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THE CROSS.



NEW

SERIES.

VOL. I.

No. 41.

and forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom the world is Crucified to me, and I to the world.—St. Paul, Gal. vi. 14.

HALIFAX, OCTOBER 16, 1815.

CALENDAR.

- Dec. 19—Sunday 23 after Pentecost and 4th Sunday of October—
Feast of the Purity of the B. V. Mary.
20—Monday—St John Cantius, Confessor.
21—Tuesday—St Peter of Alcantara, Confessor.
22—Wednesday—St Herminogildus, King and Martyr.
23—Thursday—Feast of the Most Holy Redeemer, Jesus
Christ.
24—Friday—St Raphael, Archangel.
25—Saturday—St Boniface I, Pope and Confessor.

VISITATION AT WINDSOR.

On Wednesday and Thursday of the last week, a Visitation was held by the Bishop, at Windsor. The holy Sacrament of Confirmation was administered to 73 persons, 24 of whom were converts to the Catholic Faith. Dr. Walsh preached after his Mass on Wednesday morning, and exhorted those who were about to be confirmed. He was assisted by the Rev. Mr. Byrne, who has been for the last six years the respected Pastor of the Windsor District, and who, we understand, is now promoted to the important mission of Clare.

On Wednesday evening the absolution of the dead was pronounced in the Cemetery adjoining the handsome little Church at Windsor, and Benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament was given by the Bishop, who delivered a discourse on the Sacrifice of the Mass. The following day Mass *pro oram Episcopo* was celebrated by Rev. Mr.

Byrne, and, as many Catholics of the surrounding neighbourhood were present, who could not attend on the preceding day, some instructions were again delivered by the Bishop. The Church was in the neatest order, and reflects much credit upon the pastor and the people. It is situated in a very agreeable part of the town, and if surmounted by an appropriate spire, would form one of the most picturesque objects even in the beautiful neighbourhood of Windsor.

The Rev. Mr. Kennedy has lately returned to Dartmouth, after a missionary tour through the Eastern parts of his extensive district. He visited the Catholics of Ship Harbour, Pope's Harbour, Sheet Harbour, Salmon River, Newdiquoddy, &c, offered the Holy Sacrifice, administered the Sacraments, and delivered suitable exhortations. About 300 persons availed themselves of this opportunity, to approach the tribunal of Penance, 60 received the Holy Communion, and 32 were baptized, amongst whom were two converts.

CATECHISTICAL SOCIETY.

At the last meeting of this Society the following members kindly volunteered their services as Teachers, both at the Cathedral and St. Patrick's Church, for three months from the 28th of September.

AT ST. MARY'S

Miss Jane Tobin	Mr. Joseph Quinan
" Ellen Tobin	" Patrick Walsh
Mrs. — Boyle	" Peter Bulger
" Thomas Tobin	" David O'Connor
Miss Mary Cragg	" James Fitzgerald
" Frances Foley	" Thomas Magee
" Frances Power	" James Rogers
" Margaret Power	" John Ryan
" Lydia Desfeytas	" William Compton
" Johana Roach	" William Walsh
" Ellen Hackett	" James Payne
" Margaret Connor	" David White
" Mary Cronan	" Thomas Finn
" Elizabeth O'Brien	" Peter Nolan
" Ann Barber	" Thomas Brown
" Sarah Mooney	" Michael Ryan
" Mary Kelly	" Patrick Gahan
" Mary Sullivan	" Edward Gaul
" Ellen Gleeson	" Edward Daly, junr.
" Hannah Laughnan	" Owen Fitzgerald
" Mary O'Neil	" Edward Barber
" Catherine Holden	" Mortimer Dwver
" Catherine Desfeytas	" John Compton, junr.
Mrs. — Hickey	" John Grant
	" John Stuart

FOR ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH, NORTH END.

Miss Barron	Mr. John Barron
" Davison	" Michael Ellis
" Lunn	" George Butler
" McDermott	" William Cronan
" McCarthy	" James Whelan
" Hefernan	" John Mooney
" Flattery	" James Connolly
" Conway	" Timothy Lenahan
" Brennan	" Daniel Creamer
" Sutton	" Thomas Tyson
" Keily	" Michael Gorman
" Keating	" Timothy Lenahan, jr
" Connolly	" Charles Riley
" Lenahan	" John Flinn
Mrs. Clark	

Address of the Catholics of Windsor,
TO
THE REV. LAWRENCE BYRNE.

Reverend and beloved Sir,

WE, the Catholics of Windsor, feel assured that on the public bereavement now too rapidly approaching, you can need no declaration of what sentiments are ours, nor is it from a consideration of mere external propriety we deem it necessary to speak with sorrow of your intended departure from us. It sounds an echo of melancholy and regret from end to end of your mission, your parting hour must bring the consciousness of more than we can describe. Our perfect safety under your guidance, the goodness of a benefactor, the solicitude of a father, is not without regret that we cannot express, and when we remember however flowing was the cup of our hope, in your expected stay

among us, resignation to the will of Omnipotence, is all that can give soothing to the contrast of pain we must now feel. Now the heart's emotions must be left to express in silence a privation to which, from the insufficiency of words, we cannot give utterance. We feel especially impelled to manifest, as well as the inadequacy of language will admit, our high appreciation of your invaluable and gratuitous services, and our sense of the great obligations which such services impose, in testifying what a response your eloquence could elicit, and what a spirit your ardour could infuse. We feel how unneeded is the eulogy of words, when we see the railing of your Altar perpetually crowded by the fruits of your labour, partaking of the bread which strengthens to eternal preservation.

Reverend Sir, your arrival here among us, seven years ago, was to us glad tidings of great joy. From that period our respect, love, and esteem, increased beyond comprehension. We would now use every means that our sagacity could suggest to keep your Reverence to be our spiritual guide in our exile in this valley of tears. If your presence among us has been characterized by the most eminent usefulness, our grief at your departure receives, from those circumstances, a force which the powerlessness of expression must leave undescribed. We relinquish the hopes of your future protection, humbly submitting to your own instruction, which taught us that every soul was subject to higher power, and whoever resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of the Most High.

Reverend and beloved Sir, it remains for us only to join heart and hand in thanksgiving for the services so inestimable to which we have been favoured so long, and in fervent supplication, that those graces and gifts which you have been so effectually and signally employed, here may be rendered equally beneficial in Sissaloo. We trust, in leaving us, that your commanding abilities will find a kindred and more extensive usefulness.

In conclusion we beg to add our best wishes for your future happiness and prosperity.

With the highest respect, Rev. Sir,

Your most obedient, humble, and attached servants,
At the request of the Windsor Catholics,

JOHN JORDIN,
OWEN FLINN,
MICHAEL DALY.

REPLY:

Gentlemen and beloved brethren,

Your very kind address, I assure you, fills my mind with a new humble opinion of my poor merits, than I had ever before conceived—not that I believe you capable of wilful flattery, but that I feel my humble services have not been so eminently useful as described by you. I would rather ascribe your overrated station to the warm-hearted devotion which the true Irishman ever bears to the pastor whom he loves, and who, he knows, loves him, and is ever ready to sacrifice his temporal interests, and even his very life, if necessary, for the salvation of his immortal soul. It has been, it is true, my constant and ardent desire to merit the appellation of a good pastor, and protector, and if in anywise I have failed in having just claims to the desirable character, I trust my failure is more to be attributed to my want of health than to my remissness.

I trust, I may admit, without egotism, that your allusion to zeal is just, for I may fearlessly assert that I have always exercised all the powers of my feeble talents to gather from among the sparks that were almost extinct, at my arrival here, and to put to them suitable fuel, that they might burst forth into a brilliant light whereby our neighbours might see the beauties of our religion in their true colours, and that they might not any longer

be able to look on it as false or idolatrous. In this I have succeeded to a great extent. Your allusion to my desire to protect you is, I believe, just in like manner, for I have always fearlessly put myself as your sentinel at the opening of every avenue that could lead the enemy to the invasion of your rights, and endeavoured to obstruct all the efforts of your spiritual and temporal enemies. In this also have I been successful on many occasions, But for whatever I may have effected in the above ways, I claim neither praise nor gratitude, because I consider it a sacred duty which the divine law imposes upon every pastor of the true religion.

Your kind and warm approbation of my humble services I will never forget. It shall stimulate me to a still greater exertion of my zeal to promote the interests, spiritual and temporal, of those over whom it is the will of Providence to place me, that I may deserve their approbation. also, which is of itself an ample reward.

Gentlemen, wishing, from my heart, that my successor may have better claims on your approbation, wishing you peace, union, prosperity, brotherly love, and every blessing your hearts can desire here and hereafter, and returning you my most sincere thanks for your kind felings towards me and your warm approbation of my humble merits,

I remain your devoted friend and humble servant,

L. BYRNE.

LITERATURE.

LETTERS FROM BELGIUM.

Concluded.

LETTER V.

Belgium, _____, 1842.

Since writing the above, a week has passed; my letter is awaiting an opportunity of being sent to England. We are all quite gay with the numerous fetes which are around us. This week seventeen parishes in the neighbourhood of ours are holding their Kermes. Every field and lane is enlivened by the merry chat of the peasants passing on their way, to keep holiday with their relatives or friends, in one or other parish. Whole families are trooping along together. The house is locked up, and old and young set forth. Some, who are too young, or too old, or too weak to walk, go on a donkey, with its broad sheepskin saddle, large enough to carry two or three at once. Then the farmers go in majestic style—seated in their own waggons with the *Boorenas* (farmers' wives) by their side, under their own white awning, and looking the very model of independence and comfort; that is to say, looking exactly like Belgian farmers, a race of men whom princes may envy. White petticoats and stockings peep from the carefully pinned-up gown of the travelling females. Such luxuries, only exhibited on very great occasions, add very much to the holiday feeling one has about one at Kermes. Amongst the many, it is this week the fete of a parish near ours, which is large enough to rank almost as a town. Our own dear, quiet, village produces so much to

interest and amuse us in religion, that we seldom need go any where to seek recreation; but yesterday I felt a wish to be present at some of the many Masses at A—, and after our own service was over, we walked over there. We arrived about half-past nine, and found the whole place in movement. I greatly enjoyed seeing the stalls and shops, and the children amusing themselves just as our English children used to do at their rustic fairs. We met, I really think, a third part of our own parishioners, who were returning from earlier Masses; from some of these we learned that our Mass was just beginning, for which, therefore, we should be rather late, but that there were still others to follow. We hastened on, and found our own Cure saying a high Mass, assisted by a deacon who was also our neighbour. The priests go about to assist each other on these festival days. A stranger had said Mass in our parish yesterday, for instance; that is, a friend of the Cure's and of ours; and our Cure had come over to A—, to celebrate a Mass for the Cure of A—. The Church was much too full for us to go near the altar. But I have told you we needed not hear a word to enable us to join immediately in the Mass. We found it was the time of the *Credo*. It was beautiful to enter amongst the devout multitude, and to feel that their innocent festivities were thus based upon, and mixed up with their religion. So many pretty little children were around us, knowing exactly when to kneel and when to stand up, and behaving so properly, and praying so like little angels, with no one apparently belonging to them present to guide them. I said to myself, Ah! these are the fruits of your Pastor's catechisings, and of his ever-vigilant care of you. Kind Jesus! the Pastor of pastors, who hast appointed these good shepherds to watch over thy flocks. How many of these little ones are left to perish in protestant lands, where no system of instruction is enforced and binding on every priest.

This Mass ended, the Church was soon nearly cleared, most persons present having probably to return home to allow other members of their several families to come in to the next Mass, which we found was immediately to follow, as the candles on the High Altar remained burning. Our candles have many significant uses.

This Mass was accompanied with chanting the *Matins* and *Lauds*, and the Church again filled. We approached the altar, and found every thing very handsomely arranged. The parish is a rich one, and nothing is spared by the inhabitants for the adorning and enriching the house of God. The Cure of the parish led the choir with his fine impressive voice. He had still his Mass to celebrate, which I longed to stay to hear, as it would be a very grand one, perhaps with several

Priests ; but the Church became very hot, having been successively filled from the early morning, and I began to feel it necessary to leave it. We met again some of our own fellow parishioners, entering as we left, with another set of worshippers. I envied them while going in to assist at Mass, as I dare say they pitied me because I was going out ; for there is nothing they so lament over as being deprived of hearing Mass. Our walk home was a rich treat, it being one of those fine September days, which are perfect as to weather. And the deep shadows fell among the rich foliage of the still green trees, and almost made one forget there was no longer Belgian corn to look upon in the desolate fields. Again we met troops of visiting grandmothers, and grandfathers, and aunts, and cousins, for all of whom a festival dinner was waiting, punctually as the clock struck twelve ; all but for the Cure, his arduous duties to-day would detain him far beyond that hour, that is, far into the next ; but his recreation was prepared for him also. We met many Priests, who were congregating from other parishes, some far distant, to partake of his hospitality. Many of these were our friends, at whose tables we visit. Our walk was enlivened by a little chat with each. A friendly invitation, perhaps, or a little mirth at having seen a carriage pass containing some eight or ten of their brother clergy, who they told us were professors and other Priests from a college in a town seven miles off, where one of the priests of A—— had been professor, and this was an annual visit they paid him at the Kermes. We congratulated them on the merry dinner party they were likely to have, as professors from colleges are proverbial for their cheerfulness. Often the benedicted clergy pretend to envy them, because they have not the care of a parish resting upon them. Then we met one who had just returned from a visit to England, who answered some very ignorant questions I put to him, respecting the changes which have taken place in London since I left England. Amongst others, the railroads, which he tells me are over the houses, and which I, in beautiful simplicity, was quite ignorant of ; having been so absorbed in my interesting religion in this secluded spot, that I had never once before inquired any thing about London railroads. As we approached home, every thing became quiet ; our fete being over, as I have told you, we have sobered down into our daily duties, except these occasional visitings to other parishes. Our own dinner, deferred to the late hour of half-past twelve, was not the less acceptable, nor our excellent coffee after it, which was not unaccompanied by Kermes cake either, as we had a kind present from a farmer's wife in the next parish, whose good things we frequently share, in true Flemish hospitality and christian kindness. The Church encourages all this social feeling, and teaches us union in seasons of cheerfulness, and in seasons of deep devotion ; as I hope I shall have the pleasure of showing you, in some future details of the occupations of our holy, happy, community.

After showing you how much real enjoyment our clergy have provided for them, in the encouragement the church gives to friendship and social intercourse, I ought also to tell you, occasionally, of the means she employs to keep alive among them the spirit of deep and fervent devotion ; among which are their seasons of spiritual retreat. These are just over, the last having been from Sunday the 11th of September to the following Friday. During every summer the bishops of each diocese arrange a certain number of these retreats. They are held in a college, generally, during the vacation. And the choice is given to each priest as to which he may find it most suitable to be present at. Having fixed on one, he sends notice of that he has chosen, and on the day appointed they assemble. The bishop appoints one or more talented and eminently pious men, who have been educated and trained to the work, to lead their devotions and preach to them.

These seasons being expressly dedicated to the care of the soul, every worldly occupation and feeling are laid aside for the time, and they enter the college with the purpose of giving themselves up, for those days, entirely to God. For this they prepare their whole heart, and mind, and being. In the last retreat which was held in a town near us, fifty clergymen were assembled, from the surrounding parishes, some rectors, some curates. The venerable dean of the town was appointed principal, this giving him power to be consulted, or applied to, on any needful occasion ; and two missionaries were sent by the bishop. Plain wholesome food is provided by the college, for which each pays his share. No luxury is allowed, nor even wine. And during the repast the Holy Scripture is read, or A. Kempis's Imitation of the Life of Christ, no conversation being allowed. At their entrance, which is on the Sunday evening, each has a printed paper given to him, which instructs him of the allotment of the hours of every day. I have a copy of one of these which I will explain to you.

At five in the morning they rise, when half an hour is given to morning private prayer. At half-past five they go into the chapel of the college, the missionary priest goes into the pulpit, and gives a sort of exhortation, or, as it is generally called, a "Meditation," for half or three quarters of an hour, which is intended to lead them to meditate for themselves. Great order is observed in the choice of the missionary's subjects. The first three days being given to the contemplation of the deep subjects of Death, Judgment, Heaven,

and Hell. The sinner is brought to bewail the heinousness of sin, and his mind awakened to compunction and penitence. The shortness of time and the value of eternity are set before them. His nearest interests are touched to the quick.— How is he living as a priest dedicated to God? Is God really the object and end of all his works and thoughts? Or is he going through his sacred daily duties mechanically? Is he striving to live quite above the world, not the great world with its vanities and follies, from these he is totally excluded as a true priest, but above the little world within him. His own temper, his negligence of his own soul while he is occupied in watching over the souls of others? Is he showing forth a pattern of meekness and gentleness, or is he as irritable as other men under the trials and vexations of life? Does he give way to pride, and grudge to see others more honoured and advanced than himself? Can he bear wrong and suffer wrong, and harbour no feelings of revenge? Can he forgive as he prays to be forgiven? He is obliged to be outwardly conformable to all his holy mother the church requires of him; but is he holy in thought, and fervently religious in feeling? &c. &c. And deeper and more stirring feelings are touched as the search of heart goes on; for a priest has duties to perform, so solemn and important, as none can judge of who are not Roman Catholics themselves? To all these he is aroused and exhorted before God, these meditations being most earnest, and strong, and awakening. I only just give you these few faint ideas of them, that you may try to imagine something about them. When the missionary thinks he has sufficiently excited and guided to meditation, he ceases to speak, and the remainder of the hour is spent in silence, each being thus left to meditate for himself, and apply what has been said; at half-past six a quarter of an hour is devoted to examination of conscience, as to what profit has been derived from the meditation, and to the noting down any thing it may be wished to remember. This ended, one quarter of an hour is free for each to spend in any devotion he pleases. This is called "free time;" at seven Mass is said, at which all are present. No priest says his own Mass during the retreat, unless any special reason oblige him; at half-past seven they breakfast together, during which time strict silence is observed, and one reads aloud a portion of the "Imitation of the Life of Christ."

At a quarter-past eight they say their office in choir. The office is something like your service of the prayer-book, which pious families in England read daily, with the lessons for the day. A priest's office is divided so as to give a portion to every third hour. But they are not obliged to say each portion alone, they may say two or more por-

tions together as suits them. They, therefore, at this time, a quarter-past eight, say two portions called "Prime and Tierce." Then some spiritual book is read; and at ten the Missionary again preaches, or meditates as before, carrying on his subject. At a quarter-past eleven they recite two more portions of their office, called "Sexte and None;" after which a quarter of an hour free time, and then a strict examination of conscience.

At twelve they dine; after which they may converse together, and walk in the College gardens. At two they pray in unison for half an hour, one leading them. They then recite two more portions of their office, called "Vespers and Complin," and have a quarter of an hour free time. At three the Missionary gives another sermon called a conference, which with its examination occupies them till a quarter past four, when they recite the remaining two portions of their office called Matins and Lauds, which is said by anticipation, as it is the next morning's service. At half-past five they have a fourth meditation, which again occupies them one hour and a quarter. At a quarter before seven they go into the chapel to adore Christ in the Holy Sacrament.

At seven they take their evening refreshment, which is accompanied with reading as at dinner, and after this they have the recreation of conversation. At half-past eight evening prayers with examination of conscience; and the subject of the morning's meditation is given out, which they note down, in order to prepare for it in private. They then sing a hymn, and at nine retire to their sleeping rooms. The first three days having been given to the awakening the conscience, and exciting to penitence, they all confess, a sacrament which I propose explaining to you in my next letter, previous to my telling you about the Mass as a sacrament, and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. On the Thursday they all approach this most holy sacrament, and receive it at the hands of him who has been appointed their principal. This day and the remaining Friday are days of holy joy, the subject of their meditation being the return of the Prodigal son; and the love and mercy of God in receiving penitent sinners through Christ are set before them. The life of Christ is now proposed for their imitation, and forms the base of the Missionary's meditations.

On the Friday afternoon they return home, strengthened and refreshed for their sacred duties, and comforted and animated. The order they learn in these holy retreats is brought out into their daily life, and every day is a fainter picture, but still a copy of these holy days. In addition to the great duties they are obliged daily to perform, they love to add many of the profitable exercises they have practised in their retreat. The

daily meditation, the punctual reading some spiritual book, the examination of conscience, and fervent, private prayer, become habitual, and almost essential to their mind, as is their daily food to the body. They teach us, too, something of the same order in the regulation of our time; and we are trained also to prayer, and taught how to pray, and to meditate, and taught how to meditate; and we are exhorted to daily serious reading, as far as our circumstances allow. And the evening examination of conscience none may omit. We are taught in our morning meditation to propose some virtue to practise, a sin, or fault, or bad habit to avoid during the day, and to persevere on this one point till it be conquered. We are taught to pause at noon, and inquire if we are remembering what we had proposed to ourselves in the morning, and to pray, if only for two minutes, for grace to persevere. We are taught to note down over night a subject for the morning's meditation; so that when we come to put ourselves in the presence of God to meditate, we may be prepared in heart. Our little children in their weekly catechism have a miniature plan traced out for them from the same model, and frequently an extra catechism is held for the more advanced to attend alone, in which their Pastor acts as their Missionary, and teaches their young minds how to meditate, how to examine their conscience, and how to pray.

But I really must now say farewell; the time is come when my letter must depart for England. I shall be most happy to receive another letter from you, informing me of the state of England; and in return I will give you every information within my power, regarding Catholic life in Belgium.

[The following Letters may be found at the end of a work written by an Oxford Clergyman, and lately published, entitled, "The Ideal of a Christian Church." They are reprinted here, not so much for the pleasing and valuable testimony they bear to the influence of religion in Belgium, as unexceptionable confirmation of the general faithfulness of our "Letters from Belgium," and which have been so very much admired.]

LETTER I.

My dear Ward,

My foreign travel has been confined to Italy, Switzerland, Belgium, and Rhenish Prussia; I visited Italy and Switzerland for the first time eleven years ago, revisited them six years ago, and spent two months in Belgium and Rhenish Prussia two years ago. On first going abroad in 1838, I went with the impressions respecting the Roman Catholics and their system with which I had been brought up, and which were current among those with whom I associated; I expected to find all classes irreligious or indifferent, the poorer classes ignorant; and the priests purposely keeping them so, and I went prepared to look at their religion and their religious

services with distaste. At first, I confess, every thing that I saw seemed to confirm the impressions with which I started: if I saw people diverting themselves on Sundays, I concluded that it was a wilful and deliberate desecration of the day; if I saw priests walking amongst them, I concluded they were winking at it; if I saw a poor person by the road side on his knees before a cross, I concluded he had placed himself there for us to see, and thought all meanly clad monks mere lazy beggars; the very constancy of the people at Church I attributed to formalism, and I thoroughly believed they worshipped images; for I saw them kneeling before them, and I thought that proved it.

The notion that I should find the foreign Catholics indifferent was very soon dispelled; the very manner in which I saw a French steersman at the helm of his vessel take off his cap on passing the large Crucifix on the pier at Dieppe surprised me, and the earnestness and devotion I saw in the charities was something quite new to me; but then I fell back upon the idea, that it was all superstition and idolatry; fraud in the priests and ignorance in the people.

Of the higher classes of laity in the countries which I have travelled I have seen nothing, but have seen a good deal of the priests, of the poor, and of the schools for the children of the poor; and the more I saw, the more and more I became convinced how utterly groundless my impressions were. Of the priests (I speak now of Belgium and Prussia, where I saw them most) I have a very pleasant recollection; here and there I met with a most argumentative theologian, but, as a body, I was struck by their kindness of manner and simplicity of life, although in the conversations I had with them I might not agree with them, yet the very idea that they were not honest and sincere quite shocked and distresses me; I felt and still feel convinced that they were religious men.

That the poor are ignorant is, I believe, an entire misapprehension; I never talked to any who were so; I should say they are far, very far, better instructed in religious knowledge than our own people of the same class, and their attention to their religious duties is, to my mind, quite affecting. I have seen in large manufacturing towns hundreds upon hundreds of work-people, in their working dress, at mass at 5 o'clock in the morning before going into the factories, with their books, and joining heartily in the service; and I need scarcely say what a contrast this forms to the habits of the same class of persons in this country.

I have visited also Catholic schools abroad, and those under the superintendance of the Christian Brothers, my opinion is, that we have nothing to compare with them, even as to the regularity and order of the schools, the extent of the secular education, the carefulness with which religious instruction is conveyed, or the number and character of the teachers.

Upon the whole, my last impression, on returning from a foreign country (Belgium) to our own, was, that I was coming out of a religious country to one of indifference; the open Churches of the former, the frequent services, the constant worshippers, the solemn ceremonial, the collected air of the clergy in their ministrations, the indubitable devotion and reverence of the people, their unhesitating confidence in their Church, has nothing approaching to a counterpart with us; I know nothing more disheartening (I speak of the effect produced upon myself) than a return to England after some time spent in Catholic countries; every thing seems so careless, so irreverent, so dead; with all my heart I wish, and especially for my children's sake, that I could see in this country some approximation to the solemnity, reverence, devotion, and earnestness which I have witnessed abroad.

All this may seem harsh towards my own country, and my own Church, but they are nevertheless the impressions which I have derived from what I have seen; I am of course liable to be swayed by prejudice as well as others, but so far as I know myself, my prejudices, both those of education and of family connexion, were all the other way, and I feel they have been overcome by facts which were irresistible.

I have now given you what you asked for, my impression of the Church on the Continent, and you are quite at liberty to make what use you please of it.

Believe me, dear Ward,

Yours faithfully,

LETTER II.

My dear Ward,

One of the first things that struck me in France, indeed it is obvious to any one—was the behaviour of the people in the Churches. There was something which one saw at once to be quite of another kind from that correct demeanour which a sense of propriety dictates. A general sense of the purpose for which we go to Church, and due consideration for others, will lead to a regulated and attentive conduct when there. But an attitude of active devotion cannot be mistaken for this; and to see, as you never fail to do on entering any Church, large or small, in France, many of the lowest class wrapt in that visible absorption of mind which shows at once that a real communication is going on between the soul and God, is indeed a cheering sight—a spirit of prayer and supplication is seen to belong as much now as ever to the body of the Christian people. Often the posture of the worshipper is careless, and would little meet the taste of those who dwell with rapture on the forms of middle age art, or whose ideas of prayer are formed on such representations as in the offensive archæological jargon are called 'a St Francis nimbed'—the regulations of the Church may be thought irreverential,

the system of chairs introduces a continual traffic, and the never-ending circuits of a noisy beadle, rattling the money he is collecting, sadly breaks up the ideal some are apt to form of the still and solemn ceremonial—with all this, there is that in the appearance of the people which shows at once that they come there not from curiosity, from habit, or from fashion, but for a definite act to join heart and soul at the great sacrifice in communion with the faithful living and dead. Fashion may carry the French to sermons, but not to Mass or to private prayer in the Church. The theory of Catholicism may be fashionable, but submission to its rules and practice is very far from being. It is not many years since a priest could not appear in his habit in the streets of Paris without risk of insult—and the king himself, though suspected of going privately, durst not go publicly to Mass, for fear of losing his character for good sense. The increase of popularity of the clergy, the crowds of intellectual young men, lawyers, and students of the University, who flocked to Notre Dame in Advent last to hear Lacordaire—signs of a change of feeling in the public which the French Catholic press is never tired of proclaiming—these are the mere ebb and flow on the surface—far more valuable is that genuine old Christian leaven deep in the heart of the country population, which even the Revolution could not root out, quite distinguishable from that fickle patronage which the present generation is disposed to a visionary middle-age theory. I felt much less satisfaction in seeing a crowded audience in Paris listening to a favourite preacher, than in entering early in the morning a village Church in a distant province, and seeing the country people drop in before going to work for a few minutes of private devotion. This was the genuine product of the religion—the harvest where St Martin had sown.

The same practical air was visible where I least expected it. I had fancied a procession as merely ornamental; a poetical portion of the ceremonial intended to aid and captivate the imagination. I was struck, therefore, with the business-like air it wore. Those engaged in it seemed performing a real act of devotion, to which they were given up, the assembly accompanying them with their prayers—the one party not thinking of adoring, the other not aiming at effect.

Every one notices the subdued, regulated manner almost universal in foreign priests. This arises from their habitual consideration of the Divine presence. It must be a very superficial observer who can think it accounted for by the constraint of the peculiar habit. But it is not any matter of surprise that they should be able to preserve this, when one sees the education they go through for the Priesthood. The Seminary of St Sulpice is the principal establishment for this purpose. Many persons are offended at continually recurring comparisons between our own institutions, and the corresponding Catholic ones, and attribute such to a fretful, captious spirit,

But they should remember that it is only the natural process of the mind to judge of the unknown by the known, of the new by the familiar. Open any book of travels, and whether he is describing the shape of a wheel, or a mode of harnessing a horse, the writer's first impulse is to compare it with the fashion of his own country. It was impossible for me to see St. Sulpice without comparing it with the education we give our clergy. There the world was shut out, not because it was understood that the process of hardening by exposure to it is one incompatible with the innocence which is the required foundation for a religious character. Here I understood for the first time what it was to make religion the one business of life—not merely a handmaid, a means towards living well and happily. There was no cant of language, no affectation of discarding the customs of common society, but religion reigned without effort in the whole system. A young man bringing up for the priesthood where the Church is scantily paid by the State, knows that he resigns the common objects of ambition. Hard work and contempt is what he must expect. There is, as might be expected, a strong esprit du corps, which gives great offence to the world, which they vent in the epithet, 'narrow-minded.' But even were it so, habits of devotion, and a bracing religious discipline, would be cheaply purchased at a greater sacrifice than this. An occasional religious service introduced into a day the whole of which is given to secular studies, secular conversation, and secular amusements, is an irksome formality. But where the whole day's business is made one religious service, interposed, as it were, between the hours of prayer, the mind must either openly revolt, or be raised to partake of the pervading tone. I was edified to see many of the students taking the brief space allowed to recreation after dinner, for retirement to some shrine or image (with which the grounds were filled) for prayer or recollection. It was not considered necessary to avoid intruding on them—they were taught to form the habit of abstraction from what was going on about them.

The professors (though without any Galican bias) did not at all share in that eagerness for the visible triumph of the Church which the L'Univer. is so anxious for. There was among them no active sympathy with any political party—and that in a country where, much more than with us, every one is a politician.

The priests are, in general, shy of strangers, of the English in particular. Hence the accounts of travellers of a Protestant bias must be read backwards. If such a person falls in with a priest more lax than others, who is willing to converse on the topics of the day with him, he entertains a better opinion of him as 'superior to the prejudices of his order,'—but exactly in proportion as he observes earnestness of devotion and exclusiveness, the traveller's anger is roused at the bigotry, intolerance, hypocrisy, &c., of the 'poor creatures.' Yours very truly,

Concluded in our next.

From Maxims and Examples of the Saints.

PERFECTION.

My Lord and my God, what wilt thou have me to do? Behold here the real mark of a soul entirely perfect, which hath at length abandoned her own will, and no longer seeketh, or pretendeth, or desireth to do that which she herself would choose, but that which Almighty God willeth, and that alone.—S. BERNARD.

These were the first words of the apostle S. Paul on his conversion, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And they were spoken with such sincerity of affliction, and with such submission of will, that from that time he no longer had any other desire or motive than to fulfil in all respects the divine will: nor amidst so many adversities, afflictions, sufferings, and torments, as he had to undergo, was there ever any thing sufficient to lessen his zeal, or weaken his constancy and fidelity.

The blessed mother S. Chantal had so great a desire to know and obey the divine will, that on only hearing these words mentioned, "The will of God," just as if a torch had been applied to her heart, she felt all on fire; and as long as she was ignorant what was the will of God on any matter she was in torments.

The venerable mother Seraphina attests of herself, that our Lord, by means of an internal illumination, gave her clearly to understand how good a thing it is to live without any will of one's own and entirely resigned to his holy will. "And I was persuaded," says she, "that in order to belong perfectly to him, it was necessary for us to have no other will than that of our most loving God, and that when we are arrived at this, we shall then begin to live entirely in God, and to taste the joys of paradise on earth."

JEREMY TAYLOR.—If men did but know what felicity dwells in the cottage of a virtuous poor man—how sound he sleeps, how quiet his breast, how composed his mind, how free from care, how easy his provision, how healthy his morning, how sober his night, how moist his mouth, how joyful his heart—they would never admire the noises, the diseases, the throng of passions, and the violence of unnatural appetites, that fill the houses of the luxurious, and the hearts of the ambitious.

People lose a sight of charity, by wishing to be over zealous about faith.

To know how silly the most of our wishes are, it is sufficient to see them gratified.

Published by A. J. RITCHIE, No. 2, Upper Water Street, Halifax.
Terms—FIVE SHILLINGS IN ADVANCE, exclusive of postage.
All Letters addressed to the Publisher must be post paid.