

table the company is not allowed to the clergy, as it is generally on the Monday and Tuesday, but some of his parishioners or other lay friends are received. Thursday ends the feasting, but the Masses continue all the week, and are always fully attended—thus are their recreations sanctified by religion. The children are taught in the weekly catechism, the meaning of their rejoicing, that they may be early accustomed to make their religion the foundation of their mirth. You would have much enjoyed the Pastor's "story" yesterday, "of the meaning of Kermes;" how a holy man many hundred years ago came among their forefathers when they were all wild men, living in huts, and eating herbs; and how he persuaded them to become christians; but they had no church to hear Mass in, or to pray in. And how they collected materials, and the holy man taught them to build a church: and how glad they were when they had a church: and how the holy man consecrated the church, for he was a Bishop, and how on the day their church was consecrated, they invited all their relations to come and hear the first Mass in their own church. And how as the year came about, they wished to keep up the memory of that happy day, and invited their friends to come again to help them to thank God for his goodness in having sent a missionary to them. And how this day had been kept up ever since, and with the same intention, namely, as a day of thanksgiving for having sent that holy man among them. And how, farther, to keep up the remembrance of this great mercy of God, in sending His saintly servant to them, his statue had been carved in stone, and placed as they saw it over the High Altar. And then he told them to look upon it, and remember how good God had been to them in sending them a missionary to teach their forefathers to be Christians, and in preserving them in the true faith for so many hundred years. And to remember that keeping Kermes was not to visit their grandmothers and aunts, to eat cake and drink coffee alone, but to pray to God earnestly and with all their heart, that He would preserve them in the same faith, and in the same hope, and in the same charity as that holy bishop had taught. And that all the joy and pleasure they had at Kermes, they must offer to God as a thanksgiving, and that all the week when they rose in the morning, and when they went to bed at night, they must add another Lord's Prayer to their devotions, to ask God's blessing to preserve them in the true faith which St. Omer had taught them—sent by God.

Concluded in our next.

From Maxims and Examples of the Saints.

### PERFECTION.

There are two errors which I very commonly find amongst

spiritual persons. One is, that they measure for the most part their devotion by the sensible consolations and satisfactions which they enjoy in the service of God, so that if at any time they happen to fall in the service, forthwith they imagine that they have lost all their devotion. No, this is nothing more than a sensible devotion. True and substantial devotion consisteth not in these things, but in having a will as duty moved, active, ready, and constantly determined, without concern or change, not to offend Almighty God, and to accomplish all that which belongeth to his service. The other mistake is, that if ever they happen to perform any action with repugnance, and with a natural feeling of disgust, they straightway conclude that they have no merit in it, although at that very moment their merit is considerably greater than at other times: so much so that a very ounce (so to speak) of good works, performed with the illumination of the mind at a moment of apparent darkness, which he derives not only no pleasure but even disgust from the action, is of more weight than a hundred pounds done with great ease and internal delight: and for this reason, because in the former case the action is performed with a stronger and a purer motive of love. Let us remember, then, however great may be our natural dryness and apparent feeling of disgust for what is good, we ought never to lose courage, but to follow the beaten track, just as travellers do when they hear the barking of dogs.—S. FRANCIS OF SALAZAR.

A pious matron lady desired on a certain occasion to know who were the saints most acceptable to our Lord. Jesus Christ favoured her with the following vision: One morning as she was hearing mass, after the elevation, she beheld Jesus in the form of a most lovely child standing upon the altar, when all at once he came down upon the pavement, where there were kneeling three devout nuns: he took one of them by the hand, and caressed her most affectionately; then he went to the next, and lifting up the veil from before her face, gave her a blow, going away from her as if he was angry; and finding her grieved and afflicted, he endeavoured to console her with a thousand sweet accents of love. At last he came to the third, and looking at her very disdainfully, seizing her by the arm he drove her with blows from the altar; whilst she meanwhile endured it all with great peace, humbling herself, and blessing our Lord. Upon this, Jesus returned to the devout lady before named, and said to her, Know, daughter, that the first of these nuns is very weak in the spiritual life, and very changeable; and therefore, to confirm her in the good way, I show myself all kindness and affection towards her, otherwise she would leave it. The second is stronger, and more perfect, therefore it is necessary for her only now and then to feel an internal sweetness of spirit: but the third is so firm, and so well grounded in my service, that, come what will to her, she will never allow herself to be distracted from it: and this is my best beloved of the three.

The glorious S. Philip Neri, in order to deliver his penitents from the first of these mistakes, used to say to them, that in the spiritual life there are three degrees. The first may be called the animal life; and belongs to those who follow the impulse of sensible devotion, which Almighty God is wont to bestow upon beginners, to the end that being induced by this feeling of devotion, (as animals are moved at the sight of a bait,) they may begin