

No. LX.

*To the Mother Prioress and Religious of the Convent
of St. Joseph at Granada.*

This letter is remarkable for its severity, vigour, and spirituality ; for, whether the Saint wrote in anger or in love, everything that came from her pen bears the impress of her heroic soul, which was always on fire for the good of her Order. This letter is also interesting from having been written only four months before the Saint's death, in 1582. When the Saint was on the point of departing for the Foundation of Burgos, the Foundation at Granada was also proposed to her. As, however, she could not attend to it in person, she entrusted it to Mother Anne of Jesus, who was then at Veas. She sent her two nuns from Avila to assist her in this Foundation, one of whom was called Mother Maria de Christo, and the other was named Antonia del Espiritu Santo. The Provincial, on the other hand, commanded her to take the rest of the nuns belonging to the convent at Veas. It seems she took too many, and for this the Saint blames her, and the other Religious likewise, for leaving their convent. Besides, she reproves them for not having sent either her or the father-provincial an account of what they had done at Granada. The rest of the letter treats of several subjects. Carta LXV. Spanish ed. vol. i.

JESUS. The Grace of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Very strange are the complaints you have made against our father-provincial, considering how negligent you have been in writing to him, since your first letter, in which you had informed him about having made the foundation : you have acted in the same way towards me. His Reverence was here on the Feast of the (Exaltation) Cross, and said he knew nothing about you except what I had told him : this I merely learnt from a letter which I received from the prioress of Seville, who told me you were thinking of purchasing a house for twelve thousand ducats.

It is not at all surprising that rather severe rules should be made for a convent, in which such great prosperity reigns. But the deep artifice you made use of in order not to obey has sensibly afflicted me, on account of the bad example it may give to the rest of the Order, and because the prioresses will be able to introduce a custom of taking liberties, for which they will find plenty of excuses. If, as you say, those gentleman be so stingy, it was very unwise to have taken so many* Religious with you, and to have sent so many others back who had only just arrived. I cannot imagine how you had the heart to make them come such a long distance.

You should have sent to Veas those who arrived, and others also with them : you did very wrong in having so many in the house, especially as you saw those gentlemen were against it ; and yet you thought of sending for more from Veas : how *could* you have done so, when you had no house which you could call your own ? I certainly am surprised the gentlemen had such patience. The whole affair was badly managed from the very beginning : and since you have no other remedy than what you mention, I think it best your Reverence should make use of it ; for since you take so much precaution in receiving nuns, the same precaution, if not greater, is necessary for this affair. However, it seems to me your precaution is far too great for such a large place.

I could not help laughing at the fright you gave

* The number amounted to eight.

us, by saying that the archbishop would suppress the convent. At present I see no sign of such a thing, nor do I see why I should make so much of it. He will die before he can accomplish such a deed. If any want of obedience should be introduced into the Order, it would be much better there had never been a convent, because our advantage does not consist in having many houses, but in having Religious who are holy to live in them.

I know not when your letters can be sent to our father-provincial. I fear it will be near six weeks before he can have them, and even then, I do not know *how* I shall send them by a safe courier, because he has left here for Soria, and thence he goes to so many places on his visitation, that we cannot possibly tell in what town or city he may be found: neither can we know for certain when we shall hear from him, or of him. As far as I can learn, he was at Villanueva, when the poor sisters arrived: I was in great affliction, when I thought of the trouble and shame he would have on seeing them, for as the town is so small, it is impossible to keep their arrival a secret; and it will also do us no small hurt, when every one shall be made acquainted with such a foolish act. You might easily have sent them to Veas, until the father-provincial has been informed of everything, for they have not had leave to return to the house whence they were taken, having been made by the command of the provincial conventuals of Veas. I think, however, that some remedy may

be found for the evil : but your Reverence is the sole cause of it, through not having mentioned how many Religious you took with you, or if you received any lay-sister : indeed, you seemed to take as little notice of the provincial, as if he had no authority whatever.

According to what he told me, and considering how matters stand at present, it will be impossible for him to come to you before the winter. God grant that the father (vicar) provincial may be able to undertake the journey, for I have just received a letter from Seville, in which the prioress tells me that he has caught the plague (which is in the city, though the public do not yet know of it) : brother Bartolomi is also seized with it, and this afflicts me exceedingly. Should you not already have heard the sad news, earnestly recommend them to our Lord, for their death would be a great loss to the Order. The father-vicar writes in the postscript of her letter that he is a little better, but not out of danger. The poor nuns are in great affliction, and with reason, because they suffer martyrdoms in their house, and far greater labours than the nuns in your house : and yet they do not complain so much as yours do ! It is not so great a torment to be confined in such a small space, as to want health and nourishment ; and since you are in such high esteem with so many grandees, I see not what reason you have to complain : we cannot expect everything to happen just as we wish.

Mother Beatriz informs father-provincial, that she

expects the father-vicar will send back to their convents the nuns of Veas and Seville. In Seville they are not in a condition to receive them, and the distance is very great ; besides, it is in no ways proper to send them back : when, however, there is any necessity for such a step, our father will see that it is taken.

As for the Religious of Veas, it is so proper they should return, that if I were not fearful of being the occasion of your offending God by some act of disobedience, I would send an express command to your Reverence, because in everything relating to the affairs of our Discalced Carmelites, I hold the place of our provincial. In virtue, then, of my authority, I direct and command that all those who have come from Veas shall return back as soon as possible, except the mother-prioress, Ana de Jesus : even though they should have a house suitable in every respect, what use would it be, unless they had a *revenue* sufficient to keep them from want ? It is not wise to begin a foundation with such a large community ; and for many other reasons it is better.

For some days I have been recommending this matter to our Lord (for I did not wish to answer the letters immediately), and I find it is God's will this should be done ; the more repugnance you feel, the more must it be done. It is quite opposed to the spirit of our Religious to be attached to anything, even were it to their prioress, for this would always prevent them from advancing in perfection. God wishes His spouses to be attached to no one but

Himself. I do not desire the house should commence in the same way as that of Veas did; for I shall never forget the letter which the sisters wrote to me from that convent, when your Reverence gave up office. Attachments are the source of disunion and other disorders which are not perceived at first. On this account, I beg of you, for the love of God, not to follow this time any opinion but mine; for when afterwards you shall be more securely established, and the Religious more disengaged, then they may return, if it should be considered expedient.

I don't really know who those are that have followed you, for you kept this a secret from me and your father (provincial). I did not think your Reverence would have taken so great a number with you; but they were those who were very attached to your Reverence. Oh! true spirit of obedience, which makes us have no repugnance in loving those who hold the place of God. I beg of you, through love of the same God, to consider that you are bringing up souls to be the spouses of our crucified Saviour; for this reason you ought to mortify them in their will, so that they may be not attached to trifles. Remember that you are beginning a Foundation in a kingdom newly conquered,* and that your Reverence and all the other sisters are obliged to advance the more in perfection, not as weak and timid women, but like strong and valiant women.

* Granada, which was taken from the Moors; or the Saint may mean, that this would be the first Foundation since the reform.

What does it matter, my mother, whether the father-provincial style you president, or prioress, or call you by your name, Ana de Jesus? It is certain that if you were not at the head of the community, people would no more apply to you than to another, for there have been prioresses like yourself.* As you have so seldom written, it is no wonder they are ignorant whether you have been elected or not. I assure you, I am quite grieved to see the Discalced Carmelites so soon become attached to such mean trifles, and that they should even make them the subject of conversation, and above all, that Mother Maria de Christo† should take great notice of such things! This seems so strange to me, that I believe either her imperfections have affected her head, or the devil has been using all his art to introduce diabolical principal into the Order.

After all, your Reverence is praised for being very courageous, as if submission would take away your courage! May God give my Discalced daughters the grace to be humble and obedient and submissive; for courage *without* these virtues is nothing but the source of numerous imperfections.

I now remember that in one of the letters which I received a few days ago, I was informed that one of the nuns whom you brought from Veas had some relations in Granada, who had helped her much on her journey. If this be the reason she is kept there,

* This sentence is obscure in the Spanish.

† This was a holy Religious in the convent of Avila, whom the Saint had sent to the Foundation of Granada.

I leave it to your prudence to keep her, or send her back, just as you think fit: but I do not give you the same liberty with regard to the others.

I can easily believe your Reverence must have many troubles in this commencement of the Foundation. Do not, however, wonder at it, for so important a work cannot be accomplished without them, since the reward (they say) is very great. God grant that the imperfections with which such works are performed, may not deserve punishment rather than rewards: this consideration always makes me fearful.

I will write to the Prioress of Veas, that so she may contribute something towards the expenses of the journey, for which you yourself have such slender means. I shall tell her, that if Avila were as near (as Veas) I should be very glad to take back my nuns. This may be done in time, by the help of our Lord, and so your Reverence may tell them that as soon as the Foundation is finished, and you shall have a sufficient number of Religious to supply their place, they must return to their own house.

It is not long since I wrote to your Reverence, to other mother-prioresses, and to Father John of the Cross, giving you an account of all that had happened here. I do not, then, think it necessary to write any more: this letter will be sufficient for all. God grant they may not be offended with me, as they were with our father (provincial) for calling your Reverence president: I mean as matters go on at present. In this part we call them so, and

not prioress, until they are elected on our father's arrival: after all, prioress and president are both the same.

I quite forgot to mention this. I am informed that the Religious of Veas, even after the chapter has been held, got out of their house to adorn the church! I cannot understand how this can be done, because not even the provincial himself can give them leave, since the Pope, by a "motu proprio," has especially forbidden it under pain of excommunication: besides, the constitutions expressly forbid it. In the beginning of the Order, this was not of such consequence, but now I am very glad it is otherwise. Now we are not allowed to go so far as to shut the gate. The sisters of Avila know well such a thing cannot be done: I cannot imagine why they did not tell you so. Look to this matter, for the love of God, for I am sure His Majesty will provide some one to adorn the church: He can find a remedy for everything.

I feel quite grieved every time I think of the inconvenience you have put those gentlemen to. I told you the other day to use every possible exertion in order to find a house, even though it might not be convenient in every respect; for whatever inconvenience you might suffer yourself, it is not proper *they* should suffer who have done you so much good. I have already written to Doña Ana, and I only wish I could find words sufficient to thank her for all the favours she has bestowed upon us. Our

Lord, however, will not fail to reward her for all that she has done in this affair.

If you desire anything from our father, remember you have not written to him: and, as I told you before, it will be very late before I can send your letters to him; however, I will send them as soon as I can. He will have to go from Villanueva to Daimiel, in order to take possession of the monastery, and thence he will proceed on to Malagon and Toledo, and afterwards to Salamanca and Alva. When these visitations have all been made, he will have I know not how many prioresses to elect. He told me at his departure, he did not think he should be at Toledo before the month of August. I am quite grieved to think of the long journeys he has to make in such hot places. Pray for him, and induce your friends to try all they can to purchase another house for you.

The sisters I spoke of may stay till you have informed his Reverence of everything, and he will do what he thinks for the best, though you have not given him an account of anything, nor even so much as let him know the reason why you kept those Religious. May God grant us His light, without which we cannot succeed in anything, and may He ever be the guide of your Reverence. Amen.

Your Reverence's Servant,

TERESA DE JESUS.

May 30th.

P.S.—I have written to the mother-prioress of Veas, respecting the journey of the nuns, and I have commanded her to receive them as privately as possible : but it is of little consequence, even should it be known. Give this letter to the mother sub-prioress, and let her and her two companions and Father John of the Cross read it ; my head will not allow me to write any more.

APPENDIX.

I.*

Advices† which the Holy Mother Teresa de Jesus gave to her Children during her life.

ADVICE I.

“Once (says the Saint), when I was in the hermitage of Nazareth at the convent of St. Joseph in Avila, it being the the Vigil of Pentecost; and while I was reflecting on the exceeding great favour which our Lord has bestowed upon me on that same day twenty years before, I was seized with an ecstasy, and with strong impetuous and interior movements, which quite suspended all my senses.

“While I was in this wonderful rapture, I heard the following words from our Lord, saying: ‘Tell all the Discalced fathers, in my name, that they must endeavour to observe four things, which, as long as they faithfully observe, their Order will continue to increase more and more; but if they forget them, let the fathers be assured they will soon fall from their first favour.

1. “*The Superiors should always be of one mind.*
2. “*Though they may have many convents there should be few Religious in each.*
3. “*They must speak but little with Seculars, and this little should be for the good of their souls.*
4. “*They should teach more by their works than by their words.*” †

“This rapture happened in the year 1579; and because what I have said is most certain and true, I have signed it with my name.

“TERESA DE JESUS.”

* See Preface.

† “Avisos de la Santa Madre Teresa de Jesus, que ella dió en esta vida.”

‡ These four advices are printed in the beginning of the “Constitutions of the Discalced Fathers.” (See the Annotations of the bishop of Osma).

ADVICE II.

This comprises a short, but very beautiful and edifying, exhortation, which the Saint addressed to the nuns of Avila when she was made prioress. This house was not one of the reformed, and the nuns were exceedingly annoyed at our Saint being appointed the prioress over them. She was commanded to accept the charge by the Apostolic visitor, Padre Maestro Fray Pedro Fernandez. The nuns at first refused to receive her. When she entered the house, most of them refused to obey her, because it was their convent she had left in order to commence the work of her reform. One day, however, she assembled them all in the choir, and having placed an image of our Lady in the chair of the prioress, she sat down at the feet of it. The nuns began to tremble, for they expected a most severe reprimand. But their hearts were quite changed when they heard the Saint deliver the following sweet exhortation.

“My daughters, mothers, and sisters: by the obedience which I owe to my superiors, our Lord has been pleased to send me back to this house to exercise the office of prioress: I never thought of such a dignity, because I knew I was far from deserving it.

“I was grieved at my election, both because a charge was given to me, the duties of which I know not how to fulfil, and also because they have taken away from you the right you should have of making your own choice, and thus they have given you a prioress against your will and pleasure—a prioress, too, who would think she had done a great deal could she only learn from *the least* amongst you the virtues which are practised in this house.

“I come to serve and to please you in everything I can, and I hope our Lord will assist me for this purpose; with respect to everything else, the least amongst you is able to teach me and correct me. You must, then, my dear sisters, let me know what I can do for each one of you; for I shall be most willing to do what you ask, even were it to shed my blood for you.

“I am a daughter of this house, and your sister too. I know the disposition and wants of all the Religious, or at least of the greater part of them; you have no reason, then, to fear being under the government of one who is wholly yours by so many titles.

“And though I have till now lived amongst my Discalced nuns, and have been their prioress, nevertheless I hope through the goodness of our Lord to be able to govern those who are not discalced. My desire is that we may all serve

our Lord with sweetness and humility, and through our love of *Him* to whom we are so much indebted, that we may perform what our rules and constitutions command us. I know our weakness is great; but if we cannot fulfil all our observances, let us at least have strong desires of doing so: our Lord is compassionate, and He will give us strength to execute by little and little those desires and intentions.”*

ADVICE III.

This short discourse the Saint addressed to the nuns at Valladolid before she left them, and only three weeks before her death.

“My daughters, I leave this house quite consoled by the perfection which I observe in you, by the poverty which you practise, and by the charity which I know you exercise one towards another. If you only persevere as you have hitherto done, our Lord will help you exceedingly.

“Each one ought to regulate her life in such a way, as not to neglect anything which may help her towards acquiring perfection.

“Never perform the duties of a Religious through mere custom; but strive to do heroic acts, and these with greater perfection every day.

“Endeavour to conceive ardent desires, since from these you may gain great profit, even though you might never be able to execute them.”

ADVICE IV.

These words were addressed to a Religious belonging to another Order.

“All those things will be so many crosses to him who loves God as *you* do; and if you consider often that God alone is with you in this house, it will contribute much to the profit of your soul.

“While you have no office which obliges you to take care of the convent, do not mind what passes in it; endeavour to imitate whatever you see perfect in each Religious, and to

* “Que piadoso es el Señor, y hará que poco á poco las obras igualen con la intencion y desco.

love her the more for it: profit also by the imperfections which you may notice in the other sisters.

“So great was the profit I drew from this exercise, that though there was a great number of Religious in the convent where I lived, they were no more trouble to me than if there had been none: on the contrary, I gained advantages. In a word, we may love our great God in all places; nor can any one hinder us from doing so. May He be blessed for ever.”

ADVICE V.

The object of this advice is to show what advantage may be drawn from persecution.

“In order that the soul may gain some advantage from persecutions, it is good to consider that they are directed rather against God than against ourselves, because though *we* may receive the stroke, yet his His Divine Majesty received the blow *first*, by the sins we committed against Him.

“We should also consider that a true lover has already made this agreement with her Spouse, viz., to belong entirely to Him, and to wish for nothing out of Him. If then he has already suffered persecution, why should not *we* also endure them? If we feel any pain, it should be for having offended His Majesty, and not for what we suffer, since it does not reach the soul; what is done is directed against this body of clay, which deserves so much to suffer.

1. “Our desire ought to be to die or to suffer.
2. “No one is tempted more than he can bear.
3. “Nothing happens without the will of God. ‘My Father, my Father, the chariot of Israel, and the driver thereof,’ said Elias to Eliseus.”

ADVICE VI.

These exhortations were intended by the Saint, *after* her death, for Father Gracian, the first provincial of the reform. They were first spoken by the Saint to the Venerable Catherine of Jesus, foundress of the convent at Veas, the Saint appearing to her often after her death.

For the Father-Provincial.

This day, being Low Sunday, our holy mother appeared to me, and commanded me to tell your Reverence several things which she mentioned to me more than a month ago. But as they related to you alone, I neglected to mention them to you by letter, thinking it would be time enough when I should see your Reverence; for it is impossible to inform you in detail of all she said. However, I shall mention some of them here, in order that they may not be forgotten. The first is: "That you must not allow any of your Religious to write about revelations, nor to make any account of them; for though some of them may be really authentic, yet it is quite certain that many are *false*; and it is very difficult to discover the truth amidst a hundred lies." The subject itself is full of danger, for many reasons which she gave me.

The first reason is, that the more revelations of this kind there are, the more we are liable to fall away from our faith, which is more certain than any revelation. The second is, because men are very fond of such supernatural things, and they highly esteem that soul which is favoured with them. This, however, is contrary to the order established by God for the sanctification of the soul; for this must be effected by the practice of virtue, and fulfilling the commandments.

She said: "Your Reverence should use all possible diligence in putting a stop to this abuse, for it was very necessary to do so: otherwise (she said) the greater part of women would be led away by these imaginations; and as they have neither the prudence nor the knowledge of men to be able to form a proper judgment of things, so they expose themselves to very great dangers (by giving credit to these revelations).

On this account she said, "That she did not wish her daughters to apply too much to the perusal of the works she wrote, especially her 'Life' fearing they might be tempted to believe that perfection *consists* in these revelations; and thus they might feel desirous of having them, and try to imitate her in this way." She said several things to me on this subject, which are very true, viz., "That she did not acquire the glory she now enjoys by means of the revelations

which she had during her life, but by her virtues; that your Reverence, though intending to do good, quite ruins the souls of the Religious by allowing them to give way to such things; that, though some of them should have *true* revelations, yet it is necessary you should disapprove of them, and give no more credit to them, as if they were nothing at all, because they often hinder, rather than advance, the soul." Her reasons were so powerful, that I have abandoned the intention I had of reading the "Life" of our holy mother.

Our holy mother also said: "That a subtile deceit might be concealed under these 'imaginary visions,' unless they were accompanied with the 'intellectual likewise' because that which is beheld with the interior eyes has much greater power than that which is seen with the eyes of the body; and though our Lord sometimes favours a soul with this kind of vision, for her greater good, yet it is very dangerous, on account of the cruel war which the devil wages against spiritual people who walk along this supernatural way, especially if they should be attached to any earthly thing. In that case we cannot be secure, unless we submit to our director, and yield to his judgment." She also said: "That the soul which is most separated from everything sensual is the most perfect."

ADVICE VII.

This advice was intended for the Father-Provincial.

A few days before the feast of St Andrew, while I was at prayer recommending the affairs of our Order to God, our holy mother Teresa de Jesus, appeared to me, and said "Tell the Father-Provincial he must command the Religious in his convents not to procure any favours, spiritual or temporal, by those means which seculars employ, for, if they do, they will obtain neither the one nor the other; but they must trust only in God, and live in recollection. Sometimes they think they do good to seculars, and to our Order, by frequently conversing with them: but let them beware, for they rather lose their esteem, and their own soul receives much harm. By thinking to make seculars *spiritual*, they themselves become secular, and imitate their way of living, from which the devil knows well how to gain advantage over them; for he sees that temporal solicitude brings disorder and trouble into the Order, and cools the spirit of recollection.

"Let them be very careful (she said) to remember these things, both for their own good and that of others also.

Before they resolve upon anything, let them first recollect themselves by prayer, and then He will give them so much of His spirit and intelligence as to make them capable of performing what He may have taught and commanded them. Let them be careful, too, to keep this spirit within themselves, and also to teach it to others.

ADVICE VIII.

This was also intended for the Father-Provincial.

Our holy mother bid me also tell your Reverence: "That the priors must not be re-elected; and this for many important reasons. The first is, because the advancement of every one in particular is more important than the assistance which a superior (who is re-elected) could give to the others. The good of the community is also greater when the Religious obey those who have been superiors: this cannot be practised without good example. Moreover, new priors will accustom themselves little by little to their duties; and though they may not have such great experience as those who have been priors, they should gain profit from their advice: but those who have been priors should not give their advice, nor interfere with the government of others, without being asked." I was also told: "It was very important that those who have been superiors should become true subjects, and should show themselves as such for an example to others, and that they may have no reason to think they cannot live without having the power of commanding and governing. They should show themselves subjects in such a way as if they had never been superiors, and also as if they had no hopes of ever returning to their office: they should, then, study only their own profit; and by this means they will make themselves very useful to others, when they themselves shall become superiors again."

ADVICE IX.

For the Father-Provincial.

This being the Feast of the three Kings,* our holy mother commanded me to tell the Father-Provincial, "That among the complaints made by the Religious, one is, he does not practise any austerities, and that he wears linen. It is with

* The three wise men—Feast of the Epiphany.

reason they complain thus, because many of his subjects, not being desirous of his good living, take no notice of the labours and trials he endures in his journeys : but if they should see him some day eat meat, or take a little refreshment in his illness, then they are tempted to become superiors themselves.

“Let the superior, therefore, be very fond of doing penance, and correct the least excess in himself with regard to his food ; because mortifications, when they do not injure our health, strengthen the spirit exceedingly.

“Let him banish with rigour (if it cannot be done with meekness) whatever tends to relaxation, either in the rules or constitutions ; for in this matter the beginnings are generally small, but the end is dreadful.”

ADVICE X.

For her Daughters, the Discalced Carmelites.

To-day being the Feast of the Kings, as I was asking our holy mother, who appeared to me, what books we should read, she took the “Catechism of Christian Doctrine,” and said : “Behold, this is the book which I desire my Religious should read day and night, for in it is contained the law of God.” And then she began to read about the “last judgment” in a tone that made me tremble, and that frightened me exceedingly ; and for many days after her voice sounded in my ears. I discovered in this book a treasure of most sublime doctrine, and the perfection at which a soul arrives who takes it for her guide. Hence, I cannot help teaching sublime things to those souls who are under my charge : indeed, I have a great desire to teach them all that is contained in this catechism, and of making them learn it. As for myself, I am always anxious to read whatever appears to me fit to be learnt. The catechism contains quite a treasure for me. I endeavour to make my daughter love humility, mortification, and hard labour. As for the rest, our Lord will give it to them when He sees good.

MAXIMS.

Which the Saint delivered to one of her Daughters after her death.

MAXIM 1. “Love the more, and walk the more uprightly, as the way is strait and narrow (that leads to life).”

2. “Those in heaven and those on earth ought to be one

and the same in purity and love; those in heaven, by enjoying; those on earth, by suffering. We, who are above, adore the Divine Essence; you who are yet on earth should adore the Most Blessed Sacrament. Make these words known to my daughters."

3. "The devil is so proud, that he tries to enter at the same door as God does,—viz., by confession, communion and prayer. But he strives to poison these fountains of health."

4. "We ought not to resolve to do anything of consequence, without having first recommended the matter to God by prayer."

5. "Let superiors be careful to bring up souls in a total disengagement from all earthly things, both interiorly and exteriorly; for they are intended to be the spouses of a king who is so jealous that He wishes us to forget even ourselves for love of Him."

6. "Let all Religious be great lovers of poverty, and let them rejoice in it; for while they continue such, the spirit by which they are led will remain with them."

APPENDIX II.

Carta VI. vol. i. English Translation, No. XVI.

Al muy Ilustre Senor Don Sancho d' Avila, Obispo de Jaen.

JESUS. La gracia del Espiritu Santo sea siempre con V. M.

He alabado á nuestro Senor, y tengo por gran merced suya, lo que V. M. tiene por falta—dexando algunos extremos de los que V. M. hacia por la muerte de mi Señora la Marquesa su madre, en que tanto todos hemos perdido.

Muy bien ha hecho V. M. en escribir su vida, que fue muy santa; y soy yo testigo desta verdad. Beso á V. M. las manos, por la que me hace en querer enviarmela, que tendré yo mucho que considerar, y alabar á Dios en ella. Esa gran determinacion, que V. M. no siente en si de no ofender á Dios, como quando se ofrezca ocasion de servirle, y apartarse de no enojarle, no le ofenda, es senal verdadera, se que lo es el deseo de no ofender á su Magestad. Y el llegarse V. M. al santisimo Sacramento cada dia y pesarle quando no lo hace, lo es de mas estrecha amistad.

Siempre vaya V. M. entendiendo las mercedes que recibe de su mano, para que vaya creciendo lo que le ama, y dexese de andar mirando en delgadezas de su miseria, que á bulto se nos representan á todos hartas, en especial á mi.

Y en eso de divertirse en el rezar el oficio divino, en que

tengo yo mucha culpa, y quiero pensar es flaqueza de cabeza : ansi lo piense V. M. pues bien sabe el Señor, que ya que rezamos, querriamos fuese muy bien. Yo ando mejor : y para el año que tiene el pesado, puedo decir que estoy buena, aunque pocos ratos sin padecer : y como veo que ya que se vive, es lo mejor bien lo llevo.

Al Señor Marqués y á mi Señora la Marquesa, hermano de V. M. beso las manos de sus Señorías, y que aunque he andado léjos, no me olvido en mis pobres oraciones de suplicar á nuestro Señor por sus Señorías : y por V. M. no hago mucho, pues es mi Señor, y Padre de Confesion. Suplico á V. M. que al Señor D. Fadrique, y á mi Señora Doña Maria mande V. M. dar un recado de mi parte, que no tengo cabeza para escribir á sus Señorías ; y perdoneme V. M. por amor de Dios. Su Divina Magestad guarde á V. M. y dé la santidad que yo le suplico. Amen.

Indigna sierva, de V. M. y su Hija,

TERESA DE JESUS.

De Avila, diez de Octubre, de mil quinientos y ochenta.

Carta VII. vol. i. English Translation, No. XVII.

All Mismo Ilustrisimo Senor Don Sancho d'Avila.

JESUS. La gracia del Espiritu Santo sea siempre con V. M.

Si supiera que estaba V. M. en ese lugar, antes hubiera respondido á la carta de V. M. que lo deseaba mucho, para decir el gran consuelo que me dió. Paguelo la Divina Magestad á V. M. con los bienes espirituales, que yo siempre le suplico.

En la Fundacion de Burgos han sido tantos los trabajos, y poca la salud, y muchos ocupaciones, que poco tiempo me quedaba para tomar este contento. Gloria sea á Dios, que ya queda acabado aquello, y bien. Mucho quisiera ir par donde V. M. está ; que me diera gran contento tratar algunas cosas en presencia, que se pueden mal por cartas. En pocas quiere nuestro Señor que haga mi voluntad : cumplase la de su Divina Magestad, que es lo que hace al caso. La vida de mi Señora la Marquesa deseo mucho vén. Debió de recibir tarde la carta mi Señora la Abadesa su hermana, y por leerla su merced, creo no me la ha enviado. Con mucha razon ha querido V. M. quede por memoria tan santa vida. Plegue á Dios la haga V. M. de lo mucho que hay en ella que decir, que temo ha de quedar corto.

O Señor! y qué es lo que padecé, en que sus Padres de mi sobrina la dexasen en Avila, hasta que yo volviese de Burgos! Como me vieron tan porfiada, salí con ello. Guarde Dios á V. M. que tanto cuida de hacerles merced en todo; que yo espero que ha de ser V. M. su remedio. Guarde Dios á V. M. muchos años, con la santidad que yo siempre le suplico. Amen.

Indigna sierva, y Subdita de V. M.,

TERESA DE JESUS.

De Palencia, doce de Agosto, de mil quinientos y ochenta y dos.

Carta XVI. vol. i. English Translation, No. XIX.

Al Reverendo Padre Maestro Fray Domingo Banez, de la orden de Santo Domingo.

JESUS. La gracia del Espiritu Santo sea con V. M. y con mi alma.

No hay que espantar de cosa que se haga por amor de Dios, pues puede tanto el de Fray Domingo, que lo que le parece bien, me parece, y lo que quiere, quiero: y no sé en qué ha de parar este encantamiento.

La su Parda nos ha contentado. Ella está tan fuera de sí de contento despues que entró, que nos hace alabar á Dios. Creo no he de tener corazon para que sea Frayla, viendo lo que V. M. ha puesto en su remedio: y ansi estoy determinada á que la muestren á leer, y conforme á como le fuere, haremos.

Bien ha entendido mi espiritu el suyo, aunque no la he hablado; y Monja ha habido, que no se puede valer desde que entró, de la mucha oracion que le ha causado. Crea, Padre mio, que es un delicté para mi cada vez que tomo alguna, que no trae nada sino que se tomo solo por Dios: y vér que no tienen con qué, y lo habian de dexar por no poder mas: veo que me hace Dios particular merced, en que sea yo medio para su remedio. Si pudiese fuesen todas ansi, me seria gran alegria: mas ninguna me acuerdo contentarme, que la haya dexado por no tener.

Hame sido particular contento, vér cómo le hace Dios á V. M. tan grandes mercedes, que le emplee en semejantes obras, y vér venir á esta. Hecho está Padre, de los que poco pueden; y la caridad que el Señor le dá para esto, me tiene tan alegre, que qualquier cosa havé por azudarle en semijantes obras, si puedo. Pues el llanto de la que traía consigo,

que ne pensé que acabara. No sé para qué me la envió acá?

Ya el Padre Visitador ha dado licencia, y es principio para dar mas con el favor de Dios: y quizá podré tomar ese lloraduelos sí á V. M. le contenta, que para Segovia demasiado tengo.

Bien Padre ha tenido la Parda en V. M. Dice que aun no cree, que está acá. Es para alabar á Dios su contento y le he alabado de vér acá su sobrinito de V. M. que venia con Doña Beatriz; y me holgué hasta de verle. Porque no me lo dixo?

Tambien me hace al caso haber estado esta Hermana con aquella mi amiga Santa. Su Hermana me escribe, y envia á ofrecer mucho. Yo le digo, que me enternecido. Harto mas me parece la quiedo, que quando era viva. Ya sabrá, que tuvo un voto para Prior en San Estevan: todos los demás el Prior; que me ha hecho devocion verlos tan conformes.

Ayer estuve con un Padre de su orden, que llaman Fray Melchor Cano. Yo le dixé, que á haber muchos espíritus como el suyo en la orden, que pueden hacer los monasterios de contemplativos.

A Avila he escrito, para que los que le quieran hacer no se entibien, si acá no hay recaudo, que deseo mucho se comience. Porqué no me dice lo que ha hecho? Dios le haga tan santo como deseo. Gana tengo de hablarle algun dia en esos miedos que trae, que no hace sino perder tiempo; y de poco humilde, no me quiere creer. Mejor lo hace el Padre Fray Melchor que digo, que de una vez que le hablé en Avila, dice le hizo provecho; y que no le parece hay hora, que no me trae delante. O qué espíritu, y qué alma tiene Dios alli! En gran manera me he consolado. No parece que tengo mas que hacer, que contarle espíritus ajenos. Quede con Dios, y pidale que me le dé á mi, para no salir en cosa de su voluntad. Es Domingo en la noche.

De V. M. Hija y Sierva,

TERESA DE JESUS.

APPENDIX III.

*Lettres Inédites. Lettre Première.**

La grâce du Saint-Esprit soit avec votre Révérence.

Mon Père,—Je ne m'étonne pas que vous soyez malade, mais je suis surprise que vous soyez en vie d'après ce que

* See "Œuvres très-complètes de Sainte Thérèse," par l'Abbé Migne, tome ii. p. 664.

vous devez avoir essuyé intérieurement et extérieurement. On m'a fait beaucoup de peine lorsqu'on m'a dit que vous gardiez le lit, parceque je connais votre Révérence; mais comme le mal n'est pas dangereux, je me suis à moitié rassurée, et j'ai pensé que ce pouvait être un rhume de la nature de ceux qui règnent dans ce moment. Je supplie votre Révérence d'une manière toute particulière de ne faire dire comment elle se trouve; qu'elle n'y manque pas pour l'amour de Dieu, quand même ce ne serait que par une lettre de la main du P. Miseria; je m'en contenterai.

Dites-moi aussi si vous avez besoin de quelque chose. Au reste, ne vous inquiétez de rien, et persuadez-vous bien que quand il semble que les choses sont mieux, c'est alors que je suis ordinairement plus mécontente que je n'ai lieu de l'être dans ce moment. Vous savez que le Seigneur veut toujours que nous voyions que c'est la Majesté divine qui fait ce qui nous convient; et afin que cela soit mieux compris et que nous nous apercevions que alors que tout succède mieux. On ne me dit rien de mon P. Padilla, ce qui me fait la plus grande peine; il ne m'écrit pas non plus; je voudrais qu'il jouit d'une santé parfaite, pour qu'il pût vous soigner, puisque le P. Balthasar doit vous quitter. Je prie instamment notre Seigneur de daigner vous remettre promptement en santé. J'écris à ces Pères-là pour leur faire part de ce que j'ai fait, et il me semble que le messenger n'a pas d'autre mission que cela. Sachez, mon Père, que j'ai pensé que nous aurions bien besoin du bon nonce, car enfin c'est un surviviteur de Dieu; son départ, s'il a lieu, me fera la plus grande peine. Je suis persuadée qu'il ne s'abstient d'agir que parce qu'on l'a dégoûté de ce que nous comptons faire: mais ce qui fait le sujet de ces craintes, on le négocie actuellement à Rome où nous avons quelqu'un qui s'en acquitte avec talent et sagesse, et qui lui donnera de l'occupation. Je me rappelle que le bon Nicolaso disait à son passage par cette ville, que les Carmes Déchaussés devaient avoir un Cardinal pour protecteur. Un de ces derniers jours j'ai parlé à un de mes parents d'un rang élevé, qui m'a dit qu'il y avait à Rome un curial qui a fait prévenir qu'il ferait tout ce que nous voudrions, pourvu qu'on le payât. Je lui avais déjà dit combien je serais bien aise d'avoir à Rome quelqu'un qui pût traiter certaines affaires avec le Père Général. Voyez s'il est convenable que l'ambassadeur demande quelque chose pour les Carmes Déchaussés.

Je vous apprendis que le P. Fray Pedro Fernandez a été ici, et qu'il m'a assuré que si le Tostado n'était point porteur d'un titre en règle qui lui donnât pouvoir sur les visiteurs, celui des auteurs prévaudrait: mais que s'il avait ce pouvoir, il fallait se taire, obéir et changer de batterie, parce qu'il lui

semblait que si les commissaires n'ont d'autre autorité que celle qu'ils avaient, ils ne pouvaient pas constituer une province et des définiteurs. Il faut donc que nous prenions d'autres mesures : adressons-nous à Dieu, qui est celui qui doit tout faire ; qu'il daigne dans sa miséricorde vous rendre promptement à la santé, ainsi que nous l'en supplions tous. Le messager porteur de la présente n'est expédié que dans la vue de voir ce que vous désirez qu'on passe, et d'avoir des nouvelles de votre Révérence. Je vous prie d'avoir la bonté de dire au P. Jean Diaz comment il doit s'y prendre pour remettre quelques lettres au P. Soler. Il est très-important pour moi que votre Révérence l'envoie chercher, et qu'elle les lui remette avec le plus grand secret, si elle ne peut pas faire autrement.

Indigne Servante de votre Révérence,

THERESE DE JESUS.

Ce 16 Fevrier.

LETTRE II.

Au Docteur Fray Mariano de Saint-Benoît à Madrid.

Jésus soit avec votre Révérence, mon Père et qu'il vous accorde la récompense que vous méritez pour les bonnes nouvelles que vous m'avez écrites, et qui, à ce qu'il paraît, nous sont extrêmement favorables par plusieurs raisons. Le jeune homme ne tarda pas à partir ; que Dieu conduise ses pas pour sa plus grande gloire, la seule chose à laquelle nous devons tous aspirer. Je me réjouirais que votre Révérence se trouve si bien avec ces pères-là, qui au moins ne cherchent pas à mettre des entraves. On m'assure que le Père Fray Anselmo a écrit à l'Evêque de Salamanque pour l'engager à n'accorder aucune autorisation pour fonder aucun couvent, ce que lui a suscité un procès semblable à celui d'ici, ni plus ni moins. Oh ! mon père, qu'on sait mal conduire ces affaires ! Celle en question serait maintenant terminée, si l'on avait su s'y prendre, tandis qu'elle n'a servi, qu'à déverser l'infamie sur les Carmes Déchaussés. Croyez que ce n'est qu'avec le temps que les affaires peuvent avoir du succès ? Au demeurant, moi je pense que c'est par la volonté de Dieu que les choses vont ainsi, et que cela renferme un grand mystère. Nous verrons ; et si l'on fait ce que vous dites, ce sera un bonheur. Que Dieu vous tienne compte de la bonne opinion que vous avez de ma manière de voir : Dieu veuille qu'elle soit durable ; mais il me semble que celui qui en a une aussi bonne ne doit

pas faire grand cas de la mienne. Je suis on ne peut pas plus contente de ce que les affaires soient conduites par des moines aussi habiles : que celui qui le permet ainsi, soit loué. Amen ! Comme vous ne me dites jamais rien du Père Fray Balthasar, et que j'ignore où il est, je vous prie de lui dire bien des choses de ma part, ainsi qu'à mon Père Padilla et au Père Juan Diaz. La Prieure d'ici et celle de Malagombrianda se rappellent au souvenir de votre Révérence. La première se trouvait beaucoup mieux : mais depuis qu'elle est arrivée ce soir, elle est devenue plus malade. Nous espérons la conserver ; que Dieu veuille lui prolonger la vie comme vous voyez que nous en avons besoin, et avoir votre Révérence en sa sainte garde. Faites attention, mon père, et songez bien toujours que ces amitiés pourraient devenir trop violentes pour ne point se tenir sur ces gardes en tout point ; le véritable ami, l'ami, dont volonté il n'y a rien à craindre. Je désirerais bien connaître le réponse en question ; je voudrais aussi que votre Révérence et le Père Maître pussent rester là où ils croiraient être bien accueillis ; il est certain que, quoi qu'on fasse, il ne peut pas manquer des croix dans cette vie pour celui qui est du parti du Crucifié.

Quant à Antonio Manuel, il se trompe : Doña Catherina d'Otalora n'est pas religieuse chez nous, et elle ne l'a jamais été. Cette dame devint veuve, aida à la fondation de couvent en question, où je ne crois pas qu'elle soit maintenant. Outre que je ne la connais pas, il ne m'appartient pas de m'occuper d'elle : ma profession d'ailleurs me le défend. Je prie votre Révérence de le lui dire ; on m'a même fait naître un scrupule sur ce que j'ai demandé à votre Révérence dans ce cas ; mais on verra combien je connais peu ce Monsieur-là, qui quoique haut placé, et mon parent, je ne l'ai vu qu'une seule fois, et j'ignore ce dont son âme peut s'accommoder ; ceci soit dit entre nous. Je supplie donc votre Révérence de ne rien faire dans cette circonstance que ce qu'elle croira convenable après avoir observé sa personne. Ne lui dites rien de cela, pour ne point le chagriner et lui faire de la peine ; mais dites-lui bien des choses de ma part, et que je ne lui écris pas, parce que j'ai mal à la tête, laquelle continue toujours d'être assez mauvaise. Dites-lui aussi que j'ai écrit aujourd'hui à madame sa femme. Doña Béatriz, et surtout ne manquez pas de lui faire savoir que la dame dont il parle n'est pas religieuse.

Je prie Dieu qu'il ait votre Révérence en sa sainte garde, comme nous en avons tous besoin. Amen.

THERESE DE JESUS.

LETTRE III.

A la Révérende Mère, Prieure de Saint-Jean de Salamanque.

Le Sainte-Esprit soit avec votre Révérence.

Je suis bien fâchée des craintes qu'ont montrées pour votre maison celles qui vous témoignent leur intention de s'en aller, et que vous ne désireriez pas moins conserver aujourd'hui, attendu que celle qui causait le mécontentement n'y est plus, Il faut qu'elles fassent le bien, la seule chose pour laquelle elles sont venues, pour que cette maison ne déchoie pas de la bonne réputation et de la bonne idée que doivent avoir d'elle celles qui la quittent. J'espère qu'on le fera ainsi, parce qu'il y restera de bonnes religieuses avec elles. Je pense que vous êtes toujours indisposée; encore si Dieu nous fait la grâce que vous ne soyez pas alitée, ce sera un moindre mal. Soignez-vous pour l'amour de Dieu, et que la Majesté divine daigne m'accorder de vous voir bientôt, de voir que Dieu veut que vous souffriez de toutes les manières; qu'il soit pour tout loué, et qu'il daigne vous récompenser des aumônes que vous m'avez faites, avec lesquelles j'ai été ces jours derniers assez mauvaise pour m'oublier, comme également avec le voile, parce que celui que je portais en forme de guimpe, je l'avais fait pour le mettre par-dessus.

Au reste, il faut convenir que les voiles que votre Révérence me donne sont fort jolis; mais faites-moi la grâce, je vous en supplie, de me rien envoyer qu'autant que je vous le demanderai: je préfère que vous en profitiez et que cela serve à vos plaisirs. Dans cette fondation tout prospère si bien, que je ne sais pas ce que nous allons devenir. Priez notre Seigneur de nous donner de bonnes maisons. Nous ne voulons plus l'ermitage: des maisons et des personnes disposées à nous en procurer ne nous manquent pas. L'évêque ne cesse pas de nous rendre service; priez Dieu pour lui, je vous en supplie, ainsi que pour tous nos bienfaiteurs.

Je prie votre Révérence d'écrire une petite lettre au P. Fray Domingo, si je ne puis le faire moi-même, pour lui donner des nouvelles de cette fondation. Je tâcherai cependant de lui écrire un mot; mais si je ne le fais pas, faites-lui bien des compliments de ma part. Il m'a charmée par la manière accomplie avec laquelle il a approvisionné les sœurs: tout le monde n'en ferait pas autant: j'en suis bien contente, surtout par rapport à Isabella-de-Jésus, à qui nous devons tout: il paraît qu'elle est aussi très-contente. Et puisqu'elle et toutes les autres me disent tout ce qu'elles ont

à me dire, et que j'ai d'autres lettres à écrire, je n'ajouterai rien autre chose à ma présente, si ce n'est que je supplie notre Seigneur Jésus Christ de vous avoir en sa sainte et digne garde, et de vous accorder toute sainteté. Amen.

Les Missels sont très-beaux : vous m'en marquez le prix, mais je ne sais pas quand nous pourrons vous les payer. L' P. Mondiago remettra les lettres ci-jointes à mes Pères Dominicains ; je prie votre Révérence de les lui recommander.

THERESE DE JESUS.

APPENDIX IV.

Carta del Illustrisimo Señor D. Juan de Palafox y Mendoza, Obispo de Osmá, al Reverendisimo Padre Fray Diego de la Visitacion, General de los Carmelitas Descalzos.

Reverendisimo Padre,—Con gran consuelo mio he leído las Epistolas de Santa Teresa, que V. P. Rma. quiere dar á la estampa, para pública utilidad de la Iglesia, porque en cada una de ellas se descubre el admirable espíritu de esta virgen prudentisima, á la qual comunicó el Señor tantas luces, para que con ellas despues ilustrase, y mejorase á las almas. Y aunque todos sus escritos están llenos de doctrina del cielo ; pero como advierten bien los instruidos en la humana erudicion, no puede negarse que en las cartas familiares se derrama mas el alma, y la condicion del autor, y se dibuxa con mayor propiedad, y mas vivos colores su interior y exterior, que no en las dilatados discursos, y tratados. Y como quiera que aquello será mejor, y mayor de Santa Teresa, en que se descubra á si misma mas, por eso estas cartas en las quales tanto manifiesta su zelo ardiente, su discrecion admirable, su prudencia, y caridad maravillosa, han de ser recibidas de todos con mayor gozo, y ho menor fruto, y aprovechamiento.

Verdaderamente cosa alguna de quantas dixo, de quanta hizo, de quantas escribió esta Santa, habian de estar ignoradas de los fieles : y asi siento mucho el vér algunas firmas de su nombre, compuestas con las letras de sus escritos ; porque faltan aquellas letras á sus cartas, y aquellas cartas, y luces á la Iglesia universal : y mas la hemos menester leída enseñando, que venerada firmando.

Pues que otra cosa son las Epistolas familiares de los Santos, sino unas disimuladas instrucciones, ofrecidas con suavidad á los fieles ? Y una eloquente y persuasiva doctrina que informa á la humana, y christiana comunicacion entre

nosotros mismos? La qual no solo dá luz con su discurso, sin calor, y eficacia para seguir é imitar lo que primero enseñaron los Santos con su exemplo, y virtudes al obrar.

Y asi me parece, que la Santa en sus tratados del Camino de la Perfeccion, de las Moradas, en la Explicacion del "Pater Noster," en sus Documentos, y Avisos (que todos son celestiales) nos ha enseñado de la manera que hemos de vivir en orden á Dios; y dirigir nuestros pasos por la vida espiritual. Pero como hemos de vivir en esta exterior unos con otros (de la qual depende tanta parte, y no sé si la mayor de la interior), nos lo enseña en estas Epistolas; porque con lo que dice en ellas, nos alumbrá de lo que debemos aprender; y con lo que estaba obrando al escribirlas, de lo que debemos obrar.

Qué zelo no descubre en ellas del bien de las almas? Qué prudencia y sabiduría en lo místico, moral, y político? Qué eficacia al persuadir? Qué claridad al explicarse? Qué gracia, y fuerza secreta al cautivar con la pluma á los que enseña con la erudicion?

Muchos santos ha habido en la Iglesia, que como sus Maestros universales la han enseñado; muchos, que con sapientísimo tratados la han alumbrado; muchos, que con eficacísimos escritos la han defendido: pero que en ellos, y con ellos hayan tan dulcemente persuadido, arrebatado, y cautivado, ni con mayor suavidad, y actividad vencido las almas, y convencido, so sé hallarán fácilmente.

Innumerables virtudes, propiedades, y gracias pueden ponderarse en la Santa: no digo en sus heroicas acciones, costumbres, y perfecciones (porque esas aprobadas, y canonizadas por la Iglesia, mas piden la imitacion, que la alabanza), sino en sus suavísimos escritos; pero yo lo que admiro mas en ellos, es la gracia, dulzura, y consuelo con que nos vá llevando á lo mejor; que es tal, qui primero nos hallamos cautivos, que vencidos, y aprisionados, que presos.

El camino de la vida interior es aspero, y desapacible—"Arcta est via, quæ ducit ad vitam:" porque se vence la naturaleza á si misma, y todos son pasos de dolor para la parte inferior, quantos le ofrece al alma el espíritu; y asi hacer dulce, y entretenido este camino, alegre, y gustoso al caminante, no solamente le facilita el viage, sino que le hace mas meritorias las penas con reducirlas á gozos.

Al que alegremente dá, ama el Espíritu Santo—"Hilarem enim datorem diligit Deus." Esto es, ama mas que á otros, al que sirve mas alegremente que otros. Esta alegría, gusto, y suavidad comunica admirablemente la Santa en sus obras, adulzando por una parte, y haciendo por otra mas meritorias las penas. A todos socorre con sus escritos, y les dexa contentos con su dulce modo de enseñar, y persuadir. A Dios,

con la mayor caridad del justo; y al justo con la mayor alegría, y mérito de servir á Dios. Porque tal gracia en lo natural, y tal fuerza en lo sobrenatural, como este admirable espíritu tiene en su pluma, y como allana y facilita las dificultades del camino de la virtud, no es bastantemente ponderable.

..... Ninguno lee los escritos de la Santa, que no busque luego á Dios; y ninguno busca por sus escritos á Dios que no quede devoto, y enamorado de la Santa. Y esto no solo credo yo que es gracia particular del estilo, y fuerza maravillosa del espíritu, que secretamente lo anima, sino providencia de Dios. Porque ama tanto á la Santa, que á los que hace perfectos con la imitacion de sus virtudes, é ilustra con la luz de sus tratados espirituales, quiere asegurar con la fuerza poderosa de su intercesion.

No he visto hombre devoto de Santa Teresa, que no sea espiritual. No he visto hombre espiritual, qui se lee sus obras, no sea devotísimo de Santa Teresa. La utilidad de los escritos de Santa Teresa, no basta á ponderarlos la pluma. Diganlo las almas á quien sacaron de los lazos de la vanidad del mundo. Diganlo los que por la luz comunicativa que traen consigo, como con vivas centellas, leyendolas, se han abrasado sus devotos corazones. Diganlo tanto número de hijos, y de hijas, y siervous de Dios, que á ellos les deben primero su conversion, y despues su vocacion Y si los demás escritos de Santa Teresa, para llevar á Dios almas, han sido tan eficáces: yo estoy pensando que lo han de ser mucho mas estas Epistolas. Porque la misma Santa dexó escrito en su Vida el provecho interior, que sentia un sacerdote en si mismo al leer aquello que le escribia. Y que solo con pasar por ello los ojos, le templaba, y ahuyentaba muy graves tribulaciones. Y asi, V. P. Rma. nos consuele con darlas luego á la estampa, porque han de ser para la Iglesia universal de todos los fieles de grandísimo provecho.

A instancia de los Padres deste santo convento de V. P. Rma., y particularmente del Padre Prior Fray Antonio de Sant-Angelo, mi confesor, he escrito sobre cada carta algunas notas, que creo serán mas apropósito para entretener los noviciados de los conventos de V. P. Rma. con una no inútil recreacion, que no para que se impriman.

Las ocupaciones desta peligrosa dignidad son tales, que apenas me han dexado libres treinta dias, y no del todo; antes muy llenos de embarazos inescusables al Pastoral ministerio, para darlos á tan gustoso trabajo; y asi servirá la congoja, y la brevedad del tiempo de disculpa á sus descuidos.

Guardé Dios á V. P. Rma.

De V. P. Rmo. Servidor,

Osma, Febrero 15, 1656.

JUAN, Obispo de Osma.

APPENDIX V.

The following translation of the Spanish verses, by Woodhead, may give the reader *some* imperfect idea of the meaning of the original. (See Letter No. XII.)

“O Beauty! that so far transcendest
 The beauties of all features!
 Thou woundest us, yet not offendest:
 And without pain too, away takest
 All love we have for creatures.

Strange love-knot, that together draws
 Such distant things to meet!
 What then can a disunion cause?
 When tied, thou rul'st o'er nature's laws,
 And mak'st e'en sufferings sweet.

Things void of being thou hast joined
 To endless being, and to bliss:
 When all's bestowed, still more remains:
 Where nought is to love, Thou art kind:
 Thou makest great, what nothing is.”

The French translation of the Spanish reads much better than the English, though it sadly wants the *terseness* of the original.

“Vous triomphez, ô Beauté sans seconde:
 Pour vous j'éprouve un tourment enchanteur:
 Et vos attraits me détachent du monde,
 Sans qu'il en coûte un soupir à mon cœur,
 Qu'il est puissant ce nœud qui joint ensemble
 Les deux sujets les moins faits pour s'unir!
 Tant que ce nœud par vos soins les assemble,
 Les plus grands maux se changent en plaisir.

Le rien s'unit à l'être par essence:
 Et l'immortel me parût expirant:
 L'indigne objet de votre complaisance
 A peine existe, et vous le rendez grand.”

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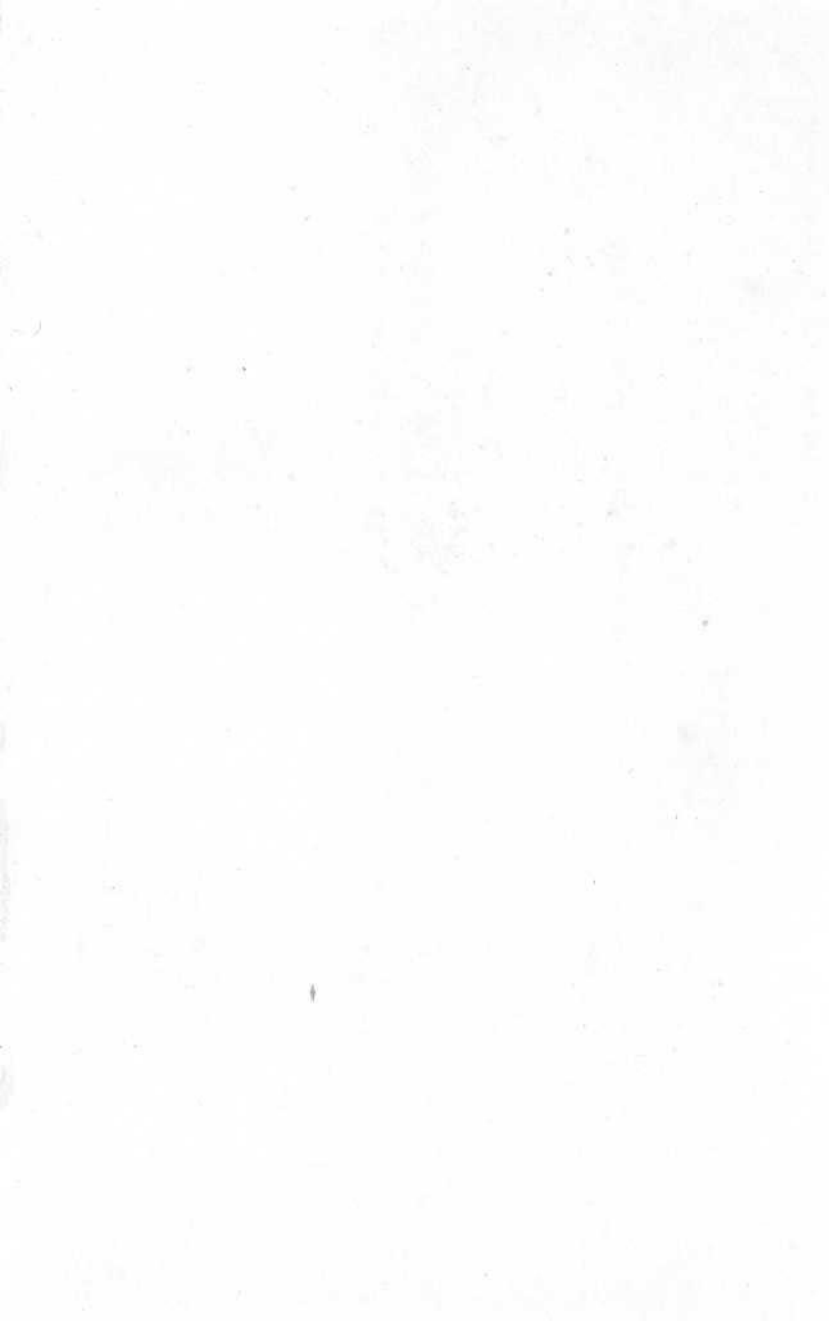
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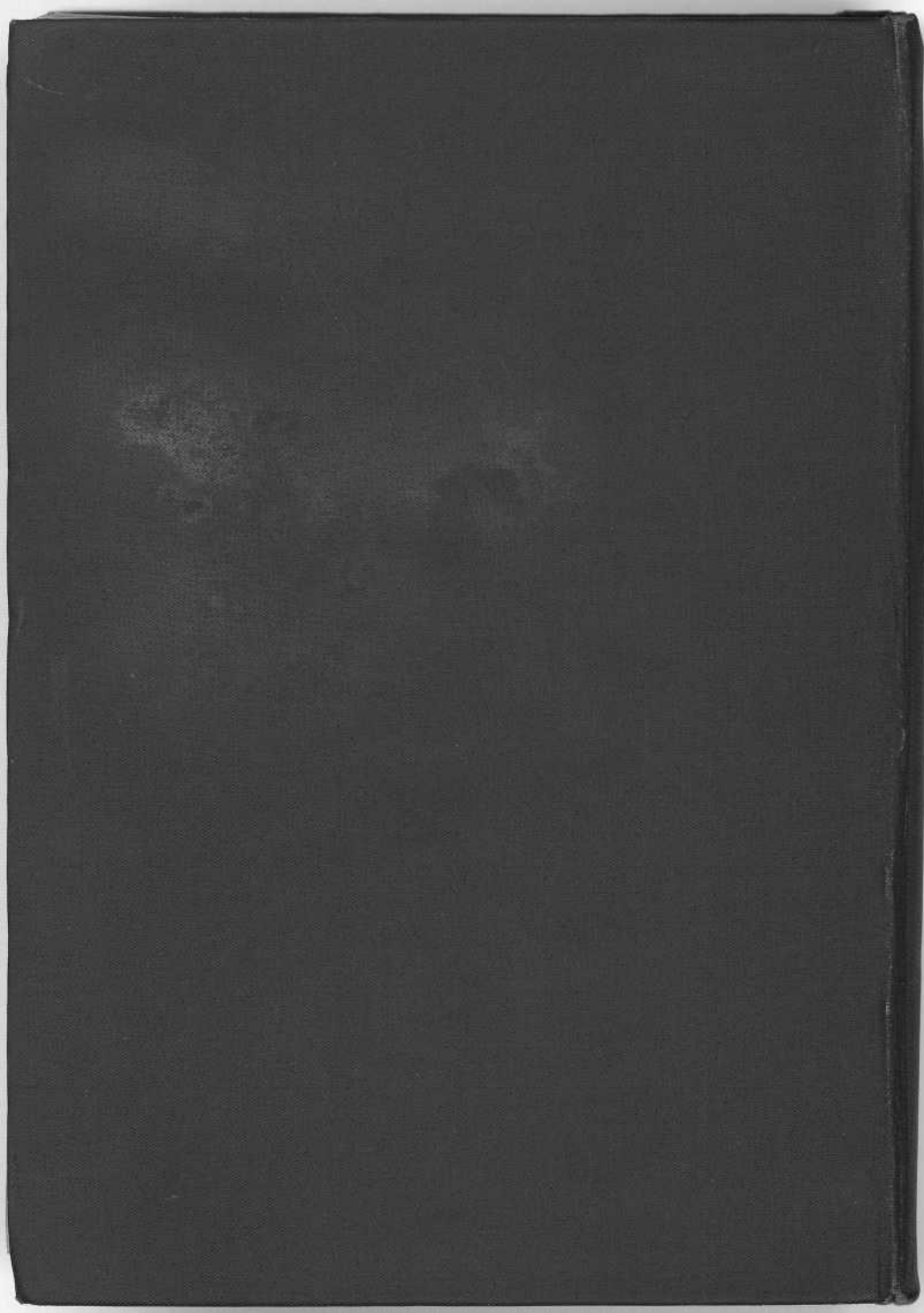
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