

# NEW DOMINION MONTHLY.

JUNE, 1873.

## MANUSCRIPT OF FATHER AMBROSE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN.\*

“Thy Word is Truth.”—St. John xvii, 17th verse.

This account was written in the Cloister of Feldpach, the year of our Lord 1175, by me, Brother Ambrose, of the holy Order of Benedictines, Chaplain in Ordinary to the noble Count de Ferette, in Alsace.

In the year of grace 1140, Frederick, 1st Count of Ferette, his wife Stephania, and his son Louis, founded the Cloister of Feldpach, dedicating it to the glory of God. They authorized the worthy Abbot of Cluny to establish in it some monks of the order of St. Benoist, who might there serve God in silence and solitude, and work for the advancement of His glory.

From the bosom of this cloister I was called later on, notwithstanding my unworthiness, to fulfil the functions of chaplain at the castle of Ferette. While holding this important post, I can conscientiously affirm that I have committed no act (knowingly at least) of which I cannot render an account before God and man. And yet, by reason of sin and infirmity within me, I must acknowledge, before that God who tries the heart and the reins, that during my stay in the castle of Ferette I have been too often guilty of idle words, uncharitable judgments, and fits of anger. May the Lord in His mercy pardon my offences for the love of his Son Jesus Christ, and may they be blotted out of the book of His remembrance!

After this sincere and humble confession

of my sins, I wish, in obedience to the desire expressed by our worthy prior, to relate how and why I was dismissed from my office as chaplain at the castle. To this end, calumnious reports having been spread by a rival house against the purity of our holy Order, I intend to deposit this writing in the archives of our monastery, that it may bear witness after my death, so that no one may even suspect me and my brethren of having, in any degree, swerved from the faith which apostles and martyrs have sealed with their blood.

As to the way in which I fulfilled my duties as chaplain during the lifetime of the worthy Count Frederick, I may say I exercised conscientiously to the best of my humble power, my authority as spiritual adviser to this noble family.

The old Count was a valiant nobleman, who ruled his house as he did his regiment in time of war; he had entrusted me with the education of his young son, Louis, the heir apparent. Now the young Count had not in him a spark of the energy and firm will of his father, nor a trace of the harsh, unyielding spirit of his mother. He liked wielding the pen rather than the sword, and instead of delighting in manly sports, would spend days in study, bending over some abstruse works. All this sorely displeased the old Count, and he would often say to me: “Shake that boy for me, Father Ambrose, and do not let him be a girl or a monk, for he is my only son, and he

\* Translated from the French by L. E. K