VOL. XVI.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, APRIL 13, 1866.

No. 36.

LIFE IN THE CLOISTER; OR, FAITHFUL AND TRUE.

By the Author of "The World and the Cloister," &c , &c., &c.

CHAPTER 1V .- Continued.

Poor child! poor child!' says Mother Angelique, addressing a few of the senior nuns, who are privileged in being the nearest to her person. See, this dainty epistle is from our old pupil, pretty Marion Craig, who begged us to join in a Novena in order that she might have the grace of a Vocation. This perfumed rosy paper savors rather strongly of the world; let us ed so worldly in her inclinations. see what she has to say.

The Sister Superior opened the letter, read it to herselt first, and then communicated its contenis to the nuns. It ran as follows:

Dearest Rev. Mother,-A great disappointment has befallen me, nay, a great trial to both myself and dear Lilian. You know that in my last I told you with much joy that I was convinced God called me to serve Hum in holy region, and that papa had promised to bring us both to London; also, that I intended to make him acquainted with the state of my feelings.

'I believe, too, you are aware that Lilian has formed an attachment with the brother of one of abandonment of the pleasures of sense, and oh, your old eleves, dear Kate Leslie. Now my fa- far, far above all, most painful to human pride, ther has been begging her to accept the hand of that absolute, that unreserved obedience, by certain nobleman, who has been paying his addresses to her; and his answer was extreme when she declared that she wished to marry difficult to give up, and yet the renunciation of down; and be as neat and nice as any lady in Herbert; and will you, can you believe it, dearest mother? he has been no less violent with

'The end of it all is, he has sent us both off to Lytham, a very pretty little watering-place, telling us we shall live there at least three months, till we are both cured of our folly. He has taken small rooms for us in a neat but excessively small cottage, and will not even allow us the comfort of a drive in the phaeton or a ride on horseback; we must walk, or engage a public vehicle. Not, my dear reverend mother, do feel very bitterly the unmerited humiliation she leaves her bed of down. which is put upon us both by the severity of my father.

shall watch anxiously for an answer by return of meal. post if possible; if not, I am sure you will not leave me beyond a day or two; and believe me your very affectionate

'MARION.'

the note, 'I must teach you something of the our Catherine is by no means insensible to the spirit of a Vocation when I do write, and that will not be this week. She is ill prepared to face trial. It will not be amiss, should the grace | would bring him a rich dower, which would enof a Vocation be hers if she meet with a little able her poor artist brother to climb a little more suffering before she joins us, if indeed her father quickly up the ladder of life than he could posever allows her to do so.'

' Well, Sister Superior,' said the general mistress, an amiable nun of about forty years of age, to whom the management of the young which she had been some months building, most lady pensioners was intrusted, to judge from appearances, one would not have thought that Marion would have had any wish to engage in our holy state, whilst I should have thought it not at all unlikely that, divested of the natural pride of her character, Lilian would one day have been likely to become a Religious; but does not His service souls whom one would regard as bewell as those who love retirement?'

Exactly so, Sister Madeleine,' replied the Superior; thus it is that women who have been surrounded with every luxury that wealth can procure, carelessly fling it at the foot of the Cross, and serve God in penance and retirement; whilst those who have been reared in poverty and trial, not unfrequently are in their bearts far more wedded to the world.'

A little apart from the group of elder ladies, walked the young nuns, to whom the news that dear Marion Craig was prevented from seeing them had already spread. Some two or three with Marion. In the little world of conventual that arrival to be delayed, always furnishes some little excitement.

Marion had been prayed for very earnestly and looked for very anxiously by those young people; they often hazarded conjectures as to

whether she, in the midst of her father's luxury and opulence, was practising sub rosa little austerities which should fit her for those she must constantly practise as a sister of Notre Dame; for though gentle as to its rule in points of fastings and abstinence, like that of every other reigious order, it of course required a spirit of mortification and of perpetual self-abnegation.

That poor Marion did not in the slightest degree possess these qualifications at the present moment, the complaining tone of her letter distinctly shewed; and a compact was entered into between the three youngest nuns to redouble their prayers for her; they declaring that they the new sister they had been praying for remain-

Innocent girls were there, who had made but one step as it were from the well-disciplined school of Canley Heath, to the Novitiate of the mother-house at Namur. Women who had passed perhaps thirty years in the world before they entered religion. Souls who, whatever the world may think or say about the matter, were undoubtedly happy, though they had abjured all that earth holds most dear, in their renunciation of domestic ties, the pleasures of the world, the luxuries which wealth can bestow, and adopted in their place the self-denying life of a nun, with with all its austerities, it poverty, its voluntary which the religious gives up to the superior that which in its full entirety is the first essential in the life of a religous.

Yes, 'He that can receive it let him re

It is absurd for the world to maintain that the inmates of cloisters must needs be unbappy because they have abjured the world, or refuse our admiration to that which we ourselves are not called upon to imitate.

But the hour of recreation passes with the fading summer eve, and the sisterhood retire all calm and peaceful as the waning summer day to would not see; and yet would be six hours acthat the loss of these luxuries much annoys me, the convent chapel, and the evening meditation, who can never know the use of them in the re- the examen, and visit to the blessed sacrament ligious state, but the fact is my chief sadness close the day, and each one seeks her humble and not unfrequently has she been heard to express visit our dear convent as I had hoped. And I more refreshed than the woman of the world when

Leave we the quiet convent, us a small but neat and pretty house on the 'I beg of you, and of all the dear sisterhood, Brixton Road, the house of Herbert Leslie, in not to forget me in your prayers. I live in which dwelt also his mother and sister. A very haps my father's temper may cool after all. 1 and preparations are being made for the evening

Catherine Leslie, a somewhat plain but very lady-like young woman, sits awaiting the return of her brother. An open letter is in her lap, she has read it over twenty times at least that 'Poor Marion,' said Sister Angelique, folding day. She dearly loved Lilian Craig, and then power and influence which wealth bestows. She remembered that if Herbert married Lilian, she sibly do when his endeavors were thwarted by poverty's unconquerable bar.' Lilian's letter, however, had cast the Chatcaux en Espanye, ruthlessly to the ground. Her indignation was excited that Herbert, whom she almost idolized for his virtue and his undoubted talent, should be you are a friend of dear Lilian's, and will call considered unfit to espouse her friend Lilian be cause he was poor.

At last the long weary day was nearly over, and the hour came at which Herbert generally daily experience prove to us that God calls to returned from his studio in Oxford street. Generally Catherine met him with a smiling face; lags destined for the gay scenes of the world, as but on this night he saw by the expression of her household matters had been neglected, Miss countenance that something had occurred to disturb her.

She said nothing, but laid the open letter on the table beside the artist's plate.

He perused it in silence, and Kate observed that his fine countenance wore a very sad expression as he laid it on the table.

I can now understand why Mr. Craig has not answered the letter in which I ventured to solicit the hand of his daughter. Well, then, all hope is over. I dare not bring a woman brought up as Lilian has been, to my humble house, Kate; nor will I do anything, dearly as I of the sisters had been in the school before their love her, to curtail my sick mother's comforts; departure to the Novitiate at Namur, and one but I will see Lilian. Oddly enough, I have to amongst them had been there at the same time commence next week a painting for the high altar of one of the Preston churches. Preston life, the circumstances attendant on the arrival is but sixteen miles from Lytham, and I will manof a new member, or whatever may occasion age to take the train thither; but I will not write it will be the better way to take Lillan by surprise. Take no notice of her letter, Catherine; this is Thursday, and Monday, the day on which I leave London, will speedily be here.

main unanswered, for she was one of those per- aloud. It ran as follows:sons who always liked to do things in a hurryno delay where Catherine Leslie was concerned -the word simply did not enter, into her vocabulary. When she was a pensioner in the con vent school she was always in disgrace because she was always in a hurry, and consequently things were only half done; quick of apprehension, Kate expected to grasp at an accomplishmeat whilst others were only thinking about it, to master the difficulties of a language in a few lessons, to play a piece of music through without a mistake, whilst other girls, who had given treble thought it was eving to their want of fervor that the time to the accomplishment in question, were reading it, thus occasioning endless trouble to the gentle nuns who directed her studies, and every occupation of the day.

Catherine was now twenty four years old, the mistress of her little house, with one tiny servant to direct and govern, a servant who had not numbered more than fifteen years, and consequently was able to do little more than save the delicate bands of her mistress from the performance of the coarser portions of the household work.

Kate knew what it was to do even the rough dirty work, though not one ever saw her with dirty hands or a soiled dress; not a bit of itshe was quite one of the go a-head sort, was our friend Kate; and when she had dismissed, as she not unfrequently did, 'her help,' for she could not term her a servant, she would rise at six will, that precious will so hard to renounce, so o'clock, clean and sweep and dust the house the neighborhood by ten o'clock in the morning. Numerous were the squabbles which used to take place between Miss Leslie and her helps on the score of their being, as she used to express it, 'so terribly slow,' that, but for her ill health herself.

She was scrupulous as to this point of cleanliness; could see dirt and neglect, it will be readily conceived, 'her help' either could not or complishing what might with ease have been done in two, and only did it by balves after all; ed girls-they would find idleness rather tire- cere friend, some to deal with than activity.

Catherine Leslie, however, erred; if, indeed, she did err on the right side; it was certainly no hopes of seeing you soon; for who knows, per- small but pretty garden surrounds the house, fault of hers if the girls with whom she was plagued, instead of being trained up for domestic service as neat, cleanly, active domestic servants, left her not a whit better than when they Novitiate of Namur. Well time will show .the word.

It therefore, as we have already said, did not | perhaps Marion's will be one of these. at all suit her basty notions to receive a letter from a friend and allow four or five days to pass over without answering it; but as Herbert had perusing its contents, she finds that Catheexpressly forbidden her to do so, there was no help but to submit.

She was, however, but little prepared for the announcement made by Herbert the following

'Catherine,' he said, 'I can only be absent for a fortnight at the longest; can you make arrangements to enable you to be absent so long from home? if so, come with me to Preston; upon her with me.'

Of course, such an arrangement was exactly what Kate liked. So promising 'ber belp' a new frock if she attended carefully to her mother in her absence, and mentally resolving to dismiss her on her return home, should she find that with right good will; and on the following Monday morning, they accordingly left the station at Euston Square, having taken their places by second class for Newton Junction.

CHAPTER V .-- A FEW USEFUL HINTS FROM THE CONVENT OF NOTRE DAME-PAPA IS OUTWITTED.

'A letter from Canley,' exclaimed Marion ing of the kind old friend who was Sister Supe whilst Lilian exclaimed-

then I will read my own.'

Kate Leslie agreed to let her faiend's letter re- But let me begin,' she added, reading her letter

'My Dear Child, - I was very glad to hear from you, and embrace the first opportunity of replying to your letter.

Be certain, my dear Marion, that however painful our trials may be they are all ordained for our good; trust to time, and above all, to prayer, and if the Almighty does indeed call you to serve Him in our holy institute, be persuaded that every obstacle will be removed. And should they continue, take it for granted that God has other designs over you; for most assuredly, my dear child, if He has given you a vocation He will also give you the means of fol-

' Rest content, in the quiet country, Marion, endless reprimands, too, for her undue engerness as long as it is your father's will, you should rewhich ran through, not only her studies, but main there. The quietude and calm of the place in which you live will be excellent aids to that inward spirit of recollection which you would do well to keep up, and which must be yours should you become a Religious.

At the same time that you own your compulsory residence in what you term a small cottage, and the privation of your customary use of an equipage, is perhaps well, as it will inure you to the absence of luxuries, and the discomforts of a humble way of living, (although, indeed, the former be not worth mentioning,) yet still, my child, I can see that you are as yet far from possessing that poverty of spirit without which you never will become a true Religious.

'You tell me, too, that you bitterly feel the humifiations your father has put upon you, by depriving you of the use of these luxuries. Ah, my child, accept of these humiliations; fly not from them when they are placed before you. I do not say seek them, Marion, tor as yet you cannot bear them when they come unsought for, but learn to receive them patiently when they do and her duties as a teacher of German and come; for if humility should be the great oil-painting, she would prefer doing all the work characteristic of every Christian soul, how much more so that of the Religious; for it forms the very basis of the spiritual life. Regard these little trials as mere nothings, or, at the most, as trifling obstacles thrown in your way in order to test the strength of your Vocation.

Write to me again shortly; be faithful in all your devotional practices; and receive the little cross of your residence in the country, instead of arises from the fact that I cannot see you, or couch, from which she rises in the early morn the unamiable wish that the ladies who used to coming to London, thankfully rather than the reprove her at Canley for her undue haste had reverse. We shall meet each other soon, rely but dangerous tete a tetes with Herbert and his their tempers tried as hers was by these wretch- upon it. Believe me, my dear child, your sin- sister.

SISTER ANGELIQUE.

Marion laid down the letter with a deepdrawn sigh. You see this poor young woman still clung marvellously to earth and earthly goods: not much chance, you will say, that she will persevere, it, indeed, she ever enters the came, idle, dirty, and worthless in every sense of | There are many souls which find their salvation amongst the shoals and quicksands of adversity,

Meanwhile Lilian has opened her epistle, and an exclamation of joy escapes her lips, as, on rine and Herbert are now on their way to Pres-

Her sister's pleasure was not very gratifying to Marion. Self-love whispers us that it is hard our grievances made light of. She could not bear the contrast between her sister's spirits and her own depression, so that she sauntered out on the beach, and choosing a secluded spot, sat down to read, and ruminate, and ponder, over to the conclusion she ought to have arrived at long since-namely, that she would follow as faithfully as possible the advice of her friend .--Nothing imparts such a charm to the countenance as the consciousness of a heert at ease with itself. Thus Marion was all smiles and cheerfulness, and her always pretty face prettier than usual on her return to the cottage.

It was surely a fete day for the two sisters .-Mother Angelique's sensible letter, every word full of religion and common sense, had had its effect; and a fervent aspiration had ascended from the depths of her poor proud young heart, so that she felt very resigned and humble, and necessarily very happy.

There was Lilian too, the very picture of Craig, as Benson one morning handed her a note, good temper, looking so charming in her white the superscription of which was in the handwrit- muslin robe, and sky-blue ribbons, with Catherine sitting beside her, and Herbert too, the sight rior of the convent, and she eagerly tore it open, of whom would have raised a tempest in Mr. Craig's heart not very easy to be quelled .-One for me. Benson: Kate has treated me | Marion though she had never seen her so happy shamefully, never answering my letter before; before, yet there was something beneath the know I must say mea culpa, for shame be to with great difficulty I own, for she went on her with which the young ladies had treated berme, how I have fretted and pined because the way very wearily, and though she had put her self." It was not without reluctance, however, that nuns have left a letter seven days unanswered. hand to the plough, she had often turned back; It was part of Mr. Craig's nature to do things-

but poor Lilian had made a retrograde morement; she had learned her first lesson in dereit that morning, and timid of the consequences, should her father know of the visit of Herbert and his sister, had sent the servant with a note to the Misses Elliot, saying that she was going to to be absent from home till evening.

She was enjoying the forbidden fruit; she had not only corresponded with the Leslies, but was positively entertaining them both for the whole

An elegant little dinner was served up for the young ladies and their friends at six o'clock, and they left by the eight o'clock train, Herbert talling the sisters that they should visit them again. on the morrow.

' Are you not afraid, Lilian dear, of Catharme and Herbert coming to see us wishout page s knowledge?' asked Marion, as they sat together in the quiet moon-light.

'Afraid!' replied Imian; 'what should I beafraid of? My father will yield his consent to my marriage with Herbert in the end; and how is he to know that Herbert comes here? Benson . is faithful.'

'True, but there are others at Lytham besides-Benson. I saw what you did not notice; both Martha and Matilda Elliot were on the beach, walking towards the house near to the old sail when Herbert left us at the garden gate; truest . me, Lilian, papa will not be long before be herare. of this visit.

' It by no means follows that the Ellors-saws or noticed them,' replied Lilian; showever, things must take their course; I really feel very indifferent about the matter,'

The following Saturday Mr. Craig came as usual to Lytham, and remained until the Monday morning. A great change had taken place, what could it mean? were his dear girls becoming sensible at last, and about to become docile and tractable after all? they were both happy and full of spirits, complained no more of Lytham being dull, called it a beautiful little place, sand they should be quite happy for three months or longer, should papa wish them to prolong their stay; and when relenting somewhat, he inquired should be send the pheaton down for them, they both replied in the negative, though from very opposite motives,-Marion because she was now thinking only of denying herself the use of former luxuries, whilst Lilian preserved those quit

What can be the meaning of all this?" bec said to himself, as the train steamed out of the station on the following Monday morning. 'Theeconduct is not assumed, the girls are perfectly happy. Well, I suppose it his been always the same since the creation of the world; women are incomprehensible creatures, no doubt about: it. This removal I had destined as a punishment seems positively turned into a pleasure?

The next morning explained the cause of one at least of his daughters having found Lytham suddenly become as pleasaut as it had previously, been the reverse.

He received a letter from Miss Elliot; the: writer declared herself 'shocked beyond corception at the duplicity practised by his daughters towards one of the most indulgent of parents but she was quite sure that Mr. Craig. was more when we think we are harshly dealt by to have at all aware that Mr. Leslie was in the babit of visiting at Lytham; he had been there, to hez: certain knowledge, three or four times at the least ; this sufficiently explained why Litian especially had shown herself so averse to her looking after herself and her sister as the writer had procontents of the letter, till at last she really came mised to do; indeed, she had not been well treated by the studied slights, she might even add, the intentional insults, shown her by both the young ladies, and should not have troubled herself about them or their indecorous conduct. had she not pledged her word to Mr. Craig to take a triendly interest in his daughters, and become as a mother to them both during their absence from home.'

> ' As the case stood,' added the writer, 'she felt too much grieved and offended to call at the cottage again, and would merely say that once on the previous week she had received a note from Lilian, breaking an engagement she badmade with her, assigning some trival and doubtless some untrue motive as the cause, and that inthe evening herself and her sister observed Mr. Leslie and Miss Leslie leave the cottage; and that on two occasions later they knew that the party in question had visited Lilian and Marion in the morning, had remained the whole day, and had been seen to leave Lytham by the 830 train for Preston in the evening.

'The writer now conceived she had done ber but let hear the contents of your epistle, Marion, surface, and she observed her start and look duty, and redeemed the promise she had given by then I will read my own.'

auxious and uneasy when any person approached watching over his daughters, and felt more the garden gate. There was this difference, grieved at the sorrow she inflicted on mentioning. you will find there has been some very good you see, between the sisters - Marion was ad- such a dereliction from duty on their part, reason for Kate's silence, depend on it. You vancing a step or two on the road to virtue, than angry at the systematic impertmence