart could be measured only by the powerful unction it imparted to his missionary duties and by that fervid and resistless eloquence which melted the most obdurate hearts to repentance and to tears. Constantly suffering from extreme delicacy of constitution, his energy and ardent devotion sustained him triumphantly through labors under which a stronger frame must have sunk, if unsupported by grace.

He loved the poor of Christ with that devoted affection which marked him as the faithful imitator of our Lord; he was their zealous advocate, their enlightened guide, their tender consoler. To spend and be spent for their souls was his delight. They were the most beloved portion of his flock, his joy and his crown. The foundation of this convent was his last great exertion in their behalf, and to this his best energy was consecrated. Undaunted by difficulties and never shrinking from personal sacrifice, the realization of this object became the all-absorbing desire of his existence. "I live," he wrote to one of the Sisters, "with one thought, one hope—the advent of the day when through you the cause of God's poor shall brighten in this dark city. St. Francis Xavier's prayer for the Indies was, 'Da

Domine, da animas,' and my ceaseless prayer is that God in His mercy may confirm and strengthen you in the sublime vocation to which He has called you."

And when at last his hopes were crowned with success he exclaimed in the words of our Lord: "I have glorified Thy Name on earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do." Ill-health finally obliged him to resign his mission, and he withdrew to the monastery of La Trappe, Melleray, Ireland, to prepare for death.

"May God," writes the only survivor of the "first seven" of Blandford Square, "who chose and appointed him *to go and bring forth fruit*, grant that the fruit may remain long after the hand which traces these lines of grateful remembrance shall have returned to dust; and you who read them pray that the founders and foundresses of this convent may, through the mercy of Him who loved the poor, be found worthy to hear these words of eternal jubilee: 'Well done, good and faithful servants; come, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'"

Two years later Sister M. Vincent Hearn, one of the foundation Sisters, died rather suddenly. As she breathed her last sigh she turned towards reverend mother with a look of recognition. A singular expression of brightness and joy which passed over her countenance was accepted by the community as an earnest that her judgment was favorable and her bliss secure. Though not so highly gifted as her lamented brother, she possessed many of his characteristics, especially his love and zeal for the poor, his untiring energy and self-sacrifice. In the community she was distinguished for the affectionate cordiality and joyousness of her disposition, love for the Institute and its observances, and simple, childlike obedience to superiors. Like all the early members, she particularly excelled in giving religious instructions.

In 1850 the community prepared to remove to Blandford

Square, where a fine convent and schools were in course of erection. The contract for the proposed amount of work was eighty-five hundred pounds, of which sum the community contributed two thousand pounds. Dr. Wiseman took the deepest interest in this project, as the following letter to the superioress will show :

“GOLDEN SQUARE, December 15, 1849.

“MY DEAR DAUGHTER IN CHRIST: I have heard with sincere satisfaction that the plan for removing the Convent of Mercy from Queen’s Square to Blandford Square is at length likely to be undertaken. By such a change your community will be placed in the immediate neighborhood of a large body of poor, in whose behalf their duties of charity can be efficiently discharged. Schools on a large and sufficient scale will be immediately under their care ; and the convent itself, placed in one of the most beautiful and open sites that London affords, will present that form and contain those arrangements which are characteristic of, and conducive to, the religious life and spirit.

“I therefore feel confident that the proposed change will be most beneficial to the poor and promote the best interests of the community. I have consequently no hesitation in warmly recommending your undertaking to the pious charity of the faithful. You have made your calculations prudently ; you have resources available to a sufficient amount to render an appeal to charity for a proportionably small amount most justifiable. You have rightly determined first to make every sacrifice yourselves and every effort before you seek aid from others. This will give you a new claim upon their sympathy, and, I trust, procure you effectual aid. In the meantime you will not fail to recommend this great work to God and implore His blessing on the undertaking. The poor will join you ; the children of the poor will raise their hands with you in prayer ; for it is their advantage more than your own that you have in view.

“Wishing you, therefore, all success in this good work, and recommending myself to the prayers of the community,

“I am, ever yours very sincerely in Christ,

“✠ N. WISEMAN.”

During the seven years of their residence in Queen's Square the Sisters were occupied chiefly in attending daily six or seven Catholic poor-schools to give religious instruction, and numerous externs were instructed at the convent. They also visited daily all the sick poor in the neighborhood. Father Price's *Sick-Calls* contains some of the many interesting cases the nuns attended. As a rule they met with respect when walking through the streets, save when the inevitable urchin now and then exclaimed, "Black devils," "Sisters of Misery," or threw live coals after them, during the Papal-Aggression excitement.

The community removed to Blandford Square June 16, 1851, and on Corpus Christi the convent was solemnly opened. High Mass was sung and the cardinal preached on the text, "The mercies of the Lord I will sing for ever." At a *déjeuner* which followed there was a curious medley of ranks and nationalities: Don Miguel, ex-King of Portugal, sat on the right of his eminence, who presided.

Soon after three Sisters went to Baggot Street to study the National system of education there and in the Marlborough establishment, as the new schools were to be under government inspection. On the Feast of St. Edward, 1851, Cardinal Wiseman celebrated Mass and opened the schools, which have been well attended from the first.

In February, 1852, a young professed Sister, M. Stanislaus Tatchell, was called to her reward. In January the Sisters were asked to attend a young man lately from France who was dying of black confluent small-pox. Having done all they could for his soul and body, they stopped to write a French letter to his parents at his dictation. Next day he died. Ere long it became evident that both had caught the disease, and Sister M. Stanislaus became a victim of charity.

In 1853 the Sisters took charge of the poor-schools, Dufour's Place, belonging to the Warwick Street district. During the following year Sister M. Margaret O'Brien was

attacked with mortal illness. She was a bright, childlike creature, attractive every way, and gifted with solid judgment and penetration of character. Amid intense sufferings ever mindful of others, she expressed a wish to live over the 24th of November, reverend mother's feast, lest her death should cast a gloom over the day.

In 1856 the nuns began an orphanage without exactly knowing what they were doing. The agonizing solicitude for the fate of her infant child experienced during her last illness by a poor woman whom the Sisters visited throughout a lingering decline, first suggested to them the idea of taking under their care the helpless and desolate little ones whose parents they so frequently attended in their dying moments.

In January, 1858, the senior member of the foundation, Sister M. de Sales Hearn, died in the fifty-third year of her age. She had served God from infancy with great piety, and was full of serene confidence in His mercy. Sister M. Bernard Nutt followed. Faith and simplicity characterized this good religious, and she had an abiding sense of gratitude for her conversion and vocation to the Order of Mercy. Through life she had been so delicate that she never passed from one room to another unless the air was exactly of the same temperature, and never went out, even to Mass, but in a carriage. But once she entered the convent she left herself entirely at the discretion of those over her, never suggesting remedies, as persons advanced in years sometimes do, but ever showing how thoroughly she appreciated a life of perfect submission.

A great loss befell this community, in common with others, in the death of Cardinal Wiseman. For several days previous there was Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament for him in the convent chapel from nine A.M. to six P.M. The Sisters regarded this loss as irreparable. And in 1868 they lost another great friend, Very Rev. Canon O'Neal. He died in the seventy-fourth year of his age and the

thirty-sixth year of his priesthood. He said Mass and heard confessions till within a few days of his happy death, saying that as long as he could stand he would labor for souls. The Sisters nursed him to the last and took it in turns to watch by his remains. He was most active in promoting the best interests of the community, and his loss they have daily more and more reason to lament.

In 1869 a convent was founded in Middlesbrough, Yorkshire; but as none of the promises made to the Sisters had been fulfilled, it was judged well to withdraw them. After three years they were still in a miserable cottage in a very low neighborhood, where scenes of drunkenness and fighting were of nightly occurrence. The schools were flourishing, it is true, and the people warmly attached to the Sisters; still, they considered they should be eventually furthering the good of the people more by giving up the foundation than by continuing it in its crippled state.

In December, 1874, Lady Georgiana Fullerton and the Dowager Marchioness of Lothian asked as a favor that the nuns would allow the Children of Mary, under the direction of the Jesuit fathers, to meet once a month in the community-room, which is very spacious, and permit them on the same day to have benediction in the convent chapel. The favor was granted, and this large body of ladies have since assembled at Blandford Square every month.

In March, 1875, two *ci-devant* Anglican Sisters, recently converted, came by order of Cardinal Manning to the convent to be trained to the religious life, in order that later they might continue the works in which they had been engaged while Puseyites. These ladies are now attached to the Saffron Hill mission, Holborn, under the direction of the Fathers of Charity.

In January, 1876, the community lost a holy and most efficient lay Sister, Sister Aloysius Egan, who is described as very useful and intelligent, most edifying by her sweet amiability and universal kindness. Her patience won the

hearts of all working with her. Whatever her sufferings were, they never prevented her from manifesting the same kind thoughtfulness for the Sisters attending her, always solicitous to spare them trouble and that they should not lose their night's rest on her account. Her gratitude was very lively both to God and the community; she often spoke most feelingly of God's love and goodness in giving her so many comforts and privileges in her last hours. She was quickly followed (in February) by Mother M. Catherine Macdaniel.

Throughout her whole religious life Mother M. Catherine was conspicuous for meekness and evenness of disposition. Singularly calm in manner and words, she never seemed ruffled by the most trying circumstances. The various offices which she held brought her in contact with many persons of different rank and employment, and she won all by her prudence, humility, and kindness.

In April a sweet young Sister, Joseph Aloysia Shannon, was called to the community in heaven. Though distinguished by no remarkable talents or natural gifts, she was regarded as a hidden treasure. "In the incorruptibility of a quiet and meek spirit, rich in the sight of God." She took the greatest interest in the school-children, and invariably won the hearts of the most unruly and troublesome by her sweet tact in managing them. All the community were present at her death. Looking around on them, she said, "Good-by all," and, having kissed the crucifix, her head drooped gradually, but no one could tell the exact moment her spirit fled to the God of her heart. The sweetest peace and consolation filled the hearts of all as they knelt around that death-bed. Though plain in appearance during life, she now looked dignified and beautiful, and it was impossible not to feel that her remains were those of a saint.

Sister M. Liguori Philips, the last but one of the foundation Sisters, died March 30, 1878. Everything about her

was remarkable, yet one could not call her "singular": she was "unique," unlike any one else. She had very marked features and was far from handsome, yet when she smiled or spoke there was something so motherly and humble about her that you at once warmed to her. The children venerated her, though she amused them by her odd ways of dealing with them and the originality of her sayings. They frequently spoke of her as St. Liguori when they were penetrating enough to discern her true worth.

To her Sisters she was all kindness and charity; to her superiors considerate and full of sympathy, ever seeking to lighten their burdens by her willing obedience, self-sacrifice, and prayer. It was her delight to cheer and recreate the Sisters after their day's work, to get up "a bit of fun" for them on Holy Innocents' and similar occasions. This was often done in the shape of badly-constructed verses which she knew would afford merriment at her expense. For habitually many of her real perfections were veiled by a kind of defect—viz., a want of clearness in expressing her ideas and carrying out her work. There was a certain amount of genius in her, but her ideas, words, and actions seemed always "in a muddle," as she herself used to say, and this afforded much entertainment. And yet her brain must have been very clear to have fulfilled to the end every minutiae of her duty. There was no evidence of "muddle" in her charge when she was gone.

Her interpretations of the acts of others were always charitable, often provokingly so. No matter what crime the guilty party had done, she invariably said, "It is his [or her] road to heaven, my dear," which without the context sometimes sounded rather disedifying. She, of course, presupposed a repentance to which "much would be forgiven." She lived and died a true Sister of Mercy, having labored unremittingly to the end through seventy-three years. In these days of conventionality, when strong personal individuality is rare; when so-called educated

people are like so many pebbles, smooth indeed but utterly devoid of variety ; when originality is a sort of sin against society, and stupidity, if well dressed, can pass muster anywhere, dear old Sister M. Liguori was a pearl beyond price in her charming community.

CHAPTER XXVII.

WORKS AND WAYS OF THE BLANDFORD SQUARE CONVENT OF MERCY.

The Reverend Mother—Lady Herbert dedicates a Book to her—Charities—House of Mercy—Schools—Benefactors, Charles Pagliano and his Wife—The *Crèche*—The Marylebone Workhouse—Infirmery at Notting Hill—The Incurables—St. Mary's Hospital—Convalescent Home—Lady Doctors—Great Meeting of Reverend Mothers at St. Edward's—Convent Bill—Protest of the Catholic Nobility—The Sisters of Mercy keep open house for the French exiled Nuns—A model Convent—Bountiful Benefactors, among them the Queen of the French—Mothers' Meetings—Clothing Club—Cardinal Wiseman's Request—An accomplished Subject declined—Sodalities.

“THE reverend mother of the Blandford Square Convent of Mercy,” writes one who knows her well, “is one of the brightest souls I ever met; her gayety serves as a happy cover for her great sanctity.” “She is,” says another, “a model of every virtue and a great favorite with all.” On the occasion of her half-jubilee as superior, November 25, 1872, Lady Herbert dedicated to her a tale called *Wilfulness and its Consequences*, in which she says: “The works of mercy undertaken in the beautiful convent of Blandford Square are manifold. They not only consist in visits to the sick and suffering poor, or in the education of children—although their really magnificent infant and day schools are said by the government inspector to be the best in his district—but they include also a vast establishment for the reception of young girls out of place, who are here received and carefully tended and employed until fresh situations can be found for them. Their laundry-work is beautiful, and they undertake the washing of a large number of families at West End, which greatly assists

them in carrying on this most useful charity. How much such a home is needed and valued by this most unprotected and helpless class in London it needs no words of mine to point out."

The House of Mercy * is a large stone building forming one side of a quadrangle, of which the convent forms the opposite side. It has large, well-ventilated dormitories, which accommodate from eighty to a hundred inmates. It is exquisitely kept in perfect neatness and order. Several of the dormitories are divided by wooden partitions, so that many of the inmates have the comfort and decency of separate apartments. There are washing and mangling machines of every description, some of primitive construction worked by machinery set in motion by a donkey. An office or waiting-room is open every day from ten to four, when all applications for situations are received by the choir Sister in charge of this department, who provides places for applicants according to their capabilities and testimonials. Altogether this institution is unsurpassed in the Order of Mercy. During the winter months soup is made every day, and any decent person known to the Sisters as poor can get a frugal meal for the asking. While women wait for situations a Sister shows them how to make and mend various articles of clothing, which are put aside for such poor girls as cannot get situations for want of a sufficient wardrobe. Several lady friends help efficiently in this useful department. In this office is a fine oil-painting of a dark Italian gentleman, Charles Pagliano, Esq., who built the House of Mercy at an outlay of thirty-

* An official report says: "The Sisters of Mercy, Blandford Square, were the first to begin these charitable ministrations among destitute Catholics which have since so happily increased. They led the way to the beds of the sick and dying poor. They opened their convent doors to infant orphans and homeless girls, and have taught in their large schools successive generations of poor children.

"The dangers incurred by young girls coming to London to seek employment are well known. . . . Who shall estimate how many of these might have wandered in the streets, or died miserably in a workhouse or hospital, but for the refuge afforded them by the Sisters of Mercy?"

two hundred pounds and was its principal benefactor. He had married a lady who, it was said, once thought of becoming a religious in this convent, and as all their children died he wisely selected the poor as his heirs, and devoted, during his lifetime, the bulk of his fortune to the foundation of this industrial home. Mrs. Pagliano, his widow, has also been a bountiful benefactor. Since the House of Mercy was opened over four thousand destitute young women of good character have been admitted and provided with situations. Many externs have been sent to decent lodgings and afterwards taught to earn their bread. Most of the inmates of the House of Mercy are employed in laundry-work, though every kind of work is undertaken. Four choir Sisters and five lay Sisters are engaged in the various departments of the House of Mercy.

The schools of Blandford Square are superior. Every government official who examined them since the first visit by Mr. Marshall has passed high and flattering encomiums on the efficiency and complete success of the system carried out. Five "certified" Sisters now preside over them. The children attend at the convent for Mass on Sundays and holidays. The school-rooms are well supplied with charts, pictures, etc.; there is an oratory in each, besides statues on brackets, and many texts, verses, etc., on the walls. The Sisters also conduct the Richmond Street schools.

In 1873 a *Crèche*, or day nursery, was opened, in which the infants of the working poor are received from eight A.M. to eight P.M. The large, comfortable, airy room is well lighted and tastefully decorated with toys, pictures, etc. Cradles are the articles most needed, and there is a good supply of arrowroot, milk, and gruel. The children have a play-ground in which they can amuse themselves when old enough to toddle about. Many are children of Protestant parents. The infant-school children, if not provided for by their parents, are sent to the *Crèche* for dinner, and after school remain there till called for when their mothers

return from their day's labor. The Sisters never leave these little creatures for a moment.

The immense establishment known as the Marylebone workhouse, containing about twenty-five hundred inmates, is visited daily by the Blandford Square nuns. The senior Sister in this charge is never changed, if possible. The freest access to Catholics is allowed, and all possible courtesy and respect shown the Sisters by the officials. Numbers of souls have been, under God, saved through these visits; converts brought into the Church; persons living in sin married; infants baptized; old and young confirmed; some who from youth neglected their Easter duties have been brought back to God, others prepared for confession and communion who had never received these sacraments; children in Protestant institutions rescued; young girls reclaimed from vice and placed in safety; the sick and dying attended and comforted to the end, and in many cases burial in consecrated ground secured. Since 1878 Mass has been said for the Catholic inmates not confined to bed, two Sisters attending to prepare the altar and keep order. In the afternoons the inmates again assemble for prayers, instructions, etc. The majority, however, are Protestants. Among the Catholics are always several Irish, and for their consolation a handsome picture of St. Patrick was put up on his feast, 1879. Latterly the infirmary of this workhouse was removed to a handsome building on Notting Hill. The poor incurables dreaded to lose the Sisters' visits, but they are still able to enjoy the consolation of receiving them by sending a postal intimating their desire.

"We can hardly express too warmly," writes one of the nuns, "our gratitude towards the master and matron of Marylebone workhouse for their unvarying attention and kindness to ourselves and our poor Catholics, and we trust that all who read these lines will unite with us in praying that God may abundantly reward their charity."

In St. Mary's Hospital the Sisters have free access to all the Catholic patients, and can thus report each case to the chaplain, that the sacraments may be administered in time. When leaving the hospital the Sisters provide the patients with clothes and money when necessary, with situations, or, if not perfectly recovered, procure them admission in some convalescent home. The hospital officials are most kind and courteous to the Sisters. In the new Hospital for Women on Marylebone Road, under the care of *lady doctors*, every facility is given to the Sisters, and they find the practitioners of their own sex "very clever and very kind."

On the 16th of August, 1869, a great meeting of all* the reverend mothers and their assistants of the archdiocese of Westminster was convoked by Archbishop Manning, who wished to give them a three days' retreat in the Blandford Square Convent of Mercy, but want of sufficient sleeping accommodation precluded the full carrying out of this plan. The horarium was as follows:

9.30 A.M.—Meditation.

10.45 A.M.—Luncheon in silence.

11.00 A.M.—Conference in community-room.

2.15 P.M.—Visit to the Blessed Sacrament.

2.30 P.M.—Dinner in silence.

3.00 P.M.—General recreation, at which the archbishop presided.

4.00 P.M.—Meditation.

5.00 P.M.—Benediction.

6.00 P.M.—Recreation—Supper.

Exclusive of Sisters of Mercy there were eighty-one religious present. During meals the Sisters of Mercy waited on their guests, taking their own meals afterwards. There were represented at this great assembly:

Assumption Nuns.

* Save those of Newhall, the Carmelites, and the Poor Clares.

Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent.
 Sisters of Charity of St. Paul.
 Dames de St. André.
 Sisters of Third Order of St. Francis.
 Sisters of Good Shepherd.
 Sisters of Penance of St. Dominic.
 Sisters of the Most Precious Blood.
 Sisters of Jesus and Mary.
 Sisters of Notre Dame de Sion.
 Sisters of Nazareth.
 Sisters of Providence.
 Sœurs de la Sainte Union.
 Sœurs de la Marie Réparatrice.
 Congregation of Mary.
 Poor Sisters of the Schools.
 Faithful Companions of Jesus.
 Ursulines.
 Sœurs de la Miséricorde de Sèvres.

This numerous body of religious occupied the whole of the large sanctuary. The effect from the end of the choir was most impressive and beautiful.

Shortly after this Sister Mary Angela died as Archbishop Manning was saying Mass in the convent chapel. Her death was announced to his grace just after the *Credo*, and he offered the Holy Sacrifice for the repose of her soul.

On May 2, 1870, was held in the House of Commons the last debate on Mr. Newdegate's bill on a committee of inquiry * into convents. The community remained in prayer

* Previously Dr. Whatcly's speech in support of the Nunneries Bill, on the ground that ladies (some of whom have about twenty street-doors to their houses and are out every day—Sisters of Mercy, for example) are imprisoned in convents, called forth an indignant protest from the Catholic nobility. Here is the concluding paragraph: "The undersigned declare that it is morally impossible that cases of unlawful imprisonment or physical restraints on liberty should exist in convents without the fact being known to them and their families. Any assumption of such cases directly inculcates them as neglectful of their first duties as men and Christians, and as participators in the wrongful detention of those whom by every tie of kindred and honor they were called on to protect; and, therefore, that the present bill, by countenancing the false

until three in the morning ; the bill was rejected by a large majority, and the Sisters had Exposition next day in thanksgiving.

The period of the French war was one of incessant activity and occupation for the community. During the entire time it lasted the Sisters kept open house for all the poor refugee nuns who needed shelter and hospitality. Sometimes they entertained as many as twenty-two strange Sisters at one time. The convent used then to be called *Hôtel Dieu* and *Blandford Hotel*.

Blandford Square convent has been in every respect a model Convent of Mercy, and its Sisters, as Cardinal Manning well said, "have deserved well of the diocese by their long and efficient labors." In doing so much for others they have done comparatively little for themselves, their noble institution being as yet unfinished. But we trust the zeal and charity of the faithful will soon enable them to accomplish this. They met with bountiful benefactors in the past. From their own private means they contributed £2,260. A legacy of £600 left by Lady Barbara Eyre for building a Convent of Mercy in this district lapsed from Bermondsey to Blandford Square. Cardinal Wiseman gave £500; the Hargrave legacy, £300; Rev. J. Furniss, £300; a lady who concealed her name, £500; W. Chisholm, Esq., £160; the poor-school committee, £300; Hon. G. Fullerton, £75; the Earl of Arundel and Surrey, £100; his countess, £50; the Right Hon. the late Lord Petre, £100; the present Lord Petre, £40; Hon. Mrs. Petre, £50. Many others gave less sums, among them Her Majesty the Queen of the French, who subscribed ten pounds.

and injurious suspicions of ignorant and prejudiced persons, is a libellous insult to the ladies in question, to their families, and to the undersigned :

"EARL OF ARUNDEL AND SURREY.	LORD VAUX OF HARROWDEN
"LORD E. FITZALAN-HOWARD.	LORD PETRE.
"VISCOUNT FEILDING.	LORD STAFFORD.
"LORD CAMOYS.	LORD LOVAT.
"LORD STOURTON.	LORD DORMER.

"With the rest of the Catholic nobility."

Charles Pagliano, Esq., is the principal benefactor, and prayers continually ascend to heaven for the happy repose of his generous soul. An official report says that the nuns not only devote their lives to benevolent objects, "but have seriously encroached on their own private funds to meet their pecuniary liabilities. We earnestly invite the pious and devout sex to cast some portion of their superfluities into this treasury, and thereby co-operate in the good work and partake of the merit of these excellent ladies who have devoted their fortunes and their lives to Him who will receive them into His eternal tabernacles.

"WILLIAM CANON HUNT,
"JAMES CANON O'NEAL."

Only one of the first seven of this foundation is now living. The foundress of the first London convent, Mother M. Agnes O'Connor, a "warm-hearted, benign creature," we shall meet again on the American mission. There are at present forty-two members in this convent.

It is a little curious that the lady who withdrew from Bermondsey in 1842 to act on some "inspirations" which superiors did not regard as heaven-sent should present her plans at St. Edward's in 1849, when she was setting up her new establishment, the rules of which she had spent several years compiling or composing in Rome. These she sought to carry into effect at a convent on the London Road. Finally there was a complete break-up, and a little before Cardinal Wiseman died he came one day to ask if the *soi-disant* abbess and her flock could be received, as the recipient of so many celestial favors (?) had had a vision that she would end her days in Blandford Square. Of course this proposition was very decidedly declined; persons who had spent their best years working out imaginary inspirations rather than submit to approved rules and lawfully appointed superiors could hardly be fit for conventual life.

The nuns of Blandford Square have a "mothers' meet-

ing" once a month, a clothing club, a lying-in charity, and several other minor works of mercy. Extern instruction is going on all day. They direct two congregations of Children of Mary, one in the House of Mercy, the other for school-children and externs. Another congregation is called Of the Sacred Heart ; its object is to keep the children who have left school to the practice of monthly Communion. These congregations assemble on fixed days for breakfast, instruction, etc., and now and again for a tea-party.

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CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE NIGHT REFUGE OF LONDON.

Cardinal Wiseman applies to Wexford for Sisters—Personal Friends of the Foundress in Wexford present at the Golden Jubilee—Richard Devereux—Canon Roche—Father Lacy—The Cholera Physician of 1832—Convent opened in Finsbury Square—Visit of the Cardinal—His Reminiscences of Ireland—New Convent built on Crispin Street—Schools—House of Mercy—The Providence Night Refuge—"I was a stranger and ye took me in"—The dangerous Classes—Accommodations—Mode of conducting the Refuge—Honored Guests—Christmas at the Refuge—"Songs are sung and Tales are told"—Canon Gilbert—Last Letter of Cardinal Wiseman written to him—The Refuge the favorite Charity of Anne Adelaide Procter—She publishes a Volume of Poems for its Benefit—Incidents—Touching Lines.

ANOTHER London house deserving of special mention was founded in Finsbury Square, 1858. Cardinal Wiseman commissioned Dr. Patterson (now bishop of Emmaus) to apply to Wexford for Sisters to replace some Dutch Ursulines who had removed to Upton. After some correspondence between Very Rev. Dr. Gilbert, senior priest of the mission—a native of Wexford—Right Rev. Dr. Furlong, Bishop of Ferns, and the superior, Mother M. Evangelist Walsh, it was arranged that five Sisters, accompanied by the reverend mother, should leave Wexford September 22, so as to open in Finsbury Square on the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy.

No Convent of Mercy assembled a greater number of personal friends of the foundress than Wexford, about which the early traditions of the Order still linger. The chief benefactor of the house, the late Richard Devereux, who had known and loved her, was present at the jubilee celebration, 1881, and planted a tree in commemoration of that auspicious event. Canons Roche and Lacy, and a

venerable physician * who boasts that he met her daily for seven months in the Cholera Hospital in 1832, also planted trees. The bishop, Dr. Warren, also planted a tree, as the jubilee occurred in his episcopate, and he had spared no pains to make it memorable in his diocese.

Two days after the Sisters' arrival they took charge of the schools of the Church of St. Mary's, Moorfields, † and a pension-school at the convent. They were very warmly received by the Moorfields priests, and in a few days Cardinal Wiseman visited them, accompanied by Dr. Patterson and Monsignor Searle. Darkness set in before these guests retired, as they had come late, and as there was no gas the cardinal promised to come soon again; for, said he, "I cannot now say I *see* the community." His eminence spoke of his recent visit to Ireland and the grand welcome he had everywhere received—how the people wanted to take the horses from his carriage and show him all possible honor. He also inquired about his cousin, Mother M. Rose Strange, of Carlow convent. Like all who ever had the privilege of intercourse with him, the exiles felt the indescribable charm of his manner, at once sweet, simple, and joyous.

No lack of work for souls here; the schools were crowded with pupils ‡ of all religious denominations, even

* Dr. Andrew Furlong. He says that, on account of the many conversions among the thirty-seven hundred cases treated in the Cholera Hospital, a complaint was lodged at the Castle against the Sisters. But Dr. Hart, the head physician, stated "they were of the greatest use, and that the hospital could not be carried on without them. They kept the eighty nurses in order—which was hard to do." "Dr. Hart, though a Protestant, was delighted with Mother McAuley, and often held long consultations with her." He gave her the fullest control, and used to attribute the fewness of the deaths (about thirty per cent.), in comparison with high percentage elsewhere, to her wise administration. Among the clergy who worked in this hospital were Dr. Blake and a Father Stuart, who, as he had been ordained after the death of his wife, used to be called "The Seven Sacraments."

† Pro-cathedral.

‡ "The children were like wild Indians—no respect for religion, awfully ignorant, terrible to manage. They would rush towards the presiding Sister, attempt to take her arm, and say: 'Teacher, won't you walk up and down with us?'" The convent is within two minutes' walk of the cathedral. There is Mass every morning save Sunday. The Sisters never tire speaking of the kindness of Canon Gilbert.

Jews. Dr. Gilbert built a fine convent for the Sisters in Crispin Street, and the stables and coach-houses in the rear opening on Providence Row were transformed into dormitories. On Rosary Sunday, 1860, the first Catholic Night Refuge in Great Britain was established under the patronage of Our Lady of Mercy and St. Benedict Joseph Labre.

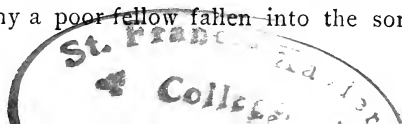
In 1868 the lease of these premises expired, and a renewal for the part occupied by the Night Refuge was refused. But through his untiring zeal and exertions, which could not fail to draw down God's blessing, Dr. Gilbert purchased a plot in Crispin Street, Spitalfields, the centre of the poorest district in London, and built a Night Refuge capable of accommodating one hundred and twelve women and an equal number of children, and in another division sixty men and as many boys. There is also a servants' home, which Dr. Gilbert intends to enlarge.

Though the schools and convent be worthy of more than a passing notice, we will not dwell on them, but rather on the Night Refuge, in which, above all other institutions, are literally fulfilled the sublime words of our Saviour, "I was a stranger, and you took me in"; and, "When thou makest a banquet . . . call thither the poor, the blind, and the lame, and thou shalt be happy, because they have not wherewith to repay thee, . . . but recompense shall be made thee at the resurrection of the just."

The Night Refuge is a handsome building in one of the most wretched quarters of London, surrounded by labyrinths of dirty streets and dingy alleys, a sort of focus for the poor creatures reputed the dangerous classes. It is designed to give lodging and a meal to such of the decent poor as are for the moment homeless, and for whom no other respectable shelter is provided from the hideous nights of London. People who have come from sweet-smelling villages to make rapid fortunes in the great Bedlam; creatures turned out of their wretched lodgings and

wandering aimlessly about the town ; young girls with the fragrance of the daisies still beautifying their weary faces ; widowed mothers with groups of sturdy orphans clinging to their scanty drapery—all enter the Refuge without let or hindrance ; that is, all free from drink. At three o'clock the fires are lit in the great halls, and towards five some two hundred of the most wretched of God's creatures are being thawed out or dried, and getting ready for their frugal supper. Everything is poor, but brilliantly clean. A crucifix adorns each dormitory. The men may see in their fine, airy sleeping-place a picture of the beggar-saint who served God so well in poverty greater than theirs. All apartments are well supplied with lavatories—a most necessary precaution, for many of the wanderers present themselves in a state of squalor and filth sadly out of keeping with the boasted civilization of our century.

Groups of Sisters go about among the women, teaching them to sew or read or prepare for the sacraments ; dressing the sores of some, consoling the sorrows of others. While a poor father is lying ill in the hospital, the mother, and her little ones, who are never separated from her, may have shelter here, if they cannot get better ; and the nuns take care of the babes by day while the mother is looking for employment. The men in another large, well-lighted, well-heated apartment are objects of the diligent care of their hostesses, who listen to their troubles, bind up their wounds spiritually and physically, look out for situations for them, and help them to make a proper appearance by providing new garments or redeeming the old ones from the pawn. Many a well-born man and woman, after long struggling with pride, humble themselves to accept the aid here so graciously given to Christ's representatives for His sake. The nuns wait on every one of these forlorn vagrants, welcome them with cheering words, prepare and serve the substantial supper in a way their guests often describe as "comforting." Many a poor fellow fallen into the sorest



straits has here taken heart afresh and sallied forth with new courage next morning to find the work that will restore independence.

The report (1881) of this admirable charity gives some wonderful statistics. Lodgings given since its opening, 1860-81, more than 1,064,000, with suppers and breakfasts; number entertained each week, over 1,600. Some of the beneficiaries are ladies and gentlemen by birth and education. Among those admitted during 1881 were a scientific lecturer, a chemist, a dentist, reporters, clerks, composers, commercial travellers, governesses, dressmakers, etc. Besides food and shelter 800 of these found good situations; small dealers have been supplied with stock, artisans with tools, women and girls with baskets of fruit and flowers. The Golden Jubilee was finely celebrated in this temporary home of the children of misfortune irrespective of creed, race, or country. Often there are more non-Catholics than Catholics among the guests. Christmas was a great day here. Holly, ivy, and laurel studded with bright roses—"we were making roses for weeks previous," wrote one of the nuns—made a grand display, and the faces, mild and gracious, of many a saint looked from the walls on a banquet spread for the blind, the halt, the maimed, the starving. Canon Gilbert, the worthy founder and best benefactor of this institution, with other priests and crowds of ladies and gentlemen, several of high rank, helped the nuns to serve their guests. An address composed by themselves was read by one of the men to Dr. Gilbert. In touching and eloquent terms they extolled the *personal* care bestowed on them by the nuns and the absolute freedom allowed them as regards religion.

When these honored guests—honored because of Him whom they so specially represent—assemble in the evening they are sad and hungry, their scanty clothing often soaked with rain; but a cheery welcome, a warm fire, and a good supper prove exhilarating, and very pleasant even-

ings are spent at the Refuge. Among such a variety of professions accomplishments are not uncommon, and

“ Songs are sung,
And tales are told,
To charm the young
And cheer the old.”

Music and recitations are sometimes executed here which would put some drawing-room performances to shame.

At each end of the women's dormitory is a cell partitioned off for a Sister, so that two of the nuns share the apartment of their transient visitors. In the men's dormitory in the opposite wing one or two trustworthy men remain during the night as caretakers.

Cardinal Wiseman, in whom love and tenderness for the poor never slumbered, took a deep interest in this institution for the nightly reception of the poor who have no fixed abode, and made an impressive appeal in its behalf Christmas day, 1863. His eminence had promised to do the same on the following Christmas, but was unable to leave his house. He wrote to Dr. Gilbert the following, which was read from the pulpit on that day—the last letter written by him :

“ MY DEAR DR. GILBERT : I had hoped to have had the consolation of giving my blessing in person to your congregation this Christmas day, but prudential reasons insisted on by my medical advisers confine me to the house. It is a disappointment to me, but I hope that this precautionary measure may enable me on subsequent festivals to impart to them that benediction which I must ask you now to assure them I call down upon them with all my heart.

“ At the same time I should wish to add my voice in favor of the *Night Refuge* for which the collection is made in your church on Christmas day. It is a charity so strictly in harmony with the devotions of this holy season, and the homeless poor whom it benefits are so precisely those who represent to us most vividly our Blessed Lord and His Holy Mother at Bethlehem, that I do not doubt that your

devout congregation will largely and generously assist the good work of your Night Refuge.

“Wishing you, your reverend brethren, and your flock all the joys of a holy Christmas, I remain, my dear Dr. Gilbert,
Yours affectionately in Christ,

“N. CARD. WISEMAN,

“8 YORK PLACE, December 24, 1864.”

This institution was the favorite charity of that sweet singer, Adelaide Anne Procter,* who founded a *bed* in the women's dormitory and published her beautiful *Chaplet of Verses* for the benefit of her beloved Night Refuge. Many will recall her touching lines :

“It is cold, dark midnight, yet listen
To that patter of tiny feet !
Is it one of your dogs, fair lady,
That whines in the bleak, cold street ?
Is it one of your silken spaniels
Shut out in the snow and sleet ?”

“My dogs sleep warm in their baskets,
Safe from the darkness and snow ;
All the beasts in our Christian England
Find pity wherever they go.
(Those are only homeless children
Who go wandering to and fro.)”

“Look out in the gusty darkness—
I have seen it again and again,
That shadow that flits so slowly
Up and down the window-pane :
It is surely some criminal lurking
Out there in the frozen rain ?”

* Miss Procter notices that the suffering of our Redeemer we compassionate least is “the only one of which He deigned to tell us Himself, and for which He appealed to our pity in the divine complaint : ‘The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests, but the Son of man *has not where to lay His head.*’

“He has said—His truths all are eternal—
What He said both has been and shall be
‘*What ye have not done to these my poor ones,
Lo! ye have not done it to me.*’”

“ Nay, our criminals all are sheltered ;
They are pitied and taught and fed ;
That is only a sister woman,
Who has got neither food nor bed.
And the Night cries, ‘ Sin to be living ! ’
And the River cries, ‘ Sin to be dead ! ’ ”
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CHAPTER XXIX.

CONVENT OF MERCY, E. COMMERCIAL ROAD—LETTERS OF THE FOUNDRESS.

Father Kelly applies to Tullamore for Sisters—Kindness of the Cardinal—Parish since divided into six Missions—Struggles—Curse of the Nineteenth Century: Church Debts bearing interest—Large Mortality—Cardinal Manning presides at a Meeting pledged to rectify Matters—Foundation to Burnley—Canon Rimmer—Father Dillon—New Convent—The Townley Family—Works—Foundress—Mother M. Anne Doyle—Beautiful Letter—In Derry—"Won't I have my sweet Lord?"—The *Mammon of Unrighteousness*.

AT the suggestion of Cardinal Wiseman, Rev. William Kelly, missionary rector of SS. Mary and Michael's, a native of the diocese of Meath, applied to Tullamore* for Sisters to manage the extensive schools of that parish. Six Sisters, under Mother M. Angela Gilsenan, left Ireland March 1, 1859, and began their work in London a few days later. The cardinal received them with fatherly kindness and cordiality, and presided at the clothing of their first postulant, who was received with great *éclat* in the public church. This immense parish has since been divided into six missions. The Sisters attend out-schools in several localities at a considerable distance from the convent, which contain about fourteen hundred children. Their

* Tullamore, Mother McAuley's first foundation, has always been filled with her spirit. The fathers of the Jesuit College, Tullabeg, took the liveliest interest in this house from its beginning, gave retreats, and lent books of instruction, at that time (1836) very rare. They also lent manuscripts of ascetic works, and, when they gave instructions, usually left many precious notes, which the Sisters transcribed for future generations. Thus in the Tullamore library are retreats from the first fathers, FF. Kenny, St. Leger, Curtis, Esmond, Ffrench, Bracken, etc., which are regarded as treasures. Father Curtis was the first extraordinary confessor appointed, and ever since the rectors of the college have acted in that capacity to the community.

select school is attended by one hundred. The people are mostly of the laboring classes, and the Sisters have had to struggle through many difficulties. Father Kelly, who died in 1874, was a great loss to them, though, owing to straitened means and ill-health, he could give but little assistance; besides, he was burdened with that peculiar curse of the nineteenth century—church debts bearing interest. Wretchedly lodged, the Sisters in a little while lost no less than five young, active members, worn out before their time by arduous labors in a densely populated district. It was only in 1881, when they were stricken with typhoid and one succumbed, that the parishioners woke up to the fact of the failing health and bad accommodations of a community which had been laboring amongst them in silence and hope for twenty-two years. Cardinal Manning presided at a meeting held to devise means of rectifying these deficiencies, and gave fifty pounds towards this object. The adjoining house has been purchased and fitted up for them. This convent has sent a foundation to Burnley, in Lancashire, of which, as a filiation of a London house, we shall give a short notice. The recently founded Convent of Mercy at Walthamstow House has one hundred orphans. There are, in and about London, or rather in the former London District, sixteen Convents of Mercy—viz., Blandford Square, N.W., Great Ormond Street, W.C., Chelsea, S.W., Commercial Road, E., Crispin Street, E., Brentwood, Walthamstow House, Aldershot, Bermondsey, S.E., Eltham, Gravesend, Abingdon, Brighton, Guernsey, Delancy, and Alderney.

In May, 1872, Rev. Michael E. Dillon, of St. Mary's, Burnley, went to the profession of his two Sisters at the Commercial Road convent. Bishop Turner and Very Rev. Canon Rimmer commissioned him to get Sisters of Mercy for Burnley, if possible. But two communities having already failed there, the Sisters declined to entertain the proposals. Whereupon Canon Rimmer hastened to Lon-

don, and, pleading his cause in person, with the sanction of Archbishop Manning, was successful. Three Sisters were selected for this mission, and, all expenses of outfit and travelling being defrayed by the canon, they set out under the escort of Father Dillon, accompanied by the mother-assistant of their late convent, who remained some months. They began in two small cottages, but the canon soon gave them a fine house and garden, and built schools at the other end of the town, the higher and middle schools being held in the convent. A very handsome convent and schools in the Gothic style have since been erected, Canon Rimmer having given the ground and seven hundred pounds of his private means for the purpose. The Bishop of Salford said the first Mass in their new chapel, November 21, 1881. Besides schools and visitation of the sick, the Sisters have large classes of adults, many converts under instruction, and immense Sunday-schools and sodalities. Their work increases beyond their accommodation; in a letter to the mother-superior Bishop Vaughan says: "Your community, which is rendering such important services to religion, is in need of a convent; as the number of your Sisters increase the inconvenience you have long experienced from the extremely limited accommodation of your present house also increases."

The Townley family, residing near Burnley, have always been very kind to the Sisters. Colonel Townley's eldest daughter, Lady Norreys, used to visit their schools every week, and her death about a year after their arrival deprived them of a bountiful friend. His youngest daughter, Lady O'Hagan, has also shown them much kindness. The Townley family is one of the most ancient in England, having resided at Townley Hall since the time of Alfred the Great. None of the heads of the family ever lost the faith. When the colonel died (sonless) his estate passed to Colonel John Townley, who shared his brother's friendship for the Sisters. But as his only son died a few months

after, followed by himself a year later, the Sisters have lost their best benefactors, and the estate is in chancery, awaiting division among the children of the brothers. Had Mr. Richard Townley lived he wou'd, in conjunction with his mother, have built a convent for the Sisters. Burnley is a fine town with a population of forty-five thousand, over five thousand of whom are Catholics.

The superior of the Burnley convent was received into religion by Mother Marianne Doyle, first companion of the holy foundress, and therefore carried the old traditions to the English houses which she founded. Among her household treasures are two autograph letters of Mother McAuley to Mother Marianne, from which we give some extracts. Like everything else she wrote, they contain gleams of unearthly, or rather heavenly, wisdom :

“MY DEAR SISTER MARIANNE: Sister E—— says you are about to send two Sisters to learn the education system; indeed, she speaks as if you were to be one. Surely not. I suppose you will never be one of the appointed teachers, though you must oversee. Would it not be better to get a well-qualified person from —— until your Sisters would know the method? . . . They sent us such a one from Limerick. I think they could send you one. . . . There could not be a more delightful school than they have in Limerick. If one of your Sisters went there Sister M. V. Hartnett, who is exceedingly clever, would teach her in a very short time. . . . I need not add that you have this house at your command if you think of Dublin.” (August 20, 1840.)

It appears that Mother McAuley did not wish superiors to travel much outside their own houses even in the interests of education; and if it were necessary to go elsewhere to learn the technicalities of school management one of the regular *corps* of teachers should be selected —1, because a superior could not well be absent as long as such a project would require; and, 2, because one very capable of governing a house would be unlikely to be employed much on the regular teaching staff,

but would rather, if there were changes, pass from one office to another, as ability to govern well is too rare not to be utilized when found. Mother Marianne was always engaged in governing houses, training novices, or assisting in the more spiritual part of the formation of convents. She was a very saintly, hidden soul, with very little worldly acuteness and no taste for business. Almost everything fell to her assistant, Mother Teresa Purcell, "the gem of the Tullamore house"—a superior person in every way and possessed of a most attractive exterior. No one could be more beloved as superior.

All the ingenuity of Mother Marianne was directed towards ridding herself of office. When sent on the Derry foundation she actually contrived to have her assistant, Mother M. Catherine Locke, appointed superior, nor could she be prevailed on to accept any office save a subordinate one. For many years she was assistant, or novice-mistress. Meekness, gentleness, and love of retirement, with great love for the poor and zeal for religious discipline, were her characteristics. It filled her with joy to hear of any prosperity in the Order. She took great interest in a total-abstinence society for women which the Sisters established, and which now numbers twenty-four hundred members.

The following beautiful letter (Dublin, July 24, 1841) was written when some unusual difficulties pressed upon her delicate conscience :

"MY DEAR SISTER MARIANNE : You are on the secure road of the cross. Have the most strong and lively confidence that your convent will be firmly established, for it certainly will. 'Be just and fear not.' Acquit yourself with justice towards God; let no temporal consideration influence your words or actions when the duty of your state is in question. I could not think any person with very cautious worldly views worthy to be admitted to holy profession. It is not a disposition to bestow gifts, like benevolent persons in the world, that bespeaks generosity of mind for the religious state. It is bestowing ourselves most

freely, and relying with unhesitating confidence on the providence of God. When our innocent, yet very sensible, Sister M. de Chantal was about to hand over all she possessed, making it impossible ever to command one shilling, her mother told her she ought to have some security (as many were of opinion this house would not be established), and said to her, 'What would you do then?' She answered, 'Won't I have my sweet Lord?' And sweet He was to her indeed to the very last moment. Though we may not often have the consolation to meet such noble universal disengagement as hers, yet a spirit directly opposite, I humbly hope, will never make its abode amongst us. Do not fear offending any one; speak as your mind directs, and always act with more courage when the *mammon of unrighteousness* is in question. Let me know when you are closely pressed, and I will divide with you, be it ever so little.

"Give my best love to all. Write soon. Most earnestly praying God to direct and strengthen you, I remain, with great affection, etc.,
M. C. MCAULEY."

Besides Dublin, the only houses in Ireland which sent foundations to England are Carlow, Cork, Tullamore, Wexford, and Kinsale, all save the last being established, in fact, during the lifetime of the foundress. And Kinsale was established in design thus early.

CHAPTER XXX.

MOTHER MCAULEY IN BIRMINGHAM, 1841.

Birmingham roused by Dr. Wiseman—John Hardman, Esq., builds a Convent for Sisters of Mercy—Earl of Shrewsbury gives two thousand Pounds towards an Endowment Fund—Six Ladies make their Novitiate in Dublin for Birmingham—They are greatly beloved by Mother McAuley—Dr. Wiseman visits them frequently—Incidents—Letters—Dr. Pusey—The Foundress unfavorably impressed by him—Sisters of Mercy in Birmingham—The Pulse of the Ancients at a modern Banquet—Mother McAuley's Illness—Return to Ireland—Letters—Progress—Benefactors—Mother Aloysius Jackson—Mr. Cuddon—Bishop Wareham—Father Faber preaches for the House of Mercy—Letters—Dr. Pusey like a negligent Author—Not strong in Features—"His Conversation betrays no Imbecility except"—Lord Clifford's thirty-three Hail Marys.

KNOWN all over the world for its fire-arms and ormolu, its japanned wares and cutlery, though but little renowned for external beauty, Birmingham some forty-two years ago had just received a powerful religious impetus in the labors and preaching of Dr. Wiseman, recently appointed coadjutor to Bishop Walsh, and president of the neighboring College of Oscott. One of the first effects of a sort of revival in these regions was an eager desire for a religious community on part of the two bishops, the priests, and the people. A munificent gentleman, John Hardman, Esq., took upon himself the whole expense of building and furnishing a convent, and John, sixteenth Earl of Shrewsbury, gave two thousand pounds towards the foundation fund. The Order of Mercy was selected as that most suitable to the spiritual and corporal wants of the place, and Juliana, daughter of Mr. Hardman, with Miss Anne Wood, Miss Lucy Bond, and Miss Elizabeth Edwards, having offered themselves to Bishop Walsh for the community of

religious, at once active and contemplative, which he designed to establish, were escorted to Dublin by Dr. Wareing to make their novitiate under the holy foundress herself, in April, 1840. Two more ladies quickly followed. "The postulants for this foundation," wrote Mother M. Catherine, "are all that we could wish. All have signs of solid, genuine piety and strong vocation to their state. . . . Rev. Mr. Parker, who brought the last postulant, says the convent (Birmingham) is going up very fast; the basement story is finished. The generous father of our Sister is on the spot every day, taking the deepest interest, and appears quite delighted. His very nice child will be a source of great comfort to him. She is all animation at the account of her good father and the general kind feeling that is manifested." Again the holy mother writes: "The English Sisters are most interesting and manifest, so far, every mark of a true vocation to the Institute. They are so playful that they afford amusement to all at recreation. Miss E——, who came while I was in Galway, is a sweet creature, quite refined, simple, and interesting. Sister Marianne, a prime pet with Mother M. Cecilia—though this is not to be seen by every eye—is very gentle and all that is desirable. Sister Juliana is quite satisfactory; all her doubts and fears have passed away. Sister Anne is very amiable, though, from a natural disposition to silence, not so pleasing as the others. Sister Lucy greatly improved—not nearly so much of the wild English girl. Their mother, M. Cecilia, in better spirits than ever I saw her; her laugh at recreation is fully equal to our dear little Catherine's [her niece]. It seems so extraordinary to find no vacant seat in the refectory after all the dear Sisters we have parted from in life and death."

In another letter Mother McAuley says: "Our English Sisters are greatly liked. One, Miss B——, a convert of high family, is quite equal to Mother M. Clare in arts, sciences, languages. It is very animating to see six per-

sons, most happily circumstanced, leave their friends and country to enter on a mission so contrary to natural inclinations; but the fire which Christ came to cast upon earth is kindling very fast."

In August these dear Sisters so highly appreciated by the foundress received the holy habit, the archbishop presiding. "I felt exceedingly anxious," wrote Mother Catherine, "that Dr. Murray should perform the ceremony, in order to make the most pious impression on their minds. His grace, who is greatly engaged, named the 8th of August. We must come out of retreat for that purpose, and will joyfully do so, since he assents. He looks so heavenly and venerable that the English Sisters will never forget him. The effect will be most valuable to them, and we esteem it so great a favor to get him that we would not make any difficulty." One does not often see a countenance so eloquent of every virtue, so well adapted to confirm in the beholder the reverence a high and sacred office naturally inspires, as was that of Archbishop Murray; and even that accidental circumstance the foundress turns to account.

Dr. Wiseman* paid several visits to Baggot Street in 1840-1841. He said Mass twice in the beautiful chapel, and gave what the foundress describes "a delightful exhortation" to the Sisters. At his suggestion, and with the full concurrence of the archbishop, the venerable Bishop Walsh was invited to receive the profession of his future daughters. He kindly acceded, and thus concludes a most courteous letter:

"I shall have great pleasure indeed in receiving the vows of my dear daughters in Jesus Christ, and the more so as I

* Mother McAuley mentions Dr. Wiseman among the bishops who paid frequent visits to Baggot Street the last year of her life. Most bishops sojourning in Dublin used to say their daily Masses in her beautiful chapel. Thus she writes from Birr, February 3: "Sister M. Cecilia had three bishops to entertain on Sunday, and five Monday—Drs. Crolly, Murphy, Ryan, Kinsella, and Wiseman. Dr. Wiseman is to give the Sisters an exhortation some morning this week."

have a beautiful convent, the admiration of all who see it, furnished with every requisite, ready for them to commence their works of mercy."

"The Irish Sisters," writes Mother McAuley, "are going to treat them to a great christening cake to impress them with a due sense of Irish hospitality; and even now when some fruit is being distributed at recreation the English Sisters always get the best of it. I am instructing them for nearly two hours a day for the ceremony. Thank God they love instruction and seem most desirous to profit by it. Their new convent is a beautiful Pugin structure. It could not be too nice for those whom God has destined to be its first occupants."

As the time approached the holy foundress wrote to Mother M. Teresa White: "My dearest child, pray most earnestly, and get all the prayers you can, that God may direct me in making arrangements for Birmingham. I am a little perplexed. Another English Sister coming. All are truly good religious, but I am at a great loss about a superior. I do not know what to do. May God bless and protect you all!"

Although it was arranged that Bishop Walsh should receive the vows of the Birmingham Sisters, and Bishop Wiseman preach, those arrangements could not be carried out. These prelates were summoned to London on law business, and Archbishop Murray would have had the Sisters await the convenience of his brother prelates but for the alarming illness of Mr. Hardman. He and his family had been such generous friends to the Church that it was decided to hasten the profession of the Sisters, that he might have the coveted gratification of seeing his daughter Juliana before his death. He said he should feel happy if he lived but an hour after the Sisters' arrival. Several distinguished persons came from England to the ceremony, among them Dr. Pusey and his daughters. Dr. Pusey spoke much of illuminated works and expressed himself

greatly pleased with the exquisite specimens of the ancient art executed by the Sisters of Mercy of the parent house. He paid several visits to Mother McAuley, whom he politely informed that the Catholic Church was a sound branch, so were other churches which he described with great volubility, apparently overlooking the fact that living branches must be united to a trunk. She was not at all favorably impressed with the celebrated professor of Hebrew, and, sanguine as she was, entertained little or no hope of his conversion. Perhaps it was a want of sincerity, perhaps it was human respect,* but he fulfilled none of his early promise, and died—groping. An amusing account of him from the pen of the foundress will be given later. On her return to England he did not fail to pay his respects once and again at the Birmingham Convent of Mercy.

Mother M. Cecilia Marmion, “the most beloved novice-mistress in the world,” was appointed temporary superior of Birmingham. “Her going,” wrote Mother M. Catherine, “will be another blow to poor Baggot Street, which has already passed through so many sorrows.” Besides the above, with Mother McAuley and her companion, the following Sisters set out for Birmingham, August 20: Sisters M. Juliana Hardman, Xavier Wood, Vincent Bond, Cecilia Edwards, Angela Borini, and Magdalen Polding. Father O’Hanlon, Dean Gaffney, and Dr. Brown, Bishop of Kilmore, accompanied them.

They were received by Bishop Wiseman in full pontificals, and the clergy of Birmingham, about four P.M. Saturday, August 21. All proceeded to the chapel, where his lordship delivered an appropriate exhortation, concluding with a fervent prayer for the aid of Almighty God. The ceremony ended with a solemn *Te Deum* for the foundation of the first community of religious in Birmingham.

* Or the mental obscurity of a man who, having seen so much, could not see the rest.

The convent,* which is very beautiful, was built and furnished by Mr. Welby Pugin. The holy mother remained over a month to aid her children with her wise counsels and experience. Her health caused much anxiety to those who knew something of her sufferings, but, as she was ever calm, joyous, and hopeful, the Sisters did not fully realize her critical condition. Indeed, she seemed as full of life as ever. On her arrival she was much amused to perceive that while all possible care had been taken to have the house modelled on the early monastic style, a most modern banquet containing all procurable delicacies was set before them by direction of the generous founder. Some of the dishes were regarded as triumphs of the culinary art, and might contain anything under a most appetizing disguise. One French concoction puzzled every one at table and turned the conversation from the ways of the ancient religious to the mysteries of modern cookery. Mother McAuley, with a touch of her old brightness, aptly suggested that the dish in question might be the pulse of the ancients!

Mother-foundress left Birmingham September 22, and arrived in Dublin next day. She writes, October 2, 1841 :

“MY VERY DEAR SISTER M. JULIANA : I am most happy to hear your little affairs go on so well. I am not yet quite comfortable in the community-room or refectory ; what would I not give to see my dear nurse coming with her whey ! I believe that would not satisfy : I should want to see them all ! May God protect and bless them !

“I have great consolation in reflecting on the arrangements we have made. Every day I feel a strong conviction that it was the best mode of proceeding ; the only thing that embitters it a little is the recollection that it gives pain to you.

“We like our new English Sister very much. She is getting impatient for another, as her month is out. I think

* Mother McAuley says in a letter from Birmingham to the Bishop of Galway : “How I wish your lordship could see this beautiful convent, executed by Mr. Pugin in the ancient monastic style ! I almost think you would get such a one in Galway for your daughters of Mercy.”

we should feel strange now without a little mixture of England among us.

“They had a grand ceremony at Naas a few days ago, and some wild reporter has published that we have spread into eighty branches. I suppose the answer to his inquiry was eighteen, which includes those not yet established though arranged for. Should you hear of this great flourish be sure to contradict it.

“Sister M. Vincent returned yesterday from Tullamore, poor Sister M. Justina wonderfully relieved by the change, yet there is no reason to hope it will be more than temporary.

“I shall be looking most anxiously for a long letter, though not deserving, as I am often heard exclaiming against them [long letters]. I am quite certain of hearing that all goes on happily, and that each of my most dear Sisters will give her whole heart to the good work in which God has engaged them, with a pure intention of pleasing Him; and my own dear Sister M. Juliana will do all in her power to fill the place allotted to her, and will pray fervently for those animating graces which will lead us on in uniform peace, making the yoke of our dear Redeemer easy, etc.

“My fondest love to each dear Sister. Very respectful and best regards to your good father and mother. You will tell me particularly how dear father is. Remember me to brother, and give my affectionate love to Mrs. John and my sister Mary, if returned. I hope you do not encroach on her privileges. I kept for the last what I know you will like to hear. Every person who has seen me since my return thinks I look much better. Pray for me, and believe me, my own ever-dear Sister Juliana,

“Your affectionate

“MARY C. MCAULEY.”

“Sister Mary” was Miss Hardman, elder sister to Mother M. Juliana, whom she joined in 1843. She became superior of the Maryvale Convent of Mercy in 1854, and died the following year.

Old Mr. Hardman, whose death was expected, recovered, and survived till August, 1844, when he died most holily. As a mark of respect for one who had labored so strenu-

ously in the service of the Church and been such a liberal benefactor to works of charity, a public procession of the Catholics of Birmingham followed his remains from Handsworth to St. Chad's Cathedral—more than a mile—the clergy who headed the procession in surplice and stole, chanting the Office for the Dead, the rest saying the rosary aloud. There was no interference from Protestants. Respect and sympathy were shown by all. He was laid in a crypt of the cathedral.

The Birmingham community, reassured by the cheering reports from Baggot Street, were terribly shocked to learn that the illness of the holy foundress had taken a fatal turn. The news of her holy death a few weeks after she left them was a most painful surprise. For a while they could not realize it. The effect on poor Mother M. Cecilia, who had been left in Birmingham to train the new superior to the duties of her charge, was fearful. She was devotedly attached to Mother McAuley, who in turn loved her with a more than common affection. Her own health, always delicate, now failed rapidly. On December 6, the feast of Bishop Wiseman, to whom she was greatly attached, she assisted at a profession in St. Chad's Cathedral. Before the Mass for the profession, Miss Lucy Powell, granddaughter of the founder, who had been admitted as a postulant by Mother McAuley a few days after her arrival, received the religious habit, taking the name of Mary Joseph. Bishop Walsh officiated, the sermon being preached by Dr. Wiseman. An immense concourse attended these ceremonies, the first of the kind that ever took place in Birmingham. Mother M. Cecilia returned to Dublin early in 1842, but, as many ladies applied for admission, Birmingham was obliged once more to solicit aid from Baggot Street. As Mother M. Xavier O'Connell was leaving Bermondsey, to which she had been lent in October, 1840, Mother M. di Pazzi kindly consented to spare her to fill the office of novice-mistress

at Birmingham *pro tem.* She remained till after Easter, 1843.

Mother McAuley, before her departure from Birmingham, had recommended the Sisters to endeavor to establish a House of Mercy, which during her short stay she had discovered to be greatly needed. They used every means to carry out her views, and on St. George's Day, 1844, a House of Mercy was opened and several destitute young women of good character received. Mr. James Cuddon, of Norwich, father of one of the Sisters, was the principal benefactor, having contributed one thousand pounds towards the building.

In autumn, 1845, Mrs. Barbara Hardman, widow of the founder and a great benefactress, was received as a boarder into the convent, where she spent the remaining twenty-six years of her life in pious exercises and good works. She restricted herself to what was plainest and most indispensable, and devoted all she possessed to the Church and the poor, whom she visited and consoled as long as she was able to go out. She died in her eighty-sixth year, February 10, 1872.

At the time of the erection of the convent its site was comparatively in the country and there were few Catholics in the neighborhood. They increased rapidly, however, and a church was soon needed in the district. Mr. John Hardman, who had taken his father's place in all that related to the welfare of the community, was the principal benefactor of the new church, which is built on the convent ground. The first stone was laid by Rev. John Moore, who from the arrival of the Sisters had been their devoted friend and benefactor. On the 26th of July, 1847, the church was consecrated by Bishop Wareing and dedicated to Our Lady and St. John. The sermon was preached by Father Faber, who from his conversion was a devoted friend of the Sisters of Mercy. About this time the House of Mercy was joined to the convent by cloisters; towards

the expense of this work Mrs. B. Hardman gave two hundred pounds. Among the early benefactors of the community we may mention also a Canadian, Mr. Bingham, who, to ensure daily Mass for the Sisters, gave annually for five years one hundred pounds for the support of an additional priest at St. Chad's. A mission has since been attached to the church with a resident priest, who is also chaplain to the community.

In 1845 St. Chad's Girls' School was undertaken by the Sisters, and shortly after they opened instruction-rooms for adults in a house adjoining the cathedral which the clergy kindly offered them. In the same house they began a school for infants and a middle-class day-school, both of which were well attended. In 1846 district Sunday-schools were opened in several of the courts near St. Chad's, and Sisters sent to them to collect the children and any persons who chose to attend, for catechism and instruction, at the close of which the rosary was said and the litany sung. To facilitate this good work a branch was established in Bath Street. In 1849, the bishops and clergy having decided that the aid offered by government in support of schools might be accepted,* a training-school was begun, and the first Catholics who passed an examination in England were prepared and presented by the Birmingham Sisters, especially Mother Aloysius Jackson.† In

*The schools formerly called poor-schools are now obliged to submit to government inspection, otherwise they are almost sure to be declared inefficient by the authorities, in which case the parents sending children to them, and the persons continuing them, may be fined.

† Mother M. Aloysius Jackson was the only Catholic teacher who obtained a *first-class* government certificate, owing to the fact that Catholics had always declined to answer the paper on religious knowledge, perhaps through fear of offending "my lords of committee on Council of Education"—all Protestants. Mother M. Aloysius bravely took the paper and answered every question according to the doctrines of our holy faith. Such honesty won the highest praise from "my lords," who thenceforth placed the greatest confidence in her and materially assisted her by large grants to her many schools. Not that they meant to encourage Catholicity, but they could not help showing their esteem of her fearlessness and uprightness. Some persons spoke of "spoiling the Philistines" by doing a little cheating to obtain a larger grant, but Mother M. Aloysius so abhorred anything bordering on deceit that she used to say,

August, 1849, this lady accompanied Mother Juliana to Ireland, where they visited several Convents of Mercy and gained much information on school matters. On their return they brought a qualified member for the infant school. The Catholic Poor-School Committee in London proposed to the Sisters to receive young persons to train as teachers, allowing a compensation for each candidate. This was the beginning of the Training-School, afterwards transferred to Liverpool. On June 28, 1852, an examination of candidates for certificates as mistresses was held by T. W. M. Marshall, Esq., and four Sisters with a number of other ladies passed successfully, thanks to the untiring patience of Mother M. Aloysius Jackson in preparing them for an ordeal quite new to all, as this was the first examination in England of Catholic mistresses.

In founding a convent at Birmingham Mr. Hardman wished to provide a home for a number of poor orphans he had under his protection, and a portion of the building was arranged for their accommodation. They remained in the convent till the House of Mercy was built, and were then transferred to rooms prepared for them in that establishment. Many others had been received, and in 1851 Old Oscott College, Maryvale, was offered to Mother Juliana as an orphanage for the diocese by Bishop Ullathorne, a great friend and benefactor to the Sisters of Mercy. The offer was gladly and gratefully accepted, and the new orphanage was associated with the memory of the venerated foundress by being opened on the tenth anniversary of her holy death, November 11, 1851.

From time to time, attracted by the high character of the teaching staff, applications were made to the Sisters to receive boarders. These it was impossible to refuse in a Protestant country like England, where there were then no

if it came to her knowledge that any grant intended to benefit a work of which she had charge was obtained by the "least little lie," she would never rest until such grant was returned.

Catholic pension-schools save a few for the higher classes. But as these children continually increased in number the addition to the usual work of the establishment at length caused so much inconvenience that it became a necessity either to provide proper accommodation for the pupils or dismiss them. The matter being submitted to the bishop, his decision was that to provide a Catholic education for the middle classes was an equal work of charity with that of teaching the poor for whom the Sisters had so well provided. Accordingly in 1858 a large, handsome building was erected on the convent ground and dedicated to St. Joseph ; the children took possession of it in January, 1859, and it has since been steadily carried on. Much good has been effected through it in many ways, in addition to the benefit derived by a large number of girls who have been trained and educated, among whom have always been numerous orphan children of respectable parents, received gratuitously and provided with situations as governesses. This school is, and always has been, barely self-supporting and not in any way a source of revenue to the convent ; the moderate pension paid for the children being only sufficient to cover the current expenses.

As Birmingham is subject to the vicissitudes of every manufacturing town, poverty abounds ; an almonry and kitchen have been established for the benefit of the poor, to aid them especially when work cannot be had. The poor children of the district (called Handsworth) have always been cared for, and in 1871 spacious schools for infants and grown girls were erected on ground given by Edward Blount, Esq., who has on many occasions proved a generous benefactor to the Handsworth community. In 1874 a day-school for children of the middle class was added to the works of these zealous Sisters. Since their establishment in 1841 this city has advanced with astonishing rapidity. Their convent, once among fields and gardens, is now the centre of a thickly-populated district,

studded with tall, smoking chimneys and busy manufactories, so that their work is ever on the increase. During the first twenty-five years of its existence the House of Mercy gave food, shelter, clothing, and instruction to nearly three thousand destitute young women of good character, besides providing situations for them. Had not this refuge been afforded them they would have been thrown on the world homeless and friendless. At the almonry gates thousands have been relieved over seasons of unusual distress and enabled to keep together their little homes. In the pension-school three hundred and seven girls have been received as boarders gratuitously within a space of fifteen years, and trained as governesses. During the same period the school registers give eighteen hundred poor girls and infants educated free of all charge. The visitation of the sick has always been a heavy duty in Birmingham. Incomparably more good might have been done had there been more "laborers" to send to the many "vineyards" offered to the Sisters, but which, to their great regret, they were obliged to decline.

We shall conclude this chapter with some letters of the holy foundress recently discovered, in which she speaks incidentally of persons and circumstances connected with this foundation. They are addressed to her "most angelic Sister M. Aloysius Scott," superior of Birr :

"[DUBLIN] May 25, 1841.

"MY DEAR SISTER M. ALOYSIUS: We have all arrived safe; got excellent horses at Birr and a most attentive driver; reached Tullamore a quarter to one. The fine little boy who brought the great trunk would not take any payment. 'Ah! sure, ma'am, I'll be *ped* at home.' It distressed me to hear him say *ped*, he is such a fine creature; offered him six shillings for himself: 'Ah! no, ma'am; haven't I a shilling to get my supper, and my bed, and my breakfast?' Most cordial welcome in Tullamore. Sister M. Cecilia continued to evince so much alarm or dislike to the canal that we arranged to go on posting. Got an ex-

cellent, roomy chaise; drove twenty-eight miles in four hours; had then only nineteen. Started at twelve, but met a cross driver, slow horses, and broken harness; kept us five hours on that short stage. A confined carriage; Sister Cowley, who sat at our feet, has not stood up quite well since. All well here.

“Father O’Hanlon celebrated Mass for us this morning; looked very well. He regretted writing such an imperative letter to me about going to Limerick, but said it was impossible to get off. Sister M. Elizabeth called all the community, and engaged each to say a considerable number of *Patens* and *Aves* for him; offer so many Communions and visits to the sick for him, several Masses, etc. [if he would get the foundress to visit them]. Said he could not refuse anything asked on such terms.

“The new Sister, Fanny Gibson, looks very delicate—a nice person. Another proposal since we left.

“Now for my old cough—very frequent since nine last night. I will use the croton-oil again and the Iceland moss.

“Mother M. di Pazzi is remarkably well and most active.

“Give a thousand loves to my dear Sisters M. Teresa, M. Rose, M. Magdalen, M. Joseph, and M. Vincent; may God bless them!

“I hope you thanked Mrs. Egan for all her kindness. I shall never forget her great good-nature and continued attention. God bless and guide you, my dear! Pray for your ever-affectionate
M. C. MCAULEY.”

This letter, though merely an announcement that the travellers had arrived safely, shows the great motherly heart and the playful, childlike simplicity of her who penned it, and who could never see promising boys or girls without wishing to educate them.* She feels for the ignorance

* One of the first good works Mother McAuley did as soon as she had means was to adopt a poor little orphan named Mary Kirwan, who seemed unusually bright, and whom she placed at a boarding-school of some repute at Summer Hill, Dublin. The girl grew up handsome and intelligent, and profited well by her advantages. When finished she lived at Coolock House as the adopted daughter of her benefactress. But while Miss McAuley was making a short visit to France with her friend, Miss Fanny Tighe. Mary Kirwan engaged herself to a poor shoemaker named Malone, but would not marry him without her consent. Though surprised and even mortified at

of the fine, handsome lad who would take no pay for waiting on "the great mother-abbess," and she takes care to make the fact known to her Birr children, that he may be handsomely rewarded in some way that will not deprive him of the honor he valued so highly as to consider a liberal recompense for his pains—to have served the great lady, like a true knight, *gratis*.

A letter dated July 30, 1841, gives a curious pen-picture of Dr. Pusey, in whom the foundress noticed a certain weakness of mind. She never entertained any hope of his conversion :

"I am sorry to find any displeasure towards the B—— ; ever since the decision of the cardinals it is regarded with additional confidence. This is the peace to be prayed for, and the plenty is Miss Ryan, I suppose. Prayer will do more towards both than all the money in the Bank of Ireland. Let us pray well and never grow weary.

"We admitted on Wednesday a most interesting Scotch Sister, the first in Ireland—twenty-two years old, very nice in manner and appearance. She has been three years wishing to be an Irish nun ; never was out of Scotland before ; name, Eliza Munro. She understood house-linen would be required, and has brought twelve pairs of large sheets, twelve table-cloths, twenty-four napkins, etc., all *Scotch manufacture*. Sister M. Cecilia's acquaintance with Mrs. Osborne, of Booterstown, who is from Edinburgh, opened the way to this addition, which seems truly desirable, so that we cannot fall out with the worldlings altogether, but must try to have a select few.

"We expect on Tuesday Miss Murray, of Sheepwalk, niece to the archbishop, and another not yet ready, so we

this, Miss McAuley at once gave leave, and, to make the best of the imprudent step, prepared a useful trousseau for the prospective bride, arranged that the marriage should take place at Coolock House, and invited Drs. James and William McAuley and their families to meet Rev. Dr. Long, the parish priest, at the little dinner got up to celebrate the occasion. Dr. James McAuley sometimes strove to tease his sister by singing "Molly Malone," a comic song then popular, as he did not like her charitable doings and seemed not sorry at her disappointment. But, indeed, there was nothing comic in the destiny of poor Mrs. Malone. She sank to the depths of poverty, and would probably have died of starvation had not Mother McAuley come to the rescue.

shall have heads for the 'considering caps' before the present owners or occupiers get the 'cap of wisdom'

"We had a long visit from Dr. Pusey, Oxford, whose new opinions have created so much interest. His appearance is that of a negligent author, such as some of the poets are described, his manner most pleasing; his countenance is not expressive of a strong mind, but in conversation he does not betray any imbecility (!) except the wanderings of all Protestants.* He says they must get back their title Catholic; expressed his firm belief in the Real Presence; says we are a safe, sound branch from the old Root, with many incumbrances and superfluous practices—not of importance in any way. The Orthodox Greek another sound branch; his own, the reformed Catholic branch, the third. He was extremely guarded not to say anything which might offend, and apologized for once calling the Pope the Bishop of Rome, or Romish Bishop.

"We have had some proposals from Liverpool, and believe we shall have some postulants over.

"Did you hear we have reason to expect Dr. Walsh will come over to receive the vows of his spiritual children, and Dr. Wiseman to preach? Eight to be professed and three received, one for Liverpool. Dr. Pusey* invited himself, if quite agreeable.

"What shall I say of the sweet, delightful fruit and butter, certainly some of the best I ever saw? I have some delightful raspberry vinegar Sister Lucy V—— made me; and they had all grand pies as you directed. I send a habit to Sister M. Teresa; I hope it will not be too small. Pray well for your ever-affectionate
M. C. MCAULEY."

"P.S. Take care of my last-born, Birr. Present my respects to Dr. Spain, and remember me to Mrs. Egan."

The following, without date, was probably written September, 1841:

"I write in haste to prevent your sending any fruit. My dear, those not accustomed to pack fruit could never send

* Dr. Pusey visited Convents of Mercy in Ireland and England a good deal about this time and later, often accompanied by his daughters. One of these, who died young, though not a Catholic, wished to enter a convent. Perhaps it was in memory of her that he founded, with the co-operation of Miss Sellon, an Anglican convent, of which he made himself the director, and in which he copied minutely all he had learned of Catholic convents.

it such a journey without [its] being greatly injured. 'I hope you have the charity to eat some fresh off the trees, walking in the garden, as that is the way fruit is most beneficial to delicate constitutions. How happy it would make me if I knew you were doing all in your power to keep up your strength amid such a variety of occupations, and so constant! God send you help soon!

"Sister M. Justina has been in the doctor's hands and is gone to Booterstown; the poor cook, Sister Elizabeth, also gone, after influenza.

"My cough very variable—one night bad, another good; five minutes in a room with a window open ever so little brings on an hour's coughing; great expectoration; yet I am not weak, though I cannot say I have any appetite. Father O'Hanlon particularly requested I would consult Dr. Stokes. I have seen him twice; on his first visit he looked like a person who had made a great discovery; on his second Mother di Pazzi conducted him out and returned with such sorrow in her countenance that I entreated her to tell me his opinion. 'My right lung was diseased.' I have now less confidence than ever in the faculty, and you know my stock was small enough. I do not think my lung is affected. I am now dead to the poor children—not to read, speak, or give out the Office, etc. I tell you all these particulars to give you the benefit of my experience. If my lung be actually engaged the progress will not be checked; and the fact of no debility, not half so much as I have had when my gums were inflamed, shows that it cannot be. Ordering a liniment to be applied to my chest, he desired 'my servant' to do it. Mother di Pazzi has got that appointment. I call every night for 'my servant.' Sister M. Catherine administers medicines and Sister M. Vincent is head cook, making nice rennet whey, light puddings, etc. I am very sure her majesty is not attended with half so much care, often most ungraciously received by a poor unfortunate, peevish old sinner, who never required any particular care or attention before, and who is more weary of it than of the delicacy that occasions it. To the oft-repeated question, 'Reverend mother, what could you take?' the best answer is, 'My heart, you tease me very much.' As we should carefully examine the motive of our actions, I here humbly confess that my chief motive just now is to show that one of the most distinguished among our medical

professors may be mistaken, and that we should not immediately take up their opinions. God bless you and all with you, my ever-dear Sister! Pray for your affectionate
"M. C. MCAULEY."

"P.S. I should add that it was not the doctor desired me not to read, etc. ; it was Father O'Hanlon. The doctor, in a melancholy tone, left me to my own wishes : I might take anything I liked ; he seemed evidently to regard the case as hopeless."

On the 4th of October, which she dates as the Feast of St. Francis Assisi, Mother McAuley wrote her last letter to Birr :

"I was thinking of my poor children in Birr during the night at different times, though I had quite enough of sleep. I made a kind of resolution to write this day, and although the duty is now Mother di Pazzi's, yet I must keep my nocturnal resolution. I am comforted by the recollection that poor F. E—— was not a frequent visitor ; you would feel the loss so much more. I suppose you will often see H—— ; not too often—you will be better engaged. I hope Father F—— will be as great a favorite with the poor as his predecessor. I am sure he will.

"What is my dear Sister V—— doing? She ought to have great-grandchildren before this. We met in Birmingham a most pious nobleman, Lord Clifford,* who told us that whenever he was asked for advice in a case of some difficulty he replied : 'Let the offended or afflicted person repeat three Hail Marys three times a day for eleven days ; I never knew this remedy to fail'—the desired effect was produced. Now, my dear Sister M. Vincent must not be offended, but she ought to be afflicted. Let her reflect on her loss until she becomes somewhat afflicted. She will then be a proper client in this case and will obtain the benefit so often experienced, and even very lately. Why do they never write to their grandmother—Sister M. V——, Sister M. M——, my own conquest Sister M. Magdalen, or my own old child Sister M. Rose? It is but just punishment for their neglect that their generations do not spring up.

* Lord Clifford was one of several noblemen who showed many delicate attentions to Mother McAuley during her visits to England.

“Birmingham is very promising. Sister M. Juliana appointed superior the second week we were there. Sister M. Cecilia to be home before Christmas. This is the best arrangement we ever had, pleasing to bishops, priests, etc.—to all but the dear, amiable poor soul who is now reverend mother.

“Pray, who gave you such a false account of me? I am just as you saw me. Pray fervently that God may grant me the grace of a holy, penitential preparation and the grace of a happy death. God bless you all!

“Your ever-affectionate

M. C. M.”

CHAPTER XXXI.

HOUSES ESTABLISHED FROM BIRMINGHAM.

Mother M. Angela Borini founds a Convent at Nottingham—Bishop Walsh—His Rosebuds—Holy Poverty—Miss Whitgreave builds Our Lady's Cloister—John Exton, of Eastwell, gives four thousand Pounds towards the Erection of the Convent Chapel—Four Miss Perrys—Oldham—Mansfield—Mother M. Polding—Statistics—Holy Deaths—"I must be thy Book"—*Adoro Te*—Dr. Cheadle—Bishop Roskell—Welcome Visitors—Cardinal Wiseman officiates at a Reception—St. John's Convent—Bishop Ullathorne invites Sisters of Mercy to Derby—Fathers Sing and Daniel—Hon. Mrs. Beaumont—Works of Mercy—Mr. Marshall examines the Schools—High State of Efficiency—A Community of Saints—St. Joseph will not leave them—Anecdotes—Sister M. Winifred's Recovery—Convent at Carlton.

AFTER the appointment of Bishop Wiseman as coadjutor to the Midland district Bishop Walsh resided chiefly at Nottingham, and his lordship was desirous that a Convent of Mercy should be established in that town as soon as Sisters could be spared from St. Mary's. In compliance with his wish, on February 6, 1844, Mother M. Juliana placed in the house prepared for them the first colony that left Handsworth: Mother M. Angela Borini, Sister M. Magdalen Polding, and Sister Teresa Hill, a lay Sister, with two others who were lent until new subjects might enable the new house to dispense with their services. Sister M. Magdalen was niece of Archbishop Polding, who took much interest in the Nottingham house. Miss Wilson, niece of Bishop Wilson, of Hobart Town, was the first lady who joined the Sisters here. They settled in Parliament Street, where they resided till 1845, when, not being able to pay the rent of the house, they removed to the Chapel House in George's Street, the priests having gone to the new presbytery attached to St. Barnabas' Cathedral.

The Nottingham house was begun in great poverty. But for the kindness of Bishop Walsh the Sisters would often have fallen short of bread. The venerable prelate poetically styled them his Rosebuds. Some of the elderly people they now visit love to relate how they contributed their little mite—one giving an ironing-blanket and table, another some irons. To Rev. F. Cheadle they were indebted for the plates, cups, and saucers which replaced their brown basins.

In 1845 Miss Vavasour, daughter of Sir Edward Vavasour, entered. Much of the expense of the elegant chapel decorations were defrayed by this lady, who devoted a portion of her fortune to this pious object. Through the generous bounty of John Exton, Esq., of Eastwell, a handsome convent was erected on the Derby Road, that gentleman, through the mediation of his chaplain, Father Bick, giving four thousand pounds towards its erection. Bishop Walsh took the greatest interest in the community, and was the means of drawing many members to it. Four Miss Perrys, of Banbury, became useful and edifying members; their father, a most saintly man, rejoiced so much that God had called all his daughters to His immediate service that he used to say if he had twenty daughters more he would be grateful if all were called to be nuns.

The first who joined the Sisters in their new convent was Miss C. Whitgreave, who devoted twenty-one hundred pounds of her fortune to building Our Lady's Cloister on the west side of the structure. Besides a large poor-school, the nuns opened a middle-class day-school and a small boarding-school. In March, 1850, three Sisters were sent to Glossop, but after three years the superior most reluctantly withdrew them in consequence of the ill-health of several and the deaths of two valuable members within a few months of each other. In 1851, the Catholic chapel being for sale, the Sisters purchased it for poor-schools. It is now used as an orphanage. A House of Mercy was

opened in 1857. At the request of Bishop Turner, and with the approbation of Bishop Roskell, a colony was sent to Burnley, but it was subsequently transferred to Oldham. In 1867 a mission was founded in the poorest quarter of Birmingham. In 1877 a convent was opened at Mansfield. A guild for the benefit of the sick was established at Nottingham. The Children of Mary are numerous, and the association is a powerful means of keeping young women to the practice of their duties. In the other societies matrons and old people are kept to their religious duties. Every year about Christmas a tea-party is given, at which they amuse themselves by dancing old fashioned dances, especially jigs and hornpipes, and several ladies, ranging from the grand climacteric to the nineties, are proud to show their agility on these festive occasions, the best dancers being those who "frisk beneath the burden of fourscore."

Two of the Sisters who established the Nottingham convent, Sister M. Angela Borini and Sister M. Magdalen Polding, passed their novitiate in Baggot Street under Mother McAuley and had personal opportunity of studying her holy, heroic life of self-sacrifice for the glory of God. It is unnecessary to say how much they valued their privilege of having been there in the lifetime of the first mother. The first five came with Dr. Wareing, of Oscott College; the two just mentioned with Father Parker, of Liverpool; and the last, Miss Beckett, with Father Moore, of Birmingham. There are at present in this convent twenty-six members. They have five poor-schools with a daily average attendance of seven hundred and fifty, a select-school with forty, a boarding-school with twenty; these, with a House of Mercy (twenty-one) and an orphanage (twenty-two), form their principal works. The *Extern Visitation Record* gives eighty-nine as the number of poor families visited last year. The Sunday-school consists chiefly of young women, many of them converts, over

whom Mother M. Angela Borini had great influence. Though delicate, she possessed great energy, judgment, and firmness, and had a special talent for drawing the negligent to the practice of their religious duties. This she used with great success over the multitudes who flocked to the Sisters for instruction and advice. Bishop Walsh, who resided near, was a kind friend and counsellor, as was also Rev. Dr. Cheadle, pastor. On the Jubilee solemnity, December 12, 1881, which united the whole Institute in thanksgiving to the good God for his mercies and in prayers for a continuance of these on ourselves and our works, when all were praying that our Sweet, Immaculate Queen of Mercy might fold us all so tightly in her blue mantle that we might almost feel the pressure of her maternal arms, those gone before us with the sign of faith were lovingly remembered. To the community in heaven Nottingham had contributed ten.

Mother M. Aloysius Perry, a model of simplicity and obedience, died in May, 1857. Always delicate, she sank under the burden of office. From early childhood she used to pray that her weak health might prove no obstacle to her entering religion. Another great loss was Sister M. Flint, a fine musician, highly cultured, and unusually gifted. After profession a large abscess formed in her foot and occasioned sufferings so intense that she was unable to leave her room. During the early stages of her illness she read many books of study as well as pious works. Two months before her death she asked the infirmarian to remove all her books, and, pointing to the crucifix, said: "There is my book. Whenever I think of reading now our Lord seems to say to me, 'I must be thy book.'" The day before her death, Maundy Thursday, she asked to have the Passion read to her, and on coming to the words, "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise," she begged the reader to kneel down and ask our Lord to say to her what He did to the good thief. "Yes, this very day," she

continued, looking earnestly and sweetly at her crucifix—"dear Jesus, dost Thou hear?" As she lay with the crucifix clasped in both hands the doctor, who happened to come in, was so struck with her beautiful attitude that he said to a Sister about to moisten her lips, "Do not disturb her." When she asked mother-assistant how long the doctor thought she would live, and heard the reply, "Not long, dear," she raised her eyes to heaven and said fervently, "Thank God!" On Good Friday she was so conscious that she pointed to her eyes, remarking they were dim, and to her fingers, saying they were dead. Yet she watched the blessed candle, and when it went out would have it re-lighted. She also asked a Sister who had a beautiful voice to sing the *Adoro Te* and other hymns, which she greatly enjoyed. She had often besought our Lord to let her keep the pasch in heaven. At eight P.M. she ceased to breathe.

In 1856, the Sisters from Kinsale having returned from the Crimea, good Bishop Roskell was anxious that every mark of respect and kindness should be shown them throughout his diocese. Her lordship therefore accompanied the mother-assistant and the novice-mistress to Derby and brought Mother Frances and her two companions to Nottingham, where three grand recreation-days were given to celebrate their visit. In autumn the two mothers went to Kinsale to examine how the works of mercy were carried on in that institution.

Cardinal Wiseman, having a very particular friendship for Bishop Roskell, visited Nottingham several times and never failed to come to the convent, with the elder members of which he was well acquainted. On his first visit after his elevation the whole community met him at the gate wearing church-cloaks, etc. His eminence used to say Mass in the convent chapel and breakfast in the community-room. He officiated at the reception of Miss Sankey, of Nant, North Wales.

Death visited the community in 1864. Sister Juliana, a

devoted lay Sister, had been a great sufferer for three years from spinal disease and was unable to raise herself or suffer herself to be raised, remaining constantly on her back. Her cheerful resignation and humble submission to the divine will were admirable while she awaited lovingly the call of her heavenly Spouse. Mother M. Walburga Perry was the next summoned home. Having a special attraction for children, she wrought much good by her influence over them, and was invaluable in the schools. Like her Sisters, she was very delicate and the burden of superiority proved too much for her. Universally beloved and regretted, she died of lingering consumption, September 21, 1866. A little before her death she was seen to look anxiously as if in search of something, and on being asked what she wanted she answered: "I want only God." Reverend mother then repeated two lines of the dying Sister's favorite hymn :

" Jesus, the only thought of Thee
With sweetness fills my breast."

To which she quickly added :

" But sweeter far it is to see
And on Thy beauty feast."

The last of these four dear and holy Sisters died February 9, 1880.—R.I.P.

The Sisters of Mercy have founded a second convent in Nottingham in the direction of St. John's Church. Since the coming of the Sisters in 1844 Catholicity has made rapid strides in the town and shire of Nottingham. Bobinet, lace of the coarse variety known as Nottingham lace, and hosiery give employment to thousands. Nottingham is a healthy old town with narrow, winding streets which are very well kept. The Sisters of Mercy educate most of the children of the Nottingham artisans.

Another Convent of Mercy in the Nottingham diocese is Derby, which deserves special mention.

Derby is a thriving town, whose material prosperity depends mainly on the manufacture of silk and hosiery. In 1849 Bishop Ullathorne invited the Sisters of Mercy, Kinsale, to take charge of the schools of the town and establish themselves in a fine, handsome convent prepared for them by their friend and benefactor, Father Sing. Bishop Ullathorne was most kind and fatherly to his new children, as were also Fathers Sing and Daniel, who supplied them with everything necessary. Honorable Mrs. Beaumont, daughter of Lord Scarsdale, gave three thousand pounds as an endowment, besides many other gifts; and Miss Sing was most kind and aided the foundation in every possible way. The community and schools flourished, but, unfortunately, the funds were injudiciously invested and great pecuniary difficulties were the result. In time, however, all was arranged, and, though God has continued to bless the Sisterhood with abundant crosses, they have rapidly increased, are in excellent condition, and accomplish a world of good. Conversions are and always have been numerous, and as solid good is done it would be useless to enter into detail as regards trials which, after all, are but gentle strokes from the hand of a loving Father, whether they come by His direct or His permissive will. The community is described by a recent visitor as hard-working, devoted, and saintly. The schools from the beginning have been most efficiently conducted, as may be gathered from the general report for 1850 by her majesty's inspector of schools, T. W. M. Marshall, Esq., a name finely enshrined in Catholic literature :

“In the school superintended by the Sisters of Mercy at Derby the following are some of the points which particularly attracted my attention :

“The lesson-books are employed as *texts*, out of which a complete and systematic course of instruction is constructed by the intelligence and skill of the teacher. The minute analysis of the reading-lesson is the prominent fea-

ture of the instruction ; and it may be said that bees do not more thoroughly extract from the flower its hidden treasure than these teachers each particle of knowledge which the lesson contains or suggests. On the occasion of my last visit to this school I had the advantage of hearing the elder girls examined by the superioress of the Kinsale school, so well known for its remarkable success and for the special eulogy and support which it has merited from the officials of the national board ; and I know not which was more worthy of admiration, the clear, rapid, and searching questions of the examiner or the prompt and unerring replies of the children. The accuracy of their knowledge in sacred and profane history, and their power of tracing the connection between them, were really astonishing. They had a considerable acquaintance with natural history, and could also explain with precision natural phenomena, such as the rainbow, the tides, etc., and readily gave their information in another form when required to do so.

“No lessons are learned in the school, but all at home—a fact of which the full significance will be readily appreciated by any one conversant with the ordinary class of elementary schools. All the instruction is conveyed by the most felicitous methods, and even the spelling-lessons are made as animated, if not as interesting, as any other.

“The copy, slips and passages from the New Testament, which the children, in consequence of this practice, appeared to know by heart ; indeed, their knowledge of Holy Scripture and of Bible history surpassed all that I have witnessed elsewhere.

“In giving Scripture lessons to the younger classes pictures are used with good effect. The relations between the teachers and the pupils, and their deportment towards one another, are not the least admirable feature of the school. . . .

“Amongst the few institutions already established in

this country for the training of teachers for elementary Catholic schools, the most complete in its organization and the most promising in its probable results is that which has been formed in connection with St. Mary's, Derby. In this institution all the essential conditions of complete eventual success—suitable buildings, skilful and devoted teachers, and a highly organized practising school—appear to be secured; and it is to be hoped that the influential promoters of primary instruction for Catholics may be induced to concentrate upon this place all their efforts and resources, instead of dissipating them, with comparatively feeble effect, in various localities where no solid results upon a large scale can possibly be realized.”

“GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

“1. Desks and furniture—excellent. 2. Books and apparatus—good and abundant. 3. Organization—excellent; hardly capable of improvement. 4. Instruction and discipline—excellent. 5. Methods—system of the Sisters of Mercy carried out with singular skill and perseverance. 6. Teachers—possess eminent qualifications for their offices.

“All the results which flow from solid and judicious instruction, diligent and affectionate supervision, and the most unstinted liberality continue to be realized with complete success in these admirable schools, in which it would not now be easy to detect any defect. The infant-school, which is conducted with great skill, is beginning to produce its expected fruits, and in the course of two or three years will still further stimulate the general progress of the institution. I have only to report my unqualified admiration of all which is done in these schools and of the spirit which animates both the managers and the teachers.”

The children of these perfectly-conducted schools are devoted to the Sisters. The convent is a community of saints under a saintly superior—one of the few now living

who was known and loved by the foundress and who carries the old traditions from the fountain-head.

When the Derby Sisters migrated from the grand but fearfully unhealthy convent near the river to the private residence adjoining the church, they found in the hall a life-sized statue of St. Joseph in a sitting posture, with the divine Child standing beside him, on a large, square block, all done in fine sandstone. The group belonged to former residents. St. Joseph being their special patron, the Sisters were delighted to have his statue, which, as years rolled by, they began to consider as their own. One day, to their surprise and consternation, it was announced that four stalwart men with a heavy truck and a pair of the finest English dray-horses had come to carry off their treasure. As no legitimate objection could be made, the superior went down to sanction the removal by her presence, but in her heart appealing to St. Joseph all the time not to go. The house had been a mansion in its day. The hall-door was very large and double; for ordinary purposes one side only was opened, but both were needed to allow St. Joseph to pass. But not one of the men, nor all of them together, could draw back the bolt, and, after trying again and again, they left, saying they must get tools. A Sister now went to see what had happened to the door, when, lo! it opened without the least difficulty, and the nuns at once arrived at the consoling conclusion that St. Joseph did not wish to leave them. Certain it is that the men never returned with the tools, and St. Joseph occupies his old place in the hall.

Another incident partaking of the miraculous consoled them. One Holy Thursday many years ago the repository caught fire during dinner-time, when there were but the two Sisters in adoration present. One of them immediately removed the Blessed Sacrament to the high altar, and the drapery, being light, was soon in flames. But in Pugin chapels there is not much inflammable material, and the

flames were extinguished before anything could be destroyed but the temporary altar and its ornaments. When the nuns were removing the *débris* they were surprised to find the box covered with white silk on which the vessel containing the Blessed Sacrament had been placed entirely uninjured and the linen not even scorched. But far greater was their surprise when the sacristan, on removing the covering, found the box all charred. This box has ever since been kept among the convent valuables.

In this community is a Sister M. Winifred, who received her name in gratitude for the miraculous recovery of a member by the use of water from the far-famed well of that saint. A girl in the orphanage was suffering from inflamed eyes, and some relative sent her a bottle of this water. Some was given to a nun who was completely paralyzed and otherwise very ill. After using it a few times she was able to rise and dress ; the infirmarian, seeing this, ran in terror to the superior's cell, the restored Sister following. To the great delight of all the recent invalid explained that suddenly, when she was not thinking of herself at all, she was cured—a wonderful effect the Sisters had not expected, though they knew that God sometimes grants such favors.

* The respected prelate who invited the Sisters of Mercy to Derby in 1849 kindly fitted up for them a handsome choir in Our Lady's Chapel, a wing of the fine Gothic church, St. Mary's, where they could hear Mass in the privacy so precious to them when no priest was at hand to celebrate in their own choir. They have always had work more than enough among the laboring classes. The first silk-mill was opened at Derby in 1728, since which period the silk industry has multiplied exceedingly. The Derbyshire spar and other varieties of semi-crystal and colored stones which are among the staples of the place also give employment to many, as they are capable of receiving a fine polish and make very handsome ornaments. Various

other industries give employment to a steady working class, which, however, is subject to the vicissitudes common to all who make their living by factory work, and therefore now and then peculiarly the object of the Sisters' care and sympathy. Father Daniel and Monsignor Sing were such good fathers to the Sisters that "no words can express their great kindness." Hon. Mrs. Beaumont was the only considerable benefactress.—R.I.P. When she died no one took her place. The Derby Catholics are mostly poor; in fact, there is no wealthy Catholic in or about Derby. The Sisters' schools are well attended; the government inspectors have always expressed themselves highly pleased with them. Many trials, serious and petty, have fallen on the Sisters. One branch house they have been obliged to close after a struggle of three years and considerable pecuniary loss; so great was the bigotry manifested toward them in this out-of-the-way village that employers actually fined Catholic girls for attending their schools—a species of liberty of conscience not uncommon among men who boast of their freedom from Roman bondage and tell their benighted little ones what a tyrant the pope is. At first they received the nuns well; but "a change came o'er the spirit of their dream," or rather the reality of their lives, and the work became, for many reasons, harder and harder. Father Daniel, whom the Sisters describe as their "invaluable spiritual father," has gone to his reward. Monsignor Sing and Miss Sing, who were kind beyond describing to the little community in its earlier days, and would be so still if they were in Derby, are now far advanced in years, yet they do not forget the Sisterhood they appreciated so highly and helped so faithfully on its first appearance in Derby thirty-four years ago. The removal of Monsignor Sing (to Grantham) was a great trial to the Sisters.

The Derby community has flourished and drawn many souls to God, especially converts, of whom they always have large numbers under instruction. The work of sav-

ing souls in the manner their vocation allows has gone on steadily from the first. The community numbers twenty-four at present; four have been called to their eternal home since 1849.—R.I.P.

The venerable superior of the Derby convent retains beautiful recollections of the holy foundress, whom she knew long before either thought of the Order of Mercy. "I remember her from my childhood," she writes: "I always thought her beautiful to look at; her skin was like snow, her complexion like a lovely rose, her eyes so soft, sweet, and yet bright, her figure and carriage graceful." Father Armstrong, "Mother McAuley's great friend and adviser," baptized this lady and her brothers and sisters, who all received their First Communion and were confirmed under his care. At his rooms at St. Andrew's and St. Michan's the venerable Mother E—— used to meet Miss McAuley every Saturday before the great work of Baggot Street began, 1827. Dr. Armstrong was then very infirm and rarely able to sit in the church confessional, but he allowed some in whom he took a special interest to come to his room. This lady was among the privileged few, and every Saturday she met the archbishop and Mother McAuley in his sitting-room. He heard confessions in the library, each going in turn as they came, "all, of course, giving way to Archbishop Murray." "She was always most kind to myself and my sister," writes Mother E——, "and often noticed us when children. We visited her in Baggot Street. She often asked us to pray for her brother's conversion. I hope I shall never prove unfaithful to the grace her prayers may have gained for me—vocation to her beautiful Institute."

The Derby nuns have opened a branch at Carlton, a village near Nottingham, a rising place, in which they find plenty of work. It would be difficult to imagine a more humble beginning than they made here: a very small, mean house—"the smallest I ever saw for a convent," writes my

informant ; “but we shall have our Blessed Lord with us to share our poverty and to bless our labors.”

There are also Convents of Mercy at St. John's, Nottingham, Gainsborough, Mansfield, and Newark, making seven in the diocese of Nottingham. But as our limits will not allow us to speak of these later establishments, we will return to the foundations made by Birmingham, the last house established by Mother Catherine.

CHAPTER XXXII.

NEW BRANCHES FROM BIRMINGHAM.

Leamington—Wolverhampton—Death of Mother M. Augustine Cuddon—The Nuns remove from Bishop Milner's House—"The Saints of the Order"—Funeral on the Golden Jubilee—Mother J. Longman—Canon Longman—St. Anne's—Mother M. Aloysius Jackson—Her Honesty and Fearlessness—"My Lords"—Bishop Bagshaw—Reminiscences—Beautiful Retrospect—Father Faber and his Brothers in the Chapel of the Mercy Convent—"Surrounded by Mercy"—Oscott College becomes a Convent of Mercy—Maryvale so named by the Oratorians—Dr. Newman—Mary Hardman—A mural Memorial to her—To perpetuate Devotion to the Sacred Heart—Special Mission of the Maryvale Sisters—They possess its oldest Shrine in England—Perpetual Lamp—The Old Oak—Bishop Milner's Residence—Recollections of Father Faber—Dr. Newman—Father A. St. John.

IN November, 1847, a branch was opened at Leamington, but as the work was found to be rather light, with little prospect of its increasing, it was decided at the end of a year to withdraw the Sisters and send them to the busy and populous town of Wolverhampton, in behalf of which Bishop Ullathorne had made urgent application, and it easily obtained the preference, as there were not Sisters to spare for both places.

On the 9th of January, 1849, Mother M. Juliana conducted Mother M. Augustine Cuddon, Sister M. Catherine Wareing, Sister M. Aloysius Stocker, all professed members, to their new home, a house in Wolverhampton, near the chapel of SS. Peter and Paul, North Street, which had once been the residence of the celebrated Bishop Milner, of whom many memorials still remained.

The prospects for this undertaking were most encouraging, but the death of Mother M. Augustine at the expira-

tion of two years gave a great check to its prosperity. Shortly after the arrival of the Sisters a violent species of cholera broke out, and they at once undertook the duty of attending those attacked by the dreadful malady. Mother M. Augustine specially devoted herself to the worst cases among the poorest patients, as among them her generous, ardent charity had fullest scope. When the terrible visitation had passed away she felt the effects of her tireless exertions. Her health rapidly declined, and in a few months consumption deprived the community of a mother beloved and esteemed by all.

Bishop Milner's house soon became too small for the nuns, and as it was impossible to make any additions to it they removed in 1855 to their present more convenient premises. In 1860 a large House of Mercy was erected, with accommodations for forty destitute young women of good character. Since that year over one thousand poor girls have been admitted, trained to servitude, and provided with situations suited to their capabilities. In 1870 an almonry and instruction-room were added, and in 1875 school premises sufficiently extensive to accommodate thirty boarders and a large number of day-scholars. The Sisters teach five poor-schools in different parts of the town. They have also large classes of adults and visit the sick of an extensive district.

Mother M. Catherine Wareing succeeded Mother M. Augustine, and the community increased slowly but surely in numbers and good works under her administration. Crosses and difficulties were not wanting to consolidate the work and promote the sanctification of those engaged in it. Among the convents which know the Wolverhampton community well the Sisters of this house are said to be the saints of the Order of Mercy. A singular trial befell them in December, 1881. They were making all possible preparations for the Golden Jubilee, the good mother-superior herself being unusually active in devising means

of making the auspicious occasion one of increased fervor and holy joy to the Sisters and all connected with them. All the clergy within easy distance of Wolverhampton were invited to participate in the ceremonies, and this beloved mother's own hands prepared everything necessary, little knowing that she did all for another ceremony not less beautiful—the ceremony of her burial.

On Monday, December 5, on her return from school about half-past four P.M., reverend mother complained of a severe pain in her chest, and in a few hours was obliged to retire. Every possible care was bestowed on the dear invalid; her children watched by her day and night, and procured the best medical assistance, though no danger was apprehended. On December 7 she was better; saw several Sisters and arranged the business of the house; but the doctor, as a precaution, desired her not to rise for a day or two. On the 8th, her favorite Feast of the Immaculate Conception, came a serious change and the last sacraments were administered, and on the 9th, at one A.M., she died sweetly and peacefully, surrounded by her sorrowing children. Mass was offered for her soul, at which her bereaved ones received Holy Communion. It was all so sudden, so unexpected, that the shock was very severe. The survivors could scarcely realize their loss—her gain—as they knelt around the little bed on which she lay, a picture of holy peace and *triumph*. They were most grateful to God that, though they had not the remotest idea that this illness was to be her last, they had, through His great mercy, acted as if they were sure of it. Even the beloved patient herself had no apprehension; spoke of a Jubilee which she was not to spend here below, and of what she would do, when better, for the happiness and comfort of the community she loved so well. She had been but six months in office, yet had endeared herself more and more every day to all with whom she was connected.

This dear mother was in her sixty-eighth year and had

entered religion in her thirty-fifth. From the first she was a model of obedience, humility, and love of labor. Her age was no obstacle to her advancement in perfection, as is now so often the case, and her loving children say that she never for a moment lost sight of the end for which she entered the service of her divine Master. She labored almost to the last day of her life—went from the school-room to her death-bed; for, though burdened with the cares of office and well stricken in years, she took charge of one of the schools close to the convent.

After Mass the chaplain set out for Birmingham to break the sad news to her brother, Very Rev. Thomas Canon Longman, V.G., Birmingham; her other brother, Very Rev. Stephen Canon Longman, of Northampton, had been already communicated with. Canon Longman was shocked at the suddenness of the bereavement, but most edifying in his resignation to the holy will of God. He was pleased and gratified at the love and devotedness lavished on his beloved sister in life and death. The dirge and requiem took place in the Sisters' beautiful chapel at nine A.M. on the JUBILEE DAY. Everything was most solemn and imposing. The music was supplied by the orphaned Sisters, the priests from the sanctuary joining appropriately. The High Mass was sung by Canon Longworth. Canon Davies reviewed in eloquent terms the holy life of the deceased, who was one of the first to join the Mercy Institute in Wolverhampton on its establishment in 1849, and who had labored untiringly in the cause of the poor and sick, and Christian education, to the very end.

Eight Sisters carried the holy remains to the hearse, and on reaching the beautiful Catholic churchyard, St. Mary's, Brewood, eight miles distant, eight Sisters bore the coffin from the hearse and laid it beside the open grave. When it was reverently lowered to its last resting-place the Sisters made a visit to the Blessed Sacrament to offer their hearts and their cross anew to their divine Spouse.

Such was the JUBILEE DAY in Wolverhampton—a jubilee day indeed for the beloved mother, whose children have every reason to believe that her generous soul was crowned that day, if not before, by the loving Master she had served so faithfully. It was all most beautiful—so solemn, so religious. The Sisters believed they had sent a saint to heaven; they seemed to feel that she looked down from her happy home on her poor children with the love of a tender mother who would procure them many blessings. The good mother died of heart-disease; its alarming symptoms appeared on the 8th, and her continuous prostration gave unmistakable evidence that the end was near. The heritage of her virtues will remain with her sorrowing children and be to them no ordinary solace. It was fitting that Mother McAuley's jubilee day should be celebrated thus at least in one of her houses. Mother Longman was solemnly professed June 7, 1852, by Bishop Ullathorne, in the presence of a large congregation, at SS. Peter and Paul's, Wolverhampton. The ceremony attracted much attention at the time for its exceeding beauty and grandeur. But far more beautiful and grand was this jubilee ceremonial. It will be remembered that the holy foundress wished her children to celebrate the last anointing and death and burial as festal occasions. "For," said she, "the burial service of a religious is a heavenly ceremony—more so than any reception or profession. . . . It is like a grand entrance into heaven. . . . It is even a powerful attraction to many to put themselves in the way of obtaining such a blessed departure from this passing world." But what would the holy mother have said of this jubilee celebration?

It is somewhat singular that in this large, poor, and hard-working community this has been the only death in seventeen years.

Wolverhampton is the only distant foundation of the Birmingham nuns; their other houses are not far from the

convent established in 1841. St. Anne's, Birmingham, is a large and beautiful convent with a flourishing community. Mother M. Aloysius Jackson * has been superior since its foundation, 1852. "It would be impossible," writes one who has every means of knowing, "to exaggerate the goodness of that dear community, their devotion to the poor, their union and charity. They had to struggle against many obstacles, but nothing disturbed the peace of these good religious. They soon removed from a small house in Bath Street to a large building, formerly a brewery, which had just been vacated by the present Cardinal Newman and the Oratorians, as their Oratory at Edgbaston had just been built. I am not afraid to say that since 1851 these good Sisters have instructed thousands of converts. I love to record the holiness of these dear souls, whose happiness never seems to have been marred in any way." A large orphanage is the special work of mercy at Maryvale, Perry Bar, but the Sisters have poor-schools and other good works in operation besides.

The Oscott house was once the property of Father Bromwich, who was condemned to death for the crime of being a priest, but reprieved. He ministered to the Catholics in

* Mother M. Aloysius Jackson, who died November 21, 1882, was regarded as a counterpart St. Catherine of Alexandria, to whom she was devoted. She was born of wealthy Protestant parents in Yorkshire, 1815, and, having received a superior education, spent most of her time in such works of benevolence as prepared her, like Cornelius, for the grace of the true faith. Overcoming immense obstacles, she entered the Birmingham convent, 1841, and in 1844 became mistress of novices. In 1852 she was appointed mother-superior of St. Anne's—an office she retained till her death. No school in England has had such success for middle-class girls as St. Catherine's, which she founded. She had a wonderful attraction for talented girls whose parents were too poor to have them educated. If she found them pious, but, above all, straightforward, she spared no pains to have them educated to the extent of their capacity, even sending them to France and Germany to acquire facility in speaking French and German. Then she obtained situations for them. Most families of the English nobility have governesses of her training, and these, in common with thousands of the poorer classes, grieved for her as for a cherished parent. Bishop Illsley and sixteen priests were present at her obsequies, and there was not a dry eye in the church during the impressive sermon of Canon O'Sullivan. The Sisters whom she governed so sweetly for thirty years continue to bewail Mother M. Aloysius Jackson as the best and noblest of mothers.—R.I.P.

these parts and died 1703. Bishop Milner built here the first chapel dedicated to the Sacred Heart in England, and established a sodality in its honor. While residing at the "Old College" the Oratorian fathers, under Dr. Newman, called the place Maryvale. Bishop Ullathorne gave the college to the Sisters of Mercy for an orphanage, 1851, and they immediately opened it for orphans and later admitted aged invalids in a separate department. Since its opening six hundred and eighty orphans have been received. They are trained to all kinds of works, and many have become valuable servants. Mother McAuley's beloved "Sister Mary" was first superior here and worked wonders for the spiritual and temporal advancement of the orphans. She died 1855. A handsome brass memorial of her was put up in the chapel by her brother, Mr. Hardman, of Birmingham.

The Maryvale Sisters regard it as their special mission to perpetuate the beautiful devotion planted on this favored spot by the holy Bishop Milner. They have religiously preserved the sanctuary he erected, with its circular window in which is a stained-glass representation of the Heart of our Lord, painted at Rome. The decorations are of exceeding richness. A statue of our Lord unveiling His Heart stands on the altar. The Perpetual Lamp, an exquisite work of art, burns for ever ; 1. In reparation for all the sins committed ; 2. To obtain the conversion of England ; 3. For the intentions of all who belong to the association, which numbers over two thousand, including ninety priests. This oldest shrine of the Sacred Heart in Great Britain is almost a place of pilgrimage. Another object of interest at the orphanage of the Sisters of Mercy, Oscott, is an old decayed oak on the right of the building, planted by Father Bromwich after his reprieve from death two centuries ago.

The mother-house at Handsworth and its filiations are proverbial for discipline, excessive kindness, and hospitality. Handsworth is a sort of suburb of Birmingham, and, though

in reality a part of it, was, when Mother McAuley founded the convent, a semi-rural district, with houses sparsely scattered over its green fields and pleasant gardens. The convent is a magnificent structure ; several piles have been erected for school and other purposes since 1841. The House of Mercy is not surpassed by any similar institution in England. The inmates are mostly very young women, though none under fourteen are admitted. Their dormitories are equal in size, arrangement, and furniture to those of many boarding-schools. The uniform is very neat and the inmates are proud of it. The dining-room is large, airy, and well appointed. There is a home-like air about the whole establishment which makes it singularly unlike several other charitable institutions. Like Blandford Square, it receives applications for servants from many parts of England, the colonies, and the Continent. Many old and valuable servants from the Continent and elsewhere return to their old home at Handsworth from time to time to recruit body and soul ; and these " old children " are well cared for and their little holidays made truly happy.

At St. Anne's Convent of Mercy, Camp Hill, Birmingham, there is a superior boarding-school, in which every accomplishment for which the pupils show any taste is taught for a very moderate pension. This the saintly Bishop Ullathorne considers a most useful work of mercy, as affording opportunities to a large and respectable class of girls which they could not have in an institution where the revenue must support the teachers and pay building and other expenses. Not a farthing of income has ever been derived by the community from these schools.

In large towns and seaports in England the House of Mercy has done immense good in preserving the morality of thousands of poor, virtuous girls. Mother McAuley, whose idea was to preserve rather than to cure, gave as a last counsel to her Birmingham children : " Open a House of Mercy as soon as possible." Speaking of the Order of

Mercy in a sermon preached at the Nottingham convent, DECEMBER 12, 1881, the Bishop of Nottingham laid particular stress on this branch of the Institute, and, congratulating the Sisters in his own name and that of the clergy and laity, he told them that it was "their right and duty to rejoice and thank God for having so manifestly chosen the holy servant of God, Catherine McAuley, to accomplish the grand work of founding the religious Sisterhood of Mercy—an Institute which has been so marvellously blessed and protected for the good of souls. . . . It had rescued the girls of Catholic Ireland from the grievous danger of godless schools ; it had protected the faith and morality of thousands of young women in many lands, and sent to heaven innumerable holy nuns, spouses of Christ. Their Institute united in a wonderful way the seclusion, silence, and choir-duties of the contemplative orders with an immense variety of works of charity and an adaptability to any of the duties of an active life that might be required."

Bishop Walsh and his great coadjutor, Bishop Wiseman, tenderly fostered the institutions we have been describing, in their early days—often days of trial and conflict. Bishop Ullathorne,* who succeeded Dr. Walsh in the Central District (1848) and subsequently (1850) became first bishop of Birmingham, was the best of fathers and friends to the new Institute.

We have now touched upon the Birmingham, or Handsworth, house with most of its children and grandchildren. A few words more, and we shall have done with this last of Mother McAuley's foundations, which still retains the good odor of Jesus Christ in which she left it forty-two years

* Dr. Ullathorne was consecrated at Coventry, June 21, 1846 (the day on which Pius IX. was crowned Sovereign Pontiff), by Bishop Briggs, assisted by Bishops Griffiths and Wareing. Bishop Wiseman preached the consecration sermon. As all the officiating prelates were especial friends of the Order of Mercy, it used to be said that Bishop Ullathorne inherited his well-known love of the Institute from them. Mr. Newman (now cardinal) and his companions were present. They were then living at Old Oscott, in the house now used as an orphanage by the Sisters of Mercy.

ago. Her stay in Birmingham, despite her failing health, was full of gladness and spiritual joy. This she diffused wherever she went. The Hardman family, which she describes as most holy, showered upon her every possible attention. The old father, who had built the beautiful convent, rallied as soon as he saw her. Though his death had been hourly expected, he lived some years longer to edify the faithful few who clung to the true Church in this most difficult land of heresy. His son, whom she calls Mr. John, was in every respect worthy of his parents, and it was a real, heartfelt consolation to her to meet such a family in the midst of poor Protestant England. "Mr. John" never forgot "the sweet mother"; he knew many a holy soul, but in his eyes there was no one like her. Twenty-six years later he was visited, the day before his death, by Mother Margaret Hallahan, who said that seeing him was like seeing a dying saint; and, indeed, this was the universal opinion entertained by the Birmingham Catholics of this saintly member of a family to whom they owed so much.

The beautiful convent is full of traditions of the holy foundress, whose presence once sanctified its mediæval cloisters and stately corridors. Everything was in the strictest conventual style, in so marked a way that she was at once brought back to the ancient monasteries—rush chairs, oak tables, no cloth of any kind on the parlors; not a rib of stucco or one panelled door, except in the chapel. The holy mother described it as the plainest building she had ever seen. Everything, both as to building, furniture, and chapel decorations, was done under the direction of Mr. Pugin. The cell Mother McAuley occupied, the corridors she paced, the rooms in which she received the frequent visits of Bishops Walsh and Wiseman, the chapel in which she knelt—all are full of sweet and holy associations for her children. A day or two before she left Bishop Walsh celebrated Mass in this beautiful chapel;

and Mother McAuley tells her friend, the Bishop of Galway, of the wonderful lectures which Dr. Wiseman, then in his prime, had begun in St. Chad's Cathedral. "He commenced with the novel opinions of the sixteenth century, placing before the congregation the arguments and reasoning of both sides. There were at least twelve hundred persons at the preparatory discourse, some hundreds of whom were Protestants. It is expected the discourses will produce many converts." So they did, and not the least illustrious of the converts won to the Church by prayer and the writings and sermons of Dr. Wiseman took up their abode in Birmingham.

"The convent bell," wrote the foundress, "weighs one hundred and fifty pounds; it is hard work to ring it. The ceiling of the choir is very beautiful; the walls all blue and gold. The stained-glass windows have MERCY in every type and character over them. It is repeated at least one hundred times. Indeed, we may say we are surrounded with MERCY." Everything here remains as when the holy mother looked her last upon the scene. The title of her children, which she was so pleased to see repeated on the ceiling and in the stained windows, remains a perpetual monitor of the duties they have been called on to fulfil towards their neighbors, and of the gratitude they owe for the divine mercies so abundantly bestowed on the last house she established before her departure to receive the reward promised to THE MERCIFUL.

Reminiscences of the great mother linger everywhere, for the Sisters trained at the *Alma* loved to tell the juniors of the happy early days when the noviceship was paradise, under the gentlest but most exact of disciplinarians, Mother M. Cecilia Marmion, whom they transplanted to Birmingham to create another paradise; and Sister Lucy Bond, the wild English girl, so full of heart, of goodness, who insisted on helping to nurse the holy mother and preparing everything to nourish or relieve her, transformed into

Sister Mary Vincent, sedate enough to control the House of Mercy. How this dear Sister used to describe to the new-comers the good lessons given her in Baggot Street on controlling her natural impetuosity, and entertain them with a lesson, spoken and acted, received from Mother McAuley on opening and closing doors and drawing the curtains of her bed. Indeed, Handsworth is the only house now in existence which retains the superior appointed by Mother McAuley on its first establishment. Mother M. Juliana Hardman has governed it since 1841, and has now passed the limit of the years allotted to man. Though as a rule we have little to say of the living, we will add that she has done nobly the work entrusted to her, and borne in obedience and with resignation the burden of superiority which the holy mother found it so difficult to make her assume. The spirit of her community is interior and ascetic—as indeed is the case in all the English Convents of Mercy—and the Sisters are most laborious. Their schools are fully equal to any similar schools in existence, superior to some; but they have never sharpened the intellect at the expense of the heart, for poor and worthless is the intelligence which is not sustained and directed by the grace of God. Truly, when the holy foundress looked upon Birmingham and loved it she must have blessed it with effusion of heart. She saw it in the golden glow of a beautiful autumn, and bade it *good-by*, with a blessing, in September, her favorite month. And there is now only Mother Juliana who remembers that sad but hopeful parting; the rest have gone to their eternal home. What a beautiful remembrance for this aged religious, whose face is already turned towards Jerusalem! Her days must be serenely happy, whether life be for her all retrospect or partly prospect: the heavenly countenance of the holy mother is in the past as well as before her, and her beloved child of early days may gaze hopefully, wistfully on the near future or the sweet past.

Other associations give interest to the Birmingham houses. When Father Faber was only Mr. Faber he and his zealous followers, "Brothers of the Will of God," were often seen to kneel in adoration in the lovely chapel which so pleased the holy foundress, and in which she had felt herself "surrounded with MERCY." After his ordination one of the first Catholic churches whose consecrated walls echoed his wondrous eloquence was the church of Our Lady of Mercy, Handsworth. The first hymn he composed was to the Mother of Mercy. And, by a singular coincidence, another bond of union with "Father Wilfrid" and his "Wilfridians" lay in the fact that their first spiritual father and great friend, Rev. Mr. Moore, senior priest of St. Chad's, held the same relation towards the Sisters of Mercy. Later Dr. Newman—now cardinal—and Rev. Father Ambrose St. John, his dearest friend, were confessors to the Birmingham Convents of Mercy, and the most cordial feeling has always been maintained between the Oratory and the Order of Mercy in Birmingham.

The religious felt a special affection for the genial and sunny-hearted Father Faber, who, gifted with the rarest intellectual powers and a fascination of manner that few could withstand, was, like themselves, devoted heart and soul to the lowly and the destitute. Even as a Protestant minister no object was so dear to him as "the English poor, so miserably neglected, ill-used, or coldly treated as they now are." In March, 1847, he had said, addressing the people: "Now that I am on the point of being ordained a Catholic priest, I feel even more strongly than ever the desire to devote all my health and strength to win my poor countrymen to the true light of the Gospel, to console them in all their tribulations, whether of body or soul, to sacrifice my own ease and comfort for them, and, knowing, as I well do, the trials and difficulties of the poor, to endeavor to make religion as easy and as kindly to them as possible."

We now come to Liverpool, the third house founded in England. As all the arrangements for this establishment were made by the holy foundress when she visited that important place on her homeward journey from Birmingham, September 22, 1841, being accompanied by Sister M. Liguori Gibson, the first postulant who offered for the Liverpool convent, it has usually been considered as one of Mother McAuley's own foundations. Like the majority of Convents of Mercy, it was, despite a few powerful friends and rich benefactors, born on the cross and bred in poverty and trial.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE FIRST CANDIDATE FOR LIVERPOOL—JANE FRANCES GIBSON.

Right Rev. George Hilary Brown and Dr. Youens apply for a Colony—A beautiful Letter—The Writer as nice as the Letter—Mother McAuley's Reply—O'Connell's Opinion—Baptismal Register—Early Days of Fanny Gibson—Beautiful Home-Life—The Darling of a happy Household—At School at Winchester—Tour of the Lakes—The little black Pony—A Fall and a Vocation—A Tour in Scotland—Fanny's Journal—Her remarkable Culture—"The sweet little Queen"—Grisi and Lablache—Rule of Life—An odd Jumble—Her Brother's Rhymes—Her Father's intense Love for her—His Grief when she leaves him—Mother Catherine tries her Vocation severely—Her beautiful Hands disfigured—She is now proud of them, as showing the disagreeable Work she does for God—The Novice-Mistress sends her to the Foundress for a Humiliation—"Her Grace the Duchess of Knock"—Letter from Bishop Brown—A bright Mind in a frail Body—News of her Sister's Death—Mother McAuley's Letter—Sister Fanny's Retreat—Her Resolutions—Reception—She goes to Birmingham and returns with the Foundress—Visit to Liverpool—Is present at the holy Death of the great Mother—Touching Incident—Beautiful Memories—Letter to Father Alberry.

REPLYING to appeals from Bishop Brown and his vicar-general, Dr. Youens, for Sisters of Mercy consumed much of the time of the holy foundress in 1840 and 1841, and, after an unsuccessful effort to obtain a colony from some of the provincial houses, the matter had been indefinitely postponed. The bishop wished to have religious trained directly by herself. She had not a single one to spare, and she wrote to that effect. The following beautiful letter, however, revived the subject of the Liverpool foundation :

"DEAR AND RESPECTED MOTHER : I take the liberty of addressing you as a child, to beg a favor which I have long

wished for, of being really admitted as one among your community. I deferred writing until I could take this decisive step, and now the consent of my parents enables me to do so. I think you know the difficulty I have in obtaining this, being the only daughter with them, and how much I feel leaving my present happy home ; but I have long had a strong desire to dedicate myself to God in the admirable Order of Our Lady of Mercy, and I think I have met with sufficient trials to prove that this desire comes from the Almighty, and from a conviction that it is in that state I shall meet with the most abundant means for working out my eternal salvation. It is with the advice of my director that I now humbly beg to be admitted a postulant in your house. I know I have *many, many* faults. I have so long followed my own will and inclinations that, no doubt, my idle habits will repine at a life of continual activity, but I trust our good God will give me grace proportioned to my necessities. I feel determined to make every effort to become a true spouse of Christ, and to prove my gratitude for the inestimable grace of a religious vocation.

“Should I be allowed to spend a year and a half or two years in the noviceship of your house, with the intention of returning to England at the end of that time? I feel very desirous of doing what little good I can in my own country, where instruction and good example are so much needed, but I do not wish to bind myself to any place. I certainly should like very much now to go to Birmingham, but I should be sorry to relinquish the advantage of passing my whole novitiate with you, and I cannot tell what establishments may be formed meantime in my own district. Above all, I wish to be guided by what you think most advisable for me and for the advancement of God’s honor and glory. Papa will pay any sum required during my novitiate, and the usual portion to the house at which I am professed. Perhaps you will say what this is when you write, and if there is anything you wish me to bring. Sister M. Juliana will be able to tell you anything about me I have omitted ; and may I beg of you, dear mother, and your dear community to remember me sometimes in your charitable prayers? I feel I stand in need of much help under the present trying parting. I trust, if I leave all those dearest to me on earth, it is to do the will of the

Almighty and attach myself more closely to Him ; while I hope to meet them in a far better world, never more to be separated.

“ Believe me ever, with sincerest respect, your most obedient child,

FANNY GIBSON.

“ EATON HOUSE, March 26, 1841.”

The writing in this letter is very beautiful. The foundress endorsed it : “ Sister Fanny is as nice as her letter—a lively, accomplished creature, as humble as if she entered for a lay Sister.” O’Connell, who took a lively interest in Mother Catherine’s English foundations, happening to call about this time, she showed him Miss Gibson’s letter. The only comment of the great tribune was : “ Miss Fanny will persevere ; she will never repine in God’s service.”

The reply is dated March 28, 1841 :

“ MY DEAR MISS GIBSON : I have been favored with your very pleasing communication and am delighted at the near prospect of receiving you as a member of our community. Your note to Sister M. Juliana excited great pity. What pain indeed it must give you to wound the affection of your very estimable parents, who make this generous sacrifice for God’s glory and your happiness ! It is a great triumph over nature ; the grace must flow from our divine Redeemer, who came on earth, not to bring the delusive enjoyment of what we call *peace*, but a heavenly sword sharpened on the cross to cut those dearest ties that have such strong hold on the heart, thus to draw to Himself you, who, in obedience to His call, will enter into His immediate service, and your respected parents, who co-operate with His designs by not placing any obstacle in your way. The appointed time of our probation is two years and a half—six months’ consideration and two years’ novitiate. The annual pension is twenty-five pounds ; at profession, six hundred pounds. For new establishments the time previous to making vows is reduced to one year and a quarter. We have every reason to hope much for the Birmingham foundation ; the Sisters in preparation continue to give the most unquestionable evidence of an ardent desire to understand perfectly the obligations of the religious life

and to enter into the real spirit of their state. I shall feel most happy to see you amongst them. They have made impressions here so favorable to English Sisters that we shall rejoice to add to their number. The few lines you mention were written by the mistress of novices. This is the first time I have had the happiness to address you.

“I remain, with sincere affection, my dear Miss Gibson,
your ever-faithful
M. C. MCAULEY.”

The young lady who thus opportunely offered herself as a corner-stone of the Liverpool foundation was the third and youngest daughter of Michael Gibson, Esq, of Eaton House, West Derby, near Liverpool, and Elizabeth Reeve. She was born in Manchester, July 12, 1819, and baptized the next day. From infancy this child was the darling of her happy home, and every little incident of her childhood was carefully treasured. The maternal instinct developed very early in her. Once after the house had been attacked by robbers, hearing her aunt describe the scene, she cried out: “O aunt! have they taken my doll? They may have everything but that!”

Her studies began at the early age of five. In 1826 the family removed from Eaton Cottage to Eaton House, the house being, as Fanny jokingly remarked, the mother of the cottage. While the removal was in progress the child, seeing every one busy and full of excitement, thought she must do her share, and accordingly tied a strong cord about a heavy hearth-rug and dragged it to the house, expecting her mother to praise her diligence. But Mrs. Gibson, finding her darling covered with dust and almost fainting from the unwonted exertion, consigned her to her maid to be nursed, the prescription being a warm bath and—bed.

In May, 1829, Fanny was sent to the Benedictine convent at Winchester, where her mother and sisters had been educated. In the vacation of 1833 she accompanied her family on a tour of the Lakes. At sixteen she left her dear nuns for home. Here her younger brother was her con-

stant companion. They rode together through the country, she mounted on a black pony called Cæsar, he on a strong cob which he styled Captain. Her father gave her a beautiful horse, not so sure-footed as the pony; he stumbled and fell with her the first time she used him. At the moment of the fall she resolved to become a nun.

In 1837 she made a tour of Scotland with her family, spending a delightful month at Edinburgh. Next year they travelled through England, making a long stay in London. In her journal Fanny mentions with affection her friends the Hardmans, of Birmingham; describes the railway station, then a novelty; the pretty country about Rugby; a drive of thirty-five miles in an omnibus, the dust choking the tourists; a pleasant sojourn at Denbigh Hall; an agreeable companion, Mr. Butler, former head-master at Harrow and tutor to Lord Byron, of whom, and of Sir Walter Scott, whom he had known at Abbotsford, he related many interesting anecdotes.

In London the party spent much time sight-seeing. Fanny speaks of painting and sculptures with the appreciation of a connoisseur. Being a musical family, they attended Mass at Warwick Street, and our young friend notes with delight that Madame Anna Bishop sang a beautiful solo at the offertory. Speaking of the Park, she mentions the fine view from Sir Herbert Taylor's house, and in the Zoölogical Gardens she finds the giraffes, with their beautiful coats and graceful carriage, the chief attraction. At an exhibition of the works of the old masters she selects the "Ecce Homo" (Correggio), the "Holy Family" (Murillo), and pictures by Rubens, Poussin, and Titian, as most worthy of notice. The Abbey could not be seen to advantage, as preparations for the coronation were going forward, but she is in raptures over Henry VII.'s chapel. She is charmed with "the sweet little queen, dressed in white satin with bullion fringe; a coronet of diamonds on her head; hair braided." Musical Fanny enjoyed the opera, in which she

heard Grisi, Lablache, and other celebrities. Were we writing her life we should gladly give entire her bright, intelligent journal.

Though Fanny enjoyed travelling, sight-seeing, and pleasant intercourse with her beloved family and friends, she led a holy and interior life. In a rule written for herself in Lent, 1838, her day is well divided between prayer, reading, work, practising :

TASKS FOR LENT, 1838.

Reading.

Memoirs of Cardinal Pacca ; Odyssey ; Lingard ; Life of St. Vincent de Paul ; Sufferings of Christ.

Writing.

Translate part of Cléry's Journal ; copy siege of Troy ; sketch the life of Napoleon, with dates of its principal events and names of his generals.

Work.

Finish alb, three sides of my buffet, one piece of drawing ; study and arrange my botany ; Latin and geography.

Ash Wednesday.

Not able to keep my regulations in the morning, as I only got home to dinner ; afternoon all right.

Thursday.

Meditated on the creation and kept my rules.

Friday.

A quarter's meditation on the Passion ; said Rosary in preparation for confession.

Saturday.

Very long dressing and had not time for meditation ; rather idle.

Her brother, Dr. Gibson, thought she could finish in one morning the alb she was embroidering, as he told her in a rhyming epistle :

To my Sister Fanny.

“ In my zeal for your welfare I must not forget
To inquire if the Latin advances well yet ;
If the master, with countenance grave and demure,
Takes care that the progress, though slow, is yet sure.”

He does not expect his sister as yet to write Latin in true Ciceronian style, though she understands his “ fine flowing Latin ” :

“ Though Latin and Greek I may manage to teach,
The work of the needle is out of my reach,
As I found, when you asked me a lesson to set,
What I gave for a morning is scarcely done yet.”

Dr. Gibson gives a reason for sometimes throwing his letters into rhyme :

‘ I can find nothing fresh, though I search through my brain,
But repeat the same tidings again and again :
Accounts of myself that my health is p’raps better,
Or complaints of the weather, fill up every letter.
So for fear of being tedious every time,
Perhaps I may please you by writing in rhyme.’

In lines dedicated to his mother Dr. Gibson speaks touchingly of his happy home :

“ A long farewell to my happy home—
The home that I love so well,
Where jessamine white as the ocean's foam,
And the rosebud, love to dwell.

“ And must I leave, and for ever,
The joys of that home so dear ?
Those ties of fondness sever
Without one parting tear ?

“ When far from that place of rest,
If I see that sweet moss-rose,
Can I still the sigh as it bursts from my breast ?
Can I check the tear as it flows ?”

It was characteristic that each member of this charming family was passionately attached to home ; but Fanny was its gem. " I remember," writes her favorite brother, " she often called me to account for looking serious when she was amusing herself. On account of her sweet and gentle disposition she was a universal favorite. I never saw her ruffled in temper or in any way disobedient." It was a terrible trial for Mr. Gibson to part with this idolized child. When she left for Ireland under the care of her uncle, Rev. George Gibson, he was unable to remain in the house. He went to Gillmoss chapel to seek in the Blessed Sacrament the only remedy that could assuage his grief. He had willingly given up his other children, but as his youngest daughter had refused several eligible offers of marriage, and had kept her vocation a secret, he had fondly imagined that she would never leave him. What her own affectionate heart felt in the trying parting could not be put into words.

Mother McAuley received this charming, courageous girl with open arms, and though she found her perfectly adapted to the religious state, yet, as was her wont, she tried her vocation most severely. It was noticed in the noviceship, where nothing escapes observation, that Fanny was very particular as to the neatness of her beautiful hands and nails, which she kept not merely clean but shining (as she would have been required to do had she shown any carelessness in this respect). Her first charge was to clean, trim, and polish sixteen oil-lamps. As it took a considerable time to shine them up to the conventual standard, the day had well worn on before the hands were clean, and they were no longer shining. The nails were soon jagged and the fingers coarse and blurred ; and now the spirit of this sweet young creature appeared. " I am now," she said laughingly, " for the first time proud of my hands as bearing witness of the hard and disagreeable work I am doing for my God." It was observed that she walked rather

haughtily, knocked at doors too vigorously, and sometimes displayed a gait a trifle too jaunty for a religious. One day her mistress, Mother M. Cecilia Marmion, sent her to the holy foundress for something—more than the message implied, as the event proved. Fanny went in haste, charmed at the prospect of having a few words with the great mother. She gave three or four double knocks on the common-room door, which Mother Catherine herself opened. Drawing her fine figure up to its utmost height, she spread out her ample habit, and, dropping a deep courtesy in court style, led in the postulant and introduced her to the seniors as “Her Grace the Duchess of *Knock*.” The lesson had the desired effect, “but,” said poor Fanny, “I could never after pass the community-room without trembling.”

Bishop Brown continued greatly interested in the Lancashire postulant and her projects, and wished her to write to him frequently. Here is his lordship’s answer (July 15, 1841) to one of her notes :

“MY DEAR AND ESTEEMED FRIEND : Your most welcome letter gives me inexpressible delight. I thank God you are so happy and doing so well. I trust in His good and holy providence that you will persevere to the end and gain your immortal crown of supereminent brilliancy. You have, for the love of God and your neighbor, chosen the better part ; therefore fear nothing, for the hand of God will support and guide you.

“Now for an answer to your question. Undoubtedly I am as firmly fixed as ever in my purpose of having a convent of Sisters of Mercy in Liverpool. A house and ground are purchased, and Dr. Youens is indefatigable in his exertions to prepare for your reception. It is not in my power to fix the time when it will be ready, but I have written to Dr. Youens to give you information on this head immediately. Do not hesitate to write to me on any subject on which I can give you satisfaction at any time. I shall always be delighted to hear from you. I have been

very unwell since I had the pleasure of seeing you at Eaton House."

The bishop then gives an account of his ailments, which were quite serious, though he lived fifteen years longer, till his seventieth year. He hopes soon to be fit for active life, and concludes :

"I recommend myself and flock to your pious prayers and those of the community, and remain, my dear child, with great esteem,
Very sincerely yours in Christ,
✠ G. BROWN."

Sister Fanny's gayety made her the darling of the community, but her frail, delicate constitution gave Mother Catherine much anxiety. Early in August Rev. Dr. Gibson begged her to break to her the sad news of the death of their eldest sister, Mrs. Leigh. The reply is dated August 6, 1841 :

"REVEREND FATHER: We have received with deep regret the account of your valued sister's death, but as we this day commence our annual retreat, in which Sister Fanny joins, preparatory to her religious clothing, I think it better not to communicate the afflicting event to her before the morning of the Assumption, lest entering upon a retreat of eight days with her mind greatly oppressed might be too much for a constitution rather delicate; when the retreat is over and all are free to sympathize with her, I have every reason to hope she will meet this great trial with renewed fortitude and humble resignation to the holy will of God. All the aid in our power shall be afforded to the dear departed soul. I remain, reverend sir,
"Respectfully, etc.,
"MARY C. MCAULEY."

The "intentions" and "resolutions" of our young novice-elect during this retreat will be found edifying :

First Day.

In honor of God the Father—for all the wants of the

Catholic Church ; for the pope and all our superiors ; to beg God's blessing on this retreat, that every part of it may be performed with the greatest exactitude and purity of intention.

Second Day.

In honor of God the Son—for the conversion of England, and especially of my Protestant friends ; to beg the virtues of charity and humility.

Third Day.

In honor of the Holy Ghost—for the souls in purgatory, particularly friends, Sisters, and those recommended to my prayers ; to beg the spirit of zeal and fervor in all my religious duties.

Fourth Day.

In honor of the Blessed Virgin—to beg her special protection ; to beg the blessing of God on all religious houses, particularly those of Our Lady of Mercy, that they may increase and ever tend to His honor and glory and the sanctification of souls ; to obtain every grace and blessing for my dearest parents, relatives, and friends, and all for whom I have promised to pray.

Fifth Day.

In honor of all the angels, particularly my guardian angel—for the propagation of the faith and the spread of the Catholic religion in England ; for myself and my dear Sisters in religion, that we may all live up to the true spirit of our holy Institute and advance daily in virtue.

Sixth Day.

In honor of the patrons of the Order—to beg God's blessing on the intended foundations of Birmingham and Liverpool ; in thanksgiving for all the graces I have received from God, particularly that of a religious vocation.

Seventh Day.

In honor of the most Blessed Sacrament, and to obtain

an ardent devotion towards it—for all the poor children we instruct, the sick we visit, the young women we protect. Also in honor of the sacred Passion and death of Jesus Christ, to obtain a lively and feeling devotion towards it and in satisfaction for my many sins, which caused Him so much suffering.

Eighth Day.

In honor of all the saints in heaven, particularly S. Alfonso—for the perseverance of the just and the conversion of sinners; to beg God's blessing on my novitiate, that I may act upon the lights and graces received during this retreat, and labor daily to advance in that perfection to which I must aspire as spouse of Christ.

The following are the resolutions of this fervent soul:

“I am firmly determined, by the help of God's grace and the intercession of the ever-blessed Virgin, to acquire all the virtue I possibly can during my novitiate and a practical knowledge of all the duties of the life I have chosen, knowing that this time, when I have to attend solely to my own perfection, is of great value, and will ever be regretted if spent in a careless manner. I will endeavor in the first place to acquire an ardent, sincere love of God, meditating on His goodness and love for me. My motto shall be: GOD ALWAYS—GOD ALONE. To carry this into effect in the best manner I will often reflect on the chapter in our Holy Rule on the perfection of our ordinary actions. I may wish to please my superiors, because in doing so I please God, but everything must be done as perfectly when they are absent as present, and I should feel as happy when they do not notice me as if they praised me. I will respect them as the representatives of God in my regard, and obey their commands or wishes with alacrity as indications of His will. I will accept any office cheerfully and fulfil it as well as I can. I must always be resigned to the will of God in every accident which befalls me, as loss of friends,

suffering, privation, ever remembering I am called to take up my cross and follow Jesus. I should rejoice when chosen to be with Him on Calvary, as that is a particular mark of His love. I will view Him in my religious Sisters, loving all as nearly alike as I can for His sake, and because He loves them; ever ready to oblige them, excuse their defects, and preserving at all times an easy, gentle evenness of temper with them.

“Above all, I will apply myself in a special manner to study and acquire humility. I will begin by not speaking of myself, at least in praise of myself. This will be my particular examen, and every day I fail greatly I must practise some mortification in atonement. I will be exact in making the daily examens diligently: 1. See how I have performed my prayers and daily duties: 2. With what purity of intention. Then on humility; always making acts of contrition for my faults, and resolutions to do better in future. I will be careful not to waste time in idle conversations, but make the best use of it to copy such prayers, MSS., etc., as may be of service when I go on a foundation; and take what opportunity I can to read such books as will best qualify me to give instructions hereafter.

“I will make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament every morning, and meditate on the Passion from half past three to four P.M., when duty permits. I will say the Hymns of the Holy Ghost daily. When possible I must spend at least a quarter reading the *Imitation* or some other book which will advance my own perfection.

“These resolutions, O Most Blessed Mother! I place at thy feet, and earnestly beseech thee to present them to thy divine Son, and obtain for me the grace to be faithful, that I may prove myself a true daughter of thine and come to enjoy Him with thee for all eternity. Amen.”

One of the last works entrusted by the Shepherd of souls to the holy foundress was the guidance of this beautiful soul, already so well advanced in perfection. But

the delights of Thabor were driven to the inmost recesses of her soul by the dark shadows of Calvary. The death of her sister and other family afflictions almost broke her affectionate heart. "Her poor papa now in London after a severe operation, her mamma's letters such as it is wonderful she can bear—never did I see a vocation so well proved," wrote Mother McAuley. On receiving the white veil, August 19, Sister Fanny took the name of a recently-canonized saint to whom she was greatly devoted, and the name *Sister Mary Liguori* appeared for the first time among religious. The Birmingham Sisters were professed the same day, as were also Mother M. Vincent Whitty and Sister M. Justina Fleming. Everything was conducted with solemnity and grandeur. Among the guests were Dr. Pusey and his daughters. He was greatly attracted to the holy foundress and took much pleasure in conversing with her. Far from reciprocating these sentiments, she was not at all favorably impressed by the head of the Puseyites, whom she described as negligent in his dress, almost imbecile in appearance, and not strong intellectually. She never entertained any hope of his conversion, though at that time he was considered nearer the kingdom of God than any other man in his communion.

"Poor Sister Gibson is a delicate creature," wrote Mother Catherine, "and looks thin as a ghost since she read the sad communication. As a source of great consolation I have promised to take her to England. She will see her poor afflicted parents; and her father, seeing his nice child in the religious dress, may be inspired to do for Liverpool what Mr. Hardman has done for Birmingham." The Gibson family greatly appreciated the delicate attention of Mother Catherine in selecting their darling as her travelling companion. This was a special blessing for the novice, as it gave her so much of the society of the holy foundress. Returning from Birmingham, they were cordially entertained by Bishop Brown and his clergy;

they inspected the ground and plans for the Liverpool convent, and made the necessary arrangements for the future foundation. Indeed, the foundress took a particular interest in it, foreseeing, no doubt, the glory which would accrue to God from the labors of her children in that large and populous city. The bishop and Dr. Youens were enrolled among her particular friends, and deeply did they revere her zealous, generous spirit. Their greatest cross was that she passed to her eternal home before she had time to give stability to her great plans for Liverpool. But confiding, as they said, in her powerful intercession with God, they redoubled their efforts to bring to a happy conclusion a work so dear to her heart.

It was the good fortune of Sister M. Liguori to be present at the heavenly passage of the holy foundress and receive her last blessing and counsel. For about ten days before her death she was confined to her room, but not supposed to be in danger till towards the end. On the Octave of All Saints Father O'Hanlon administered Extreme Unction rather to hasten her recovery than prepare her for the end; and the seniors kept everything quiet, lest the novitiate Sisters should become alarmed. One morning Sister M. Liguori, seeing the infirmary door ajar, put in her head to inquire how her beloved mother felt. Being invited to enter, the poor novice fell upon her neck weeping, and cried out in the fulness of her heart: "O reverend mother, stay with us! What would the Order do if you died?" Even now this accomplished guide of souls would inculcate her great principle that the Lord Himself must build a house destined to endure. "My child," said she in her impressive manner, "never say that again: if the Order be *my* work the sooner it falls to the ground the better; if it is God's work it needs no one."

The death of the holy foundress, NOVEMBER 11, 1841, was perhaps the greatest sorrow of her life, though in after-years the circumstances of this sad time were among her

most precious memories. The calm, beautiful face of the dead ; the silent tread of sorrowing clergy and others through the convent to gaze for the last time on one whose value they only now began to understand ; the lying in state in the elegant chapel designed by her whose monument it was to become, now heavily draped in black because a mighty one had fallen in Israel ; the obsequies, conducted with mournful solemnity by the five bishops and sixty priests, who assembled rather to honor her holy memory than to pray for her soul ; the wail of the widow and the orphan—a fitting dirge ; the emotion of her ever-kind friends Archbishop Slattery, Bishops Ryan and Haley ; the crowd so great that the forty Sisters of the house were obliged to retreat to the gallery ; here they listened to Bishop Kinsella, who, in a voice often indistinct from tears and emotion, expatiated on the virtues of his cherished friend, and bade her children never enter the cemetery in which her sacred remains were to be laid but in a reverent mood, for it would truly be unto all ages holy ground—all this made an ineffaceable impression, and our Liverpool Sister ever loved to recall that she was among the veiled forms who with lighted tapers followed the great mother of so many thousands of children to her last resting-place, at the foot of the consecration cross, in the beautiful little cemetery specially consecrated in compliance with her humble wish to be “laid in the earth like the poor.”

The spot where her death took place has always been deemed sacred. Into the wall near it is inserted a handsome slab of white marble which bears this inscription :

In this Room

Our Beloved Foundress and first Superior,

REV. MOTHER MARY CATHERINE MCAULEY,

Expired at eight o'clock on Thursday evening,

November 11, A.D. 1841,

In the 55th year of her age and 10th of her Religious Profession,

R.I.P.

Some quaint old chairs which formed part of the furniture of Coolock House—the wealthy home Catherine McAuley gave up to establish a home for the poor—some manuscripts, her work-basket, and a few other relics are kept in this holy chamber, now an oratory. The grave to which our postulant followed her sacred remains is kept radiant with the choicest flowers, and it is the pious belief of her children that Heaven refuses them no request asked on this hallowed spot.*

But the great sorrow was soon calmed, and everything went on sweetly as before. Sister M. Liguori studied diligently the minutæ of the religious life, and gave her leisure moments to translating and transcribing spiritual works and copying or transposing sacred music—for she was an excellent musician. In August, 1842, she wrote to Rev. Joseph Alberry, Winchester, Hants, chaplain of the Benedictine convent in which she, and many other ladies who became Sisters of Mercy, had been educated :

“REVEREND AND VERY DEAR FRIEND : I assure you I felt quite a reproach when I received your last kind note, though the cause of my silence was not forgetfulness or want of the same grateful feeling I always had towards you, and which you so justly claim from me. I am sorry I have not made an effort to prove it, were it only by a few lines occasionally, which, indeed, is all I can hope to do, for I am really very much engaged either with the different duties of the day or writing for our foundation. But I determined the first letter coming out of retreat should be to you. I have been enjoying a real spiritual treat—one which I hope has not been a passing consolation only, but a stimulus and source of light and grace, to guide me to that perfection to which God in His mercy calls me. I will give some account of the retreat, which will interest my dear friends at the convent. It was given by Dr.

* One of the practices by which the Sisters sanctified the GOLDEN JUBILEE was to kneel in turn in prayer all day by this blessed grave. It was visited by Archbishop (Cardinal) McCabe, who had just sung High Mass in the exquisite chapel, the Metropolitan Chapter in their robes, and over a hundred priests, when the sacred functions so splendidly carried out were over.

O'Grady, a very clever divine. He gave three meditations a day on the plan of St. Ignatius; the opening discourse was on the advantage and object of a retreat, showing how we are to bring all the meditations to bear upon our own souls, and the discovery of the principal defect which impedes our progress in perfection, and draw such fruit as would assist us to eradicate this. The first meditations were awful, and calculated to inspire a great horror of sin. Then followed the illuminative way, in which Dr. O'Grady proposed Jesus as our model in every virtue. Thence we were led to the unitive way, and had beautiful and encouraging exhortations on confidence in God and divine love. . . . His language was simple, impressive, and eloquent. If I am not roused to exert myself after this there is little chance of my ever doing so. I hope you continue your charitable assistance by praying for me. I am more than ever confounded and astonished when I consider the mercies of God in my regard, and I could not help stopping to consider: Why have *I* been brought here to share so many graces? But I shall fill my letter with this if I begin. I must remember I am not in meditation now, but ought to amuse you. . . . *Our* convent is ready for us; it is one of the prettiest ever built. I suppose we shall find the cross somewhere near—at least I hope so; how can we get to heaven without it? Will you thank Dame Joseph for a nice welcome letter received yesterday? Mother Cecilia sent the *Prospectus* to her friend, and we hope she will have an addition to her flock from her native isle. How grieved I have been to hear of my dear nuns' difficulties! I hope they are all over now.

"I am delighted to hear little Polly is well and good, and reconciled to having a new mamma. I prayed God to bless the union. Poor Teresa will find there are some troubles in life, but dear J—— is very kind-hearted; I hope he will be happy. Sister Joanna hopes you've received her note and forgiven her seeming neglect. She is anxiously looking forward to her reception, of which she will write to tell you. How busy you must be in your new mission! You will want Sisters of Mercy to help you. Suppose you send some young ladies to prepare for a foundation. I do not know where we could put them, we are so full. Tell Dame J—— there is no necessity for kidnapping here. Sisters M. Alfonso and Vincent desire very kind remem-

brances. They want to know what you thought of the ceremony—they had no congratulations from Winchester. My very best love to all my dear nuns. Never think I forget you when I do not write. I always pray for you, . . . and am always pleased to hear from you, for you are an old and true friend to yours sincerely in Jesus Christ,

“SISTER MARY LIGUORI.”

CHAPTER XXXIV.

EARLY DAYS AT LIVERPOOL.

Dispensation—Retreat and Resolutions—Profession—Farewell Banquet—St. Patrick and St. George—Off for Liverpool—"Fanny is crossing the Channel"—Confusion—Men-of-all-Work—Curious to see the Nuns—Luggage lost and found—Pleasant Incidents—Rev. Dr. Gibson—Candles—Mass at St. Oswald's—Early Days at Liverpool: "First-Fruits of the Spirit"—Work ever on the Increase—Intense Cold—Presents from Dr. Youens—Christmas Dinner—"Miss Wilson"—Fun on Holy Innocents'—Bishop Sharples conducts the first Retreat and presides at the Renewal of Vows.

BISHOP BROWN procured from the Pope some months' dispensation for Sisters Mary Liguori and Aloysius Consitt, that they might be professed before going to Liverpool. The resolutions of the former, as the fruit of her profession retreat, will edify many a young religious :

"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and under the protection of His Immaculate Mother, I, Sister Mary Liguori, make the following resolutions, and purpose to examine, the first Sunday of every month, how faithful I have been to them :

"1. Never to ask or hint to any one except my superiors what I may want. To ask only for what is necessary. To be satisfied with anything allotted to my use. To accept cheerfully any office, however laborious, and if I find it painful I will think how much our Saviour suffered for me and how anxious I should be to do penance for past sins.

"Never to assume any importance on account of family, fortune or talents, but keep all carefully concealed. If I am praised or see others preferred to me I will humble myself interiorly, and, turning to our Lord, say in my heart: 'Lord, I am nothing, I can do nothing, I have of myself nothing that is good. In Thee will I glory; for myself I will glory only in my infirmities.'

“2. To perform my actions with purity of intention, and never seek the notice or esteem of any one, except in the way God has appointed, placing my confidence in Him alone. I will perform every day at least five or six acts of mortification, and I will often raise my heart in aspirations of love to my divine Spouse, particularly when obliged to hold intercourse with the world or my friends, begging Him to keep me faithful to Him even in the least thought or desire. I will be guarded in manner, not to display too much affection for my parents or friends, or interest in their worldly concerns; be reserved without affectation to strangers, and never prolong their visits unnecessarily. I will watch carefully over the affections of my heart, and not suffer them to be engaged by any creature, however holy—the more holy the more dangerous for a religious.

“3. I will regard Jesus Christ in the person of my superior and obey cheerfully and promptly all her desires. I will never stop to examine the motive of a command, or indulge the thought, when a decision is made, that it would be better otherwise. Never will I seek dispensations without absolute necessity. I will be exact as to the time and manner of my daily duties; resigned to all the afflictions that come immediately from God—as deaths, sickness—also in disappointments, ingratitude, etc., remembering that the life of a good religious is a cross that leads to paradise. I will not be discouraged in temptation or aridity, but have recourse to God and His Blessed Mother with full confidence.”

These show the earnestness of our young novice and how carefully she was preparing for the glorious mission before her. On her twenty-fourth birthday, July 12, 1843, she had the happiness of pronouncing the sacred vows that bound her to her God for ever. It was decided that the Liverpool foundation should set out August 28. It consisted of Sisters M. Liguori Gibson, Aloysius Consitt, Teresa French, Baptist Geraghty, and Martha Walplate, the first lay Sister in the Order. Sister M. de Sales White was appointed superior.

The evening before they left a grand farewell feast was given in the novitiate, to which all the community

Sisters were invited. It was hung with black in token of mourning. Statues of St. George and St. Patrick held speeches in their hands, the former thanking the latter for the care he had taken of the Sisters for Liverpool, and hoping they would do him credit; St. Patrick replying very graciously that he rejoiced to find the Order of Mercy increasing in England, and was only too happy to help the good work. "We spent a very happy yet clouded evening," wrote the affectionate Sister M. Liguori, who could never forget her delightful sojourn of two years and five months in the parent house; "we all felt deeply at parting with our dear mothers and Sisters, who, on their side regretted the approaching separation, and testified their love and sympathy by many loving wishes for our welfare." Owing to circumstances beyond the control of those concerned, the convent was not ready in time, and Dr. Youens wrote asking that the journey be deferred for a week. As the letter came only when the places were engaged in the steamer, reverend mother wrote that as the Sisters did not fear the inconveniences of an unfurnished building, and wished to help in arranging the house, they would leave on the day appointed.

Dr. Youens being from home when this letter came, Father Walmsey, one of his assistants, put it in his pocket and forgot all about it till they met that night at a large dinner-party at St. Edward's College. On reading it Dr. Youens exclaimed: "The nuns are on the water and nothing ready!" All was excitement, every one anxious to do something. The doctor, taking his priests at their word, set them to work; all proceeded to the convent, about a mile off, the bishop promising to meet the nuns next day at the pier-head. They prevailed on the foreman of the works to vacate a small building on the grounds, and the doctor appointed some of his staff to see that the house underwent a thorough cleansing, others to see that bedding was bought or borrowed, some to provide a breakfast; and

the greater part of the night was spent by these kind priests in getting everything in order. Mr. Gibson, who had also been a guest at the bishop's table, hurried to Eaton House and delighted his wife by exclaiming: "Fanny is crossing the Channel!" Good Dr. Youens passed a sleepless night planning for his children's comfort, and counting again and again the rooms of their temporary abode.

They had left Kingstown pier Monday, August 28, at seven P.M., accompanied by the successor of the holy foundress and Sister M. Vincent Whitty, Very Rev. Father O'Hanlon and Dr. Andrew Quinn escorting the party. Half a large cabin in the *Iron Duke* was neatly curtained off for the nuns, but they had no rest; the sea was fearfully rough all night. This the captain ungallantly attributed to the presence of eight nuns, while a majority of the passengers blamed the two priests and seemed inclined to appease the angry waves with a Jonas. The sailors, however, thought the Sisters' presence a safeguard, and, when the dark-robed forms ascended the deck at dawn before the washing off was quite finished, made room for them very politely and put planks under their feet. It was a lovely morning; the "warring winds" had died away. Remembering their old home with reverent affection, they tearfully looked out for the shores of the new. At eleven A.M. they stepped on St. George's pier-head, which was crowded with people curious to see them. They were enthusiastically welcomed by bishop and priests, and all drove to the presbytery, Dr. Gibson remaining to forward fourteen large trunks and a small one which contained their veils. This he unfortunately overlooked, but one of the priests set off in search of it and found it in the luggage of a gentleman about to start for London. They breakfasted with Dr. Youens, after which he showed them his church and drove them to the new convent. On inspecting their temporary abode they found one of the most learned priests in

Liverpool hurrying the charwomen and actually carrying them water, that they might lose no time. The nuns went to work at once to arrange the furniture, an inventory of which showed one chair, eight stools, and two tables, all borrowed. In the choir was a showy picture of the Assumption, a chair for mother-superior, and four large trunks on either side for stalls. Many droll scenes went on here, as the room served also for a parlor. Visitors mostly declined the only chair and established themselves on the trunks. The visiting mothers had each a cell to herself; Sisters M. Liguori and Aloysius a double cell divided by curtains; the two novices the same, while Mother de Sales and Sister Martha utilized the attics. There were no bedsteads—the mattresses were laid on the floor; a stool was given to each Sister, which each carried processionally from refectory to oratory, from common room to dormitory. “We had plenty of fun while we lived here,” wrote one of the Sisters. Every attention was shown them by the Gibson family; the gardens and orchards of Eaton House were laid under contribution for flowers and fruits, which arrived in immense quantities every day. For a couple of weeks dinner was daily sent by Dr. Youens, whose housekeeper, Catherine, was exceedingly attentive. Nothing could surpass the solicitude of this kind father; the day after their arrival he was dining at Mr. Gibson’s with a large party, when, suddenly recollecting that his nuns had no light, he started off to Liverpool, a distance of three miles, and reached the convent at eight o’clock, to find that the thoughtful Catherine had provided candles.

Next morning the bishop brought two carriages to take the nuns to Mass at St. Oswald’s, Old Swan, two miles from Liverpool. Here they passed through a double file of children drawn up before the church-door, who courtesied most respectfully. Dr. Gibson said Mass, after which Rev. J. Maddocks showed them the church and schools. They drove home to breakfast, much to the disappointment of

Mr. and Mrs. Gibson, who had prepared a grand *déjeuner* at Eaton House and anticipated much joy at seeing their beloved Fanny. Though the workmen were still in the convent, the Sisters spent the day in the finished rooms, preparing cell furniture, arranging the altar-linen, books, and manuscripts they had brought from Dublin. The convent being open to friends, the Sisters often found a party of visitors outside the room in which they had been sitting. They went to Mass to St. Nicholas', August 30, and were stared at all the way by immense crowds, as they were the first nuns ever seen in Liverpool, and their dress completely mystified the eager gazers. On the 31st of August Mass was said in the convent parlor, and next day, about ten A.M., the bishop, assisted by four priests, began the ceremony of consecrating the altar, which lasted four hours. It was a slab of Caen stone, five and a half feet by two; relics were fixed in the centre and lights placed at each corner, and the convent chapel was dedicated to St. Ethelburga, Virgin and Abbess. It was the first Friday in September, the favorite month of the foundress—an auspicious day to beg the blessing of the Sacred Heart on the new institution. On the same day they began the visitation of the sick. A week later, on the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, they removed to the convent, and said Office in choir for the first time in Liverpool. The building they left was immediately fitted up for a House of Mercy. On the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy the bishop said Mass in the new chapel, and, after a beautiful exhortation to union and charity, appointed Mother M. de Sales White superior. "We had great fun at dinner," wrote the annalist, "the Dublin superior insisting on the newly-appointed official taking the first place, which she as positively declined; and we compared them to Paul and Anthony dividing the loaf."

On the 26th of September the senior novice, Sister M. Baptist Geraghty, was professed by Bishop Brown in pre-

sence of an immense concourse, many of whom were deeply moved. The ceremony music, rendered without accompaniment by the well-trained voices of the religious, was most touching and greatly admired. To the great regret of this ardent band, Mother di Pazzi was obliged to leave them after a stay of five weeks. But work so multiplied that there was no time for grief. On the 4th of October they undertook the religious instruction of the inmates of the Blind Asylum ; on the 9th the House of Mercy was opened ; and on the 13th they began to instruct in the poor-schools. An enormous amount of visitation had to be attended to, priests sending sick-calls from all parts of the town. The visiting Sisters used to leave the convent at ten A.M. and return about four P.M., often wet through and exhausted with cold and fatigue. On the 16th of October they began the instruction of adults from six to half-past seven P.M., and so many begged admittance that they were obliged to have a policeman at the gate, who allowed no one to pass in without a ticket. This extraordinary multitude was soon classified : Sister M. Liguori had converts and ninety Catholics to prepare for the sacraments ; Sister M. Teresa had the men and women who could not read and “knew nothing” ; Sisters M. Aloysius and Baptist gave private instructions to urgent or special cases. The nuns being a great curiosity, and instructions not being given anywhere else, people flocked from all quarters, and many who had never thought of being Catholics would stay till instructions were over, then speak to the Sisters to arrange for the future, so that converts became very numerous. On Sunday nights the numbers were immense, and many highly respectable persons were content to stand, crushed in among the poor, satisfied if they could but hear and see the Sisters. There was then no other convent in Liverpool, and but four chapels. Abundance of relief used to be sent for the poor even by Protestants and Quakers, numbers of whom came to inspect the “strange ladies.” Relief was

distributed Mondays and Thursdays on an organized plan: several aged poor were adopted as pensioners, and received tea, sugar, bread, soup, clothing, or money, as previous investigation proved to be necessary. The Sisters brought all that was needed to the sick poor.

This winter, 1843-44, the cold was intense. The choir, newly built and very lofty, was like an ice-house, and the convent so damp that the water ran down the walls in streams. It was a wonderful proof of God's goodness that no one contracted serious illness, for there was no protection against cold. The chimneys smoked so dreadfully that the Sisters could not bear a fire. "But we were very happy," writes one of these fervent souls, "and grateful to be able to suffer something for the conversion and salvation of the souls sent us by God to gain to His love and service." The chapel looked very beautiful at Christmas. Mr. Gibson gave the Sisters a fine organ, and Dr. Youens a silver lamp, monstrance, and ciborium. In accordance with the custom established by the holy foundress, a grand dinner of roast beef and plum-pudding was prepared for the poor, and ninety poor old men and women sat down to this substantial repast, waited on by the Sisters; several ladies and gentlemen who had helped to provide it rejoicing to see how their bounteous gifts were appreciated by these needy representatives of Him who owns all. The diners adjourned to the chapel at three and prayed for their benefactors at Benediction.

On Holy Innocents' Day some of the young Sisters, knowing how anxious Dr. Youens was for new members, sent him a note from a pretended Miss Wilson, stating she would like to meet him at the convent at ten A.M. He came punctually; a bolster dressed as a lady, seated in the parlor, was described in reply to his inquiries as "very quiet and lady-like." Sister M. Liguori seemed in earnest conversation with the "doll" when he entered, and, as it was December 28, all came in to enjoy the fun. The doctor

laughed heartily at his own discomfiture, and, not liking to keep so much pleasure to himself, sent several other priests during the day to see Miss Wilson. Even the coadjutor, Bishop Sharples, came to pay his respects. "Oh! yes," said he, "Miss Wilson is no stranger to me. She comes from Nottingham. I know her father well." On a nearer view his lordship joined in the general hilarity. Miss Wilson was dressed as a postulant and introduced at dinner, and finally went to bed, after which she was never seen on the premises.

All this innocent fun served to prepare the Sisters for the three days' retreat which in the Order of Mercy always closes the civil year. Bishop Sharples conducted it and presided at their first general renovation of vows, January 1, 1844.

Genuine subjects soon came. The second profession took place October 2, 1844, when Bishop Brown, assisted by many priests, received the vows of Sister M. Teresa French. Every available space was crowded, many of the guests being Protestants. A most eloquent sermon was preached by Rev. John Hearn, of London. The ceremony music still in use in Liverpool was composed for this occasion. Liverpool, from its situation, has had perhaps more visiting Sisters than any house of the Institute. The house was scarcely founded when Mother M. Frances Warde and six Sisters, *en route* for Pittsburgh, sojourned within its walls for several days, during which they assisted in all the duties; and sorry indeed was the young community when Bishop O'Connor took them away. This autumn, 1844, their darling Mother Cecilia, in whose "paradise" they had all learned the rudiments of the religious life, came, with Sister M. de Sales Vigne for companion, bringing Mother M. Agnes O'Connor and six Sisters to open a second house in the London district.

CHAPTER XXXV.

PROGRESS OF THE LIVERPOOL HOUSE—DEATH OF THE MOTHER-SUPERIOR.

Alarming Illness of Sister M. Liguori—Her Recovery an Answer to Prayer—Girls' Orphanage—Gayety of the Sisters—Search-warrant for Dr. Youens—Mother White recalled to Dublin—The Bishop wants the Loan as a Gift—Eighteen in the Noviceship—Terrible Epidemic of Typhus—Thirteen Deaths among the Clergy—The Nuns fit up a temporary Hospital for stricken Priests—Dr. Youens comes to be nursed by his Children—Death and Burial—Schools of St. Thomas, a Memorial of the Founder—Mother de Sales goes to Dublin seriously ill—She had offered her Life and Labors for the Conversion of England—Her fearful Sufferings—Wishes to die in the Land for which she offered herself in Sacrifice—"I have found Him whom my Soul loveth"; "Jesus, *my* Jesus, receive me!"—Charity of the Family of Cardinal Cullen—A little Girl sells a Statue for the Poor—Her Brother raffles his Pony for the same Object—Anecdotes—Beautiful Deaths—Sister M. Liguori loses her Parents—Through her Prayers her favorite Brother becomes a Redemptorist—Letters—Mother M. Liguori's Gratitude.

IN November, 1844, Sister M. Liguori became dangerously ill, the anxiety and overwork of the past fifteen months proving too much for her delicate frame. Sir Arnold Knight, who was at once summoned, pronounced her illness brain fever. When she received the last sacraments he formally announced there was no hope. This was grievous news. Dr. Youens came three times a day to see his dear child. The novena of the Immaculate Conception was offered for her recovery, many communities uniting for the same intention. Eight priests said each a novena of Masses, and her brother, Dr. Gibson, promised to erect a statue of Our Lady of Mercy at Ushaw if she recovered. On the feast all assembled in the infirmary to conclude the

novena. At the words, "Immaculate strength of the weak," in the Litany of the Immaculate Conception, the patient felt a sudden thrill, with a certainty that she would be cured. Bishops and priests united with the Sisters and her family in thanksgiving for a restoration they deemed hardly short of miraculous. Sister M. Liguori was universally beloved, and her loss to the rising community would have been all but irreparable. Though very weak, she was allowed to assist at the midnight Mass, Christmas, in the sacristy. The annalist notes that she left the infirmary February 3, 1845; fervently adding, *Laus Deo semper!*

In June, 1845, the Sisters assumed charge of the girls' orphanage, but were obliged to apply to the mother-house for help, and Sisters M. Xavier O'Connell, Frances Boylan, and Elizabeth Butler were sent to their aid. The sweet spirit of Sister M. Liguori diffused itself through the whole community, and, despite the incessant labors that ultimately broke down most of the early members, nothing could exceed their gayety and light-heartedness. Dr. Youens went abroad this summer, and, returning only in time to begin his retreat with the bishop and clergy, he was not able to pay his first visit to the convent. He was greatly amused, on coming out of retreat, to find a sort of search-warrant for him at his house on Copperas Hill: "Lost, stolen, strayed, or mislaid, Very Rev. Dr. Youens, our father. Any news of him will be thankfully received by the nuns at Mount Vernon."

This brought him at once to his dear children. On the 6th of September they had another visit from their beloved novice-mistress, Mother M. Cecilia Marmion, who came to see off the first colony for Australia. In 1846 Mother M. de Sales was recalled to Dublin, according to previous agreement; but as the Sisters, though most fervent, were young and inexperienced, the bishop begged that "the loan" of Mother de Sales might be changed into a gift, to which Mother M. Cecilia, then superior of the parent

house, finally assented, and there were great rejoicings in consequence. But the cross was never far off. One of the Sisters was attacked with the worst type of small-pox, and another, Sister M. Gertrude Verdon, on coming in from the visitation over-heated, sat in a draught, was chilled through and through, and laid the seeds of consumption, which carried her off later.

In 1847 the house adjoining the convent and the house at the end of the garden were purchased for two thousand one hundred and forty pounds. Mother Liguori took Sister M. Gertrude to Carlow for change of air January 30, and returned, leaving the invalid, May 21. She now became mistress of novices, having eighteen novices under her care. This was a sad year for the Church in Liverpool; no less than thirteen good, zealous priests died of typhus fever. The Sisters were obliged to hear Mass where they could, as their good father, Dr. Youens, had to supply for the dead and dying priests. He was called the consolation of the stricken, but his health was greatly weakened by the anguish he endured at the awful losses the diocese had sustained. The bishop, old and infirm, as he was, could not leave his bed through grief. To give what aid they could at this distressing period, the Sisters fitted up one of their newly-purchased houses for priests who wished to be nursed by them. Still worse was the sickness in the following year, and on the 24th of May Dr. Youens came to be nursed by his own children. Had he given up sooner, their tender, loving care might have prolonged a life so precious; but now recovery was almost impossible. He died May 31, in the fifty-eighth year of his age. On June 23 it was decided to build poor-schools close to the convent as a memorial of its founder, and call them St. Thomas', after his patron saint. A more grievous loss followed. Mother M. de Sales, in lifting Dr. Youens, had sprained her back and shoulders, and began to suffer acutely. The doctors, not understanding her case, treated her for a different disease,

and inflammation of the spine and partial paralysis were considered to be the result of medical mismanagement. It was determined to send her to Dublin for the best treatment; change of air caused a change in her symptoms, and Dr. Luther treated her for acute rheumatism. Her complaint, however, soon developed as decay of the spinal marrow, which the best Dublin doctors endeavored to alleviate but gave no hope of curing. She remained at her old home for six months,* during which Mother M. Liguori frequently went over to see her. On the 10th of July, 1849, losing all hope of recovery and unable to perform the duties of her office, she resigned it and was succeeded by Mother M. Liguori. The poor invalid, who had offered her life for the conversion of England, wishing to die in the house she had established, and her children craving the privilege of soothing her last days, she was put in a carriage-bed at Baggot Street, rolled on the deck of the vessel, July 26, and rolled off slowly on reaching Liverpool, July 27. Mother White was so delighted at being once more among her loving children that she seemed better; but, the excitement over, her condition gave not the slightest ground of hope. She was so dead from the waist downwards that she never felt the bed-sores, which were appalling to those who dressed them, two of them being each large enough to hold an orange. All her *feeling* was concentrated in the nerves of the back and shoulders, and no remedy could assuage her fearful agonies. On the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy she grew suddenly worse. Ex-

* The following is from a letter of one of the Sisters of Mercy who spent a few days in Dublin, June, 1849, *en route* for Cheadle: "Poor Mother de Sales is dying. She cannot move the lower part of her poor frame and is in torture. Five persons always attending her. The parent house gives a noble example of charity—the poor sufferer in the noviceship [then the best room in the house], the novices in the community-room, the professed in the infirmary. No great bell rung for duties or for Sisters, which causes immense inconvenience; and all this for six months.

"Every time we go to Baggot Street there is some nice improvement. The altar looked splendid on the Feast of the Sacred Heart—forty candles lit, a new organ, the singing so fine, etc."

reme Unction was administered on the 2d of October, and on the 5th she calmly expired, at five A.M., while the prayers for the dying were being recited, the whole community being present. Three days later her obsequies were celebrated by the bishop and an immense concourse of clergy.

Mother M. de Sales (Jane White) was born at Fairy Lawn, County Wexford, in 1813, and was in her thirty-seventh year at the time of her death. Her sister Amelia was born 1809, at Kiscarry House, County Carlow, and both were most carefully brought up and thoroughly educated. Jane, who was rather delicate, was considered a very peevish child until she made her First Communion, after which her family regarded her as a little saint. When both had grown up their sister-in-law visited "the House" and spoke so highly of Miss McAuley and all the good she was doing that their curiosity was excited, and when next their mother went to Dublin they begged her to see the wonderful woman and say what she thought of her. When the girls went to be presented at the viceregal court they determined to judge for themselves, and no sooner did they see the holy mother than they were inspired to enlist under her banner. Little opposition was offered them in their pious home, and in 1833 Amelia entered Baggot Street, Jane soon following. Both were deeply attached to the holy foundress and tenderly beloved by her. Sister M. de Sales was lent to Bermondsey October, 1840, and recalled by the foundress about a year later to fill the office of bursar at the parent house. She had a most extraordinary devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, and communicated daily for many months before her death. The last day of her life, when she could not speak, she made signs to the infirmarians that she wanted Holy Communion. She had nursed the holy foundress in her last illness, and received her last blessing and advice. The motto on her ring was: "I have found Him whom my soul loveth."

Mother McAuley described this sweet Sister as "well versed in all our ways and very faithful to her vocation," and mentions with gratitude the many delicate attentions and services which she lovingly rendered her when her health was breaking. In 1843, being thirty years old, she was chosen to establish the Order in Liverpool, and administered the affairs of the new house so as to give perfect satisfaction. She was very pretty in appearance, *petite* in figure, and gifted with unfailing cheerfulness. During a season of awful distress she overworked herself; after long hours of labor visiting the sick she would assist in the laundry, crimping, plaiting, and ironing the fine things which the girls were not skilful enough to manage. So grateful was this good mother to the kind old pastor, Dr. Youens, that she herself would nurse him, and he thought no one could lift his head or turn him so deftly and gently. From her exertions for his comfort during the last week of his holy life ensued the spinal affection of which she died. A little before her death she said most joyfully: "Jesus, *my* Jesus, receive my soul!" and a few moments after: "Now I am ready."* These were her last words. Deeply distressed as her children were at this great bereavement, they felt she would send them help from Sion, according to her promise. Everything prospered with them once more, and many eligible subjects were added to their ranks.

From 1847 to 1850 the distress and sickness among the poor in Liverpool were fearful, and the labors of the Sisters, though incessant, were but as a drop in the ocean.

* The belief in Mother de Sales' sanctity was universal among those who knew her. "I often ask her to pray for me," writes her eldest sister, still (1883) living, "so sure am I that she is in Heaven."

Speaking of Mother M. de Sales and Sister M. Xavier O'Connell, both of whom spent their best years on the English mission, Mother McAuley pays a high compliment to the manners of the early members:

"Sister M. Clare Moore recovering her good looks and simple Irish manners; she was too much affected with 'the precise' when she came home. I hope my dear Sisters M. de Sales and Xavier will come home [from Bermondsey] in their own native style, and that the Irish malediction [Bad manners to you] will not have fallen on them—wherever it falls *not we could desire no change.*"

Among the Catholics who helped them at this crisis was the family of Michael Cullen, eldest brother of the cardinal. Mrs. Cullen calling to see her niece, Sister M. Gertrude Verdon, Mother M. de Sales made known to her the sufferings of the poor, and immediately the charitable, energetic lady sought help from her rich friends and acquaintances. For a long time she collected one hundred and sixty pounds a month, which she forwarded to the convent in instalments of forty pounds a week. Her husband, equally interested in the good work, used to advise his children to give alms out of their pocket-money. One little daughter, who had a nice statue of the Blessed Virgin, hearing her father advocate the claims of the sick in the slums and alleys, said cleverly: "Papa, I will sell you my statue for fifty pounds. I can look at it still, and you will give me the money for the poor." The delighted father at once concluded the bargain. His son had a beautiful pony, which was groomed daily with the greatest care and had its value enhanced by a wonderful Greek name. Not to be outdone by a little girl, the boy gave his treasure for the same worthy object. One is not surprised to learn that this pious and benevolent couple had the comfort of seeing the owner of the statue wearing a habit which consecrated her to the service of the poor, and three of their grandsons in the Jesuit novitiate.

In 1850 St. Thomas' schools opened and were soon crowded. The House of Mercy progressed rapidly. A young woman received this year became so ill that her death was expected. At the close of a novena to St. Walburga, the miraculous oil being applied, she fell asleep, and so remained for twenty-seven hours, after which she awoke perfectly well. In 1852, the Orangemen having threatened to rob and wreck the convent, a party of Irishmen organized to protect it. About ten P.M., July 12, the door-bell rang violently, and the Sisters assembled in the chapel ready for martyrdom, as the "Orangers" were unusually furious

that year. However, it was only a party of the stalwart sons of St. Patrick who had come to defend them. The "enemy" was actually on the way to the convent when a hospitable Catholic invited them to his house, gave them a splendid supper, and treated them so well that they forgot their wicked designs on the convent.

Other crosses did not fail. On the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy, 1852, Sister M. Clare, a sweet, gentle creature, was seized with illness at the evening recreation, became delirious, and continued so till just before her death, February 5, 1853. Sister M. Gertrude Verdon grew worse at the fall of the leaf. While Mother M. Liguori was helping her to make her thanksgiving after Viaticum, she begged to be reminded of some motives of confidence. The good mother suggested the great mercy of our Lord in dying for us, and the continual pleading of His Precious Wounds. The dying nun gazed intently on her crucifix; then, kissing it devoutly, cried out several times: "No, I never will lose confidence; I never can lose confidence." And she made a compact with our Lord that, when no longer able to speak, every time she pressed the crucifix would mean an act of confidence.

Sister M. Gertrude was never strong after the heavy duty of 1847-48. Three weeks before her death she asked the doctor how long she was likely to live. "Many months yet," he replied. Then she besought Mother M. Liguori to beg all the convents to unite in a novena that God might call her soon, "for," said she, "the dear Sisters will be quite worn out nursing me." Ailing as she was, she was always busy, and her needlework was beautiful. In manner and appearance she was most winning; the exquisite loveliness of her countenance was but a reflex of the beauty of her soul. Simple as a babe, she was a great favorite with her Sisters and a comfort and joy to her superiors. Though six years in consumption, her patience and sweetness never once failed. She had a kind word

and a loving smile for every one who visited her, and no complaint or murmur ever escaped her. She died September 21, in a sitting posture, her head resting on Mother M. Liguori, to whom she was devotedly attached. Though only twenty-six, like the saints of old she was full of days.

In 1854 Mother M. Liguori founded convents at Newcastle-on-Tyne and Lancaster, took charge of the Jesuits' poor-schools, the largest in Liverpool, and sent three Sisters to the East to nurse the wounded soldiers. When she visited Newcastle, 1855, she enjoyed *en route* the hospitality of the Carmelite nuns at Darlington, where she met Melanie, the peasant girl of La Salette, and found her simple and quite willing to tell of the wonders she had seen. Bishop Chadwick accompanied the Sisters on this journey.

In December, 1855, six Sisters, including Mother M. Liguori, wrote test-papers to obtain government certificates—no school could now be carried on without them. The examination lasted a week—three papers a day and three hours for each paper. Besides the ordinary subjects, geography, history, arithmetic, there were papers on botany, zoölogy, book-keeping by double entry—in short, there was no *syllabus* to limit the questions. "Thank God all our Sisters obtained certificates!" writes Mother Liguori. The schools under their care were universally admitted to have attained a high degree of efficiency.

In August, 1856, Mother M. Liguori's elder brother, Dr. Gibson, Vice-President of Ushaw College, died of fever, lovingly attended by his dear sister. In April, 1857, she was summoned to the death-bed of her mother, who died April 30, and was laid in the family vault at St. Oswald's a week later. This lady lived and died a saint. For eleven years she was a martyr to rheumatism; could move neither hand nor foot, all her joints being contracted or turned by this agonizing disease. As a special benefactress and the mother of their beloved superior, all the Sisters attended her

obsequies. Her son, Rev. John Gibson, C.S.S.R., sang the High Mass, his cousins, Revs. George and Thomas Gibson, being deacon and subdeacon. The singing by the Benedictines, without the organ, was most affecting. Mrs. Gibson was seventy-three years old. November 6 Mother Liguori went to Birch House to nurse her father, who died a few hours after her arrival, having received the last sacraments with touching devotion. The Benedictines, to whom he had been a benefactor, supplied their grave and beautiful music at his requiem, and twenty-six priests attended his funeral.

The Gibson family was singularly pious. Of five children three consecrated themselves to God, and all, judging by family records, seem to have been holy from childhood. Dr. Michael Gibson's letters from Rome are full of interesting details of his friends Dr. Wiseman, Dr. Grant, and several other giants of the English College. It was the glowing description he gave of the gorgeous function of the canonization of St. Alfonso that awakened his sister's interest in that wonderful saint. Her favorite brother, John, has always attributed to her prayers and good counsel his vocation to the Redemptorist congregation.

"I left home," he writes, "very soon after my sister; all the charm of home had departed. I attended the lectures at the University, Gower Street, London, with a view of eventually practising law. In 1844, owing, as I believe, to the prayers of my dear sister, I felt inspired to lead a better life and devote myself to the practice of piety. I made a retreat at Stonyhurst, and returned to Ushaw to study for the church. Here I was ordained in 1849, always having the intention of becoming a religious, but always dissuaded by my director, Rev. Dr. Newsham. . . .

"From childhood my dearest sister and I have been attached to each other, and in the dangerous time of youth it was mainly her influence that preserved me from shipwreck. She has been a guardian angel to me. . . . Her incessant prayers led me, step by step, first to study, then to go back to college, and finally to become a Redemptorist. I have

still the little note which was the germ of my religious vocation. She was praying for me during a retreat given by Father Weld, and *felt a strong inspiration that I should become a Redemptorist.* I felt no attraction to the congregation, but began to pray earnestly and get prayers, and soon my vocation developed itself very strongly. I went to the novitiate (St. Trond). And she has continued to help me by her prayers, and now and then a letter of encouragement, till I have got so far on the way, and I hope now to persevere to the end."

Mother M. Liguori wrote to her brother when Mrs. Gibson was on her death-bed :

"MY DEAREST BROTHER : Our dear mamma was pleased to see me, and has not alluded to the pain of parting with you. I am sure both you and she have gained great merit by the sacrifice which God asked from you, and the pangs which natural affections have had to suffer will be followed by increase of divine love and blessing. Poor papa felt bitterly your leaving. He lay on the sofa and cried very much, but a little chat with Father Walmsey cheered him. He has spoken most affectionately of you—not blamed you in the least. I could not contain my feelings, if he did : God alone knows what passes in my heart. Let us thank Him daily for the blessing of our vocation, and rejoice that He sometimes permits us to suffer for His love.

"*April 28.*—Dear mamma continues as patient and fervent as ever. It is quite edifying to be near her.

"*April 30.*—Dear mamma looks so calm and sweet—quite like a saint, which I am sure she is."

From Birch House Mother M. Liguori gave the news of Mr. Gibson's death, November 7, 1857 : "Papa knew us well and was much pleased to see us. The sacraments were administered, and he prayed very fervently ; was quite peaceful and happy ; said he longed to die. His last words were : ' Jesus, mercy ! ' He died without a struggle just as the clock struck eleven. We have every consolation in his happy death, but must pray for his dear soul. You will offer the Holy Sacrifice, your labors and privations, for him,

and I will do my poor best. Ah! dear John, when shall we meet our loved parents in eternity? Who could cling to a life like this? It is precious only inasmuch as it affords us an opportunity of laboring and suffering for God."

In September, 1876, Mother M. Liguori begs prayers of her brother for dear Sister Anne, "the lay Sister who assisted me at the death-beds of our dear parents and brother, and was the greatest comfort to them. I am sure you will say Mass for her, as *we, you and I*, owe her a debt of gratitude."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

LETTERS FROM MOTHER LIGUORI TO HER BROTHER.

Detachment—Feast of her Patron—Father John's Vocation—Excellent Counsel—Father Gibson in Ireland—Father Harbison's Retreat—Convent News—Duty first, Pleasure after—Novices wanted—The Bishop ailing—The new Almonry—An odd Procession—Blessed Mercy—The little Robin—Encouraging Thoughts—The dear *little* Brother—Sisters of Mercy too busy to be scrupulous—Some *genuine* Cases—Our Lady of Mercy on Ember Saturday—Beautiful Reflections—Father John's *Brogue*—Deaths—Birthday Note—Opening in the Isle of Man—Regrets—Responsibilities sweetened—"Don't conclude I am in Heaven till I appear to tell you so"—Law Business—Satisfied to die young—Pulling away—Difficulties of School-duty under the new Régime.

WE will here give extracts from Mother M. Liguori's letters to "her dearest one on earth":

"*October, Assumption, 1850.*—I hope, my dearest John, you will peep at me before you return to college, for I should enjoy a chat with you exceedingly. I must, however, be detached from these little gratifications, especially after the beautiful instructions we had during retreat, conducted by Father Weld, C.S.S.R. He showed us clearly how we were specially called to follow Christ by a close imitation of His virtues, labors, and sufferings, and that we must carefully aim at union with Him, which will be effected in proportion as we die to ourselves and all earthly things by daily mortification of the senses and powers of the soul. He gave several instructions on prayer and our different duties, enlivening them by interesting examples from the lives of the saints.

"I wrote to Lady Townley to fix a day, and then we announce our bazaar. We had a grand day on the feast of my patron. The novices purchased a nice oak oratory for the noviceship, and the whole convent was decorated with oratories covered with beautiful flowers. I had a variety

of presents, one a beautiful enamel miniature of our dear Blessed Mother ; and, that all might not be too spiritual, a fine large salmon from the Tay. Best of all was the number of prayers my children begged and said for me. I found our cell lighted, and a lovely wreath of choice flowers at the feet of our crucifix, entwined with little billets promising about twenty Masses and a hundred Communions, besides rosaries, etc. Really, if I did not get a good lift towards heaven I must be heavy indeed. . . . Be assured I pray for you—you are dearer to me than myself.”

“*All Saints*’, 1850.—MY DEAREST JOHN : Your note has filled me with gratitude to our good God and His Blessed Mother, for the time is not distant when you will be admitted among the chosen few specially consecrated to Him in the sweet, enclosed garden of religious life. When praying for you I seemed to know most certainly that you would one day be a Redemptorist. I can never doubt this is God’s will in your regard, though I did not like to say too much when I wrote, not knowing *how* He designed to bring you to this. And I feared to interfere with the necessary preparation. For your unsettled state of mind, and the attraction you have long felt for the religious state, notwithstanding all opposition, will be a lasting proof that it was inspired by God and make you value the sweet peace you will find in obeying His call. Besides, He can bring about His own work without human interference, if we pray and desire to do His will ; but I may now without hesitation tell you to have courage and set about doing what He asks of you. You might receive much help from Father Weld, whom I know well. Suppose you explain your feelings and desires to him, and ask if he thinks you had better go to Clapham to make a retreat or wait till you give up your post at college and then proceed to the noviceship.

“We begin a novena for you to-day. When I think of all God has done for you, my dearest brother, my heart fills with gratitude and love for so much goodness. Let us both prove what we feel by striving earnestly to become great saints. Help me, for I need it more than you think, and I will help you every way I can. If you write to Father Weld tell him you are my brother ; it will be a little introduction. I admire much their [Redemptorists’] devoted love of the Blessed Virgin, and she does wonders for

them. I know, too, that Order is in its first fervor and possesses many very holy members. May you be one soon !”

Such fervent prayers were powerful with God, and one is not surprised to learn that the “dearest brother” became a fervent Redemptorist. He was professed in 1852, stationed in Liverpool in 1853, and ordered to Limerick in 1862. This involved a complete separation from his loving sister, who felt it keenly, but as usual supports and encourages him :

“Must I own, dearest brother, that a tear fell as I read your note, not only from sympathy and affection, but also from gratitude to our dearest Lord that He has chosen one so dear to me to follow Him in the path of sacrifice and perfection, and that you so cheerfully took up the cross, saw that it was good for you, and determined by His grace never to admit any other sentiment than *fiat in omnibus amabilis Dei voluntas*. It was an offering for me not to see you and get a last blessing before you left, but all will soon be over ; then we may hope to be for ever united in the home of our Blessed Spouse, whose love alone could have separated us on earth. I prayed my very best that you may have grace and fortitude to persevere with courage to the end in the duties and virtues of your high vocation. Ask the same for me, my dearest brother ; let us help one another at a distance, united in the same petitions, aims, and desires. You will often be amused at the droll sayings of the poor Irish. I have a great love for them, they are so warm-hearted and full of faith. If you go to the Convent of Mercy tell reverend mother you are my brother. I know her, though I have never been in Limerick.”

“December 18, 1862.—It seems a long time since we had any communication ; not from choice, I am sure. Often I intended to write, but some business came to prevent me. Father J—— gives our triduum ; I do not imagine we can like him as well as Father Harbison, who gave us such a solid, beautiful retreat last year. . . . But we are grateful to any one who helps us on our way to heaven. Did you get the box I left for you at the Redemptoristines’, Dublin ?

I announced myself as Father Gibson's sister, at which the good portress exclaimed: 'O nice Father Gibson!' I don't know if she thought *me* as *nice*. Reverend mother was very kind and pleasant; we begged and promised mutual prayers. How sweet is the variety yet union of spirit in the Church of God! Every day I am more and more grateful for my vocation, and that you, my own beloved brother, are a priest and a religious. I know you try to be fervent and generous; I must do the same, and then our separation on earth will bring us to a happy, eternal union.

"We have ten white veils and expect three postulants at Epiphany. Sister M. Aloysius is helping for a time in Glasgow. All the community well, thank God! and a great consolation to their mother. We are now forty-nine professed. We are building a new almonry. Five hundred pounds were left us for that purpose by Captain Henry Consitt.

"I am sure you meet droll scenes in Ireland. I am very fond of the Irish, they are so full of faith and *heart*. I must now wish you a happy Christmas and a large share in the graces that flow from the crib of our infant Saviour. Let us meet each other there on Christmas night, and when you offer the Adorable Sacrifice on that sweetest of festivals ask Him to bless your affectionate and devoted Sister."

"*July 4, 1863.*—How long I have been without writing, yet my heart and thoughts are constantly with you. A letter of friendship gets put off from day to day; something immediate presents itself, and conscience whispers, 'Duty first, pleasure after.' I am now at our house in Lancaster—a quiet spot; the sweet country air refreshes mind and body. On the 12th I shall have been professed twenty years. How many graces to be accounted for during that time! I must work doubly hard, for my pilgrimage is drawing to a close—not that I feel any symptoms of decay, but I seem to have lived a long time and enjoyed many blessings. All things go well in our dear community; we lost a good lay Sister lately who was quite a saint and edified us all by her exactness and recollection. We are short of novices. Can you send us a sensible, well-educated young lady? I do not mind so much about money: a good voice would help our choir."

“August 28, 1863.—It is one of my greatest recreations to write to you, so when I am silent you may conclude I am mortifying myself. Our retreat was given by Father Whitty, S. J.; the Sisters enjoyed it exceedingly, and it has done good. Father Concitt was delighted with Mount St. Alphonsus. The bishop spoke of you last evening. I fear he is breaking up, and that will be a great loss to us. We want a well-educated young lady who will be useful in teaching; such sometimes have difficulty in getting into convents in Ireland for want of fortune, so if you meet a really nice person recommend her here.

“We have been here twenty years to-day. We opened a new almonry by a procession of the poor, the blind, and the lame around the garden, old and young singing the Litany of Our Lady, an old woman carrying a statue, and an old man cross-bearer. The Sisters followed, and F. Walmsey, in surplice, etc., closed it. It was quite touching. The canon blessed the rooms and gave a little exhortation. We are opening a sewing-class for destitute young girls.”

“December 23, 1862.—How could you expect us to send some ‘good, devoted Sisters’ to Clifden? We cannot get through our own work here, and Ireland abounds in religious. It is our *Alma Mater* and should supply us; but I believe you were only joking.

“Mrs. Walton left us a hundred pounds—the same for you when you come back to England.

“Did you ever hear of any one wishing happiness or misery *according to our deserts*? I fear we should not have much joy, if that prayer were granted; but, fortunately, we have God’s mercy to rely on. O blessed mercy! what could we do without thee? I have sent a little robin to wish you a happy New Year; also some *Agnus Deus*. Mind you say a *hot* prayer for your sister on the blessed night of the Nativity.”

“September 30, 1863.—Eliza [Mrs. Roskell, their sister] is longing to see you. . . . *Some one else* longs to see you also; it would be the greatest treat on earth to me. But I am happy, my own dear brother, knowing that you are working for God and earning a crown for the next world. I daily pray for your perseverance, and that you may be helped to do much for God’s glory. I am grateful to know you are well and happy, enjoying the hundred-fold promised to those who leave all to follow our dear Lord.”

“*April 6, 1864.*—It is long since we had any correspondence, but we do not forget each other, especially where remembrance is most profitable. I hope you are well, in the midst of your work, and have had a good share of Paschal joy. How encouraging to meditate on our dear Lord’s resurrection and think we shall soon join Him where sin and sorrow are not, if we labor a little longer with faith, hope, and love! Oh! how near is eternity. May it be happy for us both; then we shall think anything we will have endured or sacrificed little, though now it may bring a sigh or a tear.”

“*June 10.*—I have been almost out of my senses with business, so that writing to my dear John was out of the question; but I remembered you in my sweet moments of quiet with our dear Lord, and asked Him to give you perseverance as a zealous priest and faithful religious until the hour when He will call you to Himself, and all labor, sorrow, uneasiness, and danger will have passed for ever. I suppose you are still occupied with mission work; it must be very consoling to be in God’s hands an instrument of reconciliation, saving poor souls from the dreadful torments which await impenitent sinners, and preventing sin which offends Him; still, I dare say nature sometimes grows weary of continual labor and fatigue. I hope some favorable wind will soon bring you across the Channel. What a pleasure to see you once more, my dear *little* brother—the greatest I could have on earth! We must leave it in God’s hands. He disposes all things sweetly for those who love Him.”

“*September 14.*—I have been silent longer than I intended, but *you* are growing very shabby, making me live on scraps entirely. Write me a nice long letter, as you used to do. You have been engaged in convents lately, animating our Sisters to fervor and perfection. I often wonder what style of retreat you give to nuns. I hope you did not get many scrupulous souls to settle. We are very sensible here, and Sisters of Mercy in general have too much to occupy their minds to allow them time for fancies; there are occasional cases, but those are genuine—trials sent by God. All were benefited by our retreat; I hope the fruit will come to maturity. Our lay-novice was professed and anointed on St. Aloysius’ feast, and died ten days after. Her last moments were touchingly beautiful. She seemed in

ecstasy ; said she saw our Lord coming for her, and Mary and Joseph and Alphonsus. We were the more astonished at her rapturous expressions as she was generally very shy, and would scarcely speak aloud before a professed member. An example like this is encouraging to those who have still to pass through the gates of death ; it proves how loving and merciful our dear Lord is to those who give Him their hearts, and how little we need fear if we trust in Him. To-morrow we begin to prepare for our great feast, *Our Lady of Mercy* ; it comes on Ember Saturday, so we must postpone the temporal part of our festivity till Sunday. Pray that our Blessed Mother may obtain for us all the true spirit of our vocation. I make this petition for you every day, my dearest brother, and thank God that you are a religious and a priest."

"*November 2.*—I hope you have enjoyed your time of quiet and holy communing with God, and received a plentiful shower of grace to prepare for your future work. I have prayed earnestly for you, dear John ; we must be saints, must we not ? Let us help each other constantly ; our hearts are very closely united, our aims the same, and I dare say our weaknesses similar, but our dear Lord has given us special and wonderful proofs of His love, and He will help us to finish what we have begun, if we lean on Him. Then will we praise and thank Him together for all eternity. I was sorry to hear of your bad cold. Nature would fly to nurse you when I hear of your being invalided, but this must not be."

"*February 15, 1865.*—My heart and thoughts are constantly with you ; we are both engaged in duties which claim our first attention, or we should oftener enjoy a penchat with each other. I pray for your intentions, you for mine—thus we are united in the Sacred Heart of our divine Spouse. I hope, if it be God's will, some changes may bring you to England. I want to hear your *brogue* and see you once more. We had a nice triduo by Father Stevens, C.S.S.R. ; every one enjoyed it, and it did good, reanimated our fervor, and set us in the right direction for the new year. We are surrounded by fever and small-pox ; a few cases and one death in the House of Mercy—none in the convent, thank God ! We are to have a day of thanksgiving for this and all the other blessings God has vouchsafed us during the past year. We sat down fifty-three to

dinner Christmas Day. How edifying the death of your good Father Furlong! How little all signifies at that hour, except to have lived self-denying, holy lives! Dear Father Maddock had a happy, holy death. The Sisters sat up with him, and never left him till he died. He prayed continually, spoke little, except to give a blessing or thank those around him."

"*May 15.*—I do not forget that to-morrow is your birthday. Though we have passed the time for keeping such festivals, having more special anniversaries to commemorate, yet I wish you as many happy returns as are necessary to make you ready for a very bright crown in heaven. You shall have all I can do in the way of prayers and good works. I wish it were more worthy, but I trust God in His mercy will regard a sister's love and grant her petitions for one so dear. . . . Sister Monica, a lay Sister, died on the 5th. She suffered intensely, but her prayers and resignation were more than edifying."

"*January 31, 1866.*—It is not the will but the way that has kept me silent. I have been so much occupied since, and had more trouble and anxiety than I have ever known. The cross is good for my soul, and you will pray that I may carry it cheerfully whenever our dear Lord permits that it should press more heavily than usual on my shoulders."

"*May 15.*—I have sent a colony to the Isle of Man. Pray that God may direct all to His greater glory."

"*October 12.*—Pray for our dear Sister —; and if you offer a Mass for her I will be grateful. I have every consolation in thinking of her. I can never be sufficiently grateful to God for the happy deaths of my dear children who have gone before us. I hope I and those who remain may be equally blessed. The Sisters find plenty of interesting work in Douglas, and the people [Manx] are very civil and kind. Dr. Errington has charge of the mission. He is an example of humility and self-denial. I look on him with veneration as one who has borne the cross courageously; and this is, I think, the surest mark of true sanctity. . . . Eliza never tells me much about herself; perhaps 'tis as well—it serves to keep me detached, and my thoughts more concentrated on my own work. I hope you are becoming a great saint and helping me by prayers to become the same. I do not *feel* to make much progress, but we must

go plodding on, trusting in the patience and mercy of our good Father in heaven."

"*May 15, 1867.*—I wish you many happy, profitable returns of the 16th. It is a blessing to spend many years in the love and service of God, laboring or suffering for Him as He asks, though I am often inclined to long for the home where danger and temptation will be over, and I dare say you are the same. We have so much to regret when we look back, such constant experience of our weakness, that we have reason to fear we shall not make matters better by living longer. Yet God knows what is best for us; we are in His hands, so we go on trusting in His mercy, loving His will, and praying for each other."

"*September 15.*—I fear you think me unmindful, which I can never be for *you*; as long as my heart beats you have always a safe lodging there. I prayed especially for you during the Killaloe clergy retreat. I can well understand the difficulty of such a work, but God always helps those who lean on Him, and I rejoice that He employs you to draw others to His love. May He always find you a willing, fitting, humble instrument, and bless your endeavors to please and glorify Him! I am not released from office, as I expected. The election was deferred by our bishop till the end of July. No one knew the cause till the vicar-general announced that the bishop had applied to Rome and obtained a dispensation. Next day I found myself in the same place, more to the satisfaction of the dear Sisters than my own, though it is a pleasure to do anything for them, they are so good, willing, and affectionate. Still, the anxieties, responsibilities, distractions, and dangers of such a charge for many years together are enough to make any one rather fearful and shrinking, did not the conviction that God's holy will is better than any choice of our own, and that He is ever ready to aid those who seek to do His will, serve to encourage and console me."

"*March 17, 1868.*—It is glorious to spend our life and strength in drawing souls to God. May He give you grace to persevere with fervor, and never desert the colors of our blessed father St. Alfonso! Father Plunket gave a little retreat to our pupil-teachers last week, with which they were much pleased and benefited. I am writing at the bedside of dear Sister M. Borgia (Fanny Morgan), who has not many days to live. I feel her loss very much; she was a

great help to me, and an edification to all who knew her. For the last six years she was mistress of novices. If you say Mass for her I shall be grateful, for I love her very much, and should value a service done for her more than for myself."

"*October 14, 1870.*—I can scarcely believe it is eighteen years since you made your vows. How much God has done for us both! I shall offer Mass and Holy Communion to-morrow in thanksgiving for all the graces bestowed on you, and to beg a continuance of them and the crowning one of final perseverance. I spent the first three days of your retreat in your company, and it added to my happiness to know that we were both at the feet of our Blessed Lord asking pardon, light, and spiritual strength. He alone knows how much I love you, my dearest brother, and how I long to see you a glorious saint in heaven. You have got far before me on the way, yet I feel as if I had a kind of charge of you, and that my spirit must always be near yours! Ask St. Teresa to help me in the duties of my office. I am miserably deficient."

"*August 31, 1871.*—Your note of kind wishes for the feast of our holy father was very welcome. It interested me exceedingly to hear of your present occupations and duties—plenty of material for zeal and merit, and, I trust, an abundant store of the latter for your precious soul. One thing troubles me a little while it stimulates me—that is, you are so much in advance of me in the imitation of our divine Lord that I am afraid He will reproach me when I stand before Him. I must quicken my steps to overtake you."

"*March 14, 1872.*—I have been wanting to write, but always find it difficult to sit at my desk for anything but business. You know you are not forgotten, therefore I am not uneasy. Father Bradshaw, C.S.S.R., often comes to see a dear Sister now near her end, and his visits are the greatest comfort to her. She is in beautiful dispositions, quite ready for her summons. It is a trial to lose so many good, useful members, yet when I see them dying like saints I can only bless and thank God for His goodness to them. They have attained the end for which they entered religion. I hope the like happiness may be mine when God calls me, though my account will be heavier—so many years of superiority involve great responsibility. If I die

before you, pray hard for me. Don't conclude I am in heaven till I appear to tell you so! I am in trouble just now *interiorly*, and want you to help me with special prayers and ask Our Lady to obtain the grace I need."

"*October 14.*—One of my greatest comforts is to know you are so safe; a true Redemptorist, a devoted child of our Blessed Mother, must be safe, if only the grace of perseverance is given, and that we must daily ask for each other and for ourselves. We must importune our dear Lord to remain with us to the end, and redouble our efforts to entertain Him lovingly."

"*May 15, 1873.*—What has become of my good brother, Father Gibson, C.S.S.R.? I wrote to congratulate him on the anniversary of his profession last October, and sent him a nice picture, and have never heard from him since. I am disconsolate, fearing he has forgotten my existence, but will remind him of the same by wishing him many happy returns of his natal day. God bless and preserve him in spite of his shortcomings and bring him to a speedy amendment! My dearest brother, the above will tell my thoughts as I commence a birthday note to you. I suppose you thought when you had a spare moment others needed it more than I, though they would not, could not, be more pleased to receive a remembrance. I have heard of you occasionally or I should have been uneasy. Dame Walburga told me of your introduction to the new grand-nephew in London, and his concert on the occasion. You can guess how pleased we are to have our old friend Canon O'Reilly for bishop."

"*June 10, 1873.*—I hope I may be able to say something to Miss — which will help and edify her. How some poor converts have to suffer! You will be surprised to learn I am no longer reverend mother, and am very grateful to be able to obey instead of to govern. Sister M. Joseph succeeds me; I am assistant. She is an excellent religious. We are quite one, heart and soul, so all will go well. I shall have more time to myself, which I hope to use for my soul's benefit; it wants polishing and replenishing.

"Pray for Sister M. de Sales, who is seriously ill. We do not like losing our members, yet feel inclined to envy the happiness of those who have reached the end safely and edified all around by their patience and piety."

"*February 15, 1874.*—I am willing to join you in direct-

ing Mr. Vyner to claim the funds you mention, in our behalf. Anne Morgan* has sent power of attorney from Australia to Dr. F——, in virtue of which he can sign, release, or receive any property for her. Edmund Morgan's widow would be entitled to her husband's share.

"I wonder if you are as glad to see my writing as I am to see yours?"

"November 23, 1875.—There will be difficulty in procuring change of community for the person you mention. She must obtain leave of the diocese she leaves as well as of the one to which she goes, also from the superiors of the two convents. The greatest difficulty is to find a superior willing to receive her without previous trial of her character. I should advise her to be satisfied to die young where she was professed. What is the good of poor nuns seeking after health and life at such expense? If her superiors wish and provide it for her, then it would be God's will and she would gain merit by her submission. But never mind friends who know little of the religious life. As to herself, she would be grateful, I should think, to reach the end quickly and be united still more closely to her heavenly Spouse to whom she has consecrated herself. At least this would be my feeling and that of most religious I know.

"All our portion of the R—— property goes to E——, as mamma died intestate and papa made E—— residuary legatee. Fortunately, we do not depend on chance sums of this kind, nor do you. The few hundreds would have helped on some good work. If we do not get them God will not ask an account from us."

"January 24, 1877.—I send you some *Agnus Deis* and will pray God's blessing on your work in Newcastle. You must call on our Sisters; they are my grandchildren and will be delighted to see my brother. I spent a week with them last February. They have fine schools, and have bought a nice place near them, known as the Priory. I will write to say you are to call. There are several Liverpool people in the community. We lost a little French Sister this morning, a protégée of Dame Walburga's, who sent her from Bergholt, where she was educated. Pray for her."

"July 2.—I have not heard from you since Christmas. Like myself, you are always busy. We pray for each other,

* Mother M. Catherine Morgan, Convent of Mercy, Sidney.

and are pulling away at the oars of our little barks, hoping to bring them safely into port, and then have a happy meeting, never again to part. School-work is becoming very hard in these days—so much required by Church and state ; it makes the way to heaven shorter for them, perhaps, but I grieve to see our young Sisters breaking down and worn out before their time, and feel almost powerless to help it and carry on our works.”

CHAPTER XXXVII.

LETTERS FROM MOTHER LIGUORI TO HER CHILDREN.

Our Polar Star the Will of God—God takes only ripe Fruit—A sweet Compact—Renewing the Joys of the bridal Day—Four Counsels—To bear Pain and Sorrow in Silence for Him who sees All—Leaving the Noviceship—Anniversaries—Little, fidgety, provoking Restraints—The Eternal Profession Day—Words of Comfort—Even so, Lord!—One generous Effort—Myrtle—Not an Evergreen—At His Feet with Magdalen—Religious called to great Sanctity—The greatest Day for a Religious—Full of Desires—Sursum Corda—Crosses sent to refine the Spirit, not to crush it—Their Value—A sad Sight—Good Material when the Rubbish is swept out—Useful Counsels lovingly given.

LETTER TO A POSTULANT.

“APRIL, 1849.

“MY DEAR LITTLE CHILD: God alone knows the happiness I should feel if I could see you a religious according to His own heart, generously surmounting those sallies of pride and impatience which often threaten to destroy all that would otherwise be fair and beautiful within you, and waste those precious graces which our sweet Lord has lavished in abundance on you. I am very anxious that, as you desire to consecrate yourself, you should do it generously and without restriction. Nothing less than the *whole* heart will satisfy Him; in vain would you endeavor to give a part. I hope, my dear child, you remain constant in your resolution; if so you must often find the advantage of it. Whatever may happen, a religious should always be found looking with love, peace, and confidence to her Polar star, *the will of God*. Thus will she have strength and grace to bear any trials or temptations. You have had a little experience of the transitory nature of all human things, however perfect. Let this be an early lesson to seek and rest in God alone. If you hope to die young, remember that in convents God generally takes only the

ripe fruit, and that you must labor hard to fulfil a long space in a short time. May He bless you, my dear child, and enable you to accomplish His designs in you !”

TO THE SAME ON HER PROFESSION.

“ You ask me, my own dear child, to write you a little memento of this thrice happy day of your spiritual nativity, whereon you are born to a new existence. First, then, let me congratulate with all a mother’s love and joy the poor child (whom I once feared the enemy had torn from the sanctuary of religion) on the triumph of grace her sweet and patient Lord has gained over her heart. Ah ! yes, sweet Lord, you have triumphed. The flower is now planted *for ever* in your enclosed garden ; water it, cherish it, cultivate it, until it becomes fit to adorn your heavenly palace. And what will you do, my dear child, in return for this so great love ? Remember you are the spouse of Him who has shown you so much love, and the study of a spouse should be, in every word, movement, and thought, to please her Beloved. Whenever, then, pride, impetuosity, or disappointment raise a tumult within you, stop for one moment ; think of His humility, patience, and sweetness ; hear Him asking you to imitate Him. Then, pressing your ring on your crucifix, exclaim inwardly : ‘ What shall separate me from the love of Jesus ? ’ Add this compact to the sacred vows you have this day proffered, and He will always be near to give you the grace which alone can make you what He wishes. Most willingly do I forgive any little anxiety you may have caused me during your noviceship. I am only sorry you had not a mother better fitted to train you to perfection, but I often pray God to supply my deficiency. You know how much I long to see you a fervent religious, an edification to your Sisters, a support to this dear community ; and since you have given yourself to me, as God’s representative, I will do all in my power to help you to become a saint. If ever I appear cold, indifferent, or even severe, it is because I love you and know that such a manner is often beneficial and necessary. Try to practise the sweet virtue I have spoken of so much, and receive *all*, bitter and sweet, from the hands of God. The little emblem I enclose will remind you to abandon all to the Sacred Heart of your beloved Jesus, also to think of me when you repose in that sweet sanctuary. There, too, I will often think of

and pray for you. Receive it with the best blessing of
your fond mother,

MARY LIGUORI."

"JULY 22, 1851."

ANNIVERSARY OF PROFESSION, 1852.

"MY DEAR REPENTING CHILD: I know you will wish for a little word on this sweet anniversary, and as I cannot find your tablet I put my few lines on a scrap of paper. Many thoughts pass through my mind of joy and sorrow, fear and hope, as I look back on the past year. I do most anxiously and earnestly hope that the next twelve months may find you a more faithful, loving, humble spouse of our Blessed Lord. Let the experience of His patience and mercy in your regard always serve as a check on those passions which, if indulged, would separate you from Him, and urge you to *sacrifice all*, however dear, that would be an obstacle to His grace. Oh! fervently will I pray that He may strengthen you. I will offer you anew to the Sacred Heart with the cherished hope that you will not withdraw yourself from that safe retreat. Renew your sacred vows with tears of real sorrow, and yet with a heart full of grateful joy that you can again consecrate yourself to your divine Spouse, that He will again receive you with the same sweetness and love as on your bridal day, if your offering is sincere, humble, and loving.

"Pray for me and accept, with my best blessing, the sincere wishes of your fond and affectionate mother in Christ,

"MARY LIGUORI."

LETTER OF ADVICE, 1853.

"MY VERY DEAR CHILD: So you want me to write a little spiritual treatise for you. This is rather a long business, but as you are really trying to be good I am very willing to do all I can to help you to persevere. You know how anxious I am that you should advance in perfection by overcoming the faults which have hitherto kept you back. I will, therefore, give you a few simple rules for the regulation of your thoughts, words, acts, and sufferings. They will contain what I have often said to you, and not any high perfection, since that must be attained by degrees:

"I. Your thoughts should often turn towards God as

your *All*, recalling from time to time your morning meditation, rejecting censorious thoughts of others, thoughts of the world and of self-commendation.

“2. Your words should seldom be about yourself, except in seeking advice, respectful to your superiors, kind and considerate to your Sisters, never remarking their faults, weaknesses, or deficiencies without a charitable motive. Endeavor always to speak religiously and usefully.

“3. Your actions should be upright before God, always doing what you know He wishes you to do. As an index, think if I were to see you at such a moment, should I be satisfied? Let not one duty infringe on another, but do each in its own time, as if it were the only one you had to do.

“4. Your sufferings should be borne sweetly and without unnecessary complaint, as an atonement for your sins and in union with the sufferings of your most sweet Lord and Spouse. Do not show by signs or gestures that you are uneasy; if remedies or rest are required ask for them simply, but if not offer up your pain or sorrow in silence to Him who sees all things and will be your reward exceeding great. Now, my dear child, read this over at the foot of your crucifix, and whenever it reproaches you humble yourself and ask imploringly for more grace, more love. God has been very good to you. Be in earnest, then, about making a return of goodness. I pray that you may correspond with the inspirations received in retreat. If you do God will lead you on till you become what He wishes and what I had fondly hoped. Persevere in meditation; that is necessary for your perfection. Resist other temptations promptly but peacefully; if you run to Jesus and Mary they will do you no harm. May these two blessed hearts receive and shelter you in all dangers.”

TO A SISTER LEAVING THE NOVICESHIP, 1853.

“MY OWN DEAR CHILD: I know this blessed anniversary brings many conflicting and serious thoughts—feelings of sorrow for having wounded the Heart of your eternal Spouse by violation of the fidelity you two years ago pledged Him; feelings of deep gratitude for His unwearied patience and love, and a determination to show much love in return for the time to come. You are now to leave the spiritual school in which you have had many lessons, many

falls, many contests, but I say for your encouragement that your efforts have pleased me, though I am very slow to praise. I trust you will be a help and edification to the rising community and never make me ashamed of owning you for my child and novice. Try to remain always a novice. Do exactly in the community-room as you would in the noviceship. Be simple, humble, and docile as a little child; be charitable and forbearing to your Sisters; then indeed will all my sorrow in your regard be turned into joy and our dear Lord will cherish you as His own faithful spouse. I embrace and bless you with all my heart."

ANNIVERSARY OF PROFESSION, 1854.

"I have real pleasure in writing this little note on the third happy return of your holy profession, because I know you are much more what I wish you to be than you were this time last year. Continue, then, my dear child, to do yet more, and may our good God bless you on this great day with such courage, generosity, and fervor as will make you victorious over every temptation and carry you on the path that leads to eternal union with Him! I am sure you feel nothing else is worth desiring or caring for, but if you could keep it more continually in mind—*uppermost*—external things would never trouble you much. You would value only what makes you more acceptable to Him, and, however painful to nature, you would receive trials as coming from His hands for your good. Don't imagine I am speaking of great things. No! I mean the daily little, fidgety, provoking restraints and contradictions which we are apt to attribute to the humor of creatures, because so unlike anything *God* would do; yet it is His will we should sanctify ourselves by passing through all with charity, patience, sweetness, and about all with a heart which lovingly turns to Him and says, 'For Thee, my God. Thou art all things to me.' This is the secret you wish to learn—pray that I may always do so; it will lead to that equality of temper and self-command you desire.

"Your chief fault exteriorly is *impetuosity*: showing your feelings before you have time to subdue them; speaking without reflection—that is, you are not self-possessed. It will take you some time to acquire self-possession, because it is contrary to your natural character, so I shall not ex-

pect to see it all at once ; but I hope by this time next year you will have made considerable progress. The means are : 1. Prayer ; earnestly recommend it to God every morning and make one special visit each day to Our Blessed Lady for this intention ; 2. Try never to be discouraged ; 3. Acknowledge the fault to me every time you fail, and the number at the end of the week.

“The virtue I give you to practise more particularly is charity. Endeavor to put a charitable construction on the conduct of others. Excuse them to yourself, making allowances for their natural characters, difficulties, etc.

“Never tell what you know or think to the prejudice of others, whether true or supposed. Show kindness, cordiality, and sympathy to all.

“Now, dearest child, I have said enough for the present. May our good God, who has done so much for you, perfect His work ! This He will assuredly do if you place no obstacle, and then, oh ! how happy will be the eternal profession day. It will admit us, free from all stain, into His adorable presence, never to be separated from all we love.”

WORDS OF COMFORT.

“Say in time of temptation or suffering : ‘Hell, which I have deserved, is worse than anything I now endure. My Saviour has suffered much more for me, and heaven is worth infinitely more than I can undergo. Inspire me, O sweet and compassionate Jesus, with that patience, strength, and courage which Thou didst impart to Thy saints ; and since I cannot better evince my love and gratitude than by suffering for Thee, or render myself more worthy of Thy grace and glory than by carrying the cross, support me, when sinking under its burden, by the desire of pleasing Thee and the hope of eternal happiness. Amen.’”

LETTER OF ADVICE AND AFFECTION.

“MY OWN DEAR CHILD : What has become of the beautiful lessons learnt from the heliotrope ? Do you not know that all happens by God’s appointment ? He uses creatures, but the work is His. Bow down in submission to His will and repeat from your heart your own sweet verses on ‘Even so, Father.’ If you listen to passion you separate from the only true source of grace and peace—God ; you offend Him by a want of that charity which is the mark of

His chosen ones ; you injure your precious soul instead of laying up treasures of merit ; you remedy nothing, gain nothing but remorse. Ah ! my child, do not let the devil deceive you, as he has done so often, but go to your Blessed Spouse with confidence and beg help to make a generous sacrifice of your feelings. I have prayed much that you may not be unfaithful to grace. One generous effort has got you over difficulties hitherto, and will do so now if you make it. May God bless and help you, my own faithful old child ; He alone knows how dear you are to the heart of

Your devoted mother in Jesus Christ,

“ M. LIGUORI.”

ANNIVERSARY LETTER, 1860.

“ Let me embrace you on this sweet anniversary, so dear to us both, with all the deep and sincere love I have long felt for you. I will daily implore our Blessed Lord to enable you to go on steadily advancing in virtue till the great end be gained and His designs on your soul fully accomplished. You have done a good deal towards improving your spirit ; what I desire you to aim at this year is a greater uniformity. Let not passing events, feelings, and disappointments influence you so far as to appear in the exterior or draw you from that sweet spirit of conformity attained by those who live by faith and see God in all that happens. If a Sister annoys you try not to alter your manner towards her. Tell her, if you should do so, of the fault with calmness and kindness, and be the same as if the annoyance had not been given. I feel God has given me the love I bear you. May He bless you and give you all the graces I desire for you ! ”

TO AN OLD SISTER NAMED MYRTLE.

“ AUGUST 13, 1880.

“ MY DEAREST EVERGREEN OF FIFTY-THREE YEARS : May every happiness and blessing be yours on this your natal day ! I send some flowers to make your oratory sweet for the morning, as our Blessed Lord may be your guest. Otherwise you would not have them till to-morrow. The halfpenny [a sovereign] is for anything you like. I am glad to hear a better account of you, but it is not nearly good enough yet. We begin the glorious mysteries to-morrow—you must rise with them. I am improving, but

cannot look after your lodging and furniture much longer. Ever your old mother in the Sacred Heart,

“M. LIGUORI—not an Evergreen!”

This Sister had received the last sacraments, but was cured on the Feast of the Assumption, after a novena to Our Lady.

PROFESSION LETTERS.

“I must send you my congratulations and blessing for your sweet day from the desert where I have been praying for you. To-morrow I will implore our Lord to give you a stock of generosity and courage for the coming year. You have to become more self-possessed and charitable. Resolve this day not to speak of your feelings, past or present, towards Mother —, except to the bishop or to me. Act with her in a simple, cordial manner; place your little offering in the Sacred Heart of Jesus and beg Him to keep it safe till the next anniversary of the day which made you His spouse. Ah! my dear child, I love to see you humble, faithful, and loving; but these words reproach me. I expect from you what I find not in myself. Let us both kiss His sacred feet with the penitent Magdalen and hope to share the mercy He showed to her.”

II.

“I wish you a great deal of happiness, and still more an increase of animating, supporting grace, to aid you in the road to sanctity. Sanctity, you will say, sounds very high; still, it is within our reach. Every religious is called by God not only to sanctity but to great sanctity, which consists in renouncing self, sacrificing our little likes and inclinations, to do for love of God whatever He wills of us. He wishes you, my dear child, to be very faithful in your daily actions, to think often of Him, and above all to have unbounded confidence in His infinite mercy and love. Go on courageously and cheerfully. I send you a fervent blessing to begin this new year of your religious life. Let it be the best you ever spent.”

III.

“You coaxed so hard for a line that I cannot refuse to contribute that little addition to the happiness of the day

which is the greatest of all feasts to a religious. May this anniversary be one of grace and blessing to you, renovating your fervor and fidelity in the service of your heavenly Spouse! As you grow older He may ask more sacrifices, more proofs of love, but He is always near to help you to be generous. Often it is more in little things than in great that we need generosity, because they are so frequent and escape our attention; yet God directs all and intends us to gain by all. Let your constant prayer be, 'Lord, enlighten me to see Thy will, strengthen me to do Thy will, give me grace to love Thy will in all things and at all times.'

IV.

"I hope your profession anniversary finds you full of good desires and firm resolves to be carried out faithfully during the coming year. The past has been marked with the cross, but the cross unites us more closely to our Blessed Spouse. I will say a special prayer for you at adoration. Your little sacrifices will be acceptable to our dear Lord, if you make them in loving submission to His holy will. You have had much to feel, but your soul has not lost by it, since obedience, not self, has directed all, and God will bless your constant patience."

V.

"*Sursum corda*: you must raise your heart to heaven and see your Spouse looking for the fruit of all the trials, humiliations, and crosses of the past year—crosses which He has weighed and measured and sent to you Himself, that they might teach you useful lessons and unite you more closely to Him. They are to refine your spirit, not depress or crush it; they have the latter effect when you view them naturally, the former when accepted with faith and love. I have found crosses and humiliations have done more good to my soul than any consolations; they are the spots in my life which give me most confidence. It is a blessed thing to be called to work for God, but far more to suffer for Him. You say, 'My pride has had a fall.' Is not that a sign of God's love? Thank Him for it, and humble yourself sincerely under the fall. Then will your spiritual edifice rise on a more solid foundation. You say, 'I should not mind so much for myself, but I feel for those I love.' *Sursum corda*. The school of adversity

will teach *them* useful lessons also. Pray that God may do with you and all belonging to you as He sees best ; and when difficult things come in answer to that prayer, see in them God's work and will, and use them rightly."

VI.

"Most truly and affectionately do I wish you that interior happiness and increase of grace given to those who renew with fervent love and gratitude the sacred engagements that unite the soul so closely to Him who is her Spouse and *All*, who can and will help her to overcome the opposition raised by nature and the devil, to their perfect fulfilment. Be not depressed, dear child, by the weaknesses or difficulties of the past year. You will experience many more before your work is done. Be sorry for the faults—yes, humble yourself as much as you please—but thank Him for the lessons and graces given, for His loving patience and mercy, and *trust* Him for the future ; ask Him to make you all His own by whatever means He pleases, so that His designs be accomplished in you. . . . I do not wonder at your anxiety about the children falling away ; it is sad to see so many advantages wasted by the indifference of parents, and children growing up in ignorance and irreligion. You must *pray, pray* about it, and when you have done all in your power rest content."

TO ONE WHO HAD PAINED HER BY A THOUGHTLESS REMARK.

"I see that the sorrow expressed in your note is heartfelt and humble, therefore I fully forgive all the pain caused by your ungrateful speech. I never should have believed it had I heard it from other lips than your own, for I could not imagine such an expression coming from one who, I believe, loved and trusted me, and had proofs of my love and desire to help her in every way. Let it be a lesson to you not to wound people's feelings thoughtlessly, not to express what you do not fully mean, and so give impressions contrary to truth. Had you said one-fourth part that Friday of what I have read in your note I should have forgiven you, as I do now, and you would have been spared the sorrow of the last three weeks. I, too, should have suffered less ; but it is over now, and I shall not refer to it again unless you do. Be good and

sensible, not acting from natural impulses but from principles which can always be depended on, like some whom you and I have known and loved, and who are now, I hope, praying for us in heaven. You are capable of much more than you do in virtue and self-control. If you were more docile and worked with me I could help you more; still, I do not give up my desire or the hope of accomplishing it, because I know there is good material to work upon when the rubbish is cleared away.

“No fear of your losing your place in my heart, but it is in your power to add much to its joys or sorrows while it beats in this world. Which will you do?”

TO A SISTER WHO EXPRESSED SORROW FOR HAVING WRITTEN AN UNKIND NOTE.

“I felt you would be sorry for *that note*. It pained me more because it showed me the devil was at work trying to undo your brave resolutions, and that you were foolish enough to listen to his suggestions, than because it was ungracious to me.

“I had confidence in your promises and never doubted that you would write me a childlike, candid reply to what I sent with sincere motherly affection. I have a deep desire to see you a thoroughly good religious, an edifying and happy member, and would help to this if you were simple, confiding, and docile. This, united with fervent prayers, would frustrate the devil and make you victorious. You desire to be perfect. But your feelings are strong; you have a proud, passionate nature. You require help to submit nature to grace, a friend to remind you of truths and urge you to act up to the voice of conscience. To be *shut up* is bad for you, for then the devil has power over you and your pride is nourished. Cultivate a humble, docile spirit; then you will please our Lord and be happy. The past is forgiven. I shall remember it only for your benefit when speaking with you. Thanks for your prayers in my great sorrow. God has given me support and consolation. It is good for me to have more opportunities of sacrifice, and God sends them in His love and mercy. I have consolation, too, in thinking of the goodness of the dear ones who have gone home, and rejoice to have had what was so precious to give to God. Their battles and trials are now over; yours, too, will soon pass. Make

profit of them, and you will be ready when our Lord calls. May God bless and guide you, and may you be an equal comfort with them to your devoted mother. You had indeed a saint for novice-mistress [Mother M. Borgia Morgan]. You know how I loved and valued her. If you imitate her example and act up to her teaching you will be all I desire."

TO A SISTER IN SORROW.

"Why do you not write to me? Am I not your mother and your friend? You said if you wrote your real sentiments they might pain me. It pains me more that you should be wanting in childlike simplicity and confidence, because it is not good for you to be shut up within yourself, and I have not the opportunity of giving you the help or comfort I would gladly give because of my sincere interest in your progress and happiness. Your faults are more likely to be corrected when acknowledged; wrong impressions removed, and difficulties made easier, when you have the advice and sympathy of a true and safe friend. So write me a simple account of yourself."

TO A SISTER WHO HAD SENT HER SOME ROSES AND OFFERINGS OF PRAYERS FOR HER FEAST.

'I must thank you for the pretty flowers and still more for the loving offerings. You guessed rightly what would please me. Sister Aloysius laid them at the feet of St. Alfonso; the white roses were specially beautiful. The day was very happy, notwithstanding the pang I must always feel on such occasions, which remind me vividly of the dear ones, no longer with us, who in days gone by used to be so active and joyous. There are still many dear ones left, and I cannot be too grateful to God for the graces showered on us, past and present. *You* are to be one of my consolations also—a good, humble, uniform religious. *You can* be all this with God's help. There is plenty to be done; but as much has been done by others when they set to work in earnest, and why not by you? The retreat will be a great help, if you enter with the right spirit—a desire to know yourself and what God wants of you, and a determination to refuse Him nothing. Some depend much on the father—be wiser: if he helps, very good; but if not, work between God and yourself: think out the meditations and

pray earnestly. I enclose points I noted down twenty years ago; they have strengthened and cheered me through many anxieties and difficulties, and will do the same for you, if the principles sink deep into your mind. Be docile, bend to grace; never mind the cost. Then will God work in you, and His designs in calling you to religion will be accomplished."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

CONTINUATION—LETTERS, COUNSELS, ETC.—SILVER
JUBILEE.

Profession Day—Give, and it shall be given you—When we see God's Will we must love it—We have the same Spouse to love as the Saints had—To a Sister leaving the Novitiate—Profession Anniversary—Mental Prostration—We should be purified and strengthened by the Cross, not unmanned and crushed—A Paschal Kiss—Weeding to be done in the Garden—To a Sister in great Perplexity—We succeed in all things by Prayer—Exterior Work secondary to one's own Perfection—Make those about you happy, and your Spirit will rise above its Miseries—Excelsior!—Humble Submission the main point—*Quid retribuam?*—Thabor followed by Calvary—Our Lord never disappoints us—Beautiful Letters.

“MY DEAREST CHILD: Few wish you more warmly and sincerely every blessing on this your holy profession day than your old mother, who desires so much to see you act up to the spirit of that profession and strive earnestly to overcome the obstacles in your natural character to copying the virtues taught by your Spouse and Model. They *can* be overcome by His grace and your efforts, and they *must* be overcome. Make the sacrifice of your own will each day; nothing less will do, and if it cost a good deal be glad you have that to offer instead of a compromise between nature and grace.”

TO THE SAME.

“You say I think better of you than you deserve. I knew you were making efforts to throw off the depression which steals over you sometimes and accept your daily cross from God's hands. When we see His will we must love it and submit. True, there are sacrifices in — which would be drawbacks if not viewed religiously. God will supply what you lose in other ways. He is never outdone in generosity; the more you give the more you will re-

ceive of grace and merit. You will have many a battle to fight with your proud, independent nature before it is conquered, but *do* fight; do not yield to self in little things. Then you will gain a power over your will, and strength of soul, which will make you uniform and religious in the exterior and pleasing to God, who knows and blesses all our efforts. I often wish you would throw the earnestness of your character into the right channel; *determine* to become a saint, and with God's sure help you *will* be one. Begin at the foundation—humility; nothing solid or lasting unless the proper foundation be laid. Poor Sister — lingers on to finish her purgatory here, I hope. It is a solemn, speaking meditation to watch life ebbing away and the soul hovering on the brink of eternity. O my dear child! may you and I be well prepared when that time comes for us."

TO A SISTER WHO TOOK SOME SCHOOL-CHILDREN TO VISIT
THE SHRINE OF HER PATRON SAINT.

"I was pleased to hear the children had behaved so creditably, enjoyed themselves so fully, and, above all, that they prayed for me to the dear saint, who, I am sure, was looking down on them with love. The more of that help the better, especially for those who approach the evening of life and have many shortcomings to make good before giving in their accounts. I am often with you in spirit and happy that you are laying in bodily and spiritual strength for the work before you. Have you not many thoughts, as you kneel before your sweet patroness, of the tender and practical love which filled her heart for *our* divine Spouse—how it led her to imitate His humility and mildness, to forget self when she could please Him by a sacrifice or an effort costing much to nature? Then has He not an equal claim to my devoted love? Has He not chosen me to be all His own? pardoned me, oh! how often, waited for me, and now again renews the pressing invitation to keep close to Him, to accept His graces and use them faithfully? I am sure of your desire, but you must pray for strength and constancy when temptation comes and things look quite different from what they are now. Make in retreat a few solid resolutions, which must be kept, whatever you see, think, or feel; when you commit a fault repair it *at once* by an act of humility; submit will and judgment to those

who hold God's place in your regard, and show them due reverence and attention because they are in His place. Whatever help I can give you in the uphill work will be given with a mother's love and interest ; and if I see you a thorough good religious, using the energy and better parts of your character for the edification and happiness of our dear community, I shall say a fervent *Deo gratias.*"

TO A SISTER LEAVING THE NOVITIATE.

"I am disappointed of writing as I wished. My time has been run away with in spite of my will, so I must be satisfied with sending my loving wishes for this second anniversary of your day of days. Your noviceship training is over ; we look now for the precious fruit—no one more anxiously than myself, to whom the interests of this community are specially dear. Pray you may be a fervent and amiable member, a comfort to your superiors and a help to your Sisters. You have a good will, and this, with God's grace, can work wonders."

PROFESSION ANNIVERSARY.

"It is always a pleasure to write on a profession anniversary—it is such a great day for all who have had the honor and privilege of consecration to our dear Lord by the holy vows. Your heart is full of gratitude as you renew these sacred bonds and call to mind how singularly God has favored you. Of all the members of your family you are the chosen one, and why? We know not, but we do know it is a mark of special love, of predestination. Your love should be deep and generous in return ; yet, poor, weak child ! how easily you are drawn from your purpose and seek excuse in the *cause* which has made nature rise and rebel, instead of profiting by the same to imitate your blessed Spouse and practise many acts which would please Him, sanctify your soul, and bring peace. Let it not be so in future. God gives you the opportunities ; you cannot afford to lose them. May you have light to see all this clearly, and grace to act accordingly. The will of God is found by religious in *humble submission*. Nothing else will do ; it must be genuine, from the heart, not cut and dried and reduced to mere formality. Cultivate a religious spirit ; you know well what it is. I ardently desire to see it in you, as I have seen it in many of my other dear children

who are now in heaven reaping the rewards of their sacrifices."

II.

"I must express what I feel—an earnest desire that God would perfect His own work in you, that you may oppose no obstacle, but correspond generously with the light and grace so freely given on His side and so gratefully received on yours. You have made many good resolves and acts of contrition in preparation for this anniversary, as you are trying to gain the jubilee. Persevere in trying, however often you fail; grace will be given in return to enable you to gain a victory when the bad spirit is roused, and to be docile to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Humility is always a want in us poor creatures; the more we have of this solid foundation the more use God makes of us. You say you have a proud, passionate heart. True, but you must do battle with it till God's love has conquered. We have Exposition to-day, so I will go and ask our dear Lord to bless you and work in you till He fits you for the place intended for you in His kingdom."

TO A SISTER WHO HAD GREAT TROUBLES IN HER FAMILY.

"You are not, surely, going to diffide in the power and goodness of God, who has done so much for you and chosen you for His own? No, this cannot be. You are giving in too much to nature. Remember you have left all and should not allow your mind to dwell on scenes and thoughts that cause the mental prostration you feel. You do not mend matters thus, but injure your own spirit, which should be purified and strengthened by the cross, not unmanned and crushed. Whenever it presses hard raise your heart to heaven: *In Te, Domine, speravi*. He will bear and help you with those dear to you. I deeply sympathize with you, and pray earnestly for better things, especially that you may make a right use of all God *permits*. . . . God helps superiors to know and guide the souls confided to their care, and I know you. . . . You can increase my knowledge by being always simple with me. My desire is that you be what God calls you to be—a saint."

AN EASTER LETTER.

"I hope the little breezes which were blowing when you

wrote have subsided. I send you a Paschal kiss and blessing. I like you to write your thoughts simply. I know you all the better, and can show you what needs weeding out. There is a great deal of weeding to be done in your garden yet; work diligently and it will all be cleared before you are called to give in your account. I want to see you kind and considerate to all, helping to blend and unite all. We must bear with each other. Some characters try us sorely, as perhaps we try them. If we bear all silently, sweetly, and generously we shall please God and draw blessings on ourselves and the community. Our dear Lord suffered much to teach you humility and charity; if there had been anything better for us He would have taught it. May you be so impressed with this truth that you will love dependence as much as you once loved your own will, and love all our Sisters as our Lord loves you!"

II.

"A Paschal kiss and blessing all to yourself! Easter will find your soul full of the spiritual joy which always follows crucifixion to nature; only you writhe too much under the cross, and express too much desire for relief, to find all the peace and joy given to those who seek God's will only in all they do."

III.

"God has done great things for you, but you have not yet fully realized what He asks in return; at least you lose sight of it sometimes, and allow that independence and *will*, sacrificed for ever on the day of your profession, to rule your spirit, if not your actions. You must strive hard to bring that spirit of yours into conformity with the Spirit of your Blessed Spouse—meek, humble, submissive, gentle. Collect a good store before this time next year, peacefully and in the spirit of gratitude; more is gained by a loving desire to please than a consciousness of *must, nolens volens*. Once you seek to please our dear Lord in all things, cost what it may, much that is now difficult will become sweet and easy."

TO A SISTER IN GREAT PERPLEXITY.

"It is all the devil's doings. God may permit you to be tempted by doubts and to grope along in darkness to prove you, but He is as near you and loves you as much as He

did when you felt His goodness and desired to be entirely His. He does not change, neither must you. Stand your ground courageously and trustfully. . . . Pray for more trust in divine Providence. No creature is necessary for you. He can use any instrument to help you to the perfection He asks of you. He has done much for you already, and He will perfect the work, if you leave yourself in His hands and co-operate with him. You must not allow yourself to look at things naturally only, but rise above nature to the renunciation of self and the practice of perfect submission. Tell me all your feelings simply, and I will try to put you right."

II.

"It is uphill work, this conquering of pride, subjection of self, and carrying a daily cross more or less heavy as God permits for our good ; but you pledged yourself to this when you pronounced your holy vows, and you desire to carry it out fully before you meet your divine Spouse in eternity. It must be done by degrees, using occasions as they come. You have enough of these just now. Devote yourself especially to the preservation of union and charity in thought, word, and act. Little things go a great way for or against this virtue. You will please our Lord if you are faithful in them. Be a real help to a good spirit in the community, and a great comfort to your mother. I value your affectionate expressions of gratitude, because I know their sincerity, and I hope that when my work is done I shall leave you striving steadily after perfection till we meet in our heavenly home."

III.

"Nature finds it difficult to look into self and give a simple, humble account of what she would rather forget, but there is no getting on in the spiritual life without compelling nature to submit and letting grace rule your thoughts, words, and actions. You cannot be a genuine religious on the pattern of our dear Lord without this spirit in *practice*. I can help you only as far as you co-operate with me. Do not let anxiety about school or teachers rob your spiritual duties of the time allotted them. You require all, and will succeed much better in your work for yourself and others if you pray well. Speak to our Lord

very simply but very earnestly when you are before Him. Ask Him to pity you, to give you His own sweet Spirit, to enlighten you to see things as He sees them, and enable you to please Him. This kind of prayer will do more for you than reasoning, and calm your soul when disturbed by passions, failures, or sorrows. Keep as near God as you can. Love and trust Him, and you will never be disappointed. I know you have great trouble and anxiety just now about poor —— ; you are powerless to help except by prayer, yet would give the world to be able to do something for one so dear.”

IV.

“You take things up too strongly. God is urging you to be generous, nature shrinks from the little sacrifices required ; hence the warfare, often more in small things than in great. You could leave home, friends, all, for God, and now you find it next to impossible to bear the difficulties of your daily life. The devil succeeds better in these lesser things, because they are more matters of perfection than obligation. Yet, my child, are you not called to perfection? Your judgment and that of —— do not agree ; what have you been taught about obedience and submission of judgment? If there were no difference of opinion there would be no call for submission. You may be right, she wrong, still you have to carry out what she wishes, and express your opinion only when asked, and then very humbly. You told me how glad you would be to work under another Sister, that you required it for your soul’s benefit. I felt it would be a gain to you if you used it rightly, a check to your impulsive spirit, exercising your submission and patience. Nature rebelled ; you writhed under many things, yet felt it better to be under authority than left to yourself. *Keep to this.* The success of the school is very secondary to your advancement in perfection. God will always bless your work when you try to be pleasing to Him. Never think you tire me, that I want to shake you off. No, indeed. Your soul is too sacred a charge for me to feel anything but an ardent desire to help you to be a solid, good religious. Write to me as freely as you please ; the more simply the better. You have to overcome pride, self-will, and self-love. With God’s grace you will do it.

“Your battle is with the devil and self ; you can conquer

with God's help. Do not dwell much on your own feelings; above all, do not compassionate yourself. Think of all our Lord has done, is doing for you, and say, *Quid retribuam?* Think of those around you, how to make them happy, etc. Then your spirit will rise above the little miseries of which you sometimes complain. *Excelsior!* It takes great grace and a good effort to keep the rebellious spirit in order sometimes, *n'est-ce-pas?* Always remember God has called you to be a perfect religious, and that *humble submission* tends more than all else to make you such."

ON THE PROFESSION DAY.

"How warmly I welcome you with all a mother's love as my *own* child and Sister in religion *for ever!* How earnestly I pray that you may be always faithful to your sacred vows, now registered in heaven! May my joy on this day be followed by a still more solid and lasting joy—that of seeing you crowned as a good and faithful Sister of Mercy! All is bright, beautiful, and sweet to-day. But Thabor will be followed by Calvary. If we would be near our Blessed Spouse in heaven we must have humiliations, contradictions, and trials. Without these you could never be sanctified. Prepare for them by three things:

"1. Consider yourself the last and least in the house. Be ready and anxious to oblige every one. Take gratefully whatever is given you. Expect no particular affection or consideration from any one.

"2. Never say anything of or to another that you would not like said of or to yourself. Cherish charity as a precious treasure. Do all you can to preserve and increase it.

"3. Keep always near our Blessed Lord by often speaking to Him, acting for Him, studying to please Him. Such is the life of a good religious. Lean upon Him and confide in Him. He will be ever ready to help you. He will never disappoint you. Pray that His holy will may be accomplished without any resistance on your part. As long as I live I will remind you of these things and help you to accomplish the good work begun under my care."

II.

"Live for God alone. Imitate Jesus and Mary. Love the cross which leads to union with them. Make every possible effort to be amiable and cordial with all your Sis-

ters, more expressive, less fearful and suspicious. Don't wait for persons to be all you like and admire, but forget self and accommodate them every way you can.

"I do not like you to think too much of me; it will not contribute to your good or happiness. I have been the instrument in God's hands to help you on in His service, but he is the *giver*; in Him you must rest and confide. If I sometimes appear cold it is because I am busy or do not like to encourage what would be difficult for you to give up later and is more a passing gratification than a lasting benefit. You are more amiable and sociable, but too sensitive yet; humility is the only cure—work at that; love to be hidden and despised with our dear Lord. A hard lesson, you say; so it is, but it can and must be learned by religious."

III.

"How grieved I should be were your natural prejudices to lead you to want of kindness and cordiality! Try to be humble, to bear little rubs pleasantly, to make yourself all to all. Then will you gain merit, and be happy too; for nothing disturbs interior peace more than a want of union with those about us. I will help you all I can; pray that God may enable me to guide you to Himself. Believe that when I correct or am cold it is with the same desire as when I cheer and comfort—*all* for your spiritual good. Your soul is a precious charge. What a comfort if I can one day present it to our dear Lord, as I did to pronounce the vows, but *beatified*, to receive the crown of a faithful spouse of Jesus and the cross! Ah! be generous. Each day brings its own opportunities; treasure up all; the trial will not be long, the reward eternal.

"I am glad you take correction well. Humiliations are as precious as gold. Value and use them well when God sends them; they do more for your soul than ecstasies. Be satisfied with God's sweet will. He knows what is best for us."

"A MOST PRECIOUS LETTER" TO A SISTER M. — ON
HER SILVER JUBILEE.

"*'This is the day the Lord hath made: let us be glad and rejoice thereon.'* The twenty-fifth anniversary of your holy profession is truly a day which the Lord hath made, in His

unerring wisdom, one of peculiar grace and blessing to you. In His pure love and mercy He called you out of the world to consecrate yourself to Him by the vows of religion, to spend your life in humble submission, to unite yourself to Him by the closest imitation of His life on earth, that you may hereafter be united to Him in eternal happiness and glory. You have thought more in the past of imitating Him in exterior works than in the interior, which made Him say : 'My food is to do the will of my Father.' There was a natural satisfaction in exterior work, particularly when success accompanied it, which is deceiving and dangerous. Therefore our Lord called you once more to leave all, even that work which you thought pleasing to Him, that you might imitate Him in His humble, hidden, obedient life at Nazareth. Nature rebelled ; the devil assumed the guise of an angel of light, and suggested good reasons why you should not mind the second call ; he almost triumphed, but, thanks to God's merciful grace, he was resisted, and to-day, my dear child, you kneel before our Blessed Lord, the Man of Sorrows, to implore forgiveness for the past, to renew your holy vows and promise fidelity until death, under any circumstances and at all times. Now, how must you carry out this fidelity? 1. By always submitting in faith to God's holy will as marked out by superiors, not seeking reasons why the order was given, but obeying simply. 2. By resisting at once the desire you sometimes have to go over the past in your mind, to think it out naturally ; this is a very dangerous temptation, and the devil, knowing the harm it has done you, will try it again. 3. As much grace is needed to resist temptation and do God's will, and this grace is given to those who ask, you must be faithful and fervent in your spiritual exercises. Often they will be insipid and wearisome ; but persevere, and grace will be given.

"To help you to courage and constancy in time of temptation and difficulty, think—1. How sure you are of doing God's will when there is no choice of your own in place, position, or occupation. 2. That if God's will in your regard brings humiliation and suffering to nature, it is a good atonement for the past, a shortening of purgatory, a merit which will have its reward for all eternity. 3. God afflicts those he loves ; He purifies and prepares them by the cross for Himself. O my dear child ! never

doubt His love ; He has not made you for this world. He treats you as he does His chosen ones. Trust Him to the end. Keep close to your divine Spouse in time of trial, and you will never be confounded. The devil may rage, mock, and exult, but he can do nothing against your will. You are safe when you submit in heart to God's will. Then how short the trial compared to the length of eternity—never-ending security and rest ! Take courage ; the day is far spent for each of us ; let us give every particle of the remainder to Him who alone is worthy of it. We *must* be together at His feet in the next world, or rather shall I say in His Sacred Heart ? It was there I placed you in my anxiety during your late trial, and I have confidence you will correspond with the love which would keep you safe therein."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

“ I HAVE ALWAYS FELT IT AN HONOR TO DO THE WILL OF GOD—OH ! SUCH AN HONOR.”

Growing old and stupid—Irksome Precautions—“ Anxious to have my Lamp burning ”—A constant Lover of Nature—Easter—A last Feast—Terrible Abscesses—Painful Remedies—Seaside in Winter—Nursing and Treatment—Incidents—The last *Adeste*—Recovery hopeless—The Bishop refuses to receive M. Liguori's Resignation—Novena of Masses by the Redemptorists—Jubilee Confession—Father Ethridge, S.J.—“ Our Blessed Mother will soon come for me ”—Kind Attentions of the Bishop—Father Lans, C.S.S.R.—Fanny's little Pony—Her last Days—She dies among the Oratories—“ I have always felt it such an honor to do the will of God.”

AFTER a comparative rest of three years Mother M. Liguori was obliged to resume her heaviest cross—the government of the community. She complains to her beloved brother that she grows slow and stupid, and begs his prayers that God in His mercy may spare her, yet is ready to do His will in this and all things else. She was then (1876) fifty-seven, and she tells him of an old man who had just been saying to her : “ 'Tis a grand thing that you and the holy father bear your years so well.” In November bronchitis brought her to the verge of the grave, but by unceasing prayer and careful nursing she began to improve. When Bishop O'Reilly visited her on the 23d she was sitting up, but very pale and emaciated. She tells her brother she felt deep longing and joy at the near prospect of seeing our dear Lord, and could think of little else ; but the delights of Thabor passed and she was obliged to return to the way of the cross. She became more susceptible to cold and had to take many precautions irksome to her nature, the doctors fearing a second attack would be fatal.

Every improvement was transient. She gradually grew weaker, and when night came she would say: "I can do no more." In November, 1879, she had another attack, but was able to allay the anxiety of her brother December 4. "I am almost myself again," she says, but there was no real cure. She was not allowed to rise fasting, had to live in her cell, where the heat was kept at sixty degrees, and had, as she said, to make up for all this indulgence by obedience, doing exactly as the infirmarian said. "I should consider it very wrong," wrote this perfect religious, "to be self-willed even in doing what otherwise might be good; am quite happy to live or die as God pleases—only anxious to have my lamp burning when He comes."

In January, 1880, she mentions her grave symptoms to her brother, but gaily adds: "Perhaps I may come out with the primroses in spring—as God wills; He knows what is best for His children, and we are all His." Her love of green fields, blue skies, and bright flowers continued to the end, and she sometimes longed for fine spring weather as the best remedy for her ailments. From October, 1879, till April, 1880, she never left the house. On Easter day, to the great joy of the community, she dined in the refectory, determined, as she said, to rise to a new life on that glorious festival. But the exertion was plainly beyond her strength. April 12 she went to St. Vincent's branch house and remained till the 24th; but though delighted to see the country once more, she suffered fearfully. Her cough became loud and distressing. A swelling appeared over her right lung, which she showed the infirmarian, but with strict injunctions to secrecy lest the Sisters should be alarmed. It proved to be an abscess, the first of five. So intense was the pain that the poor frail patient could scarcely remain still. She liked to wander alone about the garden, communing with her own sweet and solemn thoughts. After a short visit to Lancaster she returned to Mount Vernon, and, as the first annual re-

treat had begun, she was spared the excitement of meeting her children. When they came one by one they were appalled to behold her so feeble, so unlike her old self. But she had great endurance, as she proved by presiding at the chapters of consultation semi-annually held in the Order of Mercy. Another abscess formed in her neck, and the gnawing pain made her so ill that her feast, August 2, was spent in indescribable sadness. Her children had prepared their little offerings of love in the community-room, and she went thither to see them. She also went to the refectory, feeling it was for the last time. When she returned to her room she was so overpowered that she wept copiously, having a vivid presentiment that ere her next feast she would have left her beloved children. The evidences of their love and devotion were too much for her in her weak state, yet she rallied, and, not to disappoint them, spent an hour in the community-room, as placid and sweet as ever. As they began the song they had composed for her she was obliged to retire, and before it was finished one voice after another broke down, and they crept away to hide their grief and their tears.

The Sisters appointed to nurse this dearly loved mother never left her day or night. They had great experience, and were, like the whole community, passionately attached to the patient. As items of interest to her absent children, they kept a journal in which they faithfully chronicled all her changes and fluctuations. Sometimes she spoke of returning to public life and getting back into good ways, but no sooner had one abscess yielded to treatment than another appeared. In September they took her to Blackbrook. The weather was lovely; her children there found her looking "thin and white, but oh! so sweet." On her return she would pay the visit to the Blessed Sacrament always made in the Mercy Institute on coming from abroad, but her feet gave way. It was her last effort; she never walked again. Her nurses frequently thanked God

for the privilege of waiting on her, and besought God to bless their endeavors to relieve her. A friend sent her two small eider-down quilts, which were most useful, as she had to be kept warm but could bear now eight. Every day she was wheeled to Mass. Another abscess appeared on her ankle-bone, which caused her such torture that she often clenched her hands in agony. Physicians could afford no relief. What they called a swollen muscle in the throat proved to be a fourth abscess, which they feared would break inwardly and choke her, and the only preventive was iodine used internally and externally. Her throat seemed on fire and she could scarcely swallow her saliva. An eminent surgeon, Dr. B——, pronounced her disease a very bad case of blood-poisoning, and said her only chance of recovery was to be taken at once to the seaside! It was a most severe winter, and the Sisters felt it would be madness to expose her to the rigors of such a journey; but the bishop decided the doctor should be obeyed, and named Southport as the healthiest sea-resort. Hither she was conveyed, “in obedience,” her throat causing her the pangs of martyrdom on the way. No word of complaint broke forth; she was as sweet, gentle, and grateful as ever. “It is well we are nearing our eternal home,” writes her companion. “Let us use all things so as to secure a place near our beloved Mother in the Heart of Jesus.” Her cousin, Father Thomas Gibson, of Birkdale, showed her unbounded kindness and frequently said Mass in her presence. The bishop often came to console his holy daughter, and offered Mass in the temporary chapel fitted up by his desire. On Christmas day the poor invalid, who had been a fine musician, and, like all the early members, devotedly fond of music, sang the *Adeste* as she lay on a couch facing the oratory where her cousin said Mass. When she communicated her delight was so great that it affected her children, and the infirmarian remarked that she looked as if she saw the heavens opened. This

consolation was followed by shooting pains in the head, so violent that they reached the brain, and the doctor felt it his painful duty to tell the community that recovery was utterly hopeless and death might occur any moment. The bishop visited her and decided that she should come home, if she could come with safety.

Several times Mother M. Liguori tendered her resignation to the bishop, but his lordship would never accept it; he would merely quiet her delicate conscience by telling her to leave all to him and to suffer for her children, since she could no longer actively direct them. A novena of Masses was begun for her by the Redemptorists, May 16, the fortieth anniversary of the happy day when the venerated foundress received her at the parent house, Dublin. On the 22d she made her jubilee confession to Father Ethridge, S. J., her sincere friend and spiritual father for twenty-five years. Bishop O'Reilly frequently visited her, and would kneel by her bed and repeat the most beautiful prayers. On the 23d his lordship anointed her and gave her the last blessings, and from this time she never left her bed. Sisters M. Aloysia and Rose once observed her eyes intently fixed on a beautiful *Mater Dolorosa*; suddenly a beaming smile lit up her countenance, and, stretching forth her arms as if to reach something, she cried out twice in a loud voice: "O how beautiful! Our Blessed Mother will soon come for me!" They began the rosary, and she kissed her beads again and again, looking as though her heaven had already begun. From that day till June 9 she received Holy Communion every morning, but after that her mind seemed to wander. She had previously offered this last sacrifice, her reason, to her divine Spouse, who doubtless accepted it as the consummation of the holocaust. On the 14th the wandering ceased and she communicated as usual. "Our Lord was in and around her," writes one of her faithful nurses; "she looked *spiritualized*."

Father Lans, C.S.S.R., an old saint and a great friend,

visited her June 24. He knelt by her bed, gave her his crucifix to kiss, and said some touching prayers, placing mother and children in the Sacred Heart, that all might be united in heaven. Many other ecclesiastics visited her. Once when her cousin, Father Gibson, came, she appeared unconscious till he mentioned a little pony she had when a child. This roused her and she spoke sensibly of several events of her early life, but the kind priest was saddened by the sight of her sufferings. June 30 the bishop gave her absolution, but she could not articulate on account of the soreness of her tongue, “caused by the thrush, the certain forerunner of death.” Next morning his lordship said touching prayers to prepare her for Holy Communion, which he administered after Mass. July 3 she received her last Communion, and at the request of her dear old companion, Sister M. Angela, she blessed all her children, present and absent. It seemed as though her sweet spirit had departed, as she lay motionless, a willing victim of God’s most holy and ever just will, suffering what could be known to Him alone, not for herself but for the holy souls in purgatory—she had long since made the heroic act. “I feel convinced,” writes one of her children, “that during these silent hours her soul was united to God and occupied with the well-being of her dear community.” However great her pain, she became calm when her favorite prayers were said or her favorite hymns sung. In her wanderings she spoke of little children, birds, flowers; of her sainted mother, whom the Sisters, judging by her words and acts, felt she was permitted to see. There was a terrific storm on the night of the 5th, the effects of which she felt; she became uneasy and restless, her breathing was labored, and the phlegm threatened to suffocate her. At two A.M. her piteous moaning wrung all hearts; the sorrowful watches of the night were spent in prayer, the Sisters often repeating aloud her favorite ejaculations, *Anima Christi*, “My Jesus, mercy,” and renewing the vows.

Father Kennedy gave her absolution, and Father Ryan said Mass for her about seven. Before it was finished, at a quarter to eight, the beloved mother gave up her pure soul to her heavenly Spouse, whom she had served so faithfully, and of whose love it was her glory to be the victim. Her eyes had not been opened since midnight; her right hand clasped the indulgenced crucifix her mother had held when dying, her arms were extended in form of a cross. The Sisters offered for her the Communion they were receiving when her spirit passed away; those who remained to see her die communicated at the *Requiem* celebrated immediately after her death.

Though trials and sorrows had been her constant portion, no one ever saw her sweet spirit ruffled; serenity was her most striking characteristic. Her twin Sister in religion, Sister M. Aloysius Consitt, and a later but not less dear child, Sister M. Rose, arranged her attenuated form in the holy garb she had worn so worthily for forty years. The choicest hot-house flowers covered her couch. Her features, pinched by excessive suffering, regained their former beauty; and friends, and even strangers, felt a respect and awe which could be inspired only by something holy. So universal was the conviction of her sanctity that more prayers were said to her than for her. Bishop O'Reilly prayed long and earnestly beside the sacred corpse, which he blessed and sprinkled with holy water. He directed that all possible honor should be paid to the holy memory of one who had labored so long and faithfully in the diocese he governed, and would himself preside at the obsequies.

There were five oratories in the room where the blessed remains lay: that of the Sacred Heart—her favorite devotion, her refuge in trouble, the fountain of her strength, the source whence she derived her unalterable peace—Our Lady of Mercy's, St. Joseph's, St. Alfonso's, and the Guardian Angels'. About eight P.M. six senior Sisters placed her

in the coffin, their tears falling fast on that beloved form which had recently contained the pure soul of their cherished mother. They carried it to the chapel, where the assembled community received it, weeping and sobbing as they gazed on the familiar features of her who had been a faithful friend to every one of them. How peaceful, how happy she looked! How united in spirit with her they felt!

News of this death spread quickly, and rich and poor thronged the beautiful chapel. This exquisite gem among conventual chapels was designed by herself. Over the altar is a rich and most devotional window, representing in the centre light our Lord revealing to Blessed Margaret Mary the devotion to His Sacred Heart. The figure of our Saviour is full of majesty mingled with sweetness, and the kneeling religious gazing at the heavenly vision is very touching. On one side is St. Michael vanquishing the infernal dragon; and here the likeness of her elder brother, Dr. Michael Gibson, in his canon's robes, is ingeniously introduced—for the window was given as a memorial of this eminent divine by his sorrowing parents. On the other side is St. Ethelburga, Virgin and Abbess, patroness of the convent, within the folds of whose open mantle are five Sisters of Mercy kneeling. The pose of all the figures is exceedingly elegant, and the colors harmoniously blended and contrasted. The altar is of white marble; the reredos has five niches, in which are five exquisitely-carved angels, which, with two others above, represent the seven kinds of love described by Faber.

The walls and pillars of this superb edifice were heavily draped with crape, but an immense profusion of flowers gave the whole a festive appearance. The Sisters seemed to hear continually these consoling words: "She is risen; she is not here"; they felt she had already entered her eternal rest. Everything she had used—beads, books, pictures—were distributed among her children and friends, who

preserve them as relics. Her letters sufficiently show her beautiful spirit. Trials, and bitter ones, within and without, were her portion almost incessantly, but all were borne with the calm serenity which was her peculiar charm. When asked, a little before her death, what circumstance of the past gave her most consolation and was her happiest reflection, she answered simply: "What gives me most comfort now is that during my whole religious life I have always felt it *such an honor to do the will of God—oh! such an honor.*" If there be sanctity higher than this the writer is unable to comprehend it.

CHAPTER XL.

THE SILVER JUBILEE AND THE LAST CROWNING ON EARTH.

A most touching Incident—The ivy Crown—Affecting Lines—The crowned Corpse—Obsequies—Beautiful Condolences—From her early Friends—Father Bradshaw, C.S.S.R.—The Brothers of her Brothers—Her twin Sister in Religion—Beautiful Life and Death of Sister M. Aloysius—Monsignor Consitt—Captain Consitt, R.N.—Mother McAuley's Ring—The Cords of Adam—Love of the Poor for Sister M. Aloysius—Her immense Influence over them—The last Link with the Past—St. Ethelburga's a fruitful Mother.

WHEN the community left the choir after the first Mass, July 8, Sisters M. Aloysius and Angela remained to perform the last sad offices for their beloved mother. One of these was very touching. On her silver jubilee, 1868, they had made her an ivy crown so perfectly that it could not, without a close inspection, be distinguished from "the rare old plant." Under each leaf were written the names of two Sisters and the prayers they meant to say for her. This crown she valued highly, and it was the beautiful inspiration of her children to place it on her head ere the coffin-lid hid her from their tender, loving gaze. Reverently was this done by Sister M. Angela, so that it may be said that her children, who were her joy in life, in death became literally her crown.

The following lines, composed by a Sister and recited at breakfast on that jubilee morning, are not without beauty :

" Yes, bring the crown to deck our mother's brow,
And let her children on this joyous day
Press round her, full of gratitude and love.
But what shall be our coronal for thee ?

Shall we bring roses beautiful and fair ?
 Alas ! in one brief hour they'd fade
 And all their budding blossoms droop and die.
 Shall gold and gems find favor in our eyes ?
 No ; for the bride of Christ would blush to wear
 A crown of gold while He with thorns is crowned.
 Shall laurel be our choice—the victor's prize ?
 But this doth typify security,
 Which in the warfare of this mortal life
 Even the saints of God have never felt.
 Can we, then, dearest mother, find no crown,
 Since roses, gold, and laurel we reject ?
 Yes, surely, though we live in poverty,
 We have a priceless circlet, which we bring,
 And now with deep affection place upon thy brow.

CORONATION.

'Tis made of ivy—fadeless evergreen,
 A plant that changes not nor knows decay ;
 But as the tree it circles older grows,
 So doth it cling the closer, and entwines
 The aged trunk with fresh and verdant leaves.
 O emblem beautiful of faithful love !
 Steady and changeless, constant unto death—
 A treasure in the world too rarely found ;
 But, dearest mother, such is ours for thee.
 Examine now the leaves that form thy crown,
 For each one has its lining—mark it well :
 Thy jewels, mother, sent to thee from heaven—
 The children God hath given thee for thine own.
 Oh ! offer each unto thy heavenly Spouse,
 Rejoicing thou hast trained her to His love.
 We all are there—some of us round thee now ;
 Many, far off, in spirit with us join ;
 While others gone before, but keeping still
 Their earthly love for thee, from heaven look down
 And shower upon thy soul celestial gifts
 Which they from Jesus begged for thee to-day.
 Yes, all are there—the living and the dead,
 United all in one sweet bond of love,
 That Sacred Heart, where some already dwell,
 While we still journey towards our common home.

Bless us, then, mother, as we gather round,
And hear us ratify, on this sweet day,
A promise that we know will cheer thy heart—
TO LIVE AND DIE IN PERFECT CHARITY.
Then shall we surely form thy crown above,
And thus repay thee for thy mother's love."

To that sweet and delightful celebration, *Our Mother's Jubilee*, all hearts now turned with holy sadness. How they recalled the song in parts, the piano accompaniment, in the breakfast-room, the beautiful lessons conveyed in the solos, and the chorus now verified :

" May good angels attend thee and shield thee
Through the long, weary pathway of life !
May sweet hope ever cheer thee in sorrow,
And the crown be thine after the strife !"

The coffin disappeared under white flowers, crosses, wreaths, and bouquets, which by an ingenious contrivance were kept firmly in place ; they formed her only pall—a beautiful and poetic one, typifying the purity of this fondly-loved mother and the sweet odor of Jesus ever diffused by her bright, glad spirit. The funeral services were splendidly carried out by Bishop O'Reilly and thirty-six priests. Seven ecclesiastics sang the affecting music without accompaniment, and at the Offertory a piece of great beauty, *Miseremini mei saltem vos amici mei*, etc. There were two deacons of the throne and two masters of ceremonies. Several times, especially in giving the last absolution, the bishop was visibly affected.

The remains were laid in the private cemetery of St. Oswald's Convent, two miles distant. The Sisters, each holding a bouquet, were ranged in two rows around the open grave ; seven were privileged to bear the flowery coffin from the hearse along the winding path from the gate to the grave.* It was more like a triumphal pro-

* The remains were removed to another resting-place at three A.M., May 26, 1882. Four of the old members, the undertaker, a devoted friend of the deceased, and six

cession than a sad burial. Bishop and clergy preceded the coffin ; thousands, in whom were represented the poor, the blind, the lame, the widow, the orphan, every shade of political and religious opinion, and many nationalities, closed the cortège. As the nuns passed through the double file of friends and relatives, bearing their precious burden, many a sympathetic whisper broke the solemn silence : “ Poor Sisters, what a mother you have lost ! ”

When the bishop and priests had sprinkled the coffin with holy water it was lowered ; the *De Profundis* was said ; each Sister threw her flowers into the grave. The attentions of the bishop and clergy were such as can never cease to be appreciated by the bereaved community.

At the very moment of Mother M. Liguori’s death an event occurred in an Irish convent which was deemed extraordinary. A Sister who had been several months a guest at St. Ethelburga’s, and had endeared herself to all by her solid virtue, being hindered by peculiar circumstances from returning to the house of her profession, was in a very unsettled state of mind. Her sister, also a religious, and several of the Liverpool nuns had vainly tried to secure her a home. Mother M. Liguori, who deeply felt her desolate position, promised to pray for her when she reached heaven. At the very moment she breathed her last the Sister felt a sudden inspiration to apply to a certain convent, and mentioned it to the superior, who replied : “ How wonderful ! I had the same at the same moment.” They wrote ; the petition was granted, as all concerned firmly believed, by the holy mother’s intercession.

Many beautiful letters of condolence showed Mother Liguori’s children that their bereavement was regarded as a calamity by the whole Institute. The circumstances of her life had been such that no religious was more widely others attended what the Sisters hopefully called the “ translation of the relics.” The chaste remains were found in a state of perfect preservation—“ no odor, no insect ; habit and church cloak just as we had folded them.” They took three leaves of the ivy crown, the largest of which they sent to her brother, Father Gibson, C.SS.R.

known. She had made her novitiate with friends whom God selected to bear testimony to His name in many lands, and, as Liverpool was on the highway to all, most of them sojourned with her before proceeding to their far-away missions.

The mother-superior of the parent house, Dublin, after expressing her deep grief at the great loss the community sustained, tells the bereaved ones that she and her community will pray fervently for the precious soul, "more," however, "as a tribute of sisterly affection than that the dear departed needs prayers, for, from her long and well-spent life, I feel sure she has already received her triple crown."

The mother-superior of the Belfast Convent of Mercy condoles sincerely with the Liverpool nuns on "the loss of their good, saintly mother," yet rejoices that she has entered the coveted rest. They had been postulants together under Mother McAuley in 1841, and her example was even then most edifying. "May God comfort her sorrowing community! You are all now something like we were in Baggot Street when death took our dear foundress from us. I trust they have had a joyful meeting in our Father's kingdom."

"What a happy exchange for your dear mother!—though I grieve to lose her, I loved her so much," writes Mother M. Juliana Hardman, also a very old friend and noviceship companion in Dublin. She condoles especially with the elders; "but," she adds, "we shall not be long after her, so we must make the best of our time after her example. We shall all join you in praying that her dear soul may be speedily admitted to the vision of her divine Spouse, whose interests were the one object of her saintly life."

The Sisters of Newcastle-on-Tyne style the loss "irreparable," yet think so many weeks of suspense and anxiety must have given birth to a desire to see the term of such awful suffering, and that her sweet, bright example will be

a spur to all. "Doubtless she is now pleading for those she so tenderly cherished."

"One feels," writes the mother-superior of the Tralee convent, "that such a pure soul as your dear reverend mother's must now be enjoying the Beatific Vision and praying for her faithful children." "We will pray for her," writes the superioress of Swineford convent, "though we feel she little requires our prayers, her life was so truly holy. As to her labors in the Order, she left lasting monuments of them in the institutions she founded. Surely she is now enjoying the reward of the good and faithful servant, and true child of our venerated foundress. The void will long be felt at St. Ethelburga's—she was such a treasure. Her spirit will be cherished there, and sustain her children till the bright day when all will be reunited to her."

"The loss of such a dear mother and long-time friend is a heavy cross," writes Mother M. Liguori's old companion in the Dublin novitiate, Mother de Sales, of Dundalk convent. "May she get power from God to help her sorrowing children! I would like to look upon the calm, holy face of the departed." The mother-superior of the Burnley convent feels that the "darling mother is enjoying the reward of her holy life and long sufferings," and adds: "I feel bound to make every return for all the sisterly kindness we experienced from dear reverend mother since we came to Burnley."

Sœur Thérèse, superior of the Notre Dame Sisters, "cannot refrain, even while feeling the weakness of all human consolation," from telling the bereaved ones of their affectionate sisterly sympathy, and how highly she valued the "virtue and deep religious spirit of the deceased." And from Mother Margaret's convent, Stone, an old friend sends kind words from all, adding: "I knew your lamented mother before either of us entered religion, and loved her very much indeed." Mother M. Liguori's niece "Polly," Dame Walburga Leigh, feels blessed in having so holy a re-

lative. "She is nearer to me now than when alive. I find myself conversing with her, asking her to help me to do this or that right. How glad she must be to have suffered so much here below! What a powerful intercessor we now have in heaven! You know how specially dear she was to me. She ever showed me a mother's love and solicitude." Another Benedictine nun exclaims: "*Fiat voluntas Dei!* Our good God seemed to wait long for the embraces of His cherished spouse. Her sufferings entitle her to the double crown, virginity and martyrdom. Oh! what an example you have all had in your convent, and what an advocate now in heaven." "I imagine," writes another daughter of St. Benedict, "your whole being plunged into a sea of sorrow. But the sea is calm; you can say, *Fiat!* The sea is clear; you can look up to heaven and say with the saints of old, *Deus meus et omnia*. . . . I have placed your hearts in the Sacred Heart to be healed of all their sorrows. Walk in the footsteps of your departed mother and friend. Follow her good counsels, that she may always look down from heaven with joy on you. . . . What suffering! What patience! What a crown!"

Mother M. Liguori's sister, Mrs. Roskell, writes in the same strain; and her cousin, Rev. Thos. Gibson, "understands the feelings of the community at so heavy a loss, but the same Lord who provided so efficient a head will send a substitute capable of carrying on the work of her life. It has had His blessing hitherto, and will not want it in future. Every one among you must, by long experience, have become familiar with her mode of governing, and this will always be a safe guide to those who come after her. . . . I thank you for sending me such constant notices of her state. They have edified me much. I trust I may, by God's grace, have dispositions approaching hers when my time comes." A line from her brother John, "her dearest one on earth," was sent from Perth the day of her death: "I cannot call the tidings of my dear sister's death sad, for

I feel it is for her a happy and glorious change from pain and sorrow, anxiety and care, to joy and peace and happiness unspeakable. Though I believe she suffered her purgatory on earth and went straight to heaven, still it is a duty and will be a consolation to offer the Holy Sacrifice for her. . . . I believe the memory of the departed one, so dear to both of us, will help us to persevere in our holy vocation, in the hope of one day rejoining her and being welcomed by her in her sweet, loving manner into the abode of the blessed."

Father Ethridge, S. J., after condoling with the community on the loss of this sweet mother, testifies that her whole study was to be kind to all and each, and mentions the extraordinary respect in which she was held by Bishop O'Reilly, his clergy, and all who knew her, as a great consolation to her children in their affliction. "The confidence with which she honored me," he continues, "enabled me to appreciate her character fully, and I am happy to bear my testimony to her virtue." Father Lans, C.S.S.R., sends his condolence for the "immense loss" by Father Bradshaw, who adds: "Your mother will watch over you from heaven and forward the interests of those she so dearly loved on earth. She will not be forgotten by us, *brothers of her dear brother*; and our holy Father Alfonso, whom she loved and whose name she bore, will show her his powerful patronage."

Mother M. Liguori's twin Sister in religion, Sister M. Aloysius, soon followed her. This lady was born at Durham, March 18, 1817, being the only daughter of Captain Consitt, an English naval officer. A superior education, supplemented by a season of travel, made Mary Consitt, with her sweet disposition and rare personal charms, a most attractive girl; but she had scarcely been "brought out" when she felt the germs of a vocation to the life which she afterwards so greatly adorned. In August, 1841, Dr. Youens sent her to Mother McAuley, who describes

her as "a very nice person indeed." She had the advantage of being a short time under the immediate direction of the holy foundress herself, who, during the absence of Mother M. Cecilia in Birmingham, added the charge of the novices to her other duties. She gave morning lecture in the novitiate, and in the evening a general instruction in the community-room, at which she explained some part of the Holy Rule. The last elucidated in this way was the beautiful chapter *On the Perfection of our Ordinary Actions*, about ten days before her holy death.

On the evening of November 10 she sent for all the professed Sisters and gave to each separately her last instructions and blessing. Next morning the novitiate Sisters were admitted, and Sister M. Aloysius loved to recall the touching scene. When she entered the infirmary the holy mother looked to see who was beside her, and giving some special advice, treasured to the latest moment of life, and a general counsel as to loving all her Sisters with the tenderest charity, she said with unwonted solemnity: "May the blessing of the Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, descend upon you!"

On the Feast of the Purification, February 2, 1842, Mary Consitt received the white veil and the name Mary Aloysius; and she was professed, by dispensation procured from Gregory XVI., by Bishop Brown, July 12, 1843. The mottoes on her ring were: inside, *Fiat voluntas Tua*; outside, *Misericordia Domini in æternum cantabo*.* She worked zealously at the duties of the Institute till a few days before her death. In 1852 she was superior at Glasgow, but, though idolized by all classes there, she returned to Mount Vernon in 1854, where the writer had

* Sister M. Aloysius' novice-companion, Sister M. Juliana Delany (sister and god-child of Mother McAuley's successor, Mother M. di Pazzi Delany), having asked for the mottoes on the ring of the holy foundress, received the ring itself. It is a thin hoop of silver, and the fortunate possessor, now (1883) mother-superior of the Belfast Convent of Mercy, has worn it for forty years. The mottoes (inside, *Fiat voluntas Tua*; outside, *Ad majoram Dei gloriam*) are almost entirely obliterated.

the pleasure of forming her acquaintance and well remembers her singular sweetness and affectionateness of disposition. For a while she was superior of the convent at Newcastle-on-Tyne, where she left a holy name and a precious memory and gained all hearts. But she had no taste for business, and was soon recalled to her cherished poor in Liverpool. It was not in the office of superior that her noble, self-sacrificing soul was destined to work out the designs of God. Partly from an irresistible *attrait* for the lowly and destitute, but chiefly from an over-delicacy of conscience which made her dread the responsibility of guiding others, the superiorship was plainly beyond her strength, and on her return from Newcastle in 1858 she was left undisturbed among her sick poor.

Captain Consitt erected an almonry in 1862, which completed the separate arrangements for all departments; the Liverpool establishment being now a hollow square, with garden in the centre, closed in on every side by convent, chapel, House of Mercy, Benefit School, almonry, pharmacy, servants' office, and extern work-rooms. The Sisters are indefatigable workers, enjoying little respite. Sister M. Aloysius allowed none to surpass her in humble labor. The almonry is at once an industrial home for virtuous girls out of situation and a depot for food and clothing for the sick poor. Here she labored incessantly but unostentatiously till her death. "It would be impossible," says her obituary, "to give even a faint outline of the multitudinous acts of devotedness which stamped the labors of her every-day life. In hovels the most wretched her presence spread a halo of joy and comfort." The number of sick persons visited by her, as recorded in a book kept for the purpose, is forty-two hundred and ten; she assisted over six hundred girls and procured them places. The average number of adults living in a total neglect of duty whom she prepared for the sacraments is sixty-nine yearly. Though her great love was for the

poor, the *élite* sought her counsel and entrusted her with many a delicate commission. By her peace was restored to families, estranged parties reconciled, and difficulties between many a married couple settled. Indeed, her last out-door work of mercy was to restore amicable relations between a young married pair who but for her would have wandered from each other, perhaps for ever. Our zealous Sister was particularly successful with men; they listened to her when they would give no heed to any one else. Several averred that they felt her death more than the death of their own mothers; and one who knew her well writes: "It was a sight never to be forgotten to see her as an angel of consolation raising the wearied hand, moistening the parched lip, whispering words of comfort and help to the departing soul." Her favorite charity was training young girls, providing them with situations, watching over them when at service, and rescuing them when in danger. If the fallen sought her aid she received them as a mother, procured them secure retreats, and saved many a worthy name from open dishonor. She is known by hundreds not only in Dublin, Liverpool, Glasgow, and Newcastle, where she labored, but throughout England and Ireland, in several parts of Europe, America, Australia, and Africa, where many a mistress and many a servant bless her name and bear grateful witness to the good she accomplished.

From the death of Mother M. Liguori the strength of our good Sister began to fail, yet she would take no respite. Two weeks before her death she caught a cold which turned to congestion of the lungs and bronchitis. Her illness was intensely painful; but she, who had taught so many to prepare for death, knew how to illustrate her doctrine by example, and not a sigh or murmur escaped her. On Saturday, April 22, her brother, Right Rev. Monsignor Consitt, visited her. He said Mass for her the following day, and remained with her to the last. Her other brother, Mr. Austin, came on Friday, and she asked him to return

Saturday, but that day she spent in a better world. The Sisters lavished upon her all the care she had bestowed on thousands, but all human skill could devise was unavailing; paralysis of the *viscera* set in, and she passed away, perfectly conscious, at half-past eight Friday evening, while Father Kennedy was pronouncing over her the last absolution. The early beauty of her face was restored by death, as often happens to the aged who die in the peace of God, and its sweet expression lingered to the last.

The poor came out of their dens and alleys in hundreds to gaze on the calm, sweet features of their devoted friend; the highways and byways were cleared of the blind, the halt, the maimed; and many homes of the great ones of earth were emptied to form the crowds that besieged the convent. Flowers were brought in abundance, and none departed without a little blossom sanctified by contact with the precious dead. Such weeping and wailing! Poor creatures cried out that they had lost their mother, and one evidently spoke the sentiments of many when she said she wanted to die and be laid beside the good Sister. The plain deal coffin bore the inscription: "Pray for the soul of Sister Mary Aloysius Consitt. Died April 28, 1882, aged sixty-five years." It was hidden beneath wreaths, crosses, and bunches of exquisite flowers and *immortelles*; she rested on a couch of flowers under a flowery pall. Thousands thronged the convent chapel on Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday. On Tuesday she was laid beside her beloved Mother M. Liguori in the Sisters' private cemetery, crowds of clergy and laity of every rank testifying their reverence for the memory of this high-born and delicately-nurtured lady, whose whole life was literally devoted to God and His poor, whose greatest ambition was to be the servant of His lowliest creatures and wait upon them with her own hands.

Never did Sister of Mercy know better how to entangle poor human nature in the cords of Adam, and many a bad

Catholic and Protestant and free-thinker, who would have resisted the pope on his throne, found her irresistible. Who, indeed, could resist the sweet-voiced, tender woman, to whom a cancer was as a bouquet of lilies, and whose soft, deft fingers lingered among the wounds of the stricken, rubbed life into their paralyzed limbs, and soothed and relieved their worst tortures? The most stubborn bent before her without knowing why; great natural tact and shrewdness were combined with her simplicity; but it was the charm of her sweetness, sanctity, and genuine goodness that won the wretched and the outcast. The rich loved her the better for her devotion to "her own dear poor," and helped her to help them, knowing this was all she cared for.

Over forty Sisters who received the blessed corpse at the cemetery remained after the ceremonies to pray by the grave, in which they were heartily joined by the vast concourse assembled to honor the virginal remains of one who had spent herself for the poor. A bitter grief it was for the Sisters so recently bereft of their beloved mother to lose the only other link that bound them to the distant past, Sister M. Aloysius being the last of the band received in Dublin by the holy foundress for the Liverpool foundation.

St. Ethelburga's has been a teeming mother. Founded in 1843, it spread to Old Swan, 1850; Lancaster, 1853; Newcastle, 1856; Hardy Street, 1859; Skipton, 1861; Sydney, 1865; Douglas, Isle of Man, 1866; Blackbrook, 1869; Breckfield Road, 1871—all ten houses founded by Mother M. Liguori. On account of the pressing needs of Liverpool, Skipton was given by her to another Order. During its forty years' existence St. Ethelburga's has lost two bishops, Drs. Brown and Goss; two vicars-general, Dr. Youens and Canon Walmsey—all most devoted friends of the Mercy Institute; forty-two Sisters, including the two who died at the Crimea; and the two reverend mothers, M. de Sales White and M. Liguori Gibson. The community indeed has become abundantly familiarized with death.

CHAPTER XLI.

MOTHER M. JOSEPHINE WARDE SENDS SISTERS TO SUNDERLAND.

The old Traditions linger in Sunderland—Nomenclature—Father Kearney's Flock—He applies for a Colony—Bishop Murphy refers him to Mother M. Josephine—Volunteers—Preparations—The Sisters embark October 13, 1843—They visit Liverpool Convent—Proceed by Rail to Sunderland—Welcomed by Father Kearney—First Days—Opening of Schools—Postulants—Mother M. Vincent Deasy—*Cottage Controversy*—The Founder of Sunderland Convent, Father Philip Kearney—Canon Bamber—Schools at Seaham—At Hexham—A quaint old Place—"Frank"—Darlington—Bishop Mostyn succeeded by Bishop Riddell—Dr. Hogarth—Poor Clares and Carmelites—"The Doves cooing."—Canon Brown—"What's the use of sighing?"—Broken English—Laboring to the End—Bishop Hogarth's Death—Miss Vere—Her Brother—Sunderland—Sunderland People—Convent Barbarity to Children under the new *Régime*—Prodigies of six—Jubilee.

SUNDERLAND is another house about which the old traditions linger. "It was Mother McAuley," writes the superior, "who prepared me for reception and profession. I shall never forget her interpretation of our Holy Rule, which through life has been of immense service to me. I was the first she received in Cork, and had intended to go to Dublin; but she preferred my remaining at the new foundation, for when she began anywhere she was anxious to leave a Sister from the neighborhood, that the people might not feel all the nuns were strangers."

Six years after mother-foundress had installed her children in Cork, Father Kearney, of Sunderland, was sent thither by Bishop Mostyn to secure a few Sisters of Mercy to aid him in his labors. The Bishop of Cork, on learning that the necessary provision was made for the proposed foundation, referred the whole business to Mother M. Josephine Warde.

Sunderland stands at the mouth of the Wear, and two of its subdivisions, Bishop-Wearmouth and Monk-Wearmouth, carry the mind back to old Catholic times when St. Bennet Biscop governed his monks in these regions and the voice of praise ascended to God day and night. But the names of sites once hallowed were about all Father Kearney had to remind him of the fruitful vineyard once cultivated here. The so-called Reformation had done its deadly work, and the good priest had to plant the seeds of a harvest which soon became white for the reapers. His flock numbered between two and three hundred. He struggled manfully, and, being full of zeal for the divine honor, found means, by dint of great exertions and many sacrifices, to erect a church and schools. With the success of the latter he was not satisfied. He exposed to Mother Josephine the wants of his people with the straightforward simplicity which was one of his most remarkable characteristics.

Father Kearney was a man of noble aspect; the expression of his countenance was singularly benevolent; and as Mother Warde by no means despised externals, he soon found favor in her sight. She laid the matter before her community, to see if the Holy Spirit would inspire any of its members to leave their country, as they had already left their homes, to advance the interests of souls in poor England. The Sisters, being full of fervor and imbued with that noble self-sacrifice which characterizes the beginnings of all religious Orders, unanimously offered themselves for the work, and the good mother selected those she deemed most suitable—viz., Sisters M. Vincent Deasy, Aloysius O'Connell, Xavier Warde, Joseph Murphy, choir religious, and Agnes Scollard, lay Sister.

Father Kearney returned to Sunderland proud and happy at his success, and set about preparing for his nuns. He bought a large, roomy house next to the church, with an acre of ground which he laid out as a garden. He pro-

vided merely the indispensable, wishing to complete the good work under the superintendence of the Sisters. Word came that all was ready, and on the 13th of October, 1843, the Sisters bade farewell to their sorrowing friends and to the convent in which they had passed so many happy years, and embarked in the steam-packet *Ocean*, accompanied by Rev. W. Cunningham. After a favorable passage of thirty-six hours, during which they were treated with the greatest courtesy by the Protestant captain, they reached Liverpool, and were conducted to the convent opened at Mount Vernon seven weeks previous. It was a consolation to find a detachment of their own regiment on English soil. But they could not long enjoy the delight of reviving old friendships. After breakfast they proceeded to Sunderland, which they reached at eleven P.M., October 15, the Feast of St. Teresa—that heroic woman who had braved so many dangers in the foundation of convents. Father Kearney cordially welcomed them at the station, and conducted them to his house to partake of some refreshment. Late as it was, they took possession of their new home in the name of Our Lady of Mercy, and, having put things in order, each in her quiet cell thanked God for His protection, and besought Him to continue it in this new and strange land to which the little band had come to labor for His glory.

Next day they examined their new abode, and found it dreary enough after home-like Rutland Street; but good Father Philip only awaited their orders, and soon everything looked bright and cheerful. The largest and best room was fitted up as a chapel, in which the Blessed Sacrament was reserved. When they knelt before their heavenly Spouse and spoke to Him heart to heart, all distance vanished, for they could hardly think themselves exiles while under the same roof with Him who had been their consolation in their Irish convent. Besides, the duties of the Institute so engrossed them that insensibly they grew accustomed to their strange surroundings.

Children of all denominations crowded to the convent schools, and all, except the Jews, went to Mass every Sunday with the Catholic children and joined in the prayers and instructions, by wish of their parents, who would do anything to have their children with the nuns. "You may do as you please with our children," they would say; "we have no trouble with them at home since you took charge of them."

Miss Anne Thompson, the first postulant, entered within six days of their arrival; her sister, Henrietta, joined her, and both were received in the public church at a very grand ceremony, numerousy attended by non-Catholics. Both are still (1883) zealously working for the end to which they consecrated their lives. Miss Frances Fallon, an Irish lady, was the next. She died rather suddenly in April, 1847, and would have been professed had her death been anticipated. But she was a bride of Heaven in desire, and, no doubt, had the reward of one. Miss Guest, of Lancaster, who entered in 1845, would have been dismissed for ill-health had she not perseveringly begged for another trial. She lived on in fervor till 1873, closing an edifying life by a holy death in the forty-ninth year of her age. Miss Anne Handen, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, entered in 1847. In 1855 her health gave way, and on her expressing regret that she might never again be able to share the duties Mother M. Aloysius O'Connell said playfully: "Nonsense, child! there's twenty years' work in you yet," which proved short of the truth, for the good Sister lived till 1879, dying at the ripe age of seventy-six.

Miss Maria Smith, niece to Canon Kearney, entered in 1854; she was in rude health, and full of life and activity, yet she lived but a year after profession. A sweet young lay Sister followed her, whose most marked characteristic was a childlike confidence in God, which increased as the end approached. She begged that a *Te Deum* might be intoned as soon as she expired, to thank God for the graces bestowed on her.

The first superior of the Sunderland house, Mother M. Vincent Deasy, was professed by Mother McAuley in October, 1837. Miss Deasy belonged to a pious and highly intellectual family of Clonakilty. Her eldest sister was one of the most accomplished members of the celebrated Ursuline convent, Cork. Her other sisters adorned the married state with many virtues and accomplishments. Her youngest brother, Baron Deasy, Lord-Justice of Appeals, lives into the present year. Mother M. Vincent translated several useful ascetic works, still in use in many convents. It was at her request that Mother McAuley published that most useful and pleasantly instructive little work, *Cottage Controversy*, the preface of which is a dedicatory letter to Sister M. Vincent. This good mother was truly holy, an excellent nun, and a model of regularity. She was most abstemious—would never touch butter, pastry, or vegetables; lived mostly on dry bread and tea—and as superior kept exactly in the path traced by Mother McAuley and Mother M. Clare. Her health being delicate, she resigned her office in 1849, and was succeeded by Mother M. Aloysius O'Connell, who still presides. A few years later Mother Deasy was recalled to the house of her profession, Cork, and, though very weakly, she lingered till 1879.

In August, 1856, Canon Kearney's health began to fail, and, his physician recommending native air, he went to Ireland, where he died in a few weeks of rapid consumption. He said Mass for the Sisters of Mercy, Kells, on the Feast of the Assumption, the day before his death. When the sad news reached Sunderland his orphaned people refused to be comforted, for he had been all in all to them. The loss was peculiarly poignant to the nuns, to whom he had been for thirteen years a true father and a disinterested friend. His was a most kind and genial nature, of patriarchal simplicity—a man without guile. His whole life was sacrificed to *duty*; ambition or thought of earthly re-

compense never entered his mind. His charity and humility had something of the perfume of heaven; he could hardly say a cross word, however great the provocation. One day, having said something that savored of impatience to the portress for making him wait long at the gate, he was so fearful that she might be pained that he added with his usual sweetness: "I forgive you, child." Once calling on Mother M. Aloysius during dinner hour, he accidentally opened the refectory door, and, seeing the community dining in silence, he said: "Give them recreation, reverend mother," which was done. He had a great heart and a noble soul, and the Sisters, though praying fervently for his eternal weal, felt that he was at rest in the bosom of God.

The news of Father Philip's death came August 19, which was to have been a red-letter day at St. Bede's, for the bishop had laid the foundation-stone of the convent church; but the day that had dawned so brightly, ushered in with the prayers and benedictions of the Church on the beginning of a work which had been the dream of years with reverend mother, closed in the darkest gloom and sorrow. Who that has lived many years has not felt something of the desolation that seized the morning's happy group, especially the poor superior, who henceforth must bear the burden alone? The kindly heart and cheery voice that supported her were chilled for ever. Often one knows not how to accept life's responsibilities under new conditions of this species. But to the pious mother it was a stroke from the fatherly hand of God, and she bowed heart and mind to His will, and comfort came, as it always does, with perfect submission to the divine will.

Father Kearney was succeeded by Rev. John Canon Bamber, who inherited his friendship for the community. In 1878 failing health obliged him to seek a warmer climate, and he resigned his rectorship to reside at the English College, Lisbon. Many changes have taken place in

the *status* of Catholics during the forty years of the Sisters' residence in Sunderland. At first one church and one set of schools sufficed for the town and the adjacent country. But, especially after 1847, Catholics increased so rapidly that a church and schools were opened at Seaham, five miles distant, and three in the town of Sunderland, the population of which is now one hundred thousand, one-third being Catholics. They are chiefly of the working classes, engaged in the collieries, glass and spelter works, and ship-building, and have won honorable fame as church-builders and church-supporters. The schools are well filled. About two thousand pupils attend those conducted by the nuns, and the churches are crowded at every service.

In September, 1858, a convent was founded by the Kirsopp family at Hexham, a quaint old place, where there is a "Chinese objection" to change of any kind. The good old priest who tended the flock was certainly untainted by any nineteenth-century notions. Hexham is full of Catholic associations and relics of Catholic times. A battle was fought there in the Wars of the Roses, and close by is Queen Margaret's Cave, where the heroic wife of Henry IV. and the heir of England were sheltered by a robber and his wife. The fine abbey church is many centuries old.

Rev. Francis Kirsopp, a generous benefactor, presented to the Sunderland convent a fine bell, which is rung daily at five, six A.M., twelve M., six, nine P.M. The people call it "Frank," and guide their clocks by it, before regulating which they ask: "How goes Frank?"

Bishop Mostyn, who invited the Sisters to Sunderland, died in 1847. His successor, Bishop Riddell, died in a few months. Dr. Hogarth, who was consecrated in 1848, became Bishop of Hexham on the restoration of the hierarchy. Catholics idolized this prelate, and Protestants loved and admired him. He asked for Sisters of Mercy

for Darlington, where he resided, performing the duties of a parish priest. An early riser and most abstemious, he had a splendid constitution and perfect health, and got through an amazing amount of work, never employing a secretary or neglecting a tittle of parochial duty. Devoted to the confessional, he was there every morning before Mass, and on Sundays from early morning till last Mass. His daily Mass he never omitted ; if he could not say it before setting out on a journey he arranged to say it at the end. He used to visit the sick and infirm very frequently, and his small, neat person and brisk step were known in every part of his district. Even in old age his eyes were bright and keen, but beaming with kindness. Though abrupt in manner, his flock bore grateful testimony to the tenderness of his heart, for none knew better how to console and support the afflicted.

To the request of this zealous pastor of souls reverend mother gladly responded, and in January, 1862, six Sisters opened the Darlington convent and schools. Many a time when on their rounds among the sick poor they met his lordship issuing from some destitute home.

The Poor Clares and Carmelites had preceded the Sisters of Mercy in Darlington. The convents were contiguous, the grounds of both meeting. When the bishop, who liked friendly intercourse between the various Orders, brought the Sisters of Mercy to the Carmelite monastery, the nuns happened to be chanting the Office, and he said softly : " Listen to the doves cooing." Their chaplain, Canon (Joseph) Brown, was a warm friend to the Sisters of Mercy. For many years he had been rector of the English College, Valladolid ; but though he brought home the air and mien of a Spanish don, his stately, solemn ways were not repelling. His urbanity was charming ; no one could be long in his company without experiencing his fatherly kindness and rare thoughtfulness. As chaplain or confessor he watched over " the doves " for forty years, so that he seemed

a necessary part of the sacred enclosure, and they mourn his loss as deeply to-day as on the day of his happy death. He directed the Sisters of Mercy also after the death of Bishop Hogarth. With the nuns of St. Clare's Abbey the Sisters of Mercy have always been intimately connected. Many Sisters of Mercy have been educated at the famous boarding-school of the Abbey, and at one time twelve reverend mothers* of the Order of Mercy looked to it as their *Alma Mater* and loved to recall the days when they were joyous "Abbey girls." Among these were Isabella Walmsely, reverend mother at Liverpool; Amelia Tadmán, at Guernsey; Jane Raymond, at Sydney; Anne Viay, at Sunderland; Mary Drysdale, at Newcastle; Julia O'Donoghue, at Abingdon; also Mary Clarkson, Elizabeth Birchall, Elizabeth Evans, Alice Thompson, several of whom have since passed from earth.—R.I.P.

Bishop Hogarth was a sincere admirer of nuns. Sometimes he would join them at the recreation hour, and the youngest did not enjoy a joke more heartily than he. Once, seeing a nun look somewhat serious, he touched her with his staff and sang out :

"What's the use of sighing
When time is on the wing?
We can't prevent its flying;
Then merrily, merrily sing."

While two nuns of another Order were staying at the Convent of Mercy he called on them, and some remark elicited from the matter-of-fact prelate the exclamation: "Fiddle-de-dee!" The elder, who understood little English, asked: "Vat is feedle-dee-dee, milord?" The episcopal explanation added to her perplexity about *de pretty vord*, which greatly amused him. The day before his death he laughed very heartily on hearing a Sister tell

* They unite in describing the Abbey nuns as "real saints and particularly kind and generous to the Sisters of Mercy."

that one of her pupils reported herself as having the *keets* (bronchitis) in her throat.

The good bishop regarded Darlington as the paradise of the earth. If he noticed any of the Sunderland Sisters looking ill he would say to reverend mother: "Send her awhile to Darlington; it will do her good to walk about in the nice garden." The grand, kind old man departed on the Feast of St. Francis de Sales, 1866, whom he resembled in many ways. He was in perfect health and spirits till a day before his death. A few days previous he was at Ushaw at the president's feast, and all remarked how well he looked and how strong his voice was. Walking through the cemetery, he said pleasantly it was so beautiful a place to be buried in that it made one wish to die. He sang High Mass on Sunday at eleven, preached with his wonted energy, and after his thanksgiving waited to hear confessions before going to breakfast. When he retired to his study he began a note to Dr. Tate; every letter was correctly formed till near the end, when the pen made a crooked stroke as he fell on the floor in a fit of apoplexy. At the news of his illness mother-superior hastened to Darlington, but his eloquent tongue was still. The only sign of consciousness he gave was to stretch out his hand for the crucifix she held to his lips, and press it to his heart. He lingered twenty-four hours, and sweetly yielded his pure, upright soul to God. For over fifty years he had never once failed to offer the Holy Sacrifice daily.

The grief his death occasioned was overpowering; his children, who had lived under their father's eye and daily experienced his loving care, wept incessantly for the friend who had never failed to console them, but could console them no more. The belief in his sanctity was universal; every one desired to have some article of devotion which had belonged to him or touched his sacred remains, and many protested that these relics effected cures. But none

felt his death so keenly as the Sisters of Mercy, who had so long enjoyed his daily ministrations, and who had always found in him a friend ready to aid them in every way. The grief raised their hearts to God, in whose bosom the dear old saint slept, and made them cleave all the more closely to Him.

Among the Sisters professed by Bishop Hogarth was Sister M. Philippa Vere, a convert, who had never been baptized till she was received into the Church at the age of seventeen in the London Oratory. She had a brother to whom she was devotedly attached; their parents were dead, and they lived together, being all in all to each other. When she went to the altar to make her First Communion she was astonished to see her darling brother do the same, not knowing he ever thought of being a Catholic. While he pursued his studies in the English College at Lisbon she was praying for his perseverance in her humble novitiate. Attacked by consumption, she was professed on her death-bed, June, 1865. Young and fair to look upon, she made a cheerful sacrifice of her life to God, resigning to Him her all-absorbing desire to see her beloved brother a priest; and some hours before she expired, having said *good-by* to the sorrowing reverend mother and Sister, she gasped rather than spoke: "My everlasting love to Langdon." That cherished brother is a priest on the London mission, and never has the memory of his precious sister faded from his mind. He pays a yearly visit to Sunderland and offers Mass for her soul in the convent chapel.

Sunderland is a bright, pleasant town. The air is much purer than in other manufacturing districts, and many improvements have been recently made by opening out wide streets among the narrow lanes of the older parts, which were flanked by high old houses, so rickety that only necessity could induce families to live in them. It has long been famous for ship-building, formerly of wood,

now of iron. On the Monk-Wearmouth side the collieries give employment to hundreds, and the working class are comfortable so long as the works are active. But when *strikes* come—the natural outcome of non-Christian relations between capital and labor, which are among the saddest features of nineteenth-century civilization—great and wide-spread is the distress.

Sunderland has parks, winter-gardens, public halls, hospitals, and schools, godless and denominational; among the latter are ten Catholic schools, in which it is difficult to arrange that religious instruction will not suffer from government demands. The credit of religion requires that convent schools be rather in advance of the godless schools, but the essentials for passing each of the six standards ascend every year; mentally the poor children are severely taxed, and many wise heads attribute the increase of lunacy to too much and too early pressure on the young brain. This high-pressure education is doubtless preparing thousands of invalids for the future; and many a "smart," delicate girl has her appetite spoiled when set to consider the proportions in which hydrogen, albumen, caseine, and gluten should enter food, not to speak of the articles useful for the respiratory organs. Children have to pass, individually, in reading, writing, and arithmetic at the age of six—a barbarity only equalled by another product of our century, the laborer of seven, the baby factory-hand. The Protestant inspectors who thus legally help to murder the infants are full of courtesy for the nuns, and bear eloquent testimony to their humanizing influence on the lower classes, the neatness and brightness of their schools and pupils, and perform as pleasantly as may be their disagreeable duties of ascertaining that the *cramming* which is now called *education* has been complete, and that the juvenile brain has been forced to the utmost. With all this, religious instruction, which, above and before all else, must be attended to in every school conducted by

Sisters of Mercy, is relegated to the vacant moments before or after the time marked for secular instruction. To gain the honor of being presented for examination, each baby of six "must have *made*," to use the new English, "two hundred and fifty *attendances*" in the year.

The outskirts of Sunderland, dotted with villas and gardens, are quite picturesque. High Street runs up a hill; about midway up is the convent. When founded it was surrounded by fields; now it is in the heart of the city, among shops, arcades, and markets. People who pass its portals for the first time are surprised to find themselves among grass and trees. The buildings form a quadrangle with gardens in the centre, quite shut in from the neighboring houses. There are several quarries in the vicinity, which, when exhausted, will probably be changed into parks. The part of the town nearest the sea is built on high cliffs, flights of steps being cut in the rocks leading to the beach for the convenience of bathers. The harbor is guarded by light-houses on long piers running far into the sea, which is constantly dotted with vessels from the Baltic, Norway, Hamburg, Denmark, and other places. It is a pretty sight to see them crossing the bar: they rise up as if going over a hill, and then sink into the smoother waters. Along this northern coast navigation is dangerous, and many vessels which had braved the worst weather in long voyages have been wrecked in sight of Sunderland. The coast-guard render much help by watching for ships in distress and sending relief in various ways; but more wrecks occur here than on the rest of the English coast, and the nuns, in consequence, have plenty of widows and orphans to assist.

The Sunderland people have a rough independence about them and short, blunt manners; many are fond of dress and pleasure-loving. The number of converts to be instructed is the best consolation of the Sisters. Protestants show much curiosity about Catholic worship and ceremo-

nial, in gratifying which they rub out some of their false notions. The Sisters are welcomed at the public hospitals, and every facility is given the priest for administering the sacraments. Yet an undercurrent of bigotry pervades some of these institutions, and children especially are tampered with : a convent pupil, who had never missed Mass before going into a hospital, has never set foot in the church since she came out. Mixed marriages also weaken the faith, cause indifference and neglect of the chief duties of Catholic parents. The Sisters endeavor to counteract evils of this nature by instructing the children thoroughly in the principles of our holy religion.

The Sunderland convent, though it fully answers its purpose, is plain indeed when compared to many of the elegant structures raised in England since its foundation forty years ago. But the convent church is a perfect beauty, built of stone, in the Gothic style. The large window over the altar was presented to the mother-superior on the feast of her patron, June 21, 1881, by the parishioners, who also presented the altar and reredos, of Caen stone. On one side of the throne is the presentation of the gifts of the Magi ; on the other the Annunciation. The canopy is supported by pillars of variegated marble, the altar by pillars of green marble. Beneath it are carved the emblems of the Evangelists, set in medallions to admit of flower-pots under the altar-table. The flooring is of ornamental church-tiles. The name of each Sister who died, with the particulars given on the mortuary-cards, is done in ornamental letters on a brass plate the size of one of the tiles, in place of which it is inserted. The ante-chapel is separated from the choir by three handsome stone arches. The organ-gallery, the gift of a generous friend, is a light, elegant structure harmonizing with the surroundings. The nuns' choir has a handsome arched roof ; over the ante-chapel is the infirmary. The church opens into a vestibule containing statues of the Dead Christ and the Sacred

Heart, presented by friends. This is a continuation of St. Elizabeth's corridor, at the other end of which is an apse which has been elegantly decorated by a grateful friend. The *Regina Cæli* statue and the elaborate silver lamp kept burning before it day and night were also gifts of thanksgiving. The Stations are in this cloister, which is lighted by Gothic windows. Our Lady's apse has exquisite windows of painted glass.

The Golden Jubilee was celebrated in Sunderland with peculiar elegance. Solemn High Mass and sermon filled the morning, and in the afternoon the bishop planted a tree to commemorate the auspicious event, and at his lordship's invitation the mother-superior, who had been received and professed by the holy foundress, planted another. An immense number of priests and other friends assisted at all the celebrations. The bishop composed a sacred play, or *libretto*, for the occasion, in which was represented the career of Mother McAuley, so replete with dramatic incidents. The parts were well sustained by the convent pupils, and the effect was novel and striking. Elegant tableaux, appropriate scenery, groups of angel-infants with banners of white and gold, doves, scrolls, festoons, flowers, the grand jubilee flag of crimson velvet with gold lettering, relieved by green foil—all came into requisition to give the audience assembled in the large hall of the convent a beautiful and intellectual treat. A large tree with thirteen branches represented Dublin and its early filiations; from the Cork branch a gold chain fell to a smaller tree representing Sunderland and its four branches. The travelled auditors thought the whole scene unique, while many "Sunderlanders" pronounced it "canny."

Bishop Chadwick, a native of Drogheda, was welcomed in a beautiful ode as successor to his countryman, St. Cuthbert. But the gem of the evening was the *libretto*. From the first act—in which Mother McAuley is repre-

sented kneeling before a crucifix, an angel conveying to her the message that "virgins shall follow her, decking God's own Church as lilies deck the eastern meadows," the apparition vanishing slowly amid melting music—till the last scene, in which Mother Catherine is represented in the sleep of death, the interest never flags.

Alas! in a short time the Sisters who conducted the play of the episcopal dramatist were called to render him the last sad offices. Night and day they watched by this dear father and friend, striving to allay his fearful sufferings by every means their tender, reverent affection could suggest. Like his predecessors, St. Cuthbert and St. Chad, he had long desired to resign the mitre and end his days in retreat; but such was not the will of God. He died May 13, 1881, at the ripe age of sixty-nine, leaving behind the reputation of having been "the most noble-hearted of men, the best and gentlest of bishops." The provost, Monsignor Consitt, with whom he had been united in intimate affection and friendship for fifty years, had but left the grave of his beloved sister, M. Aloysius Consitt, in Liverpool, when he was called to pay the last tribute of affection and farewell over his lifeless remains.

Bishop Chadwick had promised the students of Ushaw to be with them on the 17th, and he failed not to keep the appointment; but for the first time his presence among them caused sorrow and tears, for he was carried thither to be laid in the cemetery with the masters of his youth, Dr. Lingard, the historian, and Dr. Gibson, brother of the saintly Mother M. Liguori. His remains repose near those of his predecessor, Bishop Hogarth, by whom he was tenderly beloved.—R.I.P.

The venerable mother-superior of Sunderland convent has seen four bishops die since her arrival in that town, 1843, all of whom were real fathers to herself and her children. Full indeed is her memento of the dead. When one nears the seventies it seems more natural to live in

the past than to make new friends. But what a past this ancient mother can recall! Received and professed by the holy foundress, she spent the first six years of her religious life under Mother M. Clare Moore and Mother M. Josephine Warde—superiors assuredly accomplished in every respect. And among the many distinguished women who were her novice-companions in those early days of the fresh fervor of the Institute was “Geraldine,” whom she knew at her best and brightest. May this good mother, who has given her life-work for the conversion of England, be spared long to draw souls to Jesus ere she hears His blessed invitation, “Come, my spouse, come from Libanus; thou shalt be crowned.”

CHAPTER XLII.

CHEADLE—BILSTON—ALTON—SHREWSBURY.

Bishop Ullathorne and the Earl of Shrewsbury ask a Foundation for Cheadle—St. Giles'—The Countess—Princess Doria—Princess Borghese—Munificent Gifts—English Reserve—Contrast—Letters—Details—Trials—Bilston—The Black Country—Alton—Ceremonies—Began with Earl John, ended with Earl Bertram—The Shrewsbury Estates pass to Protestants—Difficulties and Vicissitudes—Kindness of Cardinal Cullen—Shrewsbury Convent firmly established—Bishop Brown—A perpetual *Deo gratias*.

IN April, 1848, Right Rev. Bishop Ullathorne and the Earl of Shrewsbury applied to the Carlow Convent of Mercy for a few nuns to establish their Institute at Cheadle, a small town in Staffordshire. A year passed away before a decisive answer was given, but it was finally arranged that the Cheadle convent should be established in June, 1849. Meanwhile Bishop Pompallier came to Carlow for Sisters for Auckland; but as the majority of the community thought Cheadle enough for the present, the bishop of the antipodes was advised to try elsewhere for a branch. On the 14th of June, 1849, five Sisters of Mercy set out for Cheadle under the care of Mother M. Cecilia Maher and Rev. Father Maher; the party remained two days at Liverpool, delighted to renew their acquaintance with Mother M. Liguori Gibson and Sister M. Gertrude Verdon, recently their guests at Carlow. They reached Cheadle June 18, 1849, and were installed in a nice little convent adjoining the beautiful church of St. Giles.* Everything went on

* Mother M. Cecilia Maher writes: "We reached Cheadle, conducted by Rev. Mr. Gibbons and Father Maher. The church, though not large, is of extreme beauty

prosperously for a while, but the dampness of the convent and the severity of the winter told seriously on the health of several Sisters, and the superior, Mother M. Rose Strange, became so ill that she was recalled to Carlow.

Mother M. Rose had received kindnesses of every description from Lord and Lady Shrewsbury. They often visited the convent, sometimes with their daughter, Princess Doria, who was most kind to the young community and showed herself as interested in works of mercy as her saintly sister, Guendaline, Princess Borghese. The earl gave them splendid altar-plate, and, through the generosity of his family, the little convent chapel soon became a gem. Yet the Sisters felt the coldness of the reception accorded them, as it took them some time to become accustomed to the reserve of the English character. The earl and countess, and the many distinguished guests entertained at Alton Towers, frequently visited them and paid them many polite attentions, but the hearty welcome and encouraging blessings with which the Irish would greet them on similar occasions were wanting. Mother M. Rose, when writing appreciatively of the civilities shown them, added: "Don't fear that the favor of the great or noble will injure the religious spirit of this convent. We see but few visitors; the Sisters have plenty to do and are devoted to their work." The owners of Alton Towers were most pious. "Lady Shrewsbury is in church every morning at six, and after Mass relieves poor objects of charity. She goes to Mass again at nine, rather better dressed than in the morning; at six she is enveloped in a large cloak. When only a few familiar friends stay at the castle all dine at two P.M.; family prayers in public every evening before tea, the earl and countess presiding, and, be the company what it may, the latter always retires at ten. Lady Shrewsbury keeps no

and richness—windows stained glass, pillars gold and mosaic, roof gold and colors, every leaf denoting something sacred. Joy-bells rang out for us and the organ accompanied the *Te Deum*, sung by beautiful, thrilling voices."

carriage, but takes post-chaises at the next town when she wishes to drive out. The earl keeps only two horses, one for himself and one for his servant—an economy practised purely for God's honor, that whatever is saved may go to church-building and the poor."

Several receptions and professions were held with all possible splendor and solemnity in the exquisite church of St. Giles. On the 27th of May, 1851, Miss Margaret Keatly was clothed with the holy habit, Bishop Ullathorne officiating. The sermon was preached by Very Rev. James Maher, of Carlow, grand-uncle of the novice. The novelty of the ceremony attracted such crowds that St. Giles' could scarcely accommodate them. The bishop congratulated the Sisters on the progress already made and the promise of better things foreshadowed on all sides. The joyous pealing of the church-bells, which continued at intervals during the day to send glad notes far and near, seemed to echo the good bishop's encouraging words.

The Sisters steadily pursued the works of their vocation, attending before all else to follow, under the guidance of their superior, the path traced by their holy Rule. Pecuniary means were often scanty, yet the superior took care to provide the best books for spiritual reading, and endeavored to have experienced spiritual directors for the annual retreats. A day-school for poor children and an infant-school were opened, and later a school for children of the middle classes. The sick were visited and relieved according to their necessities, and all the works of mercy carried on as far as possible.

In July, 1855, Very Rev. Dr. Winter, of Alton, asked to have some Sisters to take charge of his schools and sick, and, his request being granted, those selected were installed in a very pretty little convent near the church. In February, 1856, the mother-superior of the parent house, Mother M. Xavier Maguire, of Dublin, a great friend of the Cheadle superioress, having received an application for Sis-

ters for Bilston which she could not supply, recommended the pastor, Rev. P. A. Davies, who had come to Dublin for a colony on part of the bishop, to apply at Cheadle. The Cheadle superior, Mother M. Gertrude Keatly, visited Bilston, and its case was so feelingly pleaded by the zealous pastor that the good mother and her companions were ready to make any sacrifice to aid the poor Catholics living there. The town is certainly devoid of external attraction. Situated in the centre of the mining region in South Staffordshire known as the "Black Country," by day the sky is overclouded with smoke from the furnaces, and at night the glaring fires and the glowing heaps of refuse from the smelting of the iron remind many a sinner of hell. The industrious, kind-hearted people who toiled in this district had never been able to procure much instruction for themselves or their children, and now, with that generosity which does not always stay to count the cost, the Cheadle community nobly volunteered to undertake the task, thinking, no doubt, that others would have similar desires of sacrificing their own comfort and convenience for God's glory and the good of souls.

All preliminaries being arranged with Bishop Ullathorne, on the 1st of April, 1856, Mother M. Gertrude took thither four Sisters to begin the good work, and immediately opened schools for girls and infants, and a night-school for young women, all which proved the greatest blessing to Bilston. On the 10th of August, 1856, Bertram, the seventeenth Earl of Shrewsbury, died, and, his estates and other property going to a Protestant branch of the Talbots, the community lost the yearly stipend paid by the earls for the support of the schools. Many changes followed the death of the last Catholic earl, some of which rendered it impossible for the Sisters to remain at Cheadle. Though Alton, too, was a loser by the changes, the devoted pastor, Very Rev. Dr. Winter, could not bring himself to deprive his people of the kind care and instructions of the Sisters.

By all imaginable acts of self-sacrifice he kept up the mission, convent and schools, and had the gratification to see the house become strong and vigorous. Doubtless he is now enjoying the reward of his unobtrusive and devoted charity, for he passed away, to the great sorrow of the community, January 18, 1867.—R.I.P.

The Sisters of Mercy in Wolverhampton showed much kindness to the struggling little community at Bilston—Mother M. Catherine Wareing came to see her new neighbors, and, finding one of the Sisters ill, offered the infirmary of her convent and the sisterly care of her children to restore the invalid—an offer gratefully accepted. But the improvement which rest and change made in the dear Sister, M. Joseph Healy, was transient. She lingered through the summer, tenderly nursed by her beloved Sisters and enjoying every spiritual blessing, and departed sweetly to our Lord early in August, 1857. The tie of sisterly union between the communities of Bilston and Wolverhampton is still a source of mutual consolation.

On the 18th of October, 1858, Bishop Ullathorne presided at the profession of two Sisters, and during his visit it was agreed that the community should establish a House of Mercy at a cost of fifteen hundred pounds, part of which was advanced from its slender funds. Things were thus progressing when, through the providence of God, new trials came upon the Sisterhood. Heretofore the difficulties had been many. For a long time they were lodged in a small, miserable house, far from schools and church, and after walking to Mass every morning they had to return to breakfast and set out again for the schools; yet all succeeded well, and they were as happy in the dreary coal-fields of Staffordshire as they had been in the picturesque vicinity of Alton Towers. But their lives were not to be spent among the belching furnaces of the Black Country; “through many tribulations” they were to be transferred to brighter scenes. While they were

using every effort to pay off the debt incurred for the site of the proposed buildings a series of "strikes" and "lock-outs" all but ruined the iron trade. Distress fell heavily on the laboring classes, and all who could gather a little money together sought employment elsewhere, the greater number emigrating to America. It was with profound grief that the venerable bishop saw Bilston must lose the Sisters, who, his lordship said, had always edified him by their piety and unity, and the zeal with which they fulfilled the duties of their vocation. "For some time," writes one of these devoted women, "we felt we could not remain in Bilston. In the anguish of my heart I wrote to Cardinal Cullen, and he replied as *my mother would have done*, and sent a check to help us meanwhile, though I never asked for anything. He offered to find us a suitable mission in Ireland, and we had applications from seven different places. I had felt keenly leaving Ireland, but, having made the sacrifice, I did not wish to return."

After many negotiations with various ecclesiastics it was finally decided that the community should accept the invitation of Bishop Brown to settle in Shrewsbury, the generous prelate bestowing a house and garden with a hundred pounds a year on his new spiritual daughters. The convent and schools are close to the church on a private road just outside the town. Many of the vestments and church ornaments of Alton Towers found their way to Shrewsbury when the title passed to a Protestant heir, and the Sisters, who had begun in Earl John's church, were glad to find that the Shrewsbury church to which they had now come had been built by Earl Bertram.

"We refused no sacrifice for the good of Bilston," continues our correspondent; "we retrenched every morsel we could live without. But surely God knows all. We felt intensely leaving the 'Black Country' after our twelve years. I had to come off, for I could not cease weeping. The

poor people and the dear little children were in such grief ! Throughout these trials I can see nothing but God's merciful love and care ; through weal and woe we always had the Most Holy Sacrament, daily Mass, and frequent Communion. May we never forget His mercy to us ! I have become so tremulous and shaky I fear I shall soon become one of 'the objects of the Institute.' But we cannot go to heaven without suffering. You say truly I am surrounded by loving hearts, thank God ! ”

Right Rev. James Brown received the Sisters with paternal kindness, and was a generous father to them to the end. He closed his long and saintly life October 14, 1881, being attended in his last illness by the Sisters of Mercy, who had prospered so well under his gentle care.—R.I.P. They are busily engaged in teaching, instructing, visiting the sick, and providing situations for young women of every class. Some of their pupils meet with great success as governesses in France and elsewhere, while others have become useful members of society as domestic servants.

The Sisters often admire the wonderful dealings of Providence in their regard in translating them from the dark but dear spot in which they had labored twelve years, and to which they clung with such deep affection. Long since has their sadness been turned into joy. The fifteen years they have spent in Shrewsbury (1883) have been singularly blessed with fruit to others, and they feel it was in that old historic town that God designed their community to take root and flourish. The sorrows of early years prepared them for the benedictions they now enjoy, and from the fulness of their grateful hearts a perpetual *Deo gratias* trembles on their lips. But the old generation is gradually passing away, and their successors in the verdant vales of Shropshire have but a traditionary knowledge of the trials of those fervent souls who bore “the burden of the day and the heats” in a region undermined

in every direction by coal-pits, the noon-day sun for ever obscured by smoke and coal-dust, and the darkness of night made visible by grim, glaring furnaces. May God grant to the seniors length of days to recount to the juniors His ancient mercies, and may these latter emulate the severe simplicity and humble labors which have borne the fruits they enjoy to-day; for in the story of these holy women and their wanderings there is food for encouragement—none, however, for undue elation. But when was elation found in souls who are always fitting themselves to become worthy instruments in the hands of God, and who refer to Him alone every favor and every success with which, in His inexhaustible compassion, He blesses the labors of those who love Him?

CHAPTER XLIII.

FOUNDATION AT HULL—THE GREAT CONVENT CASE.

Kingstown-upon-Hull—Sisters of Mercy the first *Religieuses* ever established in that Town—History—Sir William de la Pole—Monastic Houses—Charles I. repulsed at the Gates of Hull—Pole's Monasteries—Dissolution—The Rising in the North—*Domus Dei*—Home for the Aged—The Carmel—Holy Trinity Church—The Convent of Mercy—Its Founders and Benefactors—Dean Trappes, Canon Motler, Lady Clifford Constable—Convent on Anlaby Road—Solidity without Heaviness—First Profession—Bishops Briggs and Cornthwaite—The great S— Trial—Incidents—Letter of Father Ambrose St. John, of the Birmingham Oratory—Dr. Newman—The Trial helps to establish the legal *Status* of Nuns in Great Britain—The costs, £6,000, defrayed by Friends—Duke of Norfolk contributes £600, the Bishop of Meath £800—The real Instigators the Mother and Uncle of the Plaintiff, both now dead—Remarks—Sister M. Winifred—Great Progress of the Community since the famous Trial—Lady Beaumont—Bishop Quinn—Division of the Beverley Diocese—Branch Convents at Carlton and Middlesbrough—Conclusion.

THE Convent of Our Lady of Mercy, Hull, was founded January 8, 1857, by Sisters who had come from the parent house, Dublin, in 1855 to establish a convent at Clifford. The immense amount of work that fell to their share in Hull caused them to resign Clifford to their Sisters in Bermondsey.

Hull is a thriving seaport with a population of about one hundred and twenty-four thousand. Built at the confluence of the Humber and the Hull, it has fine facilities for commerce. Though a very ancient place, the Sisters of Mercy were the first religious women ever established in Hull, which, prior to the so-called Reformation, boasted of three monastic houses for men. Sir William de la Pole, when building the *Chartreuse*, declared his intention of

inviting thither a community of nuns, but death carried him off before he could give stability to his pious wishes.

Hull was founded by Edward I. in the thirteenth century, but its appearance is altogether modern. No vestige remains of the noble edifices that once sheltered the Augustinian, Carmelite, and Carthusian Orders, or the stately palace of Henry VIII., or the strong fortifications which enabled Sir John Hotham to resist the entrance of Charles I. when that monarch thundered at its gates. The monastery founded by the munificent De la Pole to testify his gratitude to God for his temporal prosperity was a fine building, which accommodated twelve monks and a prior. The hospital east of the priory, endowed for thirteen poor men and as many poor women, was dedicated "to the honor of Almighty God and the most glorious Virgin Mary, St. Michael and all holy spirits, St. Thomas of Canterbury and all the saints of God." Several of the neighboring merchants and nobles added chantries to the original foundation. In 1536 the monks were expelled and commissioners appointed to demolish the priory, sell the lands and tenements, and put the money in the royal exchequer. The rising in the North, however, compelled the king to restore about thirty houses, among which was this priory. But in 1838 it was utterly destroyed, and wheat grew on ground it had formerly covered. The hospital, *Domus Dei*, remains. In this institution are seventy poor old men and women, whose declining years are freed from temporal cares by the pious charity of their Catholic forefathers. Each has a good room, coal, medical attendance, and six shillings a week. The Augustinian monastery, adorned with gardens, fountains, and courts, covered half the street upon which it stood. The Carmelite house flourished in a spot still called White Friar Gate. It was founded by Edward I. "to draw a blessing upon himself and the town, and out of gratitude to God for all the favors bestowed on him." All was levelled with the ground

and a plough passed over it. In 1830 human remains were dug up upon its site and reverently transferred to the vaults of the Catholic church. Another relic of Catholic times is Holy Trinity Church, generally allowed to be the finest parish church in the kingdom.

The Hull Convent of Mercy was founded through the exertions of the late Dean Trappes, aided by his energetic curate, Father Motler. Lady Clifford Constable, *née* Chichester, of Burton Constable, near Hull, gave much help by patronizing two bazaars and contributing largely to both. The profits, with two thousand pounds contributed by the Sisters themselves, enabled them to purchase a gentleman's mansion on the Anlaby Road, into which they removed on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, 1857, from the small school-house they had hitherto occupied. After sixteen years they left the mansion for the handsome convent they had built meanwhile. The style is Gothic, the material red brick and light stone. A local *Guide* says it is built for all time. "Its appearance denotes its uses, religious and educational. . . . The front elevation presents three features—the left angle a tower, the right or western angle a gable, and the centre a large block of building with three tiers of windows. The western compartment has three windows in each story, and stone niches to receive figures. The design is altogether novel and striking, its great feature being solidity without heaviness."

Sisters M. Catherine Swan and M. Clare King were the first religeuses ever professed in Hull. Bishop Briggs, who received their vows, was a truly kind and generous father to the community. He died in 1861 and was succeeded by Bishop Cornthwaite, who has been equally friendly during many years of trouble and subsequent prosperity.

The progress of the Hull community was very gradual till 1869, when the celebrated trial, S— *versus* S—, drew the eyes of the world to the spot. A Miss S—

brought an action against the late and the present superiors for "assault and conspiracy," these ladies having, by episcopal authority (power being delegated by Rome for the purpose), dismissed her on account of faults which, though comparatively trivial, were judged to unfit her for the religious state. It lasted the whole month of February, and the "startling revelations" of convent life in which it abounded attracted universal attention. One of the counsel spoke of the defendants and their witnesses—all members of the community—as "ladies by birth and education who had given up their time and devoted their lives for the purpose of charity, the relief of distress, and the education of the poor," and "who had lived in strict conformity with the rules and professions they had made." The mother-superior had stated the plaintiff's case in a confidential letter to Bishop Cornthwaite:

"Had Sister M. S—— in other respects given edification to the community and satisfied her superiors, there might have been reason for substituting a severe penance for the extreme course I now propose. But . . . her general levity of conduct, her habitual disregard of the rules in minor matters, her want of truth, her unauthorized intercourse with externs, and the danger of her example for others combine to decide against adopting the less severe measure. Past experience has shown me that little reliance can be placed on her promises of amendment." The defendant proceeds to propose, "with the full concurrence of her council and having taken the best advice within her reach," that Sister M. S—— be "released from her vows and dismissed from the community."

And after a long time the bishop, though "biassed in favor of the plaintiff as the weaker party," decided, upon a careful investigation of the case, "to use the faculties he had received from Rome." He requested her relatives to remove her, adding that "upon no consideration would he permit her to remain." "Under the conviction that no

other community would receive her, and that her religious obligations are a source of danger rather than of merit," the bishop sent her an absolution or dispensation from her vows, which was really an expulsion.

Although some relatives of the expelled member had done a great deal towards bringing about this effect, it grieved and shocked them to such an extent that they threatened, unless she were reinstated—a thing impossible in case of an expelled member—they would seek redress from the law. Under their inspiration the poor lady brought action and claimed five thousand pounds damages.

The trial laid bare the interior workings of the convent, every member of which was questioned and cross-questioned by some of the ablest lawyers on earth. Popular sympathy was so strongly with the plaintiff * that Sir John Coleridge evoked a burst of applause by the closing words of his address to the jury :

“Remember that, not in the language of rhetorical declamation, but in the language of sober truth, you are Miss S——’s last, sole refuge ! Through you alone can she obtain reparation or compensation for the wrongs she has suffered. . . . Clear away, therefore, from her—for you can—the dark cloud with which the defendants have overshadowed her ! Bring back to her—for you can—the bright light from which they have shut her out ! Give her such a verdict as not feeling nor prejudice, but good sense and truth and common justice, demand. She asks nothing more at your hands ; she will be content with nothing less.

* The defendant had stated the plaintiff’s case again in a confidential letter to the bishop, May, 1865 : “The principal points in which she errs are poverty, obedience, and truth. If I close my eyes to her faults she perseveres in them with confidence. If admonished in all mildness and charity she denies them and continues to transgress. If reproached with severity she assumes a tone and manner of defiance. If given a penance she continues it longer than she was desired, to show how little she cares about it.”

Untruthfulness and want of sincerity were certainly the worst faults of this poor, half-demented creature. And where such faults exist amendment is all but impossible.

She asks what I believe any honorable and high-minded man who understands her case will say she ought to have—and in the hands of twelve such men I leave her.”

The “twelve such men” delivered a verdict for the plaintiff, and were rewarded by such cheers as never before reverberated through Westminster Hall. Yet the revelations had greatly disappointed the bigotry of the lower class of English, who could not be convinced in any other way of the moral purity of convents. Another good effect was that this trial, according to a celebrated English lawyer, helped to establish the legal *status* of nuns in England by granting small damages to the plaintiff for having been dismissed from the convent. For after all the trial, expense, publicity, and shame incurred by the poor lady, the net amount of the verdict was but two hundred pounds.

The legal cost to the community was six thousand pounds, nearly all of which was covered by subscriptions from friends—the Duke of Norfolk contributing six hundred pounds, and Bishop Nulty, of Meath, eight hundred pounds. Letters from the most distinguished ecclesiastics, from members of the Catholic nobility, and others, consoled the defendants during this awful crisis.* The excitement was so great that it was deemed providential the poor defendants were not assassinated. And yet the case was simple enough: every society, every club, every organization claims the right to expel or *black-ball* members who habitually disregard its rules. This was all the Hull Sisters had done. Miss S—— had proved herself incorrigible as an

* “Do not be cast down at this trial,” wrote Archbishop Manning to the mother-superior. “It will not turn to the hindrance but to the furtherance of the faith and the vindication of our convents from unjust attacks. The public opinion of the country is just and generous, and we have no fear to stand in the light of day.”

Bishop Cornthwaite, of Beverley, writes to the same:

“Warm sympathy for you and your community has reached me from every side. . . . Your cause is the cause of every convent in the United Kingdom. Where is the Catholic who did not feel himself struck and wounded by the late suit in the Queen’s Bench? Your anxieties and sufferings, dear reverend mother, and those of your community, have been severe indeed, but they have borne fruit which every convent will reap and their friends rejoice in for years to come.”

infractor of the Rules by which the society of which she was a member exists. One of her superiors wrote: "I will resign my office rather than have charge of her." Another had serious thoughts of returning to the house of her profession because Miss S—— was "so hard to manage and control," and affirmed that she "would rather beg her bread from door to door" than retain charge of so difficult a creature. To me poor Miss S—— seems to have been so weak of intellect that she was scarcely a responsible agent, and I think the good Sisters of Hull might have allowed her to go the length of her tether, especially as she seems to have been the only "colored" sheep in that fair flock, for the mother-superior writes:

"In giving up my charge of the Sisters it makes me happy to bear testimony to their sterling goodness. They are, with that one exception, docile, simple, self-sacrificing, and laborious. They love God, love each other, love their rule, and love the poor."

I think had any of the older superiors * of the Order been in Hull the great trial, S—— *versus* S——, would scarcely have taken place. Yet even one of Miss Susan's peculiarities could suffice to make a whole community, herself included, intensely miserable. The trials and humiliations put upon her in the religious house awakened a sort of contemptuous pity in the minds of many. Her "duster" is not yet forgotten. Here is a pleasant letter from Father Ambrose St. John, † of the Birmingham Oratory, in

* That the faults of Miss S—— sometimes occurred before children made her case more serious: "She is so artful and dextrous that it is almost impossible to detect her; but the eyes of the young are piercing and their tongues ever ready to publish the weaknesses of others, and disgrace may come upon religion and upon us before we are aware of it," writes her superior.

† Father Ambrose St. John is the dear disciple of Dr. Newman so touchingly singled out towards the close of the *Apologia pro Vita Sua*:

"And to you especially, dear Ambrose St. John, whom God gave me when He took every one else away; who are the link between my old life and my new; who have now for twenty-one years been so devoted to me, so patient, so zealous, so tender; who have let me lean so hard upon you; who have never thought of yourself, if I was in question,"

which he refers to the great excitement of the early part of 1869. It is addressed to the mother-superior of the Guernsey Convent of Mercy, who had been his penitent :

“ THE ORATORY, EDGBASTON, Easter Day, 1869.

“ MY DEAR REVEREND MOTHER : I have not forgotten you in your new and arduous task, so you need not be reproachful. Reverend mothers are great people and cannot afford to think of little folks, or I should have scolded you for leaving Brighton without telling me, and leaving me to find my bird that flew away from Birmingham half fledged, and then took refuge in Brighton and was in a nice, warm nest, now had taken wing again as a matronly hen with a brood of her own, in search of a hyperborean land over the sea where there are no naughty Yankees* to molest the young birds. Happy you ! If there is a war with England you will find yourself in the diocese of Coutances ! I am delighted to hear you have so good a spiritual father with you ; so much of your peace and happiness depends upon that that you cannot be thankful enough for so great a blessing. I hope he won't pet you all and spoil you ; and I hope he won't think you all saints, but very earnestly do I hope that you will be so without being thought so.

“ Yes, that was a strange trial, wasn't it ? I suppose there were some mistaken things done, but then who doesn't make mistakes ? It is a [wonder] that so much ground could be gone over without more coming out than did come. I am sure they must be very good people at the bottom, those Hull nuns. Talk of wearing dusters, indeed, when St. Philip made the great historian Cardinal Baronius chant the *Miserere* at a marriage, and then dance lugubriously to the tune ; and another father he made wear a pinafore and pinned a paper on him ' For having eaten curds and whey ' ! What a pity they didn't quit St. Philip's practice with the greatest men of his day ! As to Miss A—— I have nothing to say or advise. She is unmanageable. If I hear of anything to suit her I will let you know. Good-by, my dear child. A happy Easter to you and yours. Don't take anybody without a good trial, not if they have the wealth of Cræsus—in fact, eschew rich novices ; they are sure to give themselves airs sooner or

* The Brighton community had some trouble just then with a lady from America, who, however, was not an American.

later. God bless you all! Pray for us. The father * sends you his blessing.

“Ever yours affectionately in our Lord,
“AMBROSE ST. JOHN, *of the Oratory.*”

Probably no other convent has passed through such long, severe, and varied trials. For years the Sisters were harassed with preparations for a suit in Queen's Bench, and a trial in Chancery was actually begun. The parents and uncle of the plaintiff, all now dead, were said to be the instigators of all this mischief. The poor lady † herself withdrew to a convent on the Continent as a parlor-boarder. It is remarkable, and most encouraging to religious because calculated to increase their confidence in the divine protection, that the Hull nuns never flourished half so much before the trial as after it. In 1869 they numbered fourteen; they are now forty. They had then four hundred children; they have now twenty-five hundred in ten different departments, under fourteen certificated Sisters, many non-certificated, and over forty pupil-teachers. In July, 1876, they opened a convent at Carlton through the liberality of Lady Beaumont, who gave them a house and garden, and built them very fine schools. At the request of Canon Motler, an old friend and generous benefactor, they opened a convent in Bradford about the same time; the canon gave them his own house and went into lodgings. Here

* “The father”—the present Cardinal Newman. When the mother-superior to whom the above is addressed entered the convent Father Ambrose St. John was ordinary confessor, and Dr. Newman extraordinary. On the lamented death of the former she wrote a few lines of condolence to “the father,” who acknowledged the attention as follows:

“THE ORATORY, June 3, 1875.

“MY DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST: Thank you for your affectionate letter. How can I be surprised that, after giving me the great blessing of Father Ambrose St. John for thirty-two years, God should at length recall it? It is the suddenness which has overcome me. He was getting better day by day, when all at once he fell back and died.

“Pray continue your prayers for me, for it is a great shock that I have received.
“Most sincerely yours,
JOHN H. NEWMAN.”

† From a recent letter I learn that Miss Susan S— became quite imbecile. Some Protestants, glad to get a weed from the pope's garden, if they cannot have a flower, offered her a splendid fortune if she would apostatize, but the poor creature had some conscience—more than her tempters. After the trial, as before, she was as faithful to the Catholic religion as one could be who was “morally and mentally warped.”

they teach eleven hundred and ten boys and girls. The priests and people of Bradford gave them a singularly warm welcome, and their services have met with so much gratitude and appreciation that their labors are a source of pleasure to themselves. In January, 1872, Bishop Quinn, of Brisbane, an old friend of the community, visited Hull and earnestly begged help for his distant see. Three professed members volunteered and sailed with him for Brisbane, where they are still doing God's work.

By the division of Beverley into the dioceses of Leeds and Middlesbrough, 1878, the Sisters lost Dr. Cornthwaite—a severe trial to them. At the desire of their new bishop, Dr. Lacy, a native of Navan, they bought three acres of land in Middlesbrough, with a view of erecting on it their head house for the diocese. Since the foundation, 1855, thirty Sisters have been professed and six died. Those whom God called home were ripe for heaven. We shall give a short sketch of one, Sister M. Winifred.

From early childhood she expressed an earnest desire to consecrate herself to God in the religious state, and her life was a preparation for the great object of her holy ambition. She devoted much of her time to instructing and visiting the sick poor in her neighborhood, and, as there was no church within several miles, she used to assemble the Catholics every Sunday in a small cottage, catechise them, and say prayers for them. On no account would she omit this practice. By the advice of a Redemptorist father she sought admission to the Order of Mercy, which she joined in September, 1859. At her profession she made, with leave of her superior, the sacrifice of her life for the conversion of her father. Her offering was accepted by God: from that time she was never free from suffering, but she was a model of patience and sweetness. Her father was thoroughly converted and spent his last years in a holy, penitential manner.

One of her brothers being near death, she, with permis-

sion of the superior, offered herself to suffer his agony for him. He died almost without a struggle. She endured for him the pains of that terrible conflict in the agony of thirty-six hours which preceded his death.*

Sister M. Winifred had a special love for the visitation of the sick; her words of consolation and instruction in this duty were always full of sweetness. Though very delicate, she shared all the labors of the Institute and worked to the last. On the very day on which she fell into her agony she had spent a considerable time giving instructions on First Communion. She was seized with violent convulsions and received the last sacraments. The priest knelt beside her to say the Recommendation of a Departing Soul, but so touching were the prayers she sometimes said aloud that tears stole down his cheeks and he could scarcely continue. When renewing her vows she pronounced "Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience" in a strong voice, and seemed overcome with joy at the words, "our Lord Jesus Christ." Every time the priest entered the room she begged for absolution, and she frequently entreated the Sisters to speak to her about our Lord and His Blessed Mother.

Next morning she received Holy Communion again, and, the chapel being near the room in which she lay, she heard Mass with wonderful devotion. When it was announced that death was near a radiant smile passed over her face, and it seemed to be in an ecstasy of love that her pure soul went before its Creator.

Many questions,* legal and theological, were evoked by the one startling event which caused the name of Hull to be mentioned at the ends of the earth. For these, though

* Several of the ecclesiastics examined at the trial, notably Dr. O'Hanlon, librarian of Maynooth, who had studied canon law for twenty-five years, denied the power of the bishop to *expel* under the circumstances. All agreed that only the pope could dispense from the vow of chastity, "which," said Rev. G. Porter, S.J., "is a solemn vow as taken by the Sisters of Mercy." The majority thought that the circumstances justified the bishop in appealing to Rome for faculties to dispense Miss S— and expel her.

most interesting, we have little space. While the question of Miss Susan S——'s expulsion—I do not say dispensation, for she not only never asked to leave, but seemed to cling most passionately to her convent home—was being discussed privately there were conflicting opinions as to the bishop's dispensing power in an Institute confirmed by the Holy See. As the elders of the Order universally understood, without going into the merits of the case, that the pope alone could absolve a professed member—in other words, that their vows, though simple, as those of the Congregation of the Sacred Heart and almost all *religieuses* throughout the world are at present, were reserved to the Holy See—a mother-superior requested Most Rev. Dr. Leahy, Bishop of Dromore, to ascertain at Rome whether any but the pope had the power of dispensing the vows of Sisters of Mercy. The following is the reply :

“ST. CLEMENT'S, ROME, March 26, 1864.

“DEAR REVEREND MOTHER : I did not like to acknowledge the receipt of your letter until I should be able to communicate a satisfactory answer to the question which you proposed. The matter seemed so plain to me and so free from difficulty that I never should have asked about it, were it not for your request ; and, as I foresaw, the cardinal prefect of the Propaganda at once declared that *none but the pope could dispense the vows of your Sisters*. Of course His Holiness can delegate his power to a bishop, but I do not think he ever will, except for a particular case. All that was said about the dispensing power of a bishop as superior of the Order must appear sheer nonsense to any one acquainted with the laws of the Church ; and I suppose Cardinal Barnabo will set me down as an ignoramus for even asking him the question. . . .

“✠ JOHN PIUS LEAHY, O.P., *Bishop of Dromore*.

“TO THE MOTHER-SUPERIOR OF THE SISTERS OF MERCY.”

Despite the little mistakes and mishaps which the *Startling Revelations of Life in a Convent* showed forth to a curious world, the history of Hull may well prove a source of encouragement to houses having similar difficulties to encounter, especially in the beginning. God is

manifestly the protector of our Institute, and we may in all humility hope through His mercy that the work of the holy foundress, who was consumed with zeal for His glory, is destined to extend His kingdom for ages to come.

When the Hull trial took place, 1869, the Mercy Institute had been founded forty-two years and was spread all over the world. Yet the mother-superior of the Hull convent, who had been trained at the parent house, Dublin, and had the amplest opportunities for knowing whereof she spoke, declared in her evidence that "dismissal of a professed Sister had never before occurred in our Order" — a fact truly astonishing. For *it must needs be that scandals come*, and the example and instruction of our divine Lord Himself sufficed not to keep His apostles in the way of perfection. Among these twelve men one betrayed Him and one denied Him, and they *all, leaving Him, fled*; nor has there been any state of life, Order, or congregation which has not, unhappily, contributed some share, be it ever so little, of the human weakness which, separating itself from the Almighty arm, has erred and caused the tears of Holy Mother Church to flow over prodigal children. And if our good God has so mercifully supported and preserved a religious Institute upon which the sun sets not, that now, after fifty-six years, it cannot show a dozen deserters, what a motive for courage and confidence, but above all for gratitude to Him, the Spouse of virgins and the virgins' Crown, for whom indeed we have left all things, but who has given us the promised hundred-fold so abundantly that we count the pleasures of earth as naught that we may gain Him; wherefore let us live in all humility, knowing well that our strength is from Him without whom we should be powerless for good, "giving thanks to God the Father, who hath made us worthy to be partakers of the lot of the saints in light, . . . and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood."

SCOTLAND.

CHAPTER XLIV.

DAWNINGS OF THE SECOND SPRING.

Evil Effects of the Reformation in Scotland, especially in the Lowlands—Statistics—Irish Priests in the Highlands—The Duke and Duchess of York at Holyrood—Riots—Gifts of Mary Beatrice to the Scotch Mission—Her Son and Grandson—An Era of Persecution - Irish Emigrants in Scotland—They are charged with bringing the Man of Sin to the pious City of Glasgow—Gospel Light unfolded to the benighted Strangers—In vain—Catholic Progress—The sale of Catholic Works systematically promoted—Bishop Murdoch applies for Sisters of Mercy—Mother M. Elizabeth gives him a Colony in 1849—Father Forbes—Father Cody—Incidents—The Orphanage—Early Days in Glasgow—Bigotry—Small Boys hearing Confessions—“A Rope to hang the Pope”—A living Barrier—Crosses, Trials, and Disappointments—Final Success—Anecdote.

NOWHERE did the Reformation execute its nefarious work more fully than in Scotland, especially in the district south of the Grampian Hills known as the Lowlands. A visitation of the whole towards the close of the seventeenth century records the total number of Catholics as fourteen thousand, of whom twelve thousand belonged to the Highlands and the Isles, and of the two thousand scattered over the Lowlands, Glasgow and its environs produced but fifty. There were four priests in the Highlands, three of whom were Irish, and the best Catholics thought themselves fortunate if they could hear Mass three or four times a year. A subsidy of five hundred crowns a year from the Propaganda formed the chief support of the missionary body; for while the Highlanders were willing to con-

tribute a little out of their poverty, "the Lowland Catholics, with characteristic parsimony, persisted for another century in refusing to contribute anything for the support of their clergy." *

The sojourn of the convert-Duke of York and his pious duchess at Holyrood did little for the Catholic cause, and when the hapless pair ascended the English throne as James II. and Queen Mary the hopes of the adherents of the ancient faith were raised only to be cruelly disappointed. The expulsion of the king, which entailed grievous suffering on Catholics throughout Great Britain, was celebrated by a riot in Edinburgh; the mob became masters of the city, and Holyrood chapel, in which the exiled prince and his devoted wife had been the last royal worshippers, was defaced. The altar utensils given by the queen to the Scottish mission were preserved, and some of them may now be seen at St. Margaret's Convent, Edinburgh. The unsuccessful enterprises of the Stuart princes to regain their lost inheritance were peculiarly disastrous to Catholics. Priests could exist only under some impenetrable disguise, nor were the laws in force in other parts of the realm forgotten in North Britain.

Early in the present century several Irish families migrated to Scotland, most of them choosing Glasgow; and as the century wore on the number of such immigrants increased—the cotton manufacture, of which that city was the chief seat, supplying the employment of which they were in quest. The obloquy and active persecution to which these poor, industrious people were subjected in the stronghold of Presbyterianism, partly on the score of nationality but chiefly as Catholics, would require volumes to describe. But they had served too long an apprenticeship to all this in their own country to be easily dismayed at the disgust, and even horror, which their devotion to the faith excited. Their firmness in adhering to "the Man of

* *Catholic Church in Scotland*, edited by Rev. Dr. Gordon.

Sin," as the natives politely termed the pope whom they brought back to Scotland, was the theme of Orangemen and ultra-Presbyterians at evangelical assemblies. But while these gentlemen were devising ways and means of depriving the Man of Sin of Scotch hospitality and unveiling the Gospel light to the benighted strangers, a gradual change was wrought in the *status* of Catholics in Glasgow. From worshipping in a dingy lane off Gallowglass they passed to the new and spacious church of St. Andrew, Great Clyde Street, from whose arched outlets they came out in thousands every Sunday. Four Catholic schools were soon in operation, and in 1823 the Glasgow Catholic Association was established, one of the first acts of which was to open agencies in several large towns for the sale of cheap Catholic works.

Catholics being ever on the increase and prejudice dying out, in 1840 the question of introducing a religious community began to be mooted, and in a few years preparations were made for that purpose. Bishop Murdoch applied to Limerick for Sisters of Mercy to conduct the schools and orphanage of Glasgow, and, as far as possible, attend to the instruction of the "factory hands." As the business progressed slowly, the bishop continued to carry on the negotiations for a filiation through Father Forbes,* in whom he fully confided. All was ready in August, 1849, and the bishop sent Father Cody,† an Irish priest on the

* Rev. Father Forbes, a pious, scholarly gentleman of very delicate constitution, became acquainted with the Sisters of Mercy while he was collecting funds in Ireland for the erection of a church at Elgin. The sudden death of this zealous and amiable priest a few years after their arrival was a great blow to the Sisters of Mercy in Glasgow.—R.I.P.

† Father Thomas Cody, one of the large band of Irish missionaries who for the second time strove to plant the true faith in North Britain, was born in Tipperary, 1814, and ordained by Archbishop Murray, 1844, for the Scottish mission. In the same year he was stationed at St. Andrew's, Glasgow. Having, by his extraordinary zeal and self-devotion, fulfilled a long space in a short time, he died, after eleven years of unbroken labor in the ministry, of malignant typhus, caught in the discharge of his duty to the sick. His thrilling sermons, illustrated by his saintly example, converted thousands. His death deprived the Sisters of Mercy of their best friend in Scotland.—R.I.P.

Scotch mission, to escort the Sisters to their Glasgow home. Six Sisters of Mercy, among whom was Mother M. Elizabeth Moore, formed the party. A little incident on the steamer created great amusement. When they descended to the cabin before leaving Dublin Bay, so long had they been unaccustomed to mirrors that a Sister, unconscious she was before an immense pier-glass, called out to her own reflection, "O Sister dear, you're going the wrong way!" thinking she was addressing another Sister.

The arrival of Sisters of Mercy on Scottish soil was thus chronicled by a Glasgow journal:

"Six Sisters of *Charity*, all middle-aged and of grave and modest demeanor, passed through our streets to-day."

Some of the ladies so described had not seen their twenty-third birthday. They were first driven to the bishop's house, thence to Charlotte Street. The Catholic population welcomed them cordially, but there was nothing of the enthusiasm with which they were accustomed to be received in Ireland. Some days later they exchanged the private house in which they dwelt for a "flat" in the orphan asylum—in Scotland a flat means the apartments of one story. The orphanage was in the middle of a public graveyard. Though the doleful surroundings were little calculated to attract postulants, yet many holy and fervent souls * left happy homes to join them. The first child to whom Mother M. Elizabeth spoke in Scotland was named Catherine McAuley—a circumstance which struck her as singular and was regarded as a happy omen. The visitation of the sick was very extensive; the poor especially were delighted to have the Sisters among them. This, with the orphanage and the schools, gave them employment from morning till night. Mother M. Elizabeth remained in Glasgow two months to make the best arrange-

* The first Scotch postulant was M. Teresa Rigg, cousin to the present mother-superior (1883). The latter entered in 1851.

ments she could under the circumstances. Night-schools for factory girls were opened at once, factories being very numerous.

When the Sisters went abroad they had much low bigotry to encounter. The small boys used to shout in their ears such choice couplets as

“ A rope, a rope,
To hang the pope.”

These witty chaps would address them as *Mothers of Marcy*. Sometimes their humor took higher flights. They held dialogues illustrative, no doubt, of their moral habits. Thus, they would assume the rôles of confessor and penitent :

“ Father, I stole.”

“ What did you steal, my son ?”

“ I stole apples, father.”

“ Well, give me some, my child ?”

“ No, I won't.”

“ Then you have no contrition, and you're a bad boy, and I'll give you seven years in purgatory,” said the disappointed young father-confessor, with an air of virtuous indignation.

Once, as two Sisters were going to visit their patients, a cripple, who could move only with the aid of hand-crutches, followed them closely and kept knocking on their heels very vigorously. Will it be believed that this was a source of infinite amusement to the passers-by, and that business men left their shops and offices to enjoy the spectacle, all being so charmed with the outrageous behavior of the cripple that not a being among them lifted a voice or a finger to stop it ? Several of the merchants with whom the convent traded, despite their proverbial love of money, risked the loss of good customers by insulting them. Some drew their bills on the “ Sisters of Misery,” but these small witticisms subsided when creditors were informed that the

Sisters of Mercy would pay only such bills as were drawn up in their proper name.

One fine evening, as the Sisters were going as usual on their errands of mercy, a band of boys improvised a living barrier to make them turn back. Each boy stretched himself out, his hands resting on the feet of the boy before him, and so on, the whole way across the street. The Sisters, on reaching this obstruction, did not turn back, but calmly stepped across the *hand part* as being the narrower. The non-Catholics rushed to their doors, charmed with the pluck and courage of these dear boys—so brave when they were a hundred to two, and so fearless when insulting people who if struck on one cheek would turn the other—and loudly and vigorously applauded them. Some Catholics saw the scene from upper windows, but, though they viewed the Sisters' fortitude with admiration, did not interfere, dreading to excite a riot!

It was found after some years that the orphanage could not be made suitable to carry out with advantage the objects of the Institute. Encouraged by friends, the Sisters attempted to erect a convent in a better position, a kind priest helping in every possible way. But he had hardly begun to collect funds for the purpose than he died unexpectedly; they concluded from this and other events that God's time had not yet come, and the design, though far advanced, had to be relinquished.

After some time they removed to a more healthy neighborhood, which, however, pecuniary difficulties did not permit them to enjoy long. Still, they went on, laboring with ever-increasing zeal at the duties of the Institute, and God wonderfully rewarded their confidence when reward was least expected. They were able to take an old mansion with sufficient ground for schools, having received much help from the proceeds of a bazaar which the Catholic nobility, and, indeed, the whole Catholic body, had helped to make a success. The Sisters took possession of all on the

* Feast of Our Lady of Mercy, 1876, with much ceremony and the deep gratitude to God which a lively sense of such favors enkindles.

The Glasgow community had a good deal of struggling to obtain a satisfactory footing. Disappointments and disadvantages of many kinds put them back frequently, and again and again death robbed them of their most valued members. When things were at their darkest Providence sent them means to purchase the premises they now occupy. They have a handsome, well-appointed convent on Garnet Hill, a very beautiful chapel, a comfortable House of Mercy, and fine schools. With solemn rites of worship and thanksgiving they opened these schools, where, with grateful hearts and renewed confidence in God, they labor for the advancement of His interests under more favorable circumstances than in days of yore. The bishop who invited them, Dr. Murdoch, and his two coadjutors, Bishop Smith and Bishop Gray, have passed away. Bishop Lynch* was translated to Kildare (1869), and the restoration of the Scottish hierarchy has given Glasgow an archbishop. Through all these changes the Sisters of Mercy, having overcome by patience, perseverance, and unswerving devotion to duty obstacles deemed insurmountable, have made solid progress, and continue to labor with unabated zeal in their holy vocation. Bishop Ryan and Mother M. Elizabeth Moore took an extraordinary interest in the success of the Scotch foundations, from which so much good to religion was expected. And seldom have the expectations of the fervent been more abundantly realized, despite crosses, trials, and difficulties of unusual magnitude.

When the house was considered sufficiently established the foundress of the Mercy Institute in Scotland was recalled to found a house in Tipperary ; and we will close this chapter by relating the following circumstance, which shows

* Right Rev. James Lynch, Coadjutor of the Western District, Scotland, was consecrated at the Irish College, Paris, November 4, 1866.

what her spirit was, or rather is, for she is still (1883) an active and, as ever, a most zealous member. Finding a suitable house, she purchased it, though the lease had nearly run out and the agent was a terrible bigot, in full confidence that God would so arrange matters that the property should not pass to other hands. A new lease was refused, and while the Sisters were in great trepidation about the refusal one of their number died. With her usual confidence that God would help her, the mother-superior had a cemetery prepared on the convent grounds, and there laid away the earthly tenement of her beloved child. This so aroused the anger of the agent that he sent a peremptory order to have the remains removed. A correspondence ensued, but nothing could induce him to yield. The archbishop told the Sisters to let him dig open the grave, as he threatened, and that the whole community would assist at the reinterment. Next day he came in person to see if the order were fulfilled, and, finding the grave undisturbed, he angrily stamped on it in a rage. The following Sunday he complained of a pain in his leg, which prevented his going to church; but to a friend who called, having noticed his absence, he made light of the inconvenience. But on rising to go to the window to point out some rare plant he had only made the first step when he fell dead. The people considered this a judgment; not a horse or wagon could be got in Tipperary to convey his body to the family burial-place; nor could any one be found to purchase a single article when his goods and chattels were sold at auction. The owner, an absentee, visited the estate soon after, and, as the holy mother had predicted, gave the Sisters as long a lease as they could desire—a favor which the poor agent had never had any right to refuse, as the Sisters had fulfilled the necessary conditions and the landlord was willing to sell the property to them.

CHAPTER XLV.

EDINBURGH AND DUNDEE.

Scotch Postulants enter the Limerick Convent for this Foundation—Miss Jane Grant—Her Sister—Bishop Gillis—Convent in Lauriston Lane—Mrs. Hutchinson—The Scotch and the Irish—Factions—A little Unpleasantness—The Nuns incessantly absorbed in their Work—They keep clear of Party Spirit—Its Consequences reach them—Dr. Keenan founds a Convent at Dundee—Mother M. Catherine Locke—Her wonderful Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament—A Nathanael—Father McCartney—Sketch of the Bishop who first sent Sisters of Mercy to Scotland—His Nurse—“Sure 'tis Latin”—Early Education—Will not be a Physician—At Maynooth—“I would give the whole World for one Sight of my Mother”—Forced Early Rising—A Voyage—Darby's Distress about the Priest's Boots—At Bordeaux—Priest and Bishop—Then and Now—Labors in the Episcopate—Manners, public and private—Quiet Close of a great Life—He never made a Foe or lost a Friend—Personal Appearance.

MISS JANE GRANT, a most accomplished young lady, feeling a strong impulse to devote her life and fortune to the salvation of souls in her native country, ardently desired to become a Sister of Mercy, that she might be instrumental in founding a convent in Edinburgh, should her superiors approve of her design. The bishop, Dr. Gillis, ardently seconded her zealous project, and in 1850 sent her to Limerick to make her novitiate, at the same time begging that Bishop Ryan and Mother M. Elizabeth Moore, who had already done so much for religion in Scotland, would prepare a foundation for his episcopal city.

Edinburgh, though the capital, is not half as large as Glasgow, which has more than quadrupled in population since the beginning of this century. Yet previous to the introduction of the cotton industries, which attracted so

many workmen to Glasgow, the capital was a far more Catholic city. In a report to the Propaganda, in 1780, of the state of religion in the Lowlands, "Drummond, including Glasgow," is credited with only one hundred and thirty Catholics, while Edinburgh has eight hundred, "many of them," however, "very negligent of their duties." Even in the middle of this century Scotland was a thoroughly non-Catholic country. An apostolate of prayer for the conversion of England was begun, but nothing was said of the conversion of Scotland. Bishop Ryan and Mother Elizabeth, however, promoted it every way they could, especially by prayer and by giving every facility for religious training to such Scotch ladies as desired to labor for God in their native land. Even Mother McAuley was anxious to contribute to the spread of the true religion in Scotland, so much so that she directed the Sisters to make it a special subject of prayer after each of their communions; and her delight when the first Scotch postulant entered (1841), and her love for that amiable lady, were well known throughout the Institute.

Jane Grant was a holy soul, gifted with a fund of humility which made her as much at home in the lowliest employments as in the most intellectual. She thoroughly entered into every duty, and was devoted heart and soul to her vocation as a Sister of Mercy. Her mental endowments were remarkable, but with those to whom nature had not been so bountiful she dealt with such perfect naturalness that not a trace or semblance of a patronizing air or officiousness of any kind could ever be perceived in her deportment. Her sterling piety and good sense made her a most valuable addition. Great things were expected of her, for she had every qualification to be among those selected for the mission to the land of her birth. But God had other designs on this pure, fervent soul. A disease which no remedies could check came on in 1853, and after lingering two years He summoned her to His heavenly

kingdom to receive the reward of her virtues and the merit of the benefit she had secured for Edinburgh. Her death occasioned much delay in sending out the foundation. Her elder and only sister, on whom it was hoped her mantle had fallen, had some time previously entered the novitiate. But there was little resemblance between these ladies : the younger, Sister M. Loyola, was tall, lady-like, and most gentle in manner ; the elder, Sister M. Juliana—who savored slightly of the strong-minded—very tall, with large frame, though not corpulent. She was intensely Scotch in accent and appearance. She wore glasses—which seemed but natural in a not very young lady of literary tendencies—was somewhat demonstrative, and not of so even a temperament as her sister, but possessed of many fine qualities.

Bishop Gillis, an amiable prelate of Canadian birth, having completed preparations for the Sisters, began to be impatient for their arrival, and finally came to Limerick to conclude the business, 1858. In that year, July 24, the Edinburgh Convent of Mercy was opened in Lauriston Lane, at some distance from the schools which the bishop has prepared in Lothian Street. Religious styled the “Little Ursulines of Jesus” had preceded them, and from these good nuns they received cordial kindness. Though of a different Order, they invited them to join in a retreat given by a priest, and would not allow them to return to Lauriston Lane in the evening, but kept them ten days. This was but one of many acts of friendship towards their new co-laborers in the Scottish vineyard.

The Lauriston Lane house was a temporary residence, in which the objects of the Institute could not be carried out with much success, but God provided ere long a convent suitable to all purposes. There lived in Edinburgh a fervent convert of high birth, Mrs. Hutchinson, whose large-hearted bounty inclined her, for the love of God, to consider the interests of the poor. To this charitable

lady are the Sisters of Mercy indebted for the handsome convent they possess in Lauriston Gardens, which they entered on the Feast of St. Catherine, April 30, 1861. Later the same lady built an orphanage, which she placed under their care, both institutions costing her over six thousand pounds. Father Belamy, also a convert, took a large share as her friend in these acts of benevolence. Hence comparatively early in their career the Edinburgh Sisters had great advantages in carrying out the works of their Institute. Circumstances did not yet permit them to have a regular chaplain, and some inconvenience was felt from going to Mass, fifteen minutes' walk, and, after returning, having to set out again for the schools. But they met with so much kindness from the secular clergy, especially Father Belamy, and from the Jesuits, that they had Mass frequently in their own little choir.

Of course many crosses and difficulties varied the even tenor of their way, else how could their Institute be firmly established? To most of these it is rather early to allude; suffice it to say that patience bore its accustomed fruit. The Catholic clergy and laity of Scotland were, and are, to a great extent Irish; the bishops of this century, except Bishops Lynch and Gillis, and Archbishop Eyre, have been Scotch. The Irish are intensely sensitive as to their religion and country, and the cold manners of the Scotch did not harmonize well with their warm temperament. The laborers and factory hands missed the cordial sympathy to which they had been accustomed "at home," and they feel nothing more keenly than lack of sympathy and geniality, though it be only apparent, as it probably was in this case. An unpleasant state of affairs existed for a long time between the so-styled factions,* and though the nuns, incessantly absorbed in their work, kept clear of

* A memorial to the Holy See, January, 1864, when these difficulties were at their highest, states that "more than nineteen-twentieths of the faithful and more than half of the clergy were Irish by birth or parentage."

party spirit, still its consequences failed not to reach them in many ways. Mother Juliana Grant died after a long illness, in 1867. The old bishop had preceded her to the tomb. The nationality difficulties, which were still greater in Glasgow, quieted down after some years, and success crowned the efforts of the Sisters in both cities. At the Jubilee celebration, December 12, 1881, over sixteen hundred pupils of the schools of the Sisters of Mercy, Edinburgh, sang in perfect time and harmony,

“ Faith of our fathers, holy faith !
We will be true to thee till death.”

The Sisters conduct a House of Mercy, an orphanage, schools for young ladies, St. Anne's girls' and infants' schools, Cowgate ; St. Mary's girls' and infants' schools, Lothian Street ; Glen Street Schools for boys, girls, and infants, and the schools at Slateford and Dalkeith.

A third foundation in Scotland direct from Ireland was made in Dundee, a large seaport in Forfarshire, on the north bank of the Frith of Tay, and the chief centre of the linen manufacture, May, 1859. Dr. Keenan,* a native of Enniskillen, with the sanction of the bishop, invited the Sisters from Londonderry and gave them a property he had purchased years before for educational purposes at Wellburne. This zealous and erudite priest labored at Dundee twenty-one years, 1840-1861.

Mother M. Catherine Locke, who had been received at Tullamore by the foundress, and had been superior at Derry for nine years, at the earnest request of Dr. Keenan consented to migrate for the third time from a beloved convent home and undertake the labors of a new and most arduous mission. She and the four Sisters who accompanied her were most warmly received by Dr. Keenan,

* Rev. Dr. Stephen Keenan is well known as author of several controversial books. His *Catechism of the Christian Religion* is a most useful work. Pius IX. created him doctor for the ability he showed in defence of the faith.

his curates, Fathers McCarthy and Grogan, and the Catholics of Dundee. They lodged at Wellburne, but were obliged to remove to the town in November, as it became necessary to open night-schools. The first postulants, Miss Dowling, of Tullamore, and Miss Toland, of Derry, were remarkable for piety, zeal, exactness in the observance of rule, and fervor in all their duties; and it was with satisfaction their superiors observed that their good spirit descended to their successors. November 30, 1862, the Feast of St. Andrew, one of the foundresses, Mother M. Joseph Meehan, remarkable for self-sacrificing zeal, was called to her reward. This good religious is still affectionately remembered by the poor, whom she instructed with such loving devotion.

On the 11th of May, 1879, Mother M. Catherine Locke closed her long life after an illness of thirty-six hours, having spent forty-four years in religion. Tender and fervent devotion to the Blessed Sacrament was her most prominent virtue. Merely to see her enter the choir and genuflect before the altar was a lesson to her community. Her faith and reverence were rewarded by our loving Lord; for though her death was quite unexpected, she had the happiness of receiving Holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction.

The chief work of the Sisters of Mercy in Dundee, as everywhere else, is teaching. They have four large schools for girls and infants, and a night-school for factory "hands" and others who cannot attend during the day. In common with all communities established in Scotland, the Dundee nuns have had great difficulties, and even now matters are far from smooth, though much improved. Right Rev. Dr. Riggs, their first bishop under the new *régime*, has been exceedingly kind to this little flock and takes a fatherly interest in all their concerns. Fathers Peter Cummings and David McCartney have also shown them much affectionate sympathy. The former, who died recently, was a Highlander by birth, and is described as a true Celt, warm-

hearted, pious, straightforward, and simple as a child—a real Nathanael. As much might be said of Father McCartney, a native of Londonderry, whose generosity and self-devotion are equalled only by his tender piety.

BISHOP RYAN.

This devoted friend of the holy foundress and generous benefactor of her children took the greatest interest in the early Scotch houses, and went as far as possible to meet the views of Bishops Murdoch and Gillis in concluding arrangements beneficial to all parties. It will not be out of place to devote a few pages to this prelate, whose sterling worth and untiring energy extended religion and education so marvellously. Several of the incidents we give here were related by himself to the Sisters previous to the departure of the first Scotch colony.

Most Rev. John Ryan was born near Thurles, November 5, 1781. His constitution was so weakly that he could not walk till his eighth year, and as he lay in his little cot a devoted nurse taught him the first rudiments of letters. Seventy years later he recalled with amusement how cleverly this dear old lady concealed any deficiency in her own education. She admitted that she was not a classical scholar, and when the precocious child came to a difficult word she would say : “ Pass that over, darlin’ ; sure ’tis Latin.”

His mother, whom he idolized, and to whom he confided all his hopes and wishes, regarded her beloved son as called to the priesthood ; but his father chose another vocation for him, and, in spite of her remonstrances, sent him to Dr. Bell’s seminary, Clonmel, where he distinguished himself especially in Latin, which he was reputed to speak and write with Ciceronian purity. As a preparatory step to the medical profession he was next placed with an apothecary, but a doctor’s life had no attraction for the delicate boy. On witnessing the torture of a poor woman while some of her teeth were being extracted, he ran home and told his fa-

ther that he disliked the medical and surgical professions so much that he could not proceed, and after some demur Mr. Ryan yielded to his boy's cravings and placed him at Maynooth. Here his loneliness was so intense that it seemed as if he must go home. "I would give the whole world," said he, "for *one sight* of my mother."

Indeed, the pettings and little indulgences of this fond parent ill fitted her delicate son for college discipline. As she never allowed him to rise early, he found it well-nigh impossible to respond to his name before dawn of a dreary winter morning. No matter how resolutely he determined the evening before, the signals for rising and for prayers found him in deep slumber. His thorough earnestness in every other respect excused him before his companions, but the professors regarded absence from prayers in a serious light. A devoted companion, James Brown, sought to bring about success where good intention had failed, and when the call was given every morning he used to take John in his arms and place him standing on the floor; support being gradually withdrawn, he staggered about for a while and soon became wide awake. This was done daily till habit rendered early rising easy, if not pleasant. The sleeper and the rouser were consecrated in 1825. Though Dr. Ryan often playfully reproached the Bishop of Kilmore for his summary mode of dealing with well-practised sleepers, he was deeply grateful to him—want of punctuality being considered so serious by the heads of the college that those who failed to correct it had little chance of persevering.

After ordination Father Ryan went to the Continent with a family as chaplain. The voyage took longer than a journey to Australia would now. A fearful storm almost finished them in the Bay of Biscay; the waves were as mountains, and neither captain nor crew entertained the slightest hope of ever seeing land from their miserable hulk; masts and rigging were gone, and in this scene of wild

terror the young priest alone preserved composure, instructing the people and hearing confessions as well as he could. Even during this awful time he could not help laughing at the antics of his servant, Darby, who showed his national character by crying bitterly—in the hour he believed to be his last—on seeing his master's boots swimming in the hold and dashed, one to the right, the other to the left, by the rocking of the ship. "O wirra, wirra," he cried out in uncontrollable anguish, "sure they'll never be together again"—meaning the priest would wear them no more, which happily was not verified.

While living near Bordeaux Father Ryan discharged the duties of curé, preaching fluently in French, yet sometimes misapplying a word. Some of his mistakes, which were ludicrous enough, he told well against himself in after-years.

On his return he was appointed to a curacy, and, though but slightly known to the archbishop on account of his long absence abroad, his fine qualities of mind and heart were so apparent that we soon find him in an important parish. His quiet, dignified bearing, coupled with a firmness that knew not how to waver, convinced those not of the fold that they could not with impunity trespass on the rights of his flock or outrage the humblest individual in it. Yet his wisdom and moderation enabled him to protect the weak without arousing the passions of the powerful.

An event out of the ordinary course removed him to other scenes. Most Rev. Dr. Toohy, the aged Bishop of Limerick, having applied for a coadjutor, and his choice not coinciding with that of his priests, Leo XII., having consulted the metropolitan, Archbishop Laffan, nominated Father Ryan, a stranger to both parties, as one whose conciliatory course hitherto fitted him to prove acceptable to all. He was consecrated at Limerick in his forty-fourth year, and governed that see forty years.

The state of the diocese when Dr. Ryan assumed the

crozier was appalling—grand old cathedrals given over to Protestants, abbeys and convents in ruins, the old educational establishments destroyed and their princely incomes squandered; in the whole diocese one tottering convent and one small monastery. His first care was given to everything connected with the worship of God—altars, neatness of chapels, demeanor of altar-boys. The hours for confession were so extended as to give increased facilities to his beloved laboring classes. His early efforts to establish convents were disheartening: the Poor Clares failed; the Presentation nuns, after a short trial, returned to the house whence they had filiated; the Ursulines, who began under more favorable auspices, also withdrew. These reverses made him cautious when treating with Mother McAuley for Sisters of Mercy. But this experiment was eminently successful. The religious training of the humbler class was the special object of his solicitude; they were the most exposed and needed protection proportionally. By his care they, and later the upper classes, were supplied with efficient teachers. In nearly every one of the forty parishes of his diocese a new church succeeded the hovel of penal times. A great promoter of temperance, he was one of the first prelates to invite Father Mathew to his episcopal city. At conferences he always recommended two things to his clergy: "Keep the chapels in repair and *build school-houses*"; and he was for ever beseeching them to watch over the children, and to ascertain by frequent examination, in school and, if possible, out of school, that they were thoroughly instructed in the truths of our holy faith.

As persecution died out and his people became better instructed the zealous bishop recommended more frequent reception of the sacraments and had the ceremonies of the Church carried out with greater splendor. For Lenten sermons he selected the most effective preachers. Missions by the Redemptorists were followed by their perma-

ment establishment in Limerick, and he introduced Jesuits to conduct seminaries for the higher classes. To the ancient Orders already existing in his diocese he was a most devoted friend.

For the completion of St. John's Cathedral, the crown of his old age, he collected throughout his diocese, and, though seventy-four years old, he would set out three times a week at six in the morning. He met with a most cordial response; poor women would put silver in the hands of their babes to give "the old bishop." He had the gratification to see it finished, and the first public ceremony performed in it was the consecration of the coadjutor he had begged of Pius IX. when he felt the weakness of age stealing over him and was unable to exert himself as heretofore for his beloved flock. His holy remains rest opposite the beautiful altar he raised with such love and devotion to the Most High.

To all his good works he gave a character of permanence. He had a great heart and a clear head, and his fine qualities were blended in such admirable proportion as to conceal from predominance some which were safer hidden. His humility was known to all; his principles were high, and he was exact as to the least details. He would consider every phase of a question. Character he discerned almost at the first interview, and his intuitions were rarely incorrect. He entered warmly into the projects of others, and allowed them freedom of action within safe limits. To the Sisters of Mercy he was from first to last far more a father than a ruler. His life was so hidden with Christ in God that it was only when God called him home that his bereaved people were filled with admiration at his wonderful stewardship, and spoke aloud their gratitude to God for having given them this saintly pastor and bishop of their souls, who had walked among them so many years in meekness and self-abasement.

When Bishop Ryan's prejudices were confirmed by obser-

vation they were fixed. For years he had apprehensions about an orphanage ; he had seen those brought up in charter or public schools an unruly, thankless lot, who longed to be free from what they deemed a prison. Wholly under government, they were an engine for perverting Catholic children ; but such was the conduct of the successive generations they let loose upon society that the power which created them was finally obliged to suppress them.

A Catholic orphanage being a necessity, however, he allowed the system a fair trial, and the results were such that his fears never returned. He loved the orphans with his whole heart ; indeed, the artlessness of childhood had singular attractions for his loving, childlike nature. He frequently visited them, listened with delight to their little songs and plays, examined them, and distributed premiums, always provided by himself, to the most industrious. He liked to see them bright and lively ; and when they answered him with the wit and readiness rarely absent in Irish children his delight was amusing. The factory girls were his special favorites ; he liked to see them well dressed, but not above their station. To encourage them to attend the convent Sunday-school he often gave them valuable prizes. Though he did his full duty to every portion of his flock, it was easy to see that his chief interest centred in the working-classes and the poor.

Though rather undemonstrative, Bishop Ryan was merciful to a degree that almost disedified the weak. A kindness shown to himself was never forgotten. He had a fund of stories about his predecessors, which he told well, as the writer can testify. In conversing with intellectual people he seemed rather to acquire knowledge than to exhibit his abundant stores. He would sometimes moralize on the fleetingness of life, and was fond of repeating couplets or lines to illustrate his views, such as :

“ God, when He gives, is supremely wise ; not less when he denies ;
E'en crosses from His sovereign hand are blessings in disguise.”

Though hospitable, he was not lavish ; everything saved from his income went to his charitable institutions. By his clergy he was intensely beloved and revered, and the sentiment of Archdeacon O'Brien, at a dinner given for his coadjutor which the old bishop was too feeble to attend, found an echo in all hearts :

“ To him that never made a foe, or lost a friend,
All here to-night their fond affection send—
Our good old bishop, round whose glorious name
Religion wreathes her flowers of endless fame.”

After his eightieth year general debility became apparent, though he retained the full vigor of his mind. He was visited frequently by the Sisters of Mercy, especially Mother M. Elizabeth, whom he revered as a saint. In 1864, in his eighty-fourth year, his soul was released from its earthly prison to join the celestial host in praising the God he had so tenderly loved from childhood, and to whose honor and interest he had been so unswervingly devoted.

Bishop Ryan was above the middle height, of pleasing countenance, with an expression at once benevolent and intellectual. Almost to the close of his long life he was an indefatigable worker, and to few prelates has it been given to realize so much for God's Church and people. He never lost the confidence of a single individual of his flock. Uprightness and sincerity were his prevailing characteristics, but I do not think any one could hold even the most casual intercourse with him without noticing his wondrous humility.

The prayers and blessing of this good bishop may well have brought plentiful benedictions on the missions of the Sisters of Mercy to Scotland, where, if they sowed in tears, they have reaped in joy. Going out indeed, they went and wept, casting their seeds. But, returning, they have come with joyfulness, carrying their sheaves.

THE COLONIES.—AUSTRALIA.

CHAPTER XLVI.

IN AUSTRALIAN WILDS, 1845.

Bishop Brady applies to the Parent House for a Colony—Volunteers introduced to Archbishop Murray—Terrible Parting—"Omit no Opportunity of writing Home"—The Chair of State a Herring-Barrel draped with the English Flag—Bruises and Abrasions—Tale of a Tub—"A good-natured old Woman of a Man"—"Except Nails and a Hammer"—A University on Sea—Horarium—At the Cape of Good Hope—Rapid, uneventful Voyage of four Months—First Glimpse of Australia—The unfortunate Natives—Their Terror of Whites—Twenty Thousand Miles from Home—A dreary Scene—Unspeakable Loneliness—For Thee, my God!—Letters—Incidents—Death—Affection of the Children—"Malga"—Raptures on receiving News from Home—The Sisters keep up the Mission in the Bishop's Absence—They have Converts for him—May Devotions among the Gum-Trees—Anecdote—"Me no wilful Murder"—The Wretched Convicts—Mother Ursula pleads with the Queen for them—With the Pope.

THE first colony to receive Sisters of Mercy was Newfoundland, 1842, which, with several colonial establishments on the American continent, will be treated in our third volume, "America."

The history of the Order of Mercy in Australia is almost coeval with the foundation of Catholicity in that vast region. In 1845 Dr. Brady, first Bishop of Perth, came to the parent house and besought the holy and gifted superior, Mother M. Cecilia Marmion, to give a few nuns to his distant mission. Australia was not then the land of the golden fleece, but a terrible plague-spot, sparsely settled with convicts, ticket-of-leave men, liberated prisoners, run-

aways, and the cannibal aborigines, not one of whom had been reclaimed. When the spiritual destitution of this unsavory region was made known at Baggot Street volunteers rose up, from whom Mother M. Cecilia selected Mother M. Ursula Frayne, Sister M. Catherine Gogarty, and four others, and introduced them to Archbishop Murray as the first Australian missionaries. His grace was deeply affected on seeing so many young ladies willing to leave their sweet convent home, to go they knew not whither, and encounter they knew not what, in a wild and barbarous country twenty thousand miles from their island-home, to promote in their humble way the spiritual and temporal welfare of the lowest types of their fellow-creatures.

They left on the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, September 8, 1845, and arrived in London on the 10th, having made a short visit to the Liverpool house. They were received at the London convent with affectionate hospitality. Mother M. Cecilia accompanied them, and the most grievous phase of the sacrifice was the parting with a mother whom they tenderly loved and who cordially reciprocated their affection. They embraced each other again and again, and it seemed as though neither party could endure the agony of a separation which all felt to be final.

Mother M. Cecilia was holy, generous, and disinterested in a high degree, and so sweet and tender that she won the love of all. For years she had been novice-mistress, and a large proportion of the Sisters of Mercy then in existence had been trained by her. "Omit no opportunity of writing home, and rely on us for aid in every emergency," were her parting words, and so well did she fulfil her promise that she was regarded as the second Providence of the mission.

On Tuesday, September 16, the missionaries left the London convent (Queen's Square), escorted by the bishop and Rev. Father Powell, and went in the *Sapphire* to Graves-

end. Here they descended by a steep ladder to an open boat which conveyed them to the *Elizabeth*, over the side of which each Sister was literally *hauled* in a herring-barrel covered with the English flag, which did duty for a chair. The first Sister who attempted to ascend in this novel style fell through the bottom of the barrel, and was found in the boat with not a few bruises. The second who took this "aerial flight" reached the deck in safety. All the droll incidents that occurred before the vessel left the Downs the Sisters related to Mother M. Cecilia in a pleasant letter which they humorously styled "The Tale of a Tub." The ship they called the "Convent of Divine Providence." She lay at anchor several days, during which they were all sick; on recovery they thought they must be far out at sea, and were disappointed to learn the vessel had not yet sailed. The steward is described as "a good-natured old woman of a man," who gave them everything they asked except nails and a hammer. The ship is "a bishop's residence, a Convent of Mercy, a Benedictine monastery, a house of French clergy, and a college of ecclesiastical students."

The Sisters observed the following horarium: They rose at four A.M.; heard the bishop's Mass at half-past four, after which the priests said their Masses and the Sisters continued their spiritual exercises; breakfast at nine, dinner at three, the intervening hours filled with reading, writing, translating, needle-work, drawing. They also taught English to some of the foreigners, especially Dom Serra and Dom Salvado, who had been expelled from Compostella many years before and had offered themselves to Bishop Brady in Rome.

The voyage was rather uneventful. Mountains of ice, some broken and serrated, others smooth as glass, immense masses of cold and glitter; water-spouts whirling and gyrating, often in dangerous proximity to the ship; polar colds and torrid heats, all varied the monotony of the days and

sometimes added to the terror of the nights. November 24 the *Elizabeth* cast anchor near the Cape of Good Hope, and Bishop Griffith came aboard to invite the Sisters to Cape Town. During this pleasant pause in their journey they posted letters home. Christmas and New Year's day they spent with as much solemnity as possible on the southern seas, making a three days' retreat as at home, and renewal of vows. On the 7th of January land appeared, and after Mass and Holy Communion they went on deck to catch a glimpse of their future home. Cheerless indeed was the prospect. The low coast was covered with thickets to the water's edge, and in the distance they could discern Freemantle, then a small collection of miserable cottages, used as a whaling station, on an estuary called Melville Waters. There was neither jetty nor landing-place, and when, a few hours later, the ship came up to a wild country studded with scrubby trees the Sisters stepped ashore on a hastily-made bank of sea-weed. Here they knelt to thank God for His gracious protection during their tedious journey of four months, and His mercy in preserving them from the perils of the deep. The bishop, on touching land, intoned the *Te Deum* and gave his first episcopal benediction to the country and its people. All the Europeans of the place assembled to witness the landing of their first bishop, and the nuns who had come so far to minister to them and their children. The aboriginal element was represented by a chief with an enormous crown of cockatoo feathers, who viewed the party with curious interest; and still more sadly by a band of savages chained together, going to prison, and many of their women and children wandering about the street in quest of food. The weather was bright and beautiful, but these poor creatures, repulsive in appearance, having scarcely the form of human beings, obscured the beauty of the summer day and made the balmy air heavy, as it were, with thoughts of the crimes that had reduced them to the lowest depths of degradation,

and the power that had taken possession of their island-continent and done nothing to reclaim them from barbarism.

The bishop and his party of twenty took up their abode in the only hotel in Freemantle, and the Sisters were accommodated in a cottage kept by an old settler who gave dreadfully graphic accounts of the new country. Not one of them could sleep that night, perhaps for want of their usual rocking, but more likely because their hearts were so full. The last Mass was said on board Thursday, January 8. The whole party joined in the *Te Deum* on touching land, and prostrated on the sand at the *Te ergo quæsumus*; the sea behind the poor Sisters, the unbroken forest before, and twenty thousand miles between them and home, kindred, and friends—above all, that precious convent which was to them as the vestibule of heaven—all this stirred the heart of every one of these six women to its very depths. But despite the awful loneliness of their position, not a shadow of regret mingled with their emotions. “Would that I had still more to sacrifice for Thee, my God!” was the sentiment of every one of them.

Next morning the bishop celebrated Mass in the cottage, and about two o'clock the whole party sailed up the Swan River, singing the Litany of the Blessed Virgin. They soon reached Perth, where hundreds were assembled to welcome them. The bishop closed the procession to his humble cathedral, with walls unplastered, roof unceiled, the sun glinting through the shingles. Yet it was a great building for the thirty poor Catholics of Perth. There were not five hundred whites in the whole settlement. Two Sisters were professed January 25 in this poor church, and during the ceremony—the first of the kind that took place in Australia (indeed, in the Southern Hemisphere)—the bishop gave an eloquent exposition of the religious life in general, and the duties of the Order of Mercy in particular, and it is noted that all present, even the officers of the garrison,

were affected to tears. Trunks and travelling-cases formed reception furniture on this occasion.

The Sisters found the country very healthy ; sickness, they wrote, was scarcely known except by name. Of the very few Catholics some had fallen away. They visited an apostate mother, who at first would not offer a chair ; after a while she told them all her troubles, and offered to come to the convent for instruction and send her children to the nuns' school ; she kept her promises, and even brought her husband to the practice of his religion. These "enormities" coming to the knowledge of the Methodists, the minister's wife came to warn the family that the Sisters would send them all to hell. "That's more than they said of you, madam," said "the convert," "and I cannot help thinking that the religion that makes them charitable to people behind their backs as well as before their faces is the true one."

The town looked like a beautiful garden ; flowers that are delicate exotics in Ireland grew wild in Perth, and figs, melons, grapes, and olives were abundant everywhere. The Sisters found the aborigines much more gentle and intelligent than report had described them, with stately carriage and, in some cases, really handsome features. In one tribe they were full grown at ten or twelve, and old and decrepit at thirty. They used to chop wood for the Sisters every morning, and were thankful to receive some bread or flour in return. "They dislike hearing anything about religion," writes a Sister, "on account of the cruelties practised on them by Protestants, and the poor creatures have not sense to distinguish between the true and the false religions. The bishop has sent two parties of missionaries to the interior where no European has yet been." She thinks they will succeed, because those among whom they went had never seen the doings of preachers, so-called, who attended the flock only to shear it, and notices that most of the savages have some notion of the resurrec-

tion. When they became better acquainted with those who came to them in the name of the Lord, they would sometimes ask if the black man after death would jump up a white man and go to the land of good spirits. Others seemed to believe in the transmigration of souls; thus, one told a Sister she "knew her well when she was a black man." They considered themselves grievously wronged, and for a time could scarcely overlook the fact that the Sisters were Europeans like those who so often shot them down like dogs and subjected them to every indignity. It was difficult to get them to adopt the customs of civilized life; they roamed about all day, and dropped to sleep wherever they chanced to be when night fell. In relating their sufferings from the whites they expressed their indignation by tearing their faces till blood came, and then rubbing over with chalk, which gave them a frightful aspect. They soon grew quite fond of coming to the convent, and the Sisters easily trained them to work in the garden and help in the kitchen. When lazy ones applied the Sisters would ask them why they came. They would reply, "For *malga*" (something to eat). "Why not kill kangaroo?" "White man take black fellow's hunting-ground and kill all kangaroos. Black fellow none left to kill."

"The more we know of the bishop the more we esteem him," writes the superior. "He is all indulgence to us; one would suppose he had nothing to attend to but our comfort, so watchful is he of all that concerns us. Our house is one of the nicest in Perth, and, what in this country is an extraordinary convenience, we have a fine pump near the kitchen. We have converted the pantry into a refectory, and the dishes are handed through a door in the wall, quite in monastic style. I dare say Pugin would be pleased; the fire-places are according to his taste—without grates! The bishop will build us a convent as soon as he can." A great trial befell the Sisters in the hopeless illness of Mother M. Catherine; she was pained to find herself a burden where so much was to be done. "But," writes the

superior, "her very presence draws down the blessing of God ; for, in truth, she is a holy creature, a model of patience and resignation. I don't know what I shall do when I lose her. Perhaps I depended too much on her and too little on God. The punishment, though severe, is most just. I wish to have no will but the will of God, but I fear my heart goes not always with my words when I say so. The others are quite well, and as happy as possible trying who can do most for the glory of God. I have reason to bless you every day for your disinterestedness in parting with them. You would be delighted to see us at recreation laughing over the events of the day, which we do right merrily." She speaks of their delight to hear the convent bells ring out the *Angelus* "in this land of ignorance and barbarism, where the holy name of God is scarcely known." Even here they sometimes met friends, among others Captain Scully (cousin to the late superior in Baggot Street), chief magistrate of some settlement, who made many inquiries after his Irish friends ; and this reminded our scribe to ask whether a certain case of ornaments had reached the parent house, "for absence has but increased my attachment to the dear little chapel there." The little chapel at Perth was so magnificent as to be a contrast to the extreme poverty of the rest of the convent. This was partly owing to the munificence of the bishop, who gave the Sisters a tabernacle with pillars of solid silver, and a reliquary of exquisite workmanship, saying : "It is our duty to give God the best of His own gifts."

The Perth people used to often call at the convent with hospitable intent to invite "my lady mother and her companions" to dine with them, and it took them many months to learn that, as a rule, the Sisters never left their convent except to visit the sick and imprisoned or teach in the schools.

On September 10, 1846, they were literally thrown into raptures by receiving a letter from home which had been

posted in December, 1845. "To understand our delight," writes the superior to Mother M. Cecilia, "you should be as we are—twenty thousand miles from those you love. I felt unable to speak ; did not know whether to laugh or cry on reading it, and was good for nothing the rest of the day." Alas ! there was one absent from the little flock when the first news from home came—Mother M. Catherine, who had closed her saintly life by a more saintly death, July 30, 1846. The poor Sisters who so faithfully nursed her were grieved because they could get but little of what a consumptive invalid required. When they sent to a shop for arrowroot or sago, for instance, the polite merchant would say : "Sorry, but the last was sold a few days ago ; I will send for some by next ship"—the next ship might not leave port for two months or return for two years. The little children, European and savage, were in tears at the death of the holy mother, and did not care to play for several days, but spent their time gathering the delicate creepers that laced the trees together, and the scarlet flowers that seemed like spots of fire through the forest, to strew upon the grave of their beloved teacher.

The first convent was situated between the Government House, the Barracks, and the Church of England, and the Sisters were obliged to keep very quiet at recreation : to play a tune on the piano or sing a hymn was to bring a crowd about the door. The second was composed of three cottages thatched with rushes ; the schools were near the church, some ten minutes' walk from the convent. As many Protestants as Catholics came to school ; at first there were frequent bickerings, but in a few weeks the greatest harmony existed. Half an hour daily the Sisters instructed Catholic children on the truths of faith. On September 24, 1846, the bishop presided at a public examination, perhaps the first held in Australia ; the children acquitted themselves so well that the visitors were amazed. A few months before there seemed to be no difference be-

tween them and the aborigines save that of color. Great was the wrath of some Protestant zealots at the progress of the Catholic schools. They sought by every means to withdraw the children—cakes, toys, play-parties in the "Bush," promises of employment to parents—but all in vain ; the missionaries had all the money and all the influence, but the Catholics had all the children, all the poor, all the savages. A Sister remained at the convent all day to instruct adults and aborigines, and the hearts of the real friends of these poor creatures were often gladdened by seeing father, mother, and a family of many children receive baptism together.

In April, 1846, the bishop set out on his first visitation. Perth was left without a priest. Mother Catherine hoped against hope that her holy patroness would send her Mass on her feast, and it was done according to her faith. A Spanish Benedictine* arrived on the eve, but as he had not faculties as confessor the Sisters did not go to Communion—"a great mistake," said the bishop: "few were so well prepared." "These are the real privations of the foreign mission," writes one of these loving souls. During the long absence of the bishop, who was often the sole incumbent at Perth, the Sisters assembled the people on Sundays and holidays for prayers, spiritual reading, and sacred songs. The Month of May devotions were not forgotten, and the crowds of men, women, and children who came to them expressed many a wish that May might last

* This monk was supposed to be lost. Another set out in search of him, leaving at their hut in the Bush only a French novice and an Irish student. One day the former went out to shoot wild fowl, but, after several ineffectual attempts to discharge his gun, returned to the hut to clean it. In turning suddenly around his habit caught in the trigger, and in a second the contents were in the head of the Irishman. The innocent cause of this sad accident almost lost his reason. The bishop kindly took him from the scene of the catastrophe to his own house. Often he would cry out during the night, "Me no wilful murder." One day a child of a neighboring family fell into a deep well in his presence. He plunged in and brought her out in triumph, saying: "Me take one life ; me save another." "The Benedictines have many crosses. A priest and a lay Brother died of brain fever, and the catechist, Mr. Gorman, died of hardship among the savages," writes Mother Ursula.

for ever. The fruit of so much piety became apparent. When the bishop returned every man and woman of the congregation, now considerably increased, made their Easter duty, some for the first time in long lives ; and no child of Catholic parents was henceforth found in a non-Catholic school. One little child of Protestant parents went into the sacristy after the bishop and begged him to introduce her to the Sisters, which he gladly did. She had never spoken to a Catholic before. She not only came to school but coaxed her mother to allow her to learn the Catholic catechism. This favored little one was the first to make her First Communion under the Sisters' care. The procession of children, dressed very plainly in white and wearing long veils, as they approached the altar two by two for First Communion, was viewed with interest and delight by the whole population of Perth. A confirmation class was formed, and the early Perth Sisters, who remembered the extraordinary zeal of their holy foundress for that great sacrament, strove to emulate it.

The increase of the Catholic population was rapid. Within a few years the nuns built a convent and fine schools, with an orphanage for aboriginal children and one for children of European descent. Reinforcements from Dublin soon increased their number to fourteen, and work more than enough for all was found. Their white pupils speedily numbered five hundred, and all the native children fell to their care.

All this happened before gold was discovered in Victoria, and when the whole population was a mere handful, Western Australia being the poorest and most obscure of the Australian colonies. Perth is picturesquely situated on the Swan River about nine miles from the sea. Convicts* are still transported to this city, or rather to its port,

* The invaders decided from the first that the savage must go. The treatment of convicts exceeded in barbarity anything ever attributed to the Inquisition. One of the early mothers made a journey to Europe for subjects, and, going to Rome, laid

Freemantle, which the early Sisters euphoniously styled "the Kingstown of Perth."

From the first the Sisters have had remarkable success, considering the resources of the colony. They have established convents at York and Guildford. In those towns, as in Perth, they have been greatly beloved and revered by all classes. The present superior, Mother Mary Aloysius Kelly, who has labored in this mission many years, has recently gone to Ireland for subjects, and, through the members of the parent house, her three Jesuit brothers, and several other friends, has secured no less than thirty-one young ladies, who will, please God, have begun their novitiate in Western Australia before these pages meet the public eye. This venerable religious did not find at the cherished *Alma Mater* a single Sister of 1845. Many, like herself, have carried education and real enlightenment into distant and barbarous lands, but the greater number have had their *Venite*, we humbly trust, to the bosom of the Father, where may all the children of our prolific mother meet when the miseries of time will be succeeded by the glories of eternity!

some of these enormities before the pope, that the common father of the faithful might use his influence, privately or otherwise, for these hunted and tortured creatures, many of whom called him *Father*. His Holiness was graciously pleased to aid them by every means in his power. To leave no method of helping these helpless fellow-creatures untried, this mother procured an interview with Queen Victoria and interceded with her in their behalf, but we have not been informed that her majesty saw fit to do anything towards ameliorating their condition. The Benedictines have now charge of the savages, who are most happily settled with their benefactors at New Nursia, having been perfectly reclaimed to civilized life.

CHAPTER XLVII.

BY THE YARRA-YARRA.

Convent of Mercy, Melbourne—Archbishop Goold—Mother M. Ursula has worn the Habit for Fifty Years—Reinforcements from old Friends—Emerald Hill—Kilmore—Institutions—Mother McAuley's long-lost Nephew—Jessie Macaulay—The little Companion—A noble but impetuous Spirit well chastened—Sandhurst, in the gold-mining Region—Adelaide, S. A.—Mount Gambier—From Buenos Ayres—Bishop Leonard—A picturesque City—Beautiful Deaths—M. Cecilia Marmion—M. Agnes Denehy—"Why not? His Precious Body"—The bitter Tree of Humiliation bears beautiful Fruit—"I cannot help longing to see my God!"—Zealous Lovers of Souls.

IN 1857 Mother M. Ursula Frayne, with two Sisters, established the Institute in Melbourne. The house they purchased cost seven thousand pounds, as property was then very high. They have since added the adjoining lots, and their handsome convent, on which they have expended thirty-three thousand pounds, occupies the finest site in Melbourne. It consists of large wings from west to east, fronting Carlton Gardens, and a splendid three-story edifice with clock-gable fronting Palmer Street. The whole pile includes six distinct schools and a convent church. Archbishop Goold has been a kind father to the Sisters, and doubtless much of their prosperity is due to the deep interest he has always taken in their establishments. He guaranteed his hearty co-operation and support to Mother M. Ursula, and the aid of clergy and laity, and well have his promises been fulfilled. Non-Catholics also have treated them with marked kindness, particularly when their help was practically needed.

Melbourne is a busy, wealthy city on the Yarra-Yarra.*

* Yarra—*flowing*. This beautiful river *flows* the whole year, while many other rivers dry up or become mere pools in the dry season.

Like New Orleans, it is almost crescent-shaped, but, unlike that ancient city, it covers the slopes of two hills. The spread of the true faith in Melbourne has been marvellous, and must be especially consoling to those who sustained the early hardships of the mission. The Sisters of Mercy conduct first-class boarding and day schools, parochial and primary schools, and a domestic training-school for young girls. They visit the prison and other public institutions to instruct and console the inmates. At a separate house on Emerald Hill they have a large and excellently conducted orphanage. In 1875 they established a convent at Kilmore on a beautiful plateau of thirty-three acres, called Mount St. Patrick, where the air is so bracing that the summer heats are not felt as in other parts of the colony. In 1878 the Carlow nuns, who had known Mother Ursula in 1837, sent her five useful subjects, whom the mother-superior at Gravesend received hospitably and saw safe off. "Is it not delightful," writes the Carlow superior who helped "dear old Mother M. Ursula," "to see the spirit of charity that sustains our Institute in the distant houses as well as at home?" This venerable mother is still an active member, though she has worn the habit of the Mercy Institute for fifty years.

In 1860 a convent was founded from Dublin at Geelong,* at the urgent solicitation of Archbishop Goold. This town is forty-five miles from Melbourne, and is important as a mart for wool and gold-dust. It is situated in a beautiful region. The Sisters conduct an orphanage, a home for destitute girls, large day and boarding schools. An immense lending library has been established to supply the surrounding country with reading-matter. To this new

* At Geelong the long-lost nephew of the holy foundress, William Macaulay, was discovered last year (1882). His first visit was to the convent, where he conversed long and earnestly with the Sisters about his beloved aunt. He placed his daughter Jessie at the Sisters' boarding-school, and happy they were to receive the granddaughter of her beloved sister.

works are being constantly added. The foundress, Mother M. Xavier Maguire, had been superior in Baggot Street ; it was during her administration that the superb Mater Misericordiæ was opened. She died a most holy death after years of suffering from acute rheumatism, bearing the reputation of a saint. A beautiful convent and chapel, and flourishing works of mercy, are a few of the monuments of her ardent zeal for the glory of God and the good of souls. Her noble but somewhat impetuous spirit was well purified by suffering and humiliation before she was called from her exile to her home. To this eminent religious we owe the publication of that most useful work, *The Little Companion*. Her sister, Mother M. Philomena, after founding several houses in Ireland, established convents in Warnambool and Ballarat, the latter in the centre of the richest gold-yielding district in the world. In 1876 the Order spread to Sandhurst, the headquarters of a rich gold-mining region. Here are many fine establishments under the direction of the Sisters of Mercy, among others St. Kilian's Primary Institute, which affords Catholic parents an opportunity of providing superior education for their children gratuitously.

Within the ecclesiastical province of Melbourne, and about five hundred miles northwest of that city, is Adelaide, the capital of South Australia, an agricultural colony rapidly rising to eminence. This beautiful city was founded in 1836, and named after Queen Adelaide, whose husband is commemorated in its central thoroughfare, King William Street. The wool and copper exports of this region are immense, and a considerable quantity of gold is assayed at Adelaide. In the diocese of Adelaide, governed by Most Rev. Christopher A. Reynolds, the latest establishments of the Mercy Institute have been made by Mother M. Evangelista Fitzpatrick, who entered the parent house on the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy,* 1845. In 1856 this

* The lady was ready several weeks earlier, but had to wait till the Perth foundation was off, all hands being engaged making the travellers' outfit.

good mother founded a house at Buenos Ayres, but some twenty years later Cardinal Cullen, on account of the dreadful political disturbances in that republic, recalled the Sisters. Bishop Reynolds had just applied for a foundation, and the Buenos Ayres Sisters sailed for his far-away see in the first vessel that left for that port after their return. As they passed by Africa the good Bishop of Cape Town came on board to visit them, and, if possible, retain a few for his new convent. But all (eighteen) being required for the projected establishments in Adelaide, they could not accept his lordship's invitation. They reached their destination May 3, 1882, and shortly after opened a second house at Mount Gambier, three hundred miles southeast of Adelaide. Priests are few in this colony. The nuns are generally obliged to go out to Mass, but go through the cathedral grounds without crossing any street. They find the climate pleasant, and, though some twelve or fourteen days in summer are terribly hot, the air is clear and dry, and the heat not so weakening as in Buenos Ayres. The fruits are delicious and very cheap—the finest grapes but a penny a pound. The Catholics are mostly poor; the wealthier classes are Protestant, but all most civil and kind to the nuns, who like the people greatly and find the circumstances of the place perfectly adapted to the Order. Vast numbers come for instruction daily after school-hours. Adelaide is a most picturesque city; the suburbs are exquisite. And Mount Gambier a very vision of beauty.

Mother M. Cecilia Marmion, who sent the first Sisters of Mercy to Australia, 1845, and who received into the Order the superior of this last establishment to date (1883), was more or less connected with all the early houses, and trained many fervent souls for the Australian mission. This loving and intensely-beloved mother, of whom the holy foundress said that she created a paradise wherever she presided, was attacked by malignant typhus fever in Septem-

ber, 1849. From the beginning she seemed unconscious, so that it was decided that she could not receive Holy Viaticum, as all efforts to arouse her were useless. Mothers di Pazzi Delany and Vincent Whitty accompanied the chaplain to the door, leaving with the beloved mother Sister M. Evangelista, who writes :

“ I could not rest without making some efforts myself, so I bent down and said in a sort of loud whisper (which I had learned was the most likely to be heard in such cases) : ‘ Are you wishing for Holy Communion ?—because the priest will not give it unless you are.’ I thought she understood, so I repeated the words, when, with evidently an immense effort, she said thickly : ‘ *Why not ? His Precious Body.*’ I flew down after the priest, and the poor mothers were so delighted ! He gave her Holy Communion without hesitation. She suffered terribly, and, I think, was conscious all through, though unable to speak unless in a wandering way. I was up with her the last night, and could see she was struggling to unite in spirit with the prayers. I felt she understood all that was done for her and was so grateful. At dawn all the professed Sisters crowded in ; she died at a quarter past eight A.M., September 15, the Octave of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin. *His Precious Body* was the last word she spoke.”

A dear child of this holy mother followed in a few months—Mother M. Agnes Dennehy, who died of congestion of the lungs.

“ To me,” wrote one of her companions over thirty years later, “ Mother M. Agnes seemed a perfect saint. Tender-hearted, sensitive to a degree, sympathetic, aiming at the loftiest perfection, God, for her greater good, permitted that she should not be so much appreciated as one would expect. She was excessively attached to Mother M. Cecilia, who, in consequence, thought it well to try her more and be more strict with her. She felt everything intensely, but never did I see the slightest variation in her calm, fair face or sweet expression. The day before she died I happened to be alone with her in the infirmary, and she said to me, smiling : ‘ I know *you* will tell me. Don’t you think I’m getting into my agony ?’ I could scarcely answer for

weeping, but I acknowledged I thought she was. She then told me God was after giving her a great consolation—that all the little trials and humiliations of her religious life, even things she had forgotten, were shown to her inward sight, with the blissful assurance that now she was on the point of receiving the reward of each and all. Next morning she died, and all through her severe agony she seemed to be in unceasing prayer. I cannot describe it; it was simply beautiful—a most fitting close to so holy a life. Once I asked her if she had any fear of death. ‘Oh! yes,’ said she humbly, ‘and good reason I have to fear it; but, Sister dear, I cannot help longing to see my God.’ I can write only cold words, but if you could have seen and heard her! Ah! I must stop this wandering over the past; it makes me dreamy. Pray that my last end may be like these holy souls’. What a joy to think we shall all, through God’s great mercy, meet in heaven! . . .”

The colony of Victoria, with its downs covered with the richest pasture, dotted with sheep which yield the finest wool in the world, has been well called *Australia Felix*; happy indeed it was in having for its first manifestation of the religious life nuns formed in a novitiate where such virtue as we have been describing was so common as to pass almost unnoticed. The novice-mistress of Sister M. Agnes and many like her still bears onward in the island-continent the beautiful traditions of the “first-fruits of the Spirit” in the Order in which she has labored nearly half a century. And the writer of the above happy description of a holy novice-companion perpetuates in these remote regions the sweet and joyous spirit of the passionately-loved Mother M. Cecilia, whose fair form she saw laid beside the holy foundress thirty-four years ago.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

STILL IN THE LAND OF THE GOLDEN FLEECE.

From Wexford to Westport—Archbishop Polding and Mother M. Teresa Kelly—Archbishop MacHale like a Celtic Prince—Within sight of Croagh-Patrick—A Calvary—From Westport to Goulburn—Arrival—Thanksgiving—At Subiaco—Children from the Bush—Albury—Father McAlroy—The Goulburn Sisters—Well trained—A holy Novice—Mistress—The Reward of holy Desires—A Robber under Instruction—Interrupted by the Police—One with the Poor—Complaining Wives—“We must love and respect our Husbands, my dear”—“I wish I knew as little about Matrimony as he does”—The Ship like a Church in Mission Times—“My Wife never gave me a Lift towards Heaven”—Shoeless Royalty—The Roof tree fatal to the dusky King and Queen—Mother Fielding—Yass—“Men of Sorrow bowed down before the Crucified.”

THE Convent of Mercy, Goulburn, was founded in this wise: Most Rev. Dr. Polding, Archbishop of Sydney, who had long been anxious to found Convents of Mercy in various parts of his extensive diocese, came to Ireland in search of Sisters in 1855, and, not succeeding in the larger cities, applied in person to the saintly Mother M. Teresa,* of Wexford, stating that a convent was ready for them at Goulburn, and that he would gladly defray all the expenses of outfit and voyage. The good mother, unable to supply his grace, directed him to a novitiate friend of hers, Mother M. Paula Cullen, Westport, who gladly gave the zealous prelate of her best.

The Westport convent was founded in 1842 at the request of Very Rev. Dean Burke, who, applying to the holy foundress herself for a foundation, was recommended by

* Archbishop Polding was greatly impressed by Mother M. Teresa. “I cannot express,” he wrote to her, “how much consolation I have derived from having been personally acquainted with you and the community which has the happiness of being under your guidance. May the Author of all good bestow upon you every blessing.”

her to Carlow, Baggot Street being at the moment unable to supply him. Mother M. Xavier Warde with four Sisters set out from Carlow September 5, 1842, resting one night with the Tullamore community and another with the Presentation nuns at Tuam. Here Archbishop MacHale* most cordially welcomed them to his diocese, and insisted they should spend a day at his house—a delay which caused them to arrive at Westport September 9, instead of the Feast of the Nativity, as had been arranged. A solemn *Te Deum* commemorated their arrival. The dean gave them his own house and two hundred pounds towards the erection of a convent, for which the Marquis of Sligo gave a beautiful site of three acres. His grace gave seven hundred and seventy pounds for the same object. The Westport convent, the first built in Mayo for three centuries, is in one of the loveliest situations in the world, within view of Croagh-Patrick and under the shadow of a life-like Calvary erected on a hill. The industrial school attached to this convent is unsurpassed. Sir John Lentaigue describes it as the finest in Ireland.

In Holy Week, 1859, Very Rev. Dean Walsh came to Westport on part of Archbishop Polding for the promised colony, and, after many prayers and novenas to invoke the light of the Holy Ghost, six Sisters were selected from those who volunteered for Goulburn. They left Westport June 28, and were brought by the guardian angels into Melbourne October 2, where they spent a few happy days with Mother Ursula and her community. At Sydney they were most cordially welcomed by Archbishop Polding, of whose diocese Goulburn then formed a portion, and conducted in procession to the cathedral, where a solemn thanksgiving was made for their safe arrival. His grace

* Archbishop MacHale behaved like an old-fashioned Celtic prince on this occasion. He would not have Mother Warde treated as a mere guest but as the mistress of his establishment. The keys were given up to her and the servants directed to go to her for orders.

then brought them to Subiaco, where they spent a week with the Benedictine nuns, who continue to this day to be affectionate and sisterly to them in many ways. At Goulburn similar ceremonies commemorated their arrival. Their first care was to prepare a chapel, where they joyfully and lovingly welcomed our Blessed Lord, whose sweet presence in the Blessed Sacrament made them a happy home and a beloved paradise in a foreign land. They immediately began their works of mercy, visiting prisons, hospitals, and the sick in and near the town; they opened free and pension schools, also a boarding-school where children of settlers in the Bush receive a thorough education.

Goulburn was erected into a separate diocese in 1867, Right Rev. William Lanigan being its first bishop. In 1881 his lordship visited Westport, and most consoling it was to the dear ones at home to hear of the many good works of their far-off Sisters and their great success in winning souls to God. Innumerable are the conversions brought about by them. The bishop said he had never met any one, however stupid or ignorant, that could not be sufficiently instructed by being placed for some time with the Sisters of Mercy. He mentioned cases of adults, who had lived in the grossest ignorance, becoming fervent and edifying after a course of their instructions.

In 1868 the Goulburn nuns founded a house at Albury, where similar good works are carried on. Large schools and a very fine convent were erected for them by Very Rev. Dr. McAlroy, whose death in 1881 deprived them of their best benefactor.

The Sisters selected to evangelize Goulburn were full of zeal, true piety, and earnestness, real types of what religious ought to be; so that it may be said the first stones of that edifice were of great and solid worth. They felt most keenly that the sacrifice they made in leaving their convent home and all its cherished associations was greater than

that made in leaving the world, but they rejoiced to break every tie and overcome every natural and supernatural obstacle at God's call, happy in the thought: It is for God; it is to draw souls to Him; what matters the cost?

They had been trained by a dear daughter of the holy foundress who is as active and energetic to-day as she was forty-five years ago, first at every duty, animating a large community to live, labor, and suffer for God, for whom she would spend herself and be spent—a beautiful spirit which flows from the head to the members. They were trained also by a holy novice-mistress singularly favored by nature and grace, and formed by God in a special manner for the religious state. The quiet, humble demeanor of Mother M. Catherine Costello, her great sweetness and docility, her generous piety, and her fine capabilities for every duty made her an invaluable member. Professed by Archbishop MacHale on what was supposed to be her death-bed, she was miraculously cured through the prayers of Prince Hohenlohe, and, being made mistress of novices, she won the hearts of her young flock by her gentleness and maternal charity. So perfectly had she imbibed the spirit of the Rule that she was regarded as a living illustration of it. "I do not see," writes one of her children, "what is to prevent us believing that she is now enjoying the reward of her zealous labors, if St. Stanislaus is crowned as a missionary for having by his example inspired others with a vocation for the foreign mission."

The clear, bright light of the example of the Goulburn Sisters still shines in their first convent home, where, writes one of their old companions, "the odor of their virtues is as fresh and keen as ever." Pleasant and touching incidents are related of one in particular: One night a robber got into the enclosure, and the proper person was sent for to take him away. While he was waiting to be arrested this Sister sat beside him, gave him a simple course of instructions on the Commandments of God,

and strove to prepare him for a good confession, telling the others that had this poor fellow been carefully instructed in his duty to God he would never have offended Him.* It is to be hoped he was touched by her genuine zeal for his soul, though a period was put to their interview by the arrival of "the peelers," who were not ashamed to interrupt the neophyte in the first *Pater Noster* he had said for many a year.

God gave to this zealous nun a striking exterior and manners which rendered her most successful in gaining sinners. She was so much at home with the poor, *so one with them*, that they could not resist her. She would never say to a poor person or a sinner, "You should do so and so," but classed herself with them, using *we*, sometimes with a ludicrousness her exquisite simplicity prevented her noticing. "We are bound, my dear, to go to confession"; "We must forgive"; and when refractory or persecuted wives† came with long complaints, for which the poor creatures no doubt had plenty of cause, she would say: "We are bound, my dear, to love our husbands, and esteem them, and have patience with them." This dear, earnest Sister was often seen in Goulburn with a bushman six feet high kneeling before her, hands joined, eyes uplifted, repeating the *Hail Mary* after her, bit by bit, with the docility of a babe. As at home, every one regards her as a saint, and a saint she certainly appears to be by her sovereign contempt for everything save what leads the soul to heaven. That

* One youth under sentence of death said to the Sister who instructed him: "Had the Commandments been explained to me when I was a boy as you have explained them I would never have committed the crime for which I must die." Another: "Sister, my wife was a good woman, but worldly; *she never gave me a lift towards God.*"

† These poor women sometimes smiled at directions given for preserving domestic peace by a lady who could have no experience of the conditions under which they lived. The writer remembers a holy missionary who, deeming himself thoroughly conversant with these varieties, assembled married women for an instruction on their state and its difficulties. Several of these good matrons left the church laughing, and one exclaimed with great fervor: "I wish to goodness I knew as little about matrimony as *he* does!"

clause of the Rule, *Having always spiritual good most in view*, was never absent from her mind.

Nor were her companions, though differently dowered, inferior to her. The ship which bore them almost from pole to pole became like a church in mission times. Many converts were instructed, and Catholics who had not knelt to a priest from childhood were prepared for the sacraments. The clergy on board gave these poor people every facility for putting themselves in the grace and friendship of God.

The rapturous joy of these dear Sisters on finding themselves once more in a convent, doors closed on the outer world, after travelling from June till October, can scarcely be imagined. One of the oddest sights they saw when they were a little settled was a band of savages draped in blankets and eating branches of some tree, who asked to be instructed, and had evidently been expecting "the holy women." The king, queen, and all the royal family were shoeless, their bronze limbs shining in the Australian sun, and their heads so full of feathers that they looked like the huge, uncouth birds of the country. All were baptized and became fervent Christians, but I fear the restraints of civilization were put upon them too rapidly. The roof-tree was as fatal to them as the spear or poisoned arrow of their hostile brethren of the Bush. Sad to relate, their majesties, with their dusky progeny, soon passed away, to heaven, let us hope, with the dews of baptism on their swarthy brows. They were, however, a good seed; their subjects in the Bush came to the "holy women," and great was the friendship that sprang up between these poor children of the forest and the nuns who had come so far to aid them. Many converts have been made, though the Sisters, for want of numbers, have not been able to do as much for their dear black friends as their zeal suggests. The nomadic life renders the conversion of these poor creatures difficult. Habits of civilization do not seem to agree with

them ; they pine and die when too long deprived of the recreation of bush-ranging.

Another convent in the Goulburn diocese was founded direct from Ireland, 1874. Very Rev. Dr. McAlroy came to Ireland on part of Bishop Lanigan to secure a colony for the rising town of Yass. On his way to Tullamore to visit his cousin, pastor of that town, he stopped at Rochford Bridge, and, the day being wet and stormy, he was obliged to seek shelter in the convent, where he made known the object of his visit to Ireland, and asked whether this house could supply what he sought. After several interviews with the superior, who showed a willingness to aid the Australian mission, the matter was referred to the bishop. His lordship spoke feelingly of the Sisters, expressed his regret at losing any of them, but, fearing to oppose God's will in retaining them, he consented to give a filiation. Before allowing them to leave he required a sealed letter from Bishop Lanigan agreeing to the conditions he considered necessary. This was forwarded by return of post, and nobly has the good Bishop of Goulburn fulfilled them.

The parting day, August 21,* came all too soon. To describe the last scene is impossible. The breaking of ties stronger than those of flesh and blood ; the separation for ever of those who had lived in the most complete sisterly union—all this caused such grief in the midst of their joyous zeal that the spectators wept, and one of them exclaimed : " This is the work of the Most High. For no one but God could such a sacrifice be made. This little convent was a home of peace and love, but it is not too good to offer to God, for whose love these dear nuns despise all earthly comfort."

The six " dear nuns " left in the sailing-vessel *Gainsboro*

*The superior, Mother M. Paul Fielding, left not only the convent but her father's house, for it was within the walls of what is now the Rochford Bridge Convent of Mercy that Miss Fielding was brought up, a strict Protestant.

a few days after, and reached Goulburn in December, where they remained five days, most hospitably entertained by their Sisters. Bishop Lanigan accompanied them to Yass. Seven miles from the town they were met by hundreds of gentlemen on horseback and families in carriages, who, with bands of music playing chiefly Irish airs, escorted the pious women to the town. They passed into the church between two rows of young ladies dressed in white, bearing flowers which they scattered on the path by which the nuns entered. Next day they began the work of their vocation—to teach the young to live and the aged to die, console the sorrowful and reclaim the sinful. Among the foremost to welcome them and strew flowers in their path, metaphorically, was the pastor, Father O’Keeffe, a native of Meath.

The part of Australia of which we have been writing, New South Wales, once a penal settlement, was the first to receive any gleams of the true faith. Three Irish priests, Fathers Harold, O’Neil, and Dixon, who were transported for being implicated in the insurrection of 1798, were the first Catholics who labored on the vast island. They were sent home in 1808, and convicts and settlers were without a priest till 1818, when Rev. Father O’Flynn was appointed directly from Rome. Presuming to land without government sanction, Father O’Flynn was sent to jail as a common felon, and finally shipped to England.

Father Ullathorne, now the venerated Bishop of Birmingham, tells us of the visits made by colonial Catholics to the Blessed Sacrament left by Father O’Flynn in the house of a settler.

“It is beautiful,” said he, “to contemplate these men of sorrow round the Bread of Life, bowed down before the Crucified; no voice but the silent one of faith; not a priest within ten thousand miles to offer that pledge of pardon to repentance whose near presence they see and feel.”

Fathers Connolly and Terry came in 1820, but were subjected to such restraints that little could be done. They had to perform their ministrations by stealth. Father Power landed in 1826, Fathers McEncroe and Ullathorne in 1830. Father Polding came in 1835, and became Archbishop of Sydney in 1843. Forty years later Australia had two archbishops, thirteen bishops, hundreds of priests and nuns, and Catholic schools not excelled in any part of the world. What a change from the time of the humble convict-priest! Graces merited by the prayers and sufferings of early days now bless the isles of Oceanica, and the petitions of the *men of sorrow*, "bowed down before the Crucified," have borne fruit a hundred, nay, a thousand, fold.

CHAPTER XLIX.

FROM LONDON TO BRISBANE, 1860.

Convents in the Diocese and Province of Sydney—Bishop Quinn—Foundress of the Order of Mercy in Queensland—Brisbane then Bush—The Pioneers—Success of the Schools—Kindness of Sir George Bowen, Sir Maurice O'Connell, and Lord Normanby—Mother M. Vincent goes to Europe for Help—Many fervent Souls respond to her Appeal—Journal—Extracts—A dark Continent—Fate of several daring Explorers—"A World of undiscovered Souls"—Wonderful Spread of the true Religion—Zeal of the first Bishop of Brisbane, especially for Education—Success—Reinforcements from Athy—Tralee—Rev. Thomas Green—Details.

WITHIN the diocese of Sydney are Convents of Mercy: St. Patrick's in the city of Sydney, West St. Leonard's, Paramatta, and North Shore; and in the province of Sydney are convents at Singleton (diocese of Maitland), Gunnedin, Murrurundi, and Raymund Terrace. But the chief foundations within this province are Brisbane and Bathurst.

In 1859 the northern part of New South Wales, called Moreton Bay, was made a separate colony under the name of Queensland, and its capital, Brisbane, erected into a bishopric the same year, Rev. Dr. James Quinn, of Dublin, becoming its first bishop.

The district confided to the new bishop, though larger than France, Spain, and Italy together, contained but two priests and four churches. His first care was to collect priests and nuns, and on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, 1860, he set sail, accompanied by five priests and six Sisters of Mercy. They reached Melbourne March 12, 1861, and Brisbane two months later.

Most of the Brisbane of to-day was then Bush, and it is hardly possible at this distance of time to realize the hardships, trials, and discouragements which fell to the share of the zealous pioneers. From first to last the bishop re-

garded the convent as the gem of his diocese, and it has been blessed with a degree of prosperity almost exceptional. Its foundress, Mother M. Vincent Whitty, entered Baggot Street convent in January, 1839, in her nineteenth year, and had the inestimable advantage of spending nearly three years with Mother McAuley, by whom she was greatly beloved. Indeed, the holy mother spoke of her as one destined to do great things for God in the Institute. In August, 1841, she was assistant in the novitiate, the holy foundress herself being temporary mistress of novices for a few months before her holy death. In 1844 Sister M. Vincent took full charge of the novitiate, and in 1849, on the death of Mother M. Cecilia, she became mother-superior, being third in succession from the holy foundress. During her administration the Crimean mission was sent out and arrangements were completed for the foundation of the Mater Misericordiæ. A Sister who visited Baggot Street *en route* for the East in 1854 gives a pretty description of this eminent religious :

“ Mother M. Vincent was then thirty-three, rather below middle height, very graceful in her movements, but quick and energetic. Her face was handsome, particularly so as a nun—calm, earnest, and expressive; features regular, rather long than oval; her complexion of a pale olive tint; her large, liquid eyes dark and beautifully set. She had a very earnest look when listening to one speaking, set her eyes quietly on the speaker, listening with all possible sweetness. Indeed, she seemed more disposed to listen than to converse. I look on her as one of the gems of the Institute.”

This holy and accomplished woman devoted herself heart and soul to the wild country which for the love of God she chose for her future home. The Sisters were at first sheltered in a cottage on the site now occupied by the magnificent cathedral. Two years later Dr. Fullerton's residence, the best in the colony, was purchased for them, but as they continued to increase it had to be enlarged

several times. There are no schools in Australia superior to those attached to this convent. In an official report to the Propaganda the bishop says :

“After a contest of six years, sustained by heroic efforts and great sacrifices on part of our nuns, their schools were recognized as among the best in the colony, even in secular teaching. . . . So great was their success, and so fully were the merits of their moral and literary training recognized, that the Catholics of all the large towns of the colony, and many Protestants also, constantly ask to have convents established in their respective towns. . . . The nuns have also a training-school, in which the most accomplished teachers are being formed.”

The bishop proceeds to acknowledge gratefully the assistance given the convent by successive governors—Sir George Bowen, Sir Maurice O’Connell, and Lord Normanby—and “the protective kindness” of their excellencies “towards the good Sisterhood.”

As the Sisters were unable to supply a tithe of the demand for their services, Mother M. Vincent, who had spent most of her life in the parent house as superior or novice-mistress, and was, therefore, known to the whole Order, determined to make a personal appeal for help to her old friends, and in 1871 set out with one companion for Ireland, the bishop escorting the party. They visited every house in Ireland and England, and many a fervent soul responded to their appeal. The Convent of Mercy, Athy,*

* In Athy the convent was brought in sharp collision with the State Model School and gained the victory. Callan, Arklow, and Rathdrum were founded from Athy. In Callan the Sisters were so fortunate as to be, in a great measure, instrumental in preventing a schism.

The amount subscribed for establishing the Athy convent was very large, as seen from the lists of benefactors (R.I.P.) preserved. Many outside the town helped the good work, as Archbishop Murray, Cardinal Cullen, old Father McMahon; Michael Cullen, Esq., Liverpool; Patrick Maher, Esq., Kilrush; Mr. Dargan, railway contractor; Miss Goold, Col. Fitzgerald, and hundreds less known. “I have gone over the names,” writes the present worthy incumbent, Rev. Thomas Green, “with something of that melancholy one experiences among the graves of departed friends. And now remains the painful task of adding my own. I, too, must leave the friends Providence still preserves to me, and the scenes amid which I have passed so many happy years.”

which had been founded from Carlow during Mother M. Vincent's administration in Dublin, helped in a particular manner, and even opened a novitiate to train subjects for Brisbane. The parish priest of Athy at that time was Dr. Andrew Quinn, brother to the Bishops of Brisbane and Bathurst.

Several of the ladies who went from Athy to Brisbane kept journals, which were read "at home" with the greatest delight. We give some extracts :

"Oh! how my heart beat and sank when Dr. Quinn said it was time to take leave. I felt I could not part from those I love, but He for whom I was doing it strengthened me beyond what I could have imagined. I know not how the separation happened. Long and tearfully I tried to catch last glimpses of those who would never again be restored to me here below. Soon all whom I loved were out of sight, and I felt that God would henceforth be really my *All*. We could not sleep for the incessant uproar of sailors, ducks, sheep, etc., which were, perhaps, sea-sick or else giving way to great rejoicings at the prospect of a pleasure-trip to Australia.

"We had Mass and said office, and I was just contemplating the majestic beauty of the waves, when down I was pitched on Sister E——. The first Friday we began well by Mass and Holy Communion. I felt sure the loving Heart of our dear Lord could not refuse the many fervent petitions made for the poor travellers by our loved Sisters at home.

"*Saturday, July 8.*—Confessions on deck; the captain helped to make the confessional; poles covered with a sail. On Sunday thirty communicants. All assembled for Rosary at ten. We are getting at home in our strange abode. It seems as if Almighty God had taken the power of fretting from me. We passed a vessel this morning; the captain conversed with her by flags: 'Where from? Where bound?' She answered: 'Liverpool—Africa.'

"The passengers, Catholics and Protestants, come to us for instruction. Though far away, I still join in spirit those who are before our Lord and have the consolation of His sacramental Presence. We had two Masses—singing at the second.

“We crossed the line this morning; several of the steerage passengers came up to see it!

“The priests give general instructions several times a week. Those they find very ignorant they hand over to us. Two babes have been born. The captain gave a grand christening-party. All have been ordered off deck, as a poor man who has just died is to be buried. He received Extreme Unction this morning. He was sewn up in canvas. The priests read the burial service as he was thrown overboard.—R.I.P. They do an immensity of good and are most unsparing of themselves. The engineer was baptized yesterday; another will be received to-day. All the passengers went to Holy Communion.

“We are opposite Sandy Island, in a dangerous place studded with coral-reefs and sand-banks. Next day the commissioners came and ordered us to hoist a yellow flag and remain in quarantine three weeks because a poor woman died of typhus. She was buried on the island; it was almost impossible to dig the grave, the soil was so hard. The grass was long and coarse, the trees small. Parrots and other beautiful birds were screeching, not singing. The captain, two priests, her poor brother, and the rowers went to the funeral.

“I never saw such fearful-looking creatures as the natives, especially the women. Some were bareheaded, others so completely covered with feathers that one would think feathers, not hair, grew on them. They were painted in all colors.

“On Saturday we reached Brisbane. The bishop and Father Connolly came for us and drove us to the convent, where we got a very warm reception. The prayers of the Sisters saved us; for three whole weeks it was gale after gale. All is over now, and we are quite well and happy, D.G.”

Mother M. Vincent’s visit to Europe was a source of unfeigned delight to her.

“I found all things at our loved *Alma Mater*,” she wrote, “just as our holy foundress would approve—all the Sisters full of energy, devoted to their own perfection and to the active works of the Institute. They will give you particulars of their works, but their reverend mother may not tell you what a true religious spirit reigns there, and indeed in

all our houses in Ireland and England. I visited all, and received recruits for our dear mission from all who could spare them. May God reward and bless them!"

The first bishop of Brisbane had been more or less connected with the Sisters of Mercy from his ordination. While principal of the Seminary of St. Lawrence O'Toole—established to counteract the baleful tendencies of the Queen's godless colleges—he was also chaplain of the parent house, and in that capacity gained much experience of the Order and a large acquaintance with the details of school management, the Baggot Street schools being in every respect model schools. On Christmas Eve, 1850, his pupils chanted Matins and Lauds according to the Roman method in the beautiful chapel of the convent.

The Australia into which Bishop Quinn led the Sisters of Mercy in 1861 was as much a dark continent as Africa. Its oldest town has yet to see its centenary. Its interior was a "world of undiscovered souls." Its extensive plains resembled a dreary ocean, and water was an unknown commodity in many of its saline wastes. The blood of more than one daring explorer* had stained the boomerang of the savage native; many had died of starvation and fatigue in these inhospitable regions. Of some expeditions organized to explore the interior not a trace had ever been discovered. The Australia of that day consisted of the part bordering on the coast-line from above Brisbane on the east to Perth on the west, including New South Wales, Victoria, South and West Australia.

The extraordinary prosperity of religion, and the Order of Mercy in particular, throughout the semi-tropical colony of Queensland is due in a great measure to the zealous and holy man whom Cardinal Cullen selected to be first bishop of Brisbane.

* But one man, a savage, survived to tell the fate of Kennedy's expedition, 1846; Dr. Leichhardt's, 1847, has never been heard from; that of Mr. O'Hara Burke, 1860, eighteen in number, perished, after crossing the continent, in the attempt to recross it through the parched wastes of Carpentaria.

CHAPTER L.

FROM LONDON TO AUSTRALIA (1872) IN THE "SILVER EAGLE."

A large Party of pious Emigrants—Clever and simple—The Consequences of eating an Apple—On the Ocean—Accidents—In Danger—Men Overboard—A Storm at Sea—The Sisters offer their Lives to God—Zeal of the Bishop—Prayer goes up without ceasing—Answered—Mass next Day—The Star of the Sea—Purification—Ash Wednesday—A musical Party—Scared of the Nuns—Trembling in his Shoes—A useful Chart—Anecdotes of the Irish in the Bush—The Dead Horse—Air-loving Nuns—Perhaps to Ireland—Latin Declensions—A fragile Prize—The Fowl don't like too much Latin—Gorgeous Scenery—The Shark and the Monkey—St. Patrick brings the Trade Winds—The Bishop's Birthday—Universal Wearing of the Green—Indulgences for Brisbane Missioners—Songs, Stories, and pleasant Incidents—Retreat—Home again.

ON Saturday, January 20, 1872, a large party of Sisters of Mercy assembled at the London convent to go to Brisbane. Among them were three from Hull, one being Sister M. Elizabeth, an Australian—"the same the judge * complimented for her *naïveté*," writes my informant. "They are accompanied by their mother, M. Magdalen Kennedy, with whom I am quite delighted. You have an idea of her cleverness, yet she is so simple as not to embarrass a child."

* At the "extraordinary trial," *S. versus S.*

"The law" certainly got as much from this lady as it gave. Among other unnecessary questions she was asked: "Have you ever had a penance for being impetuous?" To which she pointedly, but most politely, replied: "I think I have one now, my lord."

When it came out in the evidence that the plaintiff ate between meals without leave, the solicitor-general said: "Was it bad in itself to eat a strawberry?" Witness responded: "It is not a great sin; but eating an apple is not so, either, and you know, my lord, what has come of eating an apple once."

Solicitor-general—"There the sin was not the eating of the apple, but the disobedience."

Witness—"Here there was disobedience also."

Of Mother M. K.—the lord chief-justice said: "I never heard a witness give better evidence."

On Tuesday, 23d, the Feast of the Espousals, and a day of particular devotion in the Mercy Institute as the anniversary of the first clothing, 1832, the missionaries went in cabs to the Chadwell Docks, where their ship was anchored. As she was unprepared to depart, the bishop suggested they should return to the convent. At this every countenance fell. The Hull Sisters, who were "very affectionate as well as perfect," could not bear the thought of a second parting with their mother, and the rest did not like to disturb the Blandford Square Sisters again. Seeing their long faces, the bishop told them to do as they pleased, and they immediately put themselves in working order and arranged their berths. The mate, a free-thinker, who had never seen nuns before, was not at all pleased with this part of the cargo. When the steward inquired if there were any on board he answered: "Yes, half a ship-load." "All right," said the steward, as he presented six more.

On the 26th the bishop sent a fine piano and harmonium, just before the vessel started, to enliven the voyage. The berths were comfortable; at the end of the cabin was a bath-room, where the Sisters could have salt-water baths when they pleased. On the 29th mild St. Francis sent them strong winds and a heavy sea. Every one was seasick.

"I say to my shame," writes one of the Sisters, "that it was far in the day before I could rouse myself to make an offering for the clients of St. Francis. The sea raged, the vessel rolled from side to side, and we were obliged to sit on the floor for safety. We were quite exhausted from laughing. If any one attempted to walk or stand a roll of the ship dashed her from side to side. The dean was sent sliding from his cabin in grand style till some things thrown together by another jerk stopped his skating. All laughed at the capers cut by his sedate reverence. Such priests and nuns, never able to keep steady a moment!"

The weather grew worse every hour. January 31 the captain and the bishop were exceedingly anxious. At supper-time the captain ordered the shortening of the sails. The sailors sang merrily as they pulled the ropes; suddenly their song was interrupted by a violent heave followed by a loud cry. Captain and mate sprang on deck: a tremendous wave had broken over the fore-castle, burying half the ship and washing off four poor men who had been reefing the sails in the bowsprit. The cry "Men overboard!" thrilled every heart with fear and regret. The ship was drifting onward with lightning speed, the night pitch-dark, the sea foaming to such a height as to render it impossible to use boats. Two were caught in the ropes after being dashed nine or ten times under water. Above the howling of the storm the mate was heard calling the men's names in a strong, clear voice. All listened with breathless anxiety for the response: "Here sir"; "Helm, sir." To two names there was no reply. The sea was now terrific. The voice of the officer on watch was frequently heard saying, "A light on the star-board bows," plainly telling that the *Silver Eagle* was not the only vessel in the storm; nor was his vigilance unnecessary—other ships came alarmingly near. Earnest prayers were offered for the poor missing men by the Sisters, who hoped they were picked up somewhere.

February 1 the bishop informed the Sisters of the great danger the vessel was in, and desired them to pray earnestly for her safety. All knelt in the saloon while he recited the Thirty Days' Prayer and the Litany of the Saints. The Sisters offered up their lives to God. The bishop went through all the passengers, exhorting and consoling them, and begging for prayers that he might be able to say Mass next day in honor of Our Lady. Soon the wind fell, and at seven P.M. the captain announced that all danger was over. A cold drizzle had brought down the sea. He spent every night on deck from the

27th of January to the 2d of February. For forty-two years he had never seen such weather.

On the Feast of the Purification the bishop said Mass, three priests keeping the table which served as an altar steady. They had to sit with their backs to the partition and their feet to the table, which was lashed to the ground. The Sisters sat on their heels for security, but were dashed about like shells in the water. The bishop seemed immovable as a statue. At the solemn moment of the Elevation,

“I thought,” writes a Sister, “the sea should be still out of reverence; but no, it heaved dreadfully: perhaps it seemed worse for our anxiety for its stillness then. The celebrant waved, but his hands from their uplifted position did not move. Then all was still; the day became beautifully fine, proving that the Star of the Sea had not been invoked in vain.”

Music was the principal recreation of the evening. The captain played the concertina. The Sisters played and sang some pieces, among them “Take my yoke upon you.” Next day they offered Mass and Holy Communion in thanksgiving for their preservation. “We were as much at our ease during these wild times,” wrote one of them, “as if on *terra firma*, knowing that our divine Protector was equally near and dear. A common saying of ours was: He did not bring us here to drown us, and if He did it would be all through love.” On Ash Wednesday everything was done “as in a church at home.” The captain and officers were most attentive. “They make themselves our servants,” said the bishop. The day the captain came aboard he looked scared at the formidable band of nuns at table, and pathetically implored the doctor to take his place. The doctor settled himself firmly in his seat with an air that said, . won’t stir. The captain, disconcerted, said earnestly to the mate: “Mr. Garland, will you?” Mr. Garland bowed and obeyed, trembling in his

shoes, as he afterwards told them, adding : “ When next I meet nuns I shall regard them differently.”

The bishop gave the Sisters a chart in which the ship's course was to be marked each day. He reviewed them in their Latin studies, and would often tell them stories of his missionary life. Here is one : He was once far out in the wilds of Queensland. Many Irish flocked to the station, among them a hale young man who, when in India in the army, had gone to confession every month. In Australia these helps were wanting, and his gratitude to God on receiving them again was boundless. The Irish, wishing to thank the bishop for visiting them in such an out-of-the-way place, selected as their spokesman the soldier, who, after much bowing and many attempts to speak, said : “ Thanks to God, your lordship, that we lived to see this day ”—but not another word could he utter.

The bishop told them of families whose parents had never received matrimony, children unbaptized, Protestants craving to be received into the true Church, and expatiated on the delight of the priest instrumental in restoring so many souls to the grace and friendship of God, and enkindling faith in the hearts of many who had all but lost that precious gift.

During Lent the sailors gave an entertainment called “ The Dead Horse.” Before leaving each had a month's pay in advance ; therefore they had been working for money already spent, which they call working for a *dead horse*. Close to the mainmast was the dead horse, lashed to a piece of cannon. On its back sat a sailor dressed in white. Two long ropes were fastened to the cannon. The sailors, two by two, dragged it on, the man in white singing two lines at intervals of an extempore song, the others joining in the chorus :

‘ The old horse is dead—
They say so ; I hope so.
Horse, horse, poor old horse.”

The rider made a speech, saying his father had willed him the deceased animal as a legacy, how faithful he had been, and concluded by calling on the public to buy another *hoss*. The bishop gave him fifty shillings; Dean Rigney also contributed. The money was distributed among the crew. The orator remounted his *hoss* and thanked the ladies and gentlemen. Then followed a song describing the last hours of the lamented beast :

“ I looked in his eye,
And I knew he'd die
He opened his mouth
And gave a big roar,
' Good-by, Uncle Bill,' and he spoke no more.”

A sailor stationed at the end of the beam struck a blue-light, which threw a ghastly glare on the crew; and the horse, which was made of canvas, with tarred ropes for mane and tail, fell deep into the seething waters below, rose, and slowly drifted away. Sky-rockets ended the celebration, and very beautiful they looked over the calm waters.

Divided between prayer, study, instructing the passengers, and work of various kinds, the days passed sweetly and happily. Early in March the island of Madeira appeared like a beautiful cloud in the distance. The setting sun, reflected on a calm sea, was indescribable at this point, as was also the chaste beauty of the moon, her beams shimmering through the lofty sails of the *Silver Eagle*. Every little circumstance was noted for the loved ones at home—how the dean's beretta blew overboard and was drifting “perhaps to Ireland”; how an awning was provided for the air-loving nuns when they came to the Tropic of Cancer; how they wrote the Latin declensions from memory; the thoughtful kindness of the bishop, who told them stories about the Bush on the plea that it was too warm to study. Our diarist has a poet's eye for

scenery, and is charmed with the beautiful ultramarine peering through sheets of crystal-like foam, and the horizon tinged with bright red. The air within the tropics was so cool as to recall the "Cottage by the Sea." "Strange you were all so far away while I felt you so near. Yet it was with a thrill of delight I realized my own happy lot and fervently thanked our Lord for all His mercies to me. Being vigilatrix, I was up a few moments before the rest, which I spent enjoying the beauty of the scene; then I gave the *Benedicamus Domino* and prepared the altar for Mass."

Study was rarely omitted. One day the captain gave the bishop a fresh egg for the best Latinist. Whenever the Latin studies were prolonged beyond an hour the crowing of the fowls in the coops became so vehement as to render the bishop's voice inaudible. The light and heat increased as the travellers approached the Line; beautiful crimson clouds decked the zenith and gradually spread over the heavens, overhanging the sea like a golden canopy. In the ship's track the phosphorescent lights glittered like millions of stars. Scores of stormy petrels gambolled in the air, and dolphins came up from the deep to enjoy the calm. On the 15th of March the *Silver Eagle* was becalmed with twenty other vessels, all in sight. The sailors brought a young shark on deck, to the terror of Jenny, the captain's pet monkey. Animated conversations went on in English, French, Italian, and Latin. A sailor explained that a shark never tackles a man in the water, but waits till he comes to the surface and then "goes for him." St. Patrick brought the trade-winds; the twenty vessels moved off on the 17th of March.

This, being the bishop's birthday, was grandly celebrated. The sailors decked their hats with green, and green streamers flowed from the heads—of every color but gray—of the seventy-five young Irish girls who were going to seek their fortune in Australia. The bishop wore a green cross and

shamrock, and all the passengers displayed the loved emblem. Even the captain and the doctor honored the day by the wearing of the green. The children of the second class invited the bishop and his party to a feast, at which tea was served in cups and saucers the size of a thimble, from a teapot to match. The Sisters gave the closest attention to all the women and children on board. They were specially interested in a lovely young Irish girl who wore a green rosette in her hair and sang Redemptorist hymns in a clear, sweet voice. Many Protestants wished to be received into the Church, but the bishop deferred the ceremony until they should reach Sydney.

The Sisters communicated daily. They described the bishop as strict, but with a strictness that made every one happy; a man who knew human nature well and had a high idea of what religious should be. He read them a long list of indulgences granted by the pope to all who go on the Brisbane mission—a plenary the day they embark, the day they land, the anniversary of their arrival. The same may be gained by their relatives to the fourth degree. Also many indulgences for short prayers offered for the Brisbane mission.

March 19, though the vessel was but eleven degrees from the equator, the thermometer registered but eighty-one degrees. Being St. Joseph's day and the anniversary of the bishop's baptism, the second-class passengers were invited to spend the evening, and the musical among them to take part in a concert, in the saloon, which was beautifully decorated with green and silver. His lordship sent refreshments to the emigrants, many of whom were ailing, and to the whole crew. After dinner he sat on deck with the nuns, and, though suffering acutely from a swollen foot, he rose to receive each person who came to salute him. Blue-lights blazed on the deck and rockets cleaved the clouds amid loud and prolonged cheers for the Bishop of Brisbane. The night was cool, the motion almost im-

perceptible, the moon unusually brilliant, and the sea a sheet of silver in its radiance. The pointers, dazzlingly brilliant, directed the eye to a veritable cross in the heavens—that glorious constellation, the Southern Cross.

The nuns sang a glee composed for the occasion; the girls several choruses; “The Blind Girl to her Harp” and “Bonnie Dundee” were well rendered as solos; the captain sang “The Irish Emigrant,” which was received with great applause; Mr. Garland, who had been practising all day, “The Minute Gun at Sea,” the second mate “The Lifeboat,” the third a negro melody. The captain proposed the health of the bishop, who, in a speech short and sweet, thanked captain, doctor, and all, officers and crew, for their extraordinary kindness to himself and his party.

On the Feast of the Seven Dolors the isle of Trinidad, off Brazil, appeared. Once it had a monastery, but the monks were driven out and it is now a station for pirates. Many a dark deed is said to have been perpetrated near this lonely isle. To the west is the “Nine Pins,” five hundred feet high; another rock, eight hundred feet high, has a stupendous passage cleft through it, through which the sea rushes with terrific noise. A rock twelve hundred feet high had trees growing on the top.

During Holy Week the bishop conducted a retreat for the Sisters. On Maundy-Thursday the priests, in soutanes and surplices, communicated at the bishop’s Mass. The Sisters communicated Easter eve. On Easter day the bishop wore his superb purple soutane, a Limerick lace rochet lined with crimson silk, with slippers which had buckles of Australian gold—all gifts of friends. He heard confessions before and after Mass as usual. The *Regina Cæli* was sung. When the officers saw the Sisters silent—silence was observed as in the convent—they said, “The nuns are meditating.” The captain remarked that the ship would go better now that Lent was over, for “when the Sisters meditate the ship stops to meditate, too.” After break-

fast an immense albatross swooped slowly and gracefully towards the ship, its wings of eighteen feet extended at full length, rarely flapping. This bird is much prized for its skin and feathers. A gray bird the size of a crane, beak long, feathers dark, under parts white, came to rest on the rail, but was captured by the boatswain. It was the first specimen of a "booby" the Sisters had seen. Mutton-birds like pigeons, brown birds like geese, Cape hens, and two albatross visited the ship. These last get sea-sick when kept on board. Pictures were taken of each variety. The captain frequently said that the bishop's party was the most accomplished and learned band he had ever had the honor to transport across the ocean.

The Italian priests made great progress in English. It almost made them sick to see the dean breakfast on porridge, which they called "eating poultices." Father A——, a doctor of divinity, could do every kind of fancy work. He once remained up till three A.M. to do the Sisters the favor of calling them if the ship were sinking. All were surprised at the coolness of the Torrid Zone; at Capricorn the thermometer was sixty-five degrees. Jenny, the monkey, had to get a warm dress; she drew down the sleeves, arranged the hood and belt, before the looking-glass with a vanity apparently as great as that of her betters.

The captain's good-humor when things were going well was very evident. The composure and equanimity of the nuns astonished him. Often he would say: "I envy you: you are always the same." The impression made by the bishop on the officers—all non-Catholics—was wonderful. His fatherly kindness was great to all, whether in cabin or steerage. He was singularly beloved, and was like a child among the sailors, who, when hardly treated, would run to him for consolation, and he was ever ready "to make it all right" for them with the captain. He often spoke to the Sisters on the duties of their Order, the great good they could do, the virtues they should practise. He possessed

the humility and simplicity of St. Francis de Sales and his love for the hidden life. Once he told them of a retreat he had made with the Cistercians, and how he loved to stroll into a grove which had once been the resort of Bossuet and De Rancé. The religious impressed him as being, indeed, pilgrims and strangers who had not here a lasting city. He was most anxious to have a house of contemplatives in his diocese, whose prayers might help to counteract the wiles of the devil, who seems to regard Australia as his own. "How many," he asked one day, "will teach the blacks?" All the Sisters offered. "Alas!" said he, "you are not half enough for the whites, hundreds of whom die without hearing the name of Him who died for them." He deplored that many who might devote themselves to the good work were deterred by self-love. Baptized Catholics, he said, lived like Protestants, because they have never been instructed. Catholic schools are the only remedy. He often spoke of the Brisbane Children of Mary, who, he said, do immense good and have the spirit, and even the manners, of the Sisters who trained them.

On May day the *Silver Eagle* entered Australian waters. The nuns made little oratories in the cabin and steerage, and the usual devotions were carried out, the bishop presiding. It was beautiful to see the emigrants kneeling around the lighted shrine, their features expressive of perfect peace and deep devotion. On the 3d a brave Irish lad, who had just been asking a Sister to renew his scapular, fell overboard. Three went to the rescue, but the boat capsized and they were nearly drowned. A sailor, Frank M——, to whom the boy had been confided by his mother, did prodigies in the cause, but no trace of him could be discovered. The bishop assembled his flock in the cabin to pray for him. Frank ran to him for consolation. He said that when the boat turned and he was under water every sin he had committed during his whole life was laid before him. He, and indeed all the sailors, were crying vehemently for

the poor lad under the waves and the desolate old mother at home.

One of the Sisters, whom the rest called an out-and-out *blue*, but who was simple and holy as she was learned, kept a log-book for the bishop. The captain asked if he might compete with her. The bishop agreed, promising the winner a brooch for the captain's daughter; this, which in any case must come to her, was an exquisite cameo set in gold, the design being a lady's head crowned with vines and grapes. The captain took immense pains with his, meaning to present it to the bishop. He had long private conversations with his lordship, the fruit of which was that he was never impatient as he used to be. He had the utmost veneration for him, and gave leave to any of his crew who wished to follow him to Brisbane, which many did, the poor captain ardently wishing that he himself could be of the number.

On Ascension Day Tasmania was sighted. Numbers of "molly-hawks" covered the ship's track. The phenomenon known as *the sea on fire* appeared that night, which was cold and dark. By the ship's sides, and along her track as far as the eye could reach, hundreds of bright lights were shining in the ocean, of every size, shape, and hue. The animalculæ in the sea-weed, those lamplighters in the ocean, had done their work silently and beautifully. In a few days the cliffs, revolving lights, and other beauties of Sydney Bay appeared, and the nuns, accustomed to the ship's motion for so many months, were hardly able to sleep without their usual rocking. The bishop prepared them for their mission by describing the peculiarities of his diocese, and spoke with enthusiasm of the fidelity of the Irish, hoping that England and the English-speaking world might yet be brought to the true fold through Ireland's instrumentality.

On May 22 the bishop and his party were transferred to the Brisbane steamer, and the parting between them and

their friends of the *Silver Eagle* was extremely touching. The mountains of Queensland, crowned with silvery clouds, its forests of bright green, and its white cliffs and quarries, soon appeared to the wanderers as a vision of delight. At four A.M., May 24, the Feast of Our Lady, Help of Christians, and the anniversary of the bishop's consecration, they landed and went at once to the nearest church to thank God for their safe arrival. Crowds welcomed them with the wildest demonstrations of delight as they crossed the bridge that led to their convent home. A procession of young ladies in light blue robes and white hats came to meet them. All went to the old church, beside which a splendid cathedral arose, and communicated at the Solemn High Mass of Thanksgiving celebrated by the bishop. The *Te Deum* followed, and his lordship gave his blessing to all in slow and tremulous accents.

CHAPTER LI.

IN AUSTRALIA—KING JOHN AND QUEEN MARIANA.

A Gala-Day—The King and Queen—Reception—Pale, exhausted Nuns—Voices subdued—A little Gem—Charming Flowers—Daily Communicants—To the Nudgee—Ant-Hills—Trees—A Tuft of Shamrocks—The Laughing Jackass—Sanctity and Oneness of Purpose—The little Orphans—The Sisters communicate in the Cell of a condemned Prisoner—His Chains removed at their Request—Corpus Christi—Colonial Schools—Prophecies—High Standard of Convent Schools—Zeal of the Bishop for Education—He knew every Child—He required them all in his Schools—He came to every Examination—If any one were absent he should know the Reason why—He may be said to have *created* Religion in Queensland—No “other Man’s Foundation” for him to build on—“Seventeen Altars”—Schools unsurpassed—Other good Works in Contemplation—The unhappy Convicts—Exiles for Crime—The Reformation of the Prisoner not to be forgotten in the Punishment of his Crime—There must always be Place for Repentance—Summary of Bishop Quinn’s Administration—His long Connection with the Mercy Institute.

PENETRATED with the deepest gratitude to Christ and His sweet Mother, all wended their way to the convent. It was the queen’s birthday ; colors floated from the masts and government buildings, and the people were in gala attire. Veritable royalties of dusky hue, King John and Queen Mariana, came towards the Sisters in picturesque robes ; and the queen, the more voluble of the two, throwing up her black arms, exclaimed, “ Me and me man John, we belong to Bishop Quinn,” after which these distinguished personages made a profound salaam and withdrew to fetch the royal children.

The nuns entered an iron gate and went a few perches of road through a banana-grove to the convent, a grand structure, the best in Brisbane. The boarders were on the balcony, the Sisters in the hall ; all went to the choir, a

little gem, bright and beautiful, filled with the perfumes of the delicious flowers that bloomed on the altar. Eleven Sisters welcomed the newly arrived, each, in manner and deportment, a copy of Mother M. Vincent. But painful was the contrast between the healthy looks of the travelers and the pale, exhausted appearance of these terribly-overworked Sisters. Their voices were subdued, and there was an air of recollection and composure about them all which it seemed impossible to disturb. "Look at those you came to help," said the bishop; "had you come a little later you would have found them washed away." "We were ashamed of ourselves," said one of the newcomers. Beside these ethereal creatures they were like great countrywomen. A concert celebrated the arrival of the music-loving bishop, and the new Sisters were astonished at the proficiency of the pupils in music.

The Brisbane Sisters communicate daily; and, indeed, they need all the strength the greatest of sacraments imparts in their most arduous duties. At nine they left the convent for the schools. Dinner was sent them at one. Often the only one to dine at the convent was the reverend mother. The cemetery was visited—a lovely, quiet spot, in which four of the first flock await the resurrection. Then the bishop took his party to the Nudgee, a drive of nine miles among hills decorated with trees of every species—pine, cherry, apple, bread-fruit. Here is a pretty orphanage, bright with colors, in a bed of gorgeous flowers and fine trees. Ant-nests four feet high, prickly pears lying in heaps, huge trees fallen from age or burnt by the blacks, varied the novel landscape. The bishop was quite fatherly with the children. He had just imported from New South Wales a new breed of cows, that they might have plenty of milk. The boys were on the right, the girls on the left, all bowing and waving their hands. A tall paling surrounded many acres of green fields, on which were several small houses connected by verandas. From each

streamed a large banner with the word *Welcome*. A tuft of shamrocks next greeted the bishop's eye, which he knelt down to inspect. It was touching to see the joy and delight of the children; they sang with such expression that the vicar-general, Dr. Cani, wept. He was an Italian priest, a real father to the Sisters, who saved them much trouble by looking after buildings, etc. Whatever improvements he considered necessary he always got done and paid for without ever troubling them. May the species increase!—I cannot say *tribe*, for there are scarcely men enough of that kind to form a tribe. The Sisters* found two hundred orphans and only two choir Sisters. They keep boys till they are twelve and girls till they are fourteen, and then place them out—a wise arrangement, for children are often spoiled for life by being kept too long in an orphan asylum.†

Their first morning in Brisbane the new nuns were awakened by the loud, quick laugh of a great, stupid bird called the laughing jackass. They found the pupils bright and docile, a large proportion being converts. They analyzed sentences written on the blackboard with ease and cleverness. The bishop spoke highly of Mother M. Vincent's labors, asserting that she had been a second foundress to the Order. Every day the new Sisters were more and more struck with the extraordinary sanctity of their Australian Sisters and their oneness of purpose. When the mother came to Brisbane the Catholic orphans were in a Protestant orphanage, and deplorable was their condition, spiritually and corporally. Some were ignorant of the first principles of religion,

* At Ipswich three hundred day-scholars and fifteen boarders were in charge of three Sisters, and the proportion between pupils and teachers was much the same in every house.

† At Nudgee, in common with other Australian orphanages, the Sisters are sometimes obliged to have the children prepared for service at ten or twelve. All make their First Communion before leaving, that they may be strengthened for a life of warfare with the world. The Sisters continue to look after them, and the children are so attached to their early homes that to visit the orphanage and spend the day there is their greatest recreation.

others were masses of disease. The Sisters visited and instructed them. After immense difficulty the bishop succeeded in getting them out. The nuns, of whom he told wonders, had seventy little patients at once, mere babes from two to five years old. They all spoke up to the bishop and the Sisters without fear. One said to his sister: "What shall we do for a chair for the bishop, as every one wants his own chair now?" Another little man shouted: "Did 'ou bring me lollies [sweets], bis-sop?" Another took the new Sisters to see the grave of his little dog, saying: "One of my puppies has gone to heaven."

Next day the Sisters saw a camp of poor blacks on the Nudgee: six tents, blankets spread about, and children playing. Little can be done for them, as they live in camps and move about continually. In their present state of barbarism it would be impossible for religious women to live among them. The Sisters did all they could, and prayed that the Heart of Love might soon devise some means of converting all these poor creatures.

The same day a poor youth of twenty-seven was executed. When first imprisoned he knew nothing, but the Sisters visited him twice a day and prepared him for the sacraments. The bishop confirmed him. On the morning of his execution the Sisters received Holy Communion with him in his cell, and at their request the chains were removed from his feet for the occasion. He acknowledged his guilt, and accepted his awful doom in union with the sufferings of our Lord in atonement for his sins. While all were making their thanksgiving he was led out, and in a few moments the dead-bell announced that he was before his Judge, to begin, let us hope, an eternal thanksgiving. Next day, Corpus Christi, the Sisters offered their Mass and Communion for his soul.

The colonial schools being based on infidel principles and many of the old settlers rather indifferent,

“You could not be here,” writes Mother Whitty, “and see the necessity for religious education, without making every sacrifice to secure it for the numbers settling down with their families in this vast colony. I have sent a paper on education to Cardinal Cullen, hoping it will excite his zeal, for he could not bear to have St. Patrick’s children lose the faith even in Queensland. Do,” continues this zealous soul, “send me some good, sensible nuns whose happiness will be found in the faithful discharge of appointed duties and implicit obedience, and not in anything external—places, companions, etc. Such only are the right ones, especially for a mission.”

This was always the burden of her letters home.

A saintly Sister* who died at Brisbane said to her: “Fear not, dear mother; subjects will soon come to you in such numbers that the choir will not hold them.” This was now fulfilled: the folding-doors between chapel and parlor had to be removed to make room for the new members. And they were evidently the right kind. One of them wrote:

“I feel as happy as I could possibly be out of paradise, and am astonished at the goodness of our dearest Lord, who does more for us than we ask or even desire. May we correspond faithfully with His holy grace unto the end!”

A superb school attached to the mother-house, Brisbane, was the last great work of Bishop Quinn. It fronts the river and is surrounded by immense balconies. Here is carried on a training-school for teachers. These ladies passed the Christmas examination, 1880, with extraordinary credit. And of the higher pupils four passed the Sydney University examination, two in the highest grade. The bishop gave his best attention to Catholic education, and was wont to say that one pupil thoroughly trained by the

* Another Sister failing in health, the bishop implored her to live, if possible, to labor in his ill-provided diocese. “Father,” said she, “I can do more for you and for Queensland in heaven.” It was noticed that several priests came out after her death, and at last accounts the Sisters of the Brisbane community numbered one hundred and seventy.

Sisters of Mercy could elevate and civilize a whole town—an opinion shared by non-Catholics to such an extent that they hastened to place their children in the convent schools. Convents of Mercy were established at Two-woomba, on the top of the Main Dividing Range, where the climate was so cold as to remind the missionaries of Ireland on a cool, frosty morning; at Maryboro, where a good old Irishman gave a large endowment; at Gympie, in the midst of mountain peaks which look down on the chief gold-mines. In these and many other places the whole population poured out to meet “their own nuns,” led by bands playing airs that brought the multitude, in spirit, to the Shannon and the Suir, and hundreds of fair girls robed in white and decorated with the green of fatherland.

In 1861 Queensland had neither railroad nor telegraph and only four open ports; seventeen years later there were five railways, fourteen open ports, and telegraph lines all over the colony. Bishop Quinn penetrated into every nook of his vast diocese. Often he had no resting-place but the ground, no canopy but the heavens. Though this truly apostolic man made light of such inconveniences, they at length told upon his vigorous frame and bent his stately form. He became a martyr to the rheumatic and neuralgic pains which chastened his later years and cut short his precious life. On the 18th of August, 1881, he passed from earth, tenderly nursed by the Sisters of Mercy, with whom he had been, happily for them, closely connected during his whole priestly life. Emphatically might he have said with St. Paul: “I so preached the Gospel that I should not build on another man’s foundation,” for he, so to speak, created what his diocese enjoys to-day, so dividing it that every part falls within some mission and is regularly visited. He established churches and schools in all the chief places, and not only contracted no debt of any kind, but left the church of Brisbane the best endowed

on the ocean-continent. The whole of his property he left for charitable and educational purposes, his will distinctly specifying that it was not to be applied to building churches or supporting priests, since ordinary resources were sufficient for these purposes. He opened forty schools under the Sisters of Mercy alone, and founded seventeen Convents of Mercy, or, as his venerable coadjutrix says, "seventeen altars"—a phrase which shows her profound devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. The high standard these convent schools attained was a matter of surprise in the other colonies. The affectionate obedience and courteous manners of the children towards the nuns who had come so far to lead them to God have been universally admired. Above and before and beyond everything else Bishop Quinn gave the schools his closest attention. He would sit for hours at the examinations and exhibitions, listening with the keenest interest to details tiresome to others. This was annoying to some who wanted him for other business, but he did it to the last, saying: "There is no other way of creating a universal interest in education." Every school-child in his diocese had been admonished, advised, and encouraged by him; and as it was known that the bishop never missed an examination—not if he had to be carried to the hall, as when his limbs were shrivelled with rheumatism—parents and children were spurred on to their duties. If a child failed to attend, and to attend in a way creditable to the parents, the bishop, like the "twenty thousand Cornish men," should know the reason why.

The bishop was preparing to open a hospital under the Sisters' care when death summoned him. Their House of Mercy has been in operation since 1862, and they conduct a Magdalen Asylum and Night Refuge. They visit the sick in their homes, also the hospitals and the prisons. From the first the inmates of prisons, whether convict or otherwise, had their best sympathy, for their treatment throughout the penal settlements had been such as to prove that

those appointed to administer justice in Australia were far beneath the savage whom they endeavored to exterminate. Without in the least yielding to the sickly sentimentality of the day regarding felons and assassins whose crimes sever them from the society they have outraged, we may still call it impious to treat criminals like brutes, to all but stamp the divine image from the souls of the hapless outcasts—exiles for crime—by a course of reckless cruelty. In a Christian country the reformation of the prisoner should be considered as well as the punishment of his crime. The law, indeed, must take its course, but is there to be *no place for repentance*? Having ruined themselves as to this world, are they to be systematically ruined for the next? Are they never to hear of Him who wills not the death of the sinner, and whose own blessed hands are ever ready to wipe all tears from their eyes? Alas! the Australian convict was allowed to own neither body nor soul—a victim, sometimes innocent, often guilty, led to the slaughter, and treated with an inhumanity, a barbarity, which will ever remain a reproach to the power in whose name justice, rather injustice, was administered. The woful consequences of this detestable cruelty still meet the Sisters in many parts of Australia.

The Sisters of Mercy were the first religious among whom Bishop Quinn exercised his ministry, and it was their sad privilege to close his eyes. No words can describe what he was to them. They make the best return they can by faithfully carrying out his views and continually praying for his soul. His zealous coadjutrix in much of the good he effected wrote to her conventual friends all over the world, begging of each convent three Masses and three general Communions for the repose of his soul. This was gladly granted, for the Order of Mercy has had but few such benefactors as the first bishop of Brisbane.

In 1878 this holy man asked at the Propaganda to have his vast diocese divided into four, setting forth the dimen-

sions and resources of each. The presence of a bishop in each new see, he wrote, "would at once double or treble its resources as to priests, religious teachers, and revenue. . . . Every bishop coming from Ireland has a following of his own, both of priests and religious, and possesses a facility of continually increasing them through the influence of ecclesiastical friends at home." His suggestion has just been partially acted upon—a portion of his diocese has been erected into the see of Rockhampton.

CHAPTER LII.

LINKS WITH HOME.

The Foster-Mother of Brisbane—Not a light Burden—A charming Correspondence—Pleasant and Witty—"It is enough to be silly by Nature without trying to be so supernaturally"—A House roofed with Gold—House-breaking—"As I began the second Century, I'd like to finish it"—Kangaroo-Land—Colonial Terms, Mob, Mate—Cockneyism; Vandalism—Cats fascinate Snakes—"They shall tread on the Asp"—Incessant Labor of a Brisbane Superior—Clay in the hands of the Potter—Yachting Excursions between Ireland and Australia—Reinforcements from Tralee—Warm Welcome—Intense Heat—Floods—Devastation—Reward of Zeal—The All-Hallows of Brisbane—Government Aid withdrawn from Catholic Schools—No School suspends in consequence—A Treatise on Natural History *minus* the main Point—Spell-bound—Reverend Ladies at Home.

MANY convents answered the stirring appeals of Bishop Quinn and Mother M. Vincent; but Athy did so much that its superior was called the foster-mother of Brisbane. In 1866 four Sisters went from Athy under the escort of Bishop (Matthew) Quinn. In 1868 another zealous band departed to do battle for the Lord in that vast field. One of these is now superior, and bravely bears the burden, not a light one, where so many look to her for aid. Sickness and death troubled the community, and the scenes of that far-away novitiate whence Brisbane sprang were re-enacted. The subjects called home are described as "holy and edifying in the smallest things"; "never once failing in duty"; "ripe for heaven"; "showing love for the community above father, mother, sister, brother, when circumstances tested their dispositions." A charming correspondence was kept up with Athy, though the poor missionaries were so terribly overworked that they could not do all their hearts prompted. Thus one writes :

"I cannot tell you how gratified we were to hear from you and feel we are fondly remembered by those we love. The human heart requires some sympathy, and, when God permits, there can surely be no harm in gratifying it a little; so I hope you will write occasionally, and when I don't write don't think I have forgotten you. My work is laborious and my anxiety very great. When duty is fully accomplished I have little or no leisure for writing to those so dear to me. Never forget to ask God to bless our labors to His glory. Would it be any use to beg a professed Sister with the next band of novices? I often wish I could talk to you about things which appear in a new light when one is superior. The bishop is a dear, kind father, friend, and adviser. God spare him long to us!"

Several of these letters sparkle with simple pleasantry.* Here is one :

"May a dweller in a cottage claim acquaintance with your highness, who, I am told, resides in an edifice somewhat less grand than Buckingham Palace? Ah! I could not trust myself *home* again, though there are lovely spots in sunny Queensland, and this little town (Warwick) wants but the view of the sea to complete its beauty. (An intellectual member of the corporation voted for its being made a sea-port! . . .) Our Townsville convent is on the sea-shore; the Sisters say Office on the beach, and when going to the hospital have a long walk so close that the waves salute them. And they go in a boat to an island. They wish I could see the exquisite views, for my love of the beautiful is well known since the days I used to stand tip-toe and air my eye at a peep-show. . . .

"'Tis a pity you did not come to Kangaroo-Land. Pas,

* And the letters from "home" that cheered the willing exiles in the land of harmless bears and songless birds nobody could call dull. Here are some extracts :

"The E— Sisters got a present on some *fête* of a toy-church roofed with gold coins. If you got that I fear you'd be guilty of *house-breaking*.

"Our S— Sisters have grapes and peaches in such superabundance that they use them to feed the pigs. When M— heard that she said she'd like to be a pig in that country.

"Our M— Sisters, visiting an old woman of one hundred and two years, complimented her on her long life, asking would she be resigned to die, etc. 'Well, ma'am,' said the old lady, 'I used to be resigned when only ninety nine, but since I have entered on the second century I'd like to *finish* it, if such were the will of God.' Life in M— must be very happy after that."

mas, and babies are so numerous on the Downs that they may be seen in *mobs* (vernacular in these parts, which is a conglomeration of Cockneyism, Scotchism, Germanism, and, I may add, vandalism—*mob* means a herd, a flock, or a number of people) of a thousand, sitting in graduated rows; the men-kangaroos in the rear, next their mates (colonial term, applicable to masculine, feminine, or neuter; if a child lost a glove she would hold up the other, saying, I've lost its mate), then the next generation, and so on to the thirteenth or fourteenth descent. In one district twenty men have been employed to shoot them down, they're so destructive. One man may shoot two hundred a day, and for every scalp government pays sixpence. The male kangaroos are the most dangerous; one took a big man to a creek to drown him by holding his head under the water. Fortunately he had one hand disengaged; he drew out his knife, which he opened with his teeth, and cut the throat of the animal. Another, running away with a man as you would with a baby, saw dogs coming, flung his burden over a fence, and ran. Dogs are highly valued. A squatter gave thirty pounds for an English pointer. A dog will scent a snake three miles off; he will sniff the ground till he comes to a snake-hole. The man with him sees nothing to indicate that there is a snake below. The dog roots away. When the snake stirs the dog draws back; if it dart straight into the air the dog springs at it, seizing it by the back of the neck, and finishing it in a few shakes.

"Cats kill snakes—they fascinate them. Mr. M——, going into his room, saw a cat sitting on the middle of the floor, a huge snake going round and round her, the cat turning with the snake, always keeping her eyes on its eyes. It might have gone out, but it could not withdraw from the spell. After a while it stood completely spell-bound, then puss sprang on it. Snakes can fascinate kittens; one poor kitty a snake covered with slime and then swallowed alive. Two Sisters walking through long grass stood on an enormous brown snake; when they found it yield to the pressure of the foot both sprang back. The bishop and dean, who were near, chased the monster into the river, greatly alarmed lest the Sisters had been stung. Their escape was wonderful. 'See what it is to be holy nuns,' said the dean, no doubt thinking aloud. 'They shall tread on the asp and the basilisk, and shall not be hurt.'

"We have a dear young mother; from my heart I pity her, but I pretend to envy her. Ah! you reverend ladies at home little know the worry, the ceaseless, overpowering toil of mind and body, that one in Brisbane has. The incidental work* alone regarding the mission, apart from the conventual business, is so heavy that no one but Mother B—— could get through it. I'd rather walk over to Ireland, like the hero renowned in song, than be reverend mother or novice-mistress here. Our mother's surname is *Potter*, and think of witty Sister M—— telling of her that at her first lecture she told them all to be as clay in the hands of the Potter! †

"Tell M—— the next time I'm solemn I'll pen her a few lines on abiding sorrow for sin, though 'tis many a year since a poor man in the workhouse was inspired to hail her as his 'impeccable Sister.' I'm losing Sister M——, who goes as superior to Helidon. The P.P. says she's worth two curates, she has instructed so many converts and others for the sacraments. She will do good anywhere; goodness seems natural to her."

This letter the merry, innocent writer styles "a treatise on natural history *minus* the main point."

Quite recently a large band of Sisters made what these fervent souls now call "the yachting excursion" between Tralee and Brisbane, making the contribution from the former to the latter twenty members. "The welcomes we got at the convent and schools," writes one of them, "were enough to

* In 1880 all government aid was withdrawn from such schools in Australia as refused to adopt the infidel programme prepared officially for them. These of course included all the convent schools, but when the aid they had previously enjoyed was withdrawn not a school in the Brisbane diocese suspended for a moment.

† All the early members excelled in what may be called the art of conversation. Mother McAuley wished the Sisters' conversation to be bright and animated, but simple. The same of letter-writing. The later generations of the Order have not allowed these to become lost arts among them. Stiffness, moroseness, or ungracious reserve would destroy all the charm of sisterly intercourse, whether in writing or conversing. To *bore* the people we live with is about one of the best ways of making them commit sin. To keep them bright and gay and lively is to save them from hundreds of occasions of impatience and uncharitableness. St. Teresa, when visiting a convent where the Sisters thought it a counsel of perfection never to say anything clever, said: "Good heavens! what would become of us if such a principle were adopted in our monasteries? It is quite enough to be silly by nature without trying to be so supernaturally."

make us proud, if we were inclined that way. The weather (December, 1879) was intensely hot, so that we found it hard to put one foot before the other. There was a great deal of thunder and lightning and tremendous rain—the worst we ever saw ; it almost changed day into night. . . . 'There may be a flood ; and you should be here to know what a flood means. The tide coming in at home is nothing to it. The roads are covered and people go about in boats. In the Bush cows, horses, and even houses are swept away.'"

The prayers of many holy souls reward those who helped the Brisbane mission, and they are many. Athy was called the *All-Hallows* of Brisbane, and Tralee seems to have some claim to the same designation.

CHAPTER LIII.

AS SORROWFUL YET ALWAYS REJOICING.

Bathurst well known to the Diggers—Erected into an Episcopal City—First Bishop—A Colony from Charleville—Agonizing Farewells—M. Ignatius Croke—Her Brother's Grief—Bishop Keane—The last Glimpse of Erin—Voyage on the *Empress*—Fearless Travellers—Lines—Incidents—Gorgeous Scenery—A Novitiate for Bathurst established in Charleville—"Many Waters cannot quench Charity"—Success of the Bathurst Convent—Filiations—People highly appreciate the Convent Schools—Immigrants prefer to settle in the Neighborhood of Convents—Schools Denominational; that is, Christian and Catholic—Many Australian Ladies join the Sisters.

BATHURST, which was scarcely indicated on the maps of our childhood, suddenly grew into importance as a centre of gold-mining operations, and is now the chief inland town of Australia, being about one hundred miles from the Pacific. It is connected with Sydney by a road across the Blue Mountains, long esteemed the greatest engineering work in the colony. It is beautifully situated on a sloping plain. So rapidly had it increased from 1851 to 1865 that it was judged necessary to erect it into a bishopric, and it is in this character that many heard of Bathurst for the first time, though, being near the western gold-fields, it was well known to diggers.

Dr. Matthew Quinn, brother to the Bishop of Brisbane, becoming first Bishop of Bathurst on the very day of his consecration, November 13, 1865, he began to look for a colony of Sisters of Mercy. Understanding from his friend, Dr. Croke, who had come to his consecration, that Charleville might be able to supply him, he telegraphed the mother-superior to meet him in Dublin, which she

promptly did. Mother M. Ignatius Croke, after many tears and remonstrances, was presented to the new bishop as the leader of the little flock he was to guide to the ocean-continent. The genuine worth of the bishop and his bright, fatherly manner helped to console the poor mother, who had a new world before her. Dr. Quinn left Dublin for Rome, and the Charleville nuns returned home to prepare for the work before them. As usual, all were volunteers. Seven were selected. They had eight months to get ready while the bishop was doing business in Rome and collecting priests for his mission. That they might give their whole attention to improving themselves in every way for the great work before them, the Sister-volunteers were released from all home duty.

In May the bishop returned, and in June he proceeded to London with the superiors of Charleville and Bathurst convents to see that all was well arranged on the *Empress*, the vessel selected to be the floating convent. The officers took note of all their suggestions and faithfully carried them out. The saloon cabins at one side were arranged for the nuns, and the partitions removed that they might enjoy pleasant intercourse without going into the passages of the ship. The end cabin became their drawing-room. The *Empress* belonged to Holder Brothers, Leadenhall Street, who were assiduous that everything that could contribute to individual comfort for so long and trying a voyage should be done. A champagne luncheon was served up for the bishop and the nuns, but, as it was the vigil of SS. Peter and Paul, they could only admire the elegance with which every delicacy of the season was set out. Through the kindness of the shippers the *Empress* was towed into Queenstown, that the missionaries might be able to remain in their beloved convent as long as possible.

July 20 the Charleville Sisters bade a long, last farewell to their beloved convent, and touching and painful was the scene. Mothers M. Magdalen Kirwan and Liguori Kee-

nan accompanied the Sisters going from Baggot Street to Geelong. There were five Sisters from Athy for Brisbane, and five Presentation nuns from Fermoy for Hobart. The farewells on board the *Empress* were agonizing. Mother M. Ignatius Croke was the eldest of her family, and in that capacity had earned the love and gratitude of her brothers and sister. The attachment between her and her brother (the present archbishop) was singularly deep and warm.

“The Gospel sword,” writes her sister, “made a deep cut and was keenly and killingly felt. Even now, after so many blessed years, I can hardly write of it, so intense and tearing was the grief. As if to give all possible intensity to the sacrifice, the Sisters going on the mission were wound up in myself in a manner so unusual that it almost approached romance. And I had for them an affection not to be told by words. Seldom has a ship left our shores freighted with so precious a burden. Dr. Keane remained on board all day seeing his nuns off, and he made handsome presents to every one of them. Knowing Dr. Croke’s intense feeling, the dear bishop succeeded in getting him away before the hour of departure was announced. About six P.M., July 21, the bell warned friends to withdraw; last leaves were hurriedly taken, and the *Empress* moved slowly off. God be praised! He alone knows the feelings of those she bore away and those she left behind.”

The missionaries watched from the deck the hills of the old land disappearing, and they wept most passionately as they looked their last upon the shadowy outlines fast fading from their loving gaze. “Hands were lifted to heaven,” writes one of them, “and the last glimpse of Erin was caught through an irresistible flood of burning tears.”

One of the Sisters, then in her twenty-first year, and the first upon whom Mother M. Joseph Croke had placed the black veil, was delighted to go, but could scarcely bring herself to leave. She gave vent to the joy and anguish of her heart in simple lines fondly treasured by her to whom they were addressed. Here is the concluding stanza :

“ Our dearest, sweetest Lord, mother,
 In mercy calls on me,
 To loose this heart so linked to thine
 And speed away from thee.
 His Sacred Heart for me, mother,
 Once throbb'd with grief and pain ;
 And now He asks a sacrifice,
 Nor shall He ask in vain.”

Few slept the first night. Ever and anon the offering was renewed, and these fervent nuns rejoiced to prove their love for their heavenly Spouse by so great a sacrifice. The missionary ship became a convent, all teaching class and instructing adults as at home. Every Catholic passenger approached the sacraments. Several Masses were daily celebrated, and the nuns went to Holy Communion as at home. They worked, studied, and prayed according to their ordinary *Horarium* ; prepared letters for home in hopes of meeting a home-bound vessel. As usual in missions undertaken by the Sisters of Mercy, the expedition had its rhyming chronicler, who celebrated the gorgeous splendors of the setting sun on the broad ocean ; the varied tints, bright and beauteous, that decked the horizon, recalling the glory which His wondrous works show ; the fervent daughters of Erin bent in adoration on a fair Sunday morning between the tropics, each spouse of the Lamb communing with heaven :

“ All the pure, precious gems in the unfathomed ocean,
 All the bright, beaming orbs in the heavens that roll,
 All that's lovely on earth, give no small, faintest notion
 Of the grace which God sheds in each sanctified soul.”

They had no fear of being engulfed in the treacherous billows, for the bright Star of the Sea, the great Empress of Heaven, would guide them through its perils. They burst into rapturous thanks when “the white coast of New Holland, all sandy, appeared.” Our poetess apostrophizes its golden

treasures, tells of the thanksgivings for their arrival that will resound through St. Mary's rude dome, and concludes :

“ Oh ! may that pure fire be enkindled within us
Which He came from heaven on this cold earth to cast.
Henceforth may His love, and His love alone, win us ;
All our labors be His while this brief life shall last.”

The following was read with delight by the novices preparing to follow in the wake of the writer :

“ They spoke to us of a distant land,
Of souls in darkness lying,
All thirsting for the fount of life,
Or miserably dying.
They told us of a famished soul
Whose lamp was just expiring,
And how, the faithful heart to win,
The tempter toiled untiring.”

Our “ Sister-poet ” is ravished with the beauties of the southern land. Yet they are naught compared with those of the sea-girt home she left so gladly for God :

“ Oh ! no ; with willing hearts we rose,
Though love was strong as ever,
And said, ‘ For Thee, dear Lord, we go ;
For Thee those sweet ties sever.”

Then follow adieux to the cloistered shades and consecrated bowers, to her Sister-spouses of the Lamb, and to the beloved mother “ whose care was wanting never,” to every best-loved spot at home, the green glades and emerald shades of the convent garden :

“ O dearest Lord ! our trust in Thee
Will e'er remain unshaken,
And Thou wilt give us strength to tread
The path for Thee we've taken.
Thy Heart will be our recompense
For all that we have given ;
A love above all loves of earth,
An endless love in heaven.”

The worst of the sacrifice seems to have been the parting from the mother who trained them, and whom our poetess addresses again and again :

“ Oh ! I shall not feel sad, mother,
 Since 'tis for Jesus dear
 I go to a far-off land to spread
 His name and love and fear.
 Yet one boon ere I go, mother,
 I fondly crave of thee :
 To thank the Lord for me, mother,
 To thank the Lord for me.

“ And now a fond farewell, mother,
 My own most cherished one ;
 I leave thee but for Jesus—
 His holy will be done.
 And may His choicest graces
 Each day thy heart bedew—
 The earnest prayer of her who says
 With burning heart, *Adieu.*”

The Charleville nuns opened a novitiate for Bathurst, from which they have sent out many highly-educated, thoroughly-trained subjects full of missionary zeal. “Many waters cannot quench charity”; in the earlier years of its existence Bathurst convent received twenty-seven novices from Charleville Missionary College.

The superior of the new foundation speedily won the respect of bishop, priests, and people, possessing the qualities that make a true and telling missionary—prudent zeal, enlightened piety, humility, cheerfulness, and common sense. Her community soon swelled to eighty, and she was able to found convents in Carcoar, Mudgee, Dubbo, Orange, Parkes, Forbes, and other places. For the convenience of settlers in the Bush whose children could not otherwise receive a Catholic education a boarding-school is attached to each of these houses. They have several benevolent establishments, among them a large orphanage. Their

schools are strictly denominational, and the educational programme reaches a very high standard. Languages, music, drawing, painting, wax-modelling, carving, and needlework of every variety are taught. All the places in which convents have been built are rapidly rising into importance. The people value education greatly, and, other things equal, always prefer settling near such educational centres as give them the best facilities for the training and culture of their children. Many Australian ladies, especially pupils of the Sisters, have entered Convents of Mercy.

NEW ZEALAND.

CHAPTER LIV.

TO THE ANTIPODES, 1849.

Bishop Pompallier pleads for his Cannibals—Not in vain—Mother M. Cecilia inspired to go—Resistance of the Community—Harangue of the Bishop—Opposition ended—Not an importunate Beggar—The Sisters had to steal away—They go from London to Antwerp—Seated at an Anchor—The Captain's Treat—Among Flemish Sisters—Dinner on the *Oceanica*—Tallow Candles in black Bottles—Limited Accommodations—A black Cat with red Eyes—A Dutch Village—The Bishop looking for Goats—In the Atlantic—Sea like Mountains—Sisters lashed to their Chairs—A terrible Tempest—Not good enough to be beaten by the Devil—Catching Tortoises—The Harpoon—At Teneriffe—No Admittance—Sour Grapes—The Peak—The French Mother an Englishwoman—Beauties of the Tropics—A wild Irishwoman and her little Son—Confessions in the Life-boat—Our Lady of Mercy—Grand Feast—Events untellable—At St. Jago—Cape Verde Women—Sailors handcuffed—Incident—"Are we all kilt?"—Dinner on the Island—Music—Doctor dressed like an Irishman—Queer French—Incidents—Father Chanel—Anecdotes.

IN April, 1849, Bishop Pompallier visited Carlow in search of help for his distant fold. The nuns were greatly entertained and edified on hearing him speak of the piety and simplicity of the natives of New Zealand, but had no thought that any of their number would ever see its shores. The cannibalism of the place, as described by the bishop, who had many a narrow escape from the Maori stomach, was enough to infuse terror into the most fervent and put such an enterprise completely out of the question.

The worthy bishop, however, soon gained Dr. Haly and the superior, Mother M. Cecilia Maher, to his views, and

the good mother privately offered herself for the fearful mission. Several others, urged by a similar inspiration, said, one unknown to the other: "Here I am; send me." Opposition was made within and without, and Dr. Pompallier was asked to look elsewhere for a colony. But the few houses then in existence were obliged to refuse. Dublin had recently sent Sisters to Australia and America. Meanwhile the inspiration grew stronger on Mother M. Cecilia that she ought, if permitted, to make the sacrifice, and in May it transpired that she had formally offered herself.

This was such grievous news for the community that they agreed that it must not be done, that in no case would they suffer her to go, and that, if the foundation *must* be accepted, some one else must take charge of it. The mother-assistant wrote to Bishop Haly, offering herself as a substitute, and begging him, in the name of the community, on no account to send their beloved mother. Next morning he came to say Mass, and the whole community went in a body to petition him to the same effect, feeling certain he would yield to their prayers and importunity. For a while he was greatly embarrassed; but he finally stood up and said with unusual energy:

"My dear children, I am very sorry to part with *Cecilia** or any of you, but God's glory demands that we should all make this great sacrifice. Are we to stay in our comfortable homes and know that by going, or permitting

* Bishop Haly always addressed nuns by their profession names, without Mother or Sister. Here is a note he wrote to the superior the last Good Friday he saw:

"SACRISTY.

"MY DEAR *Catherine*: Heaven preserve you, and give this poor woman something. She is not an importunate beggar, and I believe is in the greatest want. When able to walk as far as your convent I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you. Meanwhile believe me, most faithfully yours, ✠ F. HALY."

He loved the poor and sympathized with them, but was so often imposed on that the less benevolent or more acute used to be greatly amused at his credulity. He was most kind and fatherly to all under his sway, would address a few words to each of the nuns and children when he visited the school. He died August 19, 1855, attended by Archbishop Cullen, who, on hearing of his dear suffragan's illness, came at once to his dying-bed.

others to go, we should save innumerable souls? You have learned from the great and noble bishop what he has been able to effect in twelve years. How much more will he not be able to do when his efforts are seconded by the nuns teaching schools, instructing the natives, and visiting the sick! Were I a young man I would set out on this glorious mission without delay. If St. Patrick, St. Augustine, and many others of whom we read had stayed at home, how would the holy faith have been transmitted to us?"

Having thus delivered himself, the bishop stopped abruptly, gave the weeping Sisterhood a fervent blessing, and left them, as one of them drily remarked, to regain their good-humor as best they could.

The astonishing address of the bishop put an end to all opposition. After much crying the Sisters thought the best proof of their affection for their beloved mother would be to set to work and prepare the large outfit necessary for so long a voyage. Bishop Pompallier came in July for his Sisters. On the 8th of August Mother M. Cecilia and seven others left with him by the morning train. They had to steal away. Mother M. Cecilia, valiant as she was, could only take a last leave of those she loved so fondly by letter. They were most affectionately received at the parent house by Mother Cecilia Marmion. Little did they think that this holy woman, who had made religion a paradise to her children, had but a few weeks to live.

They journeyed to Liverpool, and thence to London by train. When the bishop saw them all together, and heard some of "their things" were missing, he said: "Well, mother, I am so delighted to have my little flock that I don't care what happens the luggage." They heard Mass next day in the Spanish Chapel, left London for Antwerp at nine, and after a quiet sail of four hours were summoned to dinner. The table was in the form of an anchor. The captain sat at the head, the bishop at the

foot; the cross part was kept for the Sisters, and "engaged," written on cards, laid at their places. The captain sent them champagne, which they declined till the bishop hinted he might be offended; then he stood up and bowed to each Sister in order. On reaching Antwerp the bishop took them to a religious house, where they were most kindly received; they could not speak Flemish, but several of their new friends could converse in French. August 27 they re-embarked, an immense crowd following them, wondering how they could make up their minds to such an undertaking. A cannon was let off as an adieu. Many friends accompanied them some miles, among others a *mère-général* from Paris. The vessel stopped to let them down in boats to the small sailing-vessel by which they returned to Antwerp. At half-past seven the Sisters dined at a table adorned with black wine-bottles, in which were stuck tallow candles. Two bishops, several priests, and some French Sisters were on board. Accommodations were limited in the *Oceanica*. The freshly-painted cabin was very close; it had neither window nor air-hole. One of the young ladies who accompanied the Sisters was frightened almost to death by a black cat with red eyes, which had to be locked up before any one could sleep.

Next day Mother M. Cecilia was quite ill from the paint-smell, and a breakfast of bread and *café noir* did not cure her. She was obliged to go to bed. The French *mère* was very attentive and gave her some tea, with the white of an egg for cream. The bishop, greatly distressed at her illness, ordered the steward to buy goats to supply milk for her coffee, and Father Garnet took off his coat and mopped the walls of her berth with vinegar to remove the paint-smell. On reaching Dell the bishop took them ashore to the village church, where he said Mass and gave them Holy Communion. They found the church quite neat. The *curé* used to sing High Mass every morning. He invited

the Sisters to his house and gave them bread and chocolate, which were very acceptable. Then they walked in his garden till a boat took them to the vessel. Here a rope and hook were let down, and each Sister was caught up and hauled over the ship's side by sailors. After a five hours' sail they stopped near another village, and, says our chronicler, "the bishop went ashore to say Mass and look for goats."

The pilot now left, having many letters to post for the Sisters. The Isle of Wight, September 5, was the last land they saw, and now their troubles began. "It is a graceful sight," writes one, "to see us all hanging over the ship's side sea-sick. We are not weak enough to go to bed, and the air is good for us." On September 5 they were in the Atlantic, all dreadfully sick. "It is amusing," writes our diarist, "to see so many jumping up from dinner. The soup comes hopping from our opposite neighbors' plates, by which we get a double portion. Tumblers, bottles, and bread-baskets dance and make a fine noise. I expect to be crushed by the nuns opposite, who seem inclined to take a somersault. Fresh meat is scarce, and the cooks do not know how to water hard salt beef. To-day a tremendous wave rolled over the ship at dinner-time, gave us a fine bath, besides washing away soup, bread, and all. The bishop supposed it came because the meat was not salty enough."

The Sisters had taken their first lesson in Maori on the train to London, and they made immediate application of their knowledge: throughout their correspondence the bishop is styled *picopo*, and the superior *matua*, being Maori respectively for *bishop* and *mother*.

September 8 the sea was like mountains on each side of the ship. As they could not keep their seats, the captain fastened them with great ropes. The waves frequently rolled over the ship, "considerately giving us baths, knowing how inconvenient it would be for us to take a dip at

present. Sister M. Xavier rejoices at what is half-killing us. 'Oh! what a delightful heave,' she exclaims; but we shall soon have the laugh against her." A porpoise the size of a big pig was caught with a harpoon. On September 11 a fearful tempest arose; the Sisters had to hold the sides of their berths to avoid tumbling out. When the sea got into Ella's berth,

"She roared out: 'Oh! we're all lost.' *Matua* advised her to be quiet. All the loose articles in the cabin were dancing jigs and polkas. Ella kept squealing at the thought of going; the rest were frightened, but perfectly quiet, save a stray sigh or an act of contrition. I thought I should be breakfast for a shark, so I said he must eat my beads and cross if he eats myself. I put them on my neck and held the cross in my hand, and, after a little conversation with my dear St. Joseph, I laid myself out. To my great surprise we were all alive at sunrise. The bishop would have come to give us absolution had the danger continued."

The bishop showed them a curious desk which contained two dozen drawers for papers, wafers, etc. When *matua* told him about the black cat he said the devil sometimes visits nuns in that guise, and that he knows a person whom the devil sometimes beats for doing good.

"Last night," says our journalist, "a music-book fell; I thought his satanic majesty might be near, so I listened to find out which of us he would honor; but we are not good enough yet. A shark is following us. The captain caught a pretty tortoise—head and beak like an eagle. They can be taken only when they sleep, as they then keep the head above water. The harpoon is very long, the iron end of it like a crochet-needle. It does not pierce the shell, but the skin between the head and the back. I write on my knee, the cabin being too small for table and chair."

On the 19th of September the *Oceanica* was opposite Santa Cruz, a small town of Teneriffe, Canary Islands. Messengers came to inquire if all were well, and, being answered in the affirmative, said they might land after three

days' quarantine. This was too great a delay, so the captain took in provisions and sailed.

“I don't think the village pretty or worth visiting—*sour grapes*. The captain bought sheep, melons, and water; *picopo* oranges and bananas. A banana is the shape of a cucumber, and tastes like a soft pear. The heat is great, but not overpowering; evenings most refreshing. For a hundred miles we were in sight of the Peak; on coming near we found it to be a dark mass of curious rock. Through a telescope I saw some beautiful gardens in the valleys. I am studying German with the French mother, whom I like greatly. I call her French, she speaks the language so fluently; but she is English.”

The heat continued to increase, but the breeze moderated it. The bishop celebrated Mass daily and preached every Sunday, and he always enlivened his sermons by striking anecdotes. Every night the Sisters sang the Litany, which sounded delightfully in the soft, still air. Their eyes were gladdened by a cloudless sky, sheets of phosphorus like lightning on the water, new stars, a wondrously brilliant moon, and a horizon lit up with flame. A wild Irishwoman and her wilder little son of five, who were going to the Cape, afforded the other passengers much amusement. He thought his poor mother the cleverest woman alive, because she could tell what every bell meant. Whenever she imparted any knowledge to her offspring he would exclaim: “Ah! then, mammy, who told you all that?”

Most of the crew went to confession frequently. It was not uncommon to see sailors going in the life-boat, which the confessors selected as the coolest confessional. On the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy all communicated. Our diarist says:

“If we have not had as much comfort on this day as formerly, we had more fun. Oh! how much I would give to see you all. Our breakfast consisted of tea without milk, potatoes, biscuit, and treacle. We could scarcely eat,

trying to restrain our risible faculties at the contrast between here and home. At dinner we had corned beef and a little mutton; the cook, in honor of our feast, added a rice pudding. Our recreation was to talk of you all. At seven *picopo* came and told us of his travels. At nine we lit our wax candles and said our Act of Consecration. Then, to distinguish the day, we tried to eat a few grapes; we were convulsed at the thought of what you would all say did you hear half the events of the *Oceanica*, many of which are *untellable*. After prayers we withdrew to our coffins."

September 26 the Sisters took a walk at St. Jago, Cape Verde Isles, being stiff for want of one. The deck was so crammed with barrels, etc., that they could take no exercise. *Picopo* took them in a boat. On coming within a few yards of the shore the boatmen ceased to row; four negroes advanced towards them in the water, bearing on their shoulders a platform on which was an arm-chair. By the time they reached the boat they were up to their necks in water. A Sister got into the chair, another stood before her, and they were thus conveyed, two and two, ashore. A crowd of natives ran to look at them, kissed their beads and medals, and talked some strange tongue. Our journalist says:

"They were quite black, and wore no clothes save a tunic from the neck to the knees. The women wore gowns fastened round the waist, the body and sleeves hanging down for ornaments. Some wore a handkerchief. They do not cover the arms. I was amused to see ladies in this costume. The dresses were evidently made for Europeans, but the way they put them on would set you laughing for a week. On the head was a colored handkerchief tied like a turban; a cotton scarf completed the costume. Some were smoking cigars, others pipes. Oh! what sights."

The party ascended the steep hill to the town, which consists of one street. Cocomnut, lemon, orange, and bananas greeted their eyes, and they made their first ac-

quaintance with the rustling sugar-cane. The hornets are larger than wasps here, and their bite fearful, but the Sisters escaped. The bishop gave them fruit for supper, and made them taste the wine of the country, which is like claret. Some of the French sailors wanted to leave the vessel. In such a case it is customary to have soldiers lead them to the barracks, where they are detained till the vessel sails, when they are free to go where they please. One of the sailors, not understanding the custom, said he would rather be shot than handcuffed, at which the soldiers presented the guns. The bishop told the Sisters to lie flat, lest a ball might reach them. But one of the party must tell the rest :

“While we were prostrate, awaiting the result, Father Garnet caught the soldier’s arm and prevented his firing; the man at last submitted. But M——, wondering at the delay, raised her head and cried out: ‘Do you think are we dead—are we all kilt? Is there no one to tell me are we in danger?’ I could not help laughing most heartily, though expecting a bullet every moment.” “We dined on the island, served by five slaves; two were black and shining as coal, the others sooty black. The table was exactly like an Irish table—white cloth, glasses, plates, etc.—pork at one end, stewed turkey at the other, rice and a vegetable tasting like potatoes [yam], marmalade, bread, cheese, bananas, and red wine. The doctor, of whom we purchased things wanted for crossing the Line, as cream of tartar, etc., invited us to his house—a very nice person, mild and polite, dressed like an Irishman. His house is of wood, two stories high, a fine drawing-room furnished like a house in Ireland—sofa, round table, cabinet, mirrors, piano, etc., and a delightful music-box, which he wound up to play for us. The variations of the airs were perfectly executed, soft and *forte*. There being no one on the island who plays the piano, he asked us to play, and, of course, was gratified. He is a Catholic, and asked us to sing the ‘Lamentations’; but having neither the music nor the words, we could only venture on litanies, which pleased him greatly. Sister E—— has a fine, sweet voice. She sings with *matua*. Liqueurs and sweetmeats were now brought in, and in a few moments we took leave.”

All the party were accomplished performers on the harp, piano, and other instruments, and several were fine vocalists. The doctor wished them to remain and open schools on the island, which had not a single school. *Matua* would have rejoiced to leave a few Sisters with the poor, ignorant beings who crowded around them and kissed their hands, but New Zealand was the spot to which she and her flock had been sent. They gave them beads, medals, and other articles of devotion, with which they were delighted. One of the Sisters understood Portuguese, the language of the island. They met one Irishman, and thought the poor fellow must feel lonely enough in such a strange place. The chapel was a wretched wooden building with three shabby altars and some frightful pictures. There was but one priest. He catechised the children every Sunday after Mass.

The servants on the *Oceanica* were all French, and curious was the medley in which they were often addressed: "*Donnez-moi* more tea"; "Albert, *voulez-vous* tie up that cow?" One lady, meaning to assert her ignorance on some point, said, "*Jimmy-fu-paw*" (*Je ne sais pas*), and the imperturbable official smiled not, though the Sisters could scarcely restrain themselves.

As the vessel neared the equator the heat became intense, but copious perspirations kept the travellers cool and prevented the fevers such heat would otherwise produce. On September 29 they deplore being deprived of the Michaelmas goose, and playfully beg their Sisters at home to apologize to St. Michael for them. No food was now to be had but biscuit hard enough to wear out their teeth. They wore over their veils the straw hats which careful *picopo* had bought for them at St. Jago. "Oh!" exclaims our scribe, "that you could see us in this costume. But we have more penance than that, as you shall hear in good time."

Sharks were quite common, and silvery flying-fish made

the surface lively—each about the size of a herring, with pretty wings, flying about two yards over the water at the height of a foot or two. The butter was oil; once a jar of it fell, and the floor became a sea of melted butter. Some old bottles fell into it, and the Sisters had much difficulty in arranging their night quarters. A kind French waiter came to the rescue, and the Sisters, seeing how carelessly he handled the broken glass, smiled and suggested a *balai*. “You laugh at me,” said he, “but where I got one broom dis hour of night?” The Sisters used to stay on deck till midnight and then descend “to enjoy the process of suffocation” till morning.

A sailor falling overboard, a boat was despatched in response to his screams. Though the great waves seemed likely to swallow it, it would have been cruel not to make the venture. The Sisters were in terrible suspense, and prayed earnestly that he might be saved from the deep and the sharks. The bishops were so sure of his death that they gave him absolution. The vessel had been going very fast, but the captain turned quickly; and all were then in danger, as there was no time to take the sails down. The sea was so rough that the poor man did not attempt to swim, but lay quietly on his back, which is the best plan (“I give you this information,” says our journalist, “lest any of you might fall into the Barrow”). The poor sailor was saved. He told the Sisters he had feared the boat could not overtake him, and made an act of contrition when he saw the bishops giving him absolution.

Every one at sea must pay tribute to Neptune in some way, and those who get sea-sick are often the best off. Even the goats got sea-sick on the *Oceanica*. The bishop entertained the nuns with Maori anecdotes. For a long time the Maoris thought sea and sky joined at the horizon and there was no country but their own. When the first ship came towards them they thought it was another island, that the masts were cocoanut trees, and the persons on

board inhabitants of the island. When the sailors got into a boat and rowed towards them they were amazed that the rowers turned their backs to the land. "They have eyes in the back of their heads," cried out the savages, who always row with their faces turned towards the place to which they are going.

Once the bishop went to Futuma to leave a priest, Father Chanel. On learning there were grand things in his trunk the savages resolved to kill him. One of the chiefs spoke kindly, and, on part of the rest, consented to receive the priest. The bishop gave the priest some altar requisites, which were seen by a savage who had concealed himself in the ship; these people were cannibals, and besides would kill a person for sake of an ornament. Next morning the deck was covered with them; the captain remarked they had not come for any good purpose. The bishop saluted them courteously; they frowned and did not return the salutation. Expecting immediate death, he offered his life to God, standing in prayer, his arms folded on his breast. Without turning his head he saw a savage with an axe a little behind towards the right, who aimed a blow at him, but could not strike. The bishop did not pretend to see him. He made another attempt with the same result. The bishop remained motionless, every moment expecting his crown. Once more the savage made a desperate effort. Again his arm fell, "by a miraculous interposition of Providence," said the bishop.

The savage, thus humbled before his tribe, sat down in a rage. The bishop walked up and down, and (as if he had not observed anything) said to the chief who had spoken kindly to him the day before: "If these men want to speak to me I shall be happy to gratify them. But it is rather early now; the sailors want to wash the deck. I shall leave a priest and a catechist to teach them the true religion." The chief said something the bishop did not understand, and in a moment the savages were in boats returning to their

island. "Leave this as soon as possible," he whispered the bishop.

At first they received Father Chanel well, but in a year or two began to wish for his vestments. One day two entered his hut, and while one asked him to look at a sore eye the other almost struck off his head; he dragged himself to an oratory to finish his Office before he should expire, but the other, "to put him out of pain," gave him a blow which caused immediate death. When the bishop returned to the island he said Mass and preached on the spot where the martyr had fallen. The assassins were present and wept much, as did the whole audience. All became good Catholics, without a single exception. They gave up all their vicious customs and were most exemplary.

CHAPTER LV.

TO THE ANTIPODES, 1849-50, CONTINUED.

An Ireland-Woman—"I am a Hair-pin"—"I *believe* Englis', but cannot speak it"—Crossing the Line—First Communion—*Picopo* elucidates Prayer—Conference on the Saints and on Purgatory—St. Joseph—A dead Calm—Albatross, Sharks, Acres of Porpoises—The Diarist prefers a Mutton-chop to a Slice of Sea-horse—Letter to Mother Warde—Purple-robed Sisters—Starvation stares the Sisters—Put on Allowance—Lack of French Politeness—Funny Sights—St. Cecilia's Day—Christmas in the Indian Ocean—The Blessed Sacrament—A Tabernacle decked with the beautiful white Feathers of the Albatross - In New Holland—Invited to stay—Lady Spencer—Attentions from Protestants—Sisters often in danger of being intercepted—At Cape Verde, at the Spice Islands, etc.—The Bishop a Knight of Malta—Decorated by Louis Philippe for his Devotion to the Savages—The Sisters cordially received at Sydney by Archbishop Polding—Auckland sighted—They arrive after a Journey of eight Months—Reception—Prices of Necessaries in Auckland, 1850.

THE French students made great progress in English. Our entertaining Sister gives some samples: One wanted to say his grandmother was Irish, and he said: "She is an *Ireland*-woman." Another, who had found a hair-pin, said: "I am a hair-pin." Another wished to say he could not understand the man with the large mouth, and said: "I am not understand—as man 'as great mout.'" The same said: "I *believe* [understand] Englis', but can speak it not."

October 14 the bishop baptized the only Protestant on board. The neophyte made his First Communion at Mass and was confirmed after Mass—a happy man to receive so many sacraments in one day! He was congratulated by

the captain and all on board, and said he had never felt so happy.

On St. Teresa's day the Line was crossed. The captain forbade the ceremony of tarring, but the sailors threw buckets of water over every secular, but so slyly that it afforded general amusement. The nuns were surprised they suffered so little from heat. In the evening *picopo* gave them a discourse on mental prayer, explaining it fully up to the prayer of union. He remarked that the imagination is the fool of the house, or a little dog always running about, and advised them not to mind if it were not docile. He had a great talent for preaching and making everything easy, also for uniting recreation with instruction.

Many squalls varied their experience near the equator. Torrents of rain, sea piled up in mountains, vessel on one side—these phenomena came on so rapidly that the Sisters could not get off deck before they were deluged. October 31 *picopo* explained the power and glory of the saints, and next day gave a beautiful conference on purgatory. They asked him any question they pleased, and thus got many lights on obscure subjects. Before reaching Auckland they could converse fluently in Maori.

“How delighted Sister Mary — would be to hear *picopo!*” writes our diarist. “But she'd have died on the way. Many are the privations even for the strong—no fire when it is cold, no milk, no butter, no eggs, often no fresh meat or bread. *Picopo* gives us all he can to make amends—fruit, pious discourses, etc. We feel weak, but are able to go through our spiritual duties and studies.”

Even grave, precise *matua* admits there were many hardships. “The captain,” says she, “is highly thought of as to skill in sea affairs. He does not understand the table so well, but the former is far more important.”

The nuns were amazed at the beauty of the sun about the Tropic of Capricorn, but one of them remarked she

had often seen the same magnificent object from Killiney Hill looking just as beautiful.

“For want of wonders,” she proceeds, “I shall tell you that in Antwerp all the old women have a great devotion to St. Joseph and St. Philomena. Every second person wore a medal of the latter. When the French priests asked my name, and heard ‘Philomena,’ they would say, ‘Oh! what a glorious saint.’ *Picopo* has a singular devotion to St. Joseph. When pleased about anything he says: ‘Oh! it is due to the protection of St. Joseph.’ There is a statue of St. Joseph at one end of our cabin and a crucifix at the other.”

During the calms the sailors whiled away their spare hours fowling and fishing. Albatross are frequently mentioned among their conquests—a bird with “a body larger than a goose, wings seven feet long, three joints in each—otherwise they would be too long for the body—head and breast white, wings blackish, feet webbed like a duck’s, beak very large and strong.” Sharks were caught, whose immense mouths the nuns surveyed with a shudder. Acres of porpoises, which they thought looked like an immense community of dark-veiled nuns, often surrounded the ship. Twenty men hauled a sea-horse aboard—

“Seventeen feet long, weighs a ton, the head tremendous, mouth much larger than that of a horse, teeth small, body twice as thick as that of a horse. They say the flesh can be eaten, but I should prefer a mutton-chop, not being particular. We saw a whale this morning spouting water as high as the main-mast. The *Andronicus*, an English vessel, is in sight, and our captain has gone to beg some water. She brings three hundred emigrants to New Holland, all trades-people except six cabin passengers. Several died since she left Plymouth, and some are dying. Seeing the bishop and captain uneasy about this dead calm, we began a novena to the Immaculate Conception.”

Starvation now stared our travellers in the face—“a heavenly prospect” they style it. They were put on allowance. The last animal on board was killed. “A grand

wind " came in answer to their prayers. Bishop Devereux was so delicate that they saw little of him. The French Sisters* were quartered on the upper deck, which could be reached only by a rickety ladder. Once, with an unusual lack of French politeness, they all tumbled down on their Irish Sisters, who were at meditation in the stern. A few bruises and abrasions were the courtesies exchanged, which among these merry people caused more laughing than crying. November 21 they descried Table Mount; they expected storms doubling the various capes, nor were they disappointed. White squalls, awful rocking, impossibility of walking or standing, are the next entries. At dinner a wave washed over table and guests; plates, bottles, and benches made an awful racket; each guest ran towards the cabin, a piece of bread in hand, all laughing heartily. At night they slept on the floor; to keep their berths was impossible. Along the coast of Africa the rocks were so numerous that the steersmen had not power to guide the vessel. The vessel reached Algoa November 27. On St. Cecilia's day, the feast of *matua*, there was great rejoicing; the young Sisters had meetings, and "the baby, Sister Ellen," was installed into *matua's* place, to the great amusement of *picopo*. She asked him what kind of man Bishop Pompallier was. He replied: "A very active man—he will be happy to see you in New Zealand, and do all he can to make you comfortable." After much fun they retired to recall the doings of home on that day. At Algoa the bishop gave them "a crock of preserved oranges." The passengers bought tortoises, lizards, leopard-skins, tiger and goat skins, to send to their friends. December 14 they set sail, beginning a novena to St. Joseph, "the delightful saint who had wrought miracles" for them.

*These Sisters left the *Oceanica* with Bishop Devereux at Cape Town. The Order to which they belonged is not mentioned, but their dress will identify them: purple habit without train, a white cashmere cross, veil very much off the face; on state occasions they added a long white cloak with a purple cross on the right shoulder, and purple shoes.

On Christmas eve the Sisters "went in spirit to visit the sick, with pieces of meat," etc. On Christmas day the bishop brought the Blessed Sacrament to their cabin. A simple shrine was prepared by their deft fingers for their hidden Lord; the white feathers of the albatross were the only ornaments, and never was a more chaste and elegant repository devised. After four hours, during which they remained absorbed before their beloved Spouse, the bishop removed the Blessed Sacrament. The same privilege was often granted. They had not as yet made retreat, as it is risky to apply the mind too much at sea. But now the motion had become second nature. "We could scarcely sleep without being rocked. When we reach Auckland imagine you see *matua* exchanging iron bedsteads for cradles, and buying monkeys to rock them for us." On Christmas they began an eight days' retreat, and on New Year's day renewed their vows. "For my part," writes one, "I did not think it possible to be so happy. We had no meditations on hell; all were such as to induce us to act rather from love than fear. *Picopo* studies our happiness every way."

Mother M. Cecilia wrote from the Cape of Good Hope to her cousin, Mother Frances Warde, then in Pittsburgh. After details of the voyage she gives some particulars of Bishop Pompallier. His family destined him for the army, but he wished to be a Jesuit. The Archbishop of Paris dissuaded him. At Lyons he became a Marist, and was made novice-master; three hundred passed through his hands. He had besides the direction of several communities about Lyons. Having great zeal for the foreign missions he was summoned to Rome by Pope Gregory XVI. to be consecrated bishop, that he might devote himself to preaching the Gospel in the archipelagos of Oceanica. He visited many islands in the South Seas, and soon five bishops were appointed to the vast regions first entrusted to him. He converted and baptized ten

thousand savages. "He had a great knowledge of the religious life, and was most anxious to get our Sisters," in which he succeeded, though Bishop Devereux,* whom they left at Cape Town, could not. "Fancy us seated around Dr. Pompallier, a tropical sky spangled with stars above, the dark sea rolling beneath. He tells us of his wonderful escapes; sometimes he speaks of the secrets of heaven. He never mentions except to me what he approves or disapproves of; if he had but his cincture to be repaired he would send it to me, and would wonder if any clergyman would ask a favor except through the superior."

On January 19 the *Oceanica* reached St. George's Town, New Holland. Next day the priests went ashore to find the seven Catholic inhabitants, who had not seen a priest for two years. All came aboard, went to confession to the bishop, and communicated at a Mass said for them on deck. The bishop took his party in a boat to the Bush, and they lunched on the grass and gathered shells. A serpent wriggled across the sail upon which their food was spread, but injured no one. The Sisters found many soldiers and others to instruct, and all were prepared for the sacraments, which they received from the bishop. Protestant ladies brought the Sisters immense bouquets, "as curious as handsome—nothing like them in Ireland." So charmed were they with these specimens of the far-famed *flora* of Australia that they procured seeds for Auckland. Beautiful parrots and paroquets were given them, which *matua* said might be kept in the Auckland garden. The Protestant ladies besought the bishop to leave at least two of the Sisters to open a school for their children, as they had no means of getting them educated. Lady Spencer invited the Sisters to spend the day with her. They declined, but the bishop went. Her granddaughter wanted to go with them to New Zealand, where her uncle was governor.

* Bishop Devereux went to Wexford and other places for Sisters of Mercy, but none could be spared at the time.

Seldom did contingents traverse the watery wastes that roll between their little island-home and the antipodes without danger of being intercepted. On the African coasts, at the Canary and Cape Verde Isles, among the coral-circled islets of Oceanica, risen out of the ocean no man knows how and peopled no man knows whence—those beauteous bouquets in the foaming sea—on the yellow coasts laved by Bass's Strait, wherever the unwieldy ship put in for water or provisions, the aborigines or the settlers wanted the nuns. "Stay with us to save and instruct our children," was the cry of all. They could but pray for these dwellers in the isles of the ocean, nor have their prayers been vain. The spiritual destitution of these lovely spots wrung their hearts, but, being religious, they could go only where lawful authority invited them and sent them.

The bishop, though named John, kept as his feast January 29. On that day, St. Francis de Sales', he gave each Sister his likeness. On the breast was represented the star given him by Louis Philippe for saving many lives in New Zealand and conciliating the natives in time of war; and he wore the cross received as a Knight of Malta before his consecration.

A lady took passage on the *Oceanica* for Sydney. There being no stewardess on board, the Sisters thought it a charity to mind her baby, taking turns to watch it or rock it as it lay in a basket.

They were warmly welcomed at Sydney by Archbishop Polding, who celebrated for them a grand High Mass of thanksgiving in the cathedral. At the Benedictine convent near Sydney they were hospitably entertained several days. A quiet sail of some weeks brought them to Auckland, which was sighted April 7. The bishop, with extended hands, blessed his diocese, and at five next morning *stole* ashore.

On the 9th the Sisters in one boat, the clergy in another,

bade adieu to the *Oceanica*. All the inhabitants crowded to the beach to welcome them. They went two by two to the church, followed by acolytes, students, priests, the bishop, and his coadjutor. The *Magnificat* and other psalms were sung and Benediction given. The church was crowded to excess. Refreshments were prepared for the Sisters in a school-room, and their future pupils waited on them. The walls were tastefully adorned with green boughs and the banners used on St. Patrick's day. They then adjourned to their new home, a small wooden house, containing choir, refectory, parlor, common room, a double cell, four rooms, and a kitchen. The mice were rather boisterous, and each nun was obliged to attend to those in her own corner. Schools and sodalities were undertaken, and an orphanage opened. Native girls came at once, and the bishop was proud of his pupils when he found that every Sister spoke Maori perfectly. They began with seventy Catholics, fifteen Protestants, and eight orphans. Many immigrants and other young women came every evening to be instructed, and they established four circles of the Living Rosary.

Here is the tariff of the necessaries of life in Auckland, 1850: Good tea, 1s. 6d. per pound; sugar, 3d.; beef and mutton, very inferior, 6d.; very good pork, 4d.; butter, in summer 10d., in winter 2 or 3 shillings; excellent potatoes very cheap. Servants, £15 to £20 a year; washerwomen, 2s. 6d. a day; mechanics, 7s. 6d.; laborers, 5s. No poverty where there was industry.

The bishop was confessor, chaplain—everything, but more a father than anything else to the community.

CHAPTER LVI.

LABORS AMONG THE IMMIGRANTS AND THE MAORIS.

The Heart untravelled—Letters from every Isle—To Bishop Haly—Library—Mother M. Cecilia begs for English-speaking Priests—The Natives—A Chieftainess in a State of Suffering—Eased by the Arrival of the “Sacred Girls”—Sydney—Carlow opens a Novitiate for Auckland—Cardinal Wiseman interested in New Zealand—Immense Success of the Sisters with the Maori—The Maori Women petition Queen Victoria for Aid to reclaim their savage Sisters in the Bush—The Defender of the Faith refuses this unique and most affecting Petition—Devotion of the Tribes to the Sisters—Anecdotes—Not all a Dream—Details—A poor Soldier under Sentence of Death—His Gratitude to the Sisters—He gives them all he has—Cruelty and Rapacity of the English Missioners—They rob the Savages—Auckland, 1850—California Gold—“The Sacred Girls” interpose successfully between rival Tribes in battle array—The Dove with the Olive-Branch—A courageous Chief.

WELL might those early missioners have said with their sweet-voiced countryman to their island-home :

“Where'er I go, whatever realms I see,
My heart, untravelled, fondly turns to thee.”

A letter home was despatched from every isle at which their bark sojourned. From Auckland Mother M. Cecilia wrote at once to Bishop Haly, thanking him for all his past kindness and paternal solicitude, and giving the fullest details of their new home.

“We are going,” she writes, “to get a library for our people; they are most anxious for it. No aristocracy here; all are comfortable. The colonel, mayor, and several high personages waited on the bishop; he is in great favor with the governor, who will do anything he proposes. Several chiefs have implored the bishop to send

them priests. He is afflicted to refuse, but powerless to comply. Oh ! it is lamentable to hear whole tribes supplicating for some one to break to them the Bread of Life. Will the sons of St. Patrick remain at home and numberless souls crying out for their ministrations? French priests would come, but they are unacquainted with the language. All the immigrants are Irish or English. Ah ! my lord, do all in your power to induce some good, zealous priests to come out, and you will do a great work for the Church. Well do I remember your deep interest for this part of the vineyard. May the Lord of power give efficacy to your holy exertions ! Forty good priests are needed for this diocese."

The natives were delighted with the Sisters. A chieftainess came to the convent and wept on seeing them ; at length she said : " I was in a state of suffering until I saw the 'sacred girls.' Now I begin to live." The Sisters found the Maoris quiet, intelligent and reflective, very observant, and easily taught. One Maori surprised them by her facility in speaking English after a few weeks. Mother M. Cecilia mentions several Carlow people, knowing the bishop's kind interest in all who had ever been of his fold. She sends respectful remembrance to the Carlow clergy and other friends, and love to all the dear ones at the convent. " Often and often we speak of them. What an interest absence gives ! Please God, we shall not always be separated ; we shall be reunited where there are no partings, where all is peace and joy." She mentions Sydney as " a fine city, climate disagreeable, close, and hot ; lightning awfully destructive, and as it seldom rains the country has a parched and burnt appearance. New Zealand quite different : green fields and fine trees ; all European plants, vegetables, and flowers grow wild here." The zealous mother mentions the great kindness of Archbishop Polding, and concludes " with fondest remembrances to the loved ones at home, in which Dr. Pompallier unites."

Carlow convent immediately opened a novitiate for Auck-

land, and from time to time sent out large reinforcements. Five Sisters left in August, 1851, under the escort of Rev. Dr. Macdonald, of All-Hallows. A voyage from Ireland to New Zealand in those days consumed eight or nine months at least. Mother M. Cecilia continued to make the most urgent appeals for Sisters, and in 1857 a band of five embarked at Chelsea for their distant mission. They were visited while in London by Cardinal Wiseman, who was deeply interested in New Zealand. Other contingents followed in 1858, and at various periods since. The zeal of Mother M. Cecilia for the mission entrusted to her was boundless. She writes by every mail to her friends, ecclesiastic and religious, to send her help to gather in the harvest of souls she found ready for the reapers. No class or nationality escapes her; the Maori is the same to her as her own race. All for God and for souls, she leaves nothing undone to attract all. In an incredibly short time her schools became the finest in the colony. So early as 1851 Sir George Grey mentions them as being "exceedingly well conducted."

"Perhaps it was in consequence of the encouragement such language afforded," writes Dr. Marshall, "that some of the native females, taught by the Sisters of Mercy whom the charity of Christ had moved to cross the great ocean, ventured to address a letter to the sovereign of Great Britain, imploring aid for their generous teachers."

These simple women, understanding that the sovereign in whose name they were ruled was a woman, head of the national Church and Defender of the Faith, thought they had but to lay their grievances before the young queen and her womanly heart would prompt her to come to the relief of themselves and their little ones. But though a petition from recently-reclaimed savage women, zealous for the unreclaimed of their race, must have been an unusual event in her life, the royal matron never deigned a reply. As Dr. Marshall sadly adds, "Succor was refused and the pe-

tion unnoticed." This was the more to be regretted as whole tribes had been thoroughly demoralized by missionaries from England, the most respectable of whom plundered the natives of their lands and amassed fortunes in crops and cattle. The very founder of the mission, one Marsden, began his apostolic labors by seizing two hundred acres of the best land, for which this model son of the Reformation gave the poor owners twelve axes! With appalling dishonesty thousands of acres were bartered for a few blankets, beads, knives,* the natives being ignorant of what they conveyed in the title-deeds drawn up for them by shepherds who knew only how to shear their flocks.

All efforts made to Christianize the Maoris, save by Catholics, have been gigantic failures. But splendid has been the success of those who preached to them from the bark of Peter. Disinterestedness and burning zeal must always triumph, for such evidences of the divine spark within us compel the admiration and reverence of man, whether savage or civilized. Thus Catholics won their way, though described to the natives, by the gentlemen who purchased lordly estates for hatchets and shovels, as conspirators and malefactors. Dr. Pompallier was constantly assailed by his natives for black-robos and "sacred girls." "If you are our father why do you not send them?" they said, little knowing his exertions to procure them.

Cardinal Cullen told his cousin, the mother-superior of Carlow convent, that he had letters from a worthy Irishman, settled in New Zealand, begging he would interest himself in sending out priests, adding: "We cannot get the nuns to educate our children till we have priests to say

* Rev. W. Laury, Superintendent of the Wesleyan Mission, Auckland, is described by one of his own colleagues:

"He lends money . . . at twenty per cent. . . . Is now owner of lands and houses, and one of the wealthiest men in Auckland."

One missionary, Rev. H. Williams, claimed twenty-two thousand acres of land bought for needles, etc.!

Truly the love of money is the root of all evil: *disinterestedness* is the most powerful weapon of the priest, whether he deals with barbarism or civilization.

Mass and administer the sacraments; and as the 'cages' [convents] are ready, we are most anxious to get the *black-birds* [nuns] to sing in them." Mother M. Cecilia opened at once a home for Maori girls, whom she utilized as missionaries. "After being instructed in everything useful we send them back to their tribes, others taking their places; in this way immense good is accomplished. They are a brave, intelligent, devotional people."

More than once did so-called Protestant tribes revolt against their masters, but amid wars and rumors of wars the modest homes of the missionaries and nuns were held sacred. When a British frigate offered on one occasion to hide Bishop Pompallier till the danger was over, the grand old prelate declined the offer, and, committing himself to the guardianship of the savages, declared, with apostolic boldness, that he feared nothing but sin. And such was the influence which the saintly Mother M. Cecilia gained over these simple children of nature that a few words from her often made peace between hostile tribes, and never did the smallest danger threaten her quarters that *both parties* did not give her notice and assure her that whatever happened the "sacred girls" were always safe. It is sad to think that these noble savages, so fitted by nature for civilization and Christianity, have dwindled to a mere handful—the ordinary fate of aborigines when England undertakes their protection.

"I am often moved to tears," writes Bishop Pompallier, "when I see the chief of some tribe come many leagues through the forest to consult me on some point which embarrasses the delicacy of his conscience." Again and again were the nuns moved to tears by the sublime virtue of the Maori women. . . .

"Once," writes Mother M. Cecilia, "as our orphans and native girls were walking on the shore one of the children climbed a rock overhanging the sea; her foot slipped and she fell down some yards, and, grasping some shrubs, screamed

for help. The situation was terrific ; a priest and a settler looked on shuddering. But one of the native children leaped like a deer down the rock, and, seizing the almost breathless child, bore her in triumph to her companions."

On the bishop's feast-day "a nice native girl" read a "dream" about a vessel that entered a New Zealand harbor in autumn, 1837. A distinguished-looking passenger, struck with the extreme beauty of the scene, was deeply affected to learn the island was plunged in infidelity. He soon fell asleep and saw numbers of heavenly spirits ; his guardian angel showed him the Spirit of New Zealand weeping over the unhappy state of the country. He knelt and made a touching prayer that God would take pity on his charge. Instantly the angels of Ireland, France, and Rome offered their services to their weeping companion, who acknowledged their goodness and said the Spirit of France must go for the Spirit of Lyons. When this Spirit prophesied the wonders soon to happen in New Zealand all tears were dried.

"Our poor Sisters have too much to do," writes Mother M. Cecilia ; "please send us help. Some of our boarders are quite grown, though young ; they will be married as soon as they leave us. Please God, they will know their religion well, and many useful things besides. Two nice Protestant girls are coming. When I told their parents we should not interfere with their religion the father said : 'I leave them to your care, soul and body. They may choose for themselves.' God be praised ! Is not this delightful ? We had our pupils and orphans make three days' retreat before their First Communion, and were edified at the way they went through it. A Sister gave the natives and half-castes instructions in Maori."

A party of members of Parliament, with their wives, visited Auckland. Mr. Clifford, brother to Miss Clifford (a Sister of Mercy) ; Mr. Weld, a near relative of the cardinal ; and Mr. Crampton, a convert, and related to the Sisters' Dublin friend, Sir Philip, were among them. The

bishop conducted them through the schools, and in each he was addressed in a different language, a half-caste making the Maori address with untutored eloquence. Music and painting, with beautiful illuminations and fancy-work, charmed the visitors. Next day a box of paints and brushes, specially prepared for illumination, was sent to the convent with a slip of paper on which was written in French: "An offering of respect to the Sisters of Mercy." They afterwards learned the kind donor was Mr. Crampton, who sent many presents, among them a relic of the crown of thorns—"it is awful; each thorn is thick, and longer than your longest finger."

The Sisters frequently visited the stockade, or prison. They were much interested in a young soldier who was convicted of murder. He was so ignorant as not to know the principal mysteries; but as soon as he was thoroughly instructed he began to view in its true colors his past life, and was most penitent. One day he presented his instructress with an apple, saying: "Sister, I had two apples given me yesterday, and I kept one for you." "It brought tears to my eyes," said she, "to see the poor fellow deny himself and give us all he had in the world. Such a fine head and forehead as he has! One of the keepers, an excellent young Irish Catholic, comes to his cell night and morning and reads the prayers for him."

Mother M. Cecilia describes the Auckland of 1850 as a singular-looking town, partly in a valley and partly straggling up a hill; wooden houses; streets marked, but sparsely strewn with dwellings; grass everywhere. The thirst for California gold had a deleterious effect on this embryo city. Many a poor wife and child had to deplore the infatuation of husbands and fathers who could have earned an honest livelihood without exposing their lives and morals to ruin. From first to last this good mother was devoted to the Maoris, and her love for these poor people was most cordially reciprocated. Once, when two rival tribes were

on the point of beginning a terrible battle, she sent them by a faithful native a flag with a dove bearing an olive-branch embroidered on it, and a message: "The sacred girls beg the hostile parties to become good friends." At once the poor natives yielded to her entreaty and peace was proclaimed. When a war was raging some twenty years ago, one of the chiefs came into the harbor at the risk of his life, and, going to the convent, told the "sacred girls" to be ready to fly if matters went to the worst, and he pledged his word to give them timely notice and place them in a safe refuge.

CHAPTER LVII.

FOUNDRESS OF THE SISTERS OF MERCY IN NEW ZEALAND.

Ripe for Martyrdom—Photograph—A curious Stepmother—"Lovely Helen Marr"—Fanny—A gentle Teacher—Ellen Maher enters the Carlow Novitiate—She becomes Mistress of Novices—Superior—Visit of Bishop Pompallier—The Maori Chiefs beg for Priests—Their Wives ask for the "Sacred Girls"—The savage Girls ask to consecrate their Virginitv to God—Mother M. Cecilia consults her Namesake—Father St. Leger—They encourage her—A Sacrifice—Beautiful Description—Letters—Dearth of Priests—The scattered Flock—The Bishop—His Spirit—A London Sacrilege—Mother M. Cecilia's Grief—Promises delusive—Advice—A skilful Director—An all-accomplished Maori Woman—Letters sweet, tender, full of Zeal.

ONLY saintly women ripe for martyrdom could have succeeded with the Maoris, to whom intercourse with English speaking people* had been such a terrible malediction, and of such women was Mother M. Cecilia Maher.

"I prize her," writes her successor in Carlow, "more than any other nun I ever knew—a perfect lady, most laborious,

*"We have planted England in New Zealand," said an English legislator. "The Englishman will destroy the Maori, and the sooner the Maori is destroyed the better." Miss Tucker, an English missionary, describes the plundered Maori as "barbarians whose extermination is more desirable than their conversion"—"a sentiment," says Dr. Marshall. "in which zeal seems to triumph over charity." The same unimpeachable authority, having described with virtuous indignation the dishonest practices of the missionaries sent by England to convert the Maori, says to the advocates of these barren systems: "Let them tell us whether they can imagine St. Paul claiming thousands of acres in Thrace or an estate in the suburbs of Corinth; St. Barnabas bartering domestic utensils for a vineyard in Cyprus; St. Augustine robbing the Saxons of their pork to sell it to the Welsh; St. Boniface lending money at twenty per cent. on the banks of the Danube; or St. Francis Xavier a thriving cattle-dealer on the shores of the Persian Gulf" (vol. i. p. 432).

In his invaluable work, *Christian Missions*, Dr. Marshall proves entirely from non-Catholic sources the utter failure of the emissaries of missionary societies (Protestant) to convert the aborigines of any country.

a grand woman, thoroughly devoted to her duties. Her spirit was charity in all its moods and tenses. . . . Pray for her, lest any stain should keep her from enjoying the bright vision of God. She was the most perfect person I ever knew in or out of a convent. I hope she will be mindful of my wants before the throne of God." "Mother Cecilia was a very holy person in the world," writes her cousin and first superior, Mother X. Warde; "her humility, meekness, and charity made her the sweet saint of our home at Carlow. How often I wished I could imitate her!"

This valiant woman was born at Freshford, County Kilkenny, September 13, 1799. Her mother died while she was a mere child, and some years after her father married a lady of great piety but very harsh and severe manners. Curiously enough, while Mrs. Maher doted on her step-children, Ellen and William, she was terribly stern with her own five, and very often Ellen was obliged to use her utmost influence to protect them from their own mother. She grew up beautiful and highly accomplished, and many an acrostic did the county versifiers make on "the lovely Helen Marr," as they chose to style her. A French governess aided her to educate the girls for about eight years, the mother having confessed herself unwilling to retain any control of her five daughters. She gave all into the hands of Ellen, and actually made over to her by adoption her youngest child, Fanny. When Fanny grew up Mrs. Maher forgot her non-interference policy and insisted that Ellen should administer corporal punishment; but Ellen declared she would train the child by reasoning with her and by kindness, and would not even slap her. The happiest results justified what Mrs. Maher regarded as a novel experiment. Ellen was more like a mother to her step-sisters than the peculiar and unpleasant woman who occupied that relation towards them, and whose pleasure it was to try the amiability for which they were all remarkable. One died young; four became nuns, and excellent nuns they were. Their home novitiate had been far more severe than the

strictest novitiate of any religious house. Two, Jane and Fanny, we shall meet on the American mission.

Miss Maher's chief occupation was assisting to educate her sisters and helping their mother in every possible way. As her presence seemed necessary to the peace and comfort of the family, she was thirty-nine years old before she could leave home to follow her vocation as a Sister of Mercy. In 1842 Ellen, now Sister M. Cecilia, became mistress of novices; and in 1843 she succeeded her cousin, Mother Warde, as mother-superior. In 1849 Bishop Pompallier visited her convent, and described so touchingly the wants of his people that the Sisters were eager to help him.

"Several chiefs and their wives had come to say good-bye before he left, and one said with deep feeling: 'Bishop, you told us the Catholic Church is like a great tree whose branches extend all over the world. Is there no branch * for New Zealand? Has God cut us off and abandoned us?' Then the women said: 'We have heard of *sacred girls* who teach, who instruct; would they come to us?'"

The bishop promised to try to induce some of them to come. The anxiety of these people to embrace the faith is astonishing—just what one reads of in the lives of the saints. Frequently after Communion and confirmation the young girls begged him to allow them to consecrate themselves to God. See what an inspiration without ever hearing of religious! Some have made annual vows.

Mother M. Cecilia wrote to her namesake, Mother M.

* The Maoris, who are wonderfully acute, style the Catholic Church in their own language *the trunk*, and the sects *dead branches*. When they heard the different doctrines propounded by Protestant ministers they said, with withering contempt: "Agree among yourselves before you attempt to convert us." "The keen-sighted native convert" (?), said the Protestant bishop, Dr. Selwyn, "soon detects a difference of system, and thus religion [Protestant] brings disunion." The same "keen-sighted" barbarians, witnessing the myriad evils of religious strife among the English and Scotch preachers, affirmed that "*heathenism with love is better than Christianity without it.*" But they easily learned from their Catholic teachers that there could be *no Christianity without love*.

Cecilia of the parent house, to inquire what she thought of the New Zealand mission, and asked her to consult a wise and holy mutual friend, Father St. Leger, S. J. The holy mother wrote back a most encouraging reply : said if Baggot Street could spare Sisters she would rejoice to give some to Bishop Pompallier, whom she greatly admired. Finally Dr. Pompallier asked her plainly if she would go. "Yes, if sent," was the reply. Bishop Haly said he admired her zeal, but as to letting her go he would do no such thing, unless he got more lights on the matter. He consulted the college priests and others. It was plain from the first that if the mission was accepted Mother M. Cecilia must guide it. And when Dr. Haly arrived at the conclusion that it was God who called he came to the convent to announce his decision. Bishop Pompallier, in an ecstasy of delight, embraced his episcopal brother. "For a moment or two," wrote the holy mother, "my heart beat violently ; but then I felt thankful to my sweet Lord, who so mercifully selected me, His unworthy child." For a few days the Sisters knew nothing. When they heard the news they set to work to prevent their great loss, but without success, as we have seen. To them the departure of their mother was the grief of griefs, and never have they failed to show their love for her in life and death.

One of her spiritual daughters paints the holy mother she has not seen for thirty-four years :

"She was remarkable for that very rare thing, common sense. Her devotion to the Blessed Sacrament was most lively. Every few moments she could spare were spent before the altar. At recreation she was bright and cheerful, but never noisy. She enjoyed seeing the Sisters joyous, but could not tolerate anything boisterous or coarse. Her fasting was rigorous, but her health excellent. In the middle of the night she used to take the discipline, and so strongly was the lash given that any one who chanced to be awake would feel nervous listening. Her exterior was

that of a perfect religious : face and figure those of a nun ever living in God's sweet, holy presence ; her dress neat, but like that of a true lover of holy poverty. Most impressively did she instruct the sick poor and the school-children. She inculcated that our duties were of a mixed nature, and that the faithful performance of them would secure us a high place in heaven."

Every post brought letters from this dear mother, always begging for priests and nuns :

" Ah ! if they knew the sad want of spiritual laborers here they would come. Do pray that many holy persons with an apostolic spirit may devote themselves to this glorious work. Messrs. O'Rorke and Cleary go on well ; the former is the first Irishman to exercise the sacred ministry in the Maori tongue. . . . Give our postulants great directions, beloved mother, about retiredness and modesty, sitting always quietly together, not forming acquaintances. An experienced priest will be with them. Oh ! for priests. It is afflicting to see hundreds imploring for their ministry, and none to send them. . . . My beloved child, be silent, prudent, and cautious, and pray much. Look on yourself as nothing, absolutely nothing. Tell your sweet Lord this very often, and, kneeling before the Blessed Sacrament, ask your tender Mother Mary to take your heart and beg her divine Son to impress on it what He pleases. Before you speak or act pray, and remain in silence as asking Jesus and Mary to enlighten you."

Referring to the sacrileges committed during the " Papal-Aggression " excitement, she asks : " Is it true that the holiest of creatures was burned in effigy in London ? So atrocious an act would be sufficient to draw down God's wrath on a whole nation. We have plenty of bigotry here, yet Catholicity, *T.G.*, is making steady progress."

" Tell me, dear Father Maher," she writes to her old Carlow friend, " are not promises delusive ? Do you recollect you said, ' We shall always keep the first twelve that entered St. Leo's to live and die there ; the young we

shall send forth'? And how those twelve are now scattered over the face of the earth—in many parts of Ireland, England, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and New Zealand! Well, the last trumpet will bring us all and our cherished friends together, and we shall, please God, have a joyful meeting, all, *all* on the right side. I hope to procure you a specimen of the natives' carving on wood in the shape of a walking-stick."

Of Dr. Pompallier Mother M. Cecilia writes :

"Our bishop can scarcely be surpassed—kind, amiable, with a thorough knowledge of human nature that makes him see what God demands of each. A perfect master of the interior life, he can teach meditation, and almost inspire it, so accurate is he in adapting it to each one's particular case. He is very literary, knows a number of languages, and has exercised the sacred ministry in all parts of the world. His health is good, and he is indefatigable—often rises at three A.M.—is our confessor, attends our examinations,* presides at our ceremonies. . . . He is very particular in condemning any levity about sacred matters. On this subject he would terrify you. No jests about confession, passages of Scripture, etc. He wishes his spiritual daughters to have strong, vigorous, cheerful consciences, totally free from anxiety or scruple; very exact, but more to the spirit than to the letter. Very strongly he insists on seeing God in superiors, and wishes to rule, and have me rule, by no other motive. He would not send the smallest thing to be repaired but through the superior. Before your first confession to him is concluded he knows you thoroughly, and you feel as if your soul were in the hands of a pilot so skilful that, with God's blessing, it cannot be lost. He is liberal in pecuniary matters. In Sydney they call him the Prince of Bishops. His care of us is that of a tender mother. He has great discernment—often tells me to look sharp, keep my eyes open, etc. We have a fine cow, with sheep, etc., to begin our farming.

* Bishop Haly never failed to attend the examinations at the Carlow convent school, even when so pressed for time that he had to write his letters during their continuance. When the college faculty who examined the children proposed an unusually difficult question the good-natured prelate was wont to commit the misdemeanor of "prompting."

The bishop † is pleased with all ; but if we neglect anything he says, provokingly : ‘ I thought the Irish were the best farmers in the world.’ ”

Here is a specimen of a Maori pupil :

“ One of our native girls has returned to her tribe. She is eighteen, very modest, religious, and edifying in her conduct. She used to go to Holy Communion every week here, and may continue, as fortunately a priest resides near her tribe. She is very talented. After learning to read and write her own language she was taught English, which she speaks nicely, but with a lisp. She reads and writes English well, went through arithmetic, and has a good idea of geography. At examinations she was often asked to point out remarkable places on the map ; her knowledge of the equator, zones, etc., would surprise you. She can wash, iron, knit stockings, crochet, make and bake bread, cut out dresses. She helped to make a rochet for the bishop ; can scrub a house and put it in order. As you may suppose, she is regarded with admiration by all. She has a school of thirty of her country girls [in the Bush]. Some Europeans go to her. †

“ Tell all this to Bishop Haly, who always rejoices in the accomplishment of good. Persons have been anxious to engage her in marriage, but cannot. She does great good in her tribe. The bishop thinks of forming a Third Order, and she will be a candidate. . . . A thousand thanks for the valuable engravings. They are invaluable for a new people, and will be hung in the Maori church. I ask your prayers for a nice girl we are preparing for baptism. When her brother, a Wesleyan minister, discovered it he beat her with a horse-whip. She is a fine creature, and glories in suffering for Christ. . . . A convert of excellent parts wants to join us. She loves the convent to such a degree

* In 1864, while war was raging, the bishop received a letter in Maori from a great Protestant leader, addressed “ To the bishop without a fault.” He used his best efforts to promote peace. His pastorals were always printed in Maori as well as English.

† “ We have a house of hospitality,” writes Mother M. Cecilia, “ where poor native women can be received for a few days while disposing of their potatoes, fruit, or other articles. While they remain they receive instruction, as several Sisters know Maori well, receive the sacraments, and then return safely to their tribes. Without this house these poor creatures, who come from the interior to Auckland, are greatly exposed in bad lodging-houses, etc. Already there are vocations among them.”

that she told me if we will not receive her as a lay Sister she will ask to remain all her life with the orphans or native pupils ; but leave the enclosure to return to the world she could not do."

The hundreds of letters from Auckland to Carlow contain chiefly petitions for subjects, orders for books—Mother M. Cecilia was as great a lover of books and distributor of books as the holy foundress herself—music, working and drawing materials, and the little details of conventual life. Sometimes there are pretty photographs of her children :

"Sister Flora has so strong a vocation that she would die at the convent-door before she could be put out ; Sister Mary, good, humble, and useful ; Sister Jane, a fine, lively working Sister ; Sister M. C——, a young widow, simple, docile as a child, nice-looking, and useful—most pious, and ready for everything ; Sister M. R——, a fine, good creature, clever at work, great taste for drawing. Now, I hope you like our noviceship. Schools increasing. Do all you can for us. Turn the attention of some aspirants this way. Our beloved Sisters may soon become quite exhausted. I often wish to give them a little time out of school for rest or exercise, but I cannot. Want of sufficient help is a great trial, but our heavenly Spouse will not ask more than we can do. Sister M. V—— improves in flower-painting ; but I never met any one with so great a taste for figures and drapery. I never knew a more obedient religious.

"Our beloved bishop wants you to do him a signal service by prudently getting a good physician to come to Auckland. He should be a steady, married man, a practical Catholic, of strict temperance habits. The bishop insures him a salary, and would give him twenty acres of land. Also, send us more postulants. How often have I seen fine-looking girls with lovely voices singing in country choirs ! Be on the lookout for a few of these clever, intelligent girls for us. Our examinations went on beautifully. A French address was read to the bishop. . . . There were music and singing. . . . Fine work, painting, artificial flowers, etc., were exhibited. A gentleman present, a friend of education, sent me five pounds and a very

polite note in token of his admiration and approval of the way the pupils acquitted themselves. This was a rose for us. May God be blessed! . . . If He favors you with a desire to promote His glory here, come; you shall be joyfully received. But we must seek the divine will in all things, not our own inclinations, which would be a blind guide. We are separated from all the outside world; our schools, instruction of the ignorant, visitation of the sick—these are our earthly world. The bishop comes to recreation sometimes and tells us many nice spiritual yet recreative things. . . . I was sent a letter from Cardinal Cullen to a good man in this colony, in which his eminence desires to be remembered to me. How humble he is! We have written to him privately, asking that his influence be exerted in our behalf. . . . Pray for the happy repose of a good young man who died recently, having willed all he had to us. We received some acres of land and forty pounds. Do pray for him. Dear mother, do all you can for this foundation; it is the last, and should therefore be the pet. . . . How true it is that in our exile the rose is twined round and round with thorns that pierce! You give cheering accounts of four postulants coming, and you tell of your own extreme pain where pain is so acutely felt—in the head. May God give you grace and strength to bear it, so as to merit a crown bright and fair for eternity! May He preserve that poor little brain that has worked so nobly for this poor mission for fourteen years! . . . I shall not love you less, dearest, though we meet no more. Our divine Lord is master of His own gifts. He calls one to New Zealand and leaves another in Carlow—blessed be His name for ever! We shall yet, please God, have a happy meeting.”

CHAPTER LVIII.

THE CLOSING YEARS OF THE AGED MOTHER.

Threescore and Ten—A Respite—"Old : am I old ?"—Visit of the Duke of Edinburgh—Not a Pound in the House—Embroidery—Archbishop Goold—Father Dalton, S.J.—Convents very poor but free from Debt—Beautiful Extracts—Precious Death—The Auckland Convent poor, but littered with Books, Engravings, every Evidence of Culture—Mother M. Cecilia takes up her Burden afresh—A *Mère déposée*—Closing Years of Bishop Pompallier's Life—Grief of his Children—Bishop Croke—Anecdote apropos of nothing—New Branch—A saintly Soul—Still seeking Books and Sisters—Mother M. Xavier Franklin.

IN 1868 Mother M. Cecilia, now in her seventieth year, was graciously allowed a respite from the cares of office with which she had been burdened since 1842.

"Our darling mother," writes her young and loving successor, "is, thank God ! well and in her element. She has long been anxious for this change. Considering the heavy crosses she had during her many years' superiority, she looks well ; her cheerful smile in the midst of all gave courage to her devoted children. Never will her unwearied patience be forgotten. Our bishop often asked her to have her photograph taken, but she would say : 'O my lord ! it is only the face of a poor nun.' We hope to prevail on her some time. We often say to our dearest mother : 'Do take a little care ; you are getting old now,' and she will straighten up—she has a great stoop—and say : 'Old : am I old ?'"

Letters tell us that land is not much use to convents in New Zealand, on account of the expense of tillage—much cannot be made except by the great land-owners—and that few in Auckland die natural deaths ; but this was in war-

times. A great deal of gold embroidery and bullion work was sent to the convent, especially by the military, one of whom said: "It is only my countrywomen who can do such exquisite work." In May, 1869, when the Sisters were working ornaments for the carriage which was to carry the Duke of Edinburgh, the good mother writes that "there is not a single pound in the house. Yet God is good to us. We make out with anxiety and solicitude what is barely necessary. We rest content in the bosom of His providence; He sweetens everything." From the first the Sisters had to struggle with poverty, yet when the financial crisis, caused by long and frequent wars between the British and the natives, came, the five convents established by Mother M. Cecilia were found free from debt. Archbishop Goold, who came in the fall of 1869, accompanied by Father Dalton, S.J., to ascertain the real state of affairs, was astonished to find convents in so thriving a condition despite the ordeal through which the diocese was passing.

"They were greatly pleased with our labors for the glory of God—to Him be honor and praise. There is a special providence over this well-tried community in the midst of the heaviest crosses. Our darling Mother M. Cecilia supports us through all; her spirit has taken deep root, and if every house of the Order keep the Rules as well as poor New Zealand our holy foundress has reason to rejoice. I was speaking confidentially yesterday to Sister M. C——, who said: 'Now, mother, I draw no comparisons, but I think our Sisters here are very holy.' Ah! that was a rose. How much I preferred ours to the finest convent* in the world! May God give all the dear Sisters of Mercy a blessing wherever He makes their abode in time!"

"You will not be sorry," writes Mother M. Cecilia, "to

* For nearly twenty years Mother M. Cecilia and her children lived in a tottering frame house, but nothing was wanting for the culture of their minds. However poor the dwelling, clothing, or table, the old rooms were littered with the good books, fine engravings, and standard music becoming to a teaching institution, but rather scantily supplied to-day in many of the grandest edifices advertised as educational establishments.

have a letter from your old mother, Sister, companion—are not these titles of spiritual love? May they be a prelude to that love we shall bear each other in eternity, when, lost in the divine love, we shall love all in Him and for Him. . . . You will be sorry, but grace will make you rejoice, to hear of a new soul entering the heavenly Sion—poor, dear Sister B——. Her death was beautiful; to the last she had the use of all her faculties. She was most anxious to be with God. Her death was a fine instruction for the young religious here. Poor Sister Mary! what a comfort to have her. Sister B—— used to say to her gaily: ‘You came to New Zealand to take care of me.’ Her amiable, sweet manner, her docility and humility, make her truly valuable, though otherwise she is deficient—but no one contains all. . . . As for the N——s, I do not wish them to come except it be for God’s greater glory, so do be prudent. They might make general confessions to the bishop and have his decision as to vocation before they leave. It would be awful to have them come unless they have vocations. I see this every day more and more. At one time I did not see it so clearly.

“The dear bishop never fails to offer Mass for any deceased member we tell him of; he got rooms fitted up for four Sisters at the other side of the bay, so I sent some who are poorly. God grant it may do them good! . . . The new Sisters are quite at home and very happy. Sister M—— persuaded Sister Kate, who is very innocent, to have spades for the professed to dig their graves on the first Sunday in September. Then she begged Sister M—— to see if all was right. Sister Mary was convulsed with laughter on finding in the cemetery everything necessary for the operation. . . .

“Mother M. Frances invited me to America, promising two postulants to return with me. But it would be sad to leave the work here, even for a time—I am too happy. Really I fear a long purgatory, all are so kind and good.”

The devoted Mother M. Cecilia admits that the quiet of a three years’ rest made her shrink from the labors of office; not that she dreads labor, but the mental weight and care, not small at any age, but naturally more depressing when one has passed the limits allotted to man.

“What happy, peaceful days when I had but to obey, no care, no solicitude! Truly, heaven could not be purchased on terms so easy: we must fight, suffer, and carry our cross; but one glimpse of glory, the glory of God, will make us feel and know that all is nothing but what helps to its attainment. I remember the time I thought the novices a great charge; now they do not appear much.”

In her seventy-third year this brave, gentle soul was obliged to resume the burden, and we find her working for God's glory with unabated zeal and drawing to His immediate service the choicest souls. She mentions candidates, confessors of the faith by the violent persecutions they had sustained to practise it, and begs for more such, telling her ardent Irish correspondent of “hundreds of poor children running wild—no schools, no one to teach them of rewards and punishments that are eternal.” She describes the happy meetings for retreats at the mother-house that give “a faint feeling of the joyous meeting which will yet be in heaven.” She mentions a retreat by Father Dalton, “a true friend,” adding that many of the Sisters had never before seen a Jesuit. “I am glad,” she writes to an old child of hers, a *mère déposée*, “to find you are so happy at being relieved of your charge. The saints tell us never to seek any distinction, but not to shrink from the burden if God places it on our shoulders.”

The affectionate heart of the aged mother was cruelly wrung by the troubles that clouded the closing years of Bishop Pompallier's administration. His health failed; overwork in a trying climate told heavily on his once vigorous frame, and he was unable for the business which circumstances consequent on wars and the transfer of the capital to Wellington had brought about. He made some mistakes, too—who does not?—but not a word of these ever appears in Mother M. Cecilia's most confidential letters. It was God's will that he should suffer persecution for difficulties that grew out of a state of things he could not

have foreseen. He was certainly one of the most zealous and laborious missionaries that ever labored in the South Seas. It was the disappointment of his life that he did not, like his disciple, Father Chanel, receive the crown of martyrdom. He went to Rome in 1869, and, having resigned his charge to the Holy Father, retired to the bosom of his congregation to die. His convents were the bright spots in his former charge, upon which his eyes never wearied of lingering, and an affectionate and reverential correspondence was kept up between the holy prelate and his distant children till death released him from the sorrows that embittered his old age. In connection with his former diocese the extraordinary fervor of Mother M. Cecilia and her children was his greatest consolation.

“Oh! how disengaged we should be,” writes Mother M. Cecilia. “God alone! God alone! We must now work more than ever on the institution, as we have lost such a father, helper, and guide. What pleasure this dear bishop used to feel on Saturday evenings when he came to the convent for a cup of tea, if he could tell me that some young person among his penitents had made up her mind—he would be so happy to give us a new member. What sweet recollections mixed up with his honored name! What tears were shed in our convents at the announcement of the news so sad for us! Ah! if you could see him kneeling at the dying Sisters’ beds, praying, making acts of faith, hope, and charity, giving repeated absolutions. I hoped he would be with me at death; that hope is over.”

Mother M. Cecilia finds Bishop Pompallier’s successor, Dr. Croke,* very kind, full of life and anecdote, and a fine preacher.

“When it is announced that he will preach the church

* According to Mother M. Cecilia, Dr. Croke (now Archbishop of Cashel) put new life into the convent and considerably enlarged the sphere of its usefulness. She deemed his departure from Auckland, 1874, a serious loss to the community. A Protestant doctor wrote from New Zealand to a cousin, a Sister of Mercy:

“How kind yet dignified Dr. Croke is—so noble in his bearing, and so unlike the Protestant bishop, who reminded me of the words, ‘I am holier than thou.’ He certainly contrasted very unfavorably with Dr. Croke.”

cannot contain the numbers, Jews, Protestants, and all, that come to hear him. He thinks we are not sufficiently known. It does not do at this time, when the world is in its dotage, to be hidden while heresy is trying all arts and snares to seduce poor souls. Clergy and religious have to stand up for God's glory and for religion, and show they have knowledge and intelligence. He is for inspection 'to show what nuns can do'; so one puts up with the fatigue for God's glory. Ah! if we have purity of intention all will be well."

It seems odd to find Mother M. Cecilia asking for some juvenile dramas by Madame de Genlis "which she had seen in Carlow many years ago." "Tears on the Diadem" she says was beautifully acted—"too much so, I fear. The moral is good, but still—still— The labor of preparing costume for each character is uncommon and makes me wish plays were never introduced; but then our schools would scarcely be known. Crowds that come to the drama see the work, drawings, etc., and the music causes quite a sensation."

The zealous mother informs her Carlow friends that through great debating in the Supreme Court and elsewhere the Sisters got possession of the Catholic children. Besides, they had seventy-five poor children who used to sleep under houses and pilfer. They had been in the Protestant Home, but Bishop Croke and the priests fought hard to get them. "Short as they were there, they spoke most disrespectfully of our dear Mother Mary. Oh! how much is to be done everywhere for souls. It is glorious to save these children from Protestantism, but hard on us to support them. God will help us." Many acts of generosity and kindness on the part of the bishop are mentioned.

"He speaks well of the Sisters everywhere, and is great for purity of intention. He is all for earnestness and progress. The Sisters have eleven schools and three more await them, but, alas! no Sisters. Ah! my dear mother,

do all you can for us. Protestant schools are opened and our children in danger of being lost. . . . Dr. Croke has purchased our late bishop's residence. I saw it. What a picture of the shortness of time!—all changed. Why do we ever set our hearts on any one or anything but on Him who lives for ever?

“We have a workman here,” she says, *apropos* of nothing, “an old soldier of the Fifty-eighth, quite a character. He says he was the cause of getting Catholic Emancipation. When I thought of Doyle, O'Connell, and all the great men engaged about that measure I was more than surprised. He said his regiment was in Cork at that time. The commanding officer ordered all to attend Protestant service. He refused, saying he was a Catholic. The officer ordered him to be flogged for disobedience. ‘I didn't care,’ said he, ‘sure, if they did; it would be honor to suffer like my Saviour.’ He did not, however, receive a lash, but the affair was made known in high quarters, the officer reprimanded, and—Emancipation granted!”

In 1874 a branch was established at the Thames Gold-Fields, a town of six years' standing, which had four banks, hotels and no end of shops and warehouses, a large Catholic church, and various conventicles. Father Norris, a fine young Carlow priest, who got up the convent, absolutely denied himself the necessaries of life to provide Catholic education for the children. He was a most eloquent preacher, but unfortunately over-exerted himself, got the fever, and was called to his reward. This house increased the labors of the Sisters, and our indefatigable nun continues to beg for help. “Postulants from home are always preferred,” she writes. “A gentleman who paid many compliments to our schools said to me: ‘But when the present ladies pass away will the schools pass away?’ I explained how we got supplies and also subjects from the neighborhood, pupils of ours. ‘Oh! excellent,’ he remarked.”

In the same letter this mother of many sorrows, whose whole being was given to God, bewails a recently-deceased

postulant, a lady in manner, appearance, mind, and principle; most regular at her duties, perfectly obedient, charitable, and amiable; everything was too good, every one too kind. Bitter medicine was more welcome than anything else—more like, she would say, the vinegar and gall. “I used to think she would be a bright example to the young: now she is laid in the cemetery.” She mentions a visit from French Sisters, whose superior said: “Let us pray that our children may have a true religious spirit and not be half-religious.” This was the life-long prayer of Mother M. Cecilia, who could not understand people giving themselves to God and then going but half-way towards Him. The French mother used to go among the islands of the South Seas, visiting her Sisters. “A very spiritual person, she was much pleased with the countenances of our cheerful, simple, obedient Sisters.” Mother M. Cecilia concludes as usual, begging for subjects, and that special attention be given to the higher education of all the young ladies in training for her novitiate, whom she desires to add to the more usual branches a thorough mastery of the harp and guitar.

Mother M. Cecilia had witnessed the foundation of her Institute, and it was fondly hoped that she might live to celebrate its Golden Jubilee. She retained all the primitive traditions and handed them down in all their integrity to the many generations of religious whom she trained. All her early children were singularly gifted. Space will permit me to describe but one of these gentle apostles of the antipodes—her assistant, Mother M. Xavier Franklin, a hidden saint, who suffered a sort of martyrdom for the faith before she entered the convent.

Maria Franklin was born near Cahir; her father was a Protestant, her mother a most fervent Catholic. All the girls and the youngest boy were brought up in our holy faith, but on the death of the parents the whole family falling to the guardianship of the eldest brother, he deter-

mined that all should become staunch Protestants, and his wife, a lady of the new-light persuasion, helped him to achieve this result. After a well-borne persecution the elder girls went to relatives in Australia, and Maria and William, though they did not shed their blood for the faith, were as martyrs in their brother's house. Among other petty trials they were compelled to starve on days they went to Holy Communion; every eatable was under lock and key when they returned; and on days of fast and abstinence a few undressed vegetables were their only food. Both were high-spirited children and would never let their sufferings be known, nor did they ever show the least resentment against their brother and sister-in-law. It was to show how little she felt fasting in the convent that Maria mentioned the circumstance.

Major O'Dougherty (and his wife, their aunt), happening to return from foreign service, adopted the children and sent William to college. Heretofore Maria's education had been neglected; but her abilities were beyond the average, and everything possible was now done to cultivate them. She entered the Carlow convent in 1845, and soon showed herself efficient in every duty of the Institute, but was especially drawn to the poor, whom she loved to instruct and comfort. Mortification was her daily bread; she hardly ever ate a hearty meal, and when pressed on the subject she said that the forced abstinence of her early days had made her appetite very small. She had, like most very holy people, a keen perception of the ridiculous, and often had to exercise great self-control not to let it be perceived that she noticed any peculiarity in the persons with whom she came in contact. Being very cheerful and witty, a remark would sometimes fall from her which might not be pleasing to all. Then her humility would make her exaggerate her want of urbanity, nor could she rest till she had made a most humble apology. Her love for the religious state was boundless, and she had an ardent desire

to go on some foreign mission where she could do and suffer much for God. When her offer to go on the New Zealand mission was accepted this fervent soul was almost beside herself with delight. After a few days she seemed to hesitate, and said to reverend mother: "As Chedale and New Zealand are to be supplied at once, Carlow will be left with a very small community. If you cannot spare all I am willing to remain a year or two. Don't think of my wishes, but arrange as you judge best."

It was finally decided to let Sister M. Xavier go; Sister M. Philomena being delicate, if she failed Mother M. Cecilia would want an energetic assistant, which she proved to be. She labored almost to the end, dying after a few days' illness, June 5, 1861, assisted by Bishop Pompallier, whose devoted attentions soothed her last hours. William Franklin was inconsolable when he heard of the death of the beloved sister who had sustained him in the trials of his childhood. He had just received for her from their aunt a legacy of three hundred pounds, which he at once transferred to Mother M. Cecilia, who used the sum for a project the dear deceased had much at heart—the completion of the fine orphanage of Auckland. "I loved her so much!" he wrote. "She and I were always attached." She died as she had lived, a faithful imitator of her patron, St. Francis Xavier. May God receive her into His heavenly kingdom!

CHAPTER LIX.

VENI, SPONSA CHRISTI, CORONABERIS.

The Yoke of the Lord borne from Youth to old Age—In her beloved Schools Mother M. Cecilia takes her last Illness—Expires to the Music of the *Angelus*—Obsequies—Oration—A well-spent Life of Eighty Years—Opinions as to her Sanctity—A summer Funeral—“When face to face with God I shall not forget you”—Her early Model—No capricious Fervor—Her Works remain to praise her—An untiring Worker—Her Devotion to instructing People by spreading good Books—“Send us Books”—The Mother-House—Filiations—Mother M. Cecilia revered as a Saint in Auckland—Wellington.

FOR nearly thirty years the heroic Mother M. Cecilia labored among the Maori and the immigrant population of New Zealand, upon whom her piety, zeal, and purity of intention drew down God's choicest gifts. She had formed a fine working community and established seven convents, with schools, asylums, orphanages, chapels. In September, 1878, she entered her eightieth year, but still worked on as vigorously as in the days of her holy youth, under difficulties and privations which she was too holy to reveal, and her patient endurance of which brought blessings on her convents.

On the 13th of November Mother M. Cecilia assisted in all the preparations and rehearsals for a concert and play to take place next day. The drama was one on Irish history, composed at her request, “The Geraldines”; and she was so delighted at the children's performance of it that she said she did not feel the time pass. This was her last day in her beloved schools, for the well-being of which she had toiled and prayed so unremittingly. Next day she

was unable to rise, and her sufferings, till death released her, were excruciating, but no murmur escaped her lips. She received Extreme Unction from the vicar-general, Father Fynes, the only priest living who had been laboring in New Zealand before her. Father Walter McDonald also showed her every attention, as did the younger clergy. Being wonderfully devoted to the Blessed Virgin, she expected her release on the Presentation ; but on that day she began to rally, and the doctors thought she would recover, till they perceived symptoms of paralysis of the lungs. On the 25th, the feast of her beloved patroness, St. Catherine, her breathing became very labored, and every moment seemed to be her last ; yet she spoke sweetly to each Sister and gave directions about various matters. When the infirmarian put the blessed candle in her hand she made a sign to extinguish it, as if she knew her hour had not yet come. When it was given her at half-past eleven she kept it. Without any struggle, calmly as an infant falling into a gentle slumber, she breathed her pure soul into the hands of her Creator to the music of the noonday *Angelus*. A heavenly brightness illumined the countenance of the aged mother, and her children did not know that her soul had passed away till one who watched her closely began the *De profundis*. It was their consolation to gaze on those beloved lineaments till the coffin-lid hid them from their eyes. Her bier in the church she had loved so well was covered with lilies and roses, her favorite flowers ; and wreaths of daisies and violets, the simplest flowers of her early home, adorned the catafalque. For two days her blessed remains lay in state, the church being crowded the while with some of the thousands whom she had taught to make the sign of the cross, and many non-Catholics who revered her virtues.

The vicar-general, in pronouncing her panegyric, said he felt proud to think he had the honor of welcoming the saintly mother to Auckland thirty years before. He dwelt

on the obstacles she had to surmount, the good works she accomplished, and the great rewards her well-spent life of eighty years would receive from her loving God. The convent ladies supplied the beautiful music for her obsequies. Ten Sisters carried her sacred remains, four gentlemen walking beside them lest they should become fatigued. The procession was closed by a vast concourse, every one of whom, even the poorest, wore mourning in token of respect for one who had so long moved among them like a saint. It was a lovely sight as it wound down the long avenue among the flowers, the glorious summer sun of November gilding the scene with heavenly brightness, the bells solemnly tolling. She was laid in the spot she had chosen, and next to the remains of the bright, glad Sister M. Philomena, who had been her life and joy for so many years.

Father Henebery, who was giving a mission at the time, frequently visited Mother M. Cecilia in her last illness. He said he had never witnessed such a death, though he had ministered at the death-beds of many religious whom he would give thousands of worlds to resemble. "In point of sanctity," said he, "they were nothing to Mother Cecilia." Her wasted features were ever illuminated by a holy joy which expressed how she longed to be with God.

To the very last her interest in her beloved Institute never flagged. Letters from her dear Carlow just before her death gave her great delight, though she expressed regret that the subjects she was never to see had not yet started. In speaking of that cherished home of her early religious life she used the fondest terms of endearment, and again and again sent tender messages to the few companions of her novitiate that survived, and to those who had succeeded the dear ones she was going to meet. Her successor, a fine, intelligent person, trained by the venerated mother, wrote: "We have the relics of a saint among us. God grant we may never forget the holy lessons she

has taught us! We have lost a mother and the best of friends, but, as she said before her death, 'I can do no more for you on earth, but when I shall be face to face with my God I will not forget the wants of my poor community.'"

When Mother M. Cecilia entered the novitiate in 1839 Mother Warde desired her to take as her model a Sister who, as Mother M. Teresa Kelly, afterwards did so much for souls in Wexford. Thirty years later the Auckland superior wrote :

"Ah! what a religious Mother M. Teresa was. Ever, ever shall I remember her. I may say, with St. Bernard, the remembrance of her would, were I inclined to yield to tepidity, be sufficient to make me rise from sloth and remissness. God will call us to an account for all the holy examples He places before our eyes. Oh! may He touch our hearts with His divine grace and fit us for appearing before Him when He shall call us. What beautiful things are said of her! How true that the humble shall be exalted!"

Like Mother M. Teresa, Mother M. Cecilia was an untiring, enthusiastic laborer in the Lord's vineyard, who had God's greater glory always and only in view. Her cheerful piety used to stimulate her young companions to work on as she did. She had a high degree of that faith that worketh by charity, which kept her in God's sanctifying presence and enabled her to bear cold, and heat, and fatigue for love of Him. Virtues, like the tendrils of some luxuriant vine, readily twined round her fine natural dispositions, adorning with grace and beauty all that was good in her nature; and strong faith gave vitality to her most trifling acts. Says the most beloved of her early companions, one whose fervor was never capricious: "The capricious fervor of her more juvenile associates in the novitiate was made steady by her example, their selfishness forced aside by her winning spirit of self-forgetfulness."

The summit of College Hill, in the healthiest suburb of Auckland, is crowned by the fine convent in which the dear and venerated foundress of the Sisters of Mercy in New Zealand breathed her last. It is surrounded by gardens, lawns, and promenades, designed by this lover of the beautiful, and here and there, through shrubs and bowers, peep the pious little oratories which she scattered about with lavish hand on this beautiful spot, that the hearts of her children might be continually lifted up from earthly beauty to the first and only Fair. The convent property is bounded on two sides by the pretty harbor of Waitemata; and the whole pile, consisting of convent, orphanage, and schools, forms one of the most beautiful sights in Auckland. Within are all the modern improvements and every educational help. Pianos, harps, and other musical instruments remind the visitor of the music-loving Mother M. Cecilia; and the well-stocked libraries, for which she bought books when poverty obliged her to economize in food and clothing, still give "medicine for the mind" to her children. Every book that was a help to spirituality or education was ordered from Europe as soon as it appeared, often before, and "send us books," "buy every good book for us," is almost as frequently repeated in her letters as "send us subjects." There are four hundred and thirty pupils in the Auckland schools and sixty in the orphanage, besides many native children, among whom are some fine performers; indeed, music is highly cultivated throughout the whole establishment. The mother-house is a little world in itself, containing several separate establishments. There are Convents of Mercy also at Parnell, Ouehunga, The Thames, Otahuhu, Coromandel, and Wellington. With a short notice of this last we shall conclude the second volume of *Leaves from the Annals of the Sisters of Mercy.*

CHAPTER LX.

ALMOST THE LAST OF THE MAORI.

Auckland and Wellington—Gift of Lord Petre—Schools—Bishop Viard—Father O'Reilly's Labors among the Savages—The Bishop's Death—New Zealand Poetry—Bishops Moran and Redwood—The Convent reinforced—Mother M. Cecilia goes to Europe—She receives a Gift from the Pope—Success of her Mission—The Wellington Schools unsurpassed—Schedule—Prizes offered by the Bishop—Great Encouragement given to higher Education by his Lordship—Also to domestic Work—The Maori of 1850—Taught of God, the converted Women aspire to the angelic Gift of Chastity—They reproduce the Virtues of the early Church—Catholics alone have been able to reclaim the savage Races—The Order of Mercy the first Manifestation of the religious Life in these Islands—Still laboring for European and Maori—The New Zealand Evening Hymn.

WELLINGTON is a handsome city at the extreme south of the northern island of New Zealand, known as New Ulster, the southern island being New Munster. The northern division of New Ulster is comprised in the diocese of Auckland; the southern forms the diocese of Wellington. These cities, the principal in New Zealand, are three hundred miles apart. Bishop Viard * had been seeking Sisters of Mercy in every direction since 1850, and Mother M. Cecilia, to whom he frequently wrote on the subject, was able in 1861 to comply with his request. On placing the matter before her zealous community she found every one willing to go. "I thought the most secure way of corresponding with the divine will," wrote Sister M. Augustine Maxwell, "was to leave the decision to superiors, and I have no reason to regret having done so." This lady, with Mother M. Catherine Dixon and Sister Marie, formed the filiation. Four ladies who had been living

* Bishop Viard, coadjutor to Dr. Pompallier, was transferred to Wellington in 1850.

in the convent which the bishop had built years ago, and who taught the children pending the arrival of the nuns, were to join them at Wellington. It was while they were attending the *Requiem* of the holy Sister M. Xavier, in the depth of a New Zealand winter, June 7, 1861, that they were summoned to set off. After a rough passage on the Pacific, which on that occasion belied its name, and a three days' detention by contrary winds, the vessel entered Cook's Strait, and in a few hours the travellers saw for the first time the picturesque city of Wellington, enclosed by an amphitheatre of hills.

The site of the convent, two acres (then worth fifty pounds, now worth eight thousand pounds, being within the town belt and beautifully situated on an eminence overlooking the bay), was given by Lord Petre, whose daughter became a Sister of Mercy—a great benefactor to the Wellington convent, who owned valuable property in and about the city. In a population of five hundred at the Sisters' arrival there were only forty Catholic adults, not including Catholics of the outlying districts, who, on account of bad roads, were often completely isolated from their brethren in the little town. The schools opened with twenty-four day-pupils and twenty boarders, and thrice these numbers in the free and infant schools. The nuns are now teaching the second generation of their pupils of 1861. They opened a school for their beloved Maoris. Bishop Viard was spiritual director to the nuns and their pupils. He celebrated Mass for them daily at the convent or at the Providence, a house in which natives are educated in English, Maori, and household work. Wellington at that time extended chiefly along the beach. The bishop was gratified to find that the first Sisters of Mercy who colonized Wellington spoke French perfectly, though he spoke English very well. Among their first visitors was Father O'Reilly, who had suffered everything but death at the hands of the savages. Though young, the hardships of

missionary life had told heavily on him ; he looked old and stooped, and had entirely lost his hair. The zeal and charity of this holy man were on the lips of every one, and the numbers he was instrumental in bringing to God enormous. His hair-breadth escapes and romantic adventures in the wilds of New Zealand would fill many a volume.

The pupils of the Sisters spread the faith in remote corners of New Zealand. Some become instrumental in converting their parents and others, not a few have become religious, and many as wives and mothers do credit to their early training. Bishop Viard died in June, 1872, deeply lamented. He was a most ascetic man and lived in extreme poverty to assimilate himself to his dear Maoris, who had general invitation to his house and were always guests at his frugal table. He was often seen with dozens of them squatted about him, whom he served with his own hands. Many details of his holy life will be found in the following lines, which we give as a specimen of New Zealand verse-making :

“ O’er a silent, slumbering city
Flew two angels in the night,
Death and tender-hearted Pity,
Unperceived by human sight.

“ Like the wind some ship impelling,
Swiftly, with unechoing feet,
Glided they o’er many a dwelling,
Traversed many a silent street.”

The poetess * of the antipodes speaks of two angels, Death and Pity, passing o’er the sleeping town, Pity pleading with Death to spare the saint. They rest over the bishop’s humble home, and, gazing in at the casement, see—

“ A room unfurnished,
Small, uncarpeted, and bare,
And a holy man at prayer.

* Miss McKenna, Ahaura.

“ White his locks are, long and flowing,
 But his spirit is more white ;
 Death ! O Death ! thou art not going
 To bear off his soul to-night ?

“ Naught unkind or harshly spoken
 From his lips hath ever dropped ;
 Give me some undoubted token
 Ere their eloquence be stopped.”

“ God Himself is my employer,
 Mortals thrive but in His breath.
 Although Death be life’s destroyer,
 Life commences but in Death.

“ When I take a soul in kindness
 To its own true home above,
 It is only human blindness
 That distrusteth heavenly love.”

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Dr. Moran, Bishop of Dunedin, was administrator of Wellington till 1874, when Bishop Redwood succeeded. In January, 1873, the Te Aro schools, South Wellington, were opened. The city of this period was very different from that of 1861. The natural wealth of New Zealand was becoming known and appreciated. Emigration was flooding the towns and rural districts, and the population had immensely increased. The community meanwhile had become greatly impoverished. The wooden convent and schools were dilapidated, and the pupils had increased far beyond the accommodation provided for them. The superior was failing and the assistant dying of consumption. Applications were made for help in several quarters, but without success. At last the Archbishop of Melbourne took pity on the community and allowed Mother M. Ursula Frayne to send Sisters M. Cecilia Benbow and Xavier Butler to its aid. They arrived July 1, 1873, and found the poor Sisters even worse off than they had expected. So straitened were they for space that one room did duty as infirmary, community-room, parlor, and music-room.

The trials of this branch were too numerous and too varied to be mentioned here. The newly-arrived Sisters mentioned some of them, and the leading people and others gave them three hundred and eighty-five pounds. Mother M. Augustine Maxwell died St. Joseph's Day, 1874, the anniversary of her profession.

The Te Aro shop-schools had become unbearable. A property was bought for nine hundred pounds, and a dwelling-house made a larger and more comfortable school than the shop. The fruit-garden and play-ground were an indescribable comfort to the Sisters, who hitherto had no community comfort save a back kitchen where they dined, and which often smoked them out before they had half finished. In 1876 two Sisters sailed to Europe for aid, and returned in 1878 with sixteen Sisters and two thousand pounds. The Wellington institutions have since prospered wonderfully. They are entirely out of debt, though the new convent and schools cost five thousand pounds. The schools contain six hundred children. While Mother M. Cecilia * was in Europe in the interest of the Wellington house she received a letter from an Irish missionary in Bordeaux, Father Cummings, who had labored many years in New Zealand, which he styles "a land dear to my heart, endeared by the trials, toil, and suffering it was my privilege to share."

"Who better than I," he says, "who spent seven years in New Zealand, a daily witness of the hidden lives of the Sisters of Mercy, whose sacrifices and patience often stimulated myself to action? The late Mother Augustine, whose holy life and saintly end it was my lot to witness, foresaw in the hour of bitter trial the future glory and merit of your schools. Walking one day with the boarders, the painful thought took possession of her mind: 'Hundreds of Catho-

* Mother M. Cecilia B— went to France as well as to Ireland for subjects, and finally to Rome, where she had several audiences with the Holy Father. In her second she begged something personal from His Holiness, something he had worn. In the third she got it—the little cap he had been wearing, she bringing one to replace it, which Pius IX. graciously accepted.

lic children stray wildly through the Te Aro streets and fields, and there is not one Catholic school in that quarter to receive them.' Immediately she falls on her knees and offers herself to God a victim for the Te Aro children. I perceived the same want, and, without knowing her sentiments, I could but sigh at the many obstacles. . . . They disappear. . . . I take a shop with an upper story for a school, and claim two or three Sisters to take charge of it. The secret of its success leaked out: the sacrifice is accepted; Mother M. Augustine is dangerously ill. She told me what she had been inspired to do; it was a great loss, but it was heroic. . . . Very soon after she was called to heaven. You were present at that celestial scene. . . . She now prays for you. . . . Were it my privilege to hold a few moments' converse with candidates for future houses, I could tell them the grand field now open to their zeal, the hundreds of children now claiming their love and care. Be merciful to the poor straying children scattered in the far-off plains, and poor in every sense of the word, exiles from fatherland. . . . All classes and denominations love and patronize your schools. . . . May every blessing attend your efforts will be my daily prayer before the altar."

The prayers and exertions of so many holy souls have not been fruitless. No schools we know of sustain a higher literary reputation than those of Wellington. At a literary entertainment given by the pupils in December, 1879, a schedule was presented which proved their proficiency in the higher paths of education. Besides the ordinary studies we find the departments of botany, physics, and mathematics developed by the upper classes in a three days' searching examination, the young ladies answering questions put to them by Bishop Redwood and other "experts" in such correct and elegant language as testified the care taken to train them to the art of good conversation, so desirable for all. The ornamental followed the useful, and on two evenings the pupils gave dramatic and musical entertainments, giving not only English, but adaptations from Schiller and Molière with perfect correctness of accent. The masterpieces of the great compos-

ers, vocal and instrumental, were rendered with skill. At the conclusion of this splendid display, which he described as a rare intellectual treat, Bishop Redwood affirmed, "with pride and without flattery," that "the schools conducted by the Sisters of Mercy in New Zealand could compete with the highest schools in Europe." He felt confident that "their pupils, by joining religion to the cultivation of the mind and heart, would assist to a high degree in the laudable work of raising up a great race in this land, and thus make the colony a great nation, not only in wealth, but in culture and the exercise of Christian virtue."

By the academic festivities of 1881 and 1882 it was evident that a still higher standard had been attained, and the bishop, having congratulated his dear children on their intellectual, artistic, and musical progress, hoped they were equally proficient in domestic work, assuring them that were they the highest ladies in the land they could not attain perfect happiness if they were deficient in household matters.

His lordship offered two prizes of five pounds each for the best composition—the first to be written on the spot, as a discourse purporting to be addressed by Pilate's wife to her husband, describing the dream that had affrighted her, and pleading as a heathen might in behalf of Christ; the second to describe a journey by sea from Amsterdam to Messina, keeping by the coast, and alluding to every geographical feature, whether physical or political, within thirty miles on either side of the vessel's course.

The Sisters of Mercy always took the deepest interest in the native * population. An official report signed by a Protestant, Mr. W. Rolleston, finds their native and half-caste children able to read English fluently and intelligently,

* The Maoris were cannibals when the first convent was founded in New Zealand, and themselves and their children were long regarded by the Sisters as the most interesting portion of the population. They were by far the most intelligent, and physically the finest, of the Polynesian races.

write neatly and well, and make their own clothing. "The children have separate bed-rooms, and are all scrupulously neat and clean. Each room opens into a long passage, and there is perfect ventilation." Mr. Rolleston adds that "the teaching and supervision of the school is the gratuitous work of those in charge."

It is matter of history that wherever the Catholic nations colonize the native population can live and thrive; but wherever the English standard is planted the aborigines are doomed. The Maoris have proved no exception. Every year lessens their number, and it is probable that when the next century dawns the evil work will have been completed. It is, therefore, rather the immigrants and their descendants that now claim most of the nuns' care. They continue to protect all the native children they can gather together in St. Joseph's Providence. The following report of that institution is by W. J. Habens, Esq., a Wesleyan, inspector-general of schools :

"WELLINGTON, November 6, 1879.

"Having called at St. Joseph's Providence to-day to see the half-caste children under instruction there, I am happy to be able to say that I am sure they have been well taught in the admirable parish school conducted by the Sisters of Mercy."

If the representatives of the Catholic Church in New Zealand have been unable to save from gradual extermination this finest of all barbarian races, they have at least proved that they alone could deal successfully with the savage. Under their influence, and enlightened by their teachings, the wolf dwelt with the lamb and the leopard lay down with the kid. Their zeal, their disinterestedness, their *love greater than which no man hath*, softened and won the hearts of these poor children of nature, and, in the depths of their forests, many of them revived the wonders of those early days of Christianity when, filled with the *first-fruits of the Spirit*, the multitude of believers had but

one heart and one soul. "O God!" exclaims Mother M. Cecilia in one of the early letters in which she begs help for her dear Maoris—"O God! just think of it—young native girls come to me and ask me to prepare them to consecrate their virginity to God!" Who but the Lover of chaste souls, *who feedeth among the lilies*, could put such thoughts into their barbarian hearts? And what more did the Agneses, and Cecilians, and Dorotheas of the early Church do? For these Maori maidens, jealous of the angelic gift they had received, were as ready to shed their blood for their faith and purity as the devoted virgins of the ages of persecution. . . .

Thirty-three Sisters of Mercy minister to native and European, according to their vocation, in the Wellington convent, and six rest from their labors in its beautiful cemetery. The Order, the first apparition of the religious life in these remote regions, has grown with the country. All races, all denominations flock to their schools. They are daily in the prisons, in the hospitals, in the dwellings of the sick and poor. They smooth the pillow of death for the European, and their presence is welcomed in the hut of the native; simple with the ignorant, learned with the learned, cultured with the cultured, all things to all men, and counting all as loss that they may gain all to Christ, their prayers, their teachings, their example help to keep their own race among "the children of the household," and win the barbarians to the knowledge of the true God, and of Christ Jesus whom He has sent.

Over the bright waters of the bay, and in sight of the primeval forest, stands the beautiful group known as St. Mary's Convent. The Maori girl may be seen there in as high a state of culture as her European sister; and everything recalls the hallowed memory of the great souls who left father and mother, and house and lands, to carry that Sacred Name, through which alone we can be saved, to these beautiful regions. We may fancy our bark skim-

ming the smooth waters on some warm December evening, when the shadows are deepening, and pausing near the "Mercy Chapel" to hear the nuns and their pupils, European and Maori, pleading with the Mother of Mercy in the simple lines of the New Zealand Evening Hymn : *

"Ave Maria ! 'tis sunset on the sea ;
 Ave Maria ! night falleth silently.
 The nestling seeks its home
 Beneath some woodland bower,
 And we to thee have come
 In peril's lonely hour.
 The daylight hath its cares
 That round our pathway meet,
 But night how many snares
 For weary, falt'ring feet !
 Hail ! Hail ! Hail !

"Ave Maria ! 'tis nightfall on the sea ;
 Ave Maria ! night falleth heavily.
 The seaman from afar
 The beacon fain would see,
 And we to our fair Star
 Are turning hopefully.
 We bring the sinner pale
 With penitential sigh,
 The weakling's feeble wail,
 The mourner's tearful eye.
 Hail ! Hail ! Hail !

"Ave Maria ! 'tis nightfall on the sea ;
 Ave Maria ! night falleth darksomenly.
 We bring life near its end,
 We bring life just begun :
 Sweet Mother, may they tend
 Unto thy Blessed Son !
 May all the pathway gain
 First by His footsteps trod,
 Secure, though strewed with pain,
 That leadeth unto God.
 Hail ! Hail ! Hail !"

* Composed by Sister M. Cecilia B —, who has wedded the touching lines to an exquisite air, wild and melodious as the sighing of the summer breezes through a New Zealand forest.

APPENDIX.

INSTITUTIONS OF THE SISTERS OF MERCY.

Convents of Mercy in Ireland, 184.

ENGLAND.

Diocese of Southwark.—Bermondsey, Brighton, Eltham, Gravesend—4.

Diocese of Westminster.—Blandford Square, Great Ormond Street, Commercial Road, Chelsea, Crispin Street, Walthamstow, Brentwood—7.

Diocese of Portsmouth.—Abingdon, Guernsey, Delancy, Alderney, Alder-shot—5.

Diocese of Birmingham.—Handsworth, Birmingham; Coventry, St. Mary's; Coventry, St. Anne's; Maryvale, Wolverhampton, Alton—7.

Diocese of Clifton.—Bristol—1.

Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle.—Sunderland, Hexham, Bishop Auckland, Newcastle-on-Tyne, North Shields, Tow Law, Wigton—7.

Diocese of Leeds.—Hunslet, Bradford, Carlton, Clifford, Sheffield—5.

Diocese of Liverpool.—Liverpool, Mt. Vernon; Liverpool, Hardy Street; Liverpool, Breckfield Road; Blackbrook, Douglas, Lancaster, Old Swan—7.

Diocese of Middlesbrough.—Hull, Middlesbrough—2.

Diocese of Nottingham.—Nottingham, St. Mary's; Nottingham, St. John's; Carlton, Derby, Gainsborough, Mansfield—6.

Diocese of Salford.—Burnley, Oldham—2.

Diocese of Shrewsbury.—Shrewsbury—1.

SCOTLAND.

Diocese of Edinburgh.—Edinburgh—1.

Diocese of Glasgow.—Glasgow—1.

Diocese of Aberdeen.—Dornie, Elgin, Keith, Tomintoul—4.

Diocese of Dunkeld.—Dundee—2.

THE COLONIES.

AUSTRALIA.

Diocese of Perth.—Perth, York, Guildford, Freemantle—4.

Diocese of Melbourne.—Melbourne, Emerald Hill, Fitzroy, Kilmore, Geelong—5.

- Diocese of Sydney.*—Sydney, Paramatta, North Shore, St. Leonard's—4.
Diocese of Goulburn.—Goulburn, Albury, Yass—3.
Diocese of Ballarat.—Warnambool, Ballarat—2.
Diocese of Adelaide.—Adelaide, Mount Gambier—2.
Diocese of Sandhurst.—Sandhurst—1.
Dioceses of Brisbane and Rockhampton.—Brisbane (4 houses), Brisbane South, Nudgee, Ipswich, Toowoomba, Rockhampton, Warwick, Sandthorpe, Dalby, Townsville, Gympie, Monkland, Mackay, Maryborough, Helidon—18.
Diocese of Maitland.—Singleton (2 houses), Gunnedah, Murrurundi, Raymond Terrace—5.
Diocese of Bathurst.—Bathurst (3 houses), Carcoar, Dubbo, Parkes, Mudgee, Orange—8.

NEW ZEALAND.

- Diocese of Auckland.*—Auckland, Ponsonby, St. Patrick's, St. Joseph's, Parnell, Onehunga, Thames, Otahuhu, Coromandel—9.
Diocese of Wellington.—Wellington, Hokitika—2.
Recapitulation.—England, 54; Scotland, 8; Australia, 52; New Zealand, 11; Ireland, 184. Total, 309.

THE following verses tell of the voyage to and from the Crimea of some Sisters of Mercy, and of events occurring during their sojourn there (see page 205) :

<p>When Mercy's plaintive voice we hear, With joy we leave our hallow'd home, Take <i>it</i> for passport, and appear 'Neath peasant cot or princely dome.</p> <p>And now, as o'er the Black Sea's waters, In accents strong and pity loud, Sweet Mercy calls upon her daughters To brave the wave, the camp, the crowd,</p> <p>Responsive to its earnest call Were many ready hearts, I ween, While chosen from the willing all Were we by God's own choice, I deem.</p>	<p>In numbers two, and sometimes three, The "Sisters of the mission" meet, All branches of the parent tree, At mother-house in Baggot Street, And now, our onward course begun, We meet with scenes delightful many, O'er which we'd better lightly run Than venture at describing any.</p> <p>Nor stay we e'er by Erin's shore To tell what grace and nature gave, And give it still, as when of yore It nurtured saints and heroes brave.</p> <p>Then haste we o'er the sunny wave 'Twi'x England and our native land, While friendly voices cry, "God save!" With fervent love and waving hand.</p>
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And e'er shall gratitude reveal
The friendship true which there we
found ;

So true it was we could not feel
That we were treading hostile
ground.

Dear Sisters, oh ! so sweet and kind,
With fondest greetings met us there,
For kindness round each heart seemed
twined
In Chelsea and in Blandford
Square.

And leaving now thy tranquil shores,
Proud England ! fair and polished
gem,
We pray that thou may'st deck once
more
St. Peter's stainless diadem.

The Channel's narrow bounds unfold
The sunny plains of beauteous
France,

Whose saints and heroes, as of old,
Its glorious annals sti'll enhance.

But for the fatal page that's stained
With guiltless blood of royal dye,
These records e'er might have re-
mained
The brightest met by nation's eye.

No wonder Scotia's lovely queen,
Whom cruel fate had marked its
prey,
When forced to leave each charming
scene
Stole but one-half her heart away.

Scarce had we on its soil yet stood
When invitations pressing come
From Boulogne's pious Sisterhood
To their so well-known convent
home.

These we decline, though with regret ;
Our reason why we briefly tell :
A déjeuner à la fourchette
Awaited us at the hotel.

The capital of " la belle France "
We reach just at the twilight gray ;
And now at the Hôtel des Princes
We spend one peaceful Sabbath day.

To Notre Dame our footsteps tend ;
Soon bend we at its altar low
To ask Our Lady that she lend
Her aid to us as on we go.

Next to old Lyons we proceed,
And thence to famous Avignon,
While telegraph with wonted speed
Proclaims us as we travel on.

To Marseilles thence our course pur-
sue—
The terminus of railroad " fuss "—
Where soon, and without much ado,
We step aboard the *Egyptus*.

Quickly our bark, as oft before,
Ploughs through the rough and
rugged main ;
But ere we reach the destined shore
We sigh for railroad " fuss " again.

Howling winds and foaming ocean,
Billows breaking o'er the mast,
And the vessel's sick'ning motion
Writhing 'neath the fearful blast ;

And when broke those swelling bil-
lows,
Soon we felt their ample flow :
Swampy berths and floating pillows
Sailed " ad libitum " below.

Thanks to Him whose eye ne'er slum-
bered,
Had He known one moment's sleep
We among the dead were numbered
And our graves were in the deep.

Brightly now the sun is risen ;
Soft its ray upon us falls,
Till our bark is swiftly driven
'Neath the old Athenian walls.

A few bright days again are pass'd—
 'Twas Mary brought them unto us—
 And now at last we anchor safe
 In the fair, silv'ry Bosphorus.

'Twas soon the joyous Christmas
 week—
 The week of feasting, hymn, and
 prayer;
 Yet do we think we need not seek
 A crib more poor than ours was
 there.

When to "our quarters" we were
 shown
 The Lady Strafford meets us there;
 But poorer now than ever grown,
 All *stand* for want of stool or chair.

To touch on scenes each coming day
 In sure succession did unfold
 Would be to write a comic play
 And tell what taste would leave un-
 told.

But to the work with all our might,
 With head and heart and willing
 hand,
 To toil by day or watch by night,
 Just as sweet Mercy might demand.

The end at which our labors aimed
 Some thought accomplished; you
 shall see,
 For soon our hospital was named
 "The model one at Koulali."

When oft upon the weary bed,
 As sick at heart as sore in limb,
 Lies some one by sweet Mercy fed,
 We speak of "Living Bread" to
 him.

Nor are the soothing accents vain,
 As tell the floods of contrite tears
 Which flow as breaks the hellish chain
 That galled his heart since early
 years.

For this is Mercy's highest aim,
 In east or west, from pole to pole:
 To win from sorrow, sin, and shame,
 To heal the body, save the soul.

The beds in the hospital wards were
 so close that a Sister could scarce glide
 in between them to a patient. A few
 months of hospital treatment restored
 the health of thousands. In October,
 1855, after the fall of Sebastopol, the
 patients in the hospitals were either
 returning to the seat of war or were
 invalided home. Meanwhile the prin-
 cipal medical officer, Sir John Hall,
 requested the services of the Sisters
 for his hospitals in the Crimea.

To Scutari we first repair,
 Amid rare scenes as *none* e'er saw;
 Our four dear Sisters meet us there
 And join us in the *Ottawa*.

Two days, and then we reach the shore;
 Yet for the harbor seems no chance
 Till signal floats o'er castle tower
 To say, "My friends, advance."

Oh! who need blush to shed a tear
 While gazing on that thrice-black
 wave
 Which shrouded in one fatal year
 Such hopeful thousands, young and
 brave?

A boat was sent to convey the Sis-
 ters to the shore.

When news was to our mother
 brought,
 Who in her cabin sea-sick lay,
 She too was up, as if the thought
 Of duty took her ills away.

The boat, that in the distance lay,
 For wind and wave may not come
 nigh;
 To it one life-boat must convey
 The few who dare waves fierce and
 high.

Then off we go o'er ocean's swell,
 Wild terror foaming on our way ;
 Our little boat toss'd like a shell
 Upon the direful Black Sea's spray.

Conducted by the Jesuit Father
 under whose care we were, we soon
 found ourselves on the heights of
 Balaklava.

O Balaklava, field of blood !
 The purchase of brave thousands,
 who
 Had fought for foes, and by them
 stood,
 More cruel than the foes they slew.

In Scutari and Koulali we had our
 quarters in the hospital, but in Bala-
 klava we lived in little wooden huts
 on a hill close to the harbor, overlook-
 ing the Black Sea.

Next day the sky is calm and clear,
 No trace of ocean terror found ;
 Yet sadly falls upon the ear
 The death-knell of the cannon sound.

Our little hut upon the hill
 Crimean life so well recalls ;
 Its " wooden pane of glass " doth still
 Give light inside its wooden walls.

And could we, if we would, forget
 Our first repast, and service too,
 So rich and rare because as yet
 We were arrivals just come new.

Describing it we'll fail, 'tis true,
 But failure marks each scene we
 paint ;
 Yet while description fails, so, too,
 Can fancy draw but outlines faint.

First came some ragged beef, so ten-
 der
 As not to need our blunt-edged
 knife ;

The fiery flames made it surrender
 All, all its strength without much
 strife.

Beside it an enticing stew,
 Some pork, and carrots glaring red,
 And something they called " mut-
 ton," too,
 Which looked as if on air 'twas fed.

To tempt us yet came one dish more—
 Stiff paste, but called a dumpling
 then ;

Yet such a one we ne'er before
 Had seen, nor wished to see again.

We lack'd a table, so our fare
 Was on the floor its worth reveal-
 ing,

While on it, too, the Sisters were
 All sitting, standing, squatting,
 kneeling.

Yet hearts content are heaven's meed,
 Whose feast of bliss no ills can mar ;
 And such was ours. Oh ! then, indeed,
 We might be envied by the czar.

Our hut was but one little room,
 With beds around it five or four,
 And almost was a living tomb
 When forced to shelter nine beds
 more.

One week on Russian soil, the first,
 And friendly hands in sadness lay
 A dear one with her kindred dust
 To wait the dread accounting day.

Soon after this so sad event
 Two huts are fitted up with care,
 And kind officials seem intent
 To fix us down in comfort there.

Our requisitions on the store
 Were answered, too, with cordial
 pleasure ;

Soon we had tables three or four,
 And chairs to sit on when at leisure.

Our ground once gained, we soon ex-
 pand

Our sphere of action by degrees,
 First training in an untrained band
 By custom miscalled " orderlies."

And happily we worked on, too,
 Heart gladdened by the sweet de
 light
 That all around wore faces new
 And heavy hearts were growing
 light.

And Christmas came to bless the good,
 In his own snowy vestments clad,
 Proclaiming peace to all who would,
 And bidding saddened hearts be
 glad.

And soon old Christmas passed away
 While chill winds fanned his hoary
 head ;
 Then, clad in sunbeams, New Year's
 day
 Arose, and winter's chills seem'd
 fled.

For here, in this so fickle clime,
 A winter morning oft may bring
 A summer noon, when wild birds
 chime
 As if they'd bid farewell to spring.

When cholera had passed away,
 Quite sated with the countless dead,
 The fever came with mortal sway
 To keep the English graveyards
 red.

Whate'er Crimean frosts and snow,
 The deadly cannon-shot and shell,
 Required to fill up England's woe,
 The hospitals completed well.

Inside our humble threshold, too,
 Is grasped in Death's resistless hand
 His deadly arrow, which soon flew
 Again among our little band.

And this dear one whom Death had
 doom'd
 To fall beneath his poisoned dart
 Was aimed at while she stanch'd the
 wound
 Or solaced some nigh broken heart.

Soon, soon she fell, and then we gave
 To Balaklava's gory heights
 Another tenant for the grave
 'Mid martial pomp and solemn rites.

And now the dew that heaven sheds
 In verdure clothes that lone spot
 there,
 And the white crosses o'er their heads
 Their simple epitaphs declare.

And all are looking toil-spent now,
 As if the icy hand of Death
 Had traced his name upon each brow
 And soon would hide 'neath that
 same earth.

The sword is sheathèd—we may go.
 Green olives spread their branches
 wide.

If good we did the Lord doth know,
 Nor care we who may know beside.

And, as the news around had spread,
 Inquiring crowds, and anxious, too,
 Flock down with coats of brilliant red,
 And many with the royal blue.

And any job at extra store
 Was valued like promotion then :
 The brightened tins were brightened
 more,
 And well-cleaned shelves were
 cleansed again.

While Sisters, though so glad to meet
 Each wish, were all so busy now
 If Mentchikof and all his suite
 Appeared they scarce had time to
 bow.

The "Eighty-ninth" now valiant
 fought
 To bring our "baggage" to the
 quay,
 Yet looked so proud that others sought
 To bring it too as well as they ;

While our brave orderlies, the three
 Who serv'd us faithfully and long,
 Asserted rights which dared not be
 Disputed by one hundred strong.

April's eleventh day has come,
 And, joyous as the happy lark,
 Each Sister seeks her convent home,
 As Noe's dove once sought the ark.

We cross the wooden bridge, and then
 The well-lined harbor soon we ford,
 And, trusting to the waves again,
 The charming *Cleopatra* board.

Next day, 'mid ample grounds for
 hope,
 Our graceful bark is making way
 Which, sinking 'neath the ocean's
 slope,
 Soon hides dark Balaklava's Bay.

Could heart sent breathings swell the
 sail,
 Hers had not hung so loose, I ween ;
 Nor need we fear though coals should
 fail,
 If right good wishes got up steam.

The passengers quite curious were
 To see "the nuns" who caused
 such "fuss,"
 For Alma's heroes favored were
 To get a place in ship with us.

Two days of anchorage,* and then
 The mosques' wide domes and min-
 arets
 Are passing from our view ; again
 'Mid charming scenes—yet who re-
 grets ?

And soon we pass by Koulali,
 Then fair Therapia's gilded heights,
 Those stages where oft witnessed we
 Such tragic and such comic sights.

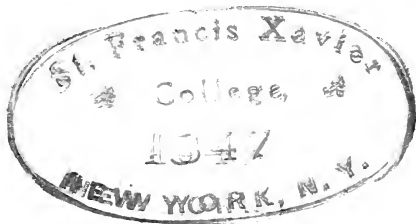
Yet brightest days do swiftest fly,
 Alike on land as on the sea ;
 Still may we hope our now dark sky
 May in its gloom as fleeting be.

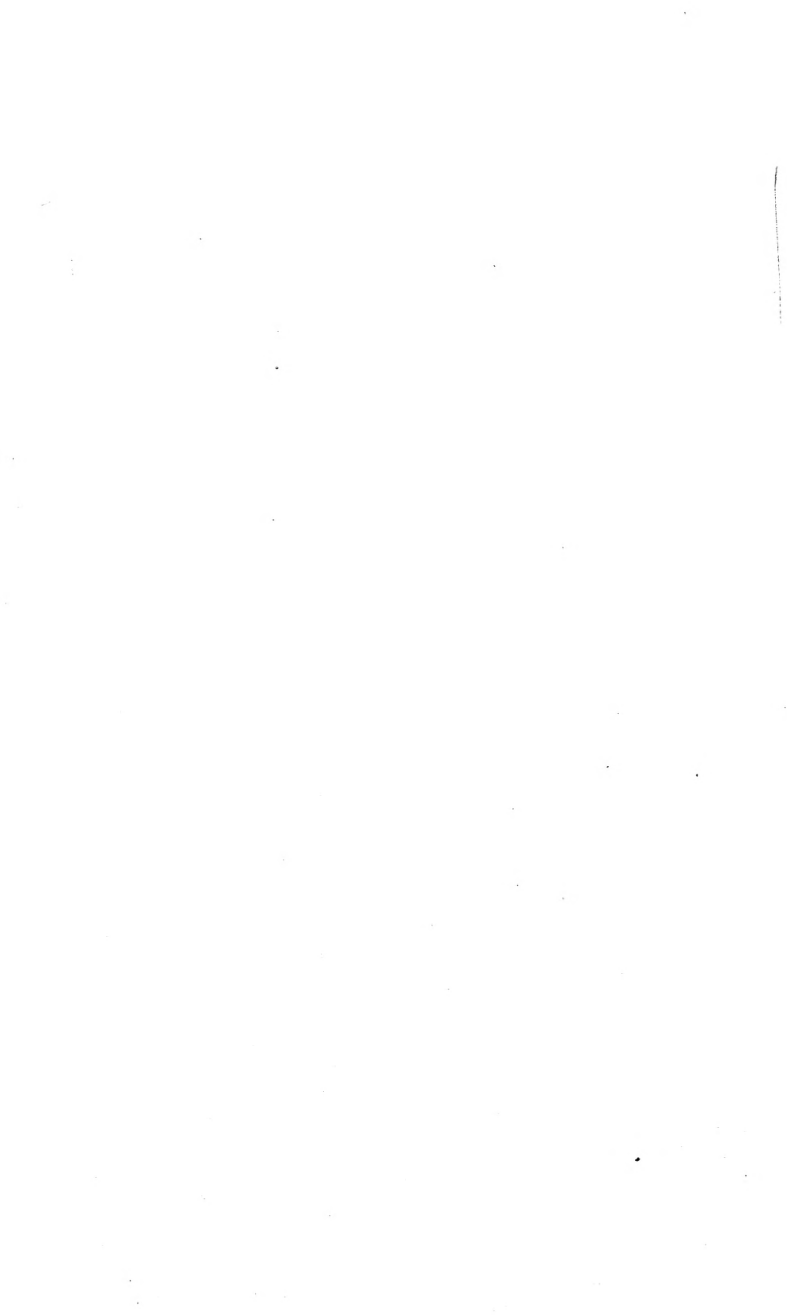
Arrived at Spithead, telegraph
 Flies with the news across the strand,
 Whose answer well might cause a
 laugh :
 "The Sisters and the cannons land!"

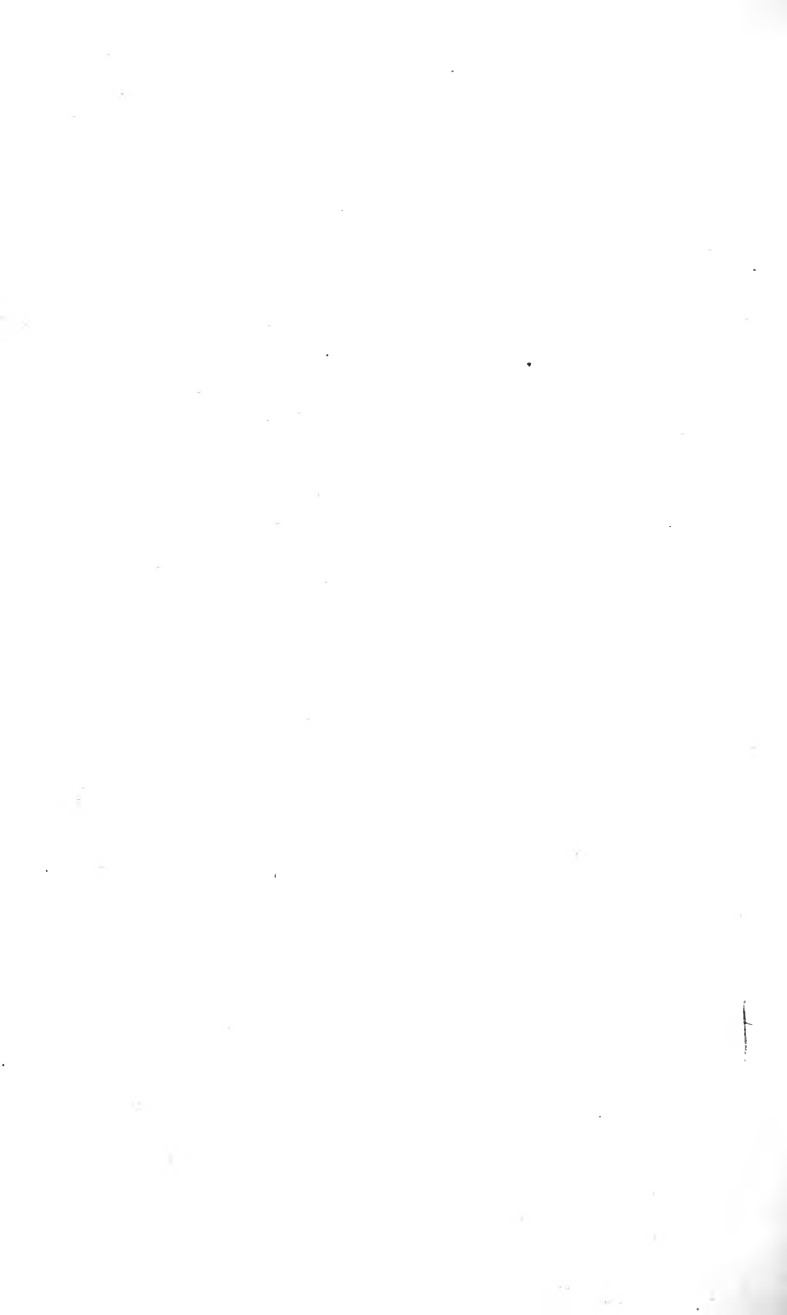
Our Jesuit, so truly kind,
 Who watched us with untiring care,
 At London terminus resigned
 His *precious charge!* yet only there.

Then soon we seek that cherished spot
 We love so wisely and so well,
 Nor has wide earth one charm got
 To disenchant that dear home-spell.

* In the Bosphorus.











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