

SKETCHES OF THE LIFE
OF
MGR. DE MAZENOD,
BISHOP OF MARSEILLES,
AND
FOUNDER OF THE OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE,
AND OF THE
MISSIONARY LABOURS AND TRAVELS
OF
Members of that Society
IN
TEXAS AND MEXICO, IN GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, IN
CEYLON, NATAL, BASUTOLAND, &c.

BY THE REV. ROBERT COOKE, O.M.I.

VOL. II.

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COOKE, R.

NOTICE.

WE place before our readers in the opening pages of this volume, the following important testimony of General Sir J. H. LEFROY, President of the Royal Geographical Society, to the services rendered to the sciences of Geography and Geology, by the discoveries of an Oblate Missionary—Father Petitot—sketches of whose travels and labours appeared in our first volume. The extract is taken from the inaugural discourse of General LEFROY, which was delivered to the Geographical Section of the British Association at its Annual Meeting, 1880:—

“I must now call your attention to the remarkable explorations, little known in this country, of Abbe Petitot, an Oblate Missionary of the Roman Catholic Church, in the Mackenzie River district, between Great Slave Lake and the Arctic Sea, a region which that Church has almost made its own. Starting sometimes from St. Joseph’s mission station, near Fort Resolution, on Great Slave Lake, sometimes from S. Theresa, on Great Bear Lake, sometimes from Notre Dame de Bonne Espérance on the Mackenzie, points many hundreds of miles asunder, he has on foot or in canoe, often accompanied only by Indians or Esquimaux, again and again traversed that desolate country in every direction. He has passed four winters and a summer on Great Bear Lake, and explored every part of it. He has navigated the Mackenzie ten times between Great Slave Lake and Fort Good Hope, and eight times between the latter post and its mouth. We owe to his visits in 1870 the disentanglement of a confusion which

existed between the mouth of the Peel River (R. Plumée) and those of the Mackenzie, owing to their uniting in one delta, the explanation of the so-called Esquimaux Lake, which, as Richardson conjectured, has no existence, and the delineation of the course of three large rivers which fall into the Polar Sea in that neighbourhood, the 'Anderson,' discovered by Mr. Macfarlane in 1859, a river named by himself the Macfarlane, and another he has called the Roncière. Sir John Richardson was aware of the existence of the second of these, and erroneously supposed it to be the 'Toothless Fish' River of the Hare Indians (Beg-hui-la on his map). M. Petitot has also traced and sketched in several lakes and chains of lakes, which support his opinion that this region is partaking of that operation of elevation which extends to Hudson's Bay. He found the wild granite basin of one of these lakes dried up, and discovered in it, yawning and terrible, the huge funnelled opening by which the waters had been drawn into one of the many subterranean channels which the Indians believe to exist here.

"These geographical discoveries are but a small part of Abbé Petitot's services. His intimate knowledge of the languages of the Northern Indians has enabled him to rectify the names given by previous travellers, and to interpret those descriptive appellations of the natives, which are often so full of significance. He has profoundly studied their ethnology and tribal relations, and has added greatly to our knowledge of the geology of this region.

"It is, however, much to be regretted that this excellent traveller was provided with no instruments except a pocket watch and a compass, which latter is a somewhat fallacious guide in a region where the declination varies between 35° and 58° . His method has been to work in the details brought within his personal knowledge, or well attested by native information, on the basis of Franklin's charts."

EXTRACTS FROM OPINIONS OF THE PRESS
ON VOL. THE FIRST
OF
Sketches of the Life of
MONSEIGNEUR DE MAZENOD,
AND OF THE
MISSIONARY LABOURS OF THE OBLATE FATHERS OF
MARY IMMACULATE,
BY THE
REV. FATHER COOKE, O.M.I.

From the "GLOBE," July 9th, 1879.

"Every one, irrespective of creed, interested in missionary work, and curious to learn something of the lives, manners, and customs of those savage races amongst whom it is sought to spread the influences of religion and civilization, will read the Rev. Father Cooke's work with pleasure and instruction. . . . Father Cooke relates in a pleasant style, and with historical authenticity, the struggles, dangers, and successes of his brethren in the wild regions of the great Transatlantic continent. As a work of historical interest and literary merit, and exciting in narrative, we can commend these 'sketches' to every one desirous of some hours' pleasant and advantageous reading."

From the "MORNING POST," September 5th, 1879.

"These sketches must remain as an exceptionally interesting record of missionary enterprise, and of the life of a good and pious man. . . . It is impossible to read without deep interest the simple story of the labours of these heroic men; the Oblate Fathers, while taking their lives in their hands in the most literal sense, went forth into almost unknown wilds, with the sublime idea of taking the Gospel to the ignorant tribes of the North American Indians."

From the "TABLET," July 12th, 1879.

"This volume has a twofold interest. As a singularly edifying narrative of a saintly life, it can hardly be read without benefit. But it is also a valuable addition to our knowledge of the physical geography of the regions bordering on the Arctic circle in the North American continent. How ably and judiciously Father Cooke has fulfilled his double task, our readers will be able to discern for themselves in the extracts from this attractive work."

*From the "WEEKLY REGISTER AND CATHOLIC STANDARD,"
July 26th, 1879.*

"What was done so effectively by the late gifted and lamented Mr. T. W. M. Marshall, is now being done not only effectively, but exquisitely, through the newly-published biography of Mgr. de Mazenod, in exposition of the many fruitful labours of some at least among our countless Catholic missionaries. The Reverend Superior of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate at Tower Hill, the Rev. Robert Cooke, commands at once our gratitude and our congratulations upon the completion of one moiety, at least, of his most touching memorial of the venerated founder of that Order, and of the missionary labours and travels of the many remarkable members of that Society, among other quarters of the globe, in Canada, Labrador, the Red River Settlement, Saskatchewan, the great North American Lakes, the Mackenzie regions, the confines of the Arctic Ocean, and British Columbia. . . . What those labours have been for years past in the remotest parts of the vast North American continent—thanks to the grace of God inspiring thus the holy missionaries sent forth by the late saintly Bishop of Marseilles, the founder of the Oblates of Mary Immaculates—Father Cooke relates, with touching eloquence, in one of the most enthralling and edifying books for a long time published. Apostolic virtues shine resplendently through the narrative, evangelical unction glows in every page, miracles of conversion are again and again recounted, the tale here told being from first to last one having about it a nameless fascination."

From "THE FREEMAN'S JOURNAL," September 23, 1879.

"Father Cooke's volume is filled with narratives of incidents and adventures, before which some of the most thrilling tales of books of travel pale away into insignificance, and their truth is assured by most reliable testimony."

From "THE NATION," October 4, 1879.

"Monseigneur de Mazenod was a man fashioned in the true apostolic mould. Belonging to one of the noblest families of France, he gave himself up at an early age to the work of ministering as a priest amongst the poor of his native province. . . . Father Cooke goes on to relate how he succeeded in finding congenial companions, and how gradually was formed under his auspices that society which did not a little to save the South of France from the infidelity of the Revolution, and then devoted itself with unsurpassed heroism to the preaching of the Gospel in the untrodden wilds of North-Western America and other out-of-the-way regions of the world. With a thrilling account of the adventures of the pioneer missionaries Father Cooke concludes his first volume. The appearance of the sequel will be eagerly awaited."

From "THE IRISH MONTHLY," December, 1879.

"It is very much more than a Life of Bishop de Mazenod, a filial tribute paid by Father Cooke to his holy Founder in obedience to the commandment *Honora Patrem tuum*. That part of his task is done admirably, but a still greater interest attaches to the account of the missionary labours of the Oblate Fathers in those wild regions which Major Butler (who has devoted to the missionaries many eloquent pages) has made so well known

under the name of "The Great Lone Land." Please God this present narrative will kindle the languid zeal of many hearts. Father Cooke's *Life*, when completed—for this fine portly volume is to be followed by another—will be one of the most considerable works undertaken by any Catholic writer of late. We trust that the concluding volume will follow very soon."

From the "CATHOLIC TIMES AND CATHOLIC OPINION,"

August 29th, 1879.

"The first Mass said at Ottawa—now capital of Upper Canada—was in the cabin of a poor Irishman, in 1827. The Oblates went there in 1844. . . . Their journeys through trackless swamps and tangled forests not only to give spiritual aid to the white trapper and wood-cutter, but to evangelize the native Indians, are simply astounding. This portion of the narrative is of absorbing interest, and furnishes a modern testimony to the sublime courage and devotion of those Catholic priests who endured countless hardships, and penetrated to the desolate haunts of the moose and Indian hunter, risking death every day, to propagate the Gospel of Christ, and to plant churches that were yet to become the nuclei of sees. . . . Through the smoke and din of battle, through wolf-haunted woods, through terrible plagues—through every danger that can be conceived—did the fearless Oblates travel and toil, slowly building up structures of truth and civilization out of the most unpromising materials."

From "THE CHURCH TIMES," January 23, 1880.

"Missions to the heathen have always been a strong point in the Roman Church. Her organization for these enterprises is on so vast and complete a scale . . . the training of her ministers for distant spheres of labour is so directly pointed to the end to be attained; their zeal and self-sacrifice causing them to exhibit the Church before the heathen as a body called to suffer for Christ's sake; their entire freedom from earthly ties; the implicit and unquestioning obedience which is required of them to the powers above them; and last, and not least, the peculiar nack which Rome has with few exceptions exercised, of putting the right man in the right place, have all conduced to attract and win the sympathies of heathen hearts. And while we acknowledge and admire the earnest zeal, and self devotion, and perseverance which have characterized the missionaries themselves, we may recognize also a spirit of discretion in much of the instrumentality that is provided; the numerous bodies sent out together, the establishment of sanctuaries and religious houses for the reception of catechumens and the education of orphans and native children, the preparation of elementary forms of instruction such as those of Francis Xavier for the use of the catechists in India, the community of living and austerity of habits invariably adopted, have doubtless contributed to the success, which has, on the whole, attended the missionary efforts of the Roman communion in all parts of the globe. . . . We might make many interesting extracts from Mr. Cooke's book which would justify to our readers our appreciation of the work and of the workers."

From "THE ATHENÆUM," June 3, 1882, on Vol. II.

"The Very Rev. Father Cooke, O.M.I., has ready for immediate publication the second volume of his 'Life of Monseigneur de Mazenod.' This instalment will especially treat of the inner life and death of the founder of the Society of Mary Immaculate. An account will be given not only of the home missions of that order, but also of its missions in Texas and Mexico, in Ceylon, Natal and Basutoland. The learned author, it should be added, has worked up the religious antiquities of his own immediate neighbourhood in connexion with his Church of the English Martyrs on Tower Hill, and has discovered a good deal of matter which was new to himself, and which will, therefore, probably be new to the general public."

Translation of a Letter of His Eminence the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda.

PROPAGANDA, ROME,

September 10th, 1879.

REVEREND FATHER,

I thank you for the gift which you have made to me of the first volume of your work on the Life of MONSIEUR MAZENOD, the Founder of your well-deserving congregation of Mary Immaculate. The subject which you have chosen is certainly a very worthy one; for while it serves to nourish the piety of all the faithful, by recording the virtues of the father of your religious family, it helps likewise to arouse the apostolic spirit in the missionaries who have consecrated themselves to the propagation of the faith in pagan countries.

I have presented to the Holy Father the copy of your book, which you sent to me for that purpose; and I am happy to tell you that His Holiness has been pleased graciously to accept your act of filial homage, and to impart to you and to all the members of your religious family his Apostolic Benediction.

Wishing you every happiness from God,

I am, Rev. Father,

Yours affectionately,

JOHN CARDINAL SIMEONI,

Prefect.

J. B. AGNOZZI,

Secretary.

THE REV. FR. ROBERT COOKE, O.M.I.

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SKETCHES OF
THE LIFE OF Mgr. de MAZENOD
AND OF
THE LABOURS OF THE OBLATES OF MARY.

CHAPTER I.

IN the first volume of our Sketches of the Life of Monseigneur de Mazenod, and of the labours of his missionary sons, we closed our summary of the works of zeal performed by the latter amidst the rolling prairies and frozen lakes of the far North Western regions of America. We now invite our readers to accompany us to the distant South Western limits of that territory, where the Rio Grande flows under skies of cloudless blue, and between sloping banks carpeted with an endless variety of fairest tinted flowers, to empty itself into the Gulf of Mexico. Texas has received the title of "the Italy of the West," by reason of its resemblance in sky and landscape to the most beautiful and favoured of European lands. Surely one would think that, amidst such cheering accessories of climate and scenery, and of earth's joyous and abundant fertility, that there, missionary labour would become a light

and pleasant duty, and that little scope would be left for a display of self-devotedness, and of patient long-suffering endurance, such as we have witnessed on the part of the Oblate Missionaries of the North. But the progress of our narrative of the Texan missions of the Oblates of Mary will make manifest the fact, that notwithstanding all the rigours and privations which have to be encountered by the missionaries who traverse the cheerless regions of the frozen Mackenzie, that trials and sufferings as pain-causing as theirs, and more so in certain cases, have to be endured by their brethren who evangelise the sunny shores of the Rio Grande. The trials of these latter missionary Fathers will be shown to come more from men than things, from frozen hearts and minds of gloom, than from lakes of frost and skies of cloud and storm. The chief promoters of their griefs will not be the unbaptized and uncivilized hordes that wander through forest and prairie, but men who have sinned against the Holy Spirit by rejecting an ancestral faith, and who have lapsed into the worst forms of savagery by trampling under foot the blessings of Christian civilisation.

We shall now proceed with our sketches of the labours of the Oblates of Mary in Texas, having first prefixed a brief outline of the history of that country, for the better elucidation of the narrative which is to follow.

In A.D. 1687, La Salle, a French explorer, erected a fort on Matagorda Bay. In 1715 the country was settled by the Spaniards under the name of the New Philippines, and several Catholic missions were established there; but owing to the fierce assaults of the Comanche and the Apache Indians (among the most warlike in America), the progress of the country was retarded. Both Spain and France laid claim to Texas, which became a disputed territory, when, in 1803, Louisiana was ceded by France to the United States. For several years attempts were made, in frequent succession, by the Americans to wrest Texas from Spain, and many battles, resulting in great slaughter on both sides, were fought. When in 1821 Spain relinquished its hold upon Mexico, Texas became a dependency of the latter country, under the government of Moses Austin, an American. Settlers then began to pour in in great numbers from the States, but many of them were such lawless characters that in 1830 the government made a law to prevent any more Americans from coming into Texas. In 1835 a provisional government was formed, Sam Houston was chosen Commander-in-Chief, and the Mexicans were driven out of Texas. Houston's army was attacked by Santa Anna, President of the Mexican Republic, who led a force of 7,500 men, but who was defeated at San Jacinto. In 1837 Texas became an independent Republic, and re-

mained so until it was annexed to America in 1845. Shortly after the annexation, it was invaded by the Mexicans, and thus commenced the great war between the United States and Mexico, which was concluded only in 1848.

The unhappy frontier regions of Texas were the battle ground over which rolled the full tide of war, with all its concomitant evils. Brownsville rose from a soil still reeking with the horrors of the battle plain. It received the name of a victorious captain in the American army. Its population at the time our story begins was of a strange and motley character. Divers nations of Europe, the American States, and the cities, towns and hamlets of Mexico were represented at Brownsville, not as a rule by the wisest and best of their respective populations. Hither many came, it is true, with motives that were praiseworthy, and with a laudable purpose of promoting the proper interests of life, but multitudes also flocked hither as refugees from the pursuit of justice, or as adventurers who were as willing to promote earthly fortunes by foul means, as by those that were fair and honourable. Public authority could be scarcely said to exist at that time in Texas. Within a decade of years almost as many different forms of government had sprung up in succession, no time being given for any system of public law to become established, or to acquire the prestige ne-

cessary to gain authority. The law of might prevailed widely over that of right. Great crimes committed in the open day remained unpunished, and men depended : : protection more upon their own witty brains and stout arms, than upon the shelter of the laws of the country. This chaotic state of society was an obstacle, not only to moral, but also to material progress.

The situation of Brownsville, standing on a noble river that placed it in easy communication with the ocean, with the towns and cities of Northern Mexico ready to become purchasers in its marts, with tracts of some of the most fertile lands in the world stretching out in its rear to the north and to the east in a wilderness of beauty and productivity, until hundreds of miles of landscape, exhibiting every variety of fruit and flower, met the rolling prairie or luxuriant forest—the situation, we say, of Brownsville, should already have secured for it, brief though the days of its existence at that time were, a place amongst the foremost in rank of the rising young cities of the west. But a moral blight was on the place, which marred its progress—the blight of irreligion. To remove this blight, the public mind, though deeply tinged with infidelity, bethought itself instinctively of an efficacious remedy—the restoration of the Catholic religion and worship, which had been suspended in Brownsville since the expulsion of the Mexicans.

In view of securing this object, the heads of the town put themselves into communication with the Bishop of Galveston. His lordship was overjoyed at their proposal, giving them credit for sentiments of which, unfortunately, they were not possessed. He thought it was a religious motive that had induced them to apply to him for priests, and for the restoration of Catholic worship in Brownsville; whereas their object in making such application was of a purely secular character. They wished, by the introduction of Catholic missionaries to Brownsville, to induce Mexican and American Catholics of position and respectability to establish themselves in that city, and thus to contribute to its mercantile and social importance.

Early in December, 1849, the first Oblate Missionaries, Fathers Telmon, Gaudet and Soulerin, arrived at Brownsville at the invitation of the Bishop of Galveston, to take charge of a district which extended in length from the Gulf of Mexico, over 200 miles running west by the northern bank of the Rio Grande. In width it stretched out in a northeasterly direction about 100 miles towards the interior of the country. We would here anticipate what will become visible as our narrative of the Oblate Missions in Texas advances, by acknowledging at once that we have no wide-spread and extraordinary results of missionary effort to speak of, no

fruits of zeal commensurate with the devotedness, the self-sacrifice, the piety, and learning of the Fathers engaged in that difficult field of apostolic labour, to describe. The most crucial test of true apostolic zeal is that of devoted labour for souls, not followed by any visible fruit.

To this test have the labours of apostolic men in divers ages of the church been subjected. Many devoted missionary spirits from the days of the Apostles down to our own times, have had no other post assigned them by the Divine Master in the vineyard of zeal, during their life's day, than that of being sowers only of the seed. Their appointed occupation was to plough, to harrow, and to plant, but seldom or never to reap. The seed planted by them may take a score, or fifty, or a hundred years to ripen, but it ripens in the end. They were often perhaps, in their day, twitted because no visible success seemed to follow their labours, whilst in their own hearts they had to do battle against a growing despondency; but being of the true apostolic type, they still worked on undaunted for God and souls, though seemingly unsuccessful. *Going they went and wept, casting the seed, watering the ground on which they laboured with their tears, and often with the last drop of their heart's blood.*

It was in labouring thus without much visible fruit that, during the early ages of the church, band

after band of martyr-apostles followed one another in the blessed winter drudgery of Christ's vineyard, under blast and chill and drenching skies, and reproach and taunt and violent opposition of wicked men who hated the WORD, whose seed these holy workers were engaged in planting. The sowers had done their appointed work, and they were called home at evening-tide to receive their hire. The winter passes away, the harvest ripens everywhere; Jerusalem begins to bud forth and blossom, the voice of the turtle is heard in the land; the desert rejoices and flourishes like the lily; the fig tree puts forth its green figs, the vine in flower yields its sweet smell. Arise, arise, put on thy strength, O Sion, put on the garments of thy glory, O City of the Holy One, loose the bonds from off thy neck. O Church of Jesus Christ come forth from the catacombs, the harvest is ripe upon the plains, send forth thy reapers in great numbers. The nations are coming to thee with their gifts, the kings of the earth are to be thy foster-fathers. Oh, blessed the hands that sowed the seed that has grown up into such glorious harvest-fruits—the conversion of nations; and blessed are they who at this hour are willingly, because God wills it, engaged in some solitary missionary work, uncheered by comfort from without; who work zealously, although without much result that is apparent, in the field of some

uninviting missionary duty. Such work is highly supernatural, is productive of loftiest merit, resembles very much the work of some of the greatest saints; yea, it resembles that of Jesus in Nazareth. Unfruitful it may seem for the while, but by and by, in God's time, the blossoming and the ripening will take place, and other hands, if not one's own, will garner the fruits of the goodly tree, planted with such difficulty, and cared with such loving patient industry during the long winter-tide.

Such reflections are forced upon us as we consider the disappointments and mishaps, the trials and persecutions, and limited success of the first years of the missionary labours of the Oblates of Mary in Texas.

The news of the arrival of the Missionary Fathers in Brownsville circulated with rapidity through the town. A meeting took place of some of the principal inhabitants, to which the Fathers were invited, on the evening of the day of their arrival. The meeting, which was held in an empty wooden structure, was composed almost exclusively of non-Catholics,—Jews, Mormons, professed Infidels, and Protestants of different sects. An aged speaker, one of the leading inhabitants, rose up to bid welcome to the Fathers in the name of his town's-men. In doing so, he made it clearly to be understood that the object those present had in view, in making such

a demonstration to welcome the Fathers to Brownsville, had nothing of a religious character about it. Before the meeting separated, a discussion ensued as to the measures to be adopted for providing a residence and means of support for the Fathers. The first resolution adopted by the meeting on this subject, was not one that gave augury of much generosity on the part of the inhabitants of Brownsville in their regard. The lodging assigned to them by the meeting was the half-ruined shed in which they were then assembled. This consisted of one apartment, unfurnished, without a fire-place, the dimensions of which were twenty-five feet by twelve. It had been a small cotton store; the floor was saturated with filth, the place infested with rats, and with huge spiders whose webs covered the walls and ceiling. Such was the first community residence of the Oblates of Mary in Texas. It was further agreed at the meeting, that a monthly collection should be made in the town for their support.

The feast of the Immaculate Conception was approaching, and some place had to be provided where mass could be said publicly on that great solemnity. With some difficulty an empty shop was secured, the counter of which became the first altar on which the holy sacrifice of the mass was publicly celebrated by the Oblates of Mary in Brownsville. This humble temporary altar was fitted up with as much

beauty of decoration as their ability, and the small means at their disposal enabled them to impart to it. The attendance at the services was very sparse at the outset; some slight improvement began to make itself manifest, when the rising hopes of the missionaries received a rude check by the "notice to quit" which reached them from the owner of their temporary chapel. For some weeks they and their little flock were left without a place of public worship in Brownsville.

At last a German Lutheran, whose wife was a Catholic, allowed them to have the use, for a time, of a small empty shop which was at his disposal. In the meantime a piece of ground was purchased and a temporary wooden chapel was erected upon it. The numbers attending the services began sensibly to increase, and several signs of brighter promise became visible. On the other hand, the public subscriptions which had been promised for their support ceased, and a series of other difficulties presented themselves in succession; worry and anxiety began painfully to tell on the health of the Fathers. Under these circumstances, after much hesitation, Monseigneur de Mazenod came to the decision of withdrawing his missionaries from Texas, to the great regret of Monseigneur Odin, the Bishop of Galveston.

One year after the departure of the Fathers from

Brownsville, the Bishop of Galveston visited Europe. A principal object of his journey was to place before Monseigneur de Mazenod the great spiritual privations to a large portion of his flock which followed the withdrawal of the Oblate Missionaries from his diocese. He pleaded his cause so well that the great missionary heart of Monseigneur de Mazenod was moved to reconsider the decision relative to the mission of Texas, and forthwith to send to that country a body of six Fathers and a lay Brother. After an interval of one year and six months' absence the Oblate Missionaries, including Father Gaudet, their devoted superior, resumed their work at Brownsville, where they arrived in the beginning of October, 1852. Three years later they laid the foundation of a large permanent church, to replace the temporary wooden structure which they were then using. This building was completed in 1859, and was solemnly opened by Monseigneur Odin, on the feast of Pentecost of that year. It was then acknowledged to be the finest public building in Texas. Attached to the church was erected a suitable community-house for the Fathers. Educational works of considerable importance were set on foot by the Fathers at Brownsville. A teaching community, the Sisters of the Incarnate Word, from Lyons, was established there. Boys' schools were also opened.

The missionaries had now the consolation of seeing crowds flocking to the services of their new and beautiful church. The attendance at the public Mass on Sunday used sometimes, in the early days of their temporary church, sink down to five or six persons; and on an occasion there was only one person present; now the church was crowded at several masses. This awakening up of faith greatly gladdened the hearts of the missionaries. Their labours, however, were not confined to the population of Brownsville. Their vast district extending along the banks of the Rio Grande in one direction, and in the other stretching far away into the interior of Texas, was interspersed with ranchos which had to be visited at appointed intervals; a hundred missionary posts were dotted over their district. Besides these, there were a large number of detached habitations scattered over the wide plains and prairies, or buried in the great forests, which they had also to visit. The labour imposed on the Fathers in visiting the inhabitants of the plains and forests of their district, was enormous. It is true they performed their journeys for the most part on horseback, nevertheless they had great fatigue to endure and sometimes great dangers to encounter, especially in fording swollen and rapid rivers.

One of the Texan Fathers—Father Clos—men-

tioned lately to the writer an instance of a narrow escape from drowning which he had a short time ago. He was crossing on horseback a rapid torrent which was greatly swollen by recent rains. For a while his horse breasted the angry current, but at last it was borne away with its rider by the force of the rushing flood. Death now seemed to stare the intrepid missionary in the face, as he gazed down into the dark foaming abyss, into which he was being hurried. At the moment, when another instant would have precipitated him to certain destruction, he espied the bough of a great tree spanning the waters. By a sudden and almost superhuman effort he sprang from the back of his drowning horse, and grasped the nearest limb of the extended bough. Upon this he hung for a considerable time in great peril, struggling in vain further to extricate himself. The deep mad torrent was rolling under his feet, flinging its wild spray upon him. His strength was being rapidly exhausted, and it had become evident to himself that he could not hold on to the bough much longer, but would have to drop back into the flooded waters unless some friendly hand came to his rescue. Such was his dangerous condition when providentially he was seen by some persons who were passing at the time, and came at once to his assistance. Aided by their help he escaped a death which seemed for some mo-

ments to be inevitable. His horse being freed from its burden, managed to find its way safely to the banks of the river.

When a missionary arrives, after a long day's ride under a broiling sun, at the rancho to which he had been journeying, great discomforts as a rule await him. The huts composing the rancho are very miserable structures. A few poles are fixed in the ground, these are interlaced with branches of trees, and the whole exterior is then coated with mud. Such is the habitation which is offered the missionary on his arrival, by some poor family who are glad to give him a corner in their hut, and share their unsavoury tortilla cake with him. He spreads his rug upon the floor of this humble abode, and using his saddle for a pillow he tries to sleep, but often fails in the attempt, notwithstanding his fatigue. The stench and filth of the place, the biting of mosquitos, and the attacks of other insects of a more hateful type, prevent him frequently from enjoying the rest he so much needs. The inhabitants of these ranchos are of Mexican origin and three-fourths Indians in blood. They are full of reverence for the priest, but owing to their isolation and the difficulty of giving them religious instruction are often found, especially in remote places that can be seldom visited by the Fathers, to be very ignorant. During his stay in their midst the Father gives in-

structions and hears confessions, baptises, marries, corrects abuses, and adjudges quarrels. He leaves one rancho to pursue his apostolic labours in the next, and so on until he has completed his circuit of visits.

CHAPTER II.

THOUGH the Rio Grande was the boundary line of the Oblate Missions in Texas, the expansion of the zeal of the Fathers at Brownsville was not to be confined to its northern banks. Mexico, that beautiful but harassed land, extended its fertile slopes to the edge of the yellow waters of the Rio Grande. Matamoras, the first frontier town on its northeastern boundary, lay within two short miles of Brownsville. Matamoras is a river-port containing twenty thousand inhabitants, and is the commercial rival of Brownsville. The venerable parish priest of Matamoras was not slow in appreciating the zeal and devotedness of the missionaries of Brownsville. He invited them to give missions at different times to his people. At the earnest request of the Bishop of Montrey, the Oblates established themselves at Victoria, the capital of the province of Tamaulipas. They also undertook the pastoral care of Matamoras and of the sanctuary of Notre Dame d'Agualas. Mexico was at that time in the throes of the revolutionary fever, nevertheless the bulk of the popula-

tion remained firmly attached to the ancient faith ; but helps to its practice were sadly wanting to them. Church property was plundered by successive up-start governments ; the good and zealous priests of the country were either in prison or in exile, or if allowed to remain at their posts were harassed in the discharge of their ministry by petty interference, cruel exactions, and a continued system of threats and annoyances. Vast districts were without priests at all, and other places were, if possible, in a worse condition ; alas, their shepherds were wolves ; Judases imposed, at the point of the bayonet, upon unwilling populations by impious dictators, whose slaves and creatures they were. “ *The ways of Sion were in mourning, and none came up to the solemn feasts. Her virgins were in affliction ; she is oppressed with bitterness. The stones of the sanctuary were scattered at the tops of the streets. Her little ones asked for bread and there was none to break it to them.*”

Sad was the condition of the persecuted church at Mexico at the epoch about which we write ! What a field for devotedness opened up for the labours of the Oblate Missionaries on their first arrival in that country. Victoria and its surrounding neighbourhood awakened up, as it were, from a long trance of faith and hope and love, in which it had lain dormant for years, under the grace of the mission given in that important town by the Oblates in A.D. 1860.

After the mission, a small community of Fathers was established at Victoria. During one year they laboured in peace at their new missionary post with great fruit for souls; but troubles were in store for them. An insurrection had broken out in their neighbourhood, and their expulsion was decreed by the newly-installed provisional government. The inhabitants of Victoria were divided into different factions. The most numerous and best disposed part of the population manifested their deep regret at the loss they were about to sustain by the departure of the Fathers, but they were powerless to do anything more than to protest against the wrong that was being inflicted on themselves and their children, by the compulsory measures used against the missionaries. On the day fixed for the departure of the Fathers, an extraordinary assemblage filled the church to overflowing. All were clad in mourning garb to testify their deep sorrow at being deprived of the presence and services of the good priests whom they so much loved and venerated. Before the congregation separated, after Mass had been said, a venerable matron rose up and addressed all present in the following terms:—"We are about to be deprived of our priests who, because they are unwilling to prove false to their duties and betray their consciences, are to be persecuted. It may be expected that when we are deprived of the helps of

religion, it will be easier to uproot from our breasts the Catholic Faith—the faith of our fathers, the faith in which we were born, and in which we wish to die. To-morrow the doors of this church will be closed, and it will then be impossible for us to come to offer our prayers at the foot of our altars. The house of God will be as a wilderness, empty of worshippers. From to-morrow our sick will be left to die without the sacraments; our dead will be buried without the prayers of the church. But are we not Christians? should we not insist upon our rights to practise our religion, and should we not boldly demand for our priests the liberty to exercise freely their holy ministry in our behalf?" At the close of these noble words the whole audience burst into tears. A deputation was then formed to wait upon the new Prefect, to present an energetic protest against the expulsion of the Fathers. The Prefect was alarmed by these proceedings on the part of the Catholic population of Victoria. He gave an evasive answer to the demands of the people, but all the while he was only temporising in order to gain time to gather troops into the city, and be able thus to carry out, with a strong hand, the anti-religious programme of his party. Several leading Catholics were cast into prison, and the Fathers were ordered to quit Victoria without further delay. A great concourse assembled to bid them adieu, deep

emotion was manifested by all present, and the Fathers were unable to suppress their own tears.

On the 21st of December they set out on their sorrowful journey. On Christmas Eve they arrived at La Gavia, a large rancho, where they were received with welcome by the inhabitants. Here they halted for some days to celebrate the holy festivals of that season, but news reaching the government at Victoria of the Fathers' presence at Gavia, pre-emptory orders were despatched for their immediate departure. Their journey back to Brownsville was a very painful one, morally and physically. It occupied ten days. "We suffered much during that journey," writes Father Sivy, "the hot days were followed by very cold nights, and the rain fell in torrents at frequent intervals. Bivouacing on the open plain, we frequently had not a particle of wood, or any other means to make a fire during the night. With the damp ground for our bed, and a saddle for our pillow, it was not very easy to close our eyes in calm sleep."

Whilst the Fathers at Victoria were undergoing their trials, a civil war was raging at Matamoras. The inhabitants of that place refused to acknowledge the newly-appointed Governor of Tamaulipas. The latter sent an army to besiege Matamoras. For three weeks the siege was carried on with great fury. A great part of the town was burnt down,

and over a thousand of the population were killed. A shell struck the Fathers' house ; much damage was done by it, but fortunately no life was lost. During these three terrible weeks the Fathers were continually on foot, administering the sacraments to the dying and attending to the sick and wounded.

During the five years following these troubles comparative tranquility reigned on the Mexican borders. Religion began to flourish at Matamoras, and the Fathers stationed there felt themselves justified, by what they witnessed, in anticipating a large and permanent success for their labours in the future. Alas, these bright hopes were not to be realised, as the following letters from Father Clos to the Superior-General will show :—

“ VERY REV. AND DEAR FATHER,

“ In my last letter I wrote to you in hopeful words, expressive of the brighter prospects which then seemed to disclose themselves to my view. I thought I was then announcing to you the end of our troubles, and the commencement of an era of quiet and of established peace. But since then, alas, revolution has followed upon revolution, and we have been living in the midst of continual tumults and anxieties ; on two several occasions our lives were exposed to gravest dangers. During the last siege of the city we were on the point of losing our beloved Father-Superior, Father Olivier. A shell, which caused great destruction, burst quite close to him, fortunately without injuring him. At present there is a momentary lull, and we are turning it to the best account while it lasts, knowing by

a sad experience how little we are to depend on such assurances of peace. But we are in the hands of God's holy providence, and this is our only consolation. Imagine not, Reverend Father, that during these periods of trouble we fold our arms and remain idle spectators of the hurrying scenes that pass before us. No, for while the enemy assails the city from without, we carry on another sort of warfare within its walls. We battle by aid of the sword of the Word of God, and happily, through God's blessing, with most consoling success. The conversion of some poor sinner is the victory, which grace, from time to time, enables us to secure. We have baptised eleven adults within a short space of time, and one of these yielded up his purified soul two days after his baptism. Shortly before his death, seeing a Protestant friend of his at his bedside, his eyes filled with tears, and gazing upon him fixedly, he said, with visible feelings of deep emotion, 'Oh, how happy I feel; would that you would imitate my example and become a Catholic.' A few moments after he expired with the names of Jesus and Mary upon his lips, whilst invoking a blessing on the Father who had been the instrument, in God's hand, in securing for him the happiness of dying in the Catholic faith.

"A young American who held a commission in the Mexican army and became commander of a regiment, was the next to receive the grace of baptism at the hands of Father Olivier. His conversion took place under extraordinary circumstances. He had allowed himself to be bribed by the offer of a large sum of money on the part of certain American agents, and had arranged to assassinate the Mexican General in command at Matamoras, and to hand over that city to the Americans. A young Irish Catholic, who had refused to become a party to this wicked plot, became the means of its being frustrated, and of the culprit who had designed it being discovered. The misguided young officer was condemned to be shot, and was led forth to the

place of execution. At that moment he flung himself at the feet of the Colonel in command to beg, as a great favour, that a Catholic priest might be sent for to prepare him for death. The request was granted him. On the arrival of Father Olivier, the young officer asked earnestly to be baptised and to be received into the Catholic Church. 'The devotedness,' he exclaimed, 'of the Sisters of Charity which I witnessed in the hospitals of Louisiana convinced me that the religion which inspired it must be true; therefore I wish to die a Catholic.' Father Olivier obtained a delay of half-an-hour for the execution, in order to have time to instruct and prepare him for his end, which he met with calm fortitude and in a truly penitential spirit.

"It fell to my share to be called upon to exercise my ministry on behalf of another unfortunate youth, a young Spaniard, who was condemned to death. He had resisted all the efforts of the military chaplain, who sought to induce him to prepare for death. The chaplain asked our Superior to appoint one of our Fathers to attend to him, and I was named for that sad duty. The condemned youth, in whose cell I undertook to spend the night before his execution, received my advances very coldly, and resisted all my efforts to work a change in him. At last he consented to place himself under the protection of the Blessed Virgin, and to wear in her honour the Medal of the Immaculate Conception. In a short time a marked change came over him, and he flung himself at my feet to make his confession. He confessed three times that night in preparation for holy communion, which he received with fervour. He was led forth for execution early the next morning. His end was holy and resigned."

Father Clos, in a letter addressed to the Superior-General, dated June 28th, 1866, wrote in the following sad terms to inform him that the work

of several years was destroyed in a few days, and that the labours of the Oblate Fathers in Mexico were brought abruptly to an end.

“VERY REV. AND DEAR FATHER,

“I write to you to-day from the fulness of a heart overflowing with grief. I have sad news to give you. The Mission of Matamoros is lost to us. Complete anarchy reigns in that unhappy city. The party of disorder have at last triumphed. The better portion of the population had already left the town, but we held our own ground, still imagining that our work here being of a purely religious character, and colourless as far as politics were concerned, we should not be interfered with; but we were grievously mistaken. On the day following the seizure of the town by the liberals, a body of men styling themselves a commission presented themselves at our doors, to ask of us to abandon our post, and to hand over to them the keys of our church, in the name of the newly-appointed Prefect. Our Superior, Father Olivier, replied that we had been established at our post by the Bishop of the diocese, and that we should not willingly quit it except at his bidding, and that it was only to him or to somebody appointed by him, that he would surrender possession of the church. On receiving this reply from Father Olivier, they immediately seized him and led him away to prison. At two o'clock p.m. the same day some police agents came to our house to ask us to accompany them, under the pretext that Father Olivier wished to speak to us; when we entered the prison where he was confined, we were then informed that we also were prisoners. My first thought was to ask Father Olivier whether he had had anything to eat since he was arrested. ‘I have not broken my fast to-day,’ he replied. Hearing this I at once asked the chief of the band who had arrested us, to order some food for the Father, which he refused to do.

“Alas! how little did I think when I was passing the night in the cell with the poor culprit who was to suffer death on the following day, that I, with my *confrères*, were in so short a time to be shut up in the same gloomy dungeon. He had a chair to sit on, and water to quench his thirst, but we were left to take our rest on the cold damp floor of our fetid cell, without food or drink. Fortunately Father Parisot came from Brownsville to visit us; in his character as an American citizen he had influence enough to obtain an order that we should be allowed to receive food in our prison. It seems that the cruel order to the contrary was given, with the intention of starving the Fathers into submission to the impious wishes of their persecutors.”

Father Parisot, nothing daunted by repeated failures in his attempts to secure the release of his *confrères* from prison, finally succeeded in obtaining their freedom. One hour's further delay in effecting their escape would have been fatal to them, for secret orders had been given for their being put to death. Their immense popularity with the people of Matamoras was the cause which moved the heads of the invading expedition to desire their being got rid of by the speediest means. Orders were hurriedly given to have the river closely watched to prevent their effecting their escape to the Texan side of the Rio Grande, but fortunately they were able to elude their pursuers, and to reach Brownsville in safety.

CHAPTER III.

IN resuming the thread of our narrative of the Oblate Missions in Texas, we do not hesitate to employ the following sad words of Father Gaudet, taken from one of his letters to the Superior-General, as the text foreshadowing the sketch of missionary efforts under trials, hardships and disappointments of the most afflicting kind, which we are about to set before our readers. Father Gaudet writes :

“Send to us the reports of our missions in other regions of the world, for we have great need to be comforted by the thought that elsewhere our brother Missionaries are cheered by present success, and by bright prospects of the further triumphs of their zeal. We have nothing here at the present hour but a succession of griefs and sufferings, whilst the future offers to our view, a clouded horizon.”

It is true these words were written in a moment of special anguish, whilst the heart of him who wrote them was bleeding under successive strokes of sharpest sorrows, nor should they be taken according to the full rigour of their meaning, for the Texan Missions had their brighter sides, and

considerable successes had been achieved by the labours of the Oblate Missionaries. Nevertheless, as in the record of these missions, gloom so far predominates over brightness, and failure appears in such startling over-proportion to success, when we consider the devotedness, the piety, the energy, and the talents of the Fathers employed in missionary labours for so many years in Texas, we feel we are justified in putting forth, as the text of what is to follow, the words we have quoted above.

After the opening of the large and handsome church in Brownsville, happier prospects seemed to dawn upon the labours of the Oblate Missionaries in that place. But a severe trial was at hand. The subtle poison of a terrible plague was hovering treacherously in an atmosphere that seemed to breathe only life and health. One fatal morning Brownsville awoke to the fact that the plague was upon it. A mute terror seized upon the inhabitants, for they knew they had to cope with an enemy against whose assaults human prowess and ingenuity were of little avail. An awakening of faith in the breasts of many in whose souls that virtue had for long years lain dormant, was one of the spiritual good things that came out of the abyss of temporal misery created by the scourge of the plague. The services of the Fathers were sought for on every side by the plague-

smitten and the dying. Day and night they were on foot going from one fever-struck victim to another, bearing with them the supreme comforts of religion to the bedside of the dying. They had no time for food or rest. Are they to enjoy immunity from the common scourge? No, it is to fall heavily on them. A holy young novice Brother, who gave great hopes of future missionary success, was the first of the community who fell a victim to the plague. He died in the fragrance of his early fervour. He was to be soon followed to the grave by a young Priest, Father de Lustrac, a member of the Oblate community of Matamoras, who had volunteered to come to the aid of his brother missionaries at Brownsville. On the day of his arrival at the latter place, a messenger came from a rancho which lay at a distance of thirty miles from Brownsville, to ask for a Father to visit a poor man who was then dying of the plague. Father de Lustrac at once offered himself for this work of charity. He set forth, alas, never to return. He had scarcely administered the last sacraments to the dying man, when he was seized himself by the mortal disease. A messenger arrived at Brownsville to inform the community that he lay dying in the rancho whither he had gone in the exercise of his holy zeal. Father Parisot hastened to his bedside to prepare him for his happy end. He died the death of God's saints.

The zealous and devoted Superior, Father Gaudet, was the next to be laid prostrate on the fever pallet, and great fears were entertained for his life, but happily God heard the prayers that were said in his behalf. Fathers Clos, Parisot, Kerulam, and other members of the Brownsville community had each to pay the tribute of a dangerous illness to the terrible plague-scurge. By degrees the number of cases of yellow fever lessened in daily average, and at last it seemed to have disappeared altogether. The town began to resume its former appearance, and the Fathers returned to their ordinary missionary work. But the early recurrence of the dread malady plunged the unhappy residents of Brownsville back into their former state of consternation, and renewed the sad scenes of death and bereavement from which they had but lately come forth. The first member of the Oblate community who fell a victim to the plague on its reappearance, was the lay brother Copeland. He was a man of rare and simple piety, and his loss was very keenly felt.

Father Sivy, with whose missionary labours, especially in Mexico, our readers are not unacquainted, was the next to pay the forfeiture of his life to his zeal in ministering to the plague-stricken in the homes and hospitals of Brownsville, and in the ranchos of the surrounding country. At the same hour that this zealous young missionary was dying, in an

adjoining apartment lay at the point of death another young and devoted priest, Father Shumacher. They both died on the same day, and of the same terrible disease. Father Gaudet, in communicating the news of these deaths to the Superior-General, finishes his letter with the following words:—

“I shall not attempt to describe to you, Very Rev. Father, the weight of sorrow that oppresses me. My pen refuses to put on paper the feelings of profound sadness that fill my soul. May God’s holy will be done; He is the supreme Master of our lives. I make no complaint, but I do not know what to think or say in presence of so many and of such terrible trials. I await some words of consolation from you.”

His affection for his departed brother missionaries spoke in these words of the good Superior of the Oblates of Brownsville. But he grieved at the loss of his fellow-workers, chiefly because of the spiritual detriment to the souls of many which the death of such devoted labourers in the holy vineyard would produce.

The period of comparative tranquility and of successful missionary labour which followed the disappearance of the plague, was not to continue for many months. Brownsville is soon to be the theatre on which another, but more terrible scourge is to display itself in huge proportions. War is at hand, Texas has flung its lot in with the Confederate States, and Brownsville is threatened by Federal

troops. The Confederate soldiery, who occupied it in large numbers, do not feel themselves equal however to the task of defending it against the advancing Federal hosts, but they are unwilling that it should fall into the hands of the enemy, and they resolve to set it on fire. Inflammable substances are secretly distributed in divers parts of the town, and casks of gunpowder are concealed near the most important buildings, one of which was lodged in a vault near the church and residence of the Fathers. The last Confederate soldier has scarcely left the precincts of the town, when fires break out in all directions, accompanied by terrific explosions. Huge rolling flames advance towards the quarter where lie the church and house of the Fathers. Prayer is the only resource of the good priests at that supreme moment. The wind is carrying the flames steadily and swiftly in the direction of their buildings. A few moments more of unchecked play will bring the advancing torrent of fire upon the buildings of the mission, and upon the vault in which the cask of powder lies concealed. Suddenly the wind changes; it was God's special providence, no doubt, that changed that wind, and the church and house of the Fathers, yes, and their lives also, were thereby saved. What scenes of desolation met their view as they went forth into the streets of that half-burned and abandoned city. The population had

all fled in terror, carrying with them such of their chattels as were portable. They took refuge on the Mexican side of the Rio Grande. The Fathers were left without a congregation for their church, and the fruits of years of missionary labours all perished in an hour. Bands of plunderers came from the Mexican borders and prowled through the city, pillaging all they could lay hands upon, and then fighting unto death among themselves over the spoil. The arrival of the Federal troops put an end to these disorders, but at the same time introduced new discomforts and annoyances for the community of missionaries. At one time they were threatened with the seizure of their house for military purposes, and again a demand was made upon them to surrender the bedding of the community for the use of the soldiers. Happily these projects were not carried out. Owing to the fact that a considerable portion of the Federal troops were Catholics, the Fathers were not much molested during their occupation of Brownsville. After a few months the Federals, for strategic reasons, withdrew from Brownsville. At their departure the former scenes of pillage and slaughter recommenced; hordes from the Mexican frontier, consisting largely of criminals fleeing from justice, invaded Brownsville and the surrounding territory. The ranchos became deserted, and Brownsville remained almost tenantless.

It is true the Confederates re-occupied the e, but this did not improve much the condition of affairs, as the soldiers were chiefly volunteers drawn from the interior of the country, who were uncivilized in their manners, and fierce in their fanatical hatred of Catholicity.

The position of the Fathers during these sad years was trying in the extreme. The Catholic population had departed from the town, and the surrounding country was left without inhabitants. The Fathers were thus reduced to a forced inactivity, and their missionary labours were almost completely suspended. This to men of zeal and devotedness was the most painful of situations. They were left in ignorance and doubt as to what was taking place elsewhere. "For four years," says Father Gaudet, "we have not seen a newspaper, and we seldom receive letters." As a large Federal force was encamped within a few days' march of Brownsville, and Federal ships of war were cruising at the mouth of the Rio Grande, they were in constant apprehension of an assault on their position. At the end of the fratricidal war between North and South, the Brownsville mission began once more to give signs of life and development; various works of importance, some of which had been inaugurated years previously, and pursued amidst all the trials and hardships we have spoken of, were now approaching

their completion. A large convent was erected to which a boarding school of considerable dimensions for young ladies was attached. A set of schools and a collegiate residence, which were placed under the care of the Christian Brothers, were opened. Their church commenced to be well attended at the Sunday services, when another sudden and terrible visitation befell them.

On the evening of the 7th of October, 1867, a terrific cyclone burst upon Brownsville; streets of houses disappeared under its successive shocks, and multitudes were buried in their ruins; not a single house escaped serious damage. The bell tower of the church was swept away, and the fine building itself shook to its foundations, and threatened at each moment to fall to the ground and bury in its ruins the Fathers and their house. All the population was in the streets, and their cries of terror in the momentary lulls of the storm were heard, mingling wildly with the groans of the injured and of the dying. From time to time the moon would come out with weird brightness, revealing to view the increasing horrors of the terrible disaster. Several of the Fathers exposed their lives to gravest dangers in seeking to save the church. Father Maurel and Brother Robert were buried in a heap of the debris of the fallen tower, and given up as lost by their brethren. After an hour they were

discovered still alive, and able to join their *confrères* who were assembled in prayer in the domestic oratory. A pause of considerable duration was made by the storm, and hopes were entertained that it had passed away, when it broke out afresh with redoubled fury. Its first direction was from north to south; it now rushes from south to north, upsetting and destroying what it had spared in its first onrush. Further delay beneath the roof of their tottering dwelling would be courting death. They went forth into the open space where their lives were scarcely less exposed to peril, owing to the large fragments of falling buildings, boughs of trees and other objects which the hurricane was sweeping before it. Within the walls of the neighbouring convent and young ladies' boarding school, during that terrific night, was enacted a scene of touching faith and piety, and loving trust and confidence in God's protection, to which the inmates all owed the preservation of their lives. As the storm grew in violence, shaking the walls of convent and boarding school, by a common impulse, all the nuns and pupils sought shelter at the feet of Jesus Christ, present in the Holy Eucharist, in their community chapel. There they remained in prayer, encouraged by the exhortations of their heroic Superioress, during the whole of that fearful night, until the fury of the hurricane had passed away the following

morning. What motives for thankfulness to God were presented to them when, on coming forth from the chapel where they had spent the previous night in security, they beheld the whole group of buildings, the boarding school with its spacious classroom and dormitories, and the whole of the convent, with the exception of that portion in which was situated the chapel where they had taken refuge, levelled to the dust. Their faith and loving trust in our Lord's real presence had saved them from perishing amidst those ruins.

What desolation stared the good and sorely tried Fathers of Brownsville in the face, when the morning's sun brought to light the full extent of the disasters of the previous night. The fruits of years of patient toil and industry lay before them—a heap of debris. The fine school-house which had just been erected was now but a mass of rubbish. Their church and dwelling-house were all but demolished, a great portion of their congregation were suddenly reduced to abject misery, and the poor nuns and their boarders were driven to seek shelter in the ruins of their once noble establishment. All had to be commenced over again for the fifth or sixth time. Happily a spirit of indomitable perseverance, in continuing the work which they felt God had called them to perform for His glory and the good of souls, beat within their breasts, nor was

their confidence in Him shaken by all these disasters by which their works had been visited. In a comparatively short space of time the damage done by the storm was remedied, and through the self-sacrificing efforts of the Fathers of the Brownsville community, new buildings on a larger scale than those destroyed, were erected.

During all their troubles at Matamoras and Brownsville, and elsewhere, there was one work of devotedness which never remained long at a time suspended, it was that of visiting the widely scattered members of their flock in the dispersed ranchos of their vast district.

We close our notice of the Texan Missions, by presenting our readers with a brief memoir of one of the Fathers of Brownsville who, by reason of his special zeal for these poor people, might well be called the Apostle of the Ranchos. He closed an apostle's life by a martyr's death. Father Kerulam, of holy memory, is the missionary to whom we refer.

Father Kerulam was greatly venerated wherever he was known. The Mexicans called him *el Santo Padre Pedrito*. This popular title he acquired by twenty years of humble devoted missionary labours. He was a model Religious, obedient to the letter and to the spirit of his rules, and to every order of his Superiors. It often happened that the inhabi-

tants of some of the ranchos in his districts would, at the close of one of his missionary visits, invite him to prolong his stay amongst them, but on his replying to them that his Superior had fixed a certain day for his return to his community, which would preclude his compliance with their wishes, they would not press him any further to remain, knowing how inflexible he was in obeying the orders of his Superiors. He was a true observer of holy poverty. He was bursar, and had charge of the monies of the house, yet whilst he provided for the wants of others he often forgot his own. His Superior had frequently to order him to provide himself with a new cassock, or with some article of apparel. He was never heard to complain of the long missionary journeys he had to undertake, which were often accompanied with the severest fatigues and privations. He often had to endure hunger and thirst for days in visiting the scattered and impoverished population of his vast district. How often was he overtaken by nightfall in the midst of the lonely forest or wild plain? On one occasion he remained for three days lost in a wood, without food or drink. On the morning of the fourth day he found his way to the rancho of Lomita. He was so wasted away by hunger and fatigue, and his whole body being covered with thorns, and his cassock hanging in shreds about him, he was scarcely re-

cognisable. When he returned to community life after those long and fatiguing journeys and harassing missionary labours, he sought no relaxation from the observances of the rule, and was at his place in the choir the next morning at the usual hour of meditation. He was most gentle and charitable in his intercourse with his brother missionaries, and would put himself to great inconvenience in order to avoid interfering with the convenience of others. On one occasion he arrived at Brownsville in the middle of the night, after a long missionary expedition; unwilling to disturb the sleep of his brethren by knocking at their door at such an hour, he spread his rug on the ground under the wall of the public cemetery, and he lay there till morning. Strangers were much struck by the candour and sweetness of his countenance. Monseigneur Odin said once to Father Gaudet, "The first time I met your good Father Kerulam I was greatly struck by his appearance and manners. I could not help conceiving a special affection for him; he seemed so good, so humble, so respectful in his deportment."

One morning Father Kerulam knelt to receive his Superior's blessing before setting forth upon one of his missionary rounds of visitation. An appointed time was fixed upon by his Superior for his return to Brownsville. Contrary to his custom on such occasions, he did not appear in his community on

the day fixed upon for his return from his missionary expedition. Day followed day, and he did not appear, nor did any message arrive from him. Enquiries were set on foot, and his course from rancho to rancho was traced for the three days that followed his departure from Brownsville, but after that date no further tidings of him could be obtained. Weeks and months of fruitless expectation passed by, and the conclusion finally come to was that he was dead. This indeed was the sad truth. Nothing however for years came to light to give a clue to the cause, or the manner, or the place of his death. This clue has lately been found. We are at present in possession of the circumstances connected with his blessed death, which we place now before our readers.

In one of the ranchos which Father Kerulam proposed, when leaving Brownsville, to visit, dwelt a rancheros, a man of evil repute, who had accumulated a considerable amount of property which was known to be acquired mainly by the plunder of cattle. He had a numerous following of desperate men. His name was a terror to the poor inhabitants of the ranchos of the wide district in which he and his followers carried on their daring robberies. About the time of the visit of Father Kerulam to his rancho, he had been out on one of his usual predatory excursions, and had brought back four

hundred head of stolen cattle. On his arrival he gave orders to a domestic to take measures for the concealment of the cattle. This man happened to be a good christian, and was unwilling in any way to take part in the deed of plunder in which his master was engaged. He ventured further to administer an advice to his employer concerning the manner of life he was pursuing. From that moment his doom was fixed in the mind of his wicked master. The next day the latter gave him orders to repair, on some pretended errand, to a retired spot in a neighbouring forest. On his arrival at the appointed place he found his master and a small band of his usual followers assembled. To his horror he perceived a cord with a nooze at the end, suspended from the branch of a tree. Immediately he understood that they were going to put him to death. Quickly he was seized and the noose was adjusted to his neck. At that moment somebody was seen to emerge from a pathway in the forest. It was Father Kerulam, who was on one of his missionary journeys. The unexpected presence of the good priest disconcerted, for a moment, the murderers in the execution of their wicked deed, and awakened a passing hope in the breast of their intended victim. The latter cried aloud to Father Kerulam to come to rescue him, or at least to come to him to hear his confession and prepare him for death. For a moment the

venerable and devoted priest stood appalled at the sight that met his gaze, as lifting his eyes from the pages of his office book, he beheld what was taking place. Instantly he prepared to advance to the rescue of the poor man who was struggling with his murderers. At that moment one of the latter, a fierce-looking man stepped forward holding a loaded revolver in his hand, which he presented to Father Kerulam, threatening him with death if he continued to advance. Mingled with the sounds of these threats were the cries of the poor man that was about being murdered, who was calling his spiritual Father to his aid. Heedless of danger, defying death, the good shepherd rushed forward to embrace and to save, if possible, a poor sheep of his fold from the fangs of those wolves in human form who were compassing his death. A ball from the pistol of the assassin struck Father Kerulam on the breast, and he fell forward wounded mortally at the feet of him whom he sought to save from death. Had the good priest time to pronounce the form of absolution in behalf of his companion in death? or were they able to interchange hopes of meeting that day in paradise? That they did meet that very day in heaven as two martyr spirits, is the belief of the writer—the one a martyr of charity and zeal, and the other a martyr of justice and truth.

In one of the cities of the Southern States of

America, some years later, a great criminal who had been convicted of several robberies and murders, was being led forth from his prison cell to suffer the supreme penalty of the law. He made a sign to notify that he wished to address those around him. Permission to do so being granted him, he declared that he wished to reveal a hidden crime with which he had never been charged in public, but which had for years been torturing his soul with the darkest remorse. He then accused himself of being the murderer of Father Kerulam, and circumstantially told the story of his own terrible crime, and of the heroic fortitude and devoted charity of his victim.

CHAPTER IV.

WE have been following the missionary sons of De Mazenod amidst the snows of the Northern, and the fierce sun-glowes of the Southern frontiers of America. We now come back to the centre figure of our narrative, to him whose light of spirit, whose fire of heart, whose energy of missionary devotedness was the guide, the kindler, and the prompter of his disciples amidst the difficulties and discouraging labours, and in face of the dangers and sacrifices of their missionary career. It is with the history of his Inner Spirit that we purpose commencing this portion of our narrative of the life of Monseigneur de Mazenod. In performing this pleasing task, we shall have to retrace our steps, and we invite our readers to go back with us to that period of his life when he was a young man in the world, and living in his native town of Aix, in Provence.

Access to the workings of the inner spirit of men of fame would, in many a case, prove fatal to unmerited renown. We should often find that the noble deed was prompted by the ignoble motive,

and that where praise was lavishly given, that there censure was richly deserved. The contrary happens with regard to men of true worth, whose real merit always exceeds their fame. The inner beauty of their spirit always surpasses the exterior lustre of their actions. We know not even a tithe of their merit until their inner spirit reveals itself to our gaze. This revelation of their inner spirit is like the opening to our view of the gates of the glowing furnace whose sparks only, till then, we had beheld. The superficial of the saints and the servants of God is like earth's rugged crust hiding a mine of gold. The enriching of multitudes depends upon that mine being discovered. The providence of God leads to blessed discoveries of the hidden treasures of spirit, of His saints and servants for the enriching of multitudes of souls.

Since the publication of our previous volume we have become possessed of a considerable portion of the manuscripts of Monseigneur de Mazenod, including fragments of his correspondence, and very copious notes written in his own hand, of his spiritual retreats. In these writings the workings of his inner spiritual life become transparent to our view. We are now enabled to present to our readers glimpses of the inner spirit of Monseigneur de Mazenod as Layman, as Church Student, as Priest, as Founder and Superior of a Religious Society of

Missionaries, and as Bishop of a great diocese. We do not forget that we are not writing the full life of Monseigneur de Mazenod. We have neither the time, nor the capacity, nor the materials at hand which would be necessary for such an undertaking. We confine ourselves to the task of placing before the public such sketches of his life, so beautiful in its holiness, and so fruitful in its apostolic labours as come within the range of our humble competence to depict.

Our friendships are faithful mirrors of our inner spirit. If they are pure and loving and exalted in their inspiring motives, such also is our inner spirit. The spirit which inspired and swayed the early friendships of Eugene de Mazenod at that period of his life when, by the death of his father, he had just become the head of his noble house, and the inheritor of a large fortune, reveals itself in the following extracts from his correspondence. Writing to a young friend, Emanuel Gautier, who had then recently entered a military school at Paris, where he was exposed to much petty persecution for the faith, he says:—

“ You will gratify me very much by letting me know all the circumstances of that personal combat in which you are engaged, single handed, with the enemies of your soul. Tell me what you do for God, and, more especially still, what God does for you. I will acknowledge to you, my dear Emanuel, that I enjoy your letters exceedingly. I

read them over again and again with great spiritual joy and profit. I relish particularly those letters in which you speak of the wonderful aids God gave you, when you first joined the army to enable you to resist the violent assaults that were made upon your faith and morals by a corrupt world, and to embolden you to lift courageously on high the standard of the Cross, trampling human respect under foot, and treating with noble disdain the sarcasms and insults heaped upon you because of your fidelity to His service.

“One of the most marvellous effects of christian charity, dear Emanuel, is the sublime intercommunion which it creates between all who love one another in God. Members of the same mystical body they participate in one another’s joys and sorrows, combats and triumphs. Though at a distance from you I was present with you in your heroic struggles by virtue of the communion of our mutual charity. I give thanks now to God for the victory you have won. I pray that He may preserve you in those sentiments which are your glory and mine also, and which tend to the glory of our holy mother, the Catholic Church. You will allow me now to speak to you of myself. I have to ask you most earnestly to pray that God may carry out in my regard all His adorable designs, notwithstanding the obstacles I place in their way by my sins and my unfaithfulness to His grace. Beg of Him not to spare me, but to strike me with His correcting rod ; to uproot from my heart all opposition to His will ; to crush my proud spirit until it yields at last entire submission to all He wishes me to do. Ask Him to remove those obstacles that oppose my advancing to that higher calling to which I feel that His Holy Spirit forcibly impels me. Pray that He may open my eyes more fully to the nothingness of the vanities of the world, that henceforward I may aspire only to the joys of heaven, and to become worthy of being admitted to companionship with His saints in their everlasting dwellings. I would fain be helped, not only by your prayers but also by your

example. It seems to me that I should feel braver in combat and more certain of victory if I were nigh to you, and had an opportunity of witnessing your daily virtues. As this cannot be at present, I would suggest that we enter into an agreement to give one another a spiritual rendezvous in the Heart of Jesus every Sunday at half-past ten o'clock, at the hour when the solemn celebration of the holy sacrifice will be taking place in every church of the kingdom. At this spiritual rendezvous we will seek by our united prayers to do a holy violence to the Sacred Heart of our Lord and Saviour, and obtain from Him the full application to our souls of the merits of His passion and death.

“EUGENE DE MAZENOD.”

The above letter was written by Eugene in his twenty-third year, and three years before he left the world to enter the Seminary of St. Sulpice to pursue his studies for the priesthood.

We give the following letter of the young Duke de Rohan to Monseigneur de Mazenod, whose intimate companion and bosom friend he was, who also aspired to the priesthood, and who at the time of his writing it, was recovering from a severe illness:—

“FEAST OF ST. CHARLES OF BORROMEIO.

approached, my dear friend, the gates of eternity, but God was not willing that I should pass through them as yet, for He knows that I am still an idle and unprofitable servant, and not fit to appear before Him. He has given me back to life again that I might make reparation for all my past negligence, and labour for the salvation of souls. Pray earnestly that God may grant me the grace of accom-

plishing the end of that sublime vocation to which, in the day of His mercy, He called me. My desire is to make a perfect and entire offering of myself into His divine hands, to spend every moment of my life in the act of loving Him intensely, and to make Him known and loved by many others. How vast the field for works of zeal which our vocation opens out before us. How many evils to be rooted up. How much good seed to be planted. What consolations to be procured for Holy Church in her present desolation. We require other Borromeos, other Vincents of Paul, other Francises of Sales. Let us ask God to grant us the spirit of true zeal and a burning love of Himself. Let us become saints and we shall work wonders.

“LE DUC DE ROHAN.”

The young Duke de Rohan must have felt, in writing the above letter to Eugene de Mazenod, that he was addressing a kindred spirit. We publish it as a specimen of the holy relations which existed between these two young noblemen at a time when French society was honeycombed with atheism and revolution.

Before taking the final step of withdrawing from the world and entering the ecclesiastical state, Eugene placed himself in the hands of a holy and venerable Jesuit Father, who was then in his 82nd year, Father Magy. He made to this wise and learned Priest a general confession of his life, and disclosed to him all the secrets of his heart, that he might be able to judge fully and impartially concerning his call to the priesthood. Father Magy,

after mature deliberation, thus writes to Eugene de Mazenod :—

“Having considered all the circumstances of the case, further examination or discussion seems to me unnecessary. Your vocation to the priesthood appears to me as clearly manifest as the unclouded mid-day sun. At the end of my career, which now draws to its close, I should rejoice at the thought of being replaced in my ministry by so worthy a successor as yourself. I should feel confident of being treated at God’s hands, with a special mercy for the faults of my life, for having a share in promoting such a vocation as yours. It is true that if He who claimed for His own portion, as Supreme Master, the first-born of the homes of Israel, had not Himself inspired you with the thought of going forth as Abraham did from out his own people, I would not have dared to counsel you to quit the circle of your respected family, whose chief hope and consolation you are, to enter the ranks of the priesthood. You have a special devotion, you say, to Saint Ignatius. That great Saint has formed many apostles. By his intercession with God he will obtain for you also the grace to become an apostle. I feel a strong presentiment that it will be so. You long to die a martyr’s death. True apostles have ever felt this desire ; your martyrdom will be that of self-immolation. Advance then with courage, the harvest field is thrown open to your labours, it is ripe for the sickle, but the labourers are few. Have confidence in God ; what He has done for you already is a guarantee of what He is prepared to do further for you. For the rest, trust yourself absolutely to His guidance ; but do not expect always to be sustained by those sensible spiritual joys with which He has hitherto so abundantly favoured you. It is when He seems to withdraw from us and leave us to ourselves in darkness and without spiritual comfort in the midst of our trials, that our fidelity to Him shines out most brightly ; our own

feelings are subject to many changes, but God is always the same ; He is entitled to be served ever with the same devoted zeal. In days of trial and darkness remember the bright days of spiritual consolation, and be comforted."

At last the decisive step is taken, and Eugene de Mazenod is a student at St. Sulpice. The secular dress is put aside, and in its stead he has put on the ecclesiastical costume. Few ever passed from the lay to the ecclesiastical state with a livelier sense of the immense change involved in such a step. When assuming the dress of his new state he endeavoured to clothe himself interiorly with the spirit of the perfect levite, and of the future Priest. He judged that spirit to be, in the first place, one of profound humility and self-denying penance. Blameless though his life had been, in the opinion of all who knew him, nevertheless he himself felt penetrated with a sense of his sinfulness, and of his unworthiness to dwell under the holy roof of the house of prayer and sacred study, of which he had become an inmate. He looked with an eye of reverence upon all the inmates of that sacred place, not only upon his superiors, but even upon his fellow-students. Among these latter he discovered many models of virtue worthy of his imitation. At that time candidates for the priesthood in France had little of human promise to look forward to, in the career upon which they entered. Martyrdom

or exile had been the fate of the great multitude of their faithful and immediate predecessors, and there were signs then abroad which gave warning that their own fate might not, at some approaching day, be dissimilar. These gusts of threatening storms which then menaced the rising priesthood of France, had a powerful effect in winnowing the chaff from the wheat, and in securing the seed grains of true vocations for the corn fields of the sanctuary.

Eugene de Mazenod in his private notes, put on paper the dispositions with which he was animated on entering the Seminary of St. Sulpice, in the first days of October, 1808:—

“I must not conceal from myself, O my God, my utter unworthiness to dwell in this holy abode, and among so many living saints. It is my duty to humble myself to the dust in crossing the threshold of this sacred place, the doors of which should ever have been closed against me, by reason of the multitude of my sins.

“I must make it a constant practice to keep always before my mind the remembrance of my many transgressions, in order that I may fully understand that I am the last in the house, in the eyes of that just God who pays no attention to birth, or rank, or education, but puts every one in the place he merits by his virtues. But it suffices not that I should have my sins always before me, from morning till night, and from night till morning. This view of my sins would be barren of any good results, unless it were accompanied by a sincere, constant and vehement sorrow for my frightful ingratitude to a God—a Father and a Saviour—who has not ceased to load me from my tenderest years with His favours. Yes, my God, I promise Thee to think over

the sins of my life, but it will be in the bitterness of my soul. *Recogitabo omnes annos meos in amaritudine animae meae.*

“But these sentiments alone should not occupy my heart. The dread of the terrible judgments of God should not so possess me as to exceed, in any way, the fullest confidence in His mercy. Ah! Lord, what would become of me if anything held me back from approaching Thy Sacred Heart, there to consume, in the fire of its love, those sins of mine that otherwise would become matter for the eternal fire of Thy anger. No, Lord, my grief for sin will not be like that of the traitor Judas; I will not flee from Thy presence as he did, but I will run to Thee and cast myself at Thy feet, and crave Thy pardon, which Thou wilt not refuse me. *Confitebor adversum me injustitiam meam Domino, et Tu remisisti impietatem meam.*

“My soul overflows with sentiments of profoundest gratitude for all that God has done for me in calling me from the world to His sanctuary. I will seek to prove my gratitude not merely by words, but by deeds also. The following are the resolutions which I now take, and which, with God’s help, I am determined to keep faithfully. There is no question now of making resolutions against committing mortal sin. The very fact of crossing the threshold of the Seminary should be, in itself, a proof that he who does so is resolved never to do anything that would be an outrage to the Sovereign Majesty of God. Never to offend God should be the motto of every christian, but infinitely more than this is required of one who aspires to the priesthood.

“Humility—the most profound humility—should be the groundwork of the edifice of my salvation. I will look upon myself as the last of all in the Seminary. I will often declare within my own breast that this is no idle supposition, but an absolute truth; for none among them, I am sure, have offended God more grievously than I have done, or stand so much in the need of doing penance as I do;

yet I feel certain that all lead lives more penitential than mine.

“I cannot hide from myself my strict obligation to do extraordinary penance. It is true I feel a firm hope within me that my Blessed Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, has received me back into His friendship, in ratifying mercifully the sentence of absolution which was pronounced over me when contrite and humble. I made an entire confession of all the sins of my life. But though the guilt has been removed, I am still bound to expiate, by penitential works, the debt which remains to be paid to the justice of God. My whole life should be one ceaseless penitential act. How am I then to do penance? By contemplating the example of those holy and illustrious penitents of former times who punished their bodies in proportion as these had been, before their conversion, instruments of sin. Having imitated and surpassed them in their transgressions, should I not seek to follow their example in their works of penitential expiation?”

With the consent of his Spiritual Director he undertook to fast on several vigils, and other occasions, in all amounting to nearly one hundred days in the year, in addition to the fasting days appointed by the Church. On these latter fasting days he frequently took no collation, confining himself absolutely to a single meal in the day. His spirit of mortification was prolific in devising a variety of means of chastising his body, and of bringing it into subjection. Some of these means of crucifying his flesh which he adopted were so startling that we hesitate to put them in detail before our readers. But he wisely concluded that, however salutary

bodily mortification might be as a penitential work, interior mortification of the spirit was still more necessary and important. Among the holy resolutions adopted by him in commencing his seminary life, we have under our eyes at this moment the following, written by his own hand :—

“The body is not the only culprit that should be punished, the spirit is still a greater culprit. It is my duty to mortify my sinful spirit; I will seek to do so by battling constantly against my self-will, and by holding under continued restraint all the disorderly affections of my heart. I will struggle ceaselessly to overcome the defects of my natural character. Being naturally of a proud, over-bearing and haughty temperament, my constant effort will be to correct myself on all these points. I will ask God to come to my help, and will rejoice and thank Him whenever His holy providence supplies me with occasions mortifying to my pride and self-love. In the world I was thought too much of; too many attentions and kindnesses were there shown to me; but here all that, happily, is to cease. Surrounded as I shall be by a crowd of fellow-students who are my superiors in virtue and acquirements, I shall sink into obscurity and pass unnoticed, and this is what I covet. For some years I have lived as my own master, but now I pass under the holy yoke of the discipline of this house; I embrace beforehand all the trials and humiliations which may present themselves in my new position, and will thus seek to render them meritorious in the eyes of God. I will conform myself, with the utmost care, to every rule and regulation of the house. I will yield the most devoted obedience and submission to all the orders of my superiors. I will endeavour to practise the most perfect and the most cordial charity to all my fellow-students. I will study to observe great simplicity, and even poverty, in the furniture of my

room, and I will seek thereby to punish myself for having sought too much my own ease and comfort in the world. I will dispense with a fire in my apartment as far as I can do so without notable injury to my health."

A year of his seminary life passed by, during which he was the edification of fellow-students and superiors. The highest virtues shone out to their eyes in his holy behaviour, yet in his own eyes his life seemed to him to be full of grave imperfections. In the notes of the retreat he performed at this time, we find the following reflections written by him; they manifest his displeasure with himself at not having made greater progress in virtue during the year which had then elapsed. He writes in self-accusing words:—

"It is not hard to discover that I have made no progress in piety during the past year; this deplorable fact can easily be accounted for. It is evident that it arises from my want of the spirit of interior recollection. That is my radical defect which, cancer-like, eats away whatever little good there may possibly be in any of my actions. I am now empty of all merit, and deserving of no reward for anything I have done, owing to the great imperfections that accompany my best deeds. How sad to be compelled to make this avowal to myself. Seven and twenty years have I been already in this world, and I have not as yet made a store of good works to serve me as a treasure in heaven. But now, with God's grace, I will at last begin to do so, and with that object in view I adopt the following resolutions:—
1st. As far as it is possible I resolve not to misspend a single moment of my time. Time is precious for all men, but it is especially precious for those who are called to the holy min-

istry. 2nd. I resolve to dwell always, so far as I can do so, in the conscious presence of God, to whom I will raise my heart frequently in the day by loving aspirations, and to please whom I will seek to perform all my spiritual exercises with the profoundest attention, and with sentiments of compunction, love, faith, and gratitude. 3rd. I resolve to have always before my eyes the sublimity of my vocation, and the motives which led me into the Seminary, and which keep me there. I will put away from my breast at once every rising thought that might disturb or delay me in going forward to do God's will in all things. 4th. I will be more sober in my words, and restrain my over-abundant facility in conversation, in order to preserve a greater calm of spirit, and a greater freedom from distractions. 5th. I will endeavour to correspond, to the fullest of my power, with the abundance of God's precious graces in my regard."

His affectionate and devout spirit reveals itself in the following letter written by him to his aged Grandmother, from the Seminary, when he was in Deacon's orders:—

"MY DEAREST GRANDMOTHER,

"I delayed writing to you, lest you should feel yourself obliged to answer me, and thereby be forced to make an effort which would fatigue you. I write to you now as if I were holding a pleasant conversation with you. Let us then talk together wherever you choose, in the drawing-room, park or garden. But before we go further let us enter the Oratory; however rustic it is, it inspires devotion. On an approaching day I shall have the unspeakable happiness of offering upon its humble altar the most Holy Sacrifice, in your presence and in your behalf. O my God, how this thought overpowers me. I will then present to you under Eucharistic form, our common Lord

and Saviour, and you will receive from my hand, with acts of thanksgiving, Him whom in my tender childhood you were the first, perhaps, to teach me to bless and praise. We shall seek on that occasion to make up for the narrow dimensions of that little temple by the width, and the height, and the depth of the love of God in our hearts. We shall invite some of those good simple villagers of your neighbourhood, whom God favours as His chosen ones, to take part in our devotions. By our united prayers we shall seek to obtain from Him all those graces that we need to secure our safe arrival in our heavenly country. To that eternal kingdom, purchased for us by Jesus Christ, all our desires should stretch forward. I shall have the happiness, when we meet, of becoming your Chaplain, and your spiritual wants will be supplied by one who derives his earthly existence from God through you. I shall not spend my vacation this year at home. This is a sacrifice for myself, and I know it will be one for you. Let us offer to God our joint sacrifice, with a pure intention, and we shall obtain some additional degrees of glory in heaven. Has N—— placed the little girls under the care of the Sisters of Charity? Tell him from me that he will have to answer to God for his negligence in this matter, which is of such great importance, and for which he is so specially responsible. When God marks out our duty for us, it is His will that we should do it, and He pays no heed to our excuses for delay—to our ‘if’s’ and ‘but’s’ and ‘wherefore’s.’

“Adieu, dearest and best of Grandmothers, from your own,

“EUGENE.”

The great event to which, from his early youth, he had been looking forward with loving impatience, yet with reverential fear—his ordination to the priesthood—was now approaching. He prepares for

it by several days spent in a preparatory retreat. In his notes of that retreat we find the following expression of the holy sentiments he experienced as the day of his ordination drew nigh:—

“How have I longed to be made partaker of the sublime priesthood of Jesus Christ. As this decisive event of my life approaches, how I desire that I may be found, through God’s infinite mercy, ready to co-operate fully with this wonderful grace of His predilection in my regard, that my soul may become purified from every stain, and my heart emptied of creatures, so that the Holy Ghost may find no obstacle in me to His divine operations, that He may rest upon me in all plenitude, filling me with the love of Jesus Christ, my Saviour, to that degree that I shall live henceforward only for Him, that my whole life may be spent in loving Him, and in teaching others to know and to love Him.”

On the day following that of his ordination to the priesthood, he wrote in these terms to his Spiritual Director, the venerable Father Duclaux:—

“MY VERY DEAR AND GOOD FATHER,

“I write to you on bended knees, overwhelmed and weighed down to earth under the load of the immense and incomprehensible mercies which the Lord has worked in me. I am a Priest of Jesus Christ, and I have already offered the dread and adorable sacrifice. I, a sinner, have immolated, by my ministry, the Lamb without stain. Oh my dear Father, it seems to me like a dream when I think of who I am. Sentiments of joy, fear, confidence, compunction, and love follow in turn one another in my soul. Is it thus, I say to myself, that God takes vengeance on me for

all my sinful ingratitude? Is it by loading me with favours as great as He, God as He is, can grant me, that He avenges Himself of all the wrongs I have done against Him? My very dear Father, at this moment my heart super-abounds with the love of Him whom I once so grievously offended. O my Beloved One, is it possible that I ever could have offended Thee, who now riseth to the gaze of my soul with irresistible charms? Can it be that a heart that loves Thee as mine now does, could ever have grieved Thee even by the slightest fault? Those tears that flow like water from a fountain out from my two eyes, sweetly and tranquilly, are testimonies of the working of Thy love within me. Ineffable is that enrapturing sweetness with which my inner soul is now flooded. I comprehend it not; but this I comprehend, that were I, after having received such favours from God, ever to offend Him again, even were it by a deliberate venial sin, I should deserve to be cast into the lowest hell. I am a Priest, and to understand what this means one must be a Priest himself. It seems to me that from the moment of my ordination, I have commenced to know Jesus Christ as I had never known Him before. What shall it be when I shall know Him as He is in heaven?

“Pray for me, my very dear Father, that I may not prove an unworthy and ungrateful recipient of such wonderful graces.”

Father de Mazenod remained at the Seminary of St. Sulpice for one year after his being raised to the priesthood. As the time approached for his going forth from that venerable institution, he felt grieved at the thought of leaving a spot which was endeared to him by so many hallowed associations, and by so many holy personal friendships contracted there. It had been for him what the desert was for St. John

the Baptist, and the supper-room for the Apostles, the place of his sanctification and enlightenment, where the Holy Spirit gifted him and fitted him to go forth as a witness, a teacher, and a priest, before the face of the Lord, to preach the gospel to the poor, and to convert many to the Lord their God. As he was preparing to take his departure from the Seminary, his grateful and appreciative spirit remembered and valued the graces and blessings and helps to holiness which had been conferred upon him during his four years residence within its walls. For every one of these spiritual advantages he knew that he was accountable to God, and he was fear-stricken at the thought of his abusing any of such signal graces. To guard against such a danger he made the following resolution which he committed to writing:—"I must employ all my force of will in laying firm hold of those treasures of grace that have been granted to me in this house. The instructions that I have here received, and the examples of holiness which I have witnessed in this place, must never be forgotten by me. The memory of the sacerdotal virtues which I had under my eyes during my four years of happy residence here, in such lives as those of M. Emery, M. Duclaux, and of their companion priests, and also in the lives of the great majority of my fellow-students, shall remain always in my mind as a

stimulus and a support to my own virtue. I will seek to represent to myself in after-life those holy friends of my seminary days, as being always nigh to me, my invisible exhorters to every good work."

CHAPTER V.

UNWORLDLINESS was the most prominent feature in the sacerdotal character of Father de Mazenod, when he returned to the world as a Priest. Happily for him at that hour *he loved not the world nor the things that were in the world.* With such gifts as his, in person, mind, manner, and appearance; with such facilities as he possessed of winning a rapid and wide-spread popularity, one taint of worldliness in his soul might have proved a fatal blight upon his whole subsequent career as a Priest. He knew full well that worldly popularity, as such, on the part of any of His Priests is not the instrument by which God works salvation in Israel. The Divine Hand employs no such instrument in saving souls. If Jesus had employed it, the world's friends would not have crucified him; if Stephen had employed it they would not have stoned him; if Peter and Paul, and the others of the apostolic band, had employed it, the rulers of the world would not have led them forth to the arena of their martyrdom. To be in the world without belonging to the world has

been the essential characteristic of the Apostolic man in every age. It was the characteristic virtue of young Father de Mazenod. The fluttering crowd of the nominally devout who sometimes succeed in robbing God's priests of a precious treasure—time, found no easy access beyond the door-steps of Father de Mazenod. But an open door was kept for the poor, and the sorrow-trying, and the sin-burdened, who wished to be released from the load of their guilt. His time was entirely absorbed between works of piety and works of charity. The attractions of his fervent heart led him to the former as the works of his special preference; the tenderness of his compassion for sinners, and his zeal for souls, led him forth from his cherished religious solitude, which he always left with repugnance, to engage in such works as came in his way for the good of others. It was his desire and effort to combine, in his daily conduct, the sanctifying exercises of the interior life with works of the most ardent zeal for the salvation of souls. This combination sometimes had its difficulties, and his exterior labours would occasionally absorb too much of the time which he had wisely allotted for contemplation and prayer. But owing to that habit of self-observation in all that appertained to his spiritual interests, which he practised to the end of his days, he speedily discovered where the error lay, and was not slow in applying the remedy.

We shall now proceed to place before our readers the Rule of Life which, in the first year of his priesthood (December 1812), he drew up for his then future guidance, the manuscript of which now lies upon our table. He heads it with these words, "Exactitude, Fervour, Perseverance," and from the knowledge which we have of his holy life, we have reason to believe that this rule was observed by him strictly, fervently, and to the end, in all its principal details.

"RULE OF LIFE.

"Ne igitur hodie asperam vitam ducas et cras mollem et delicatam, sed canonem unum retine sicut etiam sancti fecerunt Patres, qui ad quinquaginta et ultra annos, suum non mutarunt canonem ac regulam."—*S. Ephrem.*

"Do not lead to-day a life of self-denial and to-morrow a life of self-indulgence, but imitate the Saints, our Fathers in God, in following with exactitude a fixed rule of life. Many of these holy men persevered for fifty years and more in observing, without any change, the same rule of religious discipline."

"In order that we may arrive at the state of spiritual perfection, and persevere therein, it is necessary, according to the counsels of holy and learned men, that we should adopt some wise rule of life suited to our condition, and that we should follow it with fidelity. By so doing we take measures against the fickleness and love of change inherent to our nature. The rule will act like the strict and vigilant master who will not accept of the vain and frivolous excuses and pretexts of his pupil, for the omission of appointed tasks. It will serve as the compass does to the mariner at sea, and will show us in what direction our soul is shaping its course. We can readily judge, by our greater or lesser fidelity in conforming to it, whether fervour or torpidity is in

the ascendant in our lives, and one cannot go very far astray who, being desirous of saving his soul, keeps this rule of life before his view, even though sometimes he may fail in a full observance of it. A rule of life made during a retreat, when the soul, separated from the world, is under the action of special enlightening graces—is smitten with a sense of her dangers, a consciousness of her sins, and an ardent desire of her salvation,—such a rule must, ever after, command her esteem and reverence. It will remain as a testimony and guarantee of the holy promises made by her to our Lord, at a time when she was alone with Him, and He alone was her light. Unless we give permanent shape to our pious dispositions and holy promises during a retreat, by embodying them in the form of a rule for our future guidance, we are exposed to lose all recollection of them; while on the contrary, by our embodying them as a rule of life, they become a lasting monument of the compact made between our souls and God, on the solemn and holy occasion of our retreat.

“In committing to writing my resolutions on this occasion, my object is to preserve for the guidance of my future life, a record of what passed in my soul during this retreat, which will serve to remind me, each time I read it, and I shall do so frequently, of what God has done for me during these days of grace, and of what I have promised to do for Him. I have resolved, therefore, to observe faithfully, with God’s assistance, the following rule during my whole life, with those modifications only as may become necessary, owing to any altered circumstances in my position which may arise in the future.

“In the first place, convinced as I am that the life of a Priest should be a life made up entirely of days full of good works in the eyes of God, I am determined that my life, through the Divine aid, shall be such. Consequently I will hold myself aloof from the world, and I will take care that my resolution on this point becomes well known. I will

not allow myself to be bound by the exigences of society, especially with regard to the receiving and paying of visits in which much precious time is often wasted. I will pay such visits only as the glory of God and the salvation of souls demand of me, and my door will be kept firmly closed against all, excepting those to whom I may be able to render some spiritual service.

“Secondly, the obligations of a Priest, taken as a whole, consist of his duties towards God, of whose holiness he should be a faithful mirror in the eyes of men; of his duties towards his neighbour, for whose salvation he is bound to labour; and of his duties towards the Church, whose minister he is. He should practise an extreme vigilance, in order not to fail in any point of these grave responsibilities. On this account I should become sensitive alone to a feeling of the sublime character of my sacred ministry, and to a perception of the personal holiness which the exercise of that ministry demands of me. I should be convinced of the necessity of an extraordinary gift of piety, in order to accomplish my end as a Priest. Without piety, my life as a Priest will be barren in results. Piety, on the contrary, will give life and fertility to all my actions.

“My duties towards God consist principally in love, adoration, prayer, submission to His holy will, and in the keeping of His commandments. I will take as my model in the worship which I am bound to render to God, Jesus Christ, His Son and my Beloved Saviour, towards whom I will seek to bear the most tender sentiments of piety, and a love the most ardent and sincere. The thought of my Blessed Saviour Jesus will live always in my memory, and His image will be ever enshrined in the depths of my heart. I will ask every day, especially during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, for the grace of advancing in His love, and a hundred times daily I will offer this ejaculatory prayer: ‘O my Jesus, give me Thy love.’ If I gain His love, I shall gain all I shall need. The love of Jesus Christ should be the special devotion of every Priest.

“I will often contemplate Jesus, my love, in His Incarnation, in His hidden life, in His passion and death, but especially in the sacrament and sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist. My principal occupation for life will be to love Him, and the chief end of all my labours will be to lead others to love Him. I will employ for this end all the talents that He has given me, all my time, and all the energies of mind and body which I possess. And if, after having spent myself in labours to promote His love, I succeeded in eliciting from a single breast only one act of the love of Jesus, I should look upon myself as being richly recompensed.

“I will place my soul every day in the hands of this Blessed Saviour, that He may preserve it from all sin, and that He may deal with it favourably when He becomes its judge. To render this prayer more acceptable in His sight, I will join to it the practice of constant mortification, remembering that the whole life of Christ was a cross and martyrdom for my sake. Moreover, I should acknowledge, according to the devout author of the ‘Imitation of Christ,’ and the joint testimony of spiritual writers, that the more we bring our bodies under the subjection of the spirit of penance, the more our souls shall abound in grace. *‘The more the flesh is brought down by affliction, the more the soul is strengthened by inward grace.’*—Imitation Book 2, ch. 12. I will therefore endeavour to establish some proportion between my sins and my penitential works. I will seek to practise interior and exterior mortification. I will practise interior self-denial by renouncing self-will, conquering my repugnances, and living in the constant exercise of obedience, humility and patience. I will practise exterior mortification by fasting and other privations. I will therefore be sparing in food and sleep, and will labour in the hardest works of the holy ministry without complaint; and whilst observing carefully cleanliness and order, I will confine myself to simple necessaries in whatever appertains to

my personal requirements. As I have seldom, during life, used wine, and much less liquors of any sort, water being my usual beverage, I will follow the same habit for the future, as far as circumstances will permit.

“The Holy Mass, it must be confessed, is the most excellent of all means of glorifying God on earth, and in heaven itself, there is no worship more perfect. I will seek always to foster the most lively and tender devotion towards this great sacrifice. I will say Mass every day, and would do so even twice every day, if such were allowable. Happy was that devout Pontiff, St. Leo the Great, who used to celebrate the Holy Mass no less than seven times daily. The present discipline of the church not permitting me to offer the holy sacrifice as frequently as I would fain do if I were free to follow my inclinations, I will take care to say Mass every day with all the fervour and devotion that I shall be capable of stirring up in my soul, uniting myself at the same time in spirit with all the Masses that are being then said throughout the world. I will watch for opportunities of saying two Masses on Sundays and festivals, in places where, through dearth of Priests, a necessity for doing so may exist. I will make the Holy Mass the centre towards which I will direct all my actions of the day, either as acts for thanksgiving for the Mass said on the morning of each particular day, or as acts of preparation for the morrow. During the Holy Mass, while our Lord will be upon the altar, I will not fail to ask, with all earnestness, that I may become a Priest according to His own heart, that He may fill all the capacities of my soul with His love, and keep me from ever offending Him even by the least sin. I will continue to ask from God every day, at the Holy Mass, as I have done daily since I became a Priest, the great grace which I know I do not deserve, of dying a martyr's death, either as a martyr for the faith or as a martyr of charity, in giving my life in some way for the good of others. I will seek to avoid, if possible, saying a single word to anybody after Mass,

until I have made my thanksgiving, which I will perform in profound recollection, kneeling before the altar. I will spend a half-hour in acts of thanksgiving.

“The divine office comes after the Holy Mass as one of the most important of our priestly functions. Holy Church, in imposing the obligation of the divine office on her priests, intends that they should present themselves each day before the mercy throne of God, to invoke by their prayers his blessings upon her children, and to turn away the scourges of his wrath provoked by the daily sins of the world. She wishes that her priests should present themselves, in her name, before the throne of God, to offer to His Divine Majesty their homage in union with the choirs of angels and the company of the Blessed in heaven. I resolve, therefore, to apply all my attention to the devout recital of the divine office, which is one of the holiest and most consoling functions of the ministry. I will repel with great care all distractions as soon as I perceive them. I will make a short pause at the end of each psalm while reciting the *Gloria Patri*, to recollect myself and renew my intentions. I will fix my attention as much as possible on the sense of the words of the psalm, and will seek to reproduce in my soul the devout sentiments of the Psalmist, —to pray when he prays, to mourn when he mourns, to rejoice when he rejoices.

“However excellent the divine office is as a prayer, yet it suffices, not by itself, for the sanctification of a Priest. The Priest would commit a grave mistake who would rest content in the matter of daily prayer with reciting his office and the saying of Mass. The Priest’s life should be a carrying out of the counsel of our Lord: ‘*You should always pray and not fail.*’ An easy method of carrying out this counsel is that of the exercise of the Divine presence, accompanied by ejaculatory prayers. During the whole day, whether I study, or eat, or drink, or labour, whether I go forth into the crowd or remain in the quiet of my home, I

will take great care to retain a lively sense of the presence of God, watching carefully over myself in order not to do the least thing to displease my Heavenly Father. I will seek to manifest my love towards Him in divers ways as the day goes by. I will breathe in His hearing short but fervent aspirations of love towards Him. I will cast loving glances upon holy pictures that may remind me of Him. I would wish to have some faithful monitor ever at my side to remind me ceaselessly of my Beloved; but as this cannot be, I will use other means to help me to think of Him. When the clock strikes, when I hear a vehicle going by, when somebody enters my room, I will lift my heart to Him as I have been accustomed for years to do.

“Meditation should be the daily bread of the Priest; without the aid of daily meditation it is hard to become or to continue a good Priest. In mental prayer he will find light, guidance, strength, and consolation. There he will learn the science of the saints, and a knowledge of the means of becoming a saint himself, as also of sanctifying the souls of others. There he will be favoured by manifestations from the Holy Spirit, and admitted to an intimate union with God. Having these truths concerning the importance of the practice of meditation for every priest before my mind, I am resolved to guard against the temptation to negligence with reference to this holy exercise. *‘He who knows how to pray well, knows how to love well. He who abandons prayer, abandons the road to heaven.’*—St. Augustin.

“Spiritual reading supplies fuel to the furnace of meditation. Convinced of the importance of this holy exercise, I resolve to be faithful in making a spiritual lecture every day. I am convinced that, except in cases where God guides souls by extraordinary paths, no one can make much progress in the exercise of mental prayer, without being largely helped by spiritual reading. The examples of exalted virtues which present themselves to our knowledge in the lives of the saints, have a wonderful power in stirring

up within our breasts desires of imitating what we read of, and of becoming saints ourselves. The diligent study of ascetic books is most necessary for us Priests, as a means of enabling us to guide the souls committed to our charge in the ways of holiness, according to wise principles and safe models.

“The beautiful truth which discloses to us the marvellous fact that Jesus Christ, not content with offering Himself in sacrifice upon the altar, abides in person in the tabernacle, lovingly in the midst of His children, should draw us by its own attractive power, irresistibly and frequently to His feet. If news came to us that He had appeared in form visible to outward eye, in some distant part of the earth, we should hasten to get ready to go forth upon the long journey we should have to traverse, in order to reach Him. He spares us all that trouble by coming to dwell in our midst. Alas for those who, whilst believing that He is really present in the holy tabernacle, seldom or never visit Him there, depriving themselves thus, by their negligence, of countless graces, and exposing themselves to have to render a severe account on the Judgment Day, for their cold indifference towards His august presence. Happily for me, through God’s great goodness in my regard, I do not feel that this cold forgetfulness of Jesus, who is present upon our altars, is one of my dangers. From my tender childhood His grace has penetrated me with a lively and loving sense of that adorable presence. How often in my sorrows have I come to the feet of my Saviour, present upon His altar, and I always received comfort and consolation there. No, I will not imitate the mode of acting of certain priests towards Jesus, my Beloved, in the sacrament of His love, who, having said their Mass (when they do say Mass), disappear for the rest of the day from His presence in His holy temple. If some duty compels them to come to the church, they content themselves, whilst passing through it, with one minute’s adoration on bended knees, and they hasten away again,

and they tarry not with our Lord, for their hearts are icy towards Him. I will imitate rather the example of that holy Priest, Nepotian, of whom St. Jerome speaks these words:—‘*You may seek him in other places, but there is one place where you are sure to find him—his church.*’ I therefore resolve to allow no day to pass without paying a prolonged and loving visit to the feet of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, there to pour out the fulness of my heart into the heart of Him who loves me. Would that it were given to me to visit Him as often and as quietly as I used to do in my seminary days, before my missionary labours began, when I dwelt with Him under the same roof, and had it in my power, without its interfering with any duty, to go into His presence several times in the day. At that time it so happened, to my great consolation, that from my chamber, at my desk during the day, and on my bed at night, I could see the lamp burning before His Tabernacle. How I envied the position and the function of that lamp; like it, I would then fain have my heart always in Jesus’ presence, and always on fire with love before Him.

“In order to advance with security in promoting the great work of my sanctification, I must examine carefully, day by day, my line of conduct, calling myself to a strict account concerning its conformity with the commandments of God, the precepts of the church, the duties of my state of life, and with the rule of life which I have proposed to myself to follow.

“Should I discover that through negligence or human weakness I have committed faults—even slight ones—on any of the points indicated, I will humble myself before God, and resolve, with his assistance, to avoid committing the like faults on the day that is to follow. If, on the contrary, I discover that by the great mercy of God I have been preserved during the day that is coming to its close from any fault that I can find out, I will give thanks to our Lord, to whom alone belongs the glory of my preservation

from sin. The consoling fact of having spent one day without being guilty of any act or omission which I could lay to my charge as a fault, will encourage me greatly to persevere in fervour of life, and make new strides on the road of perfection. I will then resolve to have God, and God alone, before my view in all my actions, renouncing all human glory that may come to myself in any way from them, bearing in mind this maxim of the saints, that men are often praised on earth for actions which God, who is the searcher of hearts, will one day rigorously condemn.

“In the examination of my daily actions I will have the following points before my mind for my guidance. Firstly, I will consider what perfection each action should possess in order that it may be pleasing in the sight of God, and in conformity with the actions of Jesus Christ. Secondly, I will consider the various defects that are to be found in my actions; and thirdly, I will seek for the proper remedies for the removing of such defects.

“It is evident to me that if a person proves faithful in making his examination of conscience at the close of every day, he cannot fail to succeed in extirpating one after another of the leading faults of his daily life. This habit of daily self-examination helps us very much in the examination of conscience, which we have to make before we go to confession. Moreover, by this salutary exercise, we put into practice this important counsel of our Lord, to which so few, alas! pay attention: ‘*Watch ye therefore, because you know not at what hour your Lord will come.*’—Matt. xxiv. 42. By this daily examination of our conscience we keep the accounts of our souls in order, and we abide always in readiness for any moment that we may be summoned to appear before the dread tribunal of the Judgment of God. In this examination we judge ourselves according to the counsel of the Apostle, and we thereby escape the rigours of the judgment that is to come. ‘*If we would judge ourselves we should not be judged.*’—1 Cor. xi. 31.

“Confession is beneficial, not only as a means of obtaining pardon by those who have had the misfortune to offend God by grievous sin, but it is also an admirable means of preserving and increasing God’s sanctifying grace in our souls. The Priest who wishes to persevere and advance in virtue, should go frequently to confession. This practice is essential for him, in order to keep his conscience in that state of spotless purity in which he should appear daily at the Altar of God. I will keep before my mind the examples of the saints on this matter. St. Philip Neri, St. Charles Borromeo, and many other great servants of God approached daily the sacrament of penance. I will make my confession at least once every eight days.”

Father de Mazenod did not intend this rule of life to become a dead letter. We find him during a retreat, made the year that followed the adoption by him of this rule, alluding to it in these terms :—

“I must exercise severity towards myself, in order that nothing may withdraw me from the strict observance of my rule of life. Everything that is therein marked down is necessary for me, as a means of leading a fervent and holy life. In order that I may not forget a single point of this rule, I will read it carefully on the days of my monthly retreats, which generally take place on the first Friday of each month. I will impose a penance on myself for every culpable violation of any of the articles of this rule. This penance will bear some proportion to the importance of the point left unfulfilled.”

In the notes of the retreat from which we have taken the extracts just quoted, we find the follow-

ing resolutions and pious sentiments written by him :—

“I will never speak directly or indirectly of any good work I may do, unless God’s glory or the edification of my neighbour may seem to require that I should do so. In that case, before speaking, I will interiorly purify and direct my intention.

“Jealousy is hateful to me ; I look upon it as a sentiment unworthy of generous souls. It gives me great delight to discover singular merit in others. Should I find that I fail in points in which they succeed, I will do my best to imitate them, and to reach their excellence. If I should not succeed in doing so, I will humble myself at the thought of my incapacity, and will speak well of them, and rejoice with my whole heart at the praise which I hear others give them.

“I will bear with patience and resignation, and if possible with joy, the contradictions that I shall meet with in the carrying out of the works which God will inspire me to perform for His glory. I will pray under such trials with more ardour and at greater length, both for the success of such works, and for the good of those who, through mistake, oppose my undertakings. I will endeavour at such times, by special effort, to suppress all murmurings that may rise within me.

“Before commencing any action of importance I will offer it entirely to God, renouncing at the same time any self-complacency which I may find in performing it.

“Before going forth from my apartment to fulfil any exterior duty, I will, if I happen to be alone, prostrate myself at the feet of my crucifix, to offer to God the work which I am going to perform, and to beg of my blessed Saviour to extend His holy hand over me to preserve me from offending Him. I will then kiss the feet of the crucifix. Should there happen to be other people present at the time, I will

confine myself to this latter external act, performing the rest by an interior offering of my heart."

At this time Father de Mazenod was leading a life of apostolic labours in his native town, Aix, in Provence. He resided under his mother's roof. His immediate attendant was a holy Trappist lay-brother, who had been compelled to quit his monastery during the revolutionary period. In the society of this good brother, Father de Mazenod began already to taste of the sweets of the monastic life, and at the same time Brother Maur could almost imagine himself to be back again in some cloister of his monastery, whilst breathing the atmosphere of holiness with which the dwelling of Father de Mazenod was redolent, and whilst living in daily intercourse with one whose habits of prayer and self-denial recalled to his mind much of what he had witnessed amongst the holiest of his brethren at La Trappe.

About this period, doubts began to rise in the mind of Father de Mazenod as to whether he ought to withdraw from missionary labours, and devote himself exclusively to a life of solitude and prayer. He was at that time occupied with several very important works of zeal and charity. He was then performing daily prodigies of devotedness in behalf of the plague-stricken Austrian prisoners of war, at the risk of his own life. He was employed also in

several other works of a missionary and charitable character. He found that all these occupations had a tendency to disturb his interior calm and union with God, and to cause a crowd of distractions in his daily exercises of piety, even at the Holy Mass. He grew alarmed for the safety of his own soul, and became apprehensive that he was losing favour with God, by exposing himself to be deprived of interior recollection of spirit, through engaging in the exterior works of the sacred ministry. During a retreat made about this epoch, he proposed to himself the following questions, to be solved in the light of his retreat grace:—

“By experience I find when I live in retirement, following a regular order of religious exercises, and occupied in prayer and study, having nothing else to attend to but the work of my own salvation, that I am then contented and happy, and that my conscience is at peace. At such times I feel that I take a great delight in the service of God, and avoid offending Him in any serious way. On the contrary, when I am engaged in works for the good of my neighbour, I become so absorbed in what I am doing as to have scarcely any time for eating or sleeping. My prayers and meditations are performed then amidst countless distractions, which pursue me to the very altar during the Holy Mass. On the contrary, when I lead a retired life, God favours me with an abundance of consolations during the holy sacrifice, and sweet tears oftentimes flow copiously from mine eyes. The question which I now propose to myself is, should I withdraw myself from the exterior works of the ministry, to occupy myself solely with the affairs of my own salvation?”

Had he followed the bent of his own personal inclinations, the answer to this question would have been in the affirmative, for his special attraction drew him almost violently thither, where quiet converse with Jesus, the Beloved of his soul, could be held unbroken by any disturbing cause for long intervals at a time. In different passages of his writings he tells us that it was always with repugnance he left the sweets of holy solitude, with its alternating periods of study and prayer, for the arena of missionary labour. Yet who that saw him labouring in the vineyard of souls, his brow lit up with a gleam of that joy which angels feel when sinners repent—who that saw him at his work as a great missionary, preaching, hearing confessions, passing hither and thither in search of the lost sheep of the house of Israel, could imagine that the choice preference of his heart was for a life of solitude, silence and prayer? Yet so it was in truth. Happily for those souls that were to be sanctified and saved through the instrumentality of this holy young Priest, it was God's will that he should follow his repugnances instead of his preferences, and that his life should become one of many labours and battles for the rescuing of imperilled souls, and was not to be spent merely in the quiet exclusive work of saving his own soul. How pure that zeal that works through our repugnances, briskly and brightly to

the eyes of lookers on, as if we were making no sacrifice at all, whilst in our hearts God was beholding some great sacrifice progressing, and self immolating self upon the altar of His divine will. It was not all at once that the answer came from God to the doubt and question of Father de Mazenod, as above proposed. At last the light he asked for was given him, and the answer he sought for was received by him, as he himself informs us in these words :—

“I was more than once on the point of giving way to discouragement, and of renouncing all thought of labouring for the souls of others, to retire into some solitude, there to apply myself exclusively to the work of saving my own soul. But then again I asked myself, is this the will of God? Has He not manifested His good pleasure that I should labour for the souls of others as well as for my own soul? Has not His holy will been made manifest to me on this point by the voice of my Superiors, and by the visible blessing which, notwithstanding the obstacles created by my unfaithfulness, He has condescended to grant to my labours for souls? Should I then escape the severity of His judgments, which I dread so much, by fleeing from the field of battle in the hour of combat, in search of my personal repose? On the contrary I feel that it is God’s will that I should renounce my strong inclination for a life of complete solitude and retirement from the world, to apply myself to labour with new ardour for the souls of others, whilst endeavouring with all care to sanctify my own soul.”

But we are not to suppose that, in God’s designs, as understood by Father de Mazenod, that active

missionary labour was to supersede in any way the necessity and the obligation of his leading a life largely consecrated to prayer, to quiet reflection, and to sacred studies. The life of every true missionary should be modelled on the life of the Divine Missionary, our Lord Himself, who, when most fully engaged in evangelizing the multitude, spent large portions of His time in solitude and prayer. It was to the Apostles chiefly that He delivered the counsel of continual prayer. He gave this counsel to them at a time when missionary labours of the most onerous and absorbing kind were about to devolve upon them. They understood well that it was their Divine Master's wish and precept that prayer in large proportion should accompany preaching and the other duties of their active ministry. This is evident from the open declaration they made in a public assembly of Christians in Jerusalem in the following words: "*We will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word; and the discourse pleased all the multitude.*"—Acts vi. 4.

In the truly apostolic man there is a blending of the action of Moses who prayed on the mountain, with that of Joshua who fought valiantly on the plain. Woe to the preacher of the gospel who dis-severs a life of prayer from a life of active missionary labour. His words in the pulpit, no matter how perfect they be as displays of human eloquence, will

become nothing better than *the tinkling cymbal and the sounding brass*, and the enemies of his soul will triumph over him and his works, as surely as the enemies of Israel began to triumph over Joshua whenever Moses ceased to pray. At no time is prayer more powerful than when it is blended with the zealous labours of the missionary life, and at no time is it more needed than when wonders have to wrought, surpassing all those miracles, in the natural order, which are recorded in the lives of saints. How wonder-working is the life of the apostolic man who prays and preaches, and converts great sinners, raising the spiritually dead from graves of sinfulness to the new life, with all its joys and privileges. God is with that man, because he, being a man of prayer, delights to be with God, and to converse with Him. Preachers of the Word are men whom Satan seeks to sift as the wheat is sifted. He would rob them of the good grain of the spirit of prayer and piety and humility, and he would leave them the chaff—the tinsel and the glitter of human oratory—the applause of a flattering crowd—the empty bubble of self-conceit—the inner consciousness, alas, of having failed in one's high mission.

Father de Mazenod's enlightened missionary spirit understood well how the planting and the watering of the seed of the Divine word had need of that

blessing from on high which gives the increase. To secure that blessing he was determined to become a man of prayer, as well as a man of action, depending more upon the first than upon the last of these qualities for success in his missionary undertakings. He writes thus on this matter :—

“I must for the future trust more to the efficacy of prayer as a means of success in my different missionary works, than to any amount of active energy which I can bring to bear upon them. It is true we must labour, and labour very hard and devotedly, for the saving of souls; all missionary saints have done so. But we should not allow such an abuse as that of labour superseding prayer, or think that our external works dispense us from making our meditation, from spending proper time in preparing to celebrate the holy Mass, or from our prayers of thanksgiving after it. We should look upon prayer as the arsenal from which we are to draw the best appointed weapons for our missionary warfare, and trust more to the aid we are to get from heaven, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin and of the Saints of God, and through the protection of the holy Angels, than to our own unaided human endeavours.”

CHAPTER VI.

WE now approach that period in the inner life of Father de Mazenod, when the Holy Spirit was about to communicate to his mind its first perceptions of his special mission—the founding of a new society of Missionary Religious in the Church of God. Founders of Religious orders bear a privileged resemblance to Jesus Christ. The mantle of His regal magistracy in the government of souls falls in royal folds from their shoulders. They have the privilege of calling disciples around them, and of saying to them at one time, “*Come ye apart into a desert place and rest a little;*” and again of saying to them, “*Lift up your eyes and see the countries, for they are all white already to harvest, go ye and preach the gospel.*” What influence is it that draws disciples around these founders of Religious societies, to abide lovingly and permanently under their rule, and to be ready to pass hither and thither at their bidding? What but that participation of the aureola of Christ, that circlet of holiness that surrounds their brows, giving them a strange mysterious power of drawing disciples to themselves, even

as Jesus drew Matthew from his money table, and Peter, James and John from their boats and nets by the sea shore. The sway of personal holiness has always been the chief loadstone of attraction on the part of the founders of Religious orders, in bringing disciples to their side. This holiness works by sight, and works by its fame. Some witness it and are fascinated by it; some hear of it and are brought from afar to render homage to it, to bow their heads before its sceptre, and to declare themselves its willing subjects unto death. Thus were disciples to be drawn around Father de Mazenod by the sight of his virtues and the fame of his holiness.

God, who anticipates frequently our coming great trials by granting us great spiritual consolations, which prepare us for the combat, conferred, at the period of which we write, extraordinary gifts of sensible fervour on Father de Mazenod. We learn this circumstance from the notes of a retreat made by him about that epoch. He thus speaks of the lights and consolations which he received during that retreat:—

“I am gladdened by the thought that it is so easy to become a saint, and I feel that I must, of necessity, become one. A glance at the lives of the saints of our own times, such as the blessed Leonard, and the blessed Alphonsus Liguori, fills me with strength and courage. Instead of being terrified when I read of the austerities of their lives, I feel thereby more forcibly drawn to imitate them.

“The perfection of the religious state, and the observance of the evangelical counsels which hitherto had been surrounded to the gaze of my soul, by a certain mist of difficulties, now stand out in their own true light, free from every shadow of impediment. I have already, as a Priest, made a vow of chastity; why should I not add to it the vows of poverty and obedience? I have passed in review before my mind the obligations which these two latter vows impose, and it seems to me that there are none which I would shrink from taking upon myself, counting always upon the aid of divine grace. These sentiments are not to be mere passing feelings; I hereby adopt them with all the energy of my soul, as I commit them at this moment to writing. Ah! Lord, if hitherto I have grieved Thy Holy Spirit by refusing to correspond with any of Thy divine calls, I will hold back no longer. Speak Lord, Thy servant heareth. Show to me, I implore Thee, the path by which Thou wishest me to travel; enlighten me with Thy own light; give to me an understanding of Thy holy will, and guide my footsteps by the way of Thy commandments. No, I will not cease to labour for the good of my neighbour, for I know it is God’s holy will that I should do so. On the contrary, I feel disposed to do more than I have hitherto done for the salvation of souls; and if it were necessary, I feel that I could lay down my life for that object. It is true, as it is known to God, that it is not by inclination, but by a sense of duty, that I engage in exterior works, for I experience always an extreme repugnance when quitting my retirement. If I followed my inclination, I would confine myself, as far as the souls of others were concerned, to prayers offered in solitude in their behalf. But the will of the Heavenly Master of the vineyard manifests itself otherwise, and it is for Him to make known to His workmen what they are to do.”

Such were the lofty sentiments with which the spirit of God filled the soul of Father de Mazenod,

at one of the most momentous periods of his life. His new Society of Missionaries was then starting into existence; some early recruits had already mustered around him, and others were preparing to follow their example. Amongst those that were soon to join his ranks, were several whose after-career was to be distinguished by the display of the most exalted virtues. One of the number, Father Guibert, was, in the designs of Divine Providence, to be clad one day in the Roman purple, and preside over the see of Paris as its Cardinal Archbishop. The proficiency of the pupils in any science naturally redounds to the credit of their master; and we may fairly judge by the progress made in holiness by the early disciples of Father de Mazenod, of his own eminent sanctity. Such names as Tempier, Albini, Mye, Susanne, Guibert, encircle that of De Mazenod as laurel wreaths that bespeak the triumphs of his zeal in the work of sanctifying his first disciples, and the early co-operators in his great missionary undertakings.

A faith-inspired sense of their high responsibilities, on the part of those whom God appoints to rule in His name over the souls of others, is the most powerful incentive to the exercise of their watchfulness and devotedness in fulfilling the duties of their trust. It grows, as it becomes perfect, into a special form of divine worship—the worship of the Justice

of God. The living God upon His Judgment Throne is the chief and immediate object of their adoration. That Judgment Throne is ever rising before their faith-kindled vision in the calm of prayer, in the silence of the night when other men are asleep; yea, amidst the bustle and throng of daily occupations. Sometimes it startles them into a soul-panic by its amazing lights, and by the vivid distinctness with which it brings out each one of their many obligations. At such times they would betake themselves, terror-stricken, to the feet of their God, and pray to Him out of pity for their weakness, to relieve them of the burden of their responsibilities. Then learning it to be His holy will that they should continue to bear their burden, and to rule and govern in His name, they use the vision of the Judgment Throne as their guiding light, the solver of their doubts, and the kindler of their burning zeal.

The soul of Father de Mazenod was sometimes so smitten with a keen sense of his responsibilities as Superior of his new society, that he required all his virtue to sustain him under the weighty burden of his charge. It was by stirring up in his soul, at such times, sentiments of the tenderest confidence, and of the liveliest hope in the aid of God's helping hand, that he was able to hold his ground. He writes:—

“The thought which pre-occupies me now most forcibly, is that of the terrible account I shall have to render to God

at the hour of my death, concerning the fulfilment of the awe-inspiring obligations of my ministry, so far-stretching in their extent, and so all-important in their consequences. Upon my fidelity to the graces attached to my responsible charge, depends, perhaps, the salvation of many souls. If I lead a life of fervent piety, the community at the head of which I am placed will be moved by my example to become fervent also, and its members, in the fervour of their zeal and charity, will go forth to convert many souls, and God will bless their labours with an abundant harvest. But if I act a cowardly and lukewarm part, my example will have a bad effect upon others, and their zeal will cool down, and souls will be victimized, all owing to my failing to correspond with the graces of my state. In such a case how rigorous would my judgment be, how severe at the hour of death would be my condemnation, and how bitter would be the accusations and reproaches which the souls lost on my account would direct against me? I acknowledge that these thoughts became at times so oppressive, and weighed me down with such a load of anxiety, that I was more than once on the point of giving way to profound discouragement, and should have done so if God had not conferred upon me the gift of tenderest hope.

“O sweetest of virtues—holy hope—thou hast ever been the source of my best joys on earth. Through thy ministering aid have the feeble eyes of my spirit been enabled to behold in God the enrapturing beauty of His divine perfections. Through thy help have I been emboldened to love Him with the joyous freedom of childlike unreserve. Thee, O holy hope, have I preached to my brethren, to encourage them to serve God, and to induce them to love Him more than to fear Him. All blessed hope, hast thou forsaken me? What am I to become if thou supportest not my confidence, if thou dost not temper by the sweetness of thy assurances those appalling fears of the rigours of divine justice which fill my soul? Return to my breast, O holy hope, return,

and become my faithful companion, whilst I go down into my conscience and take accurate note of all my infidelities in the service of my God, and whilst I carefully set before my eyes, in fulness and in detail, the obligations of my sacred calling, and the awe-inspiring responsibilities of my state, and whilst I meditate on the terrible account which the Supreme Judge will one day den. and of me concerning my administration."

But God draws shore lines around the sea of our interior, as well as of our exterior trials, beyond which its angry waves are not allowed to fling their foam. Regions of repose lie between sea and sea in the spiritual life as well as in the outer world; upon some one of these favoured spots the soul, in her pilgrimage, is allowed to pitch her tent for a while, to drink of its fountains, to eat of its manna, to bask in its sunshine, and to rest in its passing peace; though on the morrow, it may be, it will have to embark on the angry sea again. Such is life's spiritual journey heavenwards!

Father de Mazenod was troubled lest he might not discharge with faithfulness his office of spiritual guide of his brethren. But these fears were to be allayed by the proofs that were soon to be given of heaven's approbation of his work, in the visible progress in holiness of the community of brethren confided by God to his care. We find him bearing the following testimony to the virtues of the members of his new society, at a time when he was tem-

porarily separated from them, owing to functions of importance which he had to discharge in the interests of religion, at a distance from Aix. He thus writes :—

“Notwithstanding my temporary separation from my brethren, I must acknowledge that they have the first claims on my care and devotedness. All the members of that community are models of every virtue. I cannot help being struck with admiration as I behold the holiness of their lives. With the Mother of the Machabees I have to avow that I know not how these beloved sons of mine were born of me. But they have already left me far behind on the path of virtue, and I can say with truth, that *I am not worthy to untie the latchet of their shoes*. What a happiness for me to be a member of such a community. What thanks do I owe to God for having brought so holy a brotherhood around me.”

Whilst he was gladdened by their virtues, he rejoiced exceedingly at hearing of the success of their missionary labours. He writes :—

“This morning I received a letter from Father Guibert, full of religious feeling, and breathing sentiments of a refined and lofty piety. He writes to inform me of the great success of the mission which he is conducting. News of this kind, coming from my missionary sons, is a feast to my soul.”

In his community life he studied to be an example to his brethren of the strictest punctuality in fulfilling every point of religious discipline, according to the rules of his society. We find him adopt-

ing at his retreats very precise resolutions on this matter. He writes:—

“I belong, in the first instance, to my brethren who live with me in community; the claims of others upon my time can be admitted only in the second place. I must take every possible precaution in order to avoid being absent from a community exercise; with that end in view I will cut visits short, and bring conversations that might otherwise be unnecessarily prolonged, to a close.”

He understood well how much mutual respect and reverence for one another—on the part of priests and religious men, especially when they live in community—harmonise with God’s designs, and tend to promote peace and happiness among themselves, to the great edification of their neighbour. We find the following passage in the notes of one of his retreats:—

“I will treat the members of my community with deepest respect. I will speak to them with gentleness and much consideration for their feelings. I will guard against my quickness of temper, lest I should say a word that would give them needless pain.”

But he did not forget that the correcting of the faults of those under their care, was one of the essential duties of Superiors. As his society increased in numbers, and their works became multiplied, *the hay and stubble* were sure to get mixed up with the *gold*, and less fervent brethren were likely to be found from time to time among the crowd

of the holy and fervent. Father de Mazenod could be firm as iron when a divine interest or when a duty of charitable reproof was concerned. After setting clearly before his mind, during one of his retreats, his obligation of administering correction on certain given occasions, and having also considered his own natural repugnance to say a word that might give pain to anybody, he came to the resolution which we find expressed in the brief sentence: "I must act for God, and according to the spirit of God, in administering the needed correction, come what may."

Want of generosity in God's service on the part of any members of his society was sure, when it became known to him, to touch him to the quick, so full was his own great soul of a sense of the claims of God to our entire devotedness in His service. Writing in reference to a Father of his society, in whom he perceived an absence of devotedness, he thus deploras the cowardly selfishness which characterises many christians of the present day:—

"On whatever side one turns, one meets with cowards, pusillanimous, weak-spirited souls, hearts of flesh, uninspired by one spark of divine love, lowly types of poor humanity. The love of gain will cause men to traverse oceans, and to face the perils of the deep. When a worldly personal interest has to be promoted, or the ends of personal ambition have to be reached, men pay but little attention to what even their nearest friends think or say, if they be opposed

to their projects. They act independently and go straight to their end. But when anything of a supernatural order has to be accomplished for the divine glory and their soul's good, then are they ready to pay a guilty deference to the opposing wishes and opinions of others, and they seek to justify themselves in not doing what God and conscience demands, by putting forward their imaginary obligation of yielding to what others think and say."

Entering a church one day when a celebrated preacher was delivering a discourse to a congregation composed chiefly of humble uneducated people, Father de Mazenod was grieved to find that the thoughts and language of the preacher were above the level of the comprehension of his hearers. He writes thus in reference to this incident:—

"His discourse was more philosophical than christian. May God preserve us from such preachers. He is not deficient in talent or logical precision, but he is wanting in that unction which accompanies the words of those only who preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Our chief aim should be to nourish the souls of those whom we evangelise with the bread of sound doctrine, avoiding the method of those preachers who aim at winning admiration by the loftiness of their style, and the eloquence of their diction. We should study the wants of the multitude; we should not only break the bread of the word for them, but masticate in a manner also, that thus our hearers might not return to their homes as the empty admirers of what they did not understand, but as men whose souls were bettered by our teachings, and whose minds were so well indoctrinated with holy knowledge, as to be able to communicate to others what they themselves had learnt from our lips. We shall reach this required perfection as preachers of the Divine

word, by renouncing all self-seeking, and despising the miserable applause of men, whilst endeavouring to confirm, by the holy examples of our lives, what we preach unto others."

Whilst the holy Founder lost no occasion to stimulate and sustain the zeal of his missionaries in the warfare against sin, he was ever ready to check any tendency on their part to fail in tender compassionateness towards sinners themselves. In illustration of this particular trait in his character, we cite the following instance. During the early stages of a mission which the Oblate Fathers were engaged in conducting in a populous district in Dauphiny, a body of youths, yielding to perverse influences, combined together to thwart the labours of the missionaries, and to prevent the inhabitants of the place from going to the mission. Public games were organized by them for this purpose. A very great scandal was thus given. Fortunately their attempt was a failure, and the mission became a great success. The misguided young men were led to see the wickedness of their conduct, and began themselves to frequent the exercises of the mission. A general communion day was approaching, and the Superior of the mission thought he ought not to allow these young men to take part in that ceremony, notwithstanding their return to better sentiments, as the scandal given by them was so recent. On this point

he wrote to consult the holy Founder. The answer of the latter was characteristic of the lenient and tender charity with which his great missionary heart was ever full to overflowing in his dealings with penitent sinners, no matter what their sins had been. He wrote in reply :—

“I wish that the courier who bears this letter to you could travel by forced journeys, lest he might arrive too late to prevent the evil that is in danger of arising from your undue severity in dealing with these young men. Such a mode of acting on your part comes from your inexperience. Surely the fact of their having had courage to disavow their first unseemly behaviour by their renouncing it, and by their taking public part in the exercises of the mission, should have been looked upon by you as a sufficient reparation on their part. Instead of acting towards them with coolness and reserve, you should have received them with open arms, and treated them with the greatest kindness. They have need of being helped and comforted by you in pursuing the narrow path upon which they have entered, and in treading which they must have many natural repugnances to overcome.”

One of the sharpest of the trials which Father de Mazenod had to endure at the hands of God, was the removal from him by death of any of his missionary sons. Under such losses his soul would remain for days buried in the deepest grief, but not a word of murmuring would escape from his lips, and no feeling of the kind would have a place in his heart; on the contrary, on such occasions his great christian soul would enter into a sphere of loftier and more

purified worship of God under the pressure of his immense sorrow—the worship of perfect resignation. We quote the following extract from his diary, which exhibits the perfection of his spirit of conformity to the divine will under great sorrows. It was written on the occasion of his receiving the news of the death of a zealous young Father, who was engaged, when his fatal illness overtook him, in giving a very successful mission in Corsica:—

“My worst fears are realised, the news of Father Richard’s death has reached me. How keen this pang, my God. In what words can I pour out the grief of my soul before Thee. Better than any words, at such a moment, is the silence of that perfect resignation which Thou alone canst bestow. Left to myself, unaided by Thy grace, under these severe trials which Thou hast been pleased to send me, my poor human spirit would grow perplexed and bewildered. I hasten to repeat, again and again,—may Thy holy will be entirely accomplished in our regard. Guide our footsteps as we journey forward through the mazes of the great mystery of Thy Providencè, in order that no discouragement may fall upon us as we traverse these mysterious ways, which are so incomprehensible to our feeble lights. Thou callest us to labour in divers parts of Thy vineyard, and we obey Thy voice, and everybody would fain multiply himself in order to meet, if possible, all the demands upon his labours. Thy blessings are graciously vouchsafed to our ministry, and marvellous fruits of converting grace spring up upon our pathway. When, behold, at the moment when we seem to need most that fresh auxiliaries should come to our aid to till the widening harvest field, thou removest from us the means of continuing Thy work. One by one our fellow labourers are being taken away from our ranks

by the hand of death. The dealings of Thy holy Providence in our regard are wrapt in mystery; but beneath the veil of this mystery I recognize Thy presence, O my God, and I adore Thy Trinity in Unity, as I adore and love Thee hidden from our view under the sacramental veil of the Holy Eucharist. But Lord, may it not be that my personal unworthiness is the obstacle to the accomplishment of Thy designs. If so, Lord, do not spare me, but remove me hence out of Thy way. Thou knowest that it is not for the first time that I pray to Thee in this sense. How often have I not said to Thee, in earnest prayer, that which I now repeat from the depths of my heart: 'Lord, do with me what Thou wilt, my lot is in Thy hands.' *In manibus tuis sortes mee.*"

Various are the forms by which God tries the faith and confidence of His chosen servants. He seems sometimes to forsake them in the midst of some great work in which they are occupied, in labouring for His glory. Their works languish for the time, but do His servants cease to merit, or do their lives fail in giving Him glory because of their successful labours? Oh no, God permits their failures in order to diversify the beauty of their merit, and to draw His glory more from the depths of their humbled and uncomplaining hearts, than from the success-crowned labours of their toiling hands. Few of the missionary triumphs of the spiritual sons of the pious De Mazenod brought more glory to the feet of God than did those soul-utterances of loving resignation which fell from the lips of His servant, on the occasion to which we have

just referred. The sorrows of God's servants pierce and wound them to the quick, but they do not prostrate them or bewilder them, but leave them standing calm and conscious, Mary-like, at the foot of the cross, ready to go, at first sign of the divine will, to do some further work for God, which may be a failure or may be a success, but which will certainly be a merit for themselves, and a new glory for the divine name.

Again, God tries the faith and confidence of His servants by calling them to do works that lie beyond their visible competency; works which human wisdom would bid them not to attempt, but which His Spirit, speaking in their hearts, urges them to undertake. He would have them take counsel, it is true, and secure all needed sanctions, and put forth all their own capabilities, to make the undertaking a success; all this being done, He would have them leave results, with child-like confidence, in His hands. Such was the sort of confidence which Father de Mazenod ever displayed when some great but difficult work had to be undertaken for the divine glory and the good of souls. Shortly after several deaths had taken place among the ranks of his little missionary band, a foundation was proposed to him by the Archbishop of Avignon, in his Grace's diocese. The foundation was one that offered a large scope for the zeal of his Fathers, but insuperable

obstacles seemed to exist to his accepting of it, which arose from the fewness of their numbers. Nevertheless, counting upon God's help, he did accept of it. Writing with reference to this circumstance, he says:—

“I know that in looking forward to success in this undertaking I am asking almost a miracle from God. Be it so. If a miracle be needed, I will not hesitate to ask for one from the Father of the Family, who Himself invites us to pray to the Lord of the harvest field, to send labourers into His vineyard.”

Subsequent events justified, to the fullest, the confidence of the holy Superior. The foundation in question—Notre Dame des Lumières—under the direction of the Oblate Missionaries, developed as a sanctuary of our Lady, and as a place of pilgrimage, in an extraordinary degree. It was a well-spring of grace, the abundance of whose ever-flowing waters was strikingly typified in an image furnished on the spot by nature's hand—the wonderful fountain of Vaucluse—whose margin was reached by a few hours' walk from Lumières. During a period of forty-four years, the Oblate Missionaries of Notre Dame des Lumières continued to pursue, in divers parts of the diocese of Avignon, and of neighbouring dioceses, their sacred calling of winning souls to God, until at last the sledge and hammer of the persecutor wrecked their peaceful cloister, and a decree of expulsion drove them from their sanctuary and home.

CHAPTER VII.

THE spiritual guidance and government of his society of missionaries was not the only responsible charge which Divine Providence was to lay on the shoulders of Father de Mazenod. The great diocese of Marseilles had, by the act of the Supreme Pontiff, been called back into a new existence from that grave of extinction into which it had fallen during one of the worst periods of the great French Revolution. The majority of its great religious institutions had perished during those disastrous days. The hand of death was upon those institutions that still struggled on. Such was the condition of things when Monseigneur Fortunatus de Mazenod, uncle of Father de Mazenod, was raised, as we have mentioned in our first volume, to the restored see of St. Lazarus. Years had elapsed, owing to revolutionary intrigue, between his nomination and his actual appointment to the see of Marseilles. A short acquaintance with the wants of his diocese made him feel that, alone, at his great age, he could not cope with the magnitude of the evils that had to

be remedied, nor could he expect to initiate, by himself, those many diocesan works necessitated by the havoc which the revolution had caused. He had witnessed the great things which God had already done through his holy nephew's agency, and he felt he could not join to himself a more fitting co-operator in the difficult work of administering a diocese so circumstanced as Marseilles then was. The office of Vicar-General of Marseilles was in this way conferred upon Father de Mazenod. The resources of his great administrative qualities developed with the requirements of his new position. The wants of that restored diocese demanded the intervention of the spirit that creates, as well as that of the spirit that renews.

That high creative genius which God confers upon those whom He calls to initiate great works of a spiritual order in His name, was bestowed by Him largely on Father de Mazenod. Under the action of his administration, a variety of noble diocesan institutions came forth into rapid and healthy existence, among which were seminaries for the clergy, colleges for the laity, churches, parochial schools, monasteries, convents, and institutions of divers kinds for the poor, for the sick, for the orphan, for the fallen, for the sheltering of the innocence of youth, and for the soothing of the sorrows of old age. Whilst he was engaged in the active promo-

tion of all these works, and was at the same time governing his society of missionaries, he withdrew to his community house at Aix, to spend some days in solitude and prayer, occupied exclusively with the work of his own sanctification. Thither let us follow him, to become the confidants of what passed in his inner soul on that occasion. He writes:—

“May God be ever praised for having given me this chance of freeing myself, for a while, from the yoke that presses so heavily upon me. It is true I cannot rid myself altogether of those chains of office by which I am laden, and which I am bound, in duty, submissively and lovingly to carry. But I am allowed to withdraw myself, for the coming eight days, from all external affairs, to give myself thought only regarding that which concerns the salvation of my soul. I come hither to examine myself with reference to all my various duties, and to ask myself what is, at this moment, the condition of my soul in the sight of God. O my God, dart upon me a ray of Thy light, that I may see myself as I appear unto Thee. Give to me the spirit of holy compunction wherewith to mourn over my many transgressions, and to become renewed in the spirit of my holy calling. Grant me, through the merits of Thy precious blood, and through the intercession of Mary, my tender Mother, that I may come forth from this retreat full of new vigour, and bent upon doing all the good that it will be in my power to accomplish. . . . In two days hence I must quit my cherished solitude, and return to my post, to discharge my appointed duties, and to struggle with all the efforts of my zeal, to give life to a diocese which had lain so long smitten with the chill of death.”

It was during the time of his being Vicar-General of Marseilles that he undertook the work of evan-

gelising, personally, the poor Italians who were resident there. He preached to them every Sunday for several years, in their own language, of which he was a perfect master, and in other ways sought to advance their spiritual interests.

The virtues and the works of Father de Mazenod were well known in Rome. Gregory XVI. saw in this devoted Priest the qualities that bespoke his fitness for promotion to the episcopacy, and his Holiness resolved to raise him to that dignity. As we have already alluded to the circumstance connected with Father de Mazenod's being raised to the episcopal state, we shall confine ourselves to what concerns the dispositions of his inner soul at the time of his consecration as Coadjutor Bishop, and afterwards, when he succeeded to his uncle in the full charge of the diocese of Marseilles. We have before us the notes of the retreat made by him before his consecration in 1832, and also in the retreat which he performed in 1837, when he became his uncle's successor, on the resignation of the latter.

He was in the twenty-first year of his priesthood, and in the fiftieth year of his age, when it was intimated to him that it was the desire and the intention of the Holy Father to raise him to the episcopal rank. The humble Religious was taken by surprise at this proposal. But the manifestations of the divine will were too clearly indicated in the matter

for him to persevere in the opposition which he first made to the accepting of the proposed dignity. A profound sense of his unworthiness for so high an office worked, however, in his soul a secret terror of advancing towards it, as the day of his consecration drew nigh. In all the great emergencies of his life, child-like confidence in God was the blessed plank that floated towards him, ever at the critical moment, to lift him from the floods and bear him safely to the shore. So was it to be on this occasion. In the pious reflections made by him during the retreat, preparatory to his consecration, we find him accusing himself, as he, in his great humility, was wont to do, of many imperfections. He thus continues:—

“It is at such a time, when I find in myself so many deficiencies, that I am called, all of a sudden, to receive the plenitude of the priesthood by being raised to the sublime dignity of the episcopal state. O God, my Father, if Thou hadst not accustomed me to repeated proofs of Thy infinite mercy in my regard, and if Thou hadst not already awakened in my soul a tender confidence in Thy guiding aid, I should have just cause for shrinking back in terror from that high office to which I am invited to advance. But as Thou art that loving Father who, from my earliest childhood, hast never ceased to lead me by the hand, I cannot help in this affair casting myself, with entire abandonment, into the arms of Thy providence, my heart being full of grateful memories of all that Thou hast done for me from the beginning of my days till now. Behold Lord, I am Thy servant, dispose of me as Thou willest; I am ready to do whatever Thou desirest, even though it were to cost me my life. I know

not what new forms of trials and contradictions await me in the ministry upon which I am about to enter ; whatever they be, I accept of them beforehand, with the full resolution of finding my joy and happiness only in the accomplishment of Thy divine will."

The chief portion of the retreat which he performed before his consecration was spent in meditating devoutly upon the words and ceremonies of that sublime rite by which he was to be raised to the episcopal state. When he came to those words of that beautiful ceremonial in which the newly-created Bishop is admonished of his obligation of ministering to the needs of the poor, as well as to those of other classes of society, his great missionary spirit gave vent to its feelings in the following holy utterances :—

"O ye poor of Jesus Christ, ye whom the world shrinks from because it regards you as ignorant and uncultivated, you were the chosen objects of my first priestly care and labours. To-day the Church recommends you to my pastoral solicitude. You shall not be forgotten by me ; oh no, for you shall always be looked upon by me as the most precious portion of my pastoral inheritance."

For five years after his consecration as Coadjutor Bishop, with the right of succession, he continued to discharge the functions of Vicar-General of Marseilles. The time was approaching when he was to be charged with the full episcopal responsibility of that important diocese. His venerable and saintly

uncle had long wished to surrender his pastoral staff into his holy nephew's hands, but the latter had succeeded, till now, in preventing him from doing so. At last, in a letter dated the 29th November, 1837, the aged Prelate announced his resignation to his Chapter, and availed himself of that occasion to speak of his nephew and successor in terms such as we find saints using, when they write of saints. Overflowing as that letter was of praise, those to whom it was addressed knew that there was not in it a syllable of exaggeration.

Our sketch history of the inner life of Monseigneur de Mazenod now approaches its completion, for here the materials from which we have been drawing our supply of data concerning what passed within the veiled sanctuary of his love-kindled breast, at divers epochs of his holy life, are now about to fail us. Reverently have we been turning over pages written by his own hand, and for his own perusal. Here and there we have been gathering from them, as we went along, of the ripened fruits of his enlightened thoughts for our own edification, and for that of our readers. Happily, before we close this portion of our narrative, we are to be afforded an opportunity of contemplating the workings of the inner spirit of De Mazenod, in presence of the crowning event of his life, his accession to the see of Marseilles.

Accession to posts of high responsibility in Holy Church, awakens, as a rule, one class of thoughts in the breasts of those upon whose shoulders the burden is going to be laid, and another class of thoughts in the breasts of sympathising and admiring friends. The latter view the honours and dignities that are to be conferred on friends of theirs, and rejoice accordingly. The former, if they be men of God, taking no heed of the external advantages of the position to which they are approaching, fix the eyes of their souls upon the accountability attached thereunto, and upon the sacrifices it will demand of them. They approach high office in Holy Church as victims, and whilst others are rejoicing around them, their own hearts are being filled with apprehensions. They seek to imbibe the spirit of Jesus when entering upon His high office of our Redeemer. Whilst angels were singing joyously in the clouds, He was weeping mournfully in the crib; and again, whilst His chosen disciples, Peter, James, and John, were rejoicing exceedingly at the dignity and glory wherewith their beloved Master was clothed on the Mount of the Transfiguration, Jesus was looking, even then, from Thabor to Calvary, and was secretly drinking in by anticipation, in all its bitterness, of the gall of His passiontide. They who approach high office in Holy Church in other spirit than His, will surely be crushed beneath the overpowering burden

of a load their shoulders were not fitted to carry; and others, most likely, will be involved in their downfall. Whilst the admiring friends of Monseigneur de Mazenod, and they were many and belonged to all classes, were offering their joyous felicitations upon his accession to the ancient see of St. Lazarus, his own breast was occupied with sentiments of mingled fear and sadness, over which, however, ruled the high resolve of fulfilling, without fail, even should it cost him his life, all the duties attached to the office of Bishop of Marseilles. We select the following extracts:—

“I am now Bishop of Marseilles. I have not sought this position, it has been forced upon me. I belong now to the people of my diocese. Henceforward my existence, my whole life, should be devoted to their service. Their good should be my one thought. My only fear should be that of not doing enough for the promoting of their sanctification and their happiness. I must be prepared, in their behalf, to sacrifice my repose, my natural likings, my life itself. Oh! now indeed I must set about the work in all sincerity of becoming a saint. This new phase of my life should be the occasion of an entire spiritual renovation. Ordinary graces or common-place virtues will not bear me up under the weight of my present responsible charge; I must therefore become a saint, in order to be a good Bishop. I wish to be such from the very first day of my episcopal charge, and to acquit myself worthily, from this hour, of all the sacred functions of my office. I wish, in a word, that whilst labouring with all my energy for the sanctification of my people, I may succeed in sanctifying my own soul to an eminent degree of perfection, such as befits the dignity of the episco-

pal state. I must now search the depths of my soul, and examine myself, and see what stains and other obstacles may there exist to stay the action of the Divine Spirit that I have received by the imposition of hands. It is this Holy Spirit abiding in me that must henceforward rule, as complete master, all my thoughts, desires, and affections, and my entire will. I must be attentive to all its inspirations, listening to them in the silence of prayer, and following them and obeying them in such outward action as they indicate. I must avoid, with greatest care, whatever may tend to grieve that Divine Spirit, or to weaken its power or action in my soul. I must purify myself by a daily repentance of my faults, which I will renounce with sighs of deepest compunction. I will seek to give a renewed energy to these dispositions by means of the sacrament of penance, which I will approach twice in the week.

“ I will feed the flame of the love of God in my soul, and stir up a desire of all the virtues which that love indicates, by the daily offering of the holy sacrifice, by meditation, and by the reading of the holy scriptures, the lives of the saints, and other spiritual works.

“ My obligations do not confine themselves to the acquiring of the sublimest virtues. I have duties to fulfil towards the flock which the Sovereign Pastor is now about to confide to my care. It is through them I am to be saved. I have to save my own soul in doing my best to save theirs. On the last day I must be able to testify to myself that I did all in my power to instruct them, to exhort them, to turn them aside from evil, to excite them to the practice of virtue, that I was a model to them in every good work ; in a word, that I sought by all means in my power to save their souls, and thus to conduct them, under my pastoral staff, from the earthly sheep-fold, where God had placed them under my care, to the heavenly pasture lands, there to dwell in Him for ever.

“ Necessary reforms will have to be introduced, and cer-

tain abuses will have to be corrected by me. I must not, through any human consideration, shrink from performing my duty in these matters. I should be paying too high a price for my personal quiet, were I to seek to secure it by means of culpable concessions made to the wishes of others. At the same time, I must unite gentleness with firmness, and not act with undue haste in carrying out even the most necessary changes. It should be understood that it is a Bishop's office to govern. It is for him to give impulse to the good which languishes, and to check the growth of evil. The important point for me is always to act in view of God, and of the interests of His glory, and of the good of souls."

CHAPTER VIII.

ON the 24th of October, 1842, the city of Toulon, the Plymouth of France, the chief naval arsenal of that kingdom, is astir with some extraordinary commotion. Its population are all on the alert, and a mighty concourse is assembling, for some one great object, from all quarters of the town, whilst down the slopes of the beautifully wooded elevations that intersect its lofty ramparts, streams of the rural population are pouring into the old city. No enemy's fleet is in its harbour, nor does hostile camp crown any of the heights that look down upon its walled enclosure. It is neither fear nor pleasure, nor business affairs that bring that great crowd together in the Champ de Mars. They assemble at the call of Religion, to perform a great religious act. Soldier and civilian, senator and plebeian, sailors of the fleet and sailors of the merchant navy are there. The cassock of the priest and the cowl of the monk intermingle with the gay uniforms of officers of the line, and with the gilt-buttoned jackets of those of the naval service. The plume of the General and

the mitre of the Bishop form not an unpleasant contrast in the evening sunshine. It is evident that Religion and the State are at one in this great popular manifestation. Poor France! how truly great thou canst be when thou followest thy own deep Catholic instincts, when ceasing for a while to listen to false prophets, whose teachings blindfold and madden thee; thou rememberest that thou art the eldest daughter of Holy Church, and actest a dutiful part towards thy Queenly Mother. Oh! then her beauty shines in thy face, her majesty crowns thy brow, her wisdom speaks from thy lips, her blessings fall upon thy children. Then thou appearest great to the nations, and the good men of other lands hail thee as among the first of Europe's people. Poor France! even in the lull of thy revolutionary storms thou canst appear grand, bright and beautiful. But alas, this vision of thy real self, like the blue between thunder clouds, abides not. Too quickly it vanishes and leaves thy friends in tears at its early departure. Oh! when is it to come back and stay? When art thou, O France, to be permanently thyself again?

The morning of the 25th opens brightly on the waters of the Mediterranean. In the old port of Toulon, the "Montebello," a noble three-decked frigate, is getting up steam for her departure somewhere that morning. A companion ship is also

preparing to go to sea. The Admiral who commands the port is there giving orders in person. Who is the honoured one for whose journey over the blue waters of the Mediterranean all these preparations are being made? To find an answer to this question, let us visit the old cathedral that bright October morning. Seven Bishops, and a vast gathering of clergy and laity are there assembled. A silver-gilt shrine, raised on beauteous pedestal, stands in the centre of the chancel. Within that shrine are the treasures that are to be transported from Europe to Africa, with all those circumstances of religious and civil display. That shrine contains a considerable portion of the relics of the great St. Augustine. We would here pause to say one kindly word of explanation to the non-catholic reader, into whose hands these pages may find their way. We would remind him that in the bodies of the departed servants of God, life is not permanently extinct, it is only suspended. These bones will be quickened again with a new life, which will never leave them. The germs of that eternal life are hidden already in these bones, as seeds are hidden in the spring-tide earth. These germs of immortality were being planted in their bodies, day by day, during their holy existence here below. Every grace received and well used, and especially every worthy reception of the Body of our Lord, casts a germ, a seed-

grain of future bodily glory, bodily beauty, bodily majesty, and bodily resemblance to the glorified Body of Jesus, risen from the dead, into the bodies of the servants of Christ, whilst living here on earth. These germs of eternal life are inseparable from the bodies of departed saints. Ages may roll over them, and their bones may crumble into dust, but the germs of immortality are in that dust, living and active, and ready to bud forth and blossom and ripen, when the harvest day of the Lord will come.

Upon such belief, then is based the honours which Catholics pay to the relics of the saints. We honour the germs of blessed immortality which actually reside in those holy relics. And now we will explain how the relics of St. Augustine came to receive such signal honour that day in Toulon. This great Saint and illustrious Doctor of the Church died the 14th of August, A.D. 430, in his episcopal city of Hippo, in Africa, the former residence of the Numidian kings, which lay 230 miles to the west of Carthage.

On the day that St. Augustine died, Hippo was taken by the Goths. His disciples fled, bearing with them the body of the Saint, as also his writings. They took refuge in the Island of Sardinia, and the body of St. Augustine was deposited by St. Fulgentius in a marble sepulchre at Cagliari.

Here it remained for many long years, until the Saracens took possession of Sardinia. Luitprand, King of the Lombards, by means of a large price given to the Saracens, succeeded in rescuing the Saint's body and his writings. He had the precious relics conveyed to Pavia, the capital of his kingdom. Here they remained. On the appointment of Monseigneur Dupuch to the see of Algiers, Hippo being in his diocese, he resolved to apply for some portion of the body of St. Augustine to be deposited in a sanctuary, which he had erected in that place. Monseigneur de Mazenod was one of the prelates to whom he communicated his holy project, and who most warmly seconded him by counsel and encouragement. It was from Toulon that the devout *cortège*, consisting of seven Bishops, a large body of Priests, and several distinguished laymen, were to set sail for Africa. When the news spread through that city of the approach of Monseigneur Dupuch, bearing with him a large relic of St. Augustine, the public religious manifestation to which we have referred, took place.

St. Augustine was one of those saints towards whom Monseigneur de Mazenod felt himself drawn by strongest and tenderest sympathies. There are family likenesses between Saints of God. Monseigneur de Mazenod bore a close resemblance to St. Augustine in his ardent love of God, and in the

divers forms of the manifestations of that love in his life, as Layman, as Priest, as Bishop, and as a Founder of a Religious order. The heart of the great Saint of Hippo seemed to beat again within the breast of the holy Bishop of Marseilles, especially in those soul-utterances in which the latter was wont to unbosom himself at the feet of God, in the silence of his spiritual retreats. Again, their spirits were alike in the warmth of their holy friendships for their disciples and co-operators in their works of zeal. And again—in the austere purity with which each held his own warm loving heart aloof from all earthly softness of mere human affection, or any of its empty displays—each was exceedingly like to the other. On this point they were both like the Angels of God, who work their mission for souls, and go back into their heaven, seeking no recognition, contracting no attachments, asking no thanks. And finally, they resembled one another in the reverent affection that each bore to a saintly mother, which in their breasts, as sons, rose to the sanctity of a lofty virtue, whilst it retained to the end its child-like play and fondness. Oh! who so truly natural as those who are most supernatural,—God's saints and servants.

The "Montebello" sped her way across the waters of the Mediterranean. The shores of Southern France have receded from view, and the high-peaked

mountains of the Island of Sardinia, are breaking upon the prospect. Steaming along the rugged shores of that fair Island, they reach the mouth of the bay that opens upon the harbour of Cagliari, the capital of Sardinia. The spires of the many beautiful churches of that city stand out in the distance to the gaze of the travellers. Cagliari had, as we have already stated, been the resting place, for a long period, of the body of St. Augustine. This fact became present to the thoughts of Monseigneur de Mazenod as the "Montebello" hove in sight of that city lying in the distance, and it became suggestive to his mind at once, of the fitness of rendering some special homage to the memory of St. Augustine, before quitting such a vicinity. He communicated his thoughts to his brother Bishops, who at once expressed their willing consent. The concurrence of the naval authorities on board the ship was also readily secured. A chapel was improvised on the quarter-deck, and decorated with no little taste or show of splendour. The gold enamelled reliquary containing a large portion of the arm of the Saint was placed on a raised pedestal in the centre, around which grouped the Bishops, in their episcopal robes, the clergy in their cassocks and surplices, and the officers and crew of the ship in their gala uniforms, and in reverent attitude. Several distinguished laymen were also present as

pilgrims. The solemn vespers of the feast of St. Augustine was then intoned—there in the broad calm sea, under a cloudless sky, the noble ship still pursuing her way towards the African shores. The sounds of holy psalmody never fell upon the ears of those present with effect more thrilling than they did upon that occasion. Never under vaulted roof of Cathedral or Basilica rose that song of God with effect more sublime and unearthly to their hearing, than it did then, when its tones were blended in marvellous harmony with whispers of gentle winds and beatings of soft sounding waves, whilst strange sweet echoes seemed to come down from the blue vault overhead, as if a choir in the skies was singing in response. The Catholic Church is mistress of the beautiful—yea, of the sublime and of the grand—in matters of thought and feeling, and lofty doing. Her ceremonial sometimes rises, as a mystic ladder, into the skies, and by it winged angels come down to earth, and holy hearts of earth go up to heaven on temporary visit, to be gladdened and consoled ere the final flight to heaven is taken. Sometimes the ceremonial of Holy Church becomes the bridge that spans the stream of time, to unite the present with the far-distant past, so closely, that present and past would seem to become one and the same. Such were the effects of that improvised ceremonial out upon the waters of the Mediterranean on the occa-

sion of which we write. Fifteen centuries before the date of that occurrence these same waters were traversed by a ship bearing the same holy relics, accompanied by clergy and laymen professing the same old Catholic faith—the disciples of St. Augustine, who were fleeing with their sacred treasures, the body of the Saint and his venerated writings. Then their journey was performed in sadness, and amidst fears of ruthless pursuers. The same wonderful old Belief that supported them, as they fled, sorrowful and fearful, from Hippo, in some humble craft, now thrills and gladdens, with a holy sense of triumph, the bearers of the shrine containing the relics of St. Augustine, on their way back to Hippo, on the deck of a noble ship of war, that floats the flag of a mighty people.

On the morning of the 28th of October, the "Montebello" anchored in the Gulf of Bona, at the mouth of the river Seibouse. After a few moments of general survey of the beauties of the coast and background scenery of that first portion of the African continent, which is reached by travellers from Southern Europe, the eyes of the pilgrims sought an object of more absorbing interest. There stood before them, crowning a wooded height that overhung the Seibouse, what remained of the ruins of Hippo Regius. From the walls of that once famous city issued forth the conquering legions of the vic-

torious Masinissa, King of Eastern Numidia, to do battle as an ally of Republican Rome, in her war against Hannibal. But the glory wherewith that pagan warrior invested the ancient city of Hippo was soon to fade, in presence of that imperishable fame that was to be conferred upon it by a hero and a conquerer of a far different type, the weight of whose mighty powers was also to be cast victoriously on the side of Rome of his day—the Rome of Christ, and of Catholicity. It was the glory given to Hippo by the genius and virtues of St. Augustine, that lay upon it, in unclouded splendour, as the eyes of the pilgrim travellers looked mournfully and reverently from the deck of their ship, upon its former site, now dotted with ruins.

We are but interpreting the thoughts of the holy Prelate of Marseilles, the devout De Mazenod, as he gazed, for the first time, on the ruins of Hippo. The shallowness of the water in the harbour not permitting them to land directly from the ship, they approached the shore in boats. The scene on this occasion offered to the beholders a blending of solemnity and beauty. The movements of the boats to the shore took the form of a procession. First in the line, the boats occupied by Priests only, took their place; then came those of the Bishops, who were clad in their full episcopal robes; and last of all fell into line a beautifully fitted barque, in which was

the Bishop of Algiers, who carried the Relics of St. Augustine, in the midst of a large party of attendants. Christians and Arabs were upon the waters in countless crafts of every description. At a given signal the little fleet moved forward towards the shore. Psalms were then intoned and taken up by many voices. The troops of the garrison were drawn up on the quays of Bona, and the civil authorities were also assembled to give reception.

On Sunday, the 30th October, the Relics of St. Augustine were solemnly deposited at Hippo, on a marble altar, raised at the expense of the Bishops of France, in presence of an immense concourse of persons. "What a glory for the great Bishop of Hippo, the illustrious Doctor of the Church," exclaims Monseigneur de Mazenod, "to be restored thus, in a certain form, to his diocese, after an absence of fifteen centuries."

Monseigneur de Mazenod had the happiness, before quitting the African shores, of solemnly consecrating a large Mosque as a Catholic church, as also of blessing the first stone of a new church.

His voyage back to Europe was performed under considerable difficulties, owing to the tempestuous state of the weather. His ship, after encountering the full force of the hurricane, was driven towards the Balearic Isles. They attempted to make for Port Mahon, in Minorca, but were unable to reach

it. They finally succeeded in reaching the Isle of Majorca, where they found shelter in the Bay of Palma. Among the ships which were then taking refuge in that harbour, was one that floated the yellow flag. Upon enquiry, Monseigneur de Mazenod discovered that that flag was the signal of the plague being on shipboard. This piece of information was enough to awaken his fears, lest there should be on board that plague-stricken ship some poor sick, or perhaps dying, persons who were at that moment deprived of religious help. He said to himself, it would be a strange thing that we should be here, six Bishops and a large body of Priests, and that within a few hundred yards some poor soul was now struggling in its last agony, without the aid of any religious consolation. True enough were the fears of the holy Bishop; a poor man was dying at that hour on board the ill-fated ship, and there was no one at his side to whisper one word of hope into his ear, or to excite him to repentance. He was already looked upon as a dead man by the heedless crew. The necessary authorisation being obtained, Father Tempier, who accompanied Monseigneur de Mazenod on that voyage, was deputed by the latter to visit the ship in question. The good Father arrived in time to administer the last sacraments to the dying man. He found that four others were lying prostrate, who seemed

also to be in danger of death; the last sacraments were administered to them in like manner. Three of them died the next day. Monseigneur de Mazenod rejoiced ever after in the thought of the providential character of that storm, which drove him before it to that spot when succour was to be rendered, through his agency, to those poor dying men.

At that time, a holy Bishop of Calahara, and a large body of Spanish Priests, were exiled by their government, and were banished to Majorca. The persecution inflicted by Espartero on the Church, was raging then in Spain. Nothing excited more the admiration and sympathy of Monseigneur de Mazenod, than the courage and constancy of those heroic souls, who voluntarily and generously suffered for the faith. He felt it was a duty incumbent upon him and his fellow Bishops, to pay their sympathising respects to that holy confessor of the faith, the exiled Bishop. Some of the prelates manifested a certain timidity, which caused them to dread to show too much open sympathy with the exiled Bishop and Priests, lest they might displease their government in some way, by so doing. Monseigneur de Mazenod was deeply pained by their excessive caution. He declared that he felt so strongly that it was his duty to render his personal homage and sympathy to that holy exile and venerable confessor of the faith, that had he to go alone

to visit him, he would do so. These words had their immediate effect; all the Bishops went in a body to pay the visit to the holy prelate. The Archbishop of Bordeaux was so moved by the sight of the visible holiness of the devoted Bishop, and by the knowledge of the sufferings he had undergone for the faith, that he knelt down to ask his blessing. All the others did the same. The holy and humble prelate was taken by surprise, and filled with confusion, at such a proceeding. Being compelled to yield to their entreaties, he blessed them, and then knelt himself to receive their blessing. Monseigneur de Mazenod thus writes :—

“Every eye was moist on that occasion, and this bespoke that fusion of hearts which existed between us, in the unity of our common faith and charity. It is on occasions of this kind that one feels the full blessing of being a member of that Catholic family, of which the Holy Ghost is the Life, and Jesus Christ the Founder and the Head.”

Before leaving Palma, Monseigneur de Mazenod visited a church which formerly belonged to the Jesuits, who had been expelled by a persecuting government. In that church was exposed the body of the Blessed Rodrigues—a Jesuit lay brother—who sanctified himself whilst performing the humble office of door porter for his community. He writes :—

“I venerated his holy relics, and I afterwards knelt at the altar, which is raised on the site of the doorway where

he used to act as porter. It is sad to think that the guardianship of these holy relics should be confided to the hands of strangers, and that that venerable religious family to which he belonged, was no longer there to take loving charge of them."

On the night of the 13th of December he reached Marseilles, on his return from Africa.

CHAPTER IX.

WHILST Monseigneur de Mazenod was zealously administering the affairs of his diocese, he was not neglecting his duties as Superior-General of his congregation of missionaries. The Society of the Oblates of Mary continued to grow in numbers, and to extend the sphere of its missionary labours. To God alone was known the good wrought by its quiet unchronicled works of missionary zeal, especially in the rural districts of the South of France. Corsica, at the period which we have now reached (1842) was the scene of some of its most successful missionary efforts. The work of giving missions in that Island was inaugurated by Fathers Albin and Guibert. On the holy death of the former, and on the appointment of the latter to the see of Viviers, the direction of the missionary works of the congregation in Corsica was confided to Father Semeria. In the following extract from a number of the *Ami de la Religion*, published in 1842, the works of the Oblate Fathers are thus spoken of:—

“The Bishop of Corsica, Monseigneur Casanilli, confided to the Oblates the direction of his Theological Seminary, as

also of the Junior Society of the Oblates of Mary. He further had recourse to the missionary zeal of those Fathers for stirring up the faith and piety of the inhabitants of the island, from that state of torpor in which many were immersed. Father Albini was the chief instrument which God had raised up for the effecting of this spiritual renovation. This devoted Father sacrificed his life in following the promptings of his missionary zeal in Corsica. He died upon the battle field of his devotedness, in the odour of the most exalted virtues, leaving behind him the reputation of being a Saint, and a true Apostle of Corsica. Father Semeria succeeded Father Albini. A mission was lately conducted by Father Semeria at Sari, a place which had been for some time unhappily distinguished by the deadly feuds which existed between several sections of its inhabitants. Through the zeal of Father Semeria and his brother missionaries, wonderful conversions were brought about, and a most touching ceremony took place in the church at the close of the mission, that of the public reconciliation before the altar of a large number of persons who, till then, had been known to have borne the most deadly hatred towards one another."

It was about this epoch that the horizon of the missionary labours of the Society of the Oblates of Mary was being extended far towards the limits of the old and new world, as we have notified already, and as we shall allude to again more at large in its proper place.

The ardent zeal of the episcopal heart of Monseigneur de Mazenod was not confined to his own diocese, or to those particular localities which were being evangelised by his missionary sons. Readily did he embrace such opportunities as were afforded

to him of advancing the interests of religion or of charity, directly or indirectly, at home or in other lands. The report of his virtues and devotedness reached the far East. The following letter was addressed to him by an Eastern Christian Prince. It was written in Arabic:—

“IN OUR CAPITAL OF EBTIDIN,
“September 25th, 1836.”

“ILLUSTRIOUS LORD,

“The fame of your many virtues has spread to this our country. We have heard much of your great zeal and charity, and we have been exceedingly gratified by all the good tidings in your regard that have been communicated to us. It would have been our great happiness if we could have looked forward to the privilege of making your personal acquaintance, but as we cannot hope for that pleasure, we have to employ our pen as the only means at our disposal of entering into communication with you. We have a favour to ask of you, which we trust you will not, in your great charity, refuse to grant us. We know that your Lordship possesses, deservedly, great influence with the Holy See, and we wish you to employ it our behalf, by aiding us with your assistance in an affair which concerns us very much, and which is now being transacted at Rome. We are confident of success if your Lordship espouse our cause.

(Signed) “THE PRINCE AMIN CHEAL.”

Monseigneur de Mazenod had a rare faculty of clothing, in suitable and telling language, the inspirations of his episcopal soul, in view of those passing events of the day in which religion and the

good of society were concerned. His pastoral letters were masterpieces of their kind. Having forwarded to Count Montalambert the pastoral which he had published on the accession of Pius IX. to the see of Peter, he received the following acknowledgment from that distinguished advocate of the Catholic cause :—

“ MY LORD,

“ I have received with gratitude, and read with rare pleasure, the pastoral which your Lordship has done me the great kindness of forwarding to me. It appears to me that it would be impossible to express, in nobler language, the sentiments which should animate clergy and laity at this critical hour, in the presence of such an event as the succession of our great Pope to the see of Peter. Language of this kind, which comes fully up to the level of the requirements of the hour, delights and encourages me extremely. The struggle is going to commence anew on the battleground of liberty of education. Your Lordship had already nobly planted your standard on its ramparts, by the pastoral letter issued by you in A.D. 1844. We have great reason to dread the coming projects of the government, but we trust that the prudence and the vigilance of our Bishops will save us from the abyss.

“ C. MONTALAMBERT.”

The year 1854 will always be remembered by devout children of Holy Church, as the year of the definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. That such an event would be looked forward to with glowing anticipation by the Founder

of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, is what we might expect. His reply was one of the first which reached Rome, in answer to the letter which the Holy Father addressed to the Bishops of the Catholic world, on the question of the definition of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. Whilst adhering fully to the project of the proposed definition, Monseigneur de Mazenod informs us incidentally, but very clearly, what his belief was on the question of the infallibility of the see of Peter. "Your Holiness," he writes, "could decide this question by yourself, without consulting the episcopal body." The arrival of Monseigneur de Mazenod in Rome was not left long unnoticed by the Holy Father. On the day following it, and before he had time to apply for an audience, a message came from his Holiness to say that he would be prepared to receive the Bishop of Marseilles the next morning. The audience lasted more than an hour. In Monseigneur de Mazenod the Holy Father saw, not only the Bishop of Marseilles, but also the Founder of a religious congregation, whose very name, that of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, which was given to it by Leo XII., was a clear indication in the mind of the church on the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. Various were the special proofs of high esteem, and even of kindly affectionateness, given by Pius IX. towards Monseigneur de Mazenod,

during the latter's stay in Rome, on the occasion of which we are speaking.

In a former portion of our work, we spoke of the vividness of Monseigneur de Mazenod's faith in the mysteries of the christian religion. So bright was his faith in these sublime mysteries, that the act of believing, in his case, might be described almost as the act of seeing the revealed truth face to face. Face to face he seemed ever to gaze with glance of spirit upon Mary, in the mystery of her Immaculate Conception. He reasoned himself not merely into a belief in this mystery, but he opened the eyes of his soul and saw it, and felt it, in inner spirit and in outward sense. His mind was bright with it, and his heart was on fire with it, as all could well perceive, who came into relationship with him on the subject of this mystery, during the days that preceded its solemn definition as an article of faith. He stood prominently forth then as the great Oblate of Mary Immaculate, urging on, with all the ardour of his zeal, and according to the full measure of his influence, the work of that definition. He was alarmed at one time that the progress of that work might be impeded by a certain temporising spirit, which existed among a very limited number—some half dozen, if so many—of his episcopal brethren who were then in Rome, and who were disposed to regard the definition in question as inopportune.

Opportunism, taken in the sense in which we define it, namely, an exaggerated dread of the world's censure, when some important work for God's glory has to be accomplished, is the sleeper which Satan has often placed on the rails to prevent the onward progress of the true and the good in the supernatural order. When our Lord made mention of His coming Passion and Death to His Apostles, the spirit of opportunism spoke out from their midst, saying, "Lord, be it far from Thee."

He called that spirit Satan, and pursued His way to Calvary, despite its protests. The spirit of opportunism has been assailing His Church from that hour—a crafty power of evil, an angel of darkness clad in light—speaking to her children one by one to frighten them away from works high and holy, to the doing of which God's Spirit invites them to go forward—whispering *non oportet*, it is not opportune—to martyrs on the way to the stake, to confessors on the way to their chosen solitude, to virgins on the way to the divine espousals, to him of the world whom God invites interiorly to do some noble deed of christian munificence. The spirit of opportunism has been heard again and again in the great councils of the church, giving utterance to its "*non oportet*." It was heard at Nice and Ephesus, yea, and in every council of the church held from then till now, has it dared to utter its misleading

sounds. But there was another spirit in these council halls, the same that came down in fiery tongues in the supper-room, the spirit of truth, of counsel, and of knowledge, whose breath of flame has ever scotched the snake of opportunism. The consciousness that such a spirit was at work, even though upon a narrow scale, to prevent or retard the proposed definition, was enough to call up into fullest play all the opposing energy and resources of Monseigneur de Mazenod's enlightened and heroic spirit. He fasted more rigorously, and prayed more earnestly, in order the more fully to help in defeating the serpent in his war against the WOMAN. Nor was he sparing in tongue or pen in advocating the claims of his Queen and of his Mother to the glorious title of the Ever Immaculate One. Happily all controversy was soon to cease concerning Mary's beautiful and unique prerogative. Rome was about to utter one of those sentences which silence discussion by manifesting the truth, and setting forth what all men should believe on some given doctrine. We will allow Monseigneur de Mazenod to describe, in his own words, what he saw and felt on the day of the memorable 8th of December, 1854:—

“The morning of the 8th of December broke in a cloudless sky. At an early hour the streets of Rome were crowded with people of all ranks and classes, hastening towards St. Peter's. The great Basilica was crowded to

overflowing. At seven o'clock the ceremony began. The Gospel having been chanted, the moment had now come for delivering the solemn decree. The senior Cardinal, the senior Archbishop, and the senior Bishop of those then present, approached the foot of the pontifical throne, and kneeling, petitioned the Holy Father, in the name of the whole Church, to pronounce the decree declaring the Immaculate Conception to be an article of Catholic Faith. The Holy Father then intoned, in full sweet voice, the *Veni Creator Spiritus*. A response came from every part of the vast Basilica, as the mighty multitude of voices blended together in the solemn harmonious rendering of the hymn of the Holy Spirit. In the silence which followed the chanting of the *Veni Creator*, the Holy Father stood forth as Sovereign Pontiff, and pronounced the infallible decree which declares and defines that it is a dogma of the Catholic Faith, that the most Holy Virgin Mary was, by a special privilege, and the grace of God, and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Saviour of all men, in the instant of her Conception, preserved and exempted from every stain of original sin. The words of this solemn decree were pronounced by the Holy Father under deep emotion, whilst tears rolled abundantly down his cheeks. I need not say that I partook of that emotion. I could believe at that moment that heaven was open over our heads, and that the church triumphant was sharing in the transports of joy of the church militant, whilst celebrating the new glories of their common Queen. It seemed to me that I could then witness, in spirit, how on that occasion, all the saints in heaven were raised to a higher degree of glory, through a special act of God's boundless munificence, and that I could behold Jesus Christ offering His divine felicitations to His Mother, and St. Joseph, my special patron, sharing largely in the glory of her who was espoused to him on earth, and to whom he dwelleth so nigh in heaven. I thought also that at that moment the church suffering in Purgatory must have been shone upon

by a ray of divine light, which suspended the sufferings of those therein detained. Furthermore, I could believe that Purgatory itself was emptied on that day by an act of sovereign clemency on the part of the Supreme Judge who, on the occasion of this signal glory given to His Mother, would allow that cherished portion of the great family of the Heavenly Father to become sharers in the universal joy of Holy Church, and to be admitted to the foot of the throne of their Mother, to thank her for their deliverance, and to blend their joyousness with that of all heaven's citizens, angels and saints. It was with these and kindred sentiments in my breast, that I took part in chanting the grand Credo of Nice, that followed in the Mass of that memorable day."

CHAPTER X.

It now becomes our task to speak of the labours of the missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate in the British Isles—in England, Ireland and Scotland. One year after the departure from the shores of France of the first Oblate missionaries, who set forth for Canada, the project of extending the works of his society to England dawned upon the mind of Monseigneur de Mazenod. God had been silently, for years, preparing the instrument through whose agency a British province of the Oblates of Mary was to be founded. In a valley of the Lower Alps, where the old town of Digne is traversed by the waters of the rapid Bleone, a youth, born of truly christian parents, was pursuing his early studies for the ecclesiastical state, in the year 1826. On his countenance were marked the blended traits of high intellect, great sweetness of disposition, and spotlessness of soul. God's choice has fallen upon him for a special call to the religious and missionary state. He is to become an Oblate of Mary Immaculate. Father—now Cardinal—Guibert had been

sent by Father de Mazenod to preach a mission in Digne, the native town of young Casimir Aubert, the youth of whom we speak. During the mission, the voice of God spoke to the heart of Casimir, inspiring him with the thought of becoming an Oblate of Mary Immaculate. He opened his mind on this subject to Father Guibert, whose rare discernment discovered all the marks of a true vocation in young Aubert. At the close of the mission, the latter went to the novitiate house of the Oblates; here, under the guidance of this Father, who was Master of Novices, he made rapid progress in all the virtues that should adorn the religious man, and the future missionary. Father Aubert occupied for some years the position of Secretary to the venerable Founder and Superior-General of the Oblates of Mary, whose entire and affectionate confidence he continued to enjoy to the end of his too short career. The close relationship which existed between Monseigneur de Mazenod and Father Aubert, afforded to the latter a rare occasion of imbibing, to the fullest, of the spirit of the holy Founder. We look upon this circumstance as a providential one, as Father Aubert was to be the appointed instrument, through whose agency the society of the Oblates of Mary, and its venerable Founder, were to become known in these countries.

At that time the long wintertide of England's

abandonment of the Catholic faith was visibly breaking up, and signs were abroad of the early advent of the "second spring." Additional workers were needed then in the vineyard. Divers missionary congregations of Catholic lands were to be called upon to take part in the great revival of faith and piety which was then at hand. The sons of St. Liguori and of St. Paul of the Cross had barely gained a footing, when the disciples of De Mazenod entered upon the field of missionary labour in England, under the standard of Mary Immaculate. It was not all at once that any of these congregations found its way to permanent centres of exterior labour, and of its own proper development. All had to wander for a period of years, like Israel, under tents, until God's hand guided them to permanent positions of abode and labour. The congregation of the Oblates of Mary had for periods, more or less prolonged, occupied temporary posts of missionary work in various parts of England, before reaching its present centres of labour in this country; but of these the writer undertakes to speak only of such as came within the range of his own personal knowledge in his missionary capacity.

A few days after his ordination by Monseigneur de Mazenod, the writer received his obedience from the holy Founder to proceed to Grace Dieu, in Leicestershire. A small community of Oblates had

already been established there, through the instrumentality of Father Aubert, of which Father Perron was the first Superior. Ambrose Phillipps de Lisle was the founder and generous patron of this infant establishment. The conversion of Mr. Phillipps to the Catholic faith, which had taken place some years before the arrival of the Oblates at Grace Dieu, was an event which had a marked influence on the great Catholic revival in England, which was setting in about that time. It largely contributed to the conversion of the Hon. George Spencer, as we read in a published letter of the latter, from which we give the following extract:—

“I passed several hours daily in conversation with Phillipps, and was satisfied beyond all my expectations with the answers he gave to the several questions I proposed to him, about the tenets and practices of the Catholic Church.”

Mr. Phillipps de Lisle was an instrument, in God's hands, for the founding of the Cistercian Abbey of Mount St. Bernard, in Charnwood Forest, two miles from Grace Dieu. He also built the churches of Grace Dieu, Whitwick, and Shepshed. The latter church was served by the Fathers of the Institute of Charity. Grace Dieu and Whitwick were confided to the care of the Oblates of Mary. The learned Dr. Gentili, of holy memory, was the immediate predecessor of the Oblates at Grace Dieu.

This devoted missionary, in his zeal for the spreading of the true faith in the wide district under his care, inaugurated a system of open-air preaching, which was continued by his successors, the Oblate Fathers at Grace Dieu. It was the privilege of the writer to have this branch of missionary work assigned to him by his Superiors. Sermons in the open-air were preached by him in the villages of Thringstone, Osgathorpe, and other villages; also at Coalville, Castle Donnington, and Ashby-de-la-Zouch. The arrival of Father Noble at Grace Dieu gave a further impetus to the missionary labours of the Fathers of that community, and especially to the system of open-air preaching. The following is the order which was observed at these discourses. On the arrival of a Father, in a village in which there was not perhaps a single Catholic, he commenced a course of visits from cottage to cottage, to announce the sermon which he was to preach that same afternoon on the village green, and to invite the inmates to come to hear it. The general answer he received was, "Thank you, Sir, we will come." In the meantime, a small platform of some sort was erected on some convenient spot. As the hour of the sermon drew nigh, numbers of villagers might be seen approaching the place of rendezvous in a serious, thoughtful manner, and in many instances each bore a chair on his or

her shoulders, for use during the sermon. When all who were expected had arrived and had taken their places, the sermon began. The subject was always on some great christian truth, such as salvation, conversion, the passion of Jesus Christ, &c. ; controversy was avoided. At the close of the sermon, expressions of satisfaction and good-will fell from the lips of several in the crowd, accompanied by invitations to the Father to renew his visit at some early date. Many also, on those occasions, used to express their astonishment that such scriptural doctrines could be preached by a Catholic Priest, as they had always been led to believe that Catholic Priests did not hold with scripture truths. This first glimpse of the beauty of Catholic teaching having dawned upon their unsophisticated minds, a thirst for further knowledge was produced on the part of several among them, which caused them to pursue their search after the truth, until they finally entered the one fold of the True Shepherd. On one occasion, whilst a sermon was being preached by Father Noble, in the village of Osgathorpe, a respectable man in the crowd, a protestant dissenter, raised some question about the intercession of saints, upon which a discussion ensued. The force of the argument was going against the dissenter, when the Anglican rector of the parish, the Rev. Mr. B——, who happened to be present, came forward to the

rescue. He first addressed some words of reproach to the dissenter, saying, "You are ignorant upon the question under discussion, and your advocacy is doing more harm than good to our cause." He then politely addressed himself to Father Noble, and proposed that the question in point should be discussed publicly, in a friendly way, between himself, the rector, and the reverend Father. The proposal was accepted by Father Noble, and a day was fixed upon by mutual consent, for the discussion. An announcement to this effect was made to the assembled crowd. On the evening of the 28th of June, Father Noble, accompanied by the writer, proceeded to the village of Osgathorpe. On their arrival they found Mr. B., and a half-dozen of Church of England clergymen, at the appointed place of rendezvous. A very large crowd was assembled there, eager to follow both sides of the discussion. The Fathers were very well received by the assembly, though the vast majority was composed of protestants, the parishioners of Mr. B. It was agreed upon by the Fathers, before entering on the discussion, to give first a definition of the Catholic doctrine relative to the intercession of saints, and to call upon Mr. B. to give a definition of the Church of England doctrine on the same subject. To this proposal, as a necessary preliminary, they resolved to adhere. An intimation to this effect having been given to Mr. B.,

he refused to agree to it. The Fathers declined to open the discussion on any other terms, knowing the necessity of each side putting forth a clear definition of its doctrine on the disputed point, in order that a satisfactory issue might be reached. Father Noble then explained to the multitude the nature of his proposal to Mr. B. He said, "We are prepared to state the doctrine of the Catholic Church on the subject of the intercession of saints, before entering further upon the discussion, and we ask your rector to state the doctrine of the Church of England on the same matter." The people at once saw the reasonableness of this proposal, and were surprised at the hesitation of their rector in acceding to it. A conversation, which had no result, then ensued between Mr. B. and his clerical *confrères*, some of whom were of the high church and some of the low church schools, whilst Mr. B. himself did not seem quite to agree in opinion with either party. The crowd became impatient at Mr. B.'s refusing to answer Father Noble's question as to the doctrine of the Church of England, relative to the intercession of saints, and cries rose on every side, calling on Mr. B. to answer the question. Thereupon Father Noble urged Mr. B., in the name of his own congregation, who wished to learn from their pastor what they should believe concerning the intercession of saints, not to refuse to instruct them on the

matter, but to give them at once the doctrine of his church on the subject. But Mr. B. would commit himself to no definite statement on the point. The crowd then became loud in their cries, "Answer, Mr. B." "Answer the question proposed by the Priest." The dissenters, of whom there were a great many present, seemed to enjoy the embarrassment of Mr. B., who had on a former occasion so unceremoniously put aside one of their *confrères*. Two hours were spent in the vain attempt to arrange the preliminaries of the discussion, and at last the meeting broke up. During the whole proceedings not one unkind or disrespectful word was spoken on either side, and a perfectly good temper reigned all through in the large assemblage. This was the only occasion when anything of a controversial character occurred at any of the open-air discourses of the Fathers of Grace Dieu.

Several conversions followed the Osgathorpe proceedings. Persons who had been present on the occasion came on the following Sundays to the church, to seek for further information, and becoming at last convinced of the truth of Catholic doctrine, they resolved to embrace it. Similar results followed on other occasions, in almost every case when an open-air sermon was preached in any of the villages in the vicinity of Grace Dieu or Whitwick.

We will now proceed to narrate some instances which came under our own notice, whilst at Grace Dieu, illustrative of the marvellous action of Divine grace in bringing into the fold of the Good Shepherd poor wandering sheep from the surrounding wilderness of unbelief. On a Sunday morning in August, 1846, a local Methodist preacher, a resident of Whitwick, was on his way to preach in a neighbouring chapel of his sect. As he was going along, reflecting on the points of his sermon, he heard in the distance the pealing of the bell of the Catholic church of Grace Dieu. At that moment he felt himself impelled, by some mysterious influence, to give up the project of going to the chapel where he had intended to preach, and where a congregation was assembled to hear him, and to obey the summons of that bell, by going to the Catholic church that morning. He yielded to this inspiration. Plunging into the woods which encircle Grace Dieu, he pursued for a mile the path which led to the church, wondering at himself for adopting such a course, conscious as he was of his previous anti-catholic disposition, yet being unable to resist the invitation of that holy bell. He assisted at Mass, heard the sermon which was preached by one of the Oblate Fathers, and before he left the church he made the resolution, on his knees before God, to become a Catholic. Before many weeks had elapsed,

he and his wife and five children were received into the Catholic Church.

One day the writer was passing a cottage near the village of Thringstone, the door of which was open. He saw a quiet modest looking woman sitting at her spinning wheel near the door. Accosting her, he asked her if she went sometimes to the Catholic church. "Six years ago, sir," she replied, "I was under instruction to be received into the Catholic church. The Priest who was instructing me was sent to some other place, and I had not the courage, since his departure, to present myself for further instruction to any of the Priests who came here after he had left, and I am very happy that you have called to-day to see me." The writer, finding that she was fairly instructed, received her into the church the following day. The next day she was taken seriously ill, and in two days died a most edifying death. When she found herself on the point of death, she called her husband to her bedside, and in the hearing of the writer said to him, "The Catholic religion is the true religion; promise me that you will become a Catholic." "Yes," replied the husband, who was a kind-hearted good man, and who was deeply affected, "I make that promise." She continued, "And my children;" here her voice became silent for ever, but her sweet imploring looks continued to speak in her children's

behalf, to her husband's heart. "Yes," he answered with broken voice, "our children shall be brought up as Catholics." A bright smile passed then over the dying features of the poor woman, on receiving this consoling assurance, and she calmly expired. The good man kept his word; he and his children were received into the church shortly after the death of his wife.

We shall now proceed to put on record an instance of another kind from that just related. We hesitated for some time before determining upon giving it publicity, as the ending of the story is not one of a gladdening or consoling character. But as we have undertaken to write, in all simplicity, such facts as have come to our own certain knowledge concerning such missionary works of the Oblates of Mary as we should consider of a specially instructive tendency, we insert the following:—

A. B., a stocking weaver residing in the district of Whitwick, was led to the knowledge of the Catholic religion through a signal favour which an epileptic daughter received from God, through the agency of a holy Trappist Monk, of the Mount St. Bernard community. This poor girl was subject to daily attacks of epilepsy. One day she was seized with an attack upon the public high road, as the good Monk was passing by. He, in simple faith, and moved by charitable compassion, placed on the

afflicted girl's neck a medal of the Immaculate Conception, invoking, at the same time, the intercession of the Blessed Virgin in her behalf. In the instant a cure was effected, and the poor girl never afterwards had another attack. She became a devout Catholic. Her father was deeply moved by the miraculous character of his daughter's cure, and was led thereby to make enquiries concerning the truth of Catholic doctrines. He was a highly intelligent man, and was well able to appreciate the force of the arguments put forth in the Catholic books which he read. At last he declared to the writer his full belief in the truth of the Catholic religion. Several months went by after this declaration, yet he made no advance to become a Catholic. The writer warned him of the danger of abusing grace by deferring to follow his convictions. The real cause of A. B.'s delay in becoming a Catholic, was the dread of losing a small pension which he was in the habit of receiving, as the writer afterwards discovered, from a very anti-catholic source. One day a messenger came to the writer from A. B. to say that he was dying, and that he begged him to go at once to see him. The writer went, without delay, to visit the poor invalid, whom he found in visible danger of death. A. B. then expressed his desire to become a Catholic at once, and to be prepared for death. The writer heard his confession, and gave him conditional

baptism. He then returned to Grace Dieu to bring the Blessed Sacrament to him, and the holy oil to annoint him. He left the dying man in seemingly good dispositions. He had scarcely left the house of the invalid when, as he afterwards learnt, a visitor entered with the object of undoing the work which the writer had been performing for the dying man. He was the individual from whom A. B. had been in the habit of receiving a small weekly pension. The visitor threatened to withdraw the pension from A. B. if he persevered in his purpose of dying a Catholic. The writer not knowing what had happened in his absence, returned to the sick man's chamber, bearing the Blessed Sacrament, to give him the Holy Viaticum. To his surprise he found that a complete change had taken place in the dispositions of the dying man. Inquiring as to its cause, the following sad answer was given by A. B. : " I have been thinking that if I have a soul, I have a body also, and that I should not neglect my body for the sake of my soul." The writer was startled by this bald and impious language of that worldly-minded and dying man, who thought, when he spoke those words, that he was going to recover. He continued obstinate in his refusal to prepare for the reception of the last Sacraments. The writer had to withdraw with a sad heart, full of anxiety about the dying man's approaching end. The day of his death

arrived at last. On that day he received the visit of a charitable catholic lady, Mrs. Phillipps de Lisle, who, seeing his immediate danger of death, sent a messenger to ask the writer to go at once to see him. The writer lost no time in proceeding to the dying man's house. He entered his room, and found him in his agony, but impenitent. There was no wandering of mind, for he had all his intellects about him, but he seemed utterly bereft of grace, and full of anger, and looked like one possessed of an evil spirit. On the writer's approaching him, and exhorting him to repent of his sins, and to have confidence in the divine mercy, he raised his dying hand to deal him a blow; upon which the writer said, "I will cease to speak to you, but I will speak to God in your behalf; I will pray for you." Seeing the writer on his knees praying for him, he exclaimed, "I want no prayers said for me," and grasping with his hand the bed-clothes, and whilst endeavouring to tear them, he said, looking fiercely at the writer, "If I had you near me I would tear you thus, limb from limb:" falling back upon his bed, he said, "Oh! it is a horrible thing to die." His last words were, "I am going into hell." Mrs. Phillipps de Lisle was present, and a witness of the whole of this terrible scene.* The writer makes no

* The writer, before inserting the name of Mrs. de Lisle as a witness of the sad scene described above, wrote to her to ask her permission for doing

comment on the circumstances of this sad case, but will proceed at once to relate the account of a conversion and of a death-bed scene of a far different sort from that he has just been describing, and which followed closely upon the date of the latter.

On leaving the house where the death-bed scene just spoken of had occurred, the writer could not help reflecting on the signal graces that A. B. had received from God, without his seeming to profit by them, at the same time he felt a hope that God would not withdraw those graces from that neighbourhood, but that He would bestow them upon some other soul in the district under the writer's care, whom they might benefit.

The next day a messenger came to the residence of the writer at Grace Dieu, asking him to go at once to visit a dying man who wished to see him. Upon his making inquiry about the sick man whom he was asked to visit, he learned that he was an aged Baptist. "How comes it that he wishes for my ministry?" said the writer to the messenger. The latter replied, "Last night in his sleep he heard a voice saying to him, 'The religion of the parson of Grace Dieu is the true religion,' and as

80. In her kind reply the following words occur:—"I shall never forget the death of that poor man, it has often made me shudder when I thought of it. Of course I have not the slightest objection to your mentioning me as a witness. I think you and I are the only two left of those who were concerned."

you are the clergyman of Grace Dieu, and as there is no clergyman of any other denomination but yourself here, we have come to ask you to visit this sick man, at his own request." The writer, without further delay, proceeded to the house of the aged invalid, and found the circumstances of his case to be as it had been stated to him. On questioning the aged Baptist as to the cause of his wishing to see him, the latter said, "The voice which I heard in my sleep told me that the religion of the 'Parson' of Grace Dieu was the true religion, and I wished you to be sent for, as I desire to embrace your religion before I die." "But my religion," the writer made answer, "is the Catholic religion; do you wish to become a Catholic?" "Yes, most certainly," answered the dying man, "for the voice told me that your religion is the true one." The writer lost no time in preparing the poor aged neophyte for reception into the church. Immediately after receiving Baptism, which was given without condition, as he had not been baptised before, his soul seemed to be flooded with spiritual consolation. "What have you done to me?" he exclaimed, "I feel as if I had become a young man again, and that I could dance through joy. I never felt such a feeling of happiness before." It was in such sentiments he breathed his purified and devout spirit into the hands of God.

We will here narrate an event in the domestic circle, connected with the inner life of the little community of Oblates at Grace Dieu. We relate it because it will tend to illustrate the kindly action of God's fatherly providence in providing for the wants of those who labour for His glory and for the good of souls. One morning the lay brother rang the community bell, calling the Fathers to breakfast. On the assembling of the community in the Refectory, the lay brother, with blank disappointed look, informed the Fathers that, through mistake, he had given to the poor who had called at the door the bread which was to have served for the community breakfast, and that he had only a few mouldy crusts to put before them. The Fathers had that day to go to visit places that lay at a considerable distance from their residence, and it would be a great inconvenience to wait until bread could be procured from some neighbouring village; an hour's time would be thus consumed. They resolved to make a merit of necessity, and to be content with the few crusts the poor lay brother was able to scrape together. They had scarcely seated themselves to their meagre fare, when a gentle knock was heard at the entrance door. A little girl stood outside, bearing a basket containing four small loaves of delicious bread, which a good woman, a recent convert from Methodism, felt inspired that morning to prepare as a

gift for the Fathers. This gift, which came so opportunely, was received with thankful emotion by the three Fathers and the lay brother who then composed the little community of Grace Dieu. They could not help regarding it as a proof of the tender care with which He, who feeds the birds of the air and clothes the lilies of the field, takes of His own when they confide in him. Fortified by this providential food, they were able to set forth that morning on their missionary journeys invigorated and fitted for their labours that day.

Early in the year of 1847, William Constable Maxwell, of Everingham Park, Yorkshire, visited Grace Dieu. There he became acquainted with the Oblates of Mary, and their works. The Rev. Mr. Newsham, his Chaplain, had then lately retired from his post through failing health. It was Mr. Maxwell's desire that the Oblates of Mary should undertake the service of the Everingham mission and the chaplaincy of his household. A proposal to this effect having been made by him, and accepted by the Superior-General of the Oblates, two Fathers and a lay brother went from Grace Dieu to Everingham, in Yorkshire; one of these was Father Perron, the Superior of Grace Dieu, whose place the writer was then called to occupy. It was in this way the Yorkshire missionary works of the Society of Oblates commenced. Father Perron's missionary

career in Yorkshire was closed, by his early but saintly death, in less than a year after his arrival upon the new scene of his labours. He died of fever caught in the discharge of his duties. At the death of Father Perron the writer was appointed to succeed him at Everingham, and it became necessary to withdraw the little community of Oblates from Grace Dieu. Their departure from this latter place was accompanied by mutual sentiments of kindly feeling and esteem on their part, and on that of Mr. Phillipps de Lisle, their most worthy patron and friend.

William Constable Maxwell, who in his latter years was better known by the title of the ancient family peerage of Herries, being the instrument whom God employed in introducing the Oblates of Mary into Yorkshire, deserves more than a passing notice in these pages. The writer regards it as one of the privileges of the years of his early priesthood to have been brought into intimate relationship with one in whose life there was such a happy blending of the high-minded gentleman of the world, and of the pure-souled devout and humble christian. No one had a greater power than he of winning and retaining friendships. Whilst the poor honoured and loved him for his large-hearted sympathy and munificent generosity towards them, those of his own class, Catholics and Protestants alike, formed

around him a wide circle of admiring and affectionate friends. He was the soul of the hunting field as the keen sportsman, and his manly form, as he exercised a noble hospitality under his own roof, was a figure not unworthy of the painter's pencil. But these distinguishing natural qualities were eclipsed in him by the splendid array of christian virtues which shone in his life. On succeeding to his large inheritance, one of his first thoughts was to erect a spacious and beautiful church adjoining his mansion at Everingham, the ownership of which he vested in the authorities of the diocese. Some twenty thousand pounds were employed by him in erecting and endowing this sacred edifice. The solemn dedication of this noble temple was almost the first event of the kind which had occurred in England since the Reformation. In the private and domestic life of William Constable Maxwell there was a harmonious intermingling of all his duties, without any clashing between those which were spiritual and those which were of a social and civil character. Whilst omitting nothing that society had a right to demand of him as the high-born gentleman, and the head of an honoured house, he left nothing unperformed which he owed to his religion and to his God. Human respect or false shame, when works of faith or piety had to be performed, or the rights of the Holy See defended, or when any

Catholic interest had to be promoted, was never visible in faintest trace in his public or private conduct. At an early hour every morning he might be seen in the private family tribune of the Everingham church, performing his daily exercise of mental prayer, after which he assisted at the Holy Mass. He received Holy Communion at least once a week; he communicated several times a week during seasons of special devotion; he recited the Rosary every day, and made daily visits to the Blessed Sacrament and to the altar of our Blessed Lady. He presided at the family night prayers of all the members of his household, after which he read aloud some pages of a spiritual book. Every year he retired to some religious house to make an eight day's retreat. He kept strictly all the fasts and abstinences of the church. We put these details on record in our pages, as they will serve to show how habits of high spirituality and holiness may co-exist with the discharge of all the duties of the public and social life of the man of the world, of exalted position.

Shortly after the writer's arrival at Everingham, he was favoured by a letter from the Right Rev. Dr. Briggs, Bishop of the Yorkshire district, asking if it were possible for the Fathers of the Everingham community to extend their missionary labours to the town of Howden, a place which was twelve miles distant from their residence. In compliance with

the wishes of the holy and zealous Bishop, this missionary work was undertaken. Howden was possessed of an ancient and very beautiful collegiate church, one portion of which was then in ruins; and the rest, including the towers, was in a state of good preservation, and was used for the Anglican service. Mass had not been said in that town since the Reformation, until the Everingham community undertook the service there. Not more than a dozen Catholics resided there at that time (1848). It was arranged that the first sermon was to be given by the writer in a large public room, the Howden Town Hall, which was hired for the purpose. On the arrival of the writer from Everingham, on the Sunday evening appointed for the sermon, he learnt that the parties who had agreed to allow the Town Hall to be used for the sermon had withdrawn from their engagement. The news that a Catholic Priest was to preach that evening, had drawn into the town from the villages and hamlets of the surrounding districts, a large concourse of persons, whose chief motive, no doubt, was curiosity to see a Priest, and to hear the strange things which they supposed he must have to say. A general discontent was manifested at the refusal of the lessees of the Town Hall to keep to their agreement.

A meeting was held, composed exclusively of various sections of Protestants, and a deputation was

formed to wait on the writer, with the request that he would address the crowd from the market cross, which stood in a public square in the centre of the town. The ancient Catholic cross had disappeared, but the steps remained. The writer was taken by surprise at this demonstration of good-will on the part of so many to whom he was an entire stranger, and none of whom were Catholics. He felt that he ought not to refuse compliance with their request, and he agreed to preach, as they wished him to do, from the steps of the market cross. The large open space in front of the spot from which he spoke on that occasion, was crowded by an attentive and respectful auditory, which was composed of Anglicans, Methodists, Independents, and others. The attendance in the different churches and chapels of Howden must have been very sparse that evening, as a large portion of their usual congregations were attracted by the novelty of hearing a Catholic Priest deliver his first sermon in Howden. God was pleased, on that occasion, to sow the seeds of converting grace in the souls of several whom the writer had the happiness afterwards of receiving into the true church. A temporary chapel was opened soon afterwards, which was regularly served from Everingham. A small builder, Richard V., who was a methodist class leader, had been employed by the writer in fitting up the temporary chapel. He

was present at the service one Sunday evening when the writer announced a sermon on the Real Presence, for the following Sunday. When he heard the subject of the sermon announced, he said to himself, as he afterwards acknowledged, "Ah, that is my stumbling block; I shall never believe in that doctrine." On the arrival of the writer from Everingham on the evening of the following Sunday, he was surprised to find Richard V. praying devoutly in the temporary chapel, though the hour for the assembling of the congregation had not yet arrived. He learnt afterwards, from the good man himself, why he had come at such a timely hour to pray thus before the service had begun that evening. "I desired earnestly," he said, "to know the truth concerning the Real Presence, which was to be the subject of that evening's sermon; I therefore resolved to come to the chapel some time before the service commenced, to pray to God for light to know whether the doctrine you were to preach on that subject was the truth or not." When the writer heard these words, he understood at once how it was that, of the many non-catholic who were present, that Richard V. should be the only one who received from God the gift of faith on that sublime and beautiful mystery of the Real Presence. If others had desired to know the truth, and prayed earnestly for light as he had done, we may feel

assured that they also would have been admitted to a share in his loving Eucharistic faith. Having heard the sermon, and noted in his mind the different scriptural proofs of the Real Presence brought forward, he retired full of thoughtful emotion. On reaching his home, he took his bible from its shelf. Calling to his side his wife, a very intelligent woman, who was one of his own pious cast of mind, they both knelt in prayer, and besought God to guide them in their important enquiry. They then examined together the passages of scripture which had been referred to in the sermon on the Real Presence. They were thus occupied for the greater part of that night; conviction of the truth of the Real Presence suddenly flashed on the mind of husband and wife at the same moment, and they knelt down together and prayed to God to pardon them for their sin of unbelief. "Are we not," they said to one another, "as bad as the Jews, who refused to believe Christ's words declaring that Real Presence?" The following morning Richard V. came to the writer to declare his wish to become a Catholic. He then related the circumstances just mentioned. "It is true," he said, "I have as yet made enquiry only upon one point of Catholic doctrine—the Real Presence—but I am ready to believe in all the others, for if that doctrine which is so difficult can be so well proved—proof, I am sure, can

be supplied for all the others." The writer had the happiness of admitting him, his wife and children, into the church. The faith of this good man was tried by sore domestic afflictions and many persecutions. His wife died a very happy death six months after her conversion. His former supporters, out of anger for his change of faith, ceased to employ him, and he was reduced very much in worldly circumstances as a consequence. To give him a further opportunity of meriting and of manifesting the solidity and brightness of his faith, God sent him another severe trial. He was struck with paralysis. For a whole year he lay motionless on his sick bed. Meanwhile, articles of furniture, implements of trade, and every article that could be disposed of, were sold to get bread for his children. Occasionally some of his former co-religionists, like Job's comforters, would come to his bedside, bitterly to taunt him with his change of faith, and to say that his afflictions were a judgment of God upon him for embracing a false religion. At other times they held out promises of help and reward if he returned to their ranks again by forsaking the Catholic religion, but he heeded neither taunt nor promise, but remained true to his holy faith till death.

The question of erecting a suitable church at Howden began soon to occupy the minds of the Oblate Fathers at Everingham, and they commenced

raising subscriptions for that object. A well-situated piece of ground was secured by them as a site for the new church, and in the summer of 1850 the first stone of the new building was laid by Bishop Briggs. A beautiful Gothic church of limited size, but well-proportioned, was erected, under the title of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The opening ceremony took place on the Feast of the Sacred Heart, 1851. The Right Rev. Dr. Ullathorne preached the opening sermon. Besides the work of establishing the Howden mission, the Oblate community at Everingham were engaged in restoring the mission of Pocklington, a town five miles from the latter place, where several conversions were also accomplished. The main work of the community, however, as a matter of course, lay at Everingham itself, where a numerous congregation of excellent Catholics existed.

But larger fields of labour were about to be opened to the zeal and devotedness of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in England. Father Aubert had returned to France, after taking the first steps for the introduction of his society into this country. At the close of the year 1849 we find him again in England, and engaged in important negotiations with the Right Rev. Dr. Brown, Bishop of Liverpool, relative to the founding of an establishment of Oblates in that town. These negotiations were

happily concluded on the 15th of January, 1850, and on the 18th of the same month formal possession was taken by the Oblates of Mary of their new mission of Holy Cross, Liverpool. No spot could be better selected as a field for the special vocation of the Oblates of Mary, the evangelizing of the poor, than that occupied by the mission of Holy Cross, Liverpool. There, ten thousand of the poorest Catholics in that great city awaited their missionary zeal. Holy Cross mission is situated in the very heart of Liverpool, and at a short distance from the docks and landing stage. How describe the church in which the Oblates of Liverpool had first to exercise their ministry? The area of this extraordinary building consisted of a cow-house and coal store, the first floor was occupied as a rag and bone store, the second floor was used as a poor school, and the third floor served a temporary church.

Father Noble was Father Aubert's first companion in founding the mission of Holy Cross. The work of providing suitable schools for their poor children, who were wandering, untaught, in hundreds through the courts and alleys of their district, was undertaken by Father Noble. He pursued the good work with ceaseless perseverance, until he succeeded in raising one of the largest blocks of Catholic school buildings in England. Years had to elapse after the erection of the schools, before the work of build-

ing a church for their very large, but very poor, congregation was undertaken. It was during the Superiorship of Father Jolivet, the present Vicar Apostolic of Natal, that the good work of building the fine church of Holy Cross was undertaken and completed as far as the chancel arch. Simultaneously with the building of the church, a community house for the Fathers adjoining it was also constructed. Both buildings were erected from the designs of the late Edward Welby Pugin. They form a noble ecclesiastical group of structures, and occupy one of the most central sites in Liverpool. Few of those unacquainted with the circumstances of the case could imagine what an amount of mental anxiety and bodily fatigue it cost the devoted and energetic Father Jolivet, and his zealous brother missionaries, to raise one of the largest and handsomest churches in Liverpool, in the midst of such a poverty-stricken multitude as that which composed the congregation of Holy Cross. The building of the chancel, which took place whilst Father Mathew Gaughran was Superior, and which was due largely to his active initiation, gave completeness to the church of Holy Cross. Among the most cheering results of the labours of the Oblate missionaries in the district over which they exercise pastoral charge in Liverpool, is the successful working of the various associations they have established in connection with

their church for the good of their people. The young men's society of Holy Cross numbers about five hundred men, who approach the sacraments in a body once a month. The female branch of the Holy Family reaches about the same number. These organizations effect incalculable good in promoting, to a high degree, the practice of the christian virtues, and the frequent and devout reception of the sacraments among the congregation of Holy Cross.

CHAPTER XI.

ONE year after the foundation of the Oblate mission in Liverpool, the hand of Divine Providence prepared the way for an establishment of the sons of De Mazenod, in the large manufacturing town of Leeds, in Yorkshire. As the foundation of the Oblate mission in Leeds had, for exterior causes, circumstances in connection with a great movement which was then in progress in the Anglican Church, under the title of Puseyism, we shall briefly sketch some of the leading events of that movement in Leeds, just prior to the introduction of the Oblates to the scene of their labours in that town. In 1845 the Anglican Church of St. Saviour's, of which Dr. Pusey was the patron, having the right of presenting the Vicar, was opened in Leeds. It was built at the expense either of himself or of some member of his family. Its site lay in the centre of a poor and thickly populated part of Leeds. The eyes of the advanced high church party throughout England were then directed towards St. Saviour's, in great expectation of forthcoming results, which

it was fondly hoped would tend powerfully to show forth the living Catholicity of the Anglican Church. It was their dream that all that their Church required was a free scope of action, especially among the working classes in manufacturing centres, in order to prove the divinity of her mission. Dr. Pusey was full of this idea, and was prepared to devote a large sum of money to its development. At the request of the celebrated Dr. Hook, Leeds was chosen as the scene of the experiment. Dr. Pusey for a time was master of the situation. A noble church was raised through his instrumentality, in the midst of a dense mass of working people. The clergymen who were to minister in it were chosen by himself. They were to live in community, observing celibacy, and following a rule which imposed regular hours of prayer and practices of mortification. The opening of St. Saviour's was celebrated with an octave of sermons, which were preached by Dr. Pusey, Mr. Keble, and other tractarian notabilities. A gloom, however, was cast upon the proceedings by the absence of one who, it was hoped, would have been present on that day—Mr. Newman—but who was being received into the Catholic Church that very day. Dissensions were not slow in springing up; Dr. Hook, Vicar of Leeds, withdrew his patronage. Bishop Longfield, of Ripon, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, was

ready, as the champion of the Protestantism of the Church of England, to check the outgrowth of the so-called "Catholic developments." He objected to the inscription over the west door, "Ye who enter this holy place pray for the sinner who built it," on the grounds that the founder must die, and so prayers might be said for him by some one after his death. He consented to allow the inscription to stand, on the condition that should the founder die while he was Bishop of Ripon, he should be informed of it. He had inscriptions of a similar character removed from two chalices before permitting them to be used.

These circumstances will show the antagonism of religious views which existed between their Bishop and the clergy of St. Saviour's. The Rev. Richard Ward was the first Vicar of St. Saviour's. Shortly after his appointment he was joined by Mr. Macmullen, and other Anglican clergymen. Two lay gentlemen, Mr. Haigh and Mr. Wilkinson, lived also at the clergy house at St. Saviour's. These gentlemen had the courage of their growing convictions. In proportion as Catholic truths dawned upon their own minds, they courageously communicated them to the members of their congregation. The catechetical instructions of Mr. Macmullen were very effective and practical, and full of sound Catholic doctrine. All Saints' day, 1846, fell upon a

Sunday. Mr. Macmullen was appointed to preach. The subject of his sermon was "Intercessory prayer by the saints below and the saints above." Towards the close of his discourse, the following words, in substance, were spoken: "What comfort to us who are struggling, to know that the prayers of those who have reached the eternal shore are offered on our behalf; for those who covet purity of heart to remember that the Blessed Virgin is interceding for them; for the penitent to think of St. Peter asking pardon for those who have erst denied their Lord for the christian Priest toiling for souls to know that the Apostle of the Gentiles, once in labours abundant on earth, now pleads in heaven the cause of those who strive to follow in His steps."

At length, after much prayer and earnest inquiry, Mr. Macmullen resolved to leave the Anglican and to enter the Catholic Church. He was joined in this resolution by Mr. Haigh and Mr. Wilkinson. The three were received into the Church on the Feast of the Circumcision, A.D. 1847. Mr. Ward ceased to be Vicar of St. Saviour's. He was succeeded by Mr. Forbes, who in a few months became Anglican Bishop of Brechin. Mr. Minster was appointed Vicar of St. Saviour's in 1848. He entered upon his office, determined to labour with all his might for the good of souls, to promote the unity of his church, to teach all Catholic doctrines, to

popularise the great mystery of the Incarnation, and to bring home to the hearts of the people the humiliations of the Eternal Son. He resolved also to re-establish the collegiate or community rule of life in the clergy house. He fixed his eyes on the Rev. George Crawley as one who would be likely to prove a fitting auxiliary in aiding him to carry out the plans which he hoped to realise in the interests of religion, and for the good of his flock. Mr. Crawley agreed to become Mr. Minster's curate. He was to receive food and raiment, and a room at the house, but no money. Mr. Seton Rooke was also appointed curate of St. Saviour's. In 1849 the cholera visited Leeds. The clergy of St. Saviour's were indefatigable in their labours among the sick and dying. God blessed their good intentions. Their gift of faith was soon to ripen to maturity. They thought the Anglican Church to be their mother, and they laboured in her service with unfailing devotedness. They sought to quicken into living action, shadows and imitations of Catholic rites, but disappointment followed upon their efforts. Their intentions were sincere, and as such God took them into merciful account.

The evening of April the 2nd, 1851, closed upon an extraordinary scene in the Catholic church of St. Anne's, Leeds. A large congregation was assembled within its walls. Before its altar seven

Anglican clergymen knelt to make their public profession of the Catholic faith. Their names were: The Rev. Thomas Minster, M.A., Catherine College, Cambridge, Vicar of St. Saviour's from 1849; The Rev. George Lloyd Crawley, of Christ's College, Oxford, Curate of St. Saviour's; The Rev. Seton Rooke, M.A., of Oriel College, Oxford, Curate of St. Saviour's; The Rev. Henry Combs, M.A., Fellow of St. John's College, Oxford, Curate of St. Saviour's; The Rev. Richard Ward, M.A., Oxford, first Vicar of St. Saviour's; The Rev. W. H. Lewthwaite, of Clifford, M.A., Cambridge; The Rev. Mr. Neville, a Graduate of Oxford, assisting at St. Saviour's; Mr. Lewington, lay-assistant at St. Saviour's; Mr. Long and other members of St. Saviour's Congregation, together with the matron and assistant matron of the orphanage, presented themselves at the same time for reception into the Catholic Church. The presence of Dr. Newman, who had come from Birmingham to receive these converts into the church, gave a special interest to the touching ceremonial of that evening. Our readers will, we are sure, approve of our placing before them some extracts from Dr. Newman's discourse on that occasion, which we disinter from the dust of a newspaper file. To our mind this discourse appears, even in its newspaper form, as a unique production, which shows forth, in words of matchless beauty,

the nature and consequences of the mighty change which is involved in the passage of a soul from shadows to realities, from the human system of Anglicanism to the City of the Living God—His one Holy Catholic Church.

[From the "*Leeds Times*."]]

"Address by the Rev. J. H. Newman, principally, but not exclusively, to those who had been received into the Catholic Church that day. Addressing the assembly as 'Dear Friends and Catholic Brethren,' he said 'he had no time, as they knew, for putting into order any thoughts which might be in his mind; nor indeed was it necessary, nor would they wish it. What they wished rather, who with him had been principals in the ministry in so great a work as that in which they had been employed was, that he should speak out of the fulness of his heart, and there leave the matter. Because, what was it that they who had been brought into the Catholic Church that day had received? They had received light for darkness, light for twilight, peace for warfare. There was not a change so great as that which took place from the state of doubt, and confusion, and misery in which the soul was external to the Catholic Church, to the peace which it found when it came into it. They knew it was said that there is a silence which can be heard, and which can be felt. Any one who had been at sea, and who had for days and nights heard the billows beating at the side of the vessel, and then came into the port, knew what a strange stillness it was when the continual noise of the billows had ceased. When a bell stopped there was a kind of fulness of silence which was most grateful from the contrast. So it was in comparing the tumult and irritation of mind which they who had been long seeking for peace, with the joy experienced when they found it. It was the rich reward of their long anxieties. They (the Catholics)

would suppose, indeed they knew it was so, that those who were out of the Catholic Church unfortunately very frequently were not out by their own fault, that was to say, they felt they had not peace, and they had the grace of God given them, though they were out of the church, to bring them into it, and it was that state which occasioned the distress and misery in their minds. Those who knew nothing, those who had felt nothing—they had no anxiety. Those who did not care whether they were right or wrong, those who thought they were right, those who had a dead conscience—they had no anxiety; but it was when a ray of light came, it was when a wounded conscience stung them, it was when they had a misgiving that they were not where they should be—it was then that the triumph began. They had a feeling of duty, and wished to do that duty, but did not know where it lay. Sometimes they thought it lay this way, sometimes that way; and then the voice of friends came and over-persuaded them, and they were driven back, so that one way or another they were in a most miserable condition. It was partly, certainly, their own fault. It was the fault of all of them, doubtless, who had been external to the Catholic Church, that they did not enter it sooner, because if they had had a fuller determination to follow God's will, doubtless they would have found it sooner. But Almighty God knew what they were made of, and He mercifully led them on by first one grace and then another, till they were brought nearer and nearer to that haven where they should be. But though they might be getting nearer, they did not know where they stood. Others might see they were getting nearer, but to themselves they seemed to be drifted about, tossed up and down by the waves, and there seemed no hope. It often happened that when persons were near to the shore they were amongst billows more alarming and more dangerous, because Satan blew the billows more fiercely, in order to drown those who were near the shore; and they knew that frequently, in cases of ship-

wreck, when those who fell into the water were endeavouring to reach the land, something happened to carry them off. So it was in like manner that poor souls who were making towards that land where they wished to be, might be seen to be going on gradually and gradually towards the shore, and it might be prophesied—humbly, but still prophesied—that they would be landed safe; and alas! when they were about to land, suddenly they drifted off, they perished, and it was not known what became of them. It was only known that they were not landed on the beach of the Catholic Church. But they (the Catholics present) had all cause for rejoicing that to those to whom God's mercy had been shown that day, it had not so happened. They had put themselves into God's hands, and God had brought them into that haven which they sought. And now, on this day, they thanked God, as well they might, that He had in His grace received them safe. He had brought them within the folds of His Church, He had encompassed them with His everlasting armour, had shielded them from the enemy, and he trusted they had now got a gift which they would never lose; that they were now in a state from which they would never fall, and through God's mercy, having long sought, having at last found; they would go on from strength to strength, grace to grace, doing more and more in His service, and whatever might be their trials, that still they would persevere to the end, and die in the faith, and so be brought, through the blood and merits of Jesus Christ, to the land of glory in eternity. . . . I look upon you,' said Dr. Newman, addressing himself to the converts, 'to be specimens of this great miracle which is going on continually, this miracle of the conversion of souls in spite of the opposition of the world. Every soul that is converted to God is converted by a miracle; it is a supernatural work which no power of man can do. It is a work of grace.' He then observed, 'that it could not be worldly inducements which brought men into the Catholic Church,

since they gained no riches, no honours, no praise from the mouths of men; but, on the contrary, they were reviled and called names. They gained nothing of this world. It was nothing then but a supernatural might which brought them on; it was nothing but the grace of God, seeing those things which the world could not see, and having a desire after those things which the world could not desire, that brought them on. That was the great distinction between the Catholic Church and every other body. Every other body depended upon the world: take away its worldly supports, and it goes. It was to him an affecting thing that he happened to be there on that occasion speaking to them, because who was it they had received into the Catholic Church that day? Why it was the first of a portion of a special congregation of the Church of England, of a district or parish of the Church of England, which was created in remarkable circumstances—to him especially so. They knew he was not always a Catholic. It was some years ago the grace of God made him a Catholic, and on the very day of his conversion, what was taking place in this town? Why, the very day when he was being led, as he trusted and believed, by the grace of God, to embrace the Faith of the Church of Christ, that was the very time the church of St. Saviour was opened. It was opened, if he recollected rightly, in a long devotional service which lasted many days, and when that was taking place here, he was being received into the Catholic Church 150 miles off. Therefore, it was to him a circumstance of special interest just at this moment, now he was thrown back to the period of his own conversion, to see in the event of this day a sort of reward of what God led him to do then, that he had been the instrument, in part, of doing what had been done now. How or when it was that those favoured souls who had that day been made members of the Catholic Church were led by the grace of God towards the Catholic Church, he knew not; but, as regards himself, he felt as a kind of wit-

ness that they should wish him to come to receive them, because there was this remarkable connection between St. Saviour's church being opened and his own conversion. Then it was that that was begun which now had its end, and they saw in this another illustration of the want of stability of everything in the Church of England. There had been a church, he meant St. Saviour's, opened with how much pious feeling—with how many sincere aspirations—with how many ready offerings to Almighty God! What sums of money had been expended upon that church, and that really for promoting and building up the Catholic Church! It had been the work of persons who in their hearts believed in doing what they did; they were making an offering, not to the work of man, but to the Catholic Church. They were mistaken in thinking so, but they brought their offerings. They did not act with a half liberality, but, bringing treasure by handfuls, gave it for the erection of a church which they hoped would be a Catholic Church, but they mistook the Church of England for it. They adorned it, enriched it, and what had become of all those hopes which had begun six years ago? Why, had they not vanished into empty air? They saw that the church which they had built had turned out to be nothing at all; and, after a trial of six years, there was that remarkable truth which came to him six years ago, that the Church of England was a mere shadow, that it had no substance. Here was this trial which they saw had come to naught. There were piety, devotion, sincerity, earnestness—persons who would devote themselves earnestly to God; but alas! they built up the mere creation of this world which would not last. It was coming to naught, and what had been the case here, would be the case all over in the Church of England but for the power of the State. It was the power of the State which alone kept anything in its place in the Church of England. Not so with the Catholic Church. Merely sitting still, going about its own work silently, it had

attracted educated members of the Church of England to it. It was a burning and a shining light, and it preached to the people directly by its example.' After some further observations, Dr. Newman 'begged the prayers of the Catholics present for those who had been received into the Church on that and some days previously. He begged their prayers that the work now begun might go on spreading and increasing daily, till all those were brought into the fold of Christ that ought to belong to it—that all those to whom God had given grace might have the veil taken from their eyes. He asked their prayers also—for prayer was omnipotent—that all those who had anything to do with the erection of St. Saviour's church might be brought to the light of truth. They could not undo what they had done. St. Saviour's church, so called, was given up to Protestants, and there was an end of it. They had given it over to the State. They could not undo their work, but it would be a great thing for all of them, while they felt that they could not undo much that they had done, that at least they could save their own souls, and show their earnestness by retracing their steps as far as they could. He begged them to pray that every one of the earnest persons who preached sermons at the opening of St. Saviour's church, might be brought into the fold of Christ; that all those who had hung upon their words might be brought fully to the truth; that those who, to some extent had been nursing fathers to the Catholic Church, though they knew it not, might be brought in; and that every one who had been instrumental in the spread of Catholic doctrines in England, though they knew it not, might be brought into the Catholic Church.' Finally, Dr. Newman asked his Catholic hearers to pray for himself, that he might be enabled to do his share of the work which had begun."

CHAPTER XII.

WHEN these events were occurring in Leeds, and stirring up the religious world in divers opposing senses, the little community of Oblates of Mary at Everingham was pursuing its daily routine of quiet missionary duty. There was a longing among its members that an opportunity might be afforded to them to engage in work more in harmony with the spirit and special end of their vocation, the evangelizing of the poor, than that which offered itself in the well-ordered and beautiful village at Everingham. They set their hearts upon a field being opened to their labours somewhere amidst the crowds of perishing souls, with which they had reason to fear many of the great manufacturing districts of Yorkshire abounded. God was about to hear their prayers, and to accomplish their desires in this matter. An accidental meeting, which took place in a railway carriage, between one of the converts of St. Saviour's (the Rev. George Crawley) and the writer, was the simple but effective instrumentality which God employed to open a field of congenial labour

for the Oblates of Mary in Leeds. An invitation was then given by Mr. Crawley to the writer, to visit Leeds. Mr. Crawley said, "We are staying at the cottage-orphanage, which we have established, and to which we came when we left St. Saviour's vicarage, after our reception into the Church. Several of our late parishioners wish to become Catholics. As we are only laymen, the presence of a Priest amongst us for a few days will be very serviceable." The writer arrived that night at the cottage-orphanage at Hill House-place, in Leeds, which is a short distance from St. Saviour's, and was very kindly received by Mr. Crawley and his fellow converts. A mattress laid on the kitchen floor was the best sleeping accommodation they could offer him, for they had no better for themselves. The orphans occupied the bed rooms, and an apartment was set aside for an oratory. Within this humble oratory, on the following morning, which was the opening of a bright May-day in 1851, the writer said his first Mass in Leeds. That day, on examining the neighbourhood of St. Saviour's, he ascertained that there was no Catholic church in that large and thickly-peopled district of Leeds. It seemed to him that it was a spot well suited as a labour field for the Oblates of Mary. He thereupon wrote to the Bishop of Beverley, the Right Rev. Dr. Briggs, to inquire if his lordship would be willing to allow the Oblates

of Mary to establish a church and house in that part of Leeds, and to give them charge of a district in that locality. By return of post he got the Bishop's cheerful consent to his application. It was thought advisable to lose no time in inaugurating the new mission. An unoccupied beer-shop, and its *quondam* dancing-room, were rented. The latter was to serve as a temporary church, and the former as a community residence for the Fathers. On the 22nd of October, 1851, the temporary church was opened for public Catholic worship. The sermon was preached by Father Oakley. For six years this little temporary church remained the scene of active missionary labour, and of many signal graces, and visible favours, conferred by God on several persons, Catholics, Protestants, and Freethinkers.

We shall here, in all simplicity, speak of what the writer cannot help regarding as an extraordinary occurrence which happened in connection with the temporary church at St. Mary's. A respectable poor Catholic woman was on the point of entering the church one evening, to join in a service which was about commencing, when at the door she was accosted by an aged woman—a Methodist. After a short conversation, the former said to the latter, "Would you like to enter our church?" The good woman replied, "I should like to do so, very much, and should wish to know what it is like, as I have

never been in one of your places." Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was about to be given when they both entered the church together. At the close of the Benediction service, as they were leaving the church, the aged Methodist, who had been for the first time in a Catholic church, and who had no knowledge whatever of a single Catholic doctrine, said to her companion, in Yorkshire dialect, "What a bonnie bairn was on that table to-night." "Bairn," replied the Catholic woman in surprise, "why there was no bairn on the altar, which you call table." "Oh yes, there was," exclaimed the Methodist, "did you not see, when that gentleman who wore something shining on his shoulders went up and opened the door of a cupboard that was on the table, a beautiful bairn came out, and He smiled at me, and I smiled at Him, and I said to Him, 'Oh sweet lovely bairn, Thy mother has reason to be proud of Thee.' A boy tinkled a bell, and all the people popped down their heads, but I did not pop down mine, but I kept looking at the beautiful bairn. The gentleman who stood at the table went to put the bairn back into the little cupboard, and I said, 'What a shame to put the bairn into that cupboard, He will surely get smothered there.' I was angry, and felt I ought to run up and save the poor little bairn from being smothered, by snatching Him from the gentleman's arms." The Catho-

lic woman was much surprised by these words, and said in reply to her friend, "Would you wish to speak to a Priest?" "Oh yes," answered the aged Methodist woman, "for the smile of that bairn has quite won my heart to your religion." Both agreed to seek at once an interview with one of the Priests of the church. They met the writer. He heard from the lips of the poor Methodist the statement of what she had just seen in the church. The good woman did not seem to think that there was anything extraordinary in what she stated she had witnessed, for it seemed to her that everybody in the church must have seen the beautiful child that she saw coming out from the tabernacle and smiling upon her. The Catholic doctrine of the Real Presence was one of which she had not the faintest knowledge, consequently her imagination could not have been impressed on that occasion by any perceptions concerning that mystery. The best proof of her sincerity in the statement she then made was the fact of her sudden and real conversion to the Catholic faith, which she embraced in opposition to her relatives and friends, who were amazed at the event, knowing that she had never, till then, shown any leaning towards Catholicism. "The smile of the bairn has won my heart to it," was the answer she gave when questioned as to the cause of her embracing the Catholic faith. The writer had the

happiness of instructing her, and of receiving her into the Church. For six months she led the life of a fervent Catholic ; at the close of that time she was seized with her death illness, and died an edifying death. She sees now in heaven, face to face, Him who the writer believes condescended to become visible to her view on earth, under the form of a sweet smiling little " bairn."

The writer cannot help introducing a circumstance which was related to him by a brother Priest, and which had occurred a short time previously in Bradford, Yorkshire. This good Priest had to answer a sick call one day, and by mistake he entered the room of a dying aged Protestant woman ; discovering his mistake he was about to withdraw, when the poor woman called after him, saying, " Minister ! minister ! where shall I be able to find the Body and Blood of my Saviour ; I have been reading my bible, and found these words in it : '*Except you eat of the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you.*' I want to gain eternal life, and unless I receive His body and blood, I cannot gain it." The good Priest told her who he was, that he was a Catholic Priest, and that Catholics believed in the Real Presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Holy Eucharist, and that if she wished he would instruct her in the doctrines of the Catholic Church, and receive

her into its fold, and that then he could administer to her the real Flesh and Blood of Jesus. The poor aged woman, who was overjoyed at the proposal, was received into the Church, and made her first and last communion upon her happy death-bed. Ah, it was a hungering after the real Flesh and Blood of Jesus Christ, and not after a myth, or shadow, or empty figure, that the Holy Spirit had awakened in her soul.

Mary N—, whose full name circumstances prevent us from giving, was a member of one of the many bodies of dissenters in Leeds. God filled her soul with a yearning after the truth, which she felt she had not yet found. She prayed earnestly for it, and she resolved to continue her search until she found it. She went from one dissenting chapel to another. Baptist, Methodist, and Church of England places of worship were visited by her in vain. The truth which she sought for had not yet revealed itself to her mind and heart. Rumour spoke to her of the Puseyite church of St. Saviour, and she said to herself, "Perhaps there I might find the true religion." She reached the summit of Richmond Hill. On its eastern slope stood St. Saviour's, on its western crest was located the then temporary Catholic church of St. Mary's. Her object was to go to the Puseyite church in search of the true faith. It never once occurred to her that the truth might be

found in a Catholic church. Being a stranger in that locality, she had to ask her way to St. Saviour's. She met a little boy, of whom she inquired the way to that church. In a grave earnest tone the child made answer to her inquiry, "St. Saviour's is not the true church, go there;" and the child pointed, as he spoke, to the temporary church of St. Mary's. The good woman looked on the indication given her by this child as a message from God, which we believe it was. Following the directions given her, she entered the little temporary church. There was no one present at the time, but the Blessed Sacrament was in the Tabernacle, and a lamp was silently burning before it. She had scarcely crossed the threshold of the humble oratory, when a feeling of deep interior peace came upon her, and a voice speaking in the depths of her soul said to her, "Here you will find what you have been seeking for—the true religion." She fell upon her knees and wept much; her tears were those of tranquil joy at having found at last the treasure which she had been so long searching for, till then in vain—the truth. She resolved not to return to her home until she had seen a Priest. The writer was the first Priest which she met that day. She introduced herself to him, and told her own simple touching story. After a few weeks of preparatory instruction, he had the happiness of receiving her into the

Church. God had called that humble but earnest-minded woman to a living martyrdom for the faith, which was to extend over a period of several years. Her husband was a man of violent temper, and of bitter hatred of Catholicity. Again and again her blood flowed copiously under the blows which he inflicted on her, because of her refusing, at his request, to renounce the Catholic religion. She was deposed by him, for the same cause, from the management of the household, at the head of which her daughter, a child of fourteen years, was placed. She was finally driven from her house, no more to return to it, and she had to support herself for the rest of her days as a worker in a flax mill; all the while she led a life of prayer, and every Sunday morning found her among the devout communicants at the altar rails of St. Mary's. But God reserved for her, in her sorrows, great consolations, which were trials, it must be confessed, at the same time. Shortly after she was driven from her home, her daughter, whom she loved very much, fell dangerously ill. The father had left orders that his wife should not be permitted to visit her poor sick child, but she eluded his cruel vigilance, and found her way to her child's bedside. The devoted woman, perceiving, when she entered the apartment, that her child was in danger of death, felt that no time was to be lost in carrying out the chief object of her

visit, which was to seek to communicate to her, in some way, the blessings of the Catholic faith. Approaching her dying child, she bent over her and whispered into her ear, with the earnestness of inspiration, "My child, the Catholic religion is the true religion; may God grant you the grace to believe in it." The words of the pious mother would seem to have been possessed of a sacramental power, for the dying girl, who had no knowledge of the Catholic faith till then, replied, in accents that bespoke conviction, "Mother, I do believe in the Catholic religion, and I wish to die a Catholic." On the instant, Mrs. N— dispatched a messenger to St. Mary's, for a Priest to come and baptise her daughter, and receive her into the Catholic Church before her death. One of the Fathers was soon on the spot. He convinced himself at once by questioning the dying girl that her desire to become a Catholic was sincere. She received Holy Baptism with sentiments of lively faith and tender compunction for her sins. A few moments after, before the Priest left the place, a sweet smile passed over her countenance, and she calmly expired in her devoted mother's arms. The latter, kissing the lifeless form of her beloved child, and brushing the tears from her eyes, hastily withdrew, having fulfilled her mission on behalf of her child's soul. Her husband entered a few moments after her departure, fortu-

nately too late to disturb the dying moments of their happy child.

We shall now proceed to narrate a further instance in which God's Holy Providence employed the simple earnest faith of this heroic woman, in conducting into the true fold another soul, when on the point of quitting this life. Her only sister was one of those who gave marks of greatest irritation at her conversion to the Catholic faith. She was a clever, intelligent woman, but very anti-catholic in her tone of mind. She was laid prostrate by an illness, which was to prove fatal. Mary N— was night and day at the bedside of the invalid. The illness was rapid in its fatal progress. The thought which was uppermost in the breast of Mary N— was her concern about her sister's soul, and her desire that she might obtain from God the grace of becoming a Catholic before her death. At last Mary N— resolved to speak to her dying sister on the subject of becoming a Catholic, but before doing so she sought, in earnest prayer, God's blessing on her words of sisterly advice. We pause here for a few moments in our humble narrative, to give prominence to a circumstance seemingly trivial in itself, but which was to serve, in God's designs, as a link in the chain of His Holy Providence, by which a soul was to be drawn from error to the truth. The writer, having to absent himself for a few weeks from home, invited

Father Jolivet, O.M.I., of Liverpool, now the venerable Bishop of Natal, to come to Leeds to aid the Fathers at St. Mary's. In his letter to Father Jolivet he informed him that, owing to his being called away somewhat unexpectedly from Leeds, he could not obtain before the lapse of one or two days missionary faculties for him from the Right Rev. Dr. Briggs, who resided in York. Father Jolivet left Liverpool for Leeds on the day on which he received the writer's letter. His train reached Mirfield Junction, in Yorkshire, and whilst standing on the platform another train coming from an opposite direction stopped at the same station. On the arrival of the second train, Father Jolivet, raising his eyes, met the glance of the good Bishop of Beverley, who was in a carriage immediately opposite. A friendly greeting and a few playful words were interchanged, when Father Jolivet said, "I am going to St. Mary's, Leeds, and I want missionary faculties from your lordship." The Bishop immediately replied, "I grant you all the faculties you require." In the instant both trains separated. Father Jolivet reached Leeds, duly authorized to discharge there his priestly functions. We shall now show how this circumstance was to have a providential bearing in God's dealings with a soul, which was then in death's agony.

Mrs. N— having prayed fervently for God's

blessing on her words, stood by the bedside of her dying sister and said, "I pray to God to grant you the grace to become a Catholic, for the Catholic religion is the true one." The effect of these simple words, blessed God, was instantaneous. The dying woman, who till then had no thought of becoming a Catholic, made answer, "Yes, I believe the Catholic religion to be the true one, and I wish to die a Catholic." Overjoyed at receiving this answer, Mrs. N— hastened to St. Mary's for a Priest. All the Fathers were absent, but at the moment Father Jolivet arrived from Liverpool. If he at that time had not been already authorized by the Bishop to exercise priestly faculties in Leeds, he would have asked Mrs. N— to apply either at St. Patrick's or St. Anne's presbytery for a Priest, especially as he did not look on the sick as an urgent one. This would have involved a fatal delay. As it was, he went at once to attend the sick person, and thinking the sick person was a Catholic of long standing, well instructed in her religion, and fit to receive Holy Communion, he took the sacred vessel containing the Blessed Sacrament with him. Having reached the dwelling of the sick woman, he discovered that it was only a few minutes previously that she had declared her wish to die a Catholic. He found her quite fixed in this determination, and that her faith in the truth of the Catholic religion was as

fervent as if she had been brought up from childhood in that belief. At first he renounced the prospect of being able, in the short time which her visibly approaching death left at his disposal, to instruct her sufficiently, and prepare her for Holy Communion. Having administered to her conditional Baptism, and the Sacraments of Penance and Extreme Uction, he was struck by the intelligent piety she exhibited in the reception of these Sacraments. This circumstance encouraged, on his part, the hope that he might, with God's blessing, be able fittingly to prepare her for the worthy reception of the Holy Eucharist, during the brief moments of life that were still hers. He proposed to her belief in a few clear words, the doctrine of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist. His words fell upon her soul like living fire upon dry wood. An immediate kindling of Eucharistic faith in her breast was the instantaneous result of his teaching on the Real Presence in that death chamber. No where is the gift of the "tongue of fire" more readily accorded to God's Priests than at death beds. On such spots they have been made again and again to feel that there had taken place in their regard a fulfilment of the promise of our Lord, "*It shall be given to you in that hour what to speak.*"—Matt. x. 19. Scarcely had the good Priest spoken of our Lord's Real Presence in the Holy

Eucharist, when a cry of belief burst from the lips of the dying woman. "Yes, I believe," she exclaimed, "that my Saviour Jesus Christ is truly present in the Holy Sacrament. Oh! give Him to me; give me my Saviour Jesus Christ before I die." With great devotion she communicated. Immediately after her communion, as Father Jolivet stated to the writer, she became like one inspired. From her lips broke forth a canticle of praise, adoration, thanksgiving, and love, which in sublimity and tenderness of thought and language, might be compared to some of the scripture canticles. "No where," said Father Jolivet, "in the writings of the saints have I read anything surpassing in loftiness and beauty of holy sentiment, the words that fell from the lips of that dying woman, after her first and last communion. They equal anything I have met with in the works of St. Teresa. I only regret that I was not able to commit them to writing as they were spoken—for my own edification and for that of others." In the midst of these fervent outpourings of her penitent and loving heart, her soul passed away from this life into the hands of a merciful God. She died before Father Jolivet had left the room.

The news has lately reached the writer of the death of Mrs. N—, after a life of more than a quarter of a century of many sufferings for the faith, and of its devout and fervent practice.

In Leeds, as in all the great manufacturing towns of the North, as well as of other parts of England, unhappily there are many who neither practise nor profess any religion at all. This class of persons in Yorkshire, when casually asked to what religion they belong, readily make answer, "We are 'Nouts,'" which signifies that they profess no particular religion whatever. One day one of the Fathers of St. Mary's, when visiting his district, chanced to stray into a house inhabited by a family who styled themselves "Nouts." Seated at the fireside he saw a poor youth of sixteen who had the appearance of being far gone in consumption. Addressing himself to the invalid boy, he found that he had not been baptised, and that he had scarcely the faintest knowledge of a single christian truth. He was willing, however, to be instructed, and to be baptised, and his parents readily gave their consent. An approaching day was appointed for the Baptism, as it was evident that the sick youth had not many days longer to live. When the Priest arrived on the appointed morning to baptise the dying boy, he found the door of his residence closed and the place unoccupied, for the family had removed elsewhere, and nobody could give information as to where they had gone to. The Priest was greatly troubled at this occurrence, for he felt that the unbaptised youth had only a few days at most

to live. Inquiries after him were fruitless, and no other resource remained but earnest prayer to God that He would bless with success the efforts that were being made to find out where he resided. A poor factory girl was the instrument which God was to employ to make the desired discovery. She was one of the devout frequenters of St. Mary's. She used to contribute week by week her own generous mite towards the building of the new church which was then in progress. She further devoted her Sundays between the service times in collecting from house to house subscriptions for the new building. One Sunday afternoon it occurred to her that she might succeed better with her collection, were she to go to some part in or about Leeds to which she had not gone before in search of contributions. She fixed upon Holbeck, an outskirt of Leeds, about two miles from St. Mary's. She had spent some hours pursuing the good work upon which she was engaged, when she suddenly remembered that the hour of the vesper service was approaching, and that it would consequently be necessary for her to return to St. Mary's without further delay. Being a stranger at Holbeck, she easily lost herself in the maze of new and narrow streets that had sprung up recently in that busy suburb of Leeds. Failing to extricate herself from her perplexity, meeting no one to direct her, and night having already

fallen, she knocked at the door of a house in a long terrace of new cottages, to make inquiry about her way back to St. Mary's. When the door was opened, the first object she beheld was the form of a dying youth stretched in the agony of death. She forgot then all about her return to St. Mary's. A few rapid questions brought out the fact that he was the poor boy above referred to. His mother said, "We had to 'flit' from Richmond Hill, because our work lay here; we 'flitted' on the morning on which the Priest was to have baptised him." "Does he wish to be baptised, and are you willing?" "Yes," was the answer given to the devout girl's question. She took a cab and drove in haste to St. Mary's. She met Father Kirby, who accompanied her at once to the home of the dying boy. Bending over him, the Priest received from his lips the expressed desire of Baptism, and also an act of faith and of sorrow for his sins. Baptism was administered; a bright gleam passed over his dying features, and the waters of Baptism were scarcely dry upon his forehead, when his purified soul winged its happy flight into the presence of its God.

We proceed to record another instance of conversion to the Catholic faith from the ranks of the "Nouts," which occurred about the same time as the one just reported. A young man, a carpenter employed in roofing the new church of St. Mary's

met, unhappily, with an accident which was to prove fatal. This poor man had learned from an Irish fellow-workman how to recite the Lord's Prayer and Hail Mary in Irish. After his sad accident he was taken to the Leeds Infirmary. Finding himself in danger of death, he bethought himself of his soul. He wished to pray, but the only form of prayer that had ever been taught to him was the Irish Our Father and Hail Mary. These prayers he then began to recite aloud in Irish, no longer in play as he used to do, but in all the earnestness of a dying man craving for mercy from his God. The attendants in the hospital were amazed at hearing him, whom they knew to be a Yorkshire man, praying aloud in a language that sounded so strange to their ears. The devout recital of the Lord's Prayer and Hail Mary in Irish, was to act sacramentally. It obtained the gift of Catholic faith for that poor Yorkshire "Nout," as he lay upon his bed of death. No one had approached him yet to speak to him on the subject of religion, nevertheless in his heart he believes the Catholic religion to be true, and he wishes to die a Catholic. A Church of England clergyman from St. Saviour's went to see him. The poor sufferer looked steadily into the face of the visitor, and discovering that he was not a Catholic Priest, refused to accept of the proffered aid of his ministry. Shortly after, one of the Fathers of St. Mary's called

to see him. The poor man expressed his desire to become a Catholic. He was received into the Catholic Church, and lived on still for some days longer, during which time he was visited by his mother, and other members of his family, who were all "Nouts." His relatives were so struck by the change which conversion to the Catholic faith had wrought in him, that they also expressed a desire to become Catholics. Shortly after his holy death they were received into the Catholic Church.

We will pause here to offer a few reflections on the subject of those instances of conversion to the Catholic faith, which we introduce into our narrative of the missionary works of the Oblates of Mary. In the first place we lay claim to no exceptional success attendant on the labours of the Oblate missionaries, by the fact of having such instances of conversion to put on record in connection with their works. We are sure that similar, if not more striking cases of conversion to the Catholic faith, bless the labours of all zealous Priests, both secular and regular, at the present time. We feel however that these facts, so capable of edifying, have been kept too much in the background hitherto, and that events in the order of grace have been allowed to drop into oblivion which, if put on record, would tend to prove that God is still working His wonders among men now, as in former days, and that amidst the web,

and tangle, and tumult, and throng of nineteenth-century crowds, souls may be found that vie with the old saints of the Desert, of the Catacombs, and of the Forum, in every form of sanctity that gives the beauty of variety to holiness. Speaking of the conversions themselves, the accounts of which we introduce into our pages, we will at once acknowledge that the visible means by which they have been wrought do not bear proportion to the end accomplished. The non-catholic reader of hard cold intellect, should the eye of such glance over our pages, will, perhaps, as he reads there of conversions to the Catholic faith, especially of the poor and unlettered, be disposed to think that persons, unintelligent as they, were not capable of exercising the intellectual acumen needed for deciding upon the truth or falsehood of Catholic doctrine. High intellect is in no wise necessary for deep and ardent and enlightened faith. Who more intellectual than Satan, yet he is the father of lies. It is true that men of loftiest genius, of deepest research, of most extensive and varied acquirements, giants in intellectual stature, have in all ages of the Catholic Church stood out among the most lovingly attached and the most perfectly submissive of her disciples. But they were blessed with the gift of Catholic belief, not because of the splendid array of their intellectual gifts, but because of their docility,

humility, and purity of heart, and if they had not these qualities, they would have remained in the ranks of unbelievers, outside the Fold of the One Shepherd. The want of such dispositions was the cause of the unbelief of the intellectual and learned in our Lord's own days, in the days of the apostles, in every age of christianity, and is the cause of the unbelief of many learned and highly intellectual men in these our own times. Mental light and soul darkness is the condition of the educated unbeliever. Mind has an indefinite power of penetrating matter, but it is stopped at the very threshold of the supernatural life and destinies of the spirit. Thus far, O human mind, art thou allowed to go by aid of thy own light, but no further. Thou needest a light which proceeds from no human focus, from no brain of philosopher, from no council of the world's wise men, to disclose to thee the origin and the end of thy own one soul. Uncreated light alone can give knowledge on these deep questions. That uncreated light is in God. From God's Spirit it has to pass into man's spirit through the channels, and in the measure and by the ways that God Himself appoints. How varied are all these mediums and ways by which the light which gives faith, travels from God's Spirit to man's spirit. It may grow upon a man slowly, ray by ray, through the channel of his reasoning faculties, or it may

enter the chamber of the soul as the sunshine of the summer morning enters through the unshuttered window of the chamber of our rest, fully—gloriously—all at once. It is thus the light of faith is given all at once, through the teaching of Holy Church, to God's little ones, to the poor, the unlettered, to the humble, to the clean of heart, to some chosen ones whom God selects, for reasons known to Himself, in the East or in the West, to guide them to their appointed place in His kingdom—the Church.

God is Master of the agencies which He deigns to employ in drawing souls to Himself, from error or from sin, or from both combined. The voice in the heart, or the voice in heart and ear at the same time, has been often the divinely-appointed agency of some signal conversion. A conversion to the Catholic religion, of an extraordinary kind, which was attended by unusual circumstances, took place, to the writer's own knowledge, in Leeds, the account of which he now proposes to relate. A poor man, a Protestant named Scruton, who resided in St. Mary's district in one of the courts at the foot of Richmond Hill, had been dangerously ill for some weeks, during which time he was attended by the Rev. Mr. N— of St. Saviour's, and Miss L—, one of the lady visitors of that church. Though sharp-minded, poor Scruton was very illiterate, and animated with

a great hostility to the Catholic faith. He had been accustomed to speak in terms far from respectful of his Holiness the Pope, whom he strangely fancied to be a Leeds man, living in Leeds. One night he heard a voice in his sleep which said to him distinctly, that unless he became a Roman Catholic he would lose his soul. Awakening from his sleep quite alarmed, he said to his wife, "Go at once for the Pope, tell him I want to see him before I die." His wife, at his bidding, went forth in search of the Pope. Meeting a Catholic woman of her acquaintance, she asked her where the Pope lived, for she wanted to fetch him to her husband, who could not die easy without seeing him. The Catholic woman informed Mrs. Scruton that the Pope lived far away beyond the seas, in a place called Rome, and it was for a Priest that people sent in time of sickness, and she asked her to go with her to St. Mary's to get a Priest to visit her husband. They met the writer on their reaching St. Mary's, and his became the privilege of taking the Holy Father's place at the sick bed of Scruton. He found him fully impressed, owing to the warning he had received in his sleep, with the conviction that he could not save his soul unless he entered the Catholic Church. Yet he had no Catholic sympathies or leanings; on the contrary, he had a dislike for the Catholic religion; besides, he was very ignorant.

The writer felt puzzled how to act in his regard; taking however into account the poor man's danger of death, and his expressed conviction that he could not be saved unless he became a Roman Catholic, he received him into the Church, and gave him Extreme Unction. He had however his fears that should poor Scruton rally during the night and find himself better the next day, his faith would not be proof against the tempting influences which were sure to be brought to bear upon it. These fears turned out but too true. When the writer called to see the man the next day, the latter refused to speak to him. Other visitors had preceded him, under whose persuasions poor Scruton fell back into his former anti-catholic ways. The writer, while deploring his falling away so readily from his newly-acquired faith, felt that the poor man was not so guilty in the eyes of God of the abuse of grace, as another more enlightened would be, under similar circumstances. Prayers in his behalf were offered up by several pious souls. These prayers were not to remain unheard. One night the writer was prevented by some duty he had to discharge from retiring to rest at the usual hour. The midnight hour struck. A fierce storm, which was accompanied by torrents of rain, had been sweeping for some hours over the summit of Richmond Hill, and was then at the height of its fury. A loud knocking was heard

at the entrance door, which was opened by the writer. A figure of unusual proportions stood out in dim outline in the faint glare of a solitary street lamp. To the writer's question, "Who is there?" a sepulchral voice made answer, "I am Scruton, and I am come to do penance." Yes, it was Scruton himself, in the agony of death, borne on the shoulders of a poor Irishman. Upon the writer's inquiring as to the circumstances which led to so strange and unexpected a visit, he received the following explanation: That same night Scruton had been again startled by a voice heard in his sleep, which said to him anew that his soul would surely be lost unless he died a Roman Catholic. Awakening in terror, he said to his wife, "Go for Father Cooke." "Nay," said she in reply, "the gentleman would not come to you after your having acted towards him as you have done. If I had gone over to the Romans I would have remained a Roman." "Then," he replied, "if Father Cooke does not come to me, I must go to him; for I will not lose my soul to please Mr. N— or Miss L—, or any one; you must lift me up and take me to him." The poor woman, in obedience to the wishes of her husband, raised him from his death-bed, and wrapping a blanket around him, carried him in her arms in face of the midnight storm. She struggled on under her load, with difficulty, until she reached the foot of Rich-

mond Hill. There her strength failed her, and the dying man slipped from her arms into a shallow pool of water at the hill's base, which the great rains of the previous days had formed. It was not more than a foot in depth, but it sufficed to drench him thoroughly. Things were in this state when an Irish working man, who had been engaged on night duty, and was returning to his home, was attracted by poor Scruton's groans as he lay in the water. Learning how the case stood, and that it was a dying Protestant who wished to see the Priest and become a Catholic before his death, he most willingly lent him his assistance, and bore him on his shoulders to the door of the Priest's dwelling. Such was the story of poor Scruton's appearance at the hour of midnight, under a pelting storm and in the throes of death, at the door of St. Mary's humble presbytery. The first thought of the writer, on taking the poor exhausted invalid from the shoulders of the kind-hearted Irishman, was to offer him some wine to relieve his extreme exhaustion. On wine being offered to him he replied, "Nay sir, nay, I have been too fond hitherto of the loaves and fishes, and the good things of this life; it is not for any of these I now wish, my only desire at present is to obtain the grace of God, and the pardon of my sins. I come now to be prepared by you to die a Catholic." The writer could scarcely believe that it was the

same man whom he had seen after his apostasy from the Catholic faith but a few days previously, so full now was he of faith and fervour, and compunction for his sins. He lived for three days longer after that midnight visit to St. Mary's presbytery. He spent the intervening time in continual prayer. On Good Friday morning he breathed his redeemed and sanctified soul into the hands of Jesus Christ his Saviour. His wife and son became Catholics shortly after his death, and did not survive long their reception into the Church.

Immediately in the rear of St. Mary's temporary church rose the *plateau* of Richmond Hill, one of the highest points in Leeds or its vicinity, from which a view is gained of the whole town and of the surrounding country for miles. This hill summit was famous in the days of the wars between the Cavaliers and Roundheads. Here the Marquis of Newcastle pitched his camp, which was captured by General Fairfax when he seized the town of Leeds on the 23rd of January, 1643. The position fell back again shortly afterwards into the hands of the Royalists.

On the morning of the 24th of May, 1853, the feast of Our Lady the Help of Christians, another camp-tent is pitched on the summit of Richmond Hill. From beneath its white folds issues the sacred symbol of warfare and victory—the Cross of Jesus Christ—borne by youthful hands, and followed by a long train

of levites and of Priests. A venerable Pontiff, of holy and imposing aspect, closes the line of the procession. The smoke of the ancient battles that often capped these heights in gloom, now gives way to wreathing clouds of fragrant incense, and songs of war give place to songs of God—to the chanting of those psalms and hymns which the Church appoints for the ceremonial of blessing the foundations on which are to rise the walls of her new temples. Such was the beautiful and impressive ceremonial which on that day was being performed on the *plateau* of Richmond Hill, which thenceforward was to be called Mount St. Mary's. Various are the ways in which the Catholic Church manifests her innate consciousness that she is the Church of all ages, of the future, as well as of the past. She puts that thought of hers into stone, and it rises up monumentally in her temples. She knows that the future is coming to her, and she prepares for its advent. In the construction of her sacred places she aims at providing not only for present wants, but also for future needs—for those other sheep that are not yet of her fold, but which are to be brought to her under the guidance of the Divine Shepherd, her Spouse.

On the day to which we refer, the foundations of a church of cathedral proportions were blessed by the Right Rev. Dr. Briggs, Bishop of

Beverley. Slowly but steadily grew the holy building into size, shape, and symmetry, not however without having to bear the brunt of a storm of obstacles.

CHAPTER XIII.

AT the close of the year 1855 the writer proceeded to Ireland, by the direction of Monseigneur de Mazenod, to take steps for the introduction, if such could be effected, of the Society of the Oblates of Mary into that country. No house of the society had as yet been established in Ireland, nor had a mission, up to that time, been given there by the Oblate Fathers. The mistake of a cab-driver, on the arrival of the writer in Dublin, in December, 1855, was to form a providential link in the chain of events which, in God's designs, was to lead up to the giving of the first mission, and to the founding of the first house by the Oblates of Mary in Ireland. The cab-driver had received orders from the writer to take him to an hotel at the north side of Dublin; by mistake he took him to one on the south side of the city, which was situated in the proximity of the church of the Augustinian Fathers. That church being the nearest to his hotel, the writer went there to say Mass. After Mass he made the acquaintance of the good Prior—Dr. Crane—the present Bishop

of Sandhurst, who, before the interview closed, asked for a mission to be given by the Oblates of Mary during the following May, in his church. The writer, who was Provincial at the time, readily accepted for his Fathers the invitation of the good Prior. On the 1st day of May, 1856, a mission was opened by the Oblates of Mary in the church of St. Augustine, Dublin. God was pleased to bless the labours of the Fathers engaged in it with extraordinary fruits of conversion. It lasted for a month. At the close of the mission the writer sought an interview with the Archbishop, Dr. Cullen, relative to the founding, in his Grace's diocese, of a house of Oblate Missionaries. At first the Archbishop supposed that the writer wished to establish a house of his society in Dublin itself, and he made some difficulties in granting his sanction to that effect. The writer however informed his lordship that his object was to found, if possible, a Missionary and Religious House of the Oblates of Mary somewhere in the neighbourhood of Dublin, where they could live in the observance of their rules, and from which they could give missions in different parts of Ireland. This explanation led to his asking, "In what suburb of Dublin would you wish to establish yourselves?" This question took the writer by surprise, but he had to give an answer on the spot, and the word *Kilmainham* came to his lips. The Archbishop

seemed pleased at the reply, and said, "It is the only suburb which is not already occupied by a religious body. You may take a house there when you please." The writer was not then aware of the proximity of Inchicore to Kilmainham, or of the great cause of pastoral solicitude, which the spiritual wants of that place were at that time causing in his Grace's mind. Inchicore, as is well known, was and is the central depôt of workshops for the construction of railway carriages and locomotives, &c., of the Great Southern and Western Railway Company. A thousand men were employed in these works, who resided in great numbers at Inchicore, in cottages built by the company. Many of the guards, engine drivers and stokers lived also at Inchicore. The railway company selected these men, in a large measure, from the foundries and railway works of England. They were Irishmen for the most part, and all clever and highly intelligent men, but many of them had been living for years in the neglect of their religious duties, and in the midst of infidel companions, in the great foundries of England. There were some apostles of infidelity among the body of working men at Inchicore, who sought by public lectures and a private propagandism, to spread their wicked teachings. Inchicore lay at the extremity of St. James' parish, and was a mile-and-a-half away from the church.

A great body of men residing there never went to Mass, and it was doubtful whether they were Catholics or not. Such was the population, in the midst of which the hand of God placed the first establishment of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Ireland. Counsell'd and patronized by the Right Rev. Dr. O'Connor, an Augustinian Prelate, formerly Vicar-Apostolic of Madras, and by Monseignor Yore, Vicar-General of Dublin, the writer lost no time in putting into execution the permission given by the Archbishop.

That same week negotiations were set on foot for the purchase of a suitable house and several acres of land, the writer having obtained the necessary permission of his Superior to that effect. The property belonged to a Jew, and the bargain had to be concluded without delay to prevent the price being raised, as would surely be the case on the purpose for which it was intended becoming known, before the deed of purchase was signed. A providential loan was placed in the hands of the writer by one who was a stranger to him, but who described himself as a client of St. Joseph. This loan enabled him to complete on the next day the purchase of the Inchicore property, at a very moderate price. If he had not received it, the negotiations for the purchase would have fallen through. He takes this occasion of thanking St. Joseph for having inspired

his devout client to come to his aid at so critical a moment. On the following Sunday Mass was said, with the permission of the Vicar-General, in the absence of the Archbishop, in a room of the newly-purchased house.

The writer, judging that increased accommodation would be necessary for the large congregation which would be sure to assemble on the following Sunday for Mass, took the opinion of some practical working men as to the best means of providing it. A young carpenter who was present undertook to have a large wooden chapel erected by the coming Sunday, provided that the men of the railway works lent their aid in constructing it. A cheerful response came from the railway men. Materials for the temporary building were on the ground on Tuesday, the 24th of June, the Feast of St. John the Baptist. That evening at six o'clock, after their regular day's labour, seven hundred men from the railway works and the neighbourhood of Inchicore, presented themselves to offer their services for the raising of the new temporary structure. They were all skilled workmen. From six till nine they laboured assiduously every evening that week at the new building. They completed their labour of love by ten o'clock on Saturday evening, and a building, capable of accommodating seven or eight hundred people, was raised by these devoted men in sixteen hours. The

following morning, the Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul, High Mass was sung in the new temporary church of Mary Immaculate, in presence of an overflowing congregation. But the most gratifying feature of the whole proceeding was the wonderful awakening up of dormant faith and practical religion in the breasts of these skilled and intelligent workmen, which accompanied their voluntary and cheerful labours in raising the new sanctuary of Mary Immaculate at Inchicore. Many were causes of surprise to one another as they took their places for the first time in the ranks of the new church builders. "What, are you a Catholic? I never thought you were one till now," was a frequent exclamation addressed by one working man to another. Alas! though brethren in creed, many of them knew it not until their joint labours for their common mother, Holy Church, revealed this fact to their knowledge. "Were you not surprised when you visited the new church which was built in four days?" was a question which a wife addressed to her husband who had been absent when the church was being constructed. "Yes I was," replied her husband, "but there was something which surprised me much more than the new church; it was that I saw A. B. on his knees saying his prayers." A. B. (we suppress the real initials) was one who was regarded as an infidel, and with good show of reason,

if speech and conduct were to serve as criterions; but he lent a helping hand in building the new church, and he got his reward in the restored gift of living faith working by contrite love. A mission given in the temporary church by the Fathers of Inchicore crowned with new blessings their early labours in that locality. The evening exercises of the mission especially were attended by the men of the railway works in crowds. The church was crammed, and hundreds listened to the sermons standing under the windows or at the doors outside. There was a large attendance also of railway guards, engine drivers, and stokers. The Fathers at Inchicore have always taken a special interest in the moral and spiritual well-being of this important class of men, upon whose steady conduct and conscientious discharge of duties, the very lives of many depend. It was during the mission that the Archbishop, Dr. Cullen, paid his first visit to the new establishment of the Oblates at Inchicore. He expressed surprise and delight at what he saw, and gave his blessing to the good work.

We cannot quit this portion of our narrative of the Inchicore foundation, without placing a wreath of affectionate remembrance around the memory of one whom, in life, the writer regarded as a living saint, and whose place he believes now to be very high in heaven. Father Richard had been for

several years, though still a young man, Master of Novices at the chief Novitiate House of the Oblates of Mary in France. Continued ill health, in the opinion of his medical advisers, rendered it dangerous for his life to remain charged with the responsibilities of that large establishment. He was transferred to England by Monseigneur de Mazenod. An improvement having taken place in his health, he was appointed Novice Master in the Novitiate House which had then been lately opened by the Oblates at Sicklinghall, in Yorkshire. Whilst there he made but few acquaintances, as his duties confined him to a class of occupations which, though very important, make but little show or noise in the world. Among the few whose acquaintance he did make, was the celebrated naturalist and traveller, Charles Waterton, of Walton Hall, Yorkshire. Mr. Waterton held Father Richard in the deepest veneration, and looked upon it as a great privilege to be allowed to serve his Mass, which he often did. Father Richard was the first who was appointed local Superior of the new community at Inchicore. Alas, it was not God's will to allow him to remain long the light and the benediction of that new establishment. Signs of an approaching early death were beginning to make themselves manifest in his mien and manner. They appeared more in lights than in shades, in joyous hopeful utterances than in sad and

troubled ones. One day, while walking in the garden of their house with the writer, he opened his mind to him in these words, which seemed almost echoes from another world—a world of peace, and rest, and bliss. “Father,” he said, and his face shone with strange brightness as he spoke, “for days past I have been experiencing a deep sense of interior peace, a sweet and profound calm of spirit, which I cannot describe to you. I am sure this great grace has come to me through the hands of my Immaculate Mother, whom you know I love so much. What does it mean? Is it a sign that my exile is soon to end?” Such in truth it was: it was one of those dawn-beams that flash suddenly in the darkness, and bespeak with certainty the coming day. Before that week had passed away, the writer, who was then engaged in preaching a course of sermons in Dublin, was hurriedly called to Father Richard’s bedside by a messenger, who informed him that this good Father was dying. It seems that he had been seized with a violent paroxysm, and had lain for an hour on the point of death. As the writer entered his room the worst symptoms had passed away. Seeing the change for the better, the writer said to him, “You are not going to die this time.” “No,” replied Father Richard playfully, “and I am sorry for it, for I had made all my preparations, and I shall have to begin all over again.” A

few days more brought him face to face with the final scene of his holy life. The writer stood beside him in his death agony; it was a touching and instructive scene. He suffered much, but there was no complaint. *Cupio dissolvi et esse cum Christo* (*I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ*), were the words which were among the most frequent of his death-bed utterances. He lay buried in silent prayer, and if his lips did not move, one might think him dead. At that moment there came from the adjoining church the sound of children's voices, chanting a holy hymn; a gleam of joy passed over the features of the dying Priest. Opening his eyes he fixed them on the writer, saying, "Listen Father! How sweetly those children sing the praises of God. Oh how I love to hear the singing of God's praises!" These were his last words. What he loved to hear he now hears and he takes his own part, we may feel sure, in singing in heaven the praises of his God.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE first visit of Monseigneur de Mazenod to England was made in A.D. 1850. Accompanied by Father Casimir Aubert, he left Marseilles on the 1st of June of that year. Affairs connected with the interests of the congregation made it necessary that they should pass through Belgium. They travelled by the east of France into Germany. They visited *en route* the cities of Besançon, Strasbourg, Mayence, Frankfort, Cologne, and Aix la Chapelle. The young Duke de Rohan, who was one of Monseigneur de Mazenod's earliest friends, as we have mentioned elsewhere, had pursued his ecclesiastical vocation, had become a Priest, and was promoted to the Cardinalate. He died and was buried at Besançon. His tomb was an object of pious interest to Monseigneur de Mazenod when passing through that place. At Strasbourg, Monseigneur de Mazenod was the guest of the Bishop of that city, and was treated with every mark of deference and kind attention. Similar marks of respect were shown to him in other places of his stoppage. The Redemp-

torist Fathers at Liege and Brussels exerted their hospitality towards him with great regard and affectionate respect. He felt no where more at home than with these good Fathers. On the night of the 17th of June he arrived from Ostend at Dover. He stopped at the Sablonière hotel on his arrival in London. The next day he said Mass at the Oratory, where he met Father Dalgairns. This Father was profuse in his attentions to him. He introduced him to the late Duke of Norfolk, who was then the Earl of Arundel. His lordship kindly undertook to conduct Monseigneur de Mazenod to visit some of the principal objects of interest in the west of London. He conducted him, among other places, to the House of Commons, where they were present at a debate. Lady Arundel, the present Dowager Duchess of Norfolk, had then lately become a Catholic. He was more than once the guest of the Earl of Arundel during his stay in London. He was very much struck by the cheerful but reverent tone with which subjects of a religious and pious nature were readily spoken of at table on these occasions.

West London lay then before them in the bloom of its season of pleasure and display, but he bethought himself that there was another London besides that of parks and squares—a London of courts and alleys, miles away to the east of the great metropolis. Thither he felt prone to go on a

sort of missionary pilgrimage to poverty's shrine. Thither he went, accompanied by his devoted disciple and *alter-ego*, Father Aubert. In a Mile End omnibus, taken in Oxford Street, they rolled along by Holborn and Cheapside, and the Bank. Having traversed Cornhill and Leadenhall Street, they came to Aldgate and Whitechapel. Here they alighted, and went on foot through some of its dingy and sloppy bye-streets, which were swarming with human beings. Care and toil showed themselves in face and frame in these Whitechapel crowds. The very brows of children, in many instances, seemed careworn and restless, whilst a forced precociousness peered from their withered and diminutive features, which looked old and young at one and the same time, and in which sin-germs were already, alas! ominously but unmistakably disclosing themselves. On it moved—that Whitechapel crowd—before the eyes of the pious and thoughtful travellers. What does it know of God and of His only Son Jesus Christ? What does it know of its last end? Is it baptised? Has it any faith save in what it sees, and touches, and eats, and drinks, and enjoys? What ties of charity bind its component parts together? are they like stones in the holy wall which God's hand builds up, and which are bonded together in love? or are they like those loose boulders that come from—nobody knows where—cast it may be

by freak of flame or flood on lonely mountain surface, forming crowds by numbers, but each from each, and from all abiding ever apart in cold and hardened isolation. God's hand alone can bind soul to soul, heart to heart, each to all and all to each, in the vast moving crowd of earth's pilgrims. He does so by bonding together the individuals that compose the *great crowd that no man can count*, in unity of submission to one world-centre authority, whose throne is on the rock of Peter, by leading them to worship before the one Great Altar on which the *Lamb stands slain*, by guiding them to the same fountain-heads of sacramental grace, of whose waters all drink and are gladdened with a common joy and benediction, which unite them in communion with Himself, and with one another. Under the eye of heaven there is no grander sight than that of the crowd that believes, professes, and practises the truths of the Catholic faith: at the same time there is no sadder sight than that of an unbelieving multitude, pursuing its way blindly through life's mazes on towards an abyss.

The old missionary spirit was stirred into vivid play in the depths of his soul, as Monseigneur de Mazenod gazed, for the first time, on those groups of Whitechapel denizens. He felt in his heart that no more fitting sphere for the missionary labours of his Oblates could anywhere be found, than in the

midst of these toiling poverty-stricken multitudes. An establishment of his missionaries in Whitechapel would, at that time, have been the accomplishment of one of the liveliest of the desires he then entertained. That event was not to happen in his lifetime, but the fourth year after his death it was to take place.

Monseigneur de Mazenod, accompanied by Father Aubert, reached Everingham, in Yorkshire, at the end of June, 1850. The warmth of the filial welcome given to him by his Oblate sons was almost equalled by the cordial and respectful reception afforded him by the hospitable owner of Everingham Hall, William Constable Maxwell, and his pious wife, together with a large body of Catholic visitors who had been invited by Mr. Maxwell to meet him. A new phase of Catholic life presented itself in Everingham Hall to his observant eye—the English Catholic-family life of the good old type that had come down as an heirloom from parents to children, through ages of persecution, as well as through periods of calm. Monseigneur de Mazenod spoke warmly to the writer of the edification he derived from all he had witnessed, not only in the church of Everingham, but also in the family circle of Mr. Constable Maxwell.

But a greater source of edification still awaited him at Holy Cross, Liverpool, where the Oblate

Fathers had been then six months established. In the centre of that great city stood the miserable chapel of Holy Cross, which was one day to be replaced by a noble church. Monseigneur de Mazenod saw it in all its poverty and wretchedness; but beneath that outward shell of misery he discovered a pearl of priceless value. Other visits were paid by Monseigneur de Mazenod to places that were temporarily occupied by the Oblate Fathers, to which we do not deem it necessary to make more than this passing reference. In all those visits to the dwellings of the Fathers of his society in England, the chief object of the venerable Founder was to renew in the hearts of his spiritual sons the love of their holy vocation, to remind them of their dual obligations as Priests and Religious; to stir up in their souls, by word and example, a burning zeal for their own sanctification and for the salvation of the souls committed to their care. In paternal and earnest words he exhorted them to labour, as became apostolic men, in accomplishing their part in promoting the work of England's return to the ancient faith. On the 27th of July he embarked at Dover for France.

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Seven years roll by, and we find Monseigneur de Mazenod preparing at Marseilles to renew his visit to England. In the meantime, his society of Oblates in that country has advanced its frontier

lines. Its ramifications have been extended to Ireland and Scotland. The house of Inchicore, near Dublin, has been founded; a small community has commenced missionary operations at Galashiels, in Scotland, from which place however it will migrate, a few years later on, to Leith, near Edinburgh; a Novitiate house has been opened at Sicklinghall, a village seven miles from Harrogate, in Yorkshire; and the vast and stately school buildings of Holy Cross, Liverpool, have been erected.

One of the special objects which determined the visit of Monseigneur de Mazenod to England in July, 1857, was the opening of the new church of St. Mary's, Leeds. The opening ceremony was appointed to take place on the Wednesday in the last week of July. That day of the week was selected because it answered best for the convenience of Leeds people in general. That Wednesday, by a happy coincidence, was the feast of St. Martha, the sister of St. Lazarus, first Bishop of Marseilles. Was it something more than a coincidence that a successor of St. Lazarus in the see of Marseilles, who had then lately built a church to the memory of that saint in his episcopal city, should now, on the feast of St. Martha, be the officiating pontiff at the opening of a new church in England of a society founded by him in Provence, a country where the memories of Martha, Magdalen, and Lazarus were

held in such cherished veneration? To the writer's mind this circumstance appears to be one of those beautiful harmonies which we can trace oftentimes in God's dealings with His servants, when something which an inner consciousness tells us would be opportune were it to happen, does actually take place.

The opening of the new church of St. Mary had been looked forward to by a vast population inhabiting the eastern quarter of Leeds, as an event which ought to be celebrated with unusual demonstrations of public gladness. They had been witnessing the noble church rising gradually before their eyes on the hill's summit, a thing of majesty and beauty. Difficult to their knowledge were its early struggles. The very elements seemed to combine against it, for on the 2nd of May, 1854, a thunderbolt struck it, doing great damage, and alas! destroying some lives. Happily those who perished were well prepared to die. Other trials awaited it, and gloomy forebodings of ultimate failure were not wanting. But God was pleased in the end to bless, with a success far beyond their early expectations, the efforts of those who wished to raise a temple to His name, and to the honour of the Immaculate Mother of His Divine Son, on the summit of Richmond Hill. The morning of the 29th opened upon unusual sights amidst the busy manufacturing hives of eastern Leeds. Streets which were not beautiful put on

beauty for the occasion. Triumphal arches were erected at different points along the line which was to be traversed by the carriages of his Eminence Cardinal Wiseman, and of the Bishop of Marseilles. Vast multitudes were in the streets in holiday dress. The mill owners of that quarter of Leeds had considerably given a holiday to their employés for that day. The carriage of the Bishop of Marseilles was the first to arrive. Loud and hearty was the greeting which welcomed his lordship's advent to St. Mary's Mount. In presence of such a sight, he could scarcely believe himself to be in a protestant land. The loud-ringing plaudits which came from a distance announced the approach of Cardinal Wiseman. The hill-summit on which St. Mary's stands, and which is approached from the street level by a flight of fifty steps, was the place of meeting of the two illustrious prelates. The scene was one which neither could forget. Leeds lay in view before them, clad in its gown of smoke. There was nothing of symmetry or beauty about it, but to a thoughtful glance the aspect which it wore bespoke a greatness far more impressive than art's beautifying hand, or nature's flowers or foilage could give to it. It lay before them in the giant grandeur of its marvellous industries. But more impressive than the sight of countless workshops, was that of the workers themselves,

as they knelt in their thousands on the slopes of St. Mary's Mount, to receive the benediction of Westminster's Archbishop, and of the Bishop of Marseilles. Another long continued burst of greeting announced the arrival of the saintly Bishop of the diocese, the Right Rev. Dr. Briggs, to whose sanctions, blessings and encouragements the Oblate mission of Mount St. Mary's, Leeds, owes under God, in great part, its existence. The morning sermon was preached by Cardinal Wiseman, and his future successor in the see of Westminster, Dr. Manning, preached the evening discourse. The new and beautiful church of St. Mary was thus launched auspiciously, like a noble ship on the waters of its future career. There is a something especially sacramental in the beauty of holy places. That beauty is like a loadstone: give it play there where toiling multitudes are being assailed in their brief hours of respite from daily labour, by the fatally attractive influences of the world's wicked pleasures, and, magnet-like, it will draw to itself the hearts of many in that tempted crowd. In that psalm in which David says: *I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of Thy house*, he also says, *I have hated the assembly of the malignant*. Ps. xxv.

Such was the character of those holy loves and of those blessed hates, which the sacred beauty of St. Mary's fair temple on the hill stirred up in the

breasts of those sons and daughters of toil, to whose view it rose as a centre of attraction, drawing them up to itself out of the ways of harm—from sin and its occasions—*from the assembly of the malignant.* Evening by evening all the year round, groups of mill-workers, old and young, might be seen ascending the hill steps leading to St. Mary's, to assist at the usual week evening devotions. The church became a second home for many. Aided by such helps, large numbers of young men and women who were employed in the factories of eastern Leeds, became formed to habits of prayer and of piety. Conversions to the Catholic faith were soon counted by the hundred, some of which required of those in whose case they occurred, sacrifices as generous and as many as are recorded of the old martyrs. Other ecclesiastical structures rose up, one by one, on the large open site surrounding St. Mary's, among which were a community house for the Fathers, schools for boys, girls and infants, a young men's hall and reading room, and a spacious convent, to which is attached a large diocesan orphanage. All these together form one of the most important groups of ecclesiastical buildings in the kingdom. St. Mary's was not complete when first opened; since then, through the devoted energy of Father Pinet, the good work of the completion of the new church has been accomplished.

One of the objects which Monseigneur de Mazenod had for years most at heart, was the establishment of his society in Ireland. On his first arrival from France, Father Aubert made attempts, which were unsuccessful, to introduce the congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate into that country. On one of these occasions he waited on O'Connell at his residence in Merrion Square, Dublin. O'Connell, on learning that the society of the Oblates was dedicated, in an especial manner, to the honouring of the mystery of the Immaculate Conception, said to Father Aubert, "I have a very special devotion to the Immaculate Conception, and I wish to know whether there is any means by which a layman may be associated with your society in honouring that mystery." Father Aubert spoke to him of the blue scapular of the Immaculate Conception. O'Connell expressed at once a great desire of being invested with it, and proposed that he would be good enough to come on the following morning to invest him with it in his domestic oratory. The next day, according to appointment, Father Aubert arrived at O'Connell's residence, and being conducted to the oratory, he found him there engaged in his devotions, and piously preparing to receive the holy scapular, with which he then invested him. This act of marked devotion to our Blessed Lady, on the part of one of

the greatest of the then living Catholic laymen, which was performed in the quiet of his domestic oratory, away from the public gaze, was a strong testimony to the sincerity of O'Connell's faith and piety.

Not less important in the eyes of Monseigneur de Mazenod than the opening of the Leeds church, was the visit he proposed to make to the first establishment of his society in Ireland. The news of his approaching arrival spread rapidly in the neighbourhood of Inchicore. A vast crowd assembled in front of the Fathers' residence to bid him welcome. The holy prelate was seized with deep emotion, under the influence of this most respectful yet most cordial welcome. He acknowledged that he had never experienced anything like it before. The next morning, which was Sunday, he celebrated Mass in the temporary wooden church. For one hour he was engaged in distributing Holy Communion. Tears flowed from his eyes as he beheld group after group, not only of devout women, but also of stalwart men, who were as numerous as the former, taking their places at the communion rail. On the following days he visited some of the great religious institutions of Dublin. Catholic Dublin took him by surprise. He had never in all his travels witnessed a greater display of private individual charity than during his round of visits to various establishments

in that city, which owed their origin to the private munificence of the Catholics of Dublin. He beheld there ministering, in their aggregate, to almost every form of human suffering, privation and need, noble institutions which derived their means of existence from one source only—the charitable generosity of the Catholics of that city, no State aid coming in any form to their help. The churches which he visited in Dublin were not, it is true, to be compared in architectural structure to the unsurpassed glory and beauty of the monumental churches of France. But he witnessed in the churches of Dublin, wherever he went, a manifestation of piety the like of which he acknowledged he had rarely seen elsewhere. The deep loving reverence of the people for their Priests was an object also of his admiration and frequent eulogy. The Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Cullen, was most demonstrative in his attentions to Monseigneur de Mazenod. His grace invited him to officiate at vespers in his cathedral. This gave Monseigneur de Mazenod an opportunity of beholding a great Dublin congregation. The number and the reverent attitude of men at the various services of the church in Dublin at which he had been present, impressed him profoundly. It was a striking proof to him of the depth and sincerity of Irish faith. He did not fail to visit the good Augustinian Fathers, in whose

church in Dublin the first mission of the Oblates of Mary in Ireland was given. There he met the venerable Dr. O'Connor, Bishop of Saldaña, the retired Vicar-Apostolic of Madras, at whose hands the Oblates of Mary had received many proofs of kindness in the early days of their establishment in Ireland. One of the places which Monseigneur de Mazenod visited with the largest amount of interest, was the great railway foundry and carriage building works at Inchicore. Here he was able to behold an aspect of Irish faith which was an accomplishment of an ideal, long cherished in his thoughtful and apostolic mind, namely, the ennobling of labour by faith. There were then employed at these works some twelve hundred men, the great majority, or nearly all of whom were Catholics. As he entered workshop after workshop the workers ceased momentarily from their labour, in order to kneel and ask his blessing. Among these brave and intelligent sons of skilled and honourable toil, his sharp glance recognized very many, for they were there by the hundred, to whom he had had the great consolation of administering the Holy Communion on the previous Sunday. He was not ignorant of the debt of gratitude which the Fathers of his society owed to the working men of Inchicore—for the story of the wooden chapel was well-known to him. Though his chief attention during his stay in

Ireland was, as a matter of course, directed to subjects concerning the interests of religion, and the well-being of the religious body of which he was the founder, he nevertheless did not omit to take note of matters connected with the temporal well-being of that country. From his early days he had an eye for, and a keen appreciation of the grand and beautiful in nature's works. He was particularly struck by his first sight of the glorious Bay of Dublin. He said it reminded him of the Bay of Naples, with the beauties of which he was so well acquainted. His visit to the environs of Dublin elicited frequent expressions of admiration from his lips. Having completed his canonical visitation of the community of Inchicore, he took his departure with regret from a land which he had already commenced to love, as if it had become for him a second home. On his return to England he proceeded to Sicklinghall, where the English Novitiate of his society then was. He afterwards spent a few days in Scotland, where he visited Galashiels, at which place the Oblates were established for a time. He also visited Bishop Gillis in Edinburgh. Thus ended his second and last visit to the British province of his society.

CHAPTER XV.

It becomes now our task to speak of one of the chief distinctive labours of the Oblates of Mary in their British province—the giving of missions. The first mission given by them in due form in these countries was that which took place at St. Anne's, Manchester, towards the close of the year 1849. Father Aubert was Superior at that mission, and his companion missionaries were Father Noble and the writer. The example of missionary devotedness given during that mission by Father Aubert to his brother missionaries, was of a nature to make a lasting impression on their minds. The mission took immense proportions from its first days. The writer, one evening in the first week of the mission, after the close of a sermon which was addressed to a densely-packed congregation, requested all who had to go to confession that night, to remain in the church. Nearly everybody remained stationary, as nearly everybody wished to go then and there to confession. The assistance of a large number of confessors to help the missionary Fathers was

secured by the head Priest of St. Anne's, but even with this aid multitudes who wished to approach the sacraments had to withdraw day by day, without being able to do so. The daily work of the mission began at five each morning, and was continued till twelve at night almost without interruption. The mission lasted for four weeks. Missions were subsequently given by the Oblates of Mary in Leeds, London, Liverpool, Huddersfield, Bradford, Halifax, Hull, Dewsbury, Edinburgh, Perth, Dundee, and in several other places in England and Scotland.

The first mission given by the Oblates in Ireland took place, as we have already said, at the Augustinian Church, Dublin, in May, 1856. From that date down to the present time, members of the Inchicore community have been engaged in giving missions in Ireland for the greater portion of every year, and they have frequently, during that period, extended their labours to large towns in England and Scotland. In certain places, such as Cork and Belfast, their mission work took truly colossal proportions. At a mission given by the Oblates of Mary in the cathedral of Cork, at the close of the year 1863, the number of communions which were administered amounted to twenty-six thousand. Forty confessors, headed by the zealous and devoted Bishop of the diocese, the Right Rev. Dr. Delany,

co-operated with the Oblate missionaries in the heavy work of the confessional. The church was opened at half-past four in the morning, and was closed only at midnight. Confessions were heard in the intervals between the sermons, during the greater part of the day, and were suspended only a short time before midnight. At the close of the mission, three Fathers were engaged in preaching at the same time. One addressed the great crowd that assembled within the walls of the cathedral, another spoke to a multitude of people who were collected within the enclosure of the sacred edifice, and a third preached to a vast gathering in a public square opposite the cathedral. A few weeks after the close of the mission in the cathedral of Cork, another mission was opened at St. Finbar's church in that city, which lasted for a month. The same scenes that characterised the mission in the cathedral were reproduced at St. Finbar's, or as it is popularly called, the "South Chapel." The number of communions during the second mission was about the same as were administered at the first. These two great missions might be looked upon as one, as they were given in the same city, and as the latter followed so closely on the first. The total amount of communions administered at both churches was fifty-two thousand.

God alone can know the amount of good accom-

plished at these missions. His grace is the one great factor of all the good accomplished on such occasions. He uses, it is true, the instrumentality of preachers and confessors, but it is His secret benediction that gives the increase—that startling increase that awakens wonder within the breasts of the missionary Fathers themselves. They are again and again filled with surprise at their own success, even as were the Apostles when they let down the net at the bidding of Jesus, and captured *a very great multitude of fishes*. Peter and his brethren knew well on that occasion that it was not to their skill and experience as fishermen that that large draught of fishes was due. They knew that the presence and the aid of Jesus was the cause of their success. The miracle of the extraordinary draught of fishes is reproduced under another form at well nigh every mission, souls and not fishes are then caught by hundreds, and often by thousands; but the power that lifts them from the deep into the net of salvation is that of God's right hand. At Mission times sights, capable of throwing angels into extacies of gladness, are given to the inner spirit of missionary Fathers. What spiritual transformations are they not privileged then to behold! what noble struggles, what generous sacrifices, what courageous warfare do they not witness on the part of souls that are resolutely seeking to escape from Satan's thralls and the world's

chains, and the fascinations of sin, in order to become God's children again—the heirs to His kingdom and the disciples of His Son! How faith in their own priestly ministry is quickened as they witness the results of its action under the aid of mission-tide graces. They behold the calming of the wild seas of human passion—the hushing of its winds and the stilling of its waves, at the breath of their lips counselling peace in the holy tribunal of penance. “Do you forgive?” they say to one who had been fostering for years the memory of a grievous wrong, and who had been watching all the time for the opportunity of revenge. “Yes,” is the consoling reply of the penitent soul, “I do forgive, as I hope to be forgiven.” “Are you prepared, with the help of God's grace, to effect such and such a change in your life, to renounce these and those occasions of your sin, and to enter into God's service with your whole heart, to live in it and to die in it?” “Yes, my Father, now I feel I can promise all that. But a week ago, before the mission, I could have made no such promise. I thought my sins were too great for God to pardon, and that virtue was too difficult for me to practise; but now my heart is full of hope in God's mercy. I can weep in peace at His feet, for I know He will forgive me. I want to love Him with my whole heart, and I would rather die than offend Him any more. You

know my soul, my Father, tell me what I am henceforward to do in order to lead a holy life and to prepare for a happy death." Such are common utterances addressed by penitent sinners, during missions, to the ears of missionary Priests—by persons who had been for years wandering away from God as public sinners, or as sinners in secret. What but a divine power could put such thoughts into their minds, and such words upon their lips.

Events of a spiritual order take place almost at every mission which, if published, would tend very much to give edification; but the missionary Fathers are too busy to write them down as they occur, and in time they pass away from their memories. Moreover, in many cases, it is only after a lapse of years that such events could be published without inconvenience. The events to which we refer have of course no connection with the tribunal of penance, but are such as come to the missionary Fathers' knowledge through the ordinary channels of information. We shall proceed now to mention some few instances of missionary incident which may not prove uninteresting to our readers.

The first we select as a matter for our narrative, is one which will serve to illustrate the power of the persevering prayer of a pious mother for an erring son. The occurrence to which we refer took place several years ago in the village of Apple-

ton, near Warrington, during a congregational retreat which the writer was invited to give by the local Priest, the Rev. George Fisher. The retreat lasted a fortnight. On the last Saturday of the retreat, Father Fisher said to the writer, "A general report is circulated in the village that a certain aged woman of the congregation will die about one o'clock to-morrow." "Are your people prophets," was the reply of the writer, "that they should venture to predict the precise time of anybody's death?" "No," said Father Fisher, "but it is the general belief that God is keeping this good woman alive to grant her prayer. She has an only son. For twenty years he has not been known to receive Holy Communion. His mother has been praying all the time for his conversion. Her prayer was that she might not die until she had the happiness of hearing from his own lips that he had been to communion. Several times every year, for the fourteen years I have been in Appleton, I have administered the last sacraments to her, she being on each of these occasions seemingly on the point of death; yet she used to recover unaccountably. At last it became known that she was praying not to die until she had heard from her son's lips that he had been to communion. It is known that he has been to confession with you several times during the retreat, and that you have permitted him to receive Holy Communion

to-morrow. It is expected that he will receive Holy Communion at the last Mass, and that he will reach his home about one o'clock, and that his mother, as soon as she hears from him that he has been to communion, her prayer being heard, will die." The writer hearing all this, said he would keep in mind this popular prediction, and take note how far events would justify it. The next day, at two o'clock, news reached the presbytery that the devout woman had just expired. On the return of her son from church that Sunday morning, he hastened into his mother's presence and said to her, "Mother, I have good news to tell you; I have received Holy Communion to-day." "You have, my son?" she replied, "thanks be to God; I have nothing more now to live for, my prayer is heard," and with holy Simeon was she prepared to say, *Now dismiss Thy servant, O Lord, for my eyes have seen Thy salvation.* With such sentiments in her breast she calmly sank into the sleep of death in the arms of her son.

That Jesus Christ does admit His servants on earth to co-operate with Him in the great work of saving souls, is an admitted fact. He also employs His servants in heaven, His angels and saints, as co-operators in the same work. Those blessed ones who are nearest to Him by reason of their more exalted holiness, are those who share most fully with Him in all which He is ceaselessly doing for

the salvation of souls. There is one who stands alone in her pre-eminent proximity to Jesus—who has done for Jesus more than all saints and angels together have done for Him—for whom Jesus has wrought greater wonders than for any or for all of them combined. She was His chosen associate in saving souls in Bethlehem, in Nazareth, on Calvary, and is such now in heaven. She was not His associate in preaching, or in working miracles, but she was ever united to Him in praying and in suffering for the salvation of all men. For thirty long years before apostle or disciple came to Him to be formed to the great ministry of saving souls in co-operation with Him, Mary was His co-operatrix in that sublime work. And when apostles and disciples fled from Him, as He was in the act of saving the world upon the cross, Mary was present co-operating with Him as the world's Saviour. It was then and there, in the hour of His crucifixion upon Calvary's heights, that He gave to her the office that she was in perpetuity to exercise in the Divine Plan of the world's Redemption—it was the office of the Mother. That august office was to be raised from the natural into the supernatural order in Mary's person. The Mother, according to the flesh, is a marvellous creation of God. The Mother, according to the spirit, is a being beyond all measure more wonderful still. Such is Mary now in heaven. God is ever employ-

ing her in doing a Mother's work for souls. The soul, even as the body, needs the Mother's kindly fostering care. In the infancy of its life it needs the Mother. It needs the Mother's continued action still through the varying stages of its passage upon earth, amidst its trials and its sorrows, and its dangers, and when it stumbles and falls, and is bruised and wounded. Oh! how great its consolation at such times to open the eye of faith and behold in Mary a Mother; a Mother full of tenderness and sympathy, and also full of power. It is the privilege of God's Priests to echo the words of Jesus into the ears of souls, and to say to them what He Himself said to John, "Behold thy Mother." What Priest is there who has not been a witness of wonders wrought through Mary's maternal intervention on behalf of souls. The writer selects the following out of many similar instances, as an illustration of these remarks.

During a mission which was being given by the Oblates of Mary in one of the largest manufacturing towns in England, a lady presented herself to the writer for instruction in the doctrines of the Catholic Church, in view of becoming a Catholic. He found that she had been attending the exercises of the mission, and that she was quite convinced of the truth of the Catholic religion. After she had received the amount of instruction which was con-

sidered necessary in her case, she was admitted into the Church. On the day she became a Catholic she expressed her great gratitude to God for the immense favour conferred then upon her. "One thing alone," she said to the writer, "interferes with the great joy I now experience, it is the unbelief of my husband. He professes himself an atheist. In his early boyhood he lost his parents, who were Catholics. He spent a few months in a Catholic college after their death; unfortunately he was removed from thence, and was brought up among associates who were of an infidel turn of mind, and he has adopted their views and principles." She then asked the writer what means she ought to employ in order, if possible, to secure for him a share in her own happiness of being a Catholic. He recommended her to invoke on her husband's behalf the intercession of the Blessed Virgin. He also said that he would be happy to have an interview with him. Acting upon the counsel given to her, this good lady knelt before the altar of the Blessed Virgin, where she remained that day for hours, praying for the conversion of her husband. The writer, who witnessed her fervour on that occasion, felt that God would not refuse to hear prayers that were offered to Him with such earnestness by this devoted woman. That evening she succeeded in bringing about an interview between her husband

and the writer, in the sacristy of the church. The latter found him to be a young man of gentlemanly manners and well-educated. He commenced the conversation by saying to the writer, "You have been doing a very useless piece of work by receiving my wife as a member of your religion. I do not desire to interfere with her wishes on this matter, but I must tell you that I look upon religion of every kind as being, possibly, useful in keeping a check on the vulgar crowd, but unworthy of the serious thought of men of mind and education." The writer brought the conversation to a close by saying to him that he would pray to God for him. The other replied haughtily as he retired, "Yes, you will pray to God as if there were a God." The next day his wife presented herself in great affliction to the writer, to say that her husband had never shown worse dispositions with regard to religion than he had done since the interview of the previous evening. She then said, "Am I to give up all hope of my husband's conversion?" The writer said, "No, go on still praying to our Blessed Lady to make intercession with her Divine Son in his behalf; and say to him that I shall be happy to see him again." That day she knelt once more for hours before the Lady-Altar in earnest prayer for her husband's conversion. In the evening of the same day the writer received a second visit from the young man. "I

come," he said, "to apologize for the abruptness of my manner last evening, but I do not retract any of my sentiments with regard to religion." The writer addressing him said, "I have learnt that in your boyhood you were at school in a Catholic college. You there must have heard of the Blessed Virgin." "Oh yes," he replied, "and I remember when we wanted any particular favour from what you call God, we used to ask her to obtain it for us, and what we used to pray to her for used to come to pass; but that was all chance." "No, it was not all chance," the writer said, "but it was the real granting, by Almighty God, of favours asked through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, God wishing thereby to instill into your young heart, devotion to her." When the writer had been called to see this gentleman that evening, he was preparing to invest a devout person with the scapular of the Immaculate Conception. He had the scapular in his hand during the interview. Feeling it was useless to argue further with this avowed young atheist, and remembering how earnestly his wife had been praying to our Lady for him, he felt moved to ask the young man, as a personal favour, to allow him to put him under the protection of the Blessed Virgin by placing the scapular of the Immaculate Conception upon his neck. The latter replied, "Though it would appear to be a sacrifice of my

principles to permit you to do so, yet as you ask it as a favour I will not object." The scapular of the Immaculate Conception had scarcely been placed upon him, when his countenance bespoke the fact that an extraordinary change had been suddenly wrought in his mind. His looks became subdued and thoughtful, so much so that the writer ventured to propose to him to kneel, without further delay, and begin his confession. This he at once consented to do. The next evening he returned to visit the writer, and as he entered, his first words were, "Now I come of my own free accord to make a good confession." It was not by halves that divine grace accomplished the work of his conversion; in the instant it banished all doubts from his mind, and gave to him the dispositions of a true believer, without the intervention of a single word of controversy or discussion. At the same time it awakened in his heart the sentiments of a true penitent. He himself was convinced that he had received all those favours through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin. In the last interview the writer had with him, he repeatedly used these words, whilst tears of contrition rolled down his manly countenance, "It is to her," meaning the Blessed Virgin, "I owe it. It is to her I owe my conversion." On the occasion of that last interview he begged of the writer to introduce him to the

local Priest, as he wished to place himself in his hands and under his direction, to give such assistance as a layman might give in connection with the services of the church. He desired particularly to be allowed to teach catechism lessons to children, in view of making reparation for all the impious words he had spoken against religion.

It may not be amiss for the benefit of some of our readers, to say a word of explanation with reference to certain objects of devotion, such as scapulars, blessed medals, holy water, &c., the use of which amongst her children is sanctioned by the Church. These objects, in the language of Theologians, are called *Sacramentalia*. A certain sacramental efficacy is attached to them by the blessing which the Church imparts to them. When the Church blesses any object, it is Jesus Christ in reality who blesses it. A divine benediction is therefore attached to the pious use of sacramentals. That benediction has a sort of exorcising power in it; it checks the action of the evil spirit, and thus becomes a spiritual shield to our souls. It moreover stirs up sanctifying grace within our breasts into a variety of meritorious acts, such as contrition for sin, penitent love towards God, &c. In holy scripture we find God communicating great favours through the agency of objects analogous to the sacramentals of the Church. The rod of Moses, the brazen ser-

pent, the ark of the covenant, &c., in the old law ; and in the time of our Lord and the Apostles, the waters of the pool of Bethsaida, the clay moistened by our Lord's spittle, the hem of his garment, the handkerchiefs which had touched the bodies of St. Peter and St. John—the very shadow of these Apostles—were agencies through which divine benedictions were imparted to men.

We cannot have too many reminders of things spiritual and holy, in the midst of the countless absorbing distractions of the world through which we move, and which have a fatal tendency to banish from our minds and hearts the thought of any other life but this. In choosing such material things as are to serve as mediums of His graces, God selects by preference those which are in common use, for such things are within the easy reach of the multitude whom He desires to benefit. Thus He selects water, and bread and wine, and oil, in the sacramental system, as the mediums of His most wonderful gifts to the souls of men. Unbelieving minds are shocked at the simplicity and seeming insignificance of such mediums of grace. If God had employed things glorious as the shining star in the firmament, or things precious as gold or pearl, as the instruments of His spiritual benedictions, men of little or no faith would not be so much scandalised, as they now profess themselves to be,

with the teachings and practices of the Church, both as regards sacraments and sacramentals. But in the eyes of God, the star that rolls over our head is of no higher worth, as a medium of divine favour, than the drop of water that glistens at our feet; and the humble fold of holy scapular on the pious peasant's shoulder is as fitting an instrument of benediction, when He selects it as such, yea, as would be the very mantle of Elias, were it to be dropped upon us from the clouds.

We shall now proceed to place before our readers another instance of a conversion wrought through the prayers of a devoted wife. In giving a place in our pages to this particular case, we do not, for reasons that will become apparent in the progress of our narrative, invite any one to imitate to the letter the proceedings of this good woman, however they may be disposed to admire them. One day during a mission, which the Oblates of Mary were conducting in the church of the Assumption, Warwick-street, London, a middle-aged woman of humble rank accosted the writer, saying she wished to become a Catholic. On his asking her if she had thought well on the subject, "Yes," she replied, "for several years I have been convinced of the truth of the Catholic religion." "Why then," the writer continued, "have you deferred so long becoming a Catholic?" "The reason of my doing so,"

she replied, "was the fact that my husband, who was a Catholic, was not a good one, and I wished him to change his life and become a good Catholic before I became one myself. His chief faults were drunkenness and the neglect of his confession. I heard from people who knew all about it, that unless a Catholic went regularly to confession, he could not be a good one. I made inquiry of some Catholic acquaintances as to the best means of bringing about my husband's conversion, and they informed me that praying for him was the best thing I could do. In commencing to pray for him I told Almighty God what sort of a man he was, that he was a rough sort of fellow, and that mild measures would have no effect with him, and that if He wished to convert him, that He should lay a heavy hand upon him. Of course, Sir, when I prayed in this way, I knew that if anything serious were to happen to him, I should have to labour for his support as well as my own. But I did not mind that, provided his soul would be saved by his becoming a good Catholic. I set to praying for him, and God heard my prayer, for a great affliction which was to do good to his soul happened to him—he broke his legs. This affliction cured him of drunkenness; when his legs were broken he could not go to the public-house, and he had no messenger to send there but myself, and I would not go there for him. Yet

he neglected to make his confession. I set to praying for him again, and God heard my prayer a second time. He sent him another affliction which was to be the means of his full conversion. He struck him blind. When he was struck blind he acknowledged that it was the hand of God that was upon him, and he begged of me to fetch a Priest to him, that he might make his confession. I did so, and he made his confession, and he is now one of the best Catholics in London, and the present is the only time that I have been happy with him since our marriage. Now that my husband has become a good Catholic, I present myself to you for instruction, in order to become one also. I beg of you, sir, if you please, to instruct me with as little delay as possible, as I have to go out charing every day, to labour for his support as well as for my own, and have but little time to spare to come for instructions." The writer, in listening to the account given of herself by this earnest-minded woman, which he states in her own words, was forcibly reminded of the saying of our Lord, *Amen, I say to you I have not found so great faith in Israel.* Matt. viii. 10.

During the same mission at the church of the Assumption, Warwick-street, the writer, whilst visiting the courts of Bedfordbury, one of the most wretched of the poverty dens of London, to invite

the inhabitants to come to the mission, met a touching incident of daughterly devotedness which he feels deserves a place in his pages. It was a Sunday afternoon when he knocked at the garret door of a dilapidated house in a court of Bedfordbury. The door was opened by a young woman who received him with a modest welcome. At the fire were seated her aged parents, a venerable couple, who for years had been bed-ridden, and whose humble but cleanly toilet their devoted daughter had then just finished. From their lips the writer heard how she had been their only support for several years. She had denied herself all amusements, and had refused several suitable offers of marriage during that time, in order to be able to support them by the fruits of her hard and constant labours, and thus rescue them from the necessity of having to seek the shelter of a workhouse ward in their old days. The parents had come from Ireland, but their daughter was brought up in London without any detriment, however, to her Irish faith and piety. It is by deeds of unpretending, but in truth of lofty devotedness of this kind, revealing themselves here and there to heaven's eye, that God's anger with the guilty multitude is often appeased, and His blessing secured for many.

Converting grace flows, as a rule, through the ordinary appointed channels, and accomplishes its

divine work in the silence of the soul, without any startling manifestations of extraordinary action on its part. Such is the case with regard to the conversions which take place during missions, as well as at other times. The conversions themselves are great in the eyes of God; the changes wrought by them are immense—the sacrifices of self, and of things dear to self, which they involve are often of the most heroic order, yet nothing of all that is disclosed to external observers. They appear as ordinary occurrences to the lookers on, who see people in crowds approaching the sacraments, especially during mission times. But the arm of the Lord is not shortened. For His own wise ends He employs, at particular times, the extraordinary instead of the ordinary mode of dealing with certain souls which He is drawing to Himself from sin or unbelief.

A conversion, which was marked by extraordinary circumstances, took place during a mission which the Oblates of Mary were conducting in the town of Dungarvan, in the South of Ireland. A young man, a native of the North of Ireland, a Protestant of strong anti-catholic bias, was a member of the mounted constabulary stationed at Dungarvan at the time when the mission was opened there by the Oblates. He was induced, after much persuasion by a Catholic friend, to assist one even-

ing at a service of the mission. That evening a penitential procession took place, at which the mission crucifix was borne around the church by the writer, whilst the *Miserere* psalm was being chanted. A congregation of more than three thousand persons was assembled on that occasion. The procession had not got half way through the church, when the terrified cries and loud sobbing of a strong man were heard by all present. It was only on the next day that the cause of this incident became known. It was then discovered that the cries had proceeded from the young protestant man. We will give his own account of the occurrence as he related it to the missionary Fathers on the morning after it took place. "As the procession approached the spot where I stood, I noticed that several who had not been able to kneel down, owing to the pressure of the crowd, tried to do so as the crucifix was passing near to them. When I beheld these marks of reverence being paid to the crucifix, my protestant prejudices were stirred up to anger, and I said to myself, that if my commanding officer were to stand before me with a drawn sword, and order me to kneel down before the crucifix, I would not obey him. I had scarcely formed such thoughts in my mind, when all of a sudden a ray of the most dazzling light, brighter far than any sunbeam I had ever seen, flashed from the crucifix. In that light

I saw all the sins of my life. The sight of my sins staring me in the face struck me with grief and terror, and caused me to utter loud cries. Overwhelmed with a sense of my sinfulness, I fell prostrate to the ground, unconscious of what was passing around me. The service came to a close, and the congregation dispersed, with the exception of a few friends who stood by me, who could not account for my emotion, and thought I had taken a fit of some kind. At last I regained my composure, and rose up from the spot on which I had been lying prostrate. It was then that the desire of becoming a Catholic rose irresistably in my mind, and I repeated aloud to my astonished friends, 'Oh what a happiness were I a Catholic !' " The Right Rev. Dr. O'Brien, the Bishop of the diocese in which Dungarvan is situated was in that town when this occurrence took place. The missionary Fathers felt that the case of the conversion of this young man was so extraordinary, that they ought to submit it to his lordship's decision. After a lengthened interview with the young man, the Bishop decided that conditional Baptism might be given to him that very day, and he further said that he would be prepared to confirm him immediately after. The suddenness and sincerity of this young man's conversion to the Catholic faith, produced an extraordinary impression on the public mind in the town

of Dungarvan, where he was well-known and much respected. There was no room for doubt on the subject of his strong protestantism up to the day when the extraordinary circumstance narrated above took place. His subsequent life furnished abundant proofs of the sincerity of his profession of Catholic belief. Two years after his reception into the Catholic Church he wrote to the writer that his spiritual director had decided that he had a vocation for the religious life, and that he consequently wished to enter the society of the Oblates of Mary as lay brother. He was received as such, and became the source of much edification to his brethren in religion by the piety of his life.

In the year 1878, a simultaneous mission in the six principal Catholic churches of Belfast was given by the Oblates of Mary; eighteen Fathers were engaged in conducting it. The churches were opened at half-past four in the morning. At a quarter to five, when Mass, which was followed by a sermon, began, dense congregations, chiefly of men, were already assembled. Confessions were heard, with brief intervals for meals, from an early hour up to near midnight. Holy Communion was administered to forty thousand during that memorable mission. A renewal of the mission took place the following year. During both those missions the Fathers were largely aided in the labours of the

confessional by the zealous co-operation of the local clergy, and of Priests from other parts of the diocese. The Bishop, the Right Rev. Dr. Dorrian, under whose wise administration religion has made such admirable strides in Belfast, took personal share, to a large extent, in the labours of the confessional.

Missions given in country districts of Ireland are distinguished by special characteristics of their own. The simple faith of the inhabitants of those places prepares the way for the rapid and easy action of divine grace in their souls, and disposes them to a generous readiness to make all the sacrifices which a compliance with the regulations of the mission imposes on them. Oftentimes those sacrifices are of a specially trying nature. They involve in many cases long daily journeys from distant villages, in order to assist at the sermons of the mission, and again in order to be able to get to confession. A whole day, and often several days, have to be spent in the church waiting for one's turn at the confessional. Arriving at the church at six in the morning, the Fathers frequently find it quite full of penitents, all wishing to go, not only to confession but also to communion, on the same day. They cling to this hope during the whole day, in many an instance, and after the evening sermon some poor people ask for Holy Communion, they having at last succeeded in getting to confession, and not having

yet that day broken their fast. The hearing of confessions under these circumstances is accompanied by very special difficulties. With the crowds of poor people around the confessional, sometimes in very passive attitude, each one patiently waiting for his or her turn, but sometimes also disposed to break through regulations in order not to fail making their confession on the occasion, the position of a confessor is often, in a human sense, not very agreeable. The air he breathes at such times is stifling and infected. Many of these poor people are there in their damp or wet garments. They have been travelling through the drizzle and slush of a rainy morning, in order to be at the church door before it was opened. Some have been there perhaps from the previous midnight, and now they press as an anxious group around the confessional, shutting up every aperture by which fresh air might reach the toiling confessor within. "O Father, hear me first," some one cries out, "I am a servant; my employers are not Catholic, and I have only got this one day for confession and communion." Another voice exclaims, "I have left a dying husband on his sick bed, with nobody to give him a drink until I return to him; do, Father, hear me." Again some feeble voice is heard to say, "I cannot bear the pressure of the crowd, I am old and infirm; would that the Priest would take pity on me." Somebody has

forced his way to the door of the confessional, and in a loud whisper says, "Father, for many years I have not been to confession; I have been leading a sinful life; I have just heard a sermon; I wish to change my life and make my confession now. I do not wish to trust myself by putting it off to another day, as I might never come back to make it if I do not make it now." While such appeals are reaching the missionary Father's ears from the lips of several who are surrounding his confessional, he is bound to ignore, in a manner, the presence of all others but that of the one penitent whose confession he is hearing, for whom he is responsible, and to whom he must give the due time and care that his case requires, whosoever he be—pauper, or child, or man of wealth. Yet in his heart he cannot be indifferent to the needs of those who are vainly trying to approach him to benefit by his ministry. He would fain multiply himself, in order to meet the wants of all. He spends eight, ten, and sometimes twelve hours or more in the day hearing confessions, and yet he finds himself unable to meet the demands upon his ministry, of those groups of penitents that morning after morning, for a whole month, present themselves at his confessional. Various are the devices which some poor penitents adopt, in order to succeed, during a mission, to get to confession, when ordinary efforts to do so fail

them. At a mission which the Oblates were giving in a large village in a southern county of Ireland, a poor working man, who had come from a considerable distance to the mission, and who was determined not to return to his home until he had gone to confession and to communion, found himself at the end of the week, with as little apparent chance of being able to get to confession as on the day of his arrival. His little stock of money was becoming exhausted, when he hit upon the following expedient to carry out the object he had in view. When the Fathers were returning to the church after breakfast, this poor man suddenly climbed to the top of a high tombstone, where he stood with arms extended, whilst in a loud voice he cried out, "I am the man who is in the state of mortal sin, and I beg of some good Priest to have pity on me and to hear my confession, in order that I may get the pardon of my sins." The expedient proved a success. One of the Fathers took the poor man aside to a corner of the churchyard, where he heard his confession.

Occasionally circumstances will occur to render a particular mission more difficult to the Fathers who are engaged in giving it, than an ordinary mission would be. The writer will now proceed to speak of a mission given under special difficulties. The scene of the mission was in a wild secluded district in a northern county of Ireland. A drive of twelve

or fourteen miles from a railway station, the greater portion of which lay through a dreary thinly inhabited country, brought the Fathers on a November eve to the place where the mission was to be given. At the hour of nine o'clock at night they reached the door of the dwelling appointed for them during the mission. It was a common barn built on the roadside, at the entrance to which they met the parish Priest, who looked another Curé of Ars in appearance, and who, as they discovered later on, resembled the old Saint of Ars in holiness of life. They were conducted by a ladder to their "apartments," which consisted of small nooks in a hay-loft. Standing erect was possible only in the centre of the room, and one pane of glass lighted the whole place. The chill and damp rendered sleep very difficult. It may be asked how it happened that better provision could not be made for the accommodation of the Fathers. The answer is, no better accommodation could be found within a reasonable distance of the church, which was built in a lonely spot, and was a central point between three large villages. The people came from considerable distances to the mission. The crowds coming to confession were so great, that hundreds who had been disappointed in their attempts to get to confession during the day, would be found at night begging to be allowed to remain in the church till morning, in order to have

the first places at the confessionals for the following day. At an early hour the next day, batch after batch of poor people, who had been travelling a greater part of the night, would arrive at the church doors, expecting that they would surely be the first at the confessionals, but they soon discovered their mistake on entering the church. The Fathers, on their arrival between the hours of five and six in the morning, instead of finding a well-ventilated church, found, on the contrary, the atmosphere thick and heavy, and scarcely fit to breathe, owing to the masses of people who had spent the night within its walls. If the hardship of the missionary work of the Fathers was especially severe on that occasion, their spiritual consolations were very many, surrounded as they were by Priests and people full of faith and fervour. Nine thousand communions were administered during that mission. An incident happened on that occasion which might have had a fatal termination for the missionary Fathers, if the providence of God had not intervened to prevent such an issue. There was a small fire-place in the hay-loft where they slept for the night. When they returned from the church they had a fire kindled in it, made of turf, which was the only fuel at their disposal. One night the writer was detained in the confessional to a later hour than his brother missionaries. All the others were in bed and asleep,

when he was passing on to his own division in the hay-loft. To his surprise he discovered, when crossing the improvised dormitory, that a blazing turf which had rolled from the little fire-place, was steadily igniting the floor under the bed on which one of the Fathers was asleep, unconscious of his danger. A few moments more and the whole place would have become a mass of flames. There would have been little chance of escape, as the only means of egress was through a narrow trap-door. There was no window, as we have already said. One small pane of glass alone gave light in day time. The removal of the cause of the danger was the work of a moment, and it need not be said that the writer gave thanks to God for the providential circumstances which led to the discovery of the fire before any mischief was done. It should be remarked that the good parish Priest's own residence lay five miles away, adjoining another church in his parish, and could not therefore become available as a residence for the Fathers during the mission. The courteous hospitality of the clergy of Ireland is proverbial, and if the missionary Fathers had to make a complaint on this subject, it would be of the excess of kindly attentions of which they are oftentimes the objects during missions.

The closing ceremony of missions given in country parts of Ireland, is not unfrequently accompanied

by circumstances which render it an imposing and sublime religious spectacle. It is conducted, as a rule, in the open air, owing to the multitudes who take part in it. We will cite one instance, out of many, of a similar kind which is present to the writer's mind. It took place at the end of a mission which was given by the Oblates of Mary in a parish which lay at the foot of the Galtee mountains, on the borders of Tipperary and Limerick. On the summit of a hillock which rose in the centre of a plain of great fertility and beauty, whose southern fringe touched the mountains, stood, on a raised platform, a temporary altar. The golden light of the setting sun was being reflected from the purple heather of the Galtees, as group after group of stalwart yeomen, their wives, and sons and daughters took their places reverently and in silence in front of the improvised altar. Some ten thousand persons were assembled on that occasion. This was no ordinary gathering, brought together by chance or curiosity, or political excitement—it was the assemblage of all who had been taking part in the holy mission, who had made their confessions in the spirit of true compunction of heart, who had received Holy Communion, and whose souls, it must be presumed, were then bright with the beauty of sanctifying grace. No spectacle of grander type reveals itself on earth to angels' eyes, than that of such a

multitude. Well might these holy spirits exclaim in sight of such a spectacle: *These are they who have washed their robes, and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb.* But the object of this gathering was not the producing of an imposing spectacle. Its object was the completing of the work of the mission, by an act in which Priests and people were to unite together in seeking to give final permanency, through time and unto eternity, to all the good wrought for souls by the graces of the mission. The commandments of God were read aloud before the multitude, and commented upon by the preacher. The people were then invited to promise fidelity unto death in keeping those commandments. This promise they made with one loud united voice. Their christian obligations, and their baptismal engagements were then set before them briefly but clearly, and they were invited to prepare for the renewal of the promises of their Baptism—to renounce Satan and all his works and pomps. By this time the sun had gone down, and the evening star had appeared in the sky. Presently took place the kindling of waxen tapers, one of which everybody in that vast crowd was to hold in hand during the ceremony of the renewal of the baptismal promises. Ten thousand tapers were ablaze in a time incredibly short. The effect was marvellous; a sea of light seemed to roll over the plain in shining

wavelets. When presently on the flanks of the Galtees, taper lights began to twinkle, some in groups and some in isolation, shining each by itself alone, on strange heights, amidst crag and heather. The explanation of this latter circumstance lay in the fact, that there were loving and devout watchers of the proceedings of that evening on those mountain sides, who were compelled by necessity to remain in their homesteads, but who sought in the way we have mentioned to take their part in that holy ceremonial. All being now in readiness, the most Holy Sacrament was exposed on the altar. Every head was bowed. A silence as deep as if nobody was present, reigned through the ranks of the kneeling multitude. Amidst that silence the preacher proposed separately, one by one, the following questions to the crowd: "Do you renounce Satan—and all his works—and all his pomps?" "We do renounce," ten thousand voices repeated in reply to each of these questions. "Do you believe in the Holy Catholic Church?" was the final question addressed to the great crowd. "We do believe," was the answer given by all; at the same time every light was raised in the air in testimony of their being ready to avow their faith before all men. Benediction of the most Holy Sacrament was then given, and the mission came to a close.

CHAPTER XVI.

IN the memory of many of the old Catholic inhabitants of the East of London, Virginia-street Chapel, as it was popularly called, was one of the chief centres of Catholic life and worship in the great metropolis. It occupied a central position between the London Docks and the Tower. It was encircled with a net-work of courts and lanes, which were inhabited by a population almost exclusively Irish and Catholic. But the requirements of the growing commerce of London made the creation of a new dock, which was to occupy the site of Virginia-street Church, a matter of necessity. The site was purchased by the St. Katharine's Dock Company. A new church had to be erected. The position chosen for it lay a mile to the east of the site of the old church, in a locality where a Catholic church was very much needed, owing to the vast population of Catholics, some twenty thousand at least, that had sprung up there. But whilst a great benefit was conferred upon these latter, an immense privation was inflicted on the Catholic inhabitants who re-

sided in the immediate vicinity of Tower Hill and St. Katharine's Docks by the removal of their church from out their midst. The fervent frequented it, but the greater number neglected to do so. And as the spiritual aids diminished, the temptations increased in the neighbourhood of the new docks—super-added to the elements of evil that abounded in the slums of low London life—the importation, through proximity of the docks, of the vices of almost every country of the world. This state of things continued for twelve years. A generation had grown up from childhood to adult age in the midst of these spiritual privations, and at the same time in the midst of surroundings of the most demoralising character. In July, 1864, the writer arrived in London, with the permission of the present Superior-General of the Oblates of Mary, to negotiate with his Eminence Cardinal Wiseman, relative to the foundation of an establishment of that society in the metropolis. The Holy Founder, Monseigneur de Mazenod, had frequently urged the writer, who was Provincial at the time, to take steps for the bringing about of an establishment in London of the society of the Oblates of Mary. On the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, July 16th, 1864, the writer dated a letter from his hotel in London, addressed to Cardinal Wiseman, Archbishop of Westminster, in which he offered the services of the

Oblates, for the undertaking of permanent missionary work in any poor district which his Eminence might appoint for them. Owing to the illness of the Cardinal, a delay arose in an answer being sent to this letter. In the meantime the Right Rev. Dr. Grant offered an establishment to the Oblates of Mary in Southwark, which the writer did not feel himself free to accept, before receiving an answer from Cardinal Wiseman. Whilst waiting for this answer, the writer made the acquaintance of a holy and zealous Priest, the late Father Cuddon, of St. Patrick's, to whom he communicated the object which he was then pursuing. Father Cuddon entered very warmly into the affair. "I trust," he said, "that the Cardinal Archbishop will sanction the establishment of a house of your society in London, and if so, that he will give your Fathers charge of the district of Rosemary Lane, near St. Katharine's Docks and the Tower." This was the first mention which was made to the writer of that neighbourhood. Father Cuddon then spoke at length of the great spiritual wants of that locality. His words impressed the writer's mind with a sense of the suitableness of the locality of which he spoke, as a labour field for the missionary works of the Oblates of Mary in London. The octave of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin brought an answer from Cardinal Wiseman. The Very Rev.

Canon Hearn, Vicar-General, wrote to the writer on the part of his Eminence, to say how much he regretted the delay, caused by his illness, which had occurred in his reply to the letter addressed to him by the writer. In this communication the writer was invited to an interview with the Vicar-General the next morning. On the occasion of that interview, Canon Hearn expressed the satisfaction of his Eminence with the proposal to found a house of the Oblates of Mary in London. He then pointed out on the map of London a spot where he said his Eminence wished the Oblate Fathers would establish themselves. "There is no spot," Canon Hearn continued to say, "perhaps in the world where missionary work is more needed than in that locality." The writer perceived that he was pointing to the neighbourhood of Tower Hill and St. Katharine's Docks. "If your Fathers," he went on to say, "take charge of that district, you will relieve the mind of his Eminence of a great source of anxiety." Without hesitation the writer accepted, in the name of the Society of the Oblates of Mary, the district offered to their care by the Vicar-General, on the part of his Eminence the Cardinal-Archbishop of Westminster. He looked upon the fact of that district being the one of which Father Cuddon had already spoken, and with the position and wants of which he had thus

become acquainted, as a providential circumstance appointed by God for his guidance in this important matter. A close personal inspection of the new district, brought before the writer's mind the magnitude of the work upon which the Oblates of Mary were about to enter. The first object that fixed his attention was the hoary old Tower of London, that rose to the view of the mental eye in the haze of its nine centuries of marvellous history, whilst to the external glance it stood out a vast and gloomy pile, casting its shadows over the waters of the turbid Thames that washed its base. It was not an object to be gazed upon and forgotten; no, it was England's history of nine centuries written in stone. On its stone-faced pages many records were written by Time's finger—all glorious for the Militant Church of Christ—records of deeds of christian heroism of the loftiest martyr-type. The closing days of many a beautiful life found, and finds, a chronicler in that old Tower. It has been telling, and it still tells, how confessors bore persecution's brunt, how martyrs prepared for the fight and the victory and the crown; how they looked and how they spoke on the mornings of the days of their martyrdom. It tells us the story of the most glorious of the days of a Fisher—of a More—of a Philip Howard of Arundel—of an Oliver Plunkett, and of a host of the sons of Saints

Bruno, Benedict, Francis, Dominic, Ignatius, and of many of England's secular priesthood, and of devout laymen of the three kingdoms, confessors of the faith. Of such men and things it speaks day by day to London's multitudes, to visitors from English shires, to strangers from beyond the seas, who flock in groups to listen to its stories of the past. Albeit that in its daily recitals of its bygone story, it turns up much of the mould and rubbish of human fable, it nevertheless disinters, at the same time, many precious pearls of historic truth, which serve to purchase heaven's kingdom for wanderers in the land of the shadow of death. The presence of such a monument in the centre of the new mission of the Oblates of Mary, in the east of London, served to determine the title it was to bear, viz., "The Tower Hill Mission."

But whilst hoary memories shed an air of venerable antiquity around the Hill of the Tower, a deeper interest in the locality was awakened in the breasts of those who came hither to labour for God and souls, by the busy hum of those human masses with which its precincts were astir in the opening days of the Tower Hill mission. Very many were denizens of the vicinity, and other portions of these living masses were composed of voyagers from every clime under the sun, coming from or going to the great ships that were afloat in the huge dock-basins,

stretching from the moat of the Tower far to the eastern extremities of London. A striking illustration of the great fact of the Church of all times being the Church of all peoples, is furnished daily to the thoughtful mind on Tower Hill, and within its precincts. That same religion that was loved and venerated as a mother by the old kings and saints and martyrs of the Tower, is revered and loved as such by those speakers of all tongues, and those representatives of all the divers nationalities of the world, who traverse the hill of the Tower day by day. The new district of the Oblates of Mary extended its western boundary to London Bridge, and its eastern limits to the London Docks. Its northern limits were Aldgate and High-street, Whitechapel; on the south it was bounded by the Thames. The district having been secured, it then remained to find a suitable site for the different structures that would be required for the objects of the mission. Months of weary search and inquiry had to elapse before any satisfactory solution of this difficulty presented itself. Day after day the writer visited the streets and laneways of the new district, without being able to discover a single vacant spot that would seem to answer for the purposes he had in view. During this time he received an introduction, through Father Cuddon, to the late Mr. Charles Walker, of Keppel-street,

whose office was situated in Castle-street, Holborn. The first two visits he paid to Mr. Walker were short and formal ones. The latter, however, manifested much interest in the project of a new mission being established in the neighbourhood of Tower Hill. Mr. Charles Walker was one of those remarkable laymen whom God raises up at divers times, in the history of his Church, to do some special work for the divine glory and the interests of religion. Possessed of large wealth, he spent little of it upon himself. Simple to austerity in all his habits, he had a great soul and a large heart where works of charity were concerned. His works of charity, by predilection, were those especially by which the needs of perishing souls were supplied. His aim was to bring religion home to the masses of the people, by aiding in the establishment of new missions, and in the building of churches and schools in great centres of population, where religious privations existed. Many of his free hours on week-days, and a great part of his Sundays, were spent in making visits to the poorest quarters of London and its environs, that he might, by personal observation, become informed of the places where his help was most needed. Priests in poor neighbourhoods of London, and heads of struggling charitable institutions, were often taken by surprise by aids of a substantial kind, that used to come to them from some

unknown donor, at times when they were in greatest need of assistance. A chance circumstance used sometimes to reveal the fact that Charles Walker was the unknown benefactor. What a multitude of good works will become known as his, only on the day of Judgment. He seemed to have been favoured by God with a special gift for finding out sites for new churches in crowded neighbourhoods, where others had been attempting in vain for months to make a discovery of the same kind. The finding out of the first portion of a site for the church and schools of Tower Hill mission was to be his work. For several months the writer, as it has been already stated, had been vainly endeavouring to find out a vacant spot on which might be raised in time the structures necessary for the new mission of Tower Hill. He was a frequent traveller during that time by some of the morning omnibuses going from the neighbourhood of his hotel to Whitechapel. One morning, as a matter of economy, he resolved to travel on foot to the east of London, instead of going there in an omnibus, as it had been his custom to do. This little fact became an important link, as we shall show, in the providential chain which led to the securing of a site for the works of the Tower Hill mission. That morning, when pursuing his journey on foot towards Tower Hill, in passing along Holborn the writer felt slightly fatigued.

It occurred to him at the moment that he would make a call at the office of Mr. Walker, which was close at hand, where he might repose himself for a short time. He did so. He had scarcely entered the office, when Mr. Walker said, "I am very glad you are come; I was about to write to you. I have just read an advertisement in the *Standard*, which announces that in Great Prescott-street a site for a new building is to be sold. I think it will answer your purpose." The writer read the advertisement, and at once felt, with Mr. Walker, that the site spoken of was a suitable one for the purposes he had in view. Mr. Walker had made no promise of assistance up to this point. But without generous help on his part, the writer felt that he could not entertain the prospect of purchasing the piece of vacant ground in question. Relying on all that he had heard of the generosity of Mr. Walker, to whom he was yet a comparative stranger, he ventured to make a bold proposal in the following words: "Mr. Walker, if you give a thousand pounds, I will undertake, with God's blessing, to purchase the site which is to be sold in Great Prescott-street" The noble answer of Charles Walker was, "I will." From the description of the property given in the *Standard*, the writer judged it would be sold for about three thousand pounds. He felt that by a donation from Mr. Walker of the amount named,

the place could be secured by contracting a loan for the rest. Within two hours of the writer's interview with Mr. Walker, the purchase of the site in Great Prescott-street was secured. Before concluding the agreement to purchase, the writer had an opportunity of inspecting the property to be sold, and of satisfying himself of its fitness for the object he had in view. The ink was scarcely dry on the agreement to sell the property in question to the writer, when a rich Rabbi presented himself at the office of the vendors, to purchase it as a site for a synagogue. Great was his disappointment when he found the place had already been disposed of.

It was considered prudent by the authorities of the diocese, that the Oblates of Mary should not commence missionary work in their new district until some months had elapsed after their appointment to it. The time for making a beginning of such work had now arrived. This beginning was a very humble one. On the eve of the Feast of the Annunciation, 1865, possession was obtained by the writer of a small tenement of three rooms in a house in Postern-row, Tower Hill, immediately over the spot where formerly stood Postern Gate in the London Wall. One of these rooms, which overlooked the moat in the Tower, was selected as a temporary chapel, in which an altar of humble construction was improvised that same evening. The

next morning he said Mass, the first celebrated on Tower Hill perhaps for centuries. Only a dozen people were present, as notice that Mass was to be said was only given to that number. The public at large had not yet been informed that the Tower Hill mission had been confided to the Oblates of Mary. Meanwhile, news went abroad to that effect among the neighbouring Catholic population. The good tidings stirred up the liveliest manifestations of delight on the part of these poor people. The humble lodging of the Fathers on Tower Hill was besieged by hundreds, who came to bid them welcome. They wished the writer to address to them some words of edification. But the little garret chapel could not contain the crowd who were eager to hear the voice of their Priest. Somebody suggested that they should repair to an open archway under the London and Blackwall railway, which was close at hand. The suggestion was acted upon. Thither they went, and under that railway-arch, while trains were passing one another overhead at intervals of two or three minutes, the writer had the great consolation of addressing the first public discourse to his new parishioners, and of opening the Tower Hill mission. Now that he was free to visit the Catholic inhabitants of the Tower Hill district, he had an opportunity of witnessing scenes of such misery, and at the same time of such patient en-

durance, that it would be hard to find them surpassed in any of the great centres of population in the world. Rosemary-lane and its countless courts and alleys was a world of misery in itself. It bore at the time an evil repute for lawlessness and crime, which was not altogether undeserved, though, as the writer was able soon to convince himself, amidst all these evils, exalted and purest virtues burned brightly in the hearts and lives of very many.

In the early days of the Tower Hill mission, the writer secured the valuable co-operation of his *confrère* Father Ring. Through their joint action a temporary iron church was raised on the newly-purchased site in Great Prescott-street, a portion of which was used as a school on week-days. The absence of all means of education within the limits of the Tower Hill district for the poor children of the locality, was one of the first wants which the Fathers felt they should endeavour to supply. Over a thousand children wandered through the courts of Rosemary-lane and its neighbourhood, without any local means of Catholic education. These children belonged, for the most part, to some of the poorest classes of the metropolis; at the same time the requirements of a congregation numbering over six thousand souls, would seem to make it necessary that the temporary iron church should be soon re-

placed by a permanent one of ample and suitable dimensions. The question which then presented itself for solution to the Tower Hill Fathers was, whether they should build a church, or schools for their poor children first. By building a church they would, whilst raising a temple to God and providing a place of worship for thousands of their people, also create a source of modest income for the support of the mission and their own support; whereas, school buildings of the dimensions needed would impose a large immediate and permanent outlay. But then they thought that a delay in raising schools for the vast wandering population of their poor children, would result in the then rising generation of little ones being brought up in ignorance, and being thus lost to the faith. To avert the chance of such an evil, the Fathers resolved to postpone the building of their church, and to take immediate steps for the erection of suitable schools, even though this resolution would involve them, as it has done, in financial difficulties. They were encouraged in adhering to the project of building schools with the least possible delay, by an incident which took place at that time within the walls of their iron church. His Grace the Most Rev. Dr. Manning, visited Tower Hill one Sunday afternoon. The iron church was packed with children, some nine hundred of whom were present to receive his lordship, for he had come

for them. He had scarcely finished his beautiful and touching address to these little ones, when with one voice, as if they were being moved by some sudden and irresistible impulse, they cried out, "A school! a school!" His lordship was deeply moved, and so were all present, by this occurrence. The words of the prophet, "*The little ones have asked for bread,*" came forcibly to the writer's mind on listening to this appeal. Happily that portion of the text which follows, "*and there was none to break it unto them,*" (Lamentations iv. 4), was not in this case to be fulfilled. Promises were made by his Grace and by the Fathers of the Mission, in favourable reply to the touching petition of that untaught multitude of poor children of Tower Hill.

It fell to the privileged share of the Fathers of the Tower Hill mission to be the ministers and dispensers, not only of that food and of those consolations by which the soul-life of the members of their flock was sustained and comforted, but also of that material food of which the impoverished dwellers in the courts of their district often stood sorely in need; living, as the great multitude of them did, from "hand to mouth." No provision was in store when any public or domestic visitation befell them. In the year 1867 the cholera plague burst upon the east of London with a sudden intensity; homes in considerable numbers were deprived

of their bread-winners, and starvation stared multitudes in the face. To endeavour to save the lives of the perishing poor of their neighbourhood became at once the duty of the Fathers of the Tower Hill mission. Whilst there was a rivalry of zeal on the part of all, there was one amongst the Fathers who carried away the palm of super-eminence in this charitable rivalry—Father Ring. He had a special gift of large-hearted sympathy for the suffering and poverty-stricken classes of society. At the same time, he was fertile in successful devices in rendering that sympathy of practical avail to the sufferers whose woes and wants had awakened it. To the credit of the English nation be it said, that there is one grand sentiment of its old Catholicity that has never died out, amidst the storms and wreckages of post-reformation times—it is the sentiment of that charity that shows itself by alms deeds. The harrowing privations left in the wake of the grim cholera plague in its strides through eastern London, were not slow in arousing the generous sympathy of the wealthier classes of the metropolis. A Mansion House Relief Fund was started. The local relief committee, organised by Father Ring, was one of the first in the east of London to put itself into communication with the general committee of the Mansion House. The Vicars of four or five of the neighbouring protestant churches were later in their

application for the Mansion House relief for their poor. They were informed that a committee already existed at Great Prescott-street, Tower Hill, with which they should put themselves into communication, if they wished their poor people to become partakers of the benefit of the Mansion House funds. The residence of the Fathers in Great Prescott-street became thus the central relief depôt of a great part of the east of London, for members of all denominations—of Protestants and Jews, as well as for the poor Catholics of the locality. The meetings of the committee, which consisted of Catholic Priests and Protestant clergymen, and of lay Catholic and Protestant gentlemen, were also held at the Fathers' house. It was edifying to witness the perfect harmony in doing good which prevailed among all the members of the committee. At a later period a frost famine prevailed among the labouring classes, and in an especial manner among those employed at the wharfs and docks. Shipping could not come up the Thames, and all work ceased for tens of thousands of hands. Another Mansion House fund was inaugurated; Father Ring put himself into communication with the committee who managed it, as he had done on a previous occasion, and with the same signal results. It must be said that he was largely helped on both those occasions by the influential and kindly co-operation of Mr. Deputy Young,

the solitary Catholic member, at that time, of the London Corporation. But besides those periods of general and exceptional destitution, there are always cases of appalling distress and misery to be dealt with by the Fathers of Great Prescot-street; not only have they to encounter the wretchedness of a poor east London district, but they are also continually meeting with most distressing cases of destitution among poor people coming from other countries. The chief landing stages for passenger steamers coming to London from Ireland, France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany, are in the Tower Hill district—at St. Katharine's and at other adjacent wharfs. Many of these poor people arrive in London penniless, or nearly so. To the Priests' house they flock in their distress. The Priests' hall has witnessed many a scene of anguish and despair. What can the Priests do with no funds to meet those real and terrible wants? Immersed in serious difficulties themselves, owing to their efforts to save their own people, what can they do for those poor strangers? Yet they cannot allow them to perish of hunger. Sometimes it is the group of young innocent girls, who foolishly imagined that they were sure to find fine situations on their arrival in London, who knock at the door of the Fathers' house at an advanced hour in the evening to say they are starving and houseless; their last penny being spent,

they were turned out of their lodging houses at that hour. Sometimes it is the emigrant family from some Irish county, *en route* for New Zealand or some Australian port, who find themselves in unexpected difficulties, and who make their way to the Priests' house to be helped out of their embarrassments. From the earliest days of the Tower Hill mission down to the present time, such has been the character of the wants to which the Priests of that mission have been called to minister. Alas, in many instances of real distress they were powerless to go beyond kind words of sympathy—or at most the giving of some inadequate help.

The promise made to those hundreds of children's voices, petitioning for a school, was not to be forgotten. Plans of schools for a thousand children were obtained from Mr. John Young. The foundation stone was laid by the Princess Marguerite, of Orleans, on the 21st of June, 1870. The ceremonial attracted a great deal of public attention, and was reported in all the leading morning papers. The opening of the spacious school buildings was the commencement of a new era in the Tower Hill mission. The Fathers had now in their hands an effective instrumentality for promoting the religious, moral, and intellectual condition of the rising Catholic population of their district, of which they were resolved to avail themselves, to the utmost of

their capability, for the good of their people. Shortly after the opening of the schools, application was made to the writer, on the part of two literary men of eminence, who wished to see for themselves the condition of the poor of the east of London in their homes, and who desired to be accompanied by a Priest in doing so, that he might be their guide on the occasion. They were both protestants. The writer willingly consented to their application. One of these gentlemen, the Hon. — —, published two articles in the *Globe*, detailing the results of his visit to the courts of Rosemary-lane, from which the writer quotes the following extracts, as they serve to illustrate the condition of the inhabitants of that locality, at the period when the new schools were thrown open to the wandering crowds of children who swarmed its courts and alleys:—

“Still onward, deeper and deeper into the sea of misery and want, we plunged, until it seemed as though it must rise and swallow us—among ghostly wooden edifices that glinted through the mist—under great iron arches with a roar of railway overhead—into a long, narrow court, sloppy and wet, unsafe with ancient orange peel and sweltering cabbage remnants. A woman watched and waited. ‘Had we seen a band of nigger serenaders?’ ‘No, we had not.’ ‘I hope they will soon return. They have been out all day with the banjo, but have had no luck, on account of the soft weather. Unless they have fared better this evening, we must go supperless to bed! It is a hard life for them, especially the boys, who have sought in vain for other work;

the black brand of their Bohemian life lies heavy on them, and they can procure none. But I won't stop you, Father. You are sadly wanted in No. 2, yonder.' To No. 2 we directed our steps, and a miserable sight awaited us. In the extreme corner of a room, about three yards square, the wreck of a fine young man of thirty wrestled with disease. There was a miserable fire, certainly, for the June night was cold; but that was the only attempt at comfort visible. An uncomely creature, which under more favourable auspices would have resembled a woman, was working at sack-making literally for bare life. One end of the sack was hooked to a nail in the wall, and she held the other and worked the needle rapidly, helped by an extremely dirty old man. A brawny young fellow leaned against an apology for a table, smoking a short black pipe, less uncertain in hue than was his face. They were all grimy together—walls and floor and inmates—and the attention of the rest was concentrated with the sympathy of close fellowship upon the writhing figure in the corner. 'You wouldn't think it,' the young fellow half muttered to himself between the whiffs, 'but six weeks ago he lying there was as strong and hale as I. Coal-heavers both, we earned our money honestly; and look at the poor creature, do!' We looked at him, and perceived a human being, hardly clad at all, suffering from disease of the joints, squatting upon a layer of fœtid rags, with but an inch or two of hard woollen rottenness betwixt his body and the floor. Pillow he had absolutely none, but supported himself by clinging with thin, cramped hands to the angles and excrescences of the panelling. Having a smattering of surgery, I bent down to examine his knee. It was hard and dry, with angry swelling, bound round with a scrap of sacking, which but increased its native irritation. 'Good Heavens!' I cried, 'this man must suffer as though branded with hot iron.' 'I do suffer—much,' he replied, 'but what is to be done? The parish doctor came, and prescribed linseed poultices—'

a fine thing, to buy food for my knee, while my stomach remains unfilled!' Indeed, he appeared to me to be sinking from sheer exhaustion as much as from disease. As he spoke, his wife, whose hands had been resting a moment on her sacks, stitched on with the energy of desperation, as though in the anguished hope of gaining something tangible after all; no doctor, certainly, yet, by plying bone and muscle, 8*d.* a day was to be gained, with a sick husband and three children to support. Surely, this was worth the rack of energy, well-nigh spent, with which she struggled against fate. 'One thing or the other,' the sufferer murmured, 'I wouldn't mind it all if I could be well again, but I would rather die at once than that they should wear their health for such as I;' and he traced listless patterns on the wall with wasted hands pallid through their grime, and fell back fatigued and cramped and crippled in the angle of the wainscoting. The room above contained an old man who had occupied a situation for twenty-seven years, but who had been crushed by the sudden exit of a beer-barrel from a City archway. He could claim no redress, as there had been no witness to the accident. He, too, had been advised the use of linseed meal, and his meagre wardrobe had been exchanged for poultices. The very clothing had been sold from off his bed. Sacks, still waiting to be sewn, replaced the pawned blanket. 'It was a struggle,' his wife said, 'between food and warmth;' she had elected that animal heat was preferable to dinner. Fortunately for ourselves it has never entered into our experience to decide between these two necessaries of life. Yet the wisdom of her choice was evinced by terrible example in the very next house. A miserable room like all the rest; a table minus a leg, and an ominous mass of sacks—a woman sewing doggedly—a man in incongruous relics of faded flash attire, half sitting on a tripod stool, leaning his head against the mantelshelf, shivering with fever before some smoking sticks, his chin buried on his breast. Unlike the other families that we had

visited, this couple took no notice of our entrance, and we contemplated the pair for some moments in silence. I ventured to remark that the man seemed ill. 'Ill!' echoed the woman, abruptly casting down her sack and seizing the man, with a laugh, by his hair to show us his cadaverous face. 'Ill! look up, and display your beauty to the gentlemen!' Thus admonished, the man showed a young and not uncomely face, but pallid with the grey hue of death, and the eyes glazed with the leaden look of approaching dissolution. My companion whispered in my ear, 'He is dying of absolute starvation.' It was too true—he was wasting from sheer want—a man who should have been full of life and vigour, fading before our eyes for lack of a crust of bread. There were heaps of sacks about the room, and the woman struggled over them with the benumbed, monotonous, and dreamlike movement of extreme hopelessness. The very action of her arms seemed a dogged protest against the world's injustice. Each turn of the elbows said, 'What is the use of work? Better to lie down and die at once, for never shall I win enough to keep the death wolf from my door.'

"With the burthen of this scene upon my mind, I felt all my nerves jarred painfully by a peal of laughter from the dwellers on the ground-floor. They opened their door and saluted us good-naturedly as we passed into the night. 'Good heavens!' I said to myself, 'how beneficent a dispensation is this callous spirit that can afford to laugh idly on the brink of the same precipice as swallows those around!' Truly the underlying cheerfulness that seemed to pervade the horrible dens through which we had wandered was very wonderful—ay, and merciful too—although perhaps it savoured now and then more of carelessness than mirth, more of bravado than of heart's ease. A little fairy child tripped among the foul fungi of the court as we emerged into the air, looking weird and uncanny, draped in a long tattered shawl. 'Why, my little match-girl, is that you?'

the Priest asked. 'No more match-girl,' she answered with a pout and suddenly angry brow, 'me of the Holy Guild; me good child; not match-girl any more.' Poor little one! Remain ever of the Holy Guild; cling to the good friends that heaven has raised for thee. Grow up in the purer air of kindly human sympathy and encouragement, whereby thy life may be freed from the miasmata that have warped thy parents, body and soul!

"We retraced our steps through the greasy lanes, and came suddenly upon a large building bright with gaslight, tier above tier, flooding through Gothic windows the dreary scene below. 'What is this,' I asked of my companion, 'which appears like a Palace of Hope in the midst of a desolate waste?' 'Your words are of good augury,' he answered, smiling, 'that is the new building in which we have opened schools for boys and girls. Their fathers and mothers, God help them! learned nothing in their lives but to struggle hard for mere existence. These little ones, with heaven's aid, will acquire the means of earning a decent living, and will look back upon the ignoble struggles of their infancy as on a dream.' 'A Utopian scheme, I fear,' I answered with a sigh. 'Where are the sinews of war to come from with which to carry on the fight? for such a flood of misery as this may not be stemmed by floating straws.' He shook me hopefully by the hand, and went on his way; whilst I, feeling that the instances I had witnessed of starvation and despair were but specimens of a vast family, moved painfully away from the squalid courts, and past the City mansions, away to where the glittering theatres were disgorging their crowds, and where the sumptuous carriages roll unceasingly, whilst their occupants ignore the bitter truth that famine stalks naked in our very midst."

The time had now arrived for taking steps to replace the temporary iron church in Great Prescott-

street.* To this undertaking his Eminence Cardinal Manning gave his paternal and cordial approval in the following letter :—

“8, YORK PLACE, W., Dec. 3, 1872.

“REV. AND DEAR FATHER,

“I cannot hesitate for a moment to give my heartiest commendation to your appeal for the building of the Church of the English Martyrs, Tower Hill. Every motive binds me to do so : first, the urgent spiritual needs of at least 6,000 people ; secondly, the poverty and insufficiency of the building in which the Holy Mass is now celebrated ; thirdly, the great zeal shown by yourself and the other fathers in the completion of your magnificent schools.

“I give my blessing with all my heart to your undertaking ; and I commend it very earnestly to the charity and generosity of the faithful.

“Believe me,

“Rev. and Dear Father,

“Yours affectionately in Jesus Christ,

“✠ HENRY EDWARD,

“*Archbishop of Westminster.*

“THE REV. FATHER COOKE, O.M.I.”

On the 22nd of June, 1876, the anniversary of the martyrdom of Cardinal Fisher, on Tower Hill,

* In a work entitled, “New View of London,” printed by Nicholson, in Little Britain, in 1708, Prescott-street is thus spoken of: “A spacious and regular-built street. Instead of signs the houses are distinguished here by numbers, as the staircases in the Inns of Court and Chancery.” This would go to prove that Prescott-street was the first street in London where numbers were affixed to houses.

the new church of the English Martyrs was solemnly opened by his Eminence Cardinal Manning in presence of a large congregation. The Duke of Norfolk, whose ancestor the saintly Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel, was a prisoner for the faith for many years in the Tower, was also present, with several other members of the Catholic nobility, on the occasion. Under the joint action of the church and the schools, a striking transformation began soon to show itself in the religious and educational aspects of the Tower Hill mission. The following extracts from a report on the state of these schools, which has been recently issued, will serve to show with what success the work of religious and secular education is being carried on within their walls:—

“RESULTS OF EXAMINATIONS.—This School has gone on steadily improving until it now ranks as the equal of any Elementary School in London. The results of the Examinations have been highly satisfactory, and that this is the case, is amply testified by the reports for the preceding five years, quoted below. (a). RELIGIOUS.—The Religious instruction has been attended to carefully, and with striking success, as is fully demonstrated by this School having repeatedly gained the highest mark of approbation. (b). SECULAR.—In 1877, P. LE PAGE RENOUF, Esq., H.M. Inspector, reported as follows: ‘This School is in good order, and very efficiently taught.’ In 1878, the same gentleman writes, ‘The order is as good as ever, and the instruction most satisfactory.’ In 1879, the result is even still more creditable. The Inspector, commenting on the condition of the School, simply said, ‘This School is in excellent con-

dition.' In 1880, M. MYERS, Esq., H.M. Inspector, writes: 'The work throughout this School is thoroughly well done.'

Whilst engaged in the work of building a new church, and of founding a new Religious House within the precincts of Tower Hill, the Fathers of the mission could not be indifferent to the historic fact, that formerly within the same precincts stood several beautiful churches and more than one noble abbey, and other great religious institutions. In the centre of the White Tower is the very ancient and very beautiful Norman chapel, which is dedicated to St. John the Evangelist, and which was formerly used for the private devotions of the royal family and household, when the Court was kept at the Tower. Bayle says:—

"In the year 1240, that great patron of arts, Henry III., gave particular directions for repairing and ornamenting this chapel, and among other things that were ordered to be made were three glass windows, one towards the north with Mary holding her Child, and two others towards the south, representing the Holy Trinity and St. John the Apostle and Evangelist. The cross and rood were also to be painted well, and with good colours. And there were likewise to be made and painted two fair images, one of them St. Edward holding a ring and presenting it to St. John the Evangelist."

The church of St. Peter ad Vincula was the chief sacred structure within the walls of the Tower.

This church, as it now stands, affords no idea of its vastness and beauty in early Catholic times. Stow thus speaks of it in page 68, vol. I. :—

“This church no doubt was formerly very large and spacious, since the kings used to repair hither sometimes to their devotions. In Henry III.’s time here were stalls for king and queen. It had two chancels, the chancel of St. Peter, and another chancel of which St. Mary was the tutelary. It was adorned with St. Mary and her shrine, and with the images of St. Peter, St. Nicholas, and St. Katherine.”

In this church lie buried the bodies of the illustrious Confessors of the Faith, Fisher and More. The church of All Hallows, Barking, was situated on the west of Tower Hill, not far from the entrance to the Tower. It bore that title in consequence of its having been founded and endowed by the community of Nuns of the famous old abbey of Barking, in Essex, of which St. Ethelburga had been the first Superioress, and which was founded in 680. This church was famous for several centuries, because of the chapel of the Blessed Virgin with which it was adorned. This chapel was built by Richard I., *Cœur-de-lion*. In it stood a statue of the Blessed Virgin, which was erected there by Edward I. Old historians tell us that Edward, whilst still a youth, and had not yet been called to the throne, was deeply afflicted at the thought of

the woes and disasters that had befallen England, and that in his affliction he besought the Blessed Virgin, with most earnest petitions, to intercede in behalf of his country; and that on one occasion, while thus praying, the Blessed Virgin appeared to him and comforted him with promises of her aid, and that she said to him that he was to get a statue of herself made by a celebrated sculptor named Marlibrun, who was a Jew, and who resided in Billingsgate, which statue was to be placed in her chapel in the church of All Hallows, near the Tower, and that the Jew, gazing upon the beauty of its countenance, would be moved in heart to the love of heavenly things, and would be converted, together with his wife, to the Catholic faith; and that she further said to him, "Do you, Edward, when you behold this miracle, make a vow to Almighty God, that as long as you live, and when you are in England, you will visit five times a year this image in honour of the Mother of Christ; and that you will keep the chapel in repair and maintain it, for that place is indeed to be honoured." We read in Newcourt's "Repertorium," vol. I., p. 238, the following account of the celebrated sanctuary of Our Lady near the Tower:—

"On the north side of All Hallows church was anciently built a fair chapel, founded by King Richard I., confirmed and augmented by Edward I. King Edward IV. gave

license to his cousin, John, Earl of Worcester, to found there a Brotherhood for a Master and Brethren. But what was most remarkable in the said chapel was the image of the glorious Virgin, erected there by Edward I, before the death of King Henry III., his father. Being directed by a vision in his sleep, he caused the image of the glorious Virgin to be erected—King Edward voluntarily making oath before the Pope's legate, that all things shown to him in his sleep he had hitherto found to be most true. The Pope, in order that the said chapel might with due honour be frequented, released forty days penance to all true confessing penitents who, out of devotion, should come and contribute to the lights and repairs and ornaments of the said chapel, and pray for the soul of King Richard, and for the souls of all the faithful departed, with the salutation in English. This image of Our Lady was of great repute, for a great concourse of people came hither to her in pilgrimage, till it was suppressed."

Fabian's Chronicle, Anno 21, Henry VII., as quoted by the Rev. J. Maskell in his "History of All Hallows Church," has the following entry:—

"This yere, in the ende of July, was a gracious myracle shewed by Oure Ladye image of Barkynge, by a mayden chylde that a cart laden with stone yode over."

Sir Thomas More speaks of the devotion with which, in his day, pious people visited the chapel of Our Lady by the Tower. Pennant, in his "Account of London," says:—

"This image grew in great repute, and vast were the pilgrimages to it."

There stood formerly an ancient church dedicated to the honour of the Holy Cross and St. Mary Magdalen, in Aldgate, near the London Wall, and at a short distance from the site now covered by Great Prescott-street. This church was built by Siredus, or Siricius, Archbishop of Canterbury, in or about the year 990. In the reign of Henry I., A.D. 1108, the celebrated Priory of the Trinitarians was founded at Aldgate by the pious Queen Matilda, counselled by St. Anselm. Of this holy queen we shall again speak more at large. Christ Church was the name given to this Priory. The church of St. Mary Magdalen passed at that time into the hands of the Trinitarians at Aldgate. The order of the Trinitarians was founded by two holy Solitaries, St. John of Matha, and St. Felix of Valois. The principal exercises of the members of this order were to sing the divine office at the canonical hours, praising and glorifying the adorable Trinity as angels of earth, and to gather and carry alms into Barbary for the redemption of christian slaves from the Turks, to which end one-third of the revenues of each house was applied. Of their establishment in Aldgate Stow says:—

“The multitude of brethren praising God day and night therein, in short time so increased that all the city was delighted in beholding them.”

From Aldgate, Tower Hill is approached through

the Minories. About the middle of this street, on its eastern side, stood in former days a celebrated Abbey of the Nuns of St. Clare, who were called "Sorores Minores," or "Minoreesses." They gave their name to the locality. The Abbey of St. Clare was founded by Blanche, Queen of Navarre, wife of Edmund Plantaganet, second son of Henry III. The ground on which the Abbey was built was given by a devout citizen of London, Thomas Breadstreet, for the service of God, St. Mary and St. Francis. The heart of Eleanor of Provence was piously deposited in the cemetery of the Abbey, by her son, Edward I. Elizabeth, Duchess of Norfolk, in her will bearing date November 6th, 1506, bequeathed her body to be buried here. For several centuries, until the date of its suppression by Henry VIII., the Abbey of St. Clare enjoyed universal veneration, and the Minories was looked upon as holy ground, and was possessed of the privileges of sanctuary. Approaching nearer to the spot on which the church of the English Martyrs now stands, we find ourselves treading the former precincts of a once famous old Cistercian Monastery—the Abbey of Our Lady of Graces, and of which Weaver speaks in these words:—

"Before the foundation of this Abbey there stood in the same place a little chappell within a coemeterie or church-yard, consecrated by Ralph Stratford, Bishop of London,

wherein was interred innumerable many of such persons as died in the first great pestilence, the 23rd of Edward III. Now the king likened well this plot of ground, having before, in a tempest on sea, made a vow to build a monastery to the honour of God and Our Lady of Grace, builded here a monastery wherein he placed Monks of the Cistercian order."—*Weaver's Monuments*, page 425.

Northhouck thus speaks of the site of the Abbey of Our Lady of Graces :—

"At the south end of the Minories the street opens upon Tower Hill and East Smithfield ; between these plots of ground once stood a religious foundation called the Abbey of Grace ; upon the site of that Abbey is built the King's Victualling office."*

Maitland gives the following summary of the Charter of Edward III. with reference to this Abbey :—

"The substance of the Charter is, that the king founded this house in remembrance and in acknowledgment of the goodness of Almighty God, and of the Lord Jesus, and of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whom he had often called upon and found helpful to him by sea and by land, and in wars and other perils, and therefore he ordered this house to be called the King's Free Chapel of the Blessed Virgin of Graces, in *memoriam gratiarum*—in memory of those graces and favours he had received from her."

The writer was interested to find that William de Sancta Cruce, Abbot of the great Cistercian

* At present the Royal Mint occupies this site.

Monastery of Garendon, in Leicestershire, was, at the request of King Edward, chosen the first Abbot of St. Mary of Graces in London. Whilst the shrine of our Lady of Barking, at the west of Tower Hill, was greatly frequented by pious crowds, the chapel of Our Lady of Graces was also a place of much resort on the part of multitudes of the devout citizens of London. The church of the English Martyrs now stands within a distance of one hundred yards from the site once occupied by the inclosure of the Abbey of Our Lady of Graces, and within three times that distance from the existing fragments of the old Abbey of St. Clare. In other parts of the district attached to the Tower Hill mission are churches of very ancient origin. The date of the foundation of St. Magnus near London Bridge, of St. Bennet in Gracechurch-street, and of several other old churches of this district, is lost in the mist of distant ages. How rich is the inheritance of holy memories to which the church of the English Martyrs, Great Prescot-street, Tower Hill, is the rightful heiress! How glorious the records of its long ancestral line, receding back into ages remoter far than the period of England's foundation as one kingdom! Its walls are new, and its altars of recent structure, but its faith and worship are the same, the identical same—believed in and practised long centuries ago within those churches, abbeys, royal

chapels, or lowly hermitages, that found their place nigh to London's Tower, or within its battlements, or that existed somewhere near its site long before its foundations were laid. If Briton, Saxon, or Norman worshipper of any of these old fanes were to come back to life again, he would find himself at home in the Church of the English Martyrs of the present day. The Priest standing at the altar offering the great Eucharistic sacrifice of the Holy Mass would be no new sight for him; nor would the Priest hearing confessions be a novelty to his eyes. A sermon on loving obedience to the see of Peter would not be unfamiliar doctrine to his hearing, nor would he be surprised at congregational devotions in honour of the Mother of God, or at prayers in behalf of the departed, for all such teachings and practices were olden beliefs and usages in his day.

O marvellous Catholic verities, the finger-print of Him is upon you who gave to the heavens their stability and their unquenchable fires. Clouds rising from earth's surface may for periods shut out the vision of your beauty from the eyes of certain peoples, but ye shine on still above these clouds, awaiting the opening of the blessed rift through which ye may pour down your saving lights on those who perish, because ye enlighten them not. Such a rift even now is widening fast over the heads

of England's people, and one by one ye reappear—
O ancient truths—to believing eyes. May clouds
continue to melt, and lights to multiply, until
England's old Catholic belief is given back to her
again in glory and fulness!

CHAPTER XVII.

VARIOUS weighty reasons bearing upon the interior religious life and the missionary requirements of the society of the Oblates of Mary led to the conclusion on their part, that a suburban mission in some outlying district of London, would be a beneficial accompaniment to their undertaking at Tower Hill. If a choice of times for the beginning of such a work as the founding of a new establishment of their society in the suburbs of London were left absolutely at their disposal, they would not have chosen the occasion when they were already immersed in the early difficulties of the Tower Hill foundation for entering upon this project. But special opportunities for bringing such an important work to a satisfactory issue existed then, which it was more than likely would not present themselves later on. Whilst aiming at the forming, somewhere in the neighbourhood of London, of an establishment of the kind indicated, the Oblates of Mary wished that their accomplishment of this design should become the occasion of the opening of a new mission in some

suburb where one was needed. The writer had already agreed, in the name of his society, to accept of the mission of Tower Hill offered to the Oblates of Mary by Cardinal Wiseman, and was still at his hotel when the question of a suburban mission came to be considered. There was a point on which he required information: he wished to know what neighbourhood around London was then most in need of a Catholic church being built there. He cannot help regarding as providential the circumstance by which he acquired information on that point. One evening he was seated in a public room in his hotel when two gentlemen entered the apartment, one was an elderly English gentleman who resided on the Continent, and who was then visiting London, the other was a young professional man who lived in London; they were both Catholics. They conversed together in a tone of voice loud enough to be heard by everybody in the room, and the writer could not help hearing what they said. The subject of the conversation was on the progress which the Catholic religion was then making in England. At last a question was put by the elderly gentleman to his young companion, which was the very question upon which the writer required information. The question was, "In what places in the neighbourhood of London are churches most required?" The young gentleman answered in

these words, "I have heard my brother, who is a Priest of great experience, say that there was no suburb of London where a new mission and church were more required than at Kilburn." This was the first time that the name Kilburn fell upon the writer's ears. The next day he visited Kilburn, and found that the place seemed to suit admirably for the purposes he had in view. His wishes on the subject were placed before Cardinal Wiseman, who graciously consented that the Oblates of Mary Immaculate should found a mission and house of their society there. The young professional gentleman, through whose unconscious agency the information which led to the above-named results, has since received from God a vocation to the priesthood.

Holy memories were attached to Kilburn. The stones were still "crying out from the wall," proclaiming the fact that in days gone by Kilburn had been the hallowed resort of souls who fled from the world's cares and dangers, to devote their lives to contemplation and prayer, and to the exercise of christian hospitality towards the wayfarer and the needy. At Kilburn two great street-ways cross one another; one bears the name of the Abbey-road, and the other that of the Priory-road. Half-a-dozen other places derive their titles from the old Priory of Kilburn. The Priory of Kilburn was not one

of those Religious houses that were famous in England's history ; yet it cannot be denied that "it has left its footprints on the sands of time."

The story of how there came to be a Priory at Kilburn, takes us back to a royal and saintly homestead, the palace of St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland, and niece of St. Edward the Confessor. St. Margaret's life is drawing to its close. A great servant of God—Turgot, her Confessor—whom a non-catholic writer of distinction* calls "a great and good man," is at the bedside of the dying queen. To him she speaks in these words : "Farewell, for I shall not be here long ; you will stay some little time behind me. Two things I have to desire of you ; one is that so long as you live you remember my poor soul in your masses and prayers ; the second is that you take the charge of my two children, Matilda and Edith. Teach them, above all things, to love and fear God, and if either of them should be permitted to attain the height of worldly grandeur, oh then, in an especial manner, be unto them a father and a guide ; admonish, and if-need be, reprove them, lest they should be swelled with the pride of momentary glory, and offend their creator, and forfeit eternal life. These things I beseech you promise here in the presence of God."

* Miss Strickland.

As her end drew nigh she said, "O Lord, Jesus Christ, who by Thy death hast given life to the world, deliver me from all evil." Praying thus she breathed her pure spirit into the hands of God. The piety of Margaret, of Scotland, was inherited by her daughter Matilda, the "good Queen Maude," of England, from out whose holy household its fragrance will spread to a lowly hermitage by a running brook, in the silent groves of Kilburn. Matilda was educated by the Nuns at Romsey, of which her aunt was Abbess. There she wished to spend all her days; but like another Esther she was to ascend the throne for the good of her people. Her history forms one of the brightest pages in the story of England's greatness. We would fain linger on the details of a life so full of events of an absorbing historic nature, but we are reminded that the introduction of the name of Matilda, wife of Henry I., on this occasion into our pages, is due to its connection with the foundation of the Priory or Nunnery of Kilburn. Whilst taking part with her husband in the wise government of the State, in the quiet of her domestic circle, she led the life of a saint. The companions of her devotions were her three maids of honour, Emma, Christina, and Gunilda. These holy virgins felt inspired to dedicate themselves to God in the religious state. The advice of the Abbot Herbert, of Westminster, was sought by them. At

that time there lived in the woods of Kilburn a holy hermit named Godwin, who wished before the close of his days to hand over the possession of his hermitage and its enclosure, to the community of Westminster Abbey. The Abbot Herbert, judging the site of the hermitage of Kilburn to offer a suitable position for a Priory of Benedictine Nuns, presented it, on the part of his community, to the three devout ladies, the maids of honour of Queen Matilda, already spoken of. It was thus that Kilburn Priory was inaugurated in the year A.D. 1130. The conditions which were attached to the gift of the Abbot Herbert were, that the Nuns should pray for the soul of Edward the Confessor, and for the good estate of the Abbot and community of Westminster.

Hospitality, in a high and lofty sense, was one of the leading characteristics of monasteries of the old Benedictine rule. Kilburn Priory had scarcely been founded when, by reason of the position which it occupied, it was called upon to exercise hospitality on a large scale to the wayfarer and the stranger. It stood close to the borders of the principal roadway of England—the famous Watling-street—which traversed Kilburn. This great Roman road stretched across England from sea to sea. Approaching London from Dover it divided into two branches; of these the first, and by far the most remarkable,

crossed the Thames at a ferry called Stangate, in the parish of Lambeth, and passed through Westminster and Paddington in a direct line to Edgware. . Traces of this road are found in Cheshire, Yorkshire, Northumberland, and in the counties of Scotland, south of Antonius' wall. The present Edgware-road passes over the site of the ancient Watling-street. Over this highway, for five centuries of the Roman dominion, moved the legions of imperial Rome ; but in the days of the Kilburn Priory, more peaceful crowds travelled by this old roadway. Travellers from the north of England, from Ireland and Scotland, passed before the gates of the Priory of Kilburn on their way to London. In those days inns were few throughout the country, but their places were well supplied by the hospitality exercised towards travellers and strangers at the gates, or within the walls, of Religious houses. The following extract from the code of regulations for the reception of guests in Religious houses in the olden days, will afford an idea of the lofty christian spirit which animated that hospitality :—

“ All guests that arrive are to be received as Christ Himself, for He has said, ‘ *I was a stranger and ye took me in.*’ To all due reverence shall be shown when guests are announced ; they will be received with every mark of charity. They will first join together in prayer, that thus they may be associated in the sweetness of peace. The greatest kindness will be exhibited in the entertainment of the poor, and

of travellers, for Christ is especially present in the persons of such."

In the spirit of the words just cited, was the holy hospitality of Kilburn Priory exercised for full four hundred years; but its career of blessed usefulness was to be brought to a close. It arose into existence in the days of the first Henry, it was to disappear in those of the last of England's kings who bore that name, the eighth Henry, of memory unholy. But it left behind it a twilight of holy memories that lingered over the place it once occupied through a night of centuries, until day—a day of faith—broke at last upon Kilburn, and to the olden Priory a new Priory has succeeded. "New Priory" was the title which was chosen for the establishment of the Oblates of Mary at Kilburn, because there was a connecting line of a common faith and worship and obedience between the Priory which rose into existence, amidst the silent groves of Kilburn, in the days of the Norman kings, and that community abode of Priests and missionaries which, seven hundred and fifty years later, was to take its position as a Religious house within the grounds of the ancient Priory of Kilburn. But before this permanent position had been secured, a temporary one had to be occupied for some years by the Oblates of Mary. They rented a house in Greville-road, Kilburn, a room in which was set apart for a chapel. In this

humble oratory Mass was said in Kilburn, on the feast of the Purification, February 2nd, 1865. At that time the Sunday congregations did not average more than a couple of dozen people; but gradually the grain of mustard seed began to grow and spread out its branches. The founding of new schools in Kilburn Park, where a great town had suddenly sprung up, was the first important development of the mission. The congregations on Sundays outgrew the capacity of the little chapel in Greville-road. Kilburn was now rapidly gaining in population. A suitable site had to be secured there for a church, and for a community house for the Fathers. A plot of four acres of land in one of the best situations in Kilburn was secured. This land once formed a central portion of the grounds of Kilburn Priory. On this site a wing of the future house of studies for their junior members was erected by the Fathers, the ground floor of which served as an improvised residence for themselves; a large room on the next floor was to be employed as a temporary church. The time at last came for making a beginning in the building of a permanent church, which was to be dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It was arranged that the undertaking was to be carried on portion by portion. The first portion, which has already been erected and opened for use, is an evidence of the ample size

and beauty of which the community church will be possessed.

The space at our disposal does not permit us to make more than a passing allusion to other important undertakings of the Oblates of Mary in these kingdoms. In Scotland they possess the large and handsome church of Leith. They undertook, in the days of Bishop Gillis, and at his request, the spiritual charge of that important place. Leith, as is known to our readers, is one of the chief sea-ports of Scotland. It might be looked upon as a suburb of Edinburgh, with which place it is connected by a continuous line of houses, and from which it is only two miles distant. The church and community house of the Fathers occupy one of the most central positions in the town. A vast field for missionary zeal is offered to the labours of the Oblate Fathers at Leith. On the left bank of the Mersey, almost opposite Liverpool, stands Rock Ferry, once a pleasant hamlet, an outskirt of Birkenhead, but now a neighbourhood which is steadily growing into a town of large proportions. Here the Oblates possess a church of unique beauty, which they have erected within the last few years. As we shall have occasion to allude again to Rock Ferry, we shall proceed to speak of other establishments of the Oblates of Mary in these kingdoms.

The Reformatories of Glencree and Philipstown,

in Ireland, are among the most important establishments possessed by the Oblates in these kingdoms. The work of the reformation of youthful offenders which is carried on in these establishments, is one which demands great devotedness in the case of all who are engaged in it; at the same time, that it necessarily involves a large amount of responsibility and anxiety on their part. This work was undertaken by the Oblates of Mary some twenty years ago, at the request of the late Lord Chancellor of Ireland, Lord O'Hagan, and Sir John Lentaigne. Some thousands of youths have already passed through those establishments, thoroughly reformed, and fitted to take their places in life as useful members of society. It is true that all do not correspond, by their after conduct, to the labours of zeal exercised in their behalf by the communities of Glencree and Philipstown, but the vast majority do so. Many who were once the inmates of these institutions as youthful culprits, now occupy honourable and lucrative positions in society, and are leading the lives of good and devout christians.

The Novitiate House of the British Province of the Oblates of Mary is situated at Stillorgan, which place lies half-way between Dublin and Bray. No more suitable spot could be chosen for the purposes of a Novitiate. The house stands in a well-wooded enclosure of eighteen acres, and commands some of

the finest views in Europe. In front of it, at a distance of two or three miles, stand out lofty ranges of the Wicklow and Dublin mountains, and from the rear a full view is had of the glorious Bay of Dublin, from which it is separated by a patch of the loveliest landscape, that descends in sloping terraces until it reaches the sea shore.

We return to Rock Ferry to make a passing reference to an institution which has deserved well of religion, and of which an important branch exists in that place. The institution to which we refer is that of the sisterhood of the *Sainte Famille*, of Bordeaux. The girls' and infants' schools of the Oblate missions at Liverpool, Leeds, Leith, Tower Hill, London, and Rock Ferry, are conducted by the sisters of that institution. We shall find them, as our narrative progresses, labouring in the Oblate missions of Ceylon and South Africa, among the Mahometans and Buddhists of the former place, and among the Basutos of the latter country. No work of which devoted woman is capable seems to lie beyond the range of the charitable action of this wonderfully organized sisterhood. The Novitiate House for their English province of the *Sainte Famille*, exists at Rock Ferry, near Birkenhead.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CEYLON, the Taprobane of Grecian and Roman history, is one of the loveliest and most fertile islands in the British empire. It is situated in the Indian Ocean, to the south-east of the Peninsula of Hindustan, from which place it is separated by the Gulf of Manaar and Polks Straits. Its length is 271 miles, and its greatest width is 137 miles. In area it is nearly the size of Ireland. It presents an aspect of singular grandeur and beauty as it emerges from the sea, to the eye of the traveller, with its mountain ranges rising to the average height of the Pyrenees, and crowned with forests of perennial green, whilst its plains are clad to the edge of the beach with a carpet of sparkling verdure. Traversing this fair island from coast to coast, one meets with an endless variety of the richest productions of mother earth. The pearls yielded by its alluvial soil, are counted among the most precious known to connoisseurs, and the feathery tribes of its glorious woods and forests are unsurpassed by the bird-world of any other land, in sweetness of song, and in tint.

and glitter of plumage. But it is not to feast the eye and ear amidst the most delectable of nature's sights and sounds, that the youthful missionary leaves father and mother, and all things, to become an exile unto death in some far-away land. His object is to gain souls to God. With such an object present to his thoughts, the mission fields of Ceylon, where so much certain good awaits his labours, cannot fail, should God guide his footsteps thither, to prove intensely attractive. Ceylon has a great pagan history attached to its earliest ages. If you wish to discover some proofs of what it was in very ancient times, go to one of its greatest deserts—penetrate the gloomy forests of the Wanny, advance until your foot strikes some rubbish-heap; examine the debris—fragments of fallen arches, of broken pillars, and of delicately-carved capitals roll out before you—you are treading amidst the ruins of the regal city of Anuradhapura, which was founded five centuries before Christ. It is stated that this city once occupied a site larger than that of modern London. But a bright Catholic page was to appear in the history of Ceylon. The neighbouring peninsula of Hindustan was, at the time to which we wish to refer, being traversed by the footsteps of an Apostle—an Apostle like one of the twelve—possessed of the gift of tongues and of the gift of miracles, the great St. Francis Xavier. The

inhabitants of Ceylon sent messengers to the Saint, begging that he would visit and instruct them in the Christian faith. In 1548 he set foot on the island, and the same marvels that had accompanied his missionary labours elsewhere, followed his preaching in Ceylon. The gloomy and idolatrous rites of Brahmsim in the north, and of Buddhism in the south of the island, gave way to the teachings and the practices of the Christian faith. The blood of martyrs began soon to fertilize the vineyard planted by the Apostle of the Indies—St. Francis Xavier. The glory of furnishing the first legion of martyrs for the faith in Ceylon was to belong to Jaffna, that part of the island which St. Francis had himself, in person, evangelised. Six hundred martyrs were put to death by the King of Jaffnapatam, for having embraced Christianity. Among those who perished thus gloriously was the king's own son. These events led to possession of the island being taken by the Portugese. It is not our business to speak of the political or commercial enterprises of these latter people in Ceylon; but all believers in Christianity owe them an acknowledgment for their well-directed and successful efforts in dispelling the gloom of paganism by the teachings of the Christian faith. A protestant writer of celebrity—Sir J. Emerson Tennent, formerly Governor of Ceylon—bears the following testimony to the perfectly legiti-

mate means employed by the Portugese for the conversion of the natives of Ceylon to Christianity :—

“ On the arrival of the Portugese in Ceylon, the doctrines of Brahma and Buddha were the prevailing religions respectively of the Tamils of the north, and of the Singhalese of the rest of the island. There is no proof that compulsion was resorted to by them for the extension of their own faith, or violence employed for the extinction of the national superstitions, and the probability is that the Priests and missionaries of Ceylon were contented to pursue the same line that had been found successful by their brethren in India.”

The early teachers of the Catholic religion in Ceylon must have been men of God, and largely aided by His Holy Spirit, to produce fruits of conversion of a growth so extraordinary, and of so lasting a character, among the heathen of that island. Alluding to the labours of the early Catholic missionaries in Jaffna, Sir Emerson Tennent says :—

“ The whole extent of the peninsula was brought by them under the authority of the Church. It was divided into parishes, each of which was provided with a chapel and school-house, and where required a glebe for the residence of the Priest who was to officiate. The ruins of these ecclesiastical edifices, even at the present day, attest the care and expenditure which must have been applied to their construction. In Jaffna itself they had a church and college of Jesuits at the west end of the town ; a church and convent of Dominicans on the east, besides a convent of St. Francis. Between forty and fifty Priests resided then in Jaffna. In short, there is sufficient evidence extant connected with this

province of Ceylon, to justify the assertion that within a very few years of its occupation by the Portugese, almost the entire population of the Jaffna peninsula, including even the Brahmins themselves, had abjured idolatry and submitted to the ceremony of Baptism."—*Christianity in Ceylon*, by Sir J. E. Tennent, ch. 2.

This amazing success of the first Catholic missionaries who visited Ceylon, is a proof of the divine benediction which was granted to their labours. But a terrible persecution was at hand to test the sincerity of the conversions wrought on such a large scale among the Singhalese and Tamil populations of that island. The Dutch became masters of Ceylon. The utter extirpation of Catholicity was one of the first projects which they aimed at accomplishing. One of the means employed by them for this end was to re-establish paganism. Dr. John Davy, brother to the philosopher, Sir Humphrey Davy, in his work *Travels in Ceylon*, page 308, tells us that shortly after the Dutch took possession of that island, they encouraged Wimaladarme, son of Raja Singhe, to send messengers to Siam for twelve Buddhist idolatrous priests of the highest order. These came to Kandy and ordained twelve natives to the same order, and many to the lower order, and thus they restored the religion of Buddha for the purpose of extirpating Catholicity from the island. But at the same time that they encouraged the introduction of Pagan priests, they expelled Catholic

Bishops and Priests from the island, and passed various decrees, all aiming at the destruction of Catholicity in Ceylon. Sir Emerson Tennent thus speaks of the sufferings of Catholics in Ceylon at the hands of the Dutch :—

“The same fury against the Church of Rome continued at all times to inspire the policy of the Dutch in Ceylon. In 1658 a proclamation was issued, forbidding—on pain of death—the harbouring or concealing of a Roman Catholic Priest. In 1715 a proclamation was issued, forbidding public assemblies or private conventicles of the Roman Catholics, under heavy fines. Notwithstanding every persecution however, the Roman Catholic religion retained its influence and was adhered to by large bodies of the natives, both Singhalese and Tamils, whom neither corruption nor coercion could induce to abjure it. No native could aspire to the rank of Modliar, or be permitted to farm land or hold office under government, unless he became a protestant. Roman Catholic marriages were heavily taxed, their celebration by a Roman Catholic Priest were at last absolutely prohibited and declared void. Their burial was prohibited in cemeteries of their own, and extravagant fees were exacted on their interment in those attached to the protestant churches. Roman Catholics were declared equally with heathens to be ineligible to office. Freedom was conferred upon all children born of slaves who were protestants, whilst those of Catholic parents were condemned to perpetual servitude. In the peninsula of Jaffna they took possession of the Roman Catholic churches.”—*Christianity in Ceylon*, page 53.

For one hundred and fifty years this persecution by the Dutch of the native Catholic population was

carried on relentlessly. Sir Emerson Tennent alludes in these terms to the efforts made by devoted Priests, at the risk of their lives, to minister to their flocks during this sad period :—

“From Kandy, where they had been alternately invited and proscribed by the kings, the Roman Catholic Priests made their way into the low country, visiting in secret their scattered flocks, and administering the sacraments in spite of the plakaats and prohibitions of the Government. Among the most distinguished of those preachers was Joseph Vaz, of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri, at Goa, whose adventurous journeys and imprisonments, and his extraordinary zeal in the service of his Church, have obtained for his memory among the Roman Catholics of Ceylon, a veneration little short of that accorded to St. Francis Xavier in India. He prosecuted his labours with such success, that in an incredibly short time he had re-established the Catholic communion in its former strongholds in Jaffna and Manaar, extended its influence in the maritime provinces, and added to the Church upwards of thirty thousand converts from the heathen. He died at Kandy in 1711.”

“When the Kandyan territories submitted to the British Crown, a colony of Roman Catholics were discovered in their mountain fastnesses at Wahacotta, still retaining their attachment to the christian name and ordinances, although they were hemmed in on all sides by Buddhists, and had not seen the face of a Priest for nearly three quarters of a century. Their minister, who was unordained, was called a Sacristan. They had one copy of the New Testament in Singhalese, translated by a Roman Catholic Priest. They prayed before a Crucifix, honoured the Blessed Virgin, and were married and buried according to the forms of the Roman Catholic Church.”

Sir J. E. Tennent continues :—

“The number of nominal christians who still adhere in secret to the rites and tenets of Buddhism, is infinitely smaller among the Roman Catholics than amongst the professors of any church in Ceylon, an influence which has been ascribed to the confessional. Harvard, himself a protestant missionary, in his narrative of the Wesleyan mission in Ceylon, has borne his willing testimony to the sincerity and demeanour of the Roman Catholic converts, whom he describes as being more detached from the customs of paganism, more regular in their attendances on the religious services of Christianity, and in their general conduct more consistent with the moral precepts of the gospel than any other religious body of any magnitude in Ceylon.”

About the time when the native Catholics of Ceylon were being set free from the galling yoke of Dutch persecution, events were taking place in Europe of evil import for the cause of religion at home and abroad. The great Revolution was then at the height of its terrible career of atheism and anarchy. Catholicism was its chief enemy. Its first aim was to rob the Christian nations of the world of their Catholic life—or at least to paralyse that life where they could not utterly destroy it. Portugal and her dependencies fell under the influence of the revolutionary epidemic. The reins of power in that country had passed into the hands of men who, though nominally Catholic, were in spirit hostile to the interests of religion. The old missionary spirit that used to send forth the *Xaviers*

and the Vazes had passed away from that land. The Church in Portugal—scarcely able to supply its own altars with Priests, owing to the persecution it was undergoing—could do little or nothing to provide a succession of clergy for the foreign missions it had created, and which depended largely upon its support for their existence. Ceylon was under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Goa, a Portugese settlement; but Goa was smitten, like the mother country, by the revolutionary plague. Seminaries were closed, religious orders were dispersed, and vocations to the priesthood had become rare, and there were not sufficient means of properly educating and developing such as did present themselves. From such causes large gaps were being created yearly in the ranks of the working clergy in Ceylon, there being no others to supply the places left vacant by the sickness and death of many of the missionary Priests of that country. Great numbers of the christian villages in various parts of the island, where formerly Priests were stationed, were now deprived of spiritual succour. Such being the case, the Holy See, in order to remedy these evils, took Ceylon under its own immediate jurisdiction. In 1834 Ceylon was detached from the jurisdiction of Goa, and created into an Apostolic Vicariate by Gregory XVI. In 1845 the island was divided into two vicariates—one at Colombo in the south, and one at

Jaffna in the north. Monseigneur Bettachini was appointed Vicar-Apostolic of Jaffna. This zealous prelate, who had been for some time coadjutor to the Vicar-Apostolic of Colombo, and who knew well the wants of the island, felt the importance of calling to his aid some society of missionary Priests who, walking in the footsteps of the old apostles of Ceylon, would co-operate with him in seeking to restore the vicariate under his care, as far as possible, to its former Catholic life. He fixed his choice on the Oblates of Mary. Monseigneur de Mazenod, whom he visited in 1847 at Marseilles, entered fully into all his views, and it was then agreed upon between both prelates that a foundation of the Oblates of Mary in Jaffna was to take place forthwith.

Father Semeria, with whose devoted labours in Corsica our readers are not unacquainted, was appointed Superior of the missionaries who were to go to Ceylon. No better choice could well have been made for such a position. A saint, a scholar, an apostle, he was admirably fitted for the great work which awaited him in Jaffna. At the time of the arrival of the Oblates in Ceylon, there were only eight Priests in the vicariate of Jaffna, a district nearly one-third the size of Ireland. There was then about fifty thousand native Catholics in that district; some inhabited the interior of the country, others lived

along the sea shore and in the islands which lay scattered in the bordering seas. On his arrival in Jaffna, Father Semeria was named Vicar-General by Monseigneur Bettachini. This position opened up a large field for his great administrative capabilities and his missionary zeal.

Countries that are beautiful to the eye of the tourist, and hold out bright promises to the settler on his first arrival, are sure to have their drawbacks which reveal themselves upon longer acquaintance. Missionary life in Ceylon, of the true apostolic type, makes large demands on one's physical powers of endurance, and still larger upon one's spirit of devotedness and self-denial. It is true that the Oblate missionary in Ceylon treads not the snow-whitened prairie of ocean-like dimensions, as does his brother of the North. But more grateful to the feet of the missionary traveller in that country would be the snows of Saskatchewan, than those burning quartz-sands of snowy whiteness which are dazzling and blinding to the sight, and with which certain regions in that island are covered. Did the journey of the missionary of the Tamils and the Singhalese lie always along beaten trackways, with the "rest-house" in prospect at the end of his day's march through the jungle, the hardships incidental to his travels would not be as severe as they are in truth. At a distance

of forty or fifty miles or more is situated a village, inhabited by some one or two hundred native christians. No direct roadway leads to the spot, and its exact position is not shown upon any map. The missionary Father has received, with most willing heart, his obedience to visit that village. A sea of jungle lies between him and the place he wishes to reach. His journeys must necessarily be slow; a broiling sun and a cloudless sky are overhead. His effects are being carried in a waggon drawn by oxen, or are borne on the shoulders of his Coolie companions, who perhaps may desert him in the wilderness. He advances into the jungle for a day's march. The shadows of evening are thickening and he halts for the night. The paneke, or rice-cake, forms his scant supper; with difficulty he can find wherewith to slake his thirst, as running water is a scarcity, and that which, for want of better, he is often compelled to drink, is tepid and of bad odour. Having paid his homage to God, and recommended himself to the divine protection for the night, he wraps himself in his rug, and stretches his weary limbs on the bare ground. The howling of wild beasts disturb his early slumber; the trumpeting of elephants, and the roaring of leopards, and the chattering of strange birds of the night, produce a frightful discord to which he becomes accustomed in time. But more harassing than these sounds are

the buzzings and the bitings of the musquitoes, the great pest of tropical climes. The strange rustling in the brushwood night to where he lay, he learns on the morrow to have been caused by crocodiles gliding from the marshy beds of dried up rivers, towards the woods in search of prey. Before dawn of day he renews his journey; towards noon he has to seek shelter somewhere from the great heats; when they subside he resumes his way again. Perhaps at night he discovers that he had been going astray all the day long, and that he has to retrace his steps over the same dreary ground. At last he reaches the village of his search; he is well received. He repairs to the little hut chapel where for a week or two, or more, he preaches, catechises, offers the Holy Sacrifice, administers the sacraments, baptises and marries, instructs such pagans as desire to become christians, visits the sick and gives the last sacraments to the dying. In this way he proceeds from village to village. Some of these villages may lie a hundred miles away from his residence. During these visitations he must put aside all fastidiousness with regard to food and cleanliness, and sleeping arrangements. He partakes of the same food as the poor Indians he evangelises partake of themselves. He accepts of such accommodation as they can offer him, and conquers all repugnances by making himself all to all. Six months may elapse

in a life of this kind before the Oblate missionary Father finds his way back to the humble community abode, from which he had gone forth on his message of charitable zeal. Such have been the good-shepherd journeys in Ceylon of a Semeria, of a Bonjean, of a Melizan, of Le Bescou, and dozens of other missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

We select the following remarkable testimony to the zeal of Catholic missionaries in Ceylon, from the writings of a well-known author, the distinguished traveller, Sir Samuel Baker :—

“For many years I have traversed the wildernesses of Ceylon at all hours and at all seasons. I have met many strange things during my forest journeys, but I never recollect a missionary. . . . Nevertheless, although Protestant missionaries are so rare in the jungles of the interior, and, if ever there, no vestige ever remains of such a visit, still, in spots where it might be least expected, may be seen the humble mud hut, surmounted by a cross, the certain trace of some persevering Priest of the Roman faith. These men display an untiring zeal, and no point is too remote for their good offices. Probably they are not so comfortable in the quarters in the towns as the Protestant missionaries, and thus they have less hesitation in leaving home. The converts that have been made are chiefly Roman Catholics, as, among the confusion arising from our multitudinous sects and schisms, the native is naturally bewildered. What with High Church, Low Church, Baptists, Wesleyans, Presbyterians, &c. &c. &c., the ignorant native is perfectly aghast at the variety of choice. With the members of our Church in such a dislocated state, progression cannot be expected by simple attempts at conversion;

even were the natives willing to embrace the new faith, they would have great difficulty in finding it amidst the crowd of adverse opinions."

This shrewd Protestant writer, in the extract just quoted, makes plain the fact, without intending it, that the form of presenting Christianity to the heathen, to which he alludes, was not the one established by Jesus Christ, and followed by the Apostles—that it was not amidst the bewilderment and confusion of multitudinous sects, all contradicting one another, that the sublime and beautiful truths of the Christian faith were to be set before the Pagan world. What a contrast to this babel of doctrines is presented by the true Catholic method of *teaching all nations all things whatsoever* that Christ has commanded.

The lives of her apostles and of her apostolic sons, as they shine in the sunlight of their holy deeds to the eyes of the nations evangelised by them, has ever been one of the chief teaching agencies employed by Holy Church in her office as enlightener of the world. Such lives are books which everybody can read and understand, the lettered and the unlettered alike, children even as their parents, pagans as well as christians. The whole Gospel is in these lives—all that it forbids and all that it enjoins is there—not in cold print on lifeless page, but in living, loving, moving action.

How such lives speak of a world despised and renounced, of passions crucified and entombed, and risen again and transformed into blessed energies of marvellous might, and all celestial in their tendencies. Such lives are revelations, bright and convincing, of the duplex mystery of charity—of man's loving God above all things—of his loving his fellow man, yea, the stranger to him in race, language and religion, even as himself. What a world of new and blessed ideas unfolds itself to thoughtful minds amongst the poor heathen, under the influence of the edification thus given by some truly apostolic man, amidst his labours of love in their behalf. They awaken up in joyful surprise to the consciousness of being loved by that devoted stranger, with a love greater than that wherewith father or mother, brother or sister had ever loved them. "He loves us surely," they say to one another, "he who left his home in some far land, to come hither to dwell with us all the days of his life, taking no part in our pleasures, but sharing in our sufferings—weeping with us in our sorrows, and partaking of our privations." Conviction of the truths of Christianity, produced by the holy examples of their teachers, have grown up in the minds of multitudes of Pagans in Ceylon in these latter days, as had happened in times gone by.

In the year 1854 the district of Jaffna was

visited by a double scourge—cholera and small-pox. Desolation was in every home, and the whole population was buried in a stupor of terrible despair. The streets rang day and night with the cries of the affrighted multitude. Out of the six thousand Catholics of which the mission of the town of Jaffna was composed, one thousand had, at the close of the year, fallen victims to the terrible plague. Father Lacombe, a devoted young missionary, was carried off by the frightful epidemic, a martyr to his priestly duty. The heart of the saintly Father Semeria was plunged in deep affliction at the sight of his perishing people. His labours among the cholera and small-pox smitten were incessant. To christians and pagans alike he was Father and friend and nurse. The year 1855 opened without any cessation of the double scourge. Early in the February of that year a letter reached Monseigneur Semeria from the venerable founder, Monseigneur de Mazenod, announcing the definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, in the following terms:—

“The Holy Ghost has spoken by the voice of Peter. The Supreme Pontiff, Pius IX., the infallible organ of the Church, surrounded by two hundred Bishops, has pronounced the decree, declaring that the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, was preserved from the stain of original sin. Let us rejoice and give thanks to God that we, by the name borne by us (Oblates of Mary Immaculate), should have already proclaimed this truth.”

The reception of news so important and so gladdening to the pious heart of the devoted and afflicted Oblate Father, who was a true son of her whose Immaculate Conception had been declared an article of faith, stirred up in his soul hope for himself and his people, of escaping, through the intercession of Mary the Immaculate, from the dreadful scourge that was upon them. He forthwith resolved to order a Triduum of prayers in honour of the Immaculate Conception to be offered to God, to obtain, through Mary's intercession, the cessation of the plague. He invited the Fathers of the neighbouring missions to come to Jaffna, and take part in this devout celebration. During three days, violence was offered to heaven by Priests and people praying together to be delivered from the terrible scourge. Great crowds flocked to all the devotions of the Triduum; the voices of those who were weeping and sighing and petitioning for mercy, were loud in the church from morning till night. The confessionals were besieged by eager multitudes who wished to make their peace with God, and very many approached the Eucharistic table. On each of the three days a numerous procession, in which was borne with great solemnity a statue of Mary the Immaculate, issued from the church and circulated through the streets of the town, singing hymns and litanies, and reciting prayers for forgiveness,

and for the turning away of God's anger. Arches of flowers were erected at the entrances to the chief thoroughfares, flags and festoons graced the fronts of several houses. Many Protestants, willing to show their sympathy with their Catholic fellow-townsmen, decorated their house-fronts in the streets through which the statue of Mary Immaculate was being carried. Still the plague continued to advance with terrible strides, and to strike down its average daily number of victims. No cessation or lessening of the evil took place during the three days from the commencement to the completion of the Triduum. On the fourth morning the Triduum closed. Quickly the news spread that there had been no new cases of cholera on the previous night, no death that morning, and that all who had been attacked had recovered and were out of danger. That day forty patients came out from the small-pox hospital cured. The anger of God was appeased, and the power of prayer, through the intercession of Mary the Immaculate, was established. Many conversions of Pagans and Protestants was the result of an event which seemed more than marvellous, and nothing short of a miracle to the pious and thoughtful.

Whilst the small-pox epidemic was at the height of its career, Father Le Bescou, who had charge of the improvised hospital, which was full of the plague-stricken, was ceaseless in his devoted efforts to ad-

minister the consolations of religion to the sick and dying. One day he discovered among the patients a poor old pagan woman, who was evidently approaching her end. The zealous Priest yearned to gain to God the soul of that aged Buddhist, before it passed away to its account. When she found out that he wished her to become a christian, she turned from him saying that she was resolved to die a pagan as her ancestors had done before her. Three similar attempts on his part to convert her were repelled obstinately by her. Despairing of being able to change her dispositions by any further words he could address to her, he did not however lose hope in the efficacy of prayer in her behalf. After her last refusal to listen to him, he knelt at her bedside and invoked earnestly the Blessed Virgin to intercede for her. He ended his prayer by devoutly reciting the *Memorare*. This latter prayer was scarcely finished by him, when the dying pagan woman made signs to him to approach. When he drew near, she said a change had come over her mind, and that she wished now to die a christian. The zealous Father rejoiced exceedingly at this good news. He knew whence came that marvellous grace which planted the seeds of faith in that aged pagan heart, and which ripened them quickly into a blessed fruitfulness.

In the year 1856 Monseigneur Bettachini made

successful application to the Holy See for the appointment of Father Semeria as his coadjutor, with right of succession. On the 20th of August of the same year the latter was consecrated Bishop at Marseilles. Monseigneur Bettachini died in 1857, when the full charge of the Vicariate of Jaffna passed into the hands of the Oblates of Mary.

The episcopal character does not eclipse that of the Oblate, of the religious man, or of the missionary, in those members of the society of the Oblates of Mary in foreign parts, who have been raised to the episcopal rank. Whilst performing their high duties as prelates of the Church, they give the example of faithful observance of the rules of community life. This constitutes one great source of their power in accomplishing great works for the divine glory, for it cannot fail whilst giving edification to all who witness it, to draw down from God a special benediction on themselves and their undertakings. Monseigneur Semeria was an admirable model of the true Bishop and of the perfect Religious. To the last he was as exact as a novice in all the exercises of the community. Writing in his character as Provincial to the Superior-General of the Oblates, he thus speaks of the annual retreat which the Fathers had then just performed at Jaffna :—

“These eight days spent in solitude were real days of grace and benediction. I do not remember that we ever

made a retreat more fruitful in spiritual consolations and blessings. Whilst mutually edifying and encouraging one another, the Fathers performed with fidelity all the duties of the retreat. The ties of charity which bound them already together thus became strengthened still more. The days of spiritual retirement glided by so peacefully and happily, that we could scarcely believe that we had been eight days in retreat when the end came. At last we had to part company, and each one had to return to his respective mission."

In the life of Monseigneur Semeria there was an admirable blending of prayer and action. His old missionary spirit was stirred up into active play by the unction of the Holy Spirit, imparted to him in his episcopal consecration. Shortly after the full responsibilities of the diocese of Jaffna had devolved upon him, we find him setting forth, in company with a body of Oblate missionaries, to conduct missions in due form in the chief centres of Christian population in his immense diocese. Missions were given in the islands of Catz and Manaar, in Mantotte, in Battacaloe, in Jaffna, in Chilaw, in Trincomali, and in several other districts of the vicariate. Trincomali is one of the most important sea-ports on the coasts of the Indian Ocean. We select the following description of it from Sir Emerson Tennent's *History of Ceylon* :—

"The Bay of Trincomali presents to the eye a scene of singular beauty. Land-locked and still as an island lake, its broad expanse of waters, its numerous beautiful islands and

its rocky headlands, together with the woody acclivities in its vicinity, and the towering mountains in the distance, combine to form an oriental Windermere. The town is built on the neck of a bold peninsula, rising at its southern extremity into lofty precipices covered to their summit with luxuriant forests. As a harbour Trincomali is renowned for its extent and security, but its superiority over every other in the Indian Seas consists in its perfect accessibility to every description of craft in every variation of weather. It can be entered with equal facility and safety in the north-east as in the south-east Monsoon, and the water within is so deep that vessels can lie close to the beach and discharge and receive cargo without the intervention of boats. Its unrivalled position for commerce, fronting the Bay of Bengal, and presenting a natural point of rendezvous for all vessels trading to India and the East, mark it out as having been destined for a great emporium to which the shipping of all nations will yet find it their interest to resort."

The exercises of the mission of Trincomali opened in May, 1858. During this mission, which Monseigneur Semeria conducted in person, an occurrence took place which, when we regard it in the light afforded by subsequent events, must appear of a specially providential character. That occurrence was the religious profession of a new Oblate of Mary Immaculate, a devoted missionary Priest—Father Bonjean—who, though still in the flower of his manhood, had at the time of his joining the Oblates of Mary, been already for ten years labouring as a missionary in India. The same divine hand which gave to the Oblates of Canada a missionary who

was to become an apostle-Bishop of their society, amidst the snows of the Arctic circle, now leads to their ranks one who, as time goes by, will become an Oblate Bishop and an apostle amidst the tropical regions of the South. Father Bonjean made his religious profession in presence of Monseigneur Semeria, in the church of Trincomali, on the 20th of May, 1858. We leave to his fertile pen, which in after years was to become such a potent instrument of good, to describe some of the chief circumstances of that mission, in which he took a leading part.

“This mission was held in the handsome and spacious church of Trincomali. This church is a monument of the generous piety of the Irish Catholic soldiers of the 37th regiment. Our sermons and instructions were followed from the opening to the close of the mission by an attentive crowd, who seemed to hunger with avidity after the word of God. The festival of Corpus Christi was at hand. Permission was obtained from the government authorities to have the procession pass through the streets of the town, and the soldiers garrisoned there were allowed to take part in it. The town was richly decked in holiday garb; triumphal arches were erected at different points along the route of the procession; beautiful altars of repose were placed at suitable distances, and they were decorated with European and Indian skill. Never had Trincomali been the scene of such a solemnity. At last the head of the procession entered the church. At the moment the Blessed Sacrament crossed the threshold of the sacred building, the great crowd, which was chiefly composed of native christians, and which had till then been moving along in silent worship, seemed suddenly to be

smitten by some common emotion of fervour which they could not control. With united voice they broke out into cries of contrition and repentance. 'Jesus have pity on us! Jesus pardon us!' was the cry of every lip. When the procession entered the church I took my place in the pulpit to address some words of edification to the assembled multitude, but my voice was drowned by the loud weeping and sobbings of the penitent crowd. I too, in turn, was overtaken by the common emotion, and speech failed me. Coming down from the pulpit, I hastened to prostrate myself at the feet of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist, in joint worship with that adoring congregation. The success of the mission was secured from that day. A general communion, first of the women and then of the men, followed. The whole adult Catholic population, native and European, of Trincomali, almost without exception, approached the sacraments on that happy occasion. Several non-catholics and Buddhists were received into the ranks of the Catechumens, or admitted to Holy Baptism."

Accompanied by his devoted band of brother Oblate missionaries, Monseigneur Semeria visited the most important Christian stations of his vast diocese, he united with great fruit to souls, the performing of his episcopal visitation with the exercises of a mission preached by himself, and by the Fathers who accompanied him. By such means was the "face of the earth renewed," and the faith and fervour of the days of St. Francis Xavier in a great measure restored. In Monseigneur Semeria's report presented to the General Chapter of the Oblates in 1861, we find it stated that five thousand adult pagans, or non-catholics, had, within the previous

five years, been admitted to Holy Baptism in the diocese of Jaffna.

Before the departure of the missionaries from Trincomali, a visit was paid by Fathers Bonjean and Chounavel to the prison of that place. Among the prisoners they found six poor native Catholics, to whom they undertook to administer the consolations of religion. In alluding to this visit Father Bonjean writes :—

“The time we spent with those poor prisoners was about the happiest we experienced during the mission. It was a real joy to us to pour the balm of comfort into hearts soured by misfortune, and to address words of kindness to those whom nobody loved, to call him ‘my child’ whom society had cast out as a vile object from her circles, to restore self-respect to those who were degraded in their own eyes, and against whom their fellow-men had said ‘anathema,’ to kindle a ray of hope in breasts so forlorn, and to present one glimpse of heaven to eyes whose stare was dull and vacant, having nought but their prison walls to gaze upon, and before whose mental glance nothing rose in the future but shame and despair. To a missionary’s heart, what a full recompense for his labours was there not afforded in those copious tears which he saw rolling down the cheeks of true penitents, and in that beaming happiness which he witnessed upon the brows of those whom God had pardoned in the tribunal of forgiveness. Having discharged our duties towards the Catholic prisoners, we asked permission to be allowed to address some words to the other prisoners, who were very numerous. Father Chounavel undertook to speak to the Tamil Pagans, and I addressed myself to the Singhalese Buddhists and to Mahometans. Let us hope that some of the words of truth then spoken may take

root as good seed, and produce happy fruits in God's season."

The holy prelate, Monseigneur Semeria, would have personal share in the missionary work which was being performed in behalf of the Catholic prisoners of Trincomali. He undertook to administer Holy Communion to them with his own hands. The governor of the prison, who was a Protestant, showed every disposition to give all necessary facilities to the Bishop, to perform this sacred function with due solemnity. He proposed that it should take place in the best room in his own house, which he had fitted up for the occasion, and in which an altar was raised decorated with flowers. He further gave directions that the prison garb was to be laid aside for that time, and that the prisoners were to be introduced clad in their own attire. We may feel sure that this kindly act of that good governor and his family—for they all had a willing share in it—will have its recompense hereafter.

In the following chapter we shall treat more at large of the labours of the Oblate missionaries in the prisons of Ceylon.

CHAPTER XIX.

MISSIONARY labour within prison walls demands, in him who undertakes it, the love of the Good Shepherd for the lost sheep, and a pure unselfish zeal that can expect no other recompense but that which comes from the hand of God at the hour of death. Such was the character of that zeal which led the Oblate missionaries, Fathers Pulicani and Duffo, to seek admission within the prison precincts of Kandy.

A Christian youth of the Parawas caste, who accidentally had been witness of a murder, was thrown into prison at Kandy to await the coming assizes. He was taken suddenly ill shortly after his arrest, and was visited by Fathers Pulicani and Duffo. In the hour of his affliction and bodily suffering his christian faith shone out with pure lustre. It revealed itself in his perfect resignation, in his marked piety, and in his loving and grateful reverence for the persons and the calling of those good Priests who visited him. In the same prison, at that time, there was another youth; alas, he was

not only the witness but the perpetrator of a murder—a triple murder. Invited by three young men one night to partake of their hospitality, some hours before morning he seized a hatchet and murdered the three sleeping youths, who were brothers. During some of the visits of the Fathers to the prison, they came into contact with this triple murderer of Morotto. His case was one that could not fail to excite their ardent zeal in his behalf. He repelled scornfully their first advances. He said he was a Protestant, and could not believe in their teaching. His manner was bold and defiant, and he gave no sign of repentance. The Fathers did not press further their ministry upon him, but they prayed the more earnestly in his behalf, after their advances had been repelled by him, as related; yet he would come sometimes and take his place nigh to the sick bed of the young Parawa, whilst one of the Fathers was administering consolation to the dying youth. One day Father Pulicani was engaged in this office of charity. The young murderer of Morotto came and sat at his side. He had a strange wrapt look about him, expressive of an internal mental conflict. He had witnessed the visible peace and consolation of the young Parawa after his interviews with the Priest, and he would fain partake of some consolation of the same kind for the relief of his own poor sin-laden spirit. The

weight of his triple murder is too heavy for him to carry, unaided, within the secret recesses of his own guilty breast. He feels he must tell it to somebody; that somebody he has found to whom, without fear, he can tell all, and from whom he is certain to receive the relief and guidance his wearied spirit yearns for. He whispers to the Priest that he wishes to speak to him apart. They retired into a secluded corner. When alone with Father Pulicani, the young murderer of Morotto fell at his feet, and whilst tears were rolling in abundance from his eyes, made his most humble confession. From that moment a striking change was visible in him; his looks became bright and calm, his manner subdued and gentle, for his heart had become contrite and humble. The conversion of this young man produced an extraordinary sensation among the prisoners, and impressed them very favourably with regard to our holy faith. Shortly after this event the young Parawa died in holiest dispositions. The circumstances of his last sickness and death abounded with edifying details. These two events—the holy death of the Parawa and the conversion of the guilty youth of Morotto—came at an opportune moment as providential helps to the Fathers in the exercise of their ministry of mercy among the prisoners of Kandy. At the assizes which were held at that time, no fewer than twelve prisoners

were condemned to be executed. They were all Buddhists, with the exception of the young man of Morotto. What an occasion for the exercise of the missionary zeal of the good Fathers Pulicani and Duffo. Helped by God, and sustained by the grace of their apostolic calling, they were equal to the occasion. We shall not delay in speaking of the countless impediments placed in their way, to prevent them succeeding in their devoted efforts to win to God the souls of those poor pagans, who were so soon to appear before His judgment seat. These impediments, happily, were not to be successful. The impressions produced on the condemned Buddhists by the intercourse they had already with the Fathers, and by what they had witnessed of their labours among the prisoners, disposed them to listen favourably to their exhortations. After a few interviews all, with one exception, consented to become Christians and to receive Holy Baptism. In bringing about these happy results, the youth of Morotto was, under God, an active agent. From his conversion to his execution, by his example and advice, he did all that lay in his power to make true christians of his fellow-prisoners. A change, which seemed little short of miraculous, was wrought in that band of poor Singhalese prisoners immediately after their conversion to Christianity. Lifting their chains on one occasion when a Father was conversing

with them, they said, "Father, these chains will one day be changed into chains of gold, for we offer them to God as a punishment; we suffer willingly for our sins." On the day of their first communion it was found, at three o'clock in the afternoon, that they had not yet broken their fast that day. Being questioned by one of the Fathers as to the cause of this long abstinence from food, they replied, "That it was out of respect for Him who that morning had become the food of their souls, that they were unwilling to partake earlier of other food." They were executed in two batches; nothing could be more edifying than their dispositions up to the last moment. The morning of the execution of the last batch, they said to the Priests, "Fathers, we fear that last night we caused pain to the officers of the prison. We were angry at their putting us in such heavy irons, and causing us to suffer so much when we had only a few hours to live. We now wish to beg their pardon for the manner in which we spoke to them, and we ask God to forgive us."

One Buddhist still resisted the invitations of divine grace, and the efforts of the Fathers for his conversion. They had frequent conversations with him, but he seemed resolved to persevere to the last in his attachment to Buddhism. Yet he advised two of his companions who were convicted of being guilty of the same murder for which he

was to suffer, to become Christians. "You," he said, "have never fulfilled the precepts of Buddha, but I have always done so ; I have stored my merits (kousal), I should lose them if I became a Christian." Father Duffo writes :—

"The eve of the day of his execution arrived, and he still remained obstinate in his unbelief, yet I can assure you we left nothing in our power undone to obtain his conversion. We poured out our hearts night and day before God in his behalf. The morning of his execution we entered his prison. On seeing us, he rushed at once towards us and flung himself at our feet. He begged us to help him to obtain the pardon of his sins. 'Yes,' said we, 'most willingly, provided you believe, and that you do what we tell you.' 'Yes, I believe,' he exclaimed, 'and I will do all.' Father Pulicani thereupon took him aside to a corner of his cell to instruct and prepare him, as well as he could in the short time at his disposal, for Holy Baptism and for his approaching death. Three of the eleven who had been condemned to be executed were reprieved. Among the eight who had to undergo the last penalty of the law was the young murderer of Morotto. As his end approached, his faith and fervour increased. His example and words contributed much to maintain the good dispositions of his fellow-culprits to the end."

Father Duffo continues :—

"After their conversion they went several times of their own free choice to confession. Some went once and some twice to Holy Communion ; but with what fervour and holy eagerness. What a moving sight to see them on their knees, their hands laden with heavy chains raised in prayer. We never experienced greater consolation ; perhaps we never shall meet, in the discharge of our ministry, with a such consolation again. 'We have become christians,

and we are going to heaven,' were among the encouraging words they said to one another as they approached the scaffold. In reply to one of the Fathers who encouraged them to fortitude, one of the prisoners said, 'We cannot account for the extraordinary courage which animates us.' When they reached the place of their execution, to our surprise they asked us in what direction our church lay, as they wished to say their last prayers before death facing that holy place. Their execution occurred on October 26th, 1850."

The three neophytes who had been reprieved remained faithful to their good resolutions. A characteristic answer, which we cannot help here quoting, was given by one of those poor prisoners to an objection made in his presence by a Baptist minister, against the intercession of the saints. The minister said we had no need of asking the saints to pray for us, for we could go to God direct and pray for ourselves. "As that is so," said the Singhalese prisoner, "why did Queen Victoria, at the time of the war with the Sepoys, write here to ask us to pray for the success of her army; why did she not go direct to God herself and pray for what she wanted, and not write to us to intercede for her?" We do not know what was the reply of the Baptist minister to this homely but logical query.

Shortly after the occurrences just related, Ceylon was agitated by the reports of the daring acts of brigandage committed by a famous Buddhist outlaw named Sardiel. This dreaded brigand-chief had

been brought up and educated in a *vihara*, a place where several Buddhist priests led a sort of community life. He took, at an early age, to a roving life, and finally associated himself to a band of brigands, of which he became the chosen chief. The deeds of robbery and violence perpetrated by Sardiel and his companions, spread terror through several districts of the island. Twice captured and laden with irons, he succeeded in effecting his escape each time. At last through the betrayal of one of his companions, his hiding place was discovered. Being summoned to surrender, he defiantly refused to do so, and held at bay a large body of police and civilians. Wounded in the arm he still held his ground, and it was only when his assailants succeeded in setting fire to his cave that he at last was forced to surrender. His capture was one of the great events of the day, and its news produced a universal sense of relief. Accustomed to the scorn and abhorrence of all who had at first approached him, Sardiel, to his surprise, discovered that even he could be loved and sympathised with. The first visit to his cell of Fathers Perrand and Duffo, brought this consoling conviction to his breast. They prayed much for him, and gave him some good books to read, but did not venture for some days to introduce the subject of his embracing Christianity. One day on questioning him concerning what he had been read-

ing, they were surprised at his intelligent answers, and at the clear summary he was able to give of the books he had read. Catholicity had all along been the great want of that intelligent and daring spirit, and the dormant sentiments of his better nature were awaiting its awakening influences to manifest themselves in beauty of act and utterance. He wept like a child when he was told of the effects of Baptism. Detecting himself in the act of doing so, he said, "How strange it is that I, who never shed a tear before, should now be moved to tears by the words that are spoken to me." On the day of his Baptism he was asked if he wished to retain the name Sardiel. "Oh no," he said, "it is a name so stained with evil, it cannot be washed; it must be effaced altogether." The name of Joseph was given to him in its stead. Concurrently with his reception of the Sacrament of Baptism, a visible transformation was accomplished in him. His countenance lost its hardened appearance, and in manner he became gentle and tractable as a lamb. Though believing with child-like faith in all that had been taught him concerning the fruits of baptismal grace, yet he was amazed to think that one so vile as himself could be admitted to such blessings. He was heard saying to himself aloud, in the accents of humble tender gratitude, "Is it possible that I, whose hands are stained with so many crimes, and

who never did a good deed in my life, shall be admitted into the kingdom of heaven." Having made one day, at the suggestion of Father Duffo, a devout act of contrition for his sins, and having reflected for some moments on the promise he had then made to God never more to offend him, he exclaimed, "How can it be possible that any one, whoever had made an act of contrition, should be capable of committing sin again. Having pledged his word to God never more to offend Him, how could he dare to retract it and commit sin anew." Being asked if he were not afraid to die, "No," he replied with an air of humble confidence, "the thought of the sufferings of Jesus Christ in the garden of Olives strengthens me. He was treated as I have been treated myself, but with this difference, that I was guilty and He was innocent. Judas betrayed Him after being His companion, and my companion and friend betrayed me into the hands of those who sought to take me prisoner. But I forgive him, and I beg of you to tell him so, and to urge him to change his life. All that has happened has been for my good. Had it happened otherwise, I should have died as I had been living, in the midst of my sins." On the morning of his execution he was asked by Father Duffo if he had committed, since his Baptism, any fault that troubled his conscience. "Oh no," he replied, "I took good care since then

to do nothing that would leave a stain upon my soul." In such dispositions did the once dreaded assassin and brigand-chief Sardiel, prepare himself for death. He was executed on the 7th May, 1864. His conversion made a great impression on the public mind, and induced many strangers to the Catholic Church to think favourably of a religion capable of producing, by its ministrations, a transformation of grace so closely resembling the conversion of the thief upon the cross.

Before parting company, for the present, with Father Duffo, we will go with him on a visit to some Buddhist priests at Watarama, which he made at their invitation. He was received with great courtesy and kindness, and treated with much reverence and distinction during his visit, by these priests, who had come in considerable numbers to meet him. He found their residence very much like a monastery. Each priest had a separate cell, which was furnished with a bed, a table and chair, a few books, and some bottles of medicine. Buddhist priests are supposed to be possessed of medicinal skill, and to be ready on emergencies to employ it. Their residence is called "panchala," a Singhalese word which signifies, "Abode of the happy and virtuous;" whilst in the panchala they practise celibacy. If any of them wishes to marry he can do so, but he thereby forfeits his rank and dignity. They abstain

from all strong drinks. The panchala was situated near an ancient temple of Buddha. Immense treasures, formerly belonging to the old temple, are said to be buried in those ruins. The guardianship of these treasures is assigned to horrible huge serpents that are encircled with bells, and are supposed to be filled by Buddha with his own spirit. Father Duffo was deeply moved at seeing that the true God was not worshipped or known by these poor pagans. The sight of their good natural qualities served but to inflame his zeal the more for their conversion.

The founding of Catholic schools, in which a secular education of a high standard would be given, was one of the first works of importance in the eyes of Monseigneur Semeria. Next in importance, to the mind of the holy prelate, was the establishing of orphanages on an extensive scale in his vicariate for poor christian children deprived of their parents, and also for the reception of poor little outcasts, the "waifs and strays" of Paganism. These two great works, which were to prove of such immense value to the vicariate of Jaffna, were intrusted by Monseigneur Semeria, in an especial manner, to the enlightened and devoted direction of Father Bonjean. It was at this juncture that the valuable co-operation of the sisterhood of the *Sainte Famille* of Bordeaux was secured. In the year 1862 the

first establishment of that sisterhood in Ceylon was founded. The great success which since that time has followed their labours, is a proof of the divine blessing which accompanied their works in that island from the first. It is only right to acknowledge with gratitude the generous help received for the perishing children of Ceylon, from the grants made by the directors of the *Sainte Enfance, a Cathecuminate*, into which pagan women who wished to become christians were admitted, whilst under instructions for the reception of Holy Baptism, was another of the works undertaken by the sisterhood of the *Sainte Famille*, and which under their care was to produce wonderful fruits of conversion. They had scarcely been established in Jaffna, when the influence of their holy lives and teachings began to make salutary impressions on the christian and even the pagan womanhood of that locality. The sublime and delicate virtue of angelical chastity shining in the lives of these espoused ones of Jesus, was a blessed, a saving, and an ennobling revelation for those poor daughters of the south, to whose impressible fancies the pomps of a voluptuous pagan world was ever appealing. No sermon of missionary could say what such lives said of the price of the virtue just named, and of the peace and joy that accompanies its perfect practice. Such lives are like lustres hung in temples. Beautiful in themselves, they also

bring out the beauty of holy things and places, and attract and guide the searcher for truth from porch to altar, there to kneel in adoring belief. Stirrings of a religious vocation on the part of Tamil christian maidens, were not slow in manifesting themselves. These young simple souls felt powerfully attracted to that life of self-sacrifice and of perfect renunciation of the world, which they beheld so generously and joyfully practised by those of their own sex and age in the convent of the *Sainte Famille* at Jaffna. Encouraged by the holy prelate, Monseigneur Semeria, a branch Novitiate-house was opened for young Tamil and Singhalese postulants at Jaffna, by the sisters of the *Sainte Famille*. This branch convent is dedicated to St. Peter, and is now occupied by a large community of native nuns.

Maria, the first child received into the schools of the sisters at Jaffna, was one of the first in whom signs of a religious vocation revealed themselves. At last she declared to the Superioress her desire to consecrate her virginity to God. Time was given to her for further reflection, but she still persevered in her holy and generous resolution. After some days of spiritual retreat, she was permitted to enter as postulant into the newly-founded Novitiate of St. Peter. Her mother was a fanatical idolator. She had a pagoda in her garden, and derived an income from the offerings made there to idols. This woman

came to visit her daughter, then a postulant in the convent. Seeing her without her pearl necklace, an ornament which all women, even the poorest, in Ceylon wear, and carrying in its stead a crucifix suspended around her neck, she was very much exasperated, and asked Maria what had become of her necklace of pearls. The latter informed her that, having formed the resolution of giving herself to God, she had changed her former ornaments for the holy symbol of her redemption—the Cross of Jesus Christ. The pagan mother, understanding nothing of this noble language, squatted on her heels in the presence of her daughter, and poured out upon her a torrent of indignant reproach and protest. “What!” she cried out, “are you, my eldest daughter, going to bring disgrace upon our caste by refusing to marry. Put on your necklace of pearls again and come with me, and preserve your dignity by getting married.” The devout young girl, though pained to tears by this attack on the part of her mother, remained firm in her resolution to consecrate herself to God and to works of charity in the religious state.

A very aged Mahometan woman knocked one day at the door of the convent; when it was opened for her, her first exclamation was, “Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, have pity on me!” Being asked who taught her to know Jesus, Mary, and

Joseph. "Nobody," she replied; "these names are always present to my mind. I know the Blessed Virgin, I have been at her sanctuary at Maddu. I wish very much to embrace the Catholic religion. I know that the religion of Mahomet is false. I wish to become a Christian, that my sins may be washed away in the water of Baptism." Her wish was granted. Three days after her Baptism she was seized by an attack of cholera, and died in very devout dispositions. The following are the items of her history, which the Superioress of the convent was able to collect. This poor woman was the widow of a rich Mahometan. Left in possession of considerable wealth, her house was attacked one night by burglars who, having seized her property, beat her unmercifully, leaving her for dead. During several days she remained unconscious. Whilst in that state she had a dream, in which she saw a child approach her, who marked the sign of the cross upon her forehead, and touching her wounds healed them. At the same time he said, "Arise and walk;" and then he said, "Go to the sanctuary of the Blessed Virgin of the Rosary at Maddu." On awaking she found her wounds perfectly healed; the deep marks that remained showed how severe they had been. Rejoicing in her miraculous cure, she hastened to obey the instructions given her by the child she saw in her dream, and arrived at the sanctuary of Our

Lady of the Rosary. On her arrival the missionary was absent, and she could not get baptised, but she received instruction in christian doctrine from some pious person living in the locality. She then promised the Blessed Virgin to go to Jaffna to get baptised there.

One day a pagan of high caste, named Sangrapulli, came to the door of the orphanage, and begged admission for his children. "I am cited," he said to the Superioress, "to appear to-day in the public court to stand my trial for a crime of which I acknowledge myself to you to be guilty. If I shall be condemned and cast into prison, what is to become of my family of small children? Pray to your God for me. If I escape, I promise to become a Catholic, and to endeavour to induce my wife to do the same." That evening he returned to the convent to inform the Superioress that he was acquitted, and that he fully acknowledged that his acquittal was due entirely to the goodness of her God, and that he wished without delay to fulfil his promise of becoming a christian. His wife made some difficulties at first to consent to follow her husband's example, but finally did so. After passing through the necessary period of instruction, Sangrapulla, his wife and children, were admitted on the same day to the grace of Holy Baptism.

Monseigneur Semeria took his departure from

Ceylon for Europe early in May, 1867. The chief object of his journey was to assist at the General Chapter of the Society of the Oblates, which was to be held during the month of August of that year in Autun. He was never to see Ceylon again. When he was preparing to return to Jaffna he was taken ill at Marseilles at the house of the Oblates in that city, when he expired on the fourth day of his illness, in the holiest dispositions. His death took place on the 23rd January, 1868. We select the following from the biographical notice of this holy prelate, written by his spiritual son and Oblate *confrère*, Father Bonjean:—

“ John Stephen Semeria was born at Calla, near St. Remo, in the year 1813, of an honourable family, in which piety was hereditary. In his sixteenth year, having already finished his course of rhetoric with distinction, he arrived at Marseilles, where he became acquainted with the society of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. The name and the works of that society drew him towards it. He addressed himself to the holy Founder, Father de Mazenod, by whom he was received into the Novitiate. He was remarkable, during the year of his probation, for his perfect obedience, the tender delicacy of his conscience, the sweet gravity of his manners, and his scrupulous charity. He was raised to the Priesthood in the year 1835. Shortly after his ordination he became the associate of Father Albini in his missionary works among the poor Italians at Marseilles, and became afterwards the fellow-labourer of that holy Priest in his missions in Corsica. At the call of obedience he cheerfully changed the scene of his labours from Corsica to Ceylon.

During the years whilst he was charged with the duties of head Priest of Jaffna, his zeal for souls displayed itself under divers forms, in which he showed himself to be the good shepherd. His love for his people won all hearts to him ; he was ceaseless in his care of the sick, but it was in his labours in behalf of the rising youth under his charge, that he seemed to surpass himself. Three times every week he gave public catechetical instructions, which drew crowds of children and young people around him. Those who frequented these instructions are now counted among the best Catholics in Jaffna. He led an austere and retired life. He never went forth from the quiet of his home except at the call of duty. He established religious discipline in his community, on the same footing on which it existed in the strictest houses of the society of the Oblates of Mary in Europe. The public recitation of the divine office, the morning and evening meditation, the particular examination, the spiritual conferences, the monthly and annual retreats, the observance of holy silence, of poverty, and of obedience, were all faithfully carried out under his superiorship. Perfect charity reigned in the community under his care. Firmness was blended in him with gentleness, and great considerateness in dealing with such shortcomings as he perceived in any of his spiritual subjects. He made all just allowances for the diversity of temperaments and characters of those with whom he had to deal. He used frequently to say, 'Oh! if we could but find out all the hidden good that is in men, and encourage and develope it, without occupying ourselves so much, as we are prone to do, with those defects that are inseparable from our poor fallen nature, we should find them more docile to our teaching, more expansive in their sympathies in our regard, and more willing to become virtuous.' After his consecration as Bishop, he changed nothing in the habits of a humble and fervent Oblate of Mary. He still lived in our midst as a simple religious, breaking the bread of spiritual instruction at our annual and

monthly retreats, and perpetuating amongst us the holy traditions of our society."

He whose words we have just cited, and who had been for many years the *alter-ego* of Monseigneur Semeria in virtues, in labours, and in holy sympathies, was designed by public voice as the most fitting successor of that saintly prelate. The appointment, by the Holy See, of Monseigneur Bonjean to the office of Vicar-Apostolic of Jaffna, confirmed the expectation which existed so widely with reference to that event.

Under the active and enlightened guidance of Monseigneur Bonjean, the Vicariate of Jaffna continues to make most consoling progress. The number of Catholics in that vicariate, which in 1850 was fifty thousand five hundred, is now seventy thousand. Within that period over twelve thousand pagans have been baptised, one hundred and four schools have been opened, five orphanages have been established. A Catholic press has been created, and a Catholic journal founded, which is printed in Tamil and in English. Whilst the work of primary education is being pushed to the fullest development possible, under the circumstances, the higher branches of studies for young people of both sexes are being advanced year by year, to a perfection that places them on a par with the best schools in the island. In the Jaffna vicariate there

are 263 churches, the greater number of which are, it is true, very humble ones, and nearly forty Priests of the Society of the Oblates of Mary. There are also in that vicariate five convents, including two for native nuns; a junior seminary for young ecclesiastics. A theological seminary is in process of formation there. Seven hundred thousand pagans remain still to be converted in the vicariate of Jaffna. The evangelising of this great multitude of unbelievers is a work upon which the heart of the devoted prelate, Monseigneur Bonjean, is firmly set. The fluency and correctness with which many of his Oblate brethren speak the languages of these poor people, and the large success which has already followed their labours amidst the heathen in Ceylon, form grounds for the hopes entertained by the zealous Bishop, relative to the conversion of the pagan inhabitants of Jaffna and its districts. The extinction of the Goa schism in Ceylon, through the wise and holy zeal of Monseigneur Bonjean, is a work which some future historian of the Church will certainly not leave unnoticed. To carry on all the undertakings just enumerated, the only funds at the command of the good Bishop and his Oblate brother missionaries are the local contributions of the poor native Catholics, which must necessarily be very scant, and the grants received from the

societies for the Propagation of the Faith and of the Holy Childhood.

What immensity of further good might he not accomplish, if the requisite means were placed by some charitable hand or hands at his disposal!

The consecration of Monseigneur Melizan as coadjutor Bishop to Monseigneur Bonjean, is an event which cannot fail to give an additional impulse to the great religious movement which is astir in the vicariate of Jaffna. We regret that our limited space compels us to close this notice of the missions of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Ceylon, without our being able to include in our narrative some details of the apostolic works of the zealous and devoted Fathers Boisseau, Mauroit, Pusaque, and of several other Oblate missionaries in that island, whose labours have been blessed with signal success.

CHAPTER XX.

HAVING placed before our readers sketches of the labours of the Oblates of Mary in Europe, Asia, and America, we purpose now to speak of the missionary works of the members of that society in South Africa. In the year 1852, Monseigneur de Mazenod, in obedience to the wishes of the Holy See, sent a body of his missionaries to Natal. A new Vicariate was then created by the Holy Father, which was committed to the charge of the Oblates. Father Allard, O.M.I., was named Vicar-Apostolic of Natal. A glance at the map of South Africa, when the districts included in the vicariate are named, will show at once the vastness of the territory which it embraces within its limits. It extends over the district of Natal, Basutoland, the Orange Free States, the Diamond Fields, or West Griqualand, Transvaal, and Zululand. Regions more spiritually destitute could scarcely be found in any part of the globe, than those which constituted the new Vicariate of Natal. That country was called "Terra Natalis," because it was discovered by the

renowned Portuguese navigator, Vasco da Gama, on Christmas Day, 1497. In 1760 or thereabouts, the Dutch for a short time had a trading settlement at the site of the present harbour of Durban. This settlement was, however, speedily abandoned, and more than a hundred years passed before the Natal shores were again visited by Europeans. In 1823 an English officer, Lieutenant Farewell, while on a surveying expedition along the coast, was struck by the suitability of the country around the Bay of Natal, for the purposes of a settlement, and at once made arrangements for its occupation. The natives, of whom at that time there were but few in the immediate neighbourhood, granted the land about the Bay as a site for a little colony of a score of white men. The place had been left a wilderness by the career of conquest of the famous Zulu chief, Chaka. That chief was succeeded in 1828 by his brother Dingaan, who threatened the English settlers with hostilities on account of their giving shelter to those miserable people who had fled from the terrors of himself and his brother. In 1835 an agreement was come to between the Zulu chief and the settlement. About this period Dutch settlers from the Cape Colony began to flock into Natal. The English settlers received the new comers gladly. The Dutch continued to multiply, and at last resolved to create Natal into a Republic, which they called the "Re-

public of Natalia." This step was objected to by the British Government, and some fighting took place, after which the Dutch made their submission. In 1843 Natal was formally declared to be a British colony. Any one visiting Natal at that time, skilled in the sciences of commerce and agriculture, might readily have predicted a commercial and agricultural future of great importance in store for that young colony—with its noble harbour of Durban, capable of floating the British navy in its deep and land-locked waters—if once means were found of removing the obstruction at its mouth; and with those sloping terraces teeming with fertility, which rose from the coast tier upon tier, until they reached the grass-clad plateau of the Drackenberg, that stretched out in wildernesses of greenery for scores of miles, at an altitude of six thousand feet. Overhead hung skies that smiled and wept at intervals, and that produced an atmosphere very bright and warm, yet very genial, refreshing, and fertilizing. Natal proper, which is about the size of the kingdom of Greece, lies nine hundred miles away from the Cape. The approach is by sea. Its capital is Pietermaritzburg, which is situated at a distance of about fifty miles from Durban. In these two towns—they being the chief centres of population—the missionary labours of the Oblates of Mary in Natal commenced. In the year 1852, Father Sabon

inaugurated his long period of apostleship at Durban. There he erected a humble thatched chapel, behind which he built three small rooms as a residence, one of which was reserved for the good Bishop, Monseigneur Allard, on the occasions of his visits to Durban. At the period to which we refer, a large immigration of coolies from India commenced. They sought a market for their labour in Natal, where their services were required by the settlers, as the Kafir race did not take willingly to agricultural or domestic employment. Among these poor Coolies there was a large proportion of Catholics. Their language was Tamil. Father Sabon, in order to render his ministry fully available in their behalf, applied himself to the study of that tongue until he was able to speak it with fluency. On the arrival of an emigrant ship from an Indian port, he was generally one of the first to board it. This was especially the case if he heard that cholera or yellow fever, or any other form of plague, was on ship-board. Having once become acquainted with the poor Coolie immigrant, he never lost sight of him; he kept himself informed of the place of his employment, in order to visit him and watch over him as the good shepherd. This led to many an up-hill journey, and to weary hours of walking through bush and jungle on the part of the good Father Sabon. His local works at Durban were not neg-

lected, but continued to grow and prosper under his prudent and zealous administration. In 1860 we find Father Baret at Pietermaritzburg, actively engaged in laying the foundations of that important mission.

Whilst these measures were being taken in the localities which we have mentioned, in favour of the children of the household of the faith, the poor pagan Africans were not forgotten by the devoted prelate, Monseigneur Allard. The evangelizing of the heathen was his work of predilection; the chief portion of his many years of episcopacy in South Africa was to be spent in their midst. He went in for all the hardships that must necessarily spring from having to pass the best days of his life in the midst of uncivilized men—of poor idolators. The missions of Durban and Pietermaritzburg were scarcely founded, when Monseigneur Allard penetrated into the interior of Natal, with the object of selecting some Kafir village as the centre of his missionary operations. His companions were Fathers Gerard, Bihan, and Bompert. A considerable time had already been spent by his lordship and these Fathers in labouring to acquire a sufficient knowledge of the Kafir language, to be able to exercise the holy ministry among the black natives of Natal. Father Gerard made a rapid progress in this difficult study. In a short time he became able to preach

extempore in the Kafir tongue. Having fixed upon the site of the new mission, they lost no time in taking steps towards the erection of some sort of church, and of an improvised residence for the Bishop and his companions. But where were the hands to be found capable and willing to construct the holy edifice: Far away amidst the fastnesses of these Kafir hills, skilled labour of any sort was a help not to be procured even at high price, could such be offered for it. The Bishop, Fathers Gerard and Bihan, and the catechist Brother Bernard, became the architects, masons, carpenters, and decorators of the new sanctuary. The timber used in the construction was hewn by their own hands, in a forest which lay at a distance of six miles, and was borne on their shoulders to the site of the projected building. After some months of ceaseless labour on their part, their little church was ready for the opening ceremony, which took place on Sunday, the 17th of July, 1859, on which day fell the feast of the Most Holy Redeemer. Missionary excursions among the Kafir tribes of these distant regions were made at frequent intervals by the Fathers from the central station thus created. Travelling in South Africa, whilst presenting oftentimes gorgeous and stupendous sights to the eye, offers many a difficult and dangerous pathway to the footsteps of him who climbs its wall-like mountains, or

descends into its awe-inspiring kloofs, or seeks to ford its treacherous rivers. These rivers vary amazingly in width and depth, according to the seasons of the year or the changes in the atmosphere. At one time some of the most important rivers will dwindle down to streamlets, winding through sand and shingle; and again, without giving any warning, they become suddenly swollen, and in ten minutes, owing to a single thunder storm amidst neighbouring hills, are changed into deep rushing torrents, and are rendered impassable, and may remain so for weeks.

The fording of rivers is one of the great difficulties and perils of missionary travelling in South Africa. The following extract from a letter bearing date September, 1856, written by the devoted missionary Father Gerard, to Monseigneur de Mazenod, will show to how serious a danger his life was one day exposed when fording a river:—

“Last May—that month consecrated to Our Blessed Lady—I set forth upon a journey, accompanied by a Kafir youth, who is much attached to our Fathers. About sunset we arrived on the banks of the river Unkomasi. In the rainy season this river is fifteen feet in depth, but the waters were low when we reached its banks. I sent the young Kafir forward to sound its actual depth; he advanced within a few yards of the opposite bank, and reported that it was fordable. Having recommended myself to God, made the sign of the cross, and recited an act of contrition, we advanced into the river holding one another firmly by the hand; we

had got within four or five yards of the opposite bank, when the current seemed to become deeper and more rapid. Had I reflected for a moment, I should have retraced my steps at once and returned to the bank I had left. But the night was rapidly falling, I wished to pursue my journey without delay, and I had confidence in the aid of the young Kafir, who could swim a little. We had hardly made another step in advance, when we found ourselves engulfed in a deep bed of the river, which was hollowed out by the current along the bank. We sank under the waters and were carried away to a considerable distance, and we were separated from one another. The water entered my mouth in large quantities, and I had a sense of being suffocated. I did not lose consciousness, but I felt my last hour had come. Presently under my feet I could feel the struggling form of the young Kafir; we both rose to the surface close to a very steep embankment. The young Kafir was the first to extricate himself, and through his aid I was enabled to drag myself out of the torrent. Wishing to know what sentiments he experienced at such a moment, I questioned him on the matter, saying, 'Can you explain how we escaped from the bottom of the river?' 'O chieftain,' he replied, 'it is God alone who saved us.' *Sa sindwa inkosi epehulu yodwa.*"

If ever missionary work demanded faith and resignation, it was of that kind which Monseigneur Allard and his companions undertook in behalf of the Kafir tribes of Natal. It must be confessed that no results in the shape of numerous conversions among those sons of Cham, consoled the first labours of the Oblate missionaries in that country. The Kafirs of Natal proper were of the Zulu race. Owing to the frequent intercourse with Europeans they were impregnated with many of the vices of

civilized countries, which circumstance added much to the difficulties of their conversion to Christianity. Acting on the advice of Monseigneur de Mazenod, Monseigneur Allard determined to transfer his own labours, and those of his Kafir missionaries, to another pagan region of his vicariate—Basutoland. This territory measures about 150 miles long by 50 miles wide, and has seventy thousand inhabitants. It is separated from Natal by the Quathlamba and Mulati mountains, which at certain points rise to the level of ten thousand feet above the sea, but their average height is five or six thousand feet. These mountains are like retaining walls or mighty buttresses, which sustain the elevated terraces or plateaus by which they are capped. When the flat-topped summits of these mountains are reached, one finds lying before him vast prairies of extraordinary fertility, which stretch out in some instances to a distance of twenty-five or thirty miles. Upon the plateaux and on the sides of the Mulati mountains, which is a continuation of the chain of the Drakenberg, dwelt the tribes of the Basutos, over which reigned, at the time to which we wish to refer, the famous old warrior, King Moshesh, who bore the title of the "Lion of the Mountains," owing to the terror which his name inspired among the inhabitants of bordering regions. Monseigneur Allard, accompanied by Father Gerard, and a catechist—

Brother Bernard—left Pietermaritzburg on the 19th of August, 1862, for Basutoland. The object of his journey was to visit King Moshesh, in order to obtain that old chieftain's sanction to the foundation of a missionary colony of the Oblates in the country subject to his dominion. The journey, which was performed on foot, was a long and wearisome one. It occupied fifty days. Monseigneur Allard's interview with Moshesh ended by his obtaining all that he demanded. A site for the new mission was selected in a glen at the foot of the great rock on which the king's kraal was situated. The king wished the Fathers to fix their residence not far from his own, in order that he might have an opportunity of holding frequent intercourse with them. We would ask our readers, in order to prevent future disappointment on their part, not to infer too readily, from the old king's favourable dispositions, that his conversion was an event that was likely to follow. Alas! he was to die a pagan; nevertheless, his friendly patronage was an important aid in promoting the efforts the Fathers were making for the conversion of the Basuto nation.

The site for the mission appointed by Moshesh, and accepted gratefully by Monseigneur Allard, was one of singular beauty. It lay at a height of six thousand feet above the level of the sea. A circle of terraced hills of great elevation enclosed it. It was

approached by a single narrow pass. All around it was one sea of green. The mountains which rose perpendicular in its rear to a level of ten thousand feet from their base, were verdant to their loftiest peaks. Strange enough, Monseigneur Allard discovered an Irish family residing on the king's mountain, who were overjoyed at meeting his lordship, and who were of much service to him in his transactions with the king.

Motsi-wa-Ma-Jesus (Village of the Mother of Jesus), was the name which he gave to the site of the new mission, where he hoped one day to see a Christian village spring up. This hope was destined to be realised, to the great consolation of the devoted Bishop. On the 1st November, 1863, the mission was formally opened in presence of the king, of several of his sons, and of many of the principal chieftains.

The establishing of a community of the nuns of the *Sainte Famille* of Bordeaux, at the village of Motsi-wa-Ma-Jesus, was an object on which the heart of the devoted prelate, Monseigneur Allard, was now firmly set. He lost no time in adopting measures for the carrying out of this object. His application for a community of sisters of that society was cheerfully complied with by the Superiors at Bordeaux. Two years had to elapse before this object could be accomplished. Meanwhile the

Fathers were occupied in preparing a catechism in the Sisotou language, and in visiting the surrounding tribes in their kraals. Two branch missions were established, one of which they called St. Michael's, which was four miles distant from Motsiwa-ma-Jesus; and the other, which they placed under the protection of St. Joseph, was situated at Korokoro. The work of conversion began now steadily to make progress, though it met with great obstacles from the practice of polygamy among all the Kafir tribes. Monseigneur Allard was still in Basutoland when the community of sisters of the *Sainte Famille* arrived from Bordeaux at Pietermaritzburg, under the care of Fathers Hidien and Barthelemy. The self-sacrifice displayed by these devoted ladies in leaving their homes in France, to spend the rest of their days among the poor Kafir tribes of Basutoland, made a profound impression on Protestants as well as Catholics at Pietermaritzburg. After a sojourn of some months in this latter place, caused by a delay in the arrival of Monseigneur Allard, who was to convey them to their destination, all was at last in readiness for their long and difficult journey to the mountains of the Basutos. The caravan was to be composed of his lordship Monseigneur Allard, Fathers Barthelemy and Bihan, a lay-brother catechist, and six sisters of the *Sainte Famille*. Five Kafirs were employed to conduct the

waggon. These waggons were huge affairs. They were like houses on wheels; each measured fifteen feet in length by six in width. They were supplied with a tilt or awning. They had no springs. Fourteen oxen were yoked to each in spans of two. On the morning of the 18th of February, 1866, the travelling party commenced their journey to Basutoland. It was to occupy, owing to divers mishaps and difficulties of travel, sixty days. Their course lay in a north-westerly direction from Maritzburg towards the Drackenberg mountains. They met several Irish Catholic families along their way in the early part of their journey, who were moved in many instances to tears at sight of the devotedness of the good sisters. As they advanced into the jungle, they passed through localities that were entirely inhabited by a Kafir population. The Kafir women viewed the sisters with mingled curiosity and fear; at last, moved to confidence by their kindly countenances, they approached them without hesitation, and invited them by signs into their huts. The men showed their good dispositions by presenting vessels of milk to the travelling party. They had some difficulty in crossing the Tugela river, which was swollen. Beyond this river they met with considerable obstruction to their progress, owing to the marshy condition of the ground over which they had to travel. The trek-tow or main

traces of one of the waggons gave way; this mishap caused a considerable delay. The foot of the Drackenberg having been reached, to an inexperienced eye further progress must have appeared impossible. Through the passes of these wall-like mountains have they to wind their zig-zag way, sometimes on the edge of precipices of awe-inspiring depth, and sometimes through gloomy gorges overhung with rocks that seem ready to fall upon them. Emerging from Reenan's Pass, they have before them the interminable plains of the Orange Free States. They advance for days amidst a death-like stillness, without meeting a human habitation or encountering a fellow-being. No tree or shrub is visible for scores of miles, and nothing is anywhere to be seen on earth's surface but the waving green grass.

The troubles of their journey begin here in reality. The advance through valleys netted with dongoes — the fissures in the earth caused by rain and sun — the descents on one side and the "climbings" on the other being equally difficult and dangerous. At last they arrived on the banks of the Wilgebach, in crossing which they met with a serious mishap; one of the waggons was upset in the middle of the river, which fortunately was not deep at the time. All had to be unloaded and unpacked to prevent injury to the different objects that had been immersed in the river. On the 12th of March they

were gladdened by the sight of clumps of blue gum trees, the certain sign that they were approaching a civilized settlement. Harrismith, in the Orange Free State, was the town to which they were then drawing nigh. There they learned they had got half-way upon their journey. They were consoled on their pilgrimage by having the happiness of assisting at holy Mass, which Monseigneur Allard said in the open air or under a tent every Sunday, and often also upon week-days, according as he had the opportunity of doing so. He frequently, at such times, addressed to them some words of spiritual instruction in harmony with the holy season of Lent, which was then being celebrated. On the 19th of March, the feast of St. Joseph, their journey was suddenly brought to a stand-still by a swollen river. They encamped upon its banks, and remembering the festival of the day, they sang the vespers of the feast by the waters of that lonely river, with a fervour as great, or greater perhaps, than if they were at the time back again in one of their former community homes. Day after day passed and the swollen waters in the river did not subside. A whole week of dreary waiting by the river's banks elapsed, and still there was no appearance of its becoming fordable. Provisions began now to run short, and the good Bishop had to exercise all his faith in Divine Providence to chase away the appre-

hensions that naturally rose in his mind at the prospect of the fifteen persons of his caravan being left without food in that lonely wilderness. Father Bihan and a Kafir went forth into the prairie in search of game. They met with success, and all immediate danger of suffering from hunger during their journey passed away. After ten days of encampment on the banks of the flooded Eland river, they raised their tents and set out in search of some other point at which they could cross more easily. A second ford being discovered, the first waggon attempted the passage; when approaching the middle of the river, one of the Kafirs lost his balance, fell into the water, and was carried away into a deep eddy. Father Bihan, seeing his danger, flung himself into the torrent to rescue the drowning man. He succeeded, with great difficulty, in his noble effort. The second waggon, which was occupied by the nuns, now attempted to ford the river in its turn. When it got half-way, its wheels became embedded in the sand, and the tired oxen refused to make the efforts required to extricate it. It was then approaching night-fall. The sisters had to resign themselves to the necessity of spending the night in the middle of the river, trusting to God's providence that the floods would not rise whilst they were in that perilous position. The next day, the oxen having been refreshed by their rest, were

able to draw the waggon to the opposite bank. They were put out of the ordinary track by not being able to cross the Eland at the usual ford, and were consequently compelled to wander by unfrequented ways. One day they found themselves in a great marsh, into which the wheels of the waggons sunk to their axles. At that time the Free State was at war with the Basutos. A party of armed Boers suddenly appeared, and surrounded the waggon in which the sisters were seated. They suspected that the caravan might be carrying guns or ammunition to the Basutos, but a few words of explanation satisfied them concerning the pacific designs of the travellers. At last they came in sight of Basutoland, and the hearts of the devout sisters was filled with deep emotion as they beheld the goal of their pilgrimage lying before them in the distance. They reached the territory of Malopo, one of the sons of Moshesh, and they learnt that the king was then residing there. Monseigneur Allard lost no time in going forward to pay his respects to Moshesh, who was greatly pleased to hear of the safe arrival of the sisters. He promised to visit them in their encampment. He arrived the next day, accompanied by Molapo his son, and forty chieftains, to pay his respects to the sisters and welcome them to his States. The caravan of pious pilgrims continued to advance through the territory of Basutoland until they

reached, on Holy-Thursday, April 14, the banks of the Caledon, the chief river of that country. Here their progress was arrested by the floods in that river. Two days' journey from the opposite bank of the Caledon would take them to Motsi-wa-ma-Jesus, their destination, but they had to wait patiently till a raft of some kind was constructed to transport them across the river. The first attempt at making a raft was a failure—proper materials for its construction were not at hand—the timber used in making it was too green and heavy, and it was scarcely launched when it sank. The next contrivance was a wooden box six feet long by three in width. In this tiny craft the sisters were taken, with some difficulty and danger, one by one across the swollen river, and afterwards the contents of the waggons were conveyed, portion by portion, to the opposite bank. Ten days were spent in the passage of the Caledon.

Father Gerard, at the head of fifteen hundred Kafirs, some of whom were converts to Christianity, and others who were in the habit of attending the services of the church, went forth a day's journey to meet the caravan. When it appeared in sight, they formed themselves into processional order, and advanced towards the Bishop and the nuns, chanting hymns in their own tongue which Fathers Gerard and Hidién had trained them to sing. It was a solemn and touching scene, and

one upon which heaven must have smiled. On the sixty-fourth day of their journey the pious sisterhood of the *Sainte Famille* arrived at the "Village of the Mother of God" in Basutoland. They left Maritzburg on the 18th of February, and they finished their journey on the 26th of April. On hearing of their arrival, Moshesh sent an invitation to them to visit his royal Kraal on the heights of Thaba Bosigo. They had already forwarded to him a present which he valued very much—a full uniform suit of a Field Marshal of France. He received them with great distinction. They were accompanied by the Bishop and the Fathers. The king, to his evident gratification, appeared in the costume of a French field officer. Practical work in behalf of the poor natives began, on the part of the good sisters, from the day of their arrival; the catechuminate, the orphanage and the school were the agencies which, without loss of time, they set to work for the rescuing of these poor idolaters, to benefit whom they had left behind them all that they had held dear in the home and in the land of their childhood. The venerable Bishop, the Fathers and the good sisters had before them years of labour, which was to be rewarded only in heaven. Their consolations were like well-springs in wildernesses, very real and very great when they presented themselves, but they required long patience

and perseverance in seeking after them. Numerous individual conversions rewarded the zeal of the Fathers in Basutoland year by year, some of which were beautiful and touching, but of these the limited space at our disposal forbids us giving more than scant details.

Nthlopo, a chieftain of considerable influence, and a leading *Pakati* or councillor of King Moshesh, who had been following for some time the services of the church of Mtsi-wa-ma-Jesus, declared at last his belief in the Catholic religion, and expressed a wish to be baptised. The old king applauded much the decision of his councillor, though he had not the courage to follow his example. Monseigneur Allard thought it desirable, for the sake of the edification that would result therefrom, to have the ceremony of Nthlopo's Baptism performed publicly, and with all the prescribed solemnity. Moshesh himself expressed a wish to be present on the occasion. The ceremony took place in presence of the king and of about a thousand of his people. The neophyte took the name of Joseph-Mary. With the gift of faith he received largely the gift of piety. He delighted in talking upon God and of holy things, and if the conversation glided into other channels, he would quickly bring it back again to some subject of piety. God was not to permit him to lose the grace of his Baptism. A few days after he had been baptised

he was seized with his death illness. The edification which he gave to all who approached him on his death-bed was so great, that the Pagans in witnessing it exclaimed, "It is no longer Nthlopo that we behold, but the Christian Joseph-Mary." His funeral service was performed with great solemnity. Father Gerard preached on the occasion. The king and several of his chieftains were present at the interment. They were much impressed by the honour shown to the remains of her departed children by the Catholic Church. The king addressed the crowd, advising them to listen to the instructions of the Fathers, whose teachings, he said, were true. The good sisters of the *Sainte Famille* performed an act of piety towards the dead about the same time, which made a deep impression on the popular mind. A very aged woman, who was close upon a hundred years old, died; she was a Christian, and had no relative but a grandson, who refused to trouble himself with her burial; piling up stones against the door of the hut in which lay her dead body, he went his way. The sisters hearing of this were grieved to think that the body of this poor Christian woman should remain unburied, and they resolved to bury her themselves. Her hut lay on the side of a steep mountain; thither they went after nightfall, with some of their orphans, to remove her remains. That hour was chosen by them for their generous act, as they

thought they could perform it then more quietly and with less chance of being interfered with than at another time. With reverence and care they conveyed the body of the poor aged neophyte from her mountain hut to their convent chapel, where it was arrayed in mortuary garb lovingly as if daughters were tenderly disposing of a revered mother's honoured remains. The next day a funeral service was performed in the church, to which large numbers of Pagans as well as Christians came; after which the body of the aged convert was lowered into a Christian grave. The cold heart of the unnatural grandson was conquered by this deed of devotedness on the part of the good sisters, whom he thanked with sincerity, and deep impressions were produced on the Pagans in that locality, in their favour and in favour of that faith which could inspire works of charity, so pure and unselfish, as the one recorded.

A Pagan Kafir, whose wife and some members of whose family were Catholics, in a fit of rage at their conversion, left his home to live amongst Pagans, away from all contact with Christians. He did what lay in his power to prevent persons going to the services of the mission, and becoming Christians. He was taken suddenly ill; grace at the same time appealed powerfully and efficaciously to his soul, and his eyes were opened to the truth. He sent a

message to his brother, who was a Catholic, inviting him to come and see him. On his arrival he ordered all who were Pagans to leave his presence. He then begged of his brother to remove all pagan emblems from his person, and to break all the idols in his apartment. "I cannot bear," he said, "the sight or the odour of them." He expressed his deep sorrow for his sins, and especially for his having endeavoured to prevent people becoming Christians, and for having persecuted the Christian members of his family. He sought earnestly for the grace of Baptism. After he was baptised he recovered his health and returned to his home, where he continued to lead the life of a devout Christian.

The terrors of war were not wanting to the early trials of the Oblate missions among the Basutos. A few months after the sisters of the *Sainte Famille* had established themselves in Basutoland, an army of Boers attacked the mountain strongholds of Moshesh. Monseigneur Allard thought it most prudent to provide for the safety of the sisters by flight, to hiding places in the rocks. He took charge of them himself. After they had been some time in concealment, a troupe of mounted Boers were seen riding towards them. Happily they came to give the assurance that the mission would not be molested; nevertheless the position of the Fathers and sisters was a dangerous one. Father

Gerard found himself one day in a jungle where the Boers imagined some Kafirs were then concealed, and into which they discharged volley after volley. Bullets were flying around him like hail-stones, and one of them struck his office book. He escaped untouched. Great were the miseries of the wretched Basuto population amidst all these war troubles. They came in crowds to the mission to seek food and shelter, and to have their wounds cared for. Several conversions resulted from those afflictions, during which many poor Pagans had an opportunity of experiencing the solace which Christian charity can communicate in hours of supreme distress.

Christian villages began to spring up around Motsi-wa-ma-Jesus. We insert the following extract from a letter addressed by a member of the sisterhood of the *Sainte Famille* to her Superiors at Bordeaux, in which she speaks of a visit she made to "St. Peter's," a village where a little church was about being built:—

"On the feast of St. Peter, 1874, we went in procession to a village which bears the name of this great Apostle, and which lies at a distance of half-an-hour's walk from Motsi-ma-Jesus. The occasion of our going there was to assist at the laying of the first stone of a little chapel, where the Christians could assemble for their daily devotions. The inhabitants of this village are all Catholics or Catecumens. Five of the young married women were formerly children in our schools. The houses are all built in European style.

Ten families in the village are very devout; you would be delighted to see them assisting at Mass several times in the week."

In the same letter mention is made of the lofty sentiments of piety to which a poor Kafir woman gave utterance, as she pressed to her breast the lifeless form of her child who had then just expired:—

"O my child, thou knowest how much I have loved thee and all that I have suffered for thee. One favour I ask now of thee in return for all that I have ever done for thee; it is to pray that I may have the happiness of going to heaven. Thou seest God now and thou art happy. Pray for thy father that he may have the happiness one day to become a good Christian."

We will venture upon another quotation from the same devout letter, in which the beautiful death of a devout Kafir child—one of the orphans who were under the care of the good sisters of the *Sainte Famille*, is depicted:—

"Angelina was the name she bore. She was at the time in her tenth year; she was dying of chest disease. Being well instructed and remarkably intelligent, it was resolved by her confessor to admit her, without further delay, to her first communion. On the morning of the day when she was to be admitted to receive Jesus Christ for the first time in the Holy Eucharist, she felt an extraordinary desire of acquiring perfect purity of heart. Addressing herself to the sister who had charge of her, she exclaimed, 'Prepare me well, and tell me all I must do to have a clean heart.'

Being asked in the course of that day if she remembered the act which she had performed that morning, 'O yes,' she replied, 'and I feel that I am now with God.' She was further asked if she wished to be cured; she replied, 'No, I wish to go to heaven.' 'But,' continued the sister, 'how can a little body like you, who have done scarcely anything to merit heaven, think of going there.' 'It is true,' the devout child said, 'but for several months I have suffered in union with the sufferings of my Blessed Saviour, Jesus Christ.' "

Yes, poor little Kafir waif, thy claim to a place in heaven's kingdom shall not be disallowed, nor shalt thou be left without reward for any of the sufferings which thou hast, with meek patience, borne for months in union with those of Him who has revealed Himself to thy young soul in faith's beauteous vision. Blessed are they who have instructed thee to justice. Catholic truths regarding holiness of life are, for Christ's little ones, like honey drops dripping from the honeycomb—they taste of them and *see that the Lord is sweet*. It is in the nature of those truths to travel through the heart to the mind, and thence to the inner soul, producing peace and sweetness in the heart, light and conviction in the mind, and in the soul's depths, faith, living and warm and active, and stronger than death. Such was the faith that spoke from the lips of her, of tiny form and of dusky brow, but of spirit lofty and of soul radiant, as she stood, like the virgin with

trimmed lamp, awaiting the coming of the Divine Bridegroom. Marvellous transformation—wrought through the angel-like ministry of those whom God has sent forth into that Kafir land, *to enlighten them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to direct their feet in the way of peace.* The lives of those consecrated virgins who, in obedience to their high calling, took up their abode amidst the tribes that wander through the mountain gorges of Basutoland, were sure to tell with attractive power upon certain chosen souls from out the womanhood of those regions. Kafir maidens, devout converts from Paganism, began after a period to show signs of a religious vocation. To meet their holy aspirations a branch convent for native nuns was founded in Basutoland, on a plan similar to that which had already been adopted in Ceylon, and with the same consoling results.

We have brought our narrative to the date 1874, when a change was to take place in the episcopal government of the Vicariate of Natal. The venerable Bishop Allard applied to the Holy See for permission to resign his pastoral charge of that immense vicariate, which he had so long and so faithfully governed. In granting his request, the Holy Father, Pius IX., in order to manifest his appreciation of the virtues and merits of the humble and devoted prelate, raised him to the rank of Arch-

bishop *in partibus*. Shortly after the resignation of Bishop Allard, Monseigneur Jolivet, O.M.I., was named his successor. At that time the various countries of which the Natal vicariate was composed were coming prominently to the front. Griqualand West—or the “Diamond Fields,” the Orange Free States, Transvaal, together with Natal proper and Basutoland, all made demands upon the administrative and missionary capabilities of the new Bishop. Fortunately the zeal, energy and experience of Bishop Jolivet fitted him, in a remarkable manner, to meet those demands. Let us allow a few years of his able administration of the Vicariate of Natal to elapse, and we shall behold in each of the countries just named, proofs of his practical and creative zeal in the churches, schools, colleges and convents raised through his initiative guidance and support within a space of time incredibly short.

It was whilst Bishop Jolivet was immersed in the anxieties and labours connected with all these great undertakings, that the fury of war swept over different points of his diocese, and marred many of his zealous projects. Several Oblate Fathers became chaplains to the troops in the field. Father Walsh was shut up in Ekowe during the siege of that place. Father Baudry was present as army chaplain during the Battle of Ulundi. The war with the Zulus was followed by the outbreak of the Boers.

For a while the gravest fears were entertained for the life of the devoted Bishop. He was taken prisoner by the Boers at Potchefstroom, and for several days nothing was heard of him. Fortunately he met with kind treatment on the part of his captors, and after some formalities was restored to his liberty. A false report was spread and believed in by the Bishop and the public at large for a while, that Father Walsh was shot at Lydenburg, where he was acting as Chaplain. His Lordship received this news from Sir T. Shepstone, who in communicating it spoke in terms of highest praise of Father Walsh's devotedness and courage during the war. The Bishop remained under the grief of this supposed loss for some days until the news of Father Walsh's safety reached him. At Pretoria the convent, which was the largest building in the town, was turned into a fortress. The poor nuns and their boarders had to shelter themselves during the siege of the town in a small wing of the building. The Superioress, who was sister of Bishop Jolivet, was taken ill during the siege and died after a short struggle; her death was accelerated, no doubt, by grief and anxiety. The public authorities and the Protestant Bishop of Pretoria were present at her funeral. She and her community were held in highest respect by all classes of society in Pretoria—Catholics and Protestants alike—and the first families in the place confided

their children to the care of the good sisters, who were ladies of high education and refinement. The community of Pretoria was a foundation from the Loretto convent at Navan, an establishment which ranks very high as an educational institution. Private and pastoral griefs afflicted the heart of the good Bishop. As pastor of souls he grieved over the scattering of his flock, and the other disasters caused by the war, especially in the Transvaal, and in Pretoria, its capital. But his truly episcopal and missionary spirit soon recovered its elasticity.

It was in the midst of troubles and difficulties of a public and personal nature, that he brought to completion several most important undertakings. Foremost among these undertakings was the erection of three spacious and beautiful churches, one at Durban, one at Kimberley, and the third at Bloemfontein. Besides the convent at Pretoria, he erected noble conventual establishments at Pietermaritzburg, at Durban, and at Bloemfontein, in which the sisters of the *Sainte Famille* communicate to numerous pupils, children of the principal colonists, the benefits of their admirable system of high education. In all the above places, and at other points of his vicariate, he established well-organised mission-schools and "kindergartens." His lordship further erected a college at Pietermaritzburg. But the good shepherd was not to forget the poor

wandering sheep of his fold who dwelt in their Kafir huts, outside the rim of civilization, far away in the Basuto mountains. His presence was anxiously looked forward to by the communities of Fathers and sisters who were labouring in these distant regions, without other recompense than the hope that was in them—of a reward in heaven. A great joy awaited his lordship in Basutoland, in the numerous batches of catechumens who were awaiting his arrival at the different missions to receive the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation at his hands.

In the good Bishop's zeal for the conversion of the Basutos, he resolved to create a new mission at a distant point of Basutoland, where a single Christian did not then exist. Molapo, the son of Moshesh, in whose country the new mission was to be founded, had already given his consent to that effect. Father Gerard, the veteran Kafir missionary, was placed at the head of this new undertaking. The mission, which was to be called St. Monica's, was situated sixty miles from Motsi-wama-Jesus. The Bishop was to open the new mission in person. It was arranged that a large body of converted Basutos, conducted by the Fathers and sisters, should form a pilgrimage to St. Monica's for the opening of the new mission. It was a strange sight for the natives of the place to behold the ap-

proaching procession of the pilgrims—Basutos, like themselves—advancing towards the newly-erected chapel, with the cross borne in front, and beautiful banners floating in the air, whilst hymns in their own language were being sweetly and piously sung by the united voices of many. An episcopal High Mass was celebrated in their presence, with all solemnity. The devotion of the neophyte Basutos during the Mass surprised them very much. During the week which the pilgrims spent at St. Monica's, they had frequent opportunities of conversing with their pagan countrymen on their happiness and their privilege in being Christians. We shall be prepared to hear of great results following, at no distant day, from a mission inaugurated under circumstances so full of promise. Bishop Jolivet has established some dozen missionary stations among the Kafirs of Natal proper, which are being served periodically by Oblate missionaries from Pietermaritzburg and Durban.

One Sunday morning in May, 1879, the congregation assembled in the church of Pietermaritzburg was edified by the piety of a youth of princely bearing, who knelt at a *priedieu* placed before the altar, within the sanctuary rails. Fervent evidently was his prayer, and simple truly was his piety, yet he was a prince of more than Royal line. The blood of Napoleon the Great flowed in his veins; but in the

glow of the warm catholicity of that young princely heart—the catholicity of France and Spain combined—the blood of his lineage was purified and freed from dross, whilst retaining the chivalric throbbings of his Imperial race. As he came forth from God's house that Sunday morning in his character of a devout Christian youth, he mixed with the congregation as one of themselves, and, unattended, directed his steps to his lodgings in the Government House. No doubt speculation was rife that day in Pietermaritzburg in his regard, and prophecies of a great earthly future awaiting him were ventured upon by some at least of those with whom the young prince came into contact on that occasion. But these bright forebodings in his regard were soon to end in a world-wide lamentation. . . . Into that same church, towards which Prince Louis Napoleon bent his steps on the previous Sunday morning, the lifeless form of the young prince, slain by Zulu hands, is borne amidst the sobbings of a multitude. Even veteran warriors weep around that youthful bier, and all ranks and classes and creeds of Pietermaritzburg become, for the time, like one family, bewailing a great common sorrow. And before that altar, and on that spot where he knelt but a few days since in humble fervent prayer, he lies now in death. Among the prayers which he uttered then were these words—*et ne nos inducas in tentationem*

sed libera nos a malo. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. And has not that prayer been heard in God's own way, in a manner truly merciful? and has not that young soul which God has called home to Himself, been taken out of temptation's path, and *delivered from evil*? In the inner circle surrounding the young Prince knelt Oblate Priests and sisters of the *Sainte Famille* in earnest prayer for his soul. Moved by devout impulse, the Superioress placed her own scapular on his neck, which holy badge was to descend with his body into the grave. . . . Some months go by, and into that same church of Pietermaritzburg comes an Imperial stranger, clad in garb of deepest mourning, and grief-stricken in every line of her speaking features; queenly and courtly is she in mien and manner. The Superioress of the *Sainte Famille* is at her side speaking words of comfort. She kneels—a mother is praying for her only son, for him who she had hoped would one day hold the sceptre of France in Imperial grasp. Rising, she whispered to the devout Superioress, "Reverend Mother, lead me to the place where my son knelt in prayer." Arriving there she said aloud, "And this is the spot where my son, my Louis, addressed his prayers to God before going forth to meet his death." There she prostrated herself anew, and wept and prayed for a considerable time. Rising again from her kneeling

posture, she begged of the good Superioress to retire to some quiet place with her, there to relate to her such edifying incidents as she might be acquainted with, concerning the last days of the young Prince. When the Superioress mentioned the fact of her having placed her own scapular around the neck of the departed Prince as he lay in his coffin, the Empress exclaimed, in tones of grateful emotion, "And you have done that for my son! You have placed your own scapular upon his neck! May God bless you for this deed." More precious to the glance of faith of that bereaved mother and Empress, was that religious emblem hung upon the neck of her child going down into his early grave, than all those badges—the gifts of his Imperial father and of divers Kings and Emperors—which used to sparkle on his young breast on great state occasions in the palmy days of the Empire.

Monseigneur de Mazenod occasionally used to pay his respects to the late Emperor Napoleon at the Tuileries, where he was always an esteemed and a welcomed guest. The Prince Imperial used to be present as a child on some of those occasions. Ah! little did the Emperor or the holy Bishop then think that the sons of De Mazenod were destined one day to extend the shelter of their humble church, in the far distance of an African land, to the lifeless remains of Napoleon III.'s only son.

Inscrutable are God's ways, they are ever adorable. Before quitting Natal the devout Empress gave proofs of the interest she took in the work in which the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, and the sisters of the *Sainte Famille*, were engaged in doing for the good of those they were endeavouring to convert, to sanctify, and to save.

In our sketches of the labours of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in South Africa, we are compelled, through lack of space, to omit many incidents of missionary exploit and devotedness well worthy of record. We would gladly have followed, had our space permitted us, Father Bompert and others on their journeys so full of perilous adventure and evincing traits of heroic devotedness, their lives having been not unfrequently in danger, sometimes from want of food, sometimes from flood or precipice, or again from Zulu treachery or ferocity. De Mazenod's spirit burned more brightly and warmly within the breasts of his disciples amidst their labours and privations in behalf of the heathen of Kafirland, than did the rays of Africa's sun, as they bronzed their features and kindled the sands beneath their feet.

CHAPTER XXI.

WE come back again to the central figure of our narrative, to the venerable Founder of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Monseigneur de Mazenod. Our biographical sketch of this holy prelate broke off at that period of his life when he was entering on the closing years of his long and dual government, that of the diocese of Marseilles and that of the Society of Missionaries which he had founded. In his city and diocese of Marseilles, monuments of his episcopal zeal and piety abounded on every side, and consoling news was then reaching him day by day of the progress of the labours of his missionary sons. Finding the weight of years growing upon him, he resolved to commence preparing for the journey to eternity. In that view he penned with his own hand the following testamentary document, which we insert for the edification and spiritual profit of our readers :—

“ I, Charles Joseph Eugene de Mazenod, Bishop of Marseilles, make this my last testament. My first thought as I contemplate the approach of death, is to humble myself

before God in sentiments of profoundest gratitude for His goodness in calling me to the knowledge of the truth, in the bosom of the Holy Catholic Apostolic and Roman Church, in which I have had the happiness of living, and in which I desire to die. I implore God in His mercy to grant me, through the merits of His Divine Son Jesus Christ, in whom I place all my confidence, pardon of my sins, and the favour of being admitted into heaven at the hour of my death. I invoke for these same ends the intercession of the Blessed and Immaculate Virgin Mary, Mother of God, presuming in doing so to remind her in all humility and tenderest confidence, of my filial devotedness towards her during my whole life, and of my constant desire to cause her to be known and loved, and of my wish to propagate devotion towards her everywhere, through the ministry of these whom the Church has given me as spiritual sons. I invoke also the intercession of the Holy Angels, and in a particular manner that of my Guardian Angel, who has so often during my life preserved me from dangers to body and soul. I further invoke all the Saints of Heaven, especially St. Joseph, my particular patron, whom I have always sought to honour with a profound sense of his dignity, which is second only to that of the Blessed Virgin, and devotion to whom I have endeavoured to establish and perpetuate in my diocese. I look forward in confidence to his assistance in my last agony. Nor can I fail to recommend myself to the prayers of the Holy Souls of Purgatory. I have the consolation of knowing that during my episcopate I have sought, by every means in my power, to promote devotion in their behalf. It is true they cannot gain any further merit for themselves, but I hold it for certain that, being God's cherished friends, they can obtain from our common Father in Heaven many favours for those in whose behalf they make intercession. It is with confidence therefore that I invoke them, not hesitating to remind them of the claims I have upon their gratitude by reason of all that

I have done during my life in their behalf. I now direct my thoughts towards those of my brethren who are to survive me. Of them I would earnestly ask, in the name of those ties of tender friendship which united us in life, to remember my soul in their charitable prayers when I am dead. It is true that I have full confidence that my God, in His boundless mercy, will admit me into His heavenly kingdom ; but I am aware of my many imperfections and negligences, and I fear that my love towards Him, notwithstanding all His graces, is still very imperfect, and that it requires to be purified in the cleansing sufferings of Purgatory. I acknowledge that I deserved to be cast into Hell, and therefore I bow down in full submission beforehand to the sentence of my Judge, and accept willingly whatever temporary punishment He may appoint in Purgatory for my sins, even though such were to last till the day of Judgment. At the same time I implore of my friends not to forget me in their prayers after my death, and I address to them the words of Holy Scripture, *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, at least you my friends.* It is under this title of dearest friends that I address myself to you, O Priests of my diocese. It is known to God how I have always loved you with the love of a Father. Those among you who know me best can bear testimony to the predominance of this love towards you in my breast. It led me to identify myself with you even to that degree that your sufferings were mine, and your joys became my joys, and I went so far as to appropriate your virtues to myself as if they had been mine, and to take complacency before God and men in the fact that I had received as my portion a clergy endowed with such virtues.

“ It is my hope that the rest of my flock may copy the holy example given to them by their Priests. For that flock I have endeavoured to act as the Good Shepherd, in praying constantly in their behalf, and in employing the full resources of my episcopal ministry in their favour, and

further in supplying them with zealous Pastors who were to co-operate with me in working for their sanctification. To their prayers, as well as to those of my clergy, I recommend my soul. I furthermore ask the prayers of those religious communities of the different orders who edify my diocese by their virtues and devotedness. I count much upon their devout suffrages, and upon those of that religious family of which I am, in a special manner, the Father.

“And now I wish openly to declare, that I pardon from my heart all those who, by deed or word, may have done me a wrong. I could never explain to myself how any one could wish me evil; sometimes, it is true, in the discharge of the imperative duties of my holy ministry, I may involuntarily have given pain to others, but doing so was contrary to my wishes and inclinations. I ask pardon nevertheless of all those who feel that I have done them any wrong, or given them unnecessary pain in any way; and I hereby pardon all who may have wronged me. I have no merit in pardoning, for it is contrary to my nature to treasure resentment or to remember a wrong.”

Though Monseigneur de Mazenod was in his 72nd year, he was still hale and active when he committed to paper the holy sentiments which we have just recorded, as a preparation for his end, which he judged could not be very far distant. The preparation for death which is made in the full vigour of life is the most to be depended upon, and is that which gives most convincing proof of the sincerity of one's faith, and of the fervour of one's disposition. Such was the mode of preparing for death, which has been ever in use among the saints and servants of God; therefore they were always

found ready when the day of their departure from life arrived, even though it came upon a sudden.

The closing scene of the earthly pilgrimage of the saintly De Mazenod was like the setting of a summer's sun, it was so calm, so grand, so bright even to its last glimmer on the edge of life's horizon. Bodily pain he had to endure to intensity for several weeks, but his mind was all the while unclouded, and his play of holy thoughts and feelings, and his kindly word and look, were free and active as before. He would not allow his acute pains of body to prevent him from discharging a single duty whilst he had strength to fulfil it. One night at nine o'clock he learnt that a letter had arrived from a distant foreign mission belonging to his society; his attendants wished that the reading of it should be put off till the next day. "No," he said, "perhaps the good Father who has written it to me is anxiously waiting for a reply, and that he expects a decision from me on some matter of importance. I cannot allow him to suffer one day's unnecessary delay in receiving an answer from me." Sharper than any pain of body was the pang of privation which he experienced in not being able to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The sense of this privation often drew copious tears from his eyes during his illness. The Altar of God had been for him, for many years, the sumptuous banquet table from

which he daily partook of the Heavenly Bread, that hath in itself all manner of delights. The joy of offering the Holy Mass was the immense delectation of his sacerdotal life. The loss of this joy was the only suffering that drew words of complaint from his lips during his death illness. A slight improvement having taken place in his condition, a ray of hope of being able to say Mass dawned upon his mind. Rising from his sick bed, he had himself conducted one day to the altar in his oratory, where he stood for some moments to test his power of remaining erect for the time that would be required for offering the Holy Mass. Alas! the experiment proved to him the necessity of renouncing his cherished hope. Unable any longer to recite the Divine Office, he desired that one of the Fathers would read it aloud at his bedside, whilst he would follow it in spirit. When those portions of the psalms and holy canticles to which he had greatest devotion were being read, he would raise his eyes to heaven or bow his head in earnest interior prayer. The strain of following thus the whole of the Divine Office became at last too much for him, and his physician had to restrict the portions of it which he would permit to be read to the holy invalid to Prime and Compline.

Letters at the time were coming from Canada, the Red River, Oregon, Texas, Natal, Ceylon, and

other distant regions, were Oblate missionaries were pursuing their difficult but successful labours. Listening to the reading of these letters was the holy recreation of the venerable invalid. When mention was made in these communications of conversions wrought, or of signal graces imparted through the ministry of his Fathers, he would bury himself for a few moments in an earnest prayer of thanksgiving, whilst his countenance would light up with a gleam of spiritual joy. On such occasions he would sometimes speak to the Fathers around his bed of the affairs of those distant missions, of the works of particular communities, and of the labours of individual Fathers, with a comprehensiveness and lucidity of view, and a mastery of detail, that astonished those who heard him. It then became evident how fully he had always been identifying himself as their wise, and vigilant, and loving Superior, with his Oblate missionaries in their labours in promoting the divine glory and the salvation of souls. The news of his serious illness brought to the episcopal palace nearly all the Priests of Marseilles. For each one who knelt at his bedside to receive his blessing, he had the kindly word and smile, and of each he made some enquiry concerning his works of zeal, his successes or trials. Yet all the while the holy sufferer was doing battle with an agony of pain arising from a deep-seated and

fatal abscess in the side. At last it was thought wise to administer to him the Holy Communion as Viaticum. Those who were witnesses of the last communion of that venerable Bishop declare that it was a sight to enrapture angels. His mastery over the sense of pain disclosed itself on that occasion. He did not allow his violent sufferings to become distractions to him, or to disturb him in the sublime act of giving reception in the sanctuary of his inner soul, for the last time on earth, to his Eucharistic Lord and King. Worship is perfect when exterior reverence is combined with interior love; such was the character of the worship which the devout De Mazenod had always rendered to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. When he used to appear at the altar of his cathedral on some great solemnity, clad in pontifical robes, mitre on head and crozier in hand—the traits of his noble and beautiful and serene countenance, wearing the impress of deepest and most loving reverence, he used then seem to be the realisation of those ideals of the sainted Pontiffs of olden times—the Augustines, and the Ambroses, and the Gregories, and others—which in our better moments we sometimes, in thought, picture to ourselves. It would be wrong to think that the solemnity of holy ceremonial was not chiefly designed and prescribed by the Church of Jesus Christ for the eyes of God and His Angels, and that their

main end was to serve as a source of edification to worshippers of earth. These reflections are suggested by a characteristic display of Eucharistic piety on the part of Monseigneur de Mazenod, when lying upon his bed of death, and when he was on the point of receiving his last Communion. He ordered, on that occasion, his episcopal robes to be brought to his sick chamber. He vested himself—or rather the loving hands of others vested him—in cassock of richest purple, in alb of finest lace, in stole and chasuble of cloth of gold; in such sacerdotal and episcopal garb he awaited the coming of his King and his God Incarnate, hidden under the veil of bread. Jesus knew on His arrival that all that array and preciousness of attire of His servant was for Himself alone—no crowd was there to witness or admire it. Ah! He recognized that deed as belonging to the same order of loving reverence as did the act of her who, when He entered her home, poured out upon His feet a full vessel of precious ointment. Some faint hopes still lingered that the holy Bishop might yet recover; at last these hopes vanished. His faithful friend and disciple of forty-six years standing—Father Tempier—was appointed to inform the devout prelate that there was no longer any hope of his recovery. Receiving this news, he bowed his head in humble and joyful submission to the Divine will, and offered the sacrifice of his life,

and of everything he possessed on earth, to his God. Thenceforward he wished to think and to speak only upon his approaching death. "My Lord," said one of the Fathers, approaching him, "we still have need of your presence in our midst; pray to God to prolong your life. He will surely grant your request if you address this prayer to Him." "Oh no," replied the dying Bishop, "I will address no such prayer to my God; my one desire is that His holy will be accomplished in my regard." He then requested that the prayers for the agonizing should be recited for him. "But give me first," he said, "the crucifix which I used to wear as a missionary, and hand to me my rosary beads." Holding his missionary cross in one hand, and his rosary beads in the other, he awaited the coming of death. For the thirty hours which he was still to live, he did not part with these holy emblems. His crucifix, whilst keeping before his mind in his last hours the thought of the Passion and Death of Jesus Christ, also served to console him, by the holy memories of his missionary labours in behalf of perishing souls, which it awakened in his breast; whilst the holding of his rosary beads in his dying hand was a profession of his deathless love and abiding confidence in the Queen of the Holy Rosary, Mary his Mother. After the prayers for the agonizing, which he followed with fervent attention, had been recited, he

said, "I desire now to renew my religious vows." He recited then the formula of religious profession used in his society, with a fervour greater still than that which he experienced when he first pronounced the vows of the religious state.

A letter arrived about this time, addressed to him by a Father in one of the foreign missions of his society. Being informed of the fact, he asked whether the letter was on subjects of piety or on matters of business; learning that it was of the latter nature, he said, "Then it does not concern me, my only business now is to prepare for a good death." "My Lord," said one of the Fathers, "in what terms shall we speak of your last moments to our brethren who are absent?" "Tell them," he replied, "that I die in peace—that I die consoled by the thought that God has condescended to use me as an instrument in founding, in His Church, the Society of the Oblates." "My Lord," continued his interlocutor, "confer on us the favour of disclosing to us the chief wish of your heart in our regard." Then the dying servant of God, fixing a glance of paternal tenderness on the Oblate Fathers who were at his bedside, said, "The chief wish of my heart in your regard is that you practise with fidelity, charity—charity—charity towards one another, and that in your exterior works you exercise zeal for the salvation of souls." He received with

faith and piety the Apostolic Benediction which was forwarded to him by the Holy Father, Pius IX.

At intervals, loving aspirations expressive of his desire to die, and to become united for ever to God, broke from his lips, after uttering which he used to sink into silent prayer. Feeling that his end was at hand, he invited Father Tempier to recite again the prayers for the dying. In the room at the time were his nephew, the Marquis of Boisgelin; the Bishop of Cerame; his Vicars-General; the Assistants-General, and other Oblate Fathers; two "Sisters of Hope," and the servants of his household. They came to witness the death of a great servant of God. At his desire the Compline service, to which he had much devotion, was chanted in his chamber. At those parts of that beautiful service that seemed appropriate to his condition—such as the versicle, *Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit*; and the canticle, *Now dismiss Thy servant, O Lord, in peace*—he would lift his hands and eyes to heaven in union with the sentiment uttered in these prayers. After the Compline, the "Salve Regina," a prayer to which he was also very devout, was recited. At the words of the prayer, "after this our exile ended," he raised his eyes to heaven, and at each of the invocations, "O most clement," "O most pious," he gave signs that he was following the words that were being recited. At the invocation, "O most

sweet Virgin Mary," he breathed his soul into the hands of his God. He died on the 21st of May, 1861, in the seventy-ninth year of his age.

To the lives of the great servants of God, the words of the text, *Ex fructibus eorum cognoscetis eos*—"By their fruits you shall know them"—are applicable in the fulness of their meaning. Extraordinary virtue is in itself deeply hidden; its abiding-places lie in the centre of souls, in the depths of hearts, in the secrecy of consciences, in the untold thoughts of enlightened and holy minds. Sometimes an exterior but an involuntary defectiveness in manner, way or word, is a screen which God's own hand employs to veil the preciousness of the sanctity of His earthly saints from the sun-glare of human notice, whose rays falling upon it might tarnish or destroy its lustre. And those who see only the screen and discover not the treasure hidden beneath it, pass along either ignoring or censuring a worth which they neither comprehend nor behold. The life of Charles Joseph Eugene de Mazenod, judged by its fruits, is one that merits to take its place in the annals of the history of the Church, side by side with the lives of the most illustrious prelates of ancient or of modern days, and also with those of the patriarchs of the Religious state—the Founders of Orders or Institutes to which the Church has affixed the seal of her approbation.

The death of its Founder is an occasion of special trial for a newly-established Religious Institution. It will happen that a certain undertaking, which is appointed in God's designs to accomplish some good purpose, for a limited period will grow up and prosper during the lifetime of its founder, but will disappear when he dies, his personality by its prestige and active influence being the cause and condition of the existence of the work inaugurated by him. But such was not to be the case with the institution founded by Father de Mazenod ; God's Spirit, which is deathless, filled it from the first, therefore its existence was not shortened, or even enfeebled, by the death of its Founder. That wise machinery of government which he, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and the blessing and approval of the Apostolic See, had called into play, was in perfect order at his demise. It is true it needed still the master hand to promote and control and guide its action, when *that hand* which had put its parts together, and had been working it with marvellous success for more than two score years, had to relax its hold in the chill of death.

That "master hand" was in readiness, trained and experienced, and fitted by personal aptitudes and a Divine Benediction, to take up and continue De Mazenod's wise and gentle, firm but conciliating and paternal rule. A successor to the Founder and

first Superior-General of the Society of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, was discovered in the person of the Rev. Father Joseph Fabre, the youngest of the four Assistants-General of that society. The election, at which he was unanimously chosen, took place at Paris on the 5th of December, 1861. Cardinal Guibert, Archbishop of Paris, who then occupied the see of Tours, was one of those who gave counsel, and dropped his name into the voting urn on that occasion, he acknowledging himself still the Oblate of Mary Immaculate, though wearing the ermine of a successor of St. Martin of Tours. The writer was a personal witness of the scene that accompanied the election of the first successor of the Founder of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. He can testify to the emotion which all present experienced at that solemn moment, when an event was happening which concerned so largely the interests of religion in general—the continued existence and action of a religious society in its entirety, and the work of the sanctification of many souls in divers European and foreign countries. There was a sensible action of the Divine Spirit, he believes, on that occasion, for each of those then present acknowledged afterwards having experienced, during the holy ceremonial, feelings akin to what he thought the Apostles must have felt on the day of Pentecost. The light and experience furnished by

subsequent events, spreading over the years that have elapsed since the date of that election, confirm the wisdom of the choice then made of a successor in the government of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, of their Founder the saintly De Mazenod.

The writer had intended to introduce into his pages some sketches of the missionary labours of the Fathers of his society in its parent country—France. Such sketches would necessarily be very imperfect, nevertheless he feels sure that they would give edification, as they would show that missionaries of the type of the old saints and apostles of France, such as St. Francis of Sales, St. Vincent de Paul, St. Francis Regis, are there being closely imitated, in spirit and in labours, by devoted Oblate Priests of the present times. But with the ways of Sion in mourning, and the harp of God's Church hung upon the willow in the land of the Gaul, he feels that the present is not the hour to speak of missionary labours and successes in that country, which may God protect and save, and restore to her old Catholic splendour!

THE END.