

Gentlemen, - Before adjourning I will occupy but a few moments of your valuable time. I wish to express my appreciation of the spirit which you have exhibited during this interesting discussion. The Church of England was established by compromise and I rejoice to see her present representation animated by the same spirit of compromising her teaching in their noble desire of uniting the many sects of Protestantism. Your readiness to do so has been a pleasure to me as presiding officer. One has declared himself willing to yield the Thirty-nine Articles of her belief, another, creeds and councils, another orders, and another has shown a willingness to yield the Bible itself if only these would serve to unite our dissenting brethren with us. Other denominations would, most likely, meet us half way, the Presbyterians giving up the Westminster creed; and the Methodists, Baptists and others their particular tenets. Then we might have a basis of union agreeable to all, for there would be left nothing to dispute.

The meeting was then adjourned *Sine Die*.

D. J. C.

### A GLIMPSE INTO A JESUIT NOVITIATE.

Under this title, M. H. Dzwicki, a recent acquisition to the journalistic world of London, gives some interesting records in the current number of *Blackwood*. To supply to the public the story of an experience so intimate, nay, so sacred, is, perhaps, not the most delicate thing to do. The writer may, however, certainly aver that the reputation of a Jesuit Novitiate can only gain by his truth and fact, while it suffers in the wild imaginations of outsiders by secrecy. It is also true that none but one who has been a member, and is a member no longer, can tell the whole salutary truth:—

First of all, a few words of personal explanation. I was eight years among the Jesuits—two as a novice, three as a student of philosophy, and three as teacher or assistant in their colleges. I left them of my own accord, though not without their consent, and after having asked their advice on the matter. Our regret was, I believe, mutual. Our relations since that time, though infrequent, have not been unfriendly, and I am still in communion with the Church. My position is, therefore, characterized by perfect independence on the one hand, and on the other by the want of any incitement to injure an Order with which I parted on good terms. I ought to observe, that the following account cannot be considered as correct except as a statement of facts in one particular Novitiate of one particular Province, and at one particular time. Many, even considerable, differences are to be found between one Province and another. I noticed that myself whilst spending a few days in a Spanish Novitiate during a pilgrimage that we had to make. I am told, moreover, that between the English Province and the others the difference is still more strongly marked. It is, for instance, the custom throughout the Society to give the "kiss of peace" whenever a member comes to or goes away from one of their houses. An English novice, who was visiting Pau on account of his health, came to see us, and went through the ceremony. I saw that he did not like it, and asked whether it was done in England. "Never," answered he; "we only shake hands." Now the "fraternal embrace" is explicitly alluded to in the very text of St. Ignatius's rules. So this sketch, though I can vouch for its faithfulness, might convey a very false idea, if supposed to picture any other Province or any other time.

After describing the chapel and Residence of the Fathers at Pau, the writer continues:—

But we are visiting the Novitiate, not the Residence. Let us accordingly go upstairs to the third floor, a few minutes to four a. m. All is dark in the passage. A light is suddenly struck. The bell must ring at four precisely, as the novices, like the rest of the Society, have seven hours of sleep allotted to them; and the *Frere Reglementaire* is getting up betimes in order to begin his day's work. This is no sinecure; for I have reckoned that he rings the bell thirty-five times in seventeen hours. It sounds—and at the first "ding-dong" a series of jumps on to the floor are heard in reply. For the bell is the voice of God, as Ignatius says; and as no novice would have thought of rising without leave one instant before, so no one would even for a second hesitate to obey the Divine

call. The *Frere* goes down the passage with a lighted *queue-de-rat* in his hand, and successively lights one lamp in each room, saying as he passes, "*Benedicamus Domino!*" to which each and all, hurriedly dressing, washing, or shaving, reply from behind the curtains, "*Deo Gratias!*" Haste must be made, for all these operations, besides that of carrying dirty water to the sink, must be performed in twenty-five minutes, in order to leave five minutes free for a visit in the private chapel to the "Master of the house." Here they come—and first of all the most fervent and saintly amongst them, Brother Seraphicus, as the novices playfully call him. It is 4.15: so he will pay a visit of a quarter of an hour. Alas! Seraphic Brother, I am afraid a shorter visit would have been preferable; you have neglected more than one duty to get these extra ten minutes. One shoe is badly laced; your tooth-brush is dry; and even your hands might be whiter. *Mon Frere*, with all your fervour, you will never be a son of Ignatius: that old Saint has a military liking for tidiness and order. In two years you will leave the Novitiate, to become a good pious priest, but never a Jesuit. Second on the list comes another young Brother, half French and half Irish, of quite another type, rather dry in his orisons, and not at all given to soaring in mystic contemplation. He cannot even fancy St. Peter during the Meditation, without thinking of an old tar, with a "south-wester" on his head, and a short black pipe in the corner of his mouth. But he is irreproachably neat in all his belongings; and in fact, I think, prides himself on the rapidity with which he does all things so well. Still, pride is a sin—and, to say the truth, his demeanour is far from novice-like. He holds his head erect, not with a gentle curve forwards, as most of his companions do; his eyes, though not wandering, are yet far from downcast. Can he remain in the Society, when Brother Seraphicus is not good enough? Yes, and do good solid work in the colleges, too.

Here come at last the rest of the Community, all stepping lightly on tiptoe, as the "Master of the Novices" has ordered. All hurry towards the sink, carrying each in his hand the requisite vessel. Rectors, Provincial, nay, even Generals, are also bound to this rule of "self-help," and not novices only; unless, indeed, they are too much engaged, and then a lay-brother does the work. Five-and-twenty minutes have elapsed; all novices coming henceforward to the chapel must kneel down outside the door, not to disturb the others—and there is often a whole string of them outside, when a long walk on the previous day has made them so sleepy that they are not able to do everything both speedily and well. For besides their outward occupations, their mind has all the time to be busily at work. They must take their morning resolution for the day—what evil especially to avoid, and what virtue to cultivate: and then there is the Meditation to be thought about; and they must offer the coming day to God. All this not unfrequently delays them. The hour strikes; the novices all trip upstairs—for the private chapel is on the second floor—to meditate from 4.30 to 5.30. The subject was given out the day before, and is taken from the *Exercitia Spiritualia*. The Meditation coming to an end, pens run over paper during a quarter of an hour devoted to the Review. This part of the exercise, considered so essential a part of the Meditation by St. Ignatius, he will on no account suffer it in any case to be set aside, is a mental glance or survey of the hour that has just gone by. The grand principle of *practical reflexion on the past, with a view towards progress*, is brought to bear on the Meditation; whether it has been successful or not, and why, is noted down in the *Spiritual Journal*. The beds are then made, and this is no easy task. If the furniture of the Fathers downstairs seemed to be the acme of simplicity, that of the novices is the acme in every deed. We pass over the want of fire (supplied in cold weather by a box of hay or a foot-bag), of a wash-hand stand, of a *prie-Dieu*, and even of matches. The bedstead consists of two trestles, across which three or four deal boards are laid; the bed is a mere sack filled with maize-straw, covered with sheets and blankets. The art of the bed-maker is to give this a decent and neat appearance—and he succeeds. See, an *ancien de chambre*—a novice of the second year, appointed in each room to instruct the new-comers—is giving a lesson. He shows how the ends of the of the counterpane must be symmetrically folded together with what care every straw that falls should be picked