

what part of the service he is, even to the shortest sentence, and can immediately join him. We have now arrived at the beginning of the most solemn part of the Mass, and I fear my letter would be too long were I to go through all its solemn circumstances now; I will, therefore, defer it to my next. Tell Harry our children are being prepared for their first communion, and I will write a letter to him, and tell him all about it. It is one of our most beautiful days, the first communion of the children.

To be continued.

From Maxims and Examples of the Saints.

### PERFECTION.

Remember, that perfection is not acquired by holding one's hands crossed before one: but it is necessary to labour in good earnest to overcome ones self, and to bring oneself to live not according to one's inclinations and passions, but according to reason, and according to rule and obedience. It is a hard matter so to do, there is no denying it, but it is necessary: nevertheless with constant practice it becomes both easy and full of sweetness.—S. FRANCIS OF SALES.

Plutarch relates of Lyncurgus, that having taken two puppies, which both had the same father, he brought one of them up in a kitchen, and the other in the chase; and when they were grown large dogs, one day as he was about to harangue the people, he brought them both into the forum, where he threw down upon the ground some bones, and at the same time let loose a hare; whereupon the first dog began immediately to gnaw the bones, whilst the other pursued the hare. Upon this Lyncurgus, having commanded silence, and having turned towards the people, spoke as follows: "See you now," said he, "both these two dogs are of the same breed, and yet they are not both brought up to do the same thing, but each one does that to which he has been accustomed. So true it is, that habit enables us to surmount even the most violent inclinations of nature itself." We read of S. Ignatius of Loyola, that by the continual opposition which he had offered to himself in his mortifications and in his adversities which he had to suffer, he had come to such a point, that he appeared no longer to have any natural inclinations. The same also has been seen in many other servants of God.

All the science of the saints may be reduced to two grand points: to do, and to suffer; and the man who hath accomplished these two things the best, is he who hath attained the highest degree of sanctity.—S. FRANCIS OF SALES.

He who readeth the lives of the Holy Fathers Ambrose, Basil, Jerome, Chrysostome, Dominick, Vincent of Paul, and so many other great saints, will not wonder that they became so eminent for their sanctity, when he considereth the innumerable good works which they performed, and the great sufferings which they underwent. This, as

we read in the lives of the Holy Fathers, was the art to which S. Dorotheus had recourse, in order to sanctify his disciple Dositheus, by exercising him continually and above all in things most contrary to his inclinations: so that if he saw him have in his hands any thing well made, even though it were necessary for his wants, such as knives, books, and such like things, he would take them from him: and if he asked him a question concerning even good things, he would send him away without ever answering him a word; and thus in all the desires, which he had, he sought to mortify him; whilst he on his part promptly obeyed in every thing, and suffered all without reply or complaint, and by these means, during the short space of five years, he arrived at a very high degree of perfection and sanctity.

I wish I could persuade spiritual persons that the way to perfection does not consist in so many different practices: nor in thinking much: but in denying ourselves on every occasion, and in giving ourselves up to suffer all things for the love of Christ; if they fail in the performance of this exercise, every other method of walking in the spiritual life is but standing still and mere trifling, without any profit, even though they had the gift of the highest contemplation and the most intimate communication with God.—S. JOHN OF THE CROSS.

Cassian relates of the holy Abbot Paphnutius, that the road by which he arrived at so high a degree of sanctity, was by the continual mortification of all his desires, and that by these means he extinguished in himself all vices, and perfected himself in all virtues. Father Balthazar Alvarez used continually to afflict himself, and deny himself in every thing which he felt inclined to want, not only in great things, but even in little things; and thus it was that he arrived at a high degree of perfection.

The blessed Angela of Fuligno being one day in an ecstasy, beheld our Lord caressing some of his servants, but some more, and some less; and being desirous to know the reason, she ventured to ask our Lord, who replied to her thus: "I call all to me, but all are not willing to come, because the path is strewn with thorns; but as for those who come, I invite all to eat of my dish and to drink of my cup: but because my meats are ungrateful to the natural taste of man, and my chalice is full of bitterness, all are not pleased to satiate themselves with those toils on which I sustained myself in the world. But those who are most constant in imitating my sufferings, are they who are certainly most dear to me, and my special favourites." Upon hearing this, the blessed Angela was filled with such a desire to suffer and deny herself in all things, that, when she afterwards sustained much opposition from her religious, and her parents, she derived such consolation from it, as a worldly person would have received from a delight most adapted to his own inclination and profit.