

RECEPTION AT TORONTO.

We have received from our Toronto correspondent, an account of the reception of two Sisters, into the Institute of Our Lady of Loretto.

The ladies, while in the world, were known as Miss Charlotte Lynn and Miss Mary O'Connor. Miss Lynn, as Choir Sister, has taken in religion the name of Sister Mary Ignatius, and Miss O'Connor, as Lay Sister, that of Sister Mary of the Dolours. The imposing ceremony took place at Loretto House, in that city, on the 27th of May; and, in the absence of the venerable and pious Bishop of Toronto, Mgr. Charbonnell, the Sisters were received, and the Veil given, by the Very Rev. the Vicar General *pro tem.*, the Rev. R. J. Tellier, of the Society of Jesus.

The learned Father is a Frenchman by birth, and, we believe, by education; and if our Protestant readers will only peruse his discourse dispassionately, they will find that in many particulars they misrepresent our creed; and, from the impression which we received ourselves from its perusal, as well as from its intrinsic excellence, we are induced to insert it in full.

"Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken away from her."—Luke 10, 42.

It is needless, dear Sisters, to exaggerate before you, the sublimity of the determination, which you fulfil this happy day. It is needless with you, beloved Christians, to apologise for the decided preference I must give to religious virginity, over every other state in life. Martha and Mary were sisters, and both were sincerely beloved and cherished by the good, by the divine heart of Jesus: although engaged in different pursuits, they lived in perfect harmony, and both enjoyed then and later, the kind approbation and choicest blessings of their God. However, in addressing the ever-occupied Martha, the great Master forewarns the people of the world against a forgetfulness of the divine commandments, and, at the same time, exalts the practice of the divine counsels. "Martha, Martha, thou art careful, and art troubled about many things: but one thing is necessary. Mary hath chosen," &c. How is it, O Lord Jesus, that those who retire from the world, who wear the religious garb, who embrace celibacy, have chosen the better part? "Because," says He, on another occasion, explaining the same doctrine, "because every one that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for My name's sake, shall receive a hundred fold, and shall possess life everlasting."—Mat. 19, 29; or, according to another evangelist, "Much more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting."—Luke 18, 30. This two fold and solemn promise I would here explain, and I confidently expect that I shall succeed, dearly beloved Sisters, in impressing more and more deeply on your minds and hearts the true spirit of your holy and happy vocation; and at the same time present to your relatives and friends substantial motives for congratulating you on your choice. Those who renounce the world to embrace a religious life, shall receive much more, a hundred fold, in this present time. Such is the first declaration, the first solemn promise of the divine Spouse.

I must say with St. Paul, "We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery which is hidden."—1 Cor., 2, 7. Let no one fancy that she who is consecrated to God, who lives in a religious community, separated from the world by her veil and her cloister, thereby obtains an exemption from the tribulations to which all flesh is heir. Even the great apostle, who had been favored with visions and revelations, who had been rapt up to the third heaven into paradise, who had heard secret words, which it is not granted to man to utter, says of the tribulations which he underwent, after so high a calling: "Least the greatness of the revelations should puff me up, there was given me a sting of my flesh, an angel of Satan to buffet me, for which thing I thrice besought the Lord, that it might depart from me: and he said to me: My grace is sufficient for thee: for power is made perfect in infirmity." Hear now what the apostle adds: "Gladly, therefore, will I glory in my infirmity, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I take pleasure in my infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake, for when I am weak, then I am powerful."—2 Cor., 12, 34. O thou amiable and admirable virgin, in whose honor we have just offered this most adorable sacrifice, who hast been selected by these two wise virgins to patronise their first step in religious life, St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi, how perfectly didst thou learn, how heroically didst thou practise that sublime lesson of suffering in the cloister! Mary Magdalen de Pazzi, upon a similar circumstance, when in her fifteenth year, she assumed the habit among the Carmelite nuns, received a crucifix from the hands of the priest, who, according to their ceremonial, pronounced these words of the apostle, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."—Gal. 6, 14. At that solemn moment, the virgin's countenance glowed with a seraphic ardor; she felt all inflamed with a burning desire of suffering during her whole life for Christ; and trampling under foot all the vanities of the world, she gave herself up to be crucified with Him. This young candidate of Carmelite is to undergo all the vicissitudes of a monastic career: she is to meet joys and sorrows; the most intense flames of love, and the heaviest weight of desolation. I cannot refrain from amazement, when I contemplate her towards the end of her life. She is preyed upon by maladies, both painful and tedious; and at the same time she labors under the most grievous inward spiritual thirst and desolation of soul. And do you suppose, my brethren, do you suppose she is cast down and dejected? Do you suppose that she is painfully resigned? Her only prayer is to suffer more, to suffer without any comfort. Her only aspiration is not for Heaven, but for the cross; not to enjoy Christ

in His glory, but to accompany Him in His ignominy; not for an end of her suffering and langours, but for the prolonging of her slow agony. "Grant me, O Jesus, my love," she exclaims, "grant me not to die, but to suffer!"

To day, my children, you take your solemn farewell of the world,—of the world which, to inexperienced youth, appears as a flowery field of pleasures, and which proves to experienced age a valley of tears. If you give up some hours of joy and pleasure, you undoubtedly escape many more of distress and agony. Yet when I consider this little community, yes, even in the paradise of religious seclusion, I would have you expect that many trials and pains, and solicitudes, and temptations, are to befall you, and cloud the innocent joyousness of your heavenly life. If not real evils, at least imaginary dreams of unhappiness, may sometimes find their way within the sacred walks of religious solitude, and perplex their incautious inmates. But although the gale of temptations and trials may raise and agitate the surface of a religious soul, it does not reach the bottom, and the hundred fold promised by the celestial Spouse, is the sure lot of her who is true to her holy vocation. Tranquillity of mind—this is the first treasure of religious life. You daily witness in the world, my brethren, and perhaps you experience yourselves how disheartening it is to advance amid the difficulties of life; domestic solicitude, the government of a family, the thousand petty, yet essential cares of a mother, the vicissitudes of fortune, all engross the mind of her whom Providence has called to the marriage state. The ordinary career of woman in the world, proves her to have entered, alas! in full into the sad inheritance of our first mother, Eve. And had the many, courage or power to begin their career anew, how gladly would they relinquish the choice they had made. But, alas! it too often happens that those cannot do so when they would, who would not when they could; and the opportunity of embracing a more perfect state, once foregone never returns. How different is the lot of her who has chosen it; exempt from all solicitude, she enjoys the comforts of the most opulent; she finds others appointed to attend and provide for her support, her wardrobes, her every want in sickness as in health. She has practically answered the invitation of the prophet:—"Cast thyself upon the Lord and he shall sustain thee," ps. 54, 23; and her very poverty is her best treasure; because she has thrown all her solicitude for the things of this life on that good and rich father, who feeds the fowls of the air, who produces the grass of the field, "Because she has sought first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things are added unto her."—Matthew 6.—She has not the least anxiety as to the choice of occupation, of the employment of her time, of her personal concerns, because her rule and obedience unerringly provide for all; and happy spouse of Christ, she calmly repeats with the royal prophet:—"In peace in the selfsame I will sleep, and I will rest, for thou O Lord, singularly hast settled me in peace," Ps. 4, v. 8.

Peace of heart is another treasure of religious life. "From whence?" I must ask the world with St. James: "From whence are wars and contentions among you? Come they not hence? From your concupiscences, which war in your members? You covet and have not; you contend and war, and you have not." Then he points out the only way to secure peace of heart:—"God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble. Be subject therefore to God, but resist the devil and he will fly from you. Approach to God and he will approach to you. Cleanse your hands ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy into sorrow. Be humble in the sight of the Lord, and he will exalt you."—James 4. Hence it is, my Brethren, that whosoever renounces the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life, (1 John, v. 2. and 6.) has secured for his heart the treasure of peace. Hence it is that peace exiled from the world finds a shelter in the cloister; and the less a religious has known and tasted of the world, the more is she established in peace. To understand all the happiness of St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi in her convent, we need but reflect on this privilege of her life. She was pure to such a degree, that she remained all her lifetime ignorant of aught that could stain angelical purity. How right is then the prophet Jeremiah, when he says: "It is good for a man, when he hath borne the yoke from his youth." Happy however as they are, whose youth is consecrated to God, our Mother the Church, guided by the Holy Ghost, and all-wise in her decisions, does not admit the young virgin to the heavenly nuptials of religious profession before the age of sixteen, although she does not refuse to bless the conjugal bond of one who has completed her twelfth year. Oh! blessed walls of a Community, which screen the delicate virtue from the burning heat of the world! Oh! blessed habit, robe, and veil, and cincture, which have such an eloquent language, and convey to the religious soul such sweet lessons, of precious promises and expectations!—Regularity, silence, order, occupation, mutual charity, obedience, prayer, and contemplation, all combine to create and cherish peace. But above all, who can explain the happiness of a frequent communion in a monastery? Who can explain the transports of the intercourse of a raptured soul with her Jesus! Who can describe or realize the solemn moment, the still and profound solitude of a religious soul, at her thanksgiving after the Sacramental Communion, when she speaks not face to face, but heart to heart, with the Son of God, her spouse, and pines away for love. It was at such moments that the seraphic Magdalen de Pazzi was heard to cry out, "O Love! Love is not loved, not known by his own creatures! Oh my Jesus! had I a voice powerful enough to be heard by all men in all the parts of world, how would I cry

out that this love might be known, loved, and esteemed by all men as the only true incomprehensible good!" And then with all the ardour of her soul, she invited angels, men, stars, birds, beasts, plants, the sands of the sea, the waters of the ocean, the blended choir of creation, to convert themselves into tongues, to praise, to bless and magnify the divine Love. Oh yes! it is then that the religious is established in peace. To her there is no sweeter hour, except the hour of death; for the hour of death is both the highest encomium of the religious vocation, and the summit of grace and happiness for the religious.

The store of merits laid up, is another and more substantial treasure: for the standard to judge rightly of this mortal life, is its worth for that which is immortal; or its merits, its value in the eyes of the Supreme Judge. Now, according to a remark of St. Gregory, the Supreme Judge does not consider so much what we do, as what is the principle from which we do it. Sanctifying grace and divine charity here, is the lively principle of merit, and it is secured in religious life by a thousand ways. It matters not what may be the occupation of a sister, provided she be at peace with her heavenly spouse. I know very well, that every Christian in a state of grace, lays up merits for heaven; but the nun has the additional and very high merit, which is connected with her condition of being consecrated to God by vows. Two persons, one in the world, and one in a monastery, may be both in the grace of God; animated with the same fervor, charity and zeal, and purity of intention; engaged from morning to night, in works tending to the glory of God. Both are not of the same nature: the first will reap a harvest of good grain; but the second a harvest of the finest wheat. She who has left the world, has given to God what she had—what she was; and she is entitled to receive in proportion to her holocaust.—"Give, and it shall be given to you: good measure, and pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall they give into your bosom; for with the same measure that you shall mete, it shall be meted to you again,"—Luke, vi. 38. Hence it is, that a religious person calls down a shower of blessings, not only on herself, but on the beloved family which had the generosity to sacrifice, to the will of God, their fond attachment to a favorite daughter—oftentimes a very hard and meritorious sacrifice. She remains at the foot of the altar, a permanent, and always acceptable, advocate, in behalf of all her relatives and friends.

And this, dearly beloved sisters, this tranquility of mind—this peace of heart—this store of merits—is some earnest of the hundred fold promised by the Heavenly Spouse, and secured to you at this present moment. However, the most prominent part, I would say, of your dowry is, the life everlasting secured to you.

But as I have dwelt rather long on these points, I shall but sketch what remains to be said, and leave it to your contemplations:—

She who is consecrated to God, by religious vows, if true to her engagements, and true to the end, has the promise of life everlasting. "O! good master," said a young man to our Lord, "what good shall I do, that I may have life everlasting?" The answer was—"If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments;" and the Master pointed them out one by one. The young man said to him—"All these have I kept from my youth: what is yet wanting to me?" Jesus said to him—"If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasures in heaven, and come follow me."—Matt. 19. Let us stop here a moment, and consider two altogether different classes of men:—When the young man had heard these words he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. Then Jesus said to his disciples—"Amen I say to you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of Heaven." This is, my brethren, the type of an unfortunate class who, because they do not correspond to the high vocation of God, peril not only their perfection, but even their eternal salvation. Misplaced in the world, they are most likely to become an incumbrance on society, an example of domestic unhappiness—a problem in real Christian life. As soon as the Divine Master had laid down this fearful doctrine, Peter, answering, said to him—"Behold we have left all things and followed thee; what, therefore, shall we have?" This cheerful obedience of the Apostles to the Divine call is, the beautiful type of the other class, who faithfully follow their religious vocation. And the magnificent answer given to the Apostles, is addressed even to their followers in the life of the divine Counsels.—"Amen I say to you, that you who follow me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the seat of His Majesty, you also shall sit on twelve seats, judging the twelve tribes of Israel; and every one that hath left house, &c." Tell me now, beloved Christians, how could the followers of the Evangelical counsels sit beside the Supreme Judge, with the honor of being His associates in the general judgment of the world, unless they be themselves numbered amongst the elect? Indeed they are in the way of salvation, for how could they follow the Evangelical counsels, if they violate the divine commandments? Their struggles are for the counsels, for their monastic rules, for the perfection of Christian virtues, for works of charity and of zeal; for energy in self-denial, and in spiritual exercises; but to fulfil each and all of the commandments, it is with them a matter of course; and therefore, provided they so persevere to the end, a life everlasting is with them, no less, a matter of course; their's is, emphatically, the kingdom of Heaven.

Still something more peculiar awaits those privileged beings, who, by a special grace of God, and through the intercession of Mary, knew how to preserve in their weak bodies their virgin purity, unguilted by thought, by look, by desire. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency

may be of the power of God, and not of us."—2 Cor., 4, 7. To live here below on earth in our bodies as pure angels in heaven, is far above the natural powers of our fallen creation, and a singular gift of divine munificence. Hear St. Paul, who had a full knowledge of the world, and a full knowledge of heaven, on account of his having been witness of both: "Concerning virgins," says he, "I have no commandment of the Lord; but I give counsel, as having obtained mercy of the Lord, to be faithful."—1 Cor., 7, 25. Then he teaches Christian marriage to be lawful, and laudable, and necessary, for the workings and imperfection of many; he points out the tribulations and dangers of that state, and presents the proper antidotes; he then explains some high advantages and privileges of virginity. "The unmarried woman," says he, "and the virgin thinketh on the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit. But she that is married, thinketh on the things of the world, how she may please her husband, and this I speak for your profit: not to cast a snare upon you, but for that which is decent, and which may give you power to attend upon the Lord, without impediment." But, dear Christians, where is the tribunal appointed by God to decide whether this or that person is called to the world, or rather to a religious life; to decide at what age she may safely embrace the one or the other? Surely, it is not the world, which has neither experience nor notion, nor mission in matters of perfection and purity. "The sensual man," says the Apostles, "perceiveth not the things that are of the spirit of God, for it is foolishness to him, and he cannot understand, because it is spiritually examined; but the spiritual man (that is to say, the organ of the Church,) judgeth all things, and he himself is judged by no one; for who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."

—1. Cor. 2, 14. But to come back to the point under consideration: What is the exclusive privilege of virgins in Heaven? Virgins in Heaven are the brilliant retinue of the immaculate Lamb; Virgins in Heaven are a selected choir, which, wrapped in light and grace, are grouped before the eternal throne of the king of the heavenly Jerusalem, and sing in transports of enthusiasm and love; with a harmony of their own, an immortal canticle of praise and thanksgiving, which no others can sing. These innumerable Virgins, of every sex and age, the Virgin Apostle, St. John, was allowed to see and hear, and with that master hand, so peculiarly his own, he portrays in a few strokes, the heavenly scene:—"And I saw, and beheld, a Lamb stood on Mount Sion, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from Heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of great thunder; and the voice which I heard was of harpers, harping on their harps; and they sung as it were a new canticle, before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the angels; and no one could sing the canticle but these hundred and forty-four thousand, who were purchased from the earth. These are they who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins—these follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth,—these were purchased from among men—the first fruits to God and to the Lamb—and in their mouth was found no lie; for they are without spot before the throne of God."—Apc. 14, 1. Dearly beloved sisters, we have all reason to hope, that a place awaits you in that privileged choir. You make now the first step towards that glorious destiny; but still you remain free, under no vow, no oath of any kind. This is but your espousal; two years are to elapse before you can be admitted to the mystic nuptials of the immaculate Lamb. In the meantime, during the precious days of your novitiate, you will exert yourselves; you will pray, you will entreat daily, and in good earnest, her who is Queen of Virgins, to obtain for you the grace of Providence; you will disengage your mind and heart from all worldly ties and feelings; you will set your affections on high, and while enjoying, already, some participation of the promised hundred fold in this present time, you will secure for the world to come, life everlasting.

EFFECT OF THE PENAL LAWS.

In proportion as the Bill for the Suppression of the Catholic Hierarchy advances in the House of Commons, and as the anti-Catholic fanaticism of the great majority of the English representatives in that assembly develops itself, so does the organisation of the Catholic Defence Association proceed; and we are not without hope that before the atrocious Penal Bill shall have passed through the forms necessary to place it as a stigma on the statute book, we shall have a body established in this country for the defence of religious liberty, round which the entire Catholic population may rally with confidence. We publish this week some highly important communications relative to this new national organisation. Among them are letters from his Eminence Cardinal Wiseman, from the illustrious Archbishop of Tuam, from the Bishop of Clonfert, Derry, and Killaloe; from the Earl of Arundel and Surrey, from Mr. Reynolds, M.P., Mr. Scully, M.P., and others, all of which will be read with the deepest interest throughout the country. The proceedings connected with the formation of this association are daily assuming additional importance. It was originally intended that the inaugural meeting should be held on the 10th inst., but it has been deemed wiser to wait until the Irish Catholic members can leave London; and by their letters it appears that they will remain in London to arrange plans during the approaching short recess. We believe that it is the intention of the committee to adopt an address, and to forward it to each parish in Ireland, so as to elicit the opinions of the clergy and influential laity.

SOMETHING LEARNED BY EXPERIENCE.—Wesley says, "When I was young I was sure of everything: in a few years having been mistaken a thousand times, I was not sure of most things as I was before: at present I am not sure of anything but what God has revealed to man."