

that it is chiefly in the exercise of the great Catholic duty, to which the study of moral theology is mainly directed that the seeds of these virtues are sown and cherished, that the wicked are brought back to God, and the timid are comforted and the weak confirmed, and all are made good. Then there is the still higher, at least more attractive and splendid, study of dogmatic theology, without which the missionary cannot know what doctrinal truths he is to preach or defend, what doctrinal errors, he is to avoid or combat.

Your Grace does not hold the necessity, on the part of your own ministers, of attending at the sick bed. But you are well aware that we hold a far different doctrine, and adopt a far different practice from yours. You are aware that attendance at the sick bed—the last battle field of the powers of light and the power of darkness—is one of our most sacred duties. What skill, what experience, what knowledge of divine truth, of the human heart and of its passions and the ways of dealing with these passions, according to the infinite variety of forms which they assume are required by the priest; what deep and patient study is required to fit him for such a work!

I need not enter upon other matters. I could not, in a letter like this, present your Grace with even a brief outline of the many topics, on some of which I have touched. To you it would be superfluous to add one word on the importance of the study of the sacred Scriptures for a minister of Christ, in whatever sphere he may be placed.

Your grace has never heard a single confession in the whole course of your life. You have never assisted at the dying bed, at least as a Catholic priest assists at it. Learned and able as you unquestionably are, you would not know even how to set about to these offices, without a training in Maynooth or some such place. The kind of knowledge, therefore, required in a missionary priest is a matter on which the peculiar studies and experience of your life have not given to you the means of forming a fair judgment.

What has a young man, who is destined for a life like that of an Irish curate or parish priest, to do with (to him) babbling and jargon about major axis, and parabola, and cosine, and evanescent quantities? Why should the halls for his education be converted into sooty forges for experiments on brass and copper, and tin, and old rags, as if he were to become master tinker?—and this, too, while there is hardly time enough for him to gather a slender stock of that learning, in itself infinitely more solid and sublime, and without a competency of which he will be a blind leader of the blind. Some people talk as if spherical trigonometry were a portion of the Gospel—as if cases of conscience were to be solved like problems in quadratic equa-

tions. This nonsense has been long enough afloat, and it is full time that it should be met and exposed on the true merits. The study of matter and figures, and lines, is in its own nature a study of inferior dignity; and for a missionary priest a study of the least possible utility. It used to be said that the Catholic Church discouraged the study of natural philosophy. The slander was met, of course, by a flat denial, and facts were adduced to prove the contrary. But it is nevertheless perfectly true—and a truth to be not only admitted but maintained—that the Church has always considered such study as of comparatively trifling importance in the education of the clergy who are destined for the active duties of the mission. The fact is, that the genius of Protestantism has naturally enough given to mere human science a relatively undue importance in these countries. The cause is, that since the revolution—since the days of her own great divines, her Bramhalls, her Barrows, her Lauds, her Stillingsfleets—her theology as a science—at least as a deep, extensive science, has vanished: it is now but the skeleton of a dwarf, a brainless scalp, the 'shadow of a shade.' Hence it is, that in her colleges, mathematics, and physics, and classics, swallow up everything else. Mr. Sewell, the professor of moral philosophy at Oxford, published a treatise on that subject a few years ago. I would be ashamed to have such a book appear under my name, even as written by me walking in my sleep. He published another work, still worse, on the evidences of Christianity—almost the only theological topic prosecuted vigorously by Anglican divines. I should like to see two works on the same subjects by the respective professors of them in Maynooth.

I have as yet only spoken of the sort of knowledge which alone can be fairly required of a missionary priest to possess. I have said nothing to the extent of purely extra-professional information communicated in Maynooth, or to be found among a very large body of the Irish clergy.

AN IRISH PRIEST.

THE LAMP OF THE SANCTUARY.

Continued from No. 28.

They had two motives for this cruel earnestness, in having him as their accomplice. First, from his conversations they had ascertained that he knew accurately what was of real, and what of apparent value among the ornaments of the church; what was really of silver, and what only of base metal; as he had often assisted as voluntary sacristan there, in his better days. They, on the contrary, had never taken more than a cursory glance at the riches accumulated in the sanctuary, enough to inflame their desires, but not to guide them in the selection of spoil. But, farther, they had a still baser and