

episcopal authorities and the communes. For, nearly all the selections, freely made by the electors, are worthy of being ratified, and no manœuvres or menaces are introduced into the elections.

The parishes are served by double the number of priests that they possess in France, but still the secular clergy, notwithstanding the devotion of which they give proof, are not numerous enough to satisfy the religious wants of these pious people; for, besides the churches which are to be found in each village, there are scattered over the country chapels erected by ancient families in expiation of their sins or as souvenirs of their deceased ancestors; whilst many chapels are also raised up by the zeal of the inhabitants. These chapels are to be found in the most elevated parts of the country, even at the height of fifteen hundred metres, in places whither the peasants send their flocks during the summer season. Here the religious orders find a field for their zeal, their spirit of sacrifice, and their practical intelligence. I have never better understood their zeal than when I met the Capuchins, with their poor costumes, braving the rigors of the season, and going to serve the most distant chapels, winning for themselves the utmost popularity and affection.

Each month, two Fathers preach a sermon in a village, and nearly all the population approach the holy table. Practical and able speakers, the Fathers preach sermons which are greatly liked, and which draw large crowds. Like the religious of the middle ages, if the church is too small to hold the mass of the faithful, they preach in the open air.

I know no finer spectacle than that of this people practicing their duties, and preserving the faith with the same fervor as their fathers centuries ago possessed; and when, accustomed to the French churches of certain regions, which are deserted by men, I saw a parish church filled with the male population, I could not prevent myself from feeling a lively emotion. Faithful to the prescriptions of the Church, the peasants of this country do not confine themselves to a weekly attendance at the religious ceremonies. They do

not fail each day to pray in the church, and they have preserved for several centuries the touching custom of repeating at their second meal a "Pater" and "Ave," and a prayer for friends and enemies, as well as for the souls in purgatory. On the walls of the houses are to be found pictures of our Lord and the Blessed Virgin, together with that of the saints particularly venerated by the family or the village. Even the inns admit these religious prints, and I have not found one of these inns in which the principal room was not ornamented with a crucifix. Finally, at the door of the houses inhabited by the old peasant families there is usually a holy water font, and before the inmates retire, the priest, who visits them, gives them his blessing. The clergy are everywhere received with open arms, and no inhabitant, not even strangers, who perhaps nourish at the bottom of their hearts very little love for priests, will dare to utter a disrespectful word towards them. When a priest travels through the country, the little children run before him and catch his hand. This is the touching way in which they testify their respect.

Besides the Capuchins, are to be found in the canton of Schweitz the Benedictines, owners of the splendid Convent of Einsiedeln, the most frequent resort in Europe of pilgrims. Protector of the whole country, which it has filled with benefits, the convent is at once a house of instruction and a place where deep and learned studies are carried on. The college has a high renown for the ability with which the students are taught. It is necessary to inscribe one's name on the books several months in advance to obtain admission, so great is the number seeking for entrance.

The divine precept which ordains the sanctification of the Sunday is fully obeyed; on that day all work ceases. Never does a sick person die without the consolations of religion. And this people, who preserve the Catholic faith untarnished, possess a rich country. All the inhabitants know how to read and write, and the press counts many organs. Strangers arrive there who, to a certain extent, bring about the creation of a class generally disposed to become the instrument of social disorganization;