

to you, and an increase of reward to me from such discourse. I trust in the Lord Jesus, that his mercy may not be wanting to our prayers, who hath promised that He will be present with those that speak of him, saying: "Where there are two or three gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matth. xviii. 20.)

2 For it is now as when his two disciples were walking and discoursing of him in the way, he appeared unto them in the likeness of a stranger, and said: "What are these discourses that you hold one with another, as you walk, and are sad?" (St. Luke xxiv. 17) "And they said, concerning Jesus of Nazareth," (ver. 19.)

See how mercifully our Lord came unto them in their sadness, and joined them in presence. And because they spoke not of worldly matters, but of the works of their Saviour, therefore they deserved to be comforted by him, and moreover, to be instructed in the divine Scriptures; for presently they were so wondrously inflamed with the love of Christ, that they declared, in the wonder of the light that flowed from his sweet discourse: "Was not our heart burning within us whilst he spoke in the way, and opened unto us the Scriptures?" (St. Luke xxiv. 32.)

For as good conversation enkindles the heart of the pious to a love of heavenly things, and makes the fruits of virtue generate therein, so vain discourse corrupts good manners, loses the grace of God, quenches devotion, stains the conscience, and scandalises others.

Let us pray then, to the Lord, that he may lift up the light of his countenance upon us, and keep us from all evil deeds, and idle words; let us sit at the feet of Jesus, with Mary Magdalene, hearkening to his words (Luke x. 39), which can save our souls: and in all our works, let us show forth the good-will of God.

THE NOVICE. 1. Thou hast comforted me, and instructed me, by words and by the best examples. "Oh! that I may keep my ways, so that I may not offend with my tongue." May all my goings be directed ever in the sight of my God. Be not then angry with my questions, but tell, I pray thee, how one may come to the complete contempt of this world, and become the true disciple of Christ?

2. For I see many leave the world, and yet return into a worldly life. I observe others, who have taken upon them the religious habit, yet languish away from their former fervour. Some who open up the Church unto others, but who taste not of the sweetness thereof themselves. Some, too, I notice, who are carried away with external things, and by degrees decline to a perilous and hurtful license. I pray thee, then, do not let me wander without the orbit of perfection, but teach me plainly what to avoid and what to hold.

HOW TO HOLD TO GOOD EXAMPLE AND
TO SHUN BAD.

THE SENIOR. 1. The good disciple is ever ready to acquiesce in his master's