

be able to look on it as false or idolatrous. In this I have succeeded to a great extent. Your allusion to my desire to protect you is, I believe, just in like manner, for I have always fearlessly put myself as your sentinel at the opening of every avenue that could lead the enemy to the invasion of your rights, and endeavoured to obstruct all the efforts of your spiritual and temporal enemies. In this also have I been successful on many occasions, But for whatever I may have effected in the above ways, I claim neither praise nor gratitude, because I consider it a sacred duty which the divine law imposes upon every pastor of the true religion.

Your kind and warm approbation of my humble services I will never forget. It shall stimulate me to a still greater exertion of my zeal to promote the interests, spiritual and temporal, of those over whom it is the will of Providence to place me, that I may deserve their approbation. also, which is of itself an ample reward.

Gentlemen, wishing, from my heart, that my successor may have better claims on your approbation, wishing you peace, union, prosperity, brotherly love, and every blessing your hearts can desire here and hereafter, and returning you my most sincere thanks for your kind felings towards me and your warm approbation of my humble merits,

I remain your devoted friend and humble servant,

L. BYRNE.

LITERATURE.

LETTERS FROM BELGIUM.

Concluded.

LETTER V.

Belgium, _____, 1842.

Since writing the above, a week has passed; my letter is awaiting an opportunity of being sent to England. We are all quite gay with the numerous fetes which are around us. This week seventeen parishes in the neighbourhood of ours are holding their Kermes. Every field and lane is enlivened by the merry chat of the peasants passing on their way, to keep holiday with their relatives or friends, in one or other parish. Whole families are trooping along together. The house is locked up, and old and young set forth. Some, who are too young, or too old, or too weak to walk, go on a donkey, with its broad sheepskin saddle, large enough to carry two or three at once. Then the farmers go in majestic style—seated in their own waggons with the *Boorenas* (farmers' wives) by their side, under their own white awning, and looking the very model of independence and comfort; that is to say, looking exactly like Belgian farmers, a race of men whom princes may envy. White petticoats and stockings peep from the carefully pinned-up gown of the travelling females. Such luxuries, only exhibited on very great occasions, add very much to the holiday feeling one has about one at Kermes. Amongst the many, it is this week the fete of a parish near ours, which is large enough to rank almost as a town. Our own dear, quiet, village produces so much to

interest and amuse us in religion, that we seldom need go any where to seek recreation; but yesterday I felt a wish to be present at some of the many Masses at A—, and after our own service was over, we walked over there. We arrived about half-past nine, and found the whole place in movement. I greatly enjoyed seeing the stalls and shops, and the children amusing themselves just as our English children used to do at their rustic fairs. We met, I really think, a third part of our own parishioners, who were returning from earlier Masses; from some of these we learned that our Mass was just beginning, for which, therefore, we should be rather late, but that there were still others to follow. We hastened on, and found our own Cure saying a high Mass, assisted by a deacon who was also our neighbour. The priests go about to assist each other on these festival days. A stranger had said Mass in our parish yesterday, for instance; that is, a friend of the Cure's and of ours; and our Cure had come over to A—, to celebrate a Mass for the Cure of A—. The Church was much too full for us to go near the altar. But I have told you we needed not hear a word to enable us to join immediately in the Mass. We found it was the time of the *Credo*. It was beautiful to enter amongst the devout multitude, and to feel that their innocent festivities were thus based upon, and mixed up with their religion. So many pretty little children were around us, knowing exactly when to kneel and when to stand up, and behaving so properly, and praying so like little angels, with no one apparently belonging to them present to guide them. I said to myself, Ah! these are the fruits of your Pastor's catechisings, and of his ever-vigilant care of you. Kind Jesus! the Pastor of pastors, who hast appointed these good shepherds to watch over thy flocks. How many of these little ones are left to perish in protestant lands, where no system of instruction is enforced and binding on every priest.

This Mass ended, the Church was soon nearly cleared, most persons present having probably to return home to allow other members of their several families to come in to the next Mass, which we found was immediately to follow, as the candles on the High Altar remained burning. Our candles have many significant uses.

This Mass was accompanied with chanting the *Matins* and *Lauds*, and the Church again filled. We approached the altar, and found every thing very handsomely arranged. The parish is a rich one, and nothing is spared by the inhabitants for the adorning and enriching the house of God. The Cure of the parish led the choir with his fine impressive voice. He had still his Mass to celebrate, which I longed to stay to hear, as it would be a very grand one, perhaps with several