

ear, overflowing with sympathy with the woes and wants of His children who so thoughtlessly brush past His dwelling throughout the livelong day. Backwards and forwards go the steps of many feet, the footfalls echoing in the silent, deserted church — the steps of men and of women of all ages and conditions, whose hearts are so full of their own thoughts, so busy in their own natural activity, so self-absorbed, that they never stay to listen for the counsel and help which would be theirs were they to lay their burden of human anxiety down before the Tabernacle ! And so Jesus remains silent, because there are none to listen to His Voice !

There are, alas ! churches where He is never visited, where the neighbours of His dwelling are so evil-disposed that from early morning until night He must be guarded against them by closed doors and barred gates, or else where those who are not actually hostile to Him, are too cold and indifferent to think of Him or to form a Guard of honour around Him. A key turns in the rusty lock of one of these churches. Is it a prayerful soul coming to bear her Lord company ? No ! it is a party of sightseers come to visit the wonders of carving, painting, glass or stone which the edifice contains. The aisles echo with their noisy tread ; their curious eyes peer into every corner ; sketch-books are brought out and here and there an architectural curiosity is noted down ; holy pictures and statues are commented on freely, often irreverently, whilst not a look, not a thought is given to the Silent Owner of the building with which they are making free, unless it be in the shape of a coarse jest, or rude, insulting gibe. And then the noisy troop withdraws, the key grates anew in the lock and Jesus is again alone. Do faithful souls come later to make reparation to their Lord for this profanation of His solitude, by a few moments, at least, of loving adoration ? No ! devotion to the Blessed Sacrament is cold, is almost unknown in these places. The Divine Occupant of the Church is so silent, so unobtrusive that He is forgotten, and those who might do so, fail to remind His thoughtless children that He is living by their side.

— From " Emmanuel."