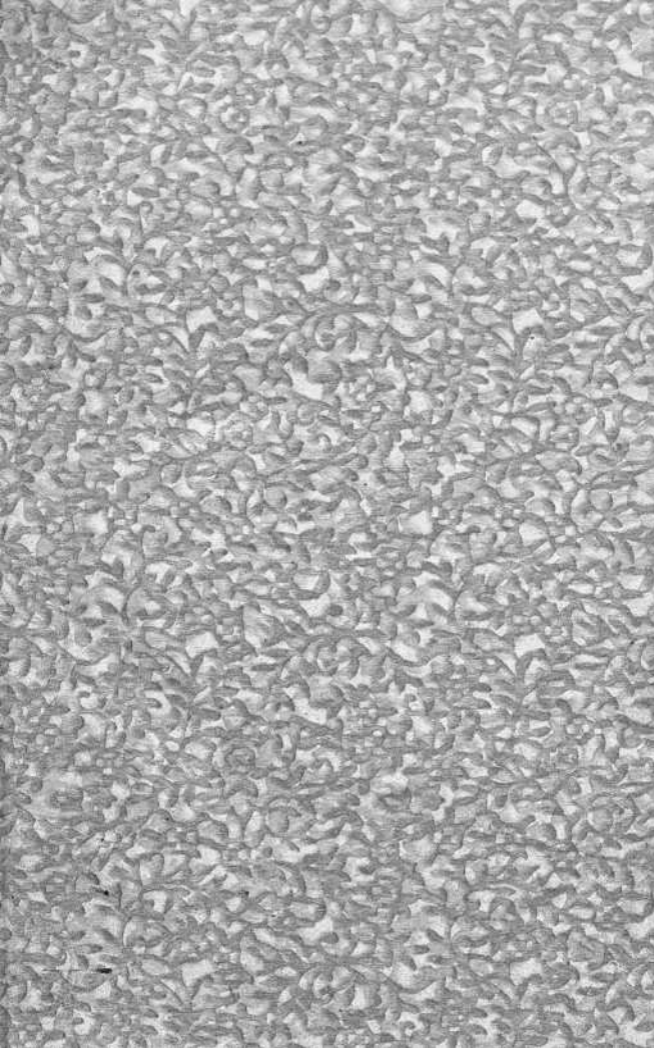


79.

THE
LIFE OF ST. TERESA







THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

County of Santa Clara

BY THE HON. CLERK OF THE COURT



WITNESSETH MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE



THE
LIFE OF ST. TERESA,

Foundress of the Reformed Discalced
Carmelites.

BY THE REV. ALBAN BUTLER.



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THE LIFE OF ST. TERESA.

THE humble relation which St. Teresa has left us of her own life, in obedience to her confessors, is the delight of devout persons, not on account of the revelations and visions there recorded, but because in it are laid down the most perfect maxims by which a soul is conducted in the paths of obedience, humility, and self-denial, and especially of prayer and an interior life. St. Teresa was born at Avila, in Old Castile, on the 28th of March, 1515. Her father, Alphonsus Sanchez of Cepeda, was a gentleman of a good family, and had three children by a first wife, and nine by a second. The name of the latter was Beatrice Ahumada, mother to our saint, another daughter, and seven sons. Don Alphonsus delighted much in reading good books, with which he was well stocked; he was also very charitable to the poor, compassionate to the sick, and tender towards his servants: remarkable for his strict veracity, modesty, and chastity, and very averse from detraction and swearing. Our saint's mother, likewise, was very virtuous, suffered much from frequent sickness, and died happily at the age of three-and-thirty, when Teresa was twelve years old. By the means of the pious instructions and example of her parents, God inclined the tender heart of Teresa from her infancy to his service. Being only seven years old, she took great pleasure in reading the Lives of the Saints and other pious books, with a little brother called Rodrigo, who was nearly the same age. They were much amazed at the thought of eternity, and used to repeat often together. "For ever, for ever, for ever!" and admiring the victories

of the saints, and their everlasting glory, they said to one another: "What! for ever they shall see God." The martyrs seemed to them to have bought heaven very cheap by their torments; and, after many conferences together on this subject, they resolved to go into the country of the Moors, in hopes of dying for their faith. They set out privately, with great fervour praying as they went, that God would inspire them with his holy love, that they might lay down their lives for Christ; but, upon the bridge over the Adaja, near the town, they were met by an uncle, and brought back to their mother, who was in the greatest fright, and had sent to seek them. They were chided by their parents for their unadvised project, and Rodrigo laid all the blame on his sister. Teresa continued the same course, and used often to say to herself, "O Eternity! Eternity! Eternity!" She gave to the poor all the alms she could, and studied to do all the good works in her power. Teresa sought to be much alone, and said very long prayers with great devotion, especially the Rosary; for her mother inspired her tender soul with a singular devotion to the Blessed Virgin. She had in her room a picture of our Saviour discoursing with the Samaritan woman at the well, with which she was much delighted, and she often addressed those words to our Saviour with great earnestness: "Lord, give me of that water;" meaning that of his grace and holy love. In the twelfth year of her age, upon the death of her mother, in great grief she threw herself upon her knees before a picture of the Blessed Virgin, and besought her with many tears, that she would vouchsafe to be her mother. The saint adds, that this action which she did with great simplicity, she thought afterward very profitable to her: and found the Blessed Virgin favourable to her in all her requests, and looked upon herself as much indebted to her intercession for the great mercy by which God was pleased to bring her back to a sense of her duty after she had begun to go astray. She aggravates exceedingly her own malice by which she had been ungrateful to so great and so early favours, which she had received from God in her tender age; she never ceased to grieve that she should have ever defiled the tabernacle of her heart in which he was to

dwell for ever, and to thank his goodness for having called her back into the path of her duty, begging that he would be pleased to conduct her soul to eternal salvation.

The most dangerous snare into which she fell was that of idle books and vain company. Romances, or fabulous histories of knight-errantry, were at that time much in fashion in Spain. Teresa got hold of some such books a little before her mother died, and began to read them much more after her death, though always unknown to her father, who would have been highly provoked. About that time, a certain cousin-german, a worldly young woman, addicted to vanity, and fond of reading such books, began to visit her, and by her conversation wrought such a change in Teresa, that, forgetting the greatest part of her former devotions, she spent several hours both of the day and night in reading romances with great pleasure. She began at the same time to curl and trim her hair, to use perfumes, to love fine clothes, and the like, out of a desire of pleasing others, though without any bad intention; for she would not for the world have given to any one an occasion of offending God. She continued some years without imagining there was in this any sin; but she afterward found it was a great one. None but this kinswoman, and some other near relations, were allowed by the father to visit his daughter: but even these proved dangerous company to her; and she listened to them with pleasure in their discourse on vanities, toys, and follies, never criminal, yet not good. Thus she gradually fell off from her fervour during three months. Her father perceived her to be much changed, and her devotion cooled. She laments grievously this her dangerous fall, and, from her own fatal experience, earnestly conjures all parents to watch over their children, that they may never fall into idle, vain, and dangerous company, or read such books; for if she had not dashed against these two rocks, she thinks she should always have increased in fervour, instead of falling back. Ribera, from his strictest examination of the saint, assures us, that she could not be thought to have incurred the danger of any mortal sin; for this reading and company, though very dangerous, did not appear

to her any more than an innocent amusement ; so that her simplicity extenuated the fault. Bishop Yopez makes this evident from what the saint herself acknowledges, notwithstanding her inclination to exaggerate this offence ; saying that though she was delighted with agreeable conversation and diversions, she had always an extreme horror of any open evil : but she exposed herself to the danger, and therefore condemns herself so severely, attributing her preservation from falling down the precipice to God's pure mercy and assistance in preserving in her heart a great sense of the honour of virtue. She indeed says, that notwithstanding her confessors judged nothing in these actions that could have amounted to the guilt of a mortal sin, she afterward understood them to have been mortal sins ; where she expresses her own apprehensions. For those vanities and books were dangerous occasions of greater evils than she was aware of. When she fell into these faults, she confessed them, for she always confessed during the lukewarm period of her life all known venial sins, as she assures us. After her perfect conversion, her timorous conscience and vehement compunction made her speak of these sins in stronger terms than her confessors approved ; and she testifies that she desired to say much more on this subject, to publish to the whole world her ingratitude against God, had they not forbidden her. Her father took notice that her devotion was much cooled, and not being able with courtesy to forbid this vain relation to his house, he placed his daughter, who was then fifteen years of age, in a very regular convent of Augustinian nuns in Avila, where many young ladies of her rank were educated. Teresa found a separation from her companions grievous : but, as her attachments proceeded only from the naturally affectionate disposition of her heart, they were soon forgotten, and a secret sentiment of honour and of her reputation made her disguise this repugnance. From the precaution which her father had taken, she saw that her fault had been greater than she imagined, and began severely to condemn herself for it. The first eight days in the convent seemed tedious to her : but, having by that time forgotten her former amusements, and broken the ties she had contracted in the world, she

began to be pleased with her new situation. A devout nun, who was mistress of the boarders, used frequently to instil into her mind serious reflections on virtue, and repeated often to her that dreadful truth: "Many are called, but few are chosen." By the discourse and counsels of this servant of God, Teresa recovered her fervour, and earnestly recommended herself to the prayers of the nuns, that God would place her in that state in which she might be likely to serve him best, though she had not then the courage to desire to be a nun herself; for the thoughts of a perpetual engagement affrighted her.

After a year and half spent in this convent, the saint fell dangerously sick, and her father took her home. When she had recovered her health she went to see her eldest sister in the country who tenderly loved her, and calling to see an uncle, her father's brother, was detained by him some time. His name was Peter Sanchez of Cepeda: he was a widower, and a very discreet and pious man. He lived retired in the country, where he employed his time in his devotions, and in reading good books. He gave several to Teresa to read, and his discourse was most commonly of God, and of the vanity of the world. When she returned to her father's house, she began for some time to deliberate with herself about embracing a religious state of life. She at first thought the convent of the Augustinian nuns, where she had lived, too severe, and was inclined to choose a house in which she had a very great friend; by which circumstance she afterward feared she had then more regard to the subtle gratification of a secret sensual satisfaction and vanity, than to the greater spiritual advancement of her soul. After a violent fever at home (for she had often bad health), she was determined by reading St. Jerome's epistles, to become a nun. Her father would by no means give his consent, but said, that after his death she might dispose of herself as she pleased. The saint fearing from former experience she might again relapse, though she felt an excessively severe interior conflict in leaving her dear father, went privately to the convent of the Incarnation of the Carmelite nuns, without the walls of Avila, where her great friend sister Jane Suarez lived, though at that time she says she

sought only the good of her soul, making no account at all of rest or ease. Upon her taking the habit, God changed the dryness under which she had laboured for some time into an extreme tenderness of devotion, and all her religious observances gave her great delight. Whilst she was sweeping the house, or employed in other such actions, the remembrance that she had formerly spent those hours in dressing herself, or in other vanities, overwhelmed her heart with such an extraordinary joy as amazed her. But during her noviciate she felt many severe interior trials, notwithstanding her constant great contentment in this state. She made her profession with extraordinary fervour in November, 1534, in the twentieth year of her age. A sickness, which seized her before her profession, increased very much on her after it, with frequent fits of fainting and swooning, and a violent pain at her heart, which sometimes deprived her of her senses. Physicians finding no remedy for her extraordinary case, her father got her removed out of her convent, in which the law of inclosure was not then established. Sister Jane Suarez bore her company, and she remained partly at her sister's in the country, and partly at Bezeda, almost a year in the hands of certain able physicians. Their medicines served only to increase her distempers, inasmuch, that for the space of three months she suffered such excessive torments, with a continual burning fever, that her sinews began to shrink up, and she could take no rest either day or night. She was also oppressed with a profound sadness of mind. Her father, after this, caused her to be brought to his own house, where the physicians gave her over; for her distempers had then terminated in a hectic fever, and her sharp pains never left her, and afflicted her all over from head to foot. God, however, gave her incredible patience; and she was much comforted by reading the book of Job, with St. Gregory's morals or commentary, and had often in her mouth some of the aspirations of holy Job, which expressed his resignation to God. She, at length, in August, 1537, lay near four days in a trance or lethargic coma, during which time it was expected that every moment would be her last. It being once imagined that she was dead, a grave was dug

for her in the convent, and she would have been buried, if her father had not opposed it, and testified that he still perceived in her body certain symptoms of life. Through excessive pain she had bitten her tongue in many places, when out of her senses; and for a considerable time she could not swallow so much as a drop of water without almost choking. Sometimes her whole body seemed as if the bones were disjoined in every part, and her head was in extreme disorder and pain. She could neither stir hand, nor foot, nor head, nor any other part, except, as she thought, one finger of her right hand. She was so sore, that she could not bear anyone to touch her in any part; and she had often a great loathing of all food. Her pains being somewhat abated, she so earnestly desired to return to her monastery, that she was carried thither, though her body seemed reduced to skin and bone, and worse than dead, through the pain she endured. She continued thus above eight months, and remained a cripple nearly three years.

The saint endured these sufferings with great conformity to the holy will of God, and with much alacrity and joy. Under these afflictions she was much helped by the prayer which she had then begun to use. When in the beginning of this sickness, she was taken out of her convent, and soon after carried into the country; her devout uncle Peter put into her hands a little book of F. Ossuna, called the Third Alphabet, treating on the prayer of recollection and quiet. Taking this book for her master, she applied herself to mental prayer, according to the manner prescribed in it, and was favoured with the gift of tears, and of the prayer of quiet (in which the soul rests in the divine contemplation, so as to forget all earthly things); and sometimes, though not for a longer space than an Ave Maria at a time, she arrived at the prayer of Union, in which all the powers of the soul are absorbed in God. However, for want of an experienced instructor, she made little progress, was not able to hold any discourses in her understanding, or to meditate without a book, her mind being immediately distracted. Yet she was wonderfully delighted with this holy meditation, and received a heavenly light, in which she saw clearly the

nothingness of all earthly things, looked upon the whole world as under her feet, and beneath the regard of a soul, and pitied all persons who vainly pursue it empty bubbles. The paralytic disorder in which her fevers, violent headaches, and convulsions and contractions of her sinews had terminated, began so far to be abated, that she was able to crawl upon her hands and feet. After three years' suffering, she was perfectly restored to her health ; and she afterward understood that she had received of God this favour and many others, through the intercession of the glorious St. Joseph, which she had humbly and earnestly implored. She declares, that she trembled exceedingly, and praised and thanked the divine mercy, with all the powers of her soul, as often as she remembered that "God might have bereaved her of life, when she was in a dangerous state ; and I think," says she, "I may safely add a thousand times, though I be blamed by him who commanded me to use moderation in the recital of my sins. I have disguised them enough. I beseech him for God's sake that he will not extenuate my faults ; for by them the great goodness of God is more manifested, since he so long beareth an unfaithful soul.—Praise be to him for ever. May he rather annihilate me, than I should ever hereafter cease to love himself." Her confessor, by whose order she wrote, knew her great propensity to magnify her faults ; for which reason he gave her this charge. If, when she was arrived at the most perfect purity of heart and divine love, she could discern such faults and dangers in her soul, at a time whilst she seemed already a saint in the eyes of men, and received the gift of supernatural prayer, and other eminent virtues, how much ought we to fear in our lukewarm state, and excite ourselves to watchfulness and compunction ? St. Teresa attributes the good opinion which others then had of her to her own cunning and hypocrisy, though she acknowledges that she was never designedly guilty of any dissimulation, having always abhorred such a baseness. Two great means by which she preserved her soul from many difficulties and snares, were her constant and tender charity and goodness toward all persons, by which she always gained the esteem and good-will of all those with

whom she lived *or* conversed; secondly, an extreme dread and abhorrence of the least shadow of detraction, inso-much, that no one durst in the least reflect on any other person in her presence, and from her infancy she had this rule always before her eyes, in discoursing of others to speak of them in the same manner she would desire others should speak of her.

Who ought not always to tremble for himself, and excite himself, by humility and holy fear, to watch continually with the utmost attention over his own heart, to apply himself with his whole strength to all his duties, and with the greatest earnestness to call in Omnipotence to his assistance, since this holy virgin, after receiving so many favours from God, fell again from her fervour and devotion? Her prudence and other amiable qualifications gained her the esteem of all that knew her. An affectionate and grateful disposition inclined her to make an obliging return to the civilities which others showed her. And, finding herself agreeable to company, she began to take delight in it, by which she lost that love of retirement, which is the soul of a religious or interior life, and in which she had been accustomed to spend almost her whole time in prayer and pious reading. By an irregular custom of her convent she seemed authorized to indulge this dangerous inclination, and spent much time in conversing with seculars at the grate or door of the monastery, and she contracted an intimacy with one whose company was particularly dangerous to her. Such conversation, besides a great loss of time, dissipated her mind, and infused earthly affections and inclinations, which do infinite mischief to a soul whose affections are or ought to be spiritual, and expose her to the utmost dangers. Teresa, therefore, began to neglect mental prayer, and even persuaded herself that this was a part of humility, as her dissipated life rendered her unworthy to converse so much or so familiarly with God by mental prayer. So subtle is the devil in his snares, knowing that no virtuous person can be deceived, but under the appearance or cover of good. Teresa also said to herself there could be no danger of sin in what so many others did, more virtuous than she was who received frequent

visits of secular persons in the parlour. The remonstrances which a senior nun made to her on the impossibility of reconciling so much dissipation of mind and worldly conversation with the spirit and obligations of a religious life, were not sufficient to open her eyes.

One day, whilst she was conversing at the grate with a new acquaintance, she seemed to see our Lord, who represented himself to the eyes of her soul with much rigour in his countenance, testifying that her conduct displeased him. She took this for the effect of imagination, and being much importuned to it, still persuaded herself, by the example of others, that there could be no harm in so much exterior conversation, and that no damage resulted from it to her soul. She grievously accuses herself of this fault, and of her blindness in shutting her eyes to many warnings and inspirations, by which she ought to have been made sensible of so great an evil, which she conjures all religious persons to beware of. Her father had been induced by her, when she first learned the use of mental prayer, to apply himself earnestly to it, as to the great means of acquiring all perfect interior virtues, and within five or six years he was much improved by that holy exercise. He often called to see her, and to converse with her on spiritual things. He thought she assiduously conversed with God, as she formerly had done, whereas she had lived a year or more in that state of dissipation, having left off mental prayer, contenting herself with only vocal, of which she says: "This was the greatest and worst temptation that ever I had; for by this means I ran headlong upon my own ruin." At length, finding her father's mistake, she disabused him, telling him she no longer used mental prayer, for which she alleged the frequent infirmities to which she was subject. But she adds: "This reason of bodily weakness was not a sufficient cause to make me give over so good a thing, which requires not corporal strength, but only love and custom. In the midst of sickness the best of prayer may be made; and it is a mistake to think that it can only be made in solitude." Her father, out of the good opinion he had of her, looked upon her excuse as just, and pitied her because she had enough to do to be able to attend the choir.

In 1539, she suffered a great affliction in the loss of her good father, whom she always loved with the most dutiful and tender affection. Though ill herself, she went out of her monastery to assist him in his last sickness, and strained very hard to do him all the service, and procure him all the comfort she was able. Giving great praise to the divine mercy for him, she has left us an edifying account of his preparation for his last passage, and mentions the desire which he had to leave this world, and the good advice he gave to his children, and all that were about him, whom he charged earnestly to recommend his soul to God, faithfully to serve him themselves, and to have constantly before their eyes that all this world must come to an end. He added, with many tears, how much he was grieved at heart for not having served God with greater fervour. His sickness began with a very grievous pain in the shoulders. St. Teresa told him, that since he had been much devoted to the mystery of our Saviour carrying his cross, he would do well to conceive, that Christ, in his great mercy, had been pleased to give him a feeling of some part of that suffering. With this consideration he was so much comforted that he mentioned his pain no more, nor did he even let fall the least word of complaint. He expired whilst he was saying the creed. His confessor, whom Teresa at that time also made use of, made her understand that her soul was in a dangerous way, and that she must not fail to make use of mental prayer. She, therefore, began to use it again, in the twenty-fourth year of her age, and from that time never left it. Yet for a long time she continued still to pursue her amusements of worldly dissipation, and receiving visits at the grate, as if she had a mind to reconcile a spiritual life and sensual pastimes--or the spirit of God and that of the world. The use she made of prayer made her see these faults; whilst she was conversing with God in prayer, worldly inclinations and attachments disturbed her. Yet God was pleased often to visit her in her devotions with sweet consolation; and to bestow upon her favours, even in that very time of her life when she offended him most.

This goodness of God towards her, was a subject of

continual astonishment, and a motive of love and gratitude. "Hence," says she, "proceed my tears, together with a grievous indignation against myself, when I considered what a wretched creature I was ; for I saw that I was still upon the point of falling again, though my purposes and desires of amendment (as long as those favours lasted) seemed to be firm and strong. I wish I could get leave to declare the multitude of times that I failed in my obligation to God in this number of years, because I was not supported by the strong pillar of mental prayer. I passed through this tempestuous sea almost twenty years, between these fallings and risings, though I rose very imperfectly, since I so soon relapsed." These relapses are meant of those venial sins and imperfections which stopped her progress in the divine service. She adds, that within this term there were many months, and perhaps a whole year, that she gave herself much to prayer without relapsing into vain amusements ; but, because she remembered little of these good days, she believed they were few : though few days past in which she had not given a considerable time to mental prayer ; and the worse she was in health, the more her soul was united to God. Thus out of twenty-eight years, since she began to employ herself diligently in mental prayer, except that one year in which she laid it aside, she spent more than eighteen in this strife. Bishop Yenez assures us that she passed these eighteen years in frequent trials of spiritual dryness, intermingled with intervals of heavenly consolation in prayer, and that these faults and dangers consisted chiefly in serious entertainments with affectionate visitants, to which the sweetness of her temper and the goodness of her heart inclined her, and which her confessors at that time approved and recommended, though she discovered them to be obstacles to her spiritual perfection and prayer. She conjures every one for the love of God to be assiduous in endeavouring to obtain and cherish the spirit of prayer, and adds the most pathetic exhortations that no one deprive himself of so great a good, in which nothing is to be reared, but much to be desired. By mental prayer we learn truly to understand the way of heaven ; and this is the gate through which God

conveys himself and his graces and favours into our souls. "Nobody ever made choice of God for a friend, whom his divine majesty did not well requite for his pains. For mental prayer is a treaty of friendship with God, and a frequent and private communication with him, by whom we know we are beloved." And they who love him not yet, must force themselves to be much in his company by prayer, and pass on through this gate till they arrive at his love. "I do not see how God can come to us," says the saint, "or enrich us with his graces, if we shut the door against him. Though he is infinitely desirous to communicate himself to us with all his gifts, he will have our hearts to be found disengaged, alone, and burning with a desire to receive him. O joy of the angels, my Lord and my God! I cannot think of conversing with you without desiring to melt like wax in the fire of your divine love, and to consume all that is earthly in me by loving you. How infinite is your goodness to bear with, and even caress those who are imperfect and bad, recompense the short time they spend with you, and upon their repentance, blot out their faults! This I experienced in myself. I do not see why all men do not approach you to share in your friendship. Even the wicked, whose affections have no conformity to your spirit, ought to approach you, that they may become good, even though they at first abide with you sometimes with a thousand distractions, as I did, &c. Since our Lord suffered so wicked a creature as myself so long a time, and all my miseries were redressed by this means of prayer, what person, how wicked soever, can find any thing to fear in this exercise? For how wicked soever any person may have been, he will never have been so bad as I was, after having received such great favours from our Lord, &c." The saint says, that during the time of her most slothful dispositions, she was never tired with hearing sermons, though ever so bad; but that she was a long time before she perfectly understood that all endeavours are good for nothing, unless first we strip ourselves entirely of all confidence in ourselves, and place it wholly in God alone. This foundation of a spirit of prayer is seldom sufficiently laid; so apt is pride imperceptibly to persuade us that

there is something in us of strength, or by which we deserve the divine compassion.

After twenty years thus spent in the imperfect exercise of prayer, and with many defects, the saint found a happy change in her soul. One day going into the oratory, seeing a picture of Our Saviour covered with wounds in his passion, she was exceedingly moved, so that she thought her very heart was ready to burst. Casting herself down near the picture, and pouring forth a flood of tears, she earnestly besought our Lord to strengthen her, that she might never more offend him. She had long been accustomed every night before she composed herself to rest, to think on our Lord's prayer in the garden, and bloody sweat, and was particularly affected with that mystery. From this time she made the sufferings of Christ the ordinary object of her interior conversation with him during the day and night. Being particularly devoted to St. Mary Magdalen, she was delighted to place herself in spirit with her at the feet of Jesus, earnestly beseeching her Redeemer not to despise her tears. She always found particular comfort in those saints, who, after having been sinners, were converted to our Lord, hoping that by their means he would forgive her, as he had done them. Only this reflection discouraged her, that he called them but once, and they returned no more to sin, whereas she had so often relapsed, which afflicted her to the very heart; but the consideration of the love our Lord bore her, made her always confide entirely in his mercy. St. Austin, who was an admirable penitent, and the patron of the first nunnery in which she had lived, was one of those saints toward whom she was most tenderly affected. In reading his confessions, in the twentieth year of her age, she applied to herself that voice by which his conversion was wrought, in so lively a manner, as to remain for a considerable time even dissolved, as it were, in tears, with very great affliction and anguish; and she prayed with the greatest earnestness that our Lord would hear her cries, have regard to so many tears, and have compassion on her miseries. From that time she withdrew herself more than ever from all occasions of vain amusements and dissipations, and gave her time

more entirely to the exercises of compunction and divine love. The saint had scarce formed her resolution of serving God perfectly, when he vouchsafed to visit her soul with new and extraordinary consolations and favours, regaling her with heavenly sweetness in great abundance: for she tells us he did not require, as in others, that she should have disposed herself for such favours, but only that she was content to receive them. "I never presumed," says she, "to desire that he should give me so much as the least tenderness of devotion: I begged only for grace never to offend him, and for pardon of my past sins; and I never durst deliberately desire any spiritual delights. It was an infinite mercy that he would suffer me to appear in his presence. Only once in my whole life, being in great spiritual dryness, I desired him to afford me some little spiritual comfort; but as soon as I had reflected what I had done, I was filled with confusion, and the grief I felt for my want of humility, obtained for me that which I had presumed to beg." The saint, before she gives an account of the supernatural favours she had received, conjures her confessor, Garzia de Toledo (by whose order, and to whom she wrote this relation), entirely to conceal all she says on that head, and publish only her sins, imperfections, and the indifferent actions of her life.

Describing the state of her soul with regard to her manner of prayer, she says she began to consider Christ as present in her soul, in the same manner as she had been accustomed to do after communion: thus she entertained herself with him in her ordinary actions, and in mental prayer. From the twentieth year after she had first applied herself to this exercise, she made little use of interior discoursing or reasoning to inflame her affections; the intuitive consideration of any motive or object immediately raising in her heart the most ardent acts of divine love, thanksgiving, compunction, or earnest supplications. The tenderness of her love, and her feeling sense of her own wants formed her a prayer without studied or chosen words, or long reasoning and reflection in meditation. St. Teresa says she had been before accustomed to feel often a tender heavenly sweetness in her devotions; but at this

time her soul began to be frequently raised by God to the sublimer degrees of supernatural passive prayer. For she observes, that the servants of divine love, in which they chiefly advance by prayer, arrive not on a sudden at the highest degree of prayer.—True love is a precious gift, and the soul must be more and more prepared and disposed as she advances. The gift of prayer and an interior life have difficulties to be overcome, which cost much to flesh and blood, especially in the beginning or first steps by which a soul is prepared to receive it.

St. Teresa distinguishes four degrees in mental prayer. In the first the soul applies herself to holy meditation, for which a calm state of mind and a retired place are necessary, and the life of Christ one of the first and most important subjects. No state of dryness or difficulties from distractions must make a person lay it aside ; he is not to seek his own satisfaction, and ought to be content with humbling himself before God, and knowing that his divine Majesty regards the desire of our hearts to love him, and knows and compassionates our miseries and weakness more than we ourselves can do. We must be willing to bear our cross, to pay as well as to receive ; and the saint says she afterwards experienced that one hour of consolations abundantly paid, even in this life, for all the crosses she had sustained. Our desire ought to be ever to acquiesce in the will of God, to rejoice in carrying our cross with our Lord, and sincerely to acknowledge ourselves infinitely unworthy to be admitted into the divine presence, much less to receive the least drop of the dew of his consolations, which only the poor excess of his infinite goodness could ever bestow on the most unworthy of his creatures, out of mere condescension to their weakness, which engages him by these sensible caresses to overcome their obstinacy, and draw them to his love. St. Teresa assigns the second degree of prayer to be that of quiet, in which the powers of the soul are recollected, but not absorbed in God ; the will or affections being strongly captivated in God, and employed in acts of love, and the understanding and memory aiding some little the will to enjoy this its sovereign good and quiet, though the will is so taken up in God as not to regard or be dis-

tracted by the concurrence of these powers. This state is accompanied by an exceedingly great interior comfort or delight; the powers of the soul are applied without labour or pains, (so that this prayer never wearies how long soever it continues,) and often tears flow with joy, of their own accord, or without being procured. The intellect may here suggest certain humble silent reflections of thanksgiving, love, or the like, which increase the flame of the will, but if the intellect raises too great a tumult, or the will strives to silence or recollect it, or the memory or imagination, this quiet is lost and vanishes. This recollection or quiet in the exercise of divine love, inspired and produced by the Spirit of God, differs infinitely from a pretended quiet of the will which human industry may strive to produce in it, but which is without any effect or sublime operation; it quickly expires, and is succeeded by great dryness in the affections. The devil sometimes, by working upon the imagination, endeavours to imitate the visits of the Divine Spirit, but an experienced soul easily discovers his illusions, as St. Teresa remarks; for he leaves the mind disturbed, not calm as the Holy Ghost always does; neither does he leave any impression of profound infused humility, but generally an inclination to pride; nor any strong dispositions to virtue; nor great spiritual light in the understanding; nor steady resolution or constancy in virtue, which are the effects of heavenly visitations, as the saint remarks. The third degree of prayer she calls the repose of the soul: it is the prayer of union, in which the soul overflows with incomparably greater joy, ardour, and delight in the divine love, than in the former; she consumes herself in the most sublime affections of love and praise, as St. Teresa explains at large; and is not inactive, as the false mystics or quietists pretended, though she knows not at all how she acts. The fourth degree of prayer distinguished by her is a more perfect union of all the powers of the soul, suspended and absorbed in God, as she explains at large. This is accompanied with so great interior joy and delight, that the saint assures us a single moment would be, even in this life, a sufficient recompense for all the pains we can have undergone. St. Teresa

distinguishes the prayer of union, in which her soul was able to resist the divine operation, from a rapture or ecstasy in which it could not resist, and in which her body lost all the use of its voluntary functions, and every part remained in the same posture, without feeling, hearing or seeing, at least so as to perceive it; though she says, on such occasions the soul knows she is in a rapture, whilst she is by the most ardent love ravished in God. These raptures continue sometimes for hours, though, not all that time, in the same degree. In them the soul sees in a wonderful and clear manner, the emptiness of earthly things, the greatness and goodness of God, and the like. Though, before, she saw nothing in herself but desires of serving God, in a rapture she beholds herself covered with spots, defects, and faults, for the smallest are clearly visible in a bright beam of divine light darting in upon her; she sees that she is all misery and imperfection, and cries out: "Who shall be justified before thee?" As the vessel which seemed before clear in a crystal glass, appears full of atoms if it be placed in the beams of the sun; so this divine sun, by darting its bright beams upon the soul, sets before her eyes all her imperfections and sins as so many hideous spots. At this sight she is confounded and humbled on one side beyond expression, and on the other astonished at the greatness and goodness of God, and transported in an ecstasy of love and adoration. St. Teresa mentions, that having suffered two raptures in the church, which could not escape the observation of others, she prayed that this might no more happen to her in public, and from that time it had not when she wrote, but this was not long after. She says she was sometimes raised from the ground in prayer, though she endeavoured to resist it.

St. Teresa, after having exercised herself twenty years, in mental prayer, began to withdraw herself from the conversation of secular persons, and other occasions of dissipation and little faults which she exceedingly exaggerates, and was favoured by God very frequently with the prayer of quiet, and also with that of union, which latter sometimes continued a long time, with great improvement of her soul, and with excessive heavenly joy and love. The

examples of certain women who had been miserably the dupes of a deluded imagination and of the devil, much terrified her, and though she was persuaded her favours were from God, she was so much perplexed with these fears that she resolved to take advice ; and she consulted so many persons, though obliging them to secrecy, that the affair was divulged abroad, to her great mortification and confusion. The first person to whom she opened her mind was a gentleman of the town, named Francis of Salsedo, a married man, who for thirty-eight years had practised mental prayer with great assiduity, and with his virtuous lady, who concurred with him in his great charities, fasts, and other exercises of piety, was an example of virtue to the whole country. This gentleman introduced to her Dr. Daza, a learned and virtuous priest, and after an examination, from what she declared of herself, judged her to be deluded by the devil, saying, such divine favours were not consistent with a life so full of imperfections as she made out hers to be. Her alarms being increased by this decision, the gentleman advised her to speak with one of those fathers of the Society of Jesus, who were lately come into Spain, and were eminent for their manner of prayer, and their experience in virtue and an interior life. This gentleman (to whom the saint says she owed her salvation and her comfort,) bade her not to be discouraged, because she was not delivered from all her imperfections in one day, for God would do it by little and little, and said that he himself had remained whole years in reforming some very light things. By the means of certain friends one of these fathers of the Society visited her, to whom she made a very careful general confession, in which, with the confession of her sins, she gave him an account of all the particulars, through the course of her whole life, relating to her manner of prayer, and her late extraordinary favours. The father assured her these were divine graces, but told her she had neglected to lay the true foundation of an interior life, by the practice of an universal self-denial and mortification, by which a person learns to govern his senses, subdue entirely his passions, and cut of all inordinate attachments in the heart. That spiritual builder attempts

to raise an edifice of devotion upon a quicksand, who does not begin by laying the foundation by humility, and that spirit of compunction and practice of general self-denial, which being joined with a life of prayer, will be a crucifixion of the old man, and a reformation of the affections of the soul. By the advice of this confessor, St. Teresa made every day a meditation on some part of our Lord's passion, and set herself heartily to practise some kinds of penance which were very inconsistent with her weak health ; for, on pretence of her great infirmities, she had thought little of any other mortifications than such as were general. By the prudent order of the same servant of God, though he judged her extraordinary gifts in prayer to be from God, she endeavoured for two months to resist and reject them. But her resistance was in vain : and when she laboured the most to turn herself from heavenly communications, our Lord overwhelmed her most abundantly with them. St. Francis Borgia, at that time commissary-general to the Jesuits in Spain, coming to Avila, was desired to speak to the saint, and having heard her account of her prayer and state, he assured her, without hesitation, that the Spirit of God was the author of her prayer ; commended her resistance for a trial during the two months past, but advised her not to resist any elevations if our Lord was pleased to visit her so in prayer, provided she had no hand in endeavouring to procure them ; and he prescribed her greater mortifications than she had hitherto undertaken.

Her confessor being called away, she chose another of the Society of Jesus. This was F. Balthasar Alvarez du Paz, a very spiritual man, who, through severe interior trials during the space of twenty years, arrived at the perfection of holy contemplation and an interior life. This excellent director took notice of certain immortifications in the conduct of St. Teresa, contrary to her perfect sanctification, especially in her remaining still sensible to the satisfaction of ingenious, witty, and learned conversation, of which he put her in mind. Her answer was, that she had hoped her motive in it had been always for the best, and that it seemed a kind of ingratitude in her entirely to deny herself to certain

friends. He told her she would do well to beg of God that he would direct her to do what was most pleasing to him, and for that purpose to recite every day the hymn, *Veni Creator Spiritus*. She did so for a considerable time, and one day whilst she was reciting that hymn she was favoured with a rapture, in which she heard these words, which were spoken to her in the most interior part of her soul: "I will not have thee hold conversation with men, but with angels." She was exceedingly amazed at this voice, which was the first she heard in that manner: from that time she renounced all company but such as business or the direct service of God obliged her to converse with. The saint had afterwards frequent experience of such interior speeches after raptures, and explains how they are even more distinct and clear than those which men hear with their corporal ears, and how they are also operative, producing in the soul the strongest impressions and sentiments of virtue, and filling her with an assurance of their truth, and with joy and peace; whereas all the like illusions of the devil leave her much disquieted and disturbed, and produce no good effects, as she experienced two or three times. The saint earned these great heavenly comforts by severe sufferings; or rather God purified and improved her soul in his love and all virtues, both by his sweetest consolations and the sharpest trials. She says of herself, under the name of a third person, what follows: "I know one who for these forty years (since God hath vouchsafed to honour her with special favours) hath not passed one day without anguish and various kinds of sufferings, besides sicknesses and great fatigues." Whilst F. Balthasar Alvarez was her director she suffered grievous persecutions for three years, and, during two of them, extreme interior desolation of soul intermixed with gleams of spiritual comfort and favours. It was her earnest desire that all her heavenly communications should be kept secret: but they were become the common subject of discourse in every conversation, and even in the public schools, and she was everywhere censured and ridiculed as an enthusiast or hypocrite: her confessor was persecuted on her account. Six religious men of note who had been her friends, after a conference on this sub-

ject, decided that she seemed deluded by the devil, and prevailed on F. Balthasar to go with them to her, and to order her not to communicate so frequently (which was her greatest support and comfort), not to live so strictly retired, and not to prolong her meditations beyond the time prescribed by the rule of her house. Her very friends reviled and shunned her as one who had communication with the devil, and some hesitated not to call her a devil. F. Balthasar, indeed, bade her be of good courage; for if she was deluded by the devil, he could not hurt her, provided she laboured only to advance in charity, patience, humility, and all virtues. One day the saint, after having suffered a long and grievous desolation and affliction of spirit, suddenly fell into a rapture, and heard a voice interiorly saying to her: "Fear not, daughter; for it is I, and I will not forsake thee: do not fear." Her mind was instantly quieted and composed, and filled with light; her soul was drowned in heavenly sweetness and joy, and being endued with strength and courage, she challenged the devils, making no more reckoning of them than of so many flies, and saying to herself, that God, whose servant she desired to be, is all powerful, and under his protection nothing could hurt her; and as she pretended and desired no other thing than to please him, she joyfully met all sufferings and renounced all ease and contentment, if she could only be so happy as to accomplish in all things his holy will.

A confessor whom the saint made use of once during the absence of F. Balthasar, told her that her prayer was an illusion, and commanded her when she saw any vision, to make the sign of the cross, and to insult the vision, as of a fiend. The saint assures us, that these visions and raptures carried with them their own evidence and demonstration, so that whilst they continued, it was impossible for her to harbour the least doubt but they were from God. Nevertheless, she knew them to be subordinate to the ordinary means which God has established to conduct our souls to him: and as all pretended visions must be false and condemned which should contradict the Scripture, or the authority of the church, so no such visions can exempt us from any duty towards the church

or others: for God never derogates by private revelations from his general laws and established rules. Therefore, in simplicity, she obeyed this order of her confessor; and the saint assures us, that Christ himself in several visions approved her conduct in so doing. She adds, that in these visions to use some exterior action of scorn was a terrible thing to her, as she could not possibly believe but that it was God. "And I besought our Lord," says she, "with much instance to free me from being deceived; and this I did continually, and with abundance of tears. I begged it also by the prayers of St. Peter and St. Paul; because, as I had my first vision on their festival, our Lord told me they would take such care of me, that I should not be deceived. Accordingly I have often seen very clearly these two glorious saints, my very good patrons, upon my left hand. But this making signs of scorn when I saw the vision of our Lord, gave me excessive pain and trouble. For when I saw him present before my eyes, it was impossible for me to believe it was the devil. That I might not be perpetually crossing myself, I took a cross into my hands, and this I did almost always. I used not the signs of scorn often; for this afflicted me too much, and I remembered the affronts which the Jews put upon our Lord; and I humbly besought him to pardon me, since I did this in obedience to those whom he had appointed in his own place. He told me not to be troubled at it, for I did well in obeying them; but he said he would bring them "to understand the truth;" which they afterward did. "When they forbade me the use of mental prayer, our Lord appeared angry at it, and bade me tell them this was tyranny. He also gave me reasons to know that this was not the devil. Once when I held in my hand the cross which was at the end of my beads, he took it into his hand; and when he gave it to me again, it appeared to be of four great stones, incomparably more precious than diamonds. A diamond is but a counterfeit in comparison of these. They had the five wounds of our Lord engraved upon them after a most curious manner. He told me I should always see this cross so from that time forward, which I did; for I no longer saw the matter of which the cross was made, but only those precious stones; though

no other saw them but myself. When I was commanded to use this resistance to those favours, they increased much more, and I was never out of prayer. Even whilst I slept I was uttering loving complaints to our Lord, and his love was still increased in me. Nor was it in my power to give over thinking on him, and least of all when I endeavoured to do so. Yet I obeyed as well as I could, though I was able to do little or nothing in that respect. Our Lord never freed me from obeying them: yet he gave me all assurance that it was he, and instructed me what I should say to them. There grew in me so impetuous a love of God, that I found myself even dying through a desire to see him, my true life, nor did I know how or where to find this life, but by death," &c. Bishop Yopez informs us, that this cross fell afterward into the hands of the saint's sister, Jane of Ahumada, who died at Alva; and he relates some miracles wrought by it. Pope Gregory XV., in the bull of the canonization of St. Teresa, commends this example of her obedience as the test of her spirit and of her visions, &c. "By the command of her confessors she humbly showed marks of contempt under the visions of our Lord, not without a great recompense of her obedience. She was wont to say, that she might be deceived in discerning visions and revelations; but could not in obeying superiors," says this Pope.

Though after two years spent in frequent interior desolation, the visits of the Holy Ghost restored her interior peace with great sweetness and spiritual light, which dispelled her former darkness, she continued to suffer a whole year longer a persecution from her friends, which seemed general. F. Balthasar Alvarez, who was a spiritual man, but exceeding timorous, durst not oppose the torrent, or decide with confidence that the Holy Ghost was the author of the wonderful operations in her prayer, though he continued to hear her confessions, which scarce any other person in the country would have done, and he comforted her, saying, that so long as she improved herself in virtue, the devil could do her no prejudice. She had learned to be so perfectly dead to herself, that with regard to herself, she was not the least concerned what the whole world said or did concerning her; but the

judgment of others, as to her state, caused her still frequent alarms and fears, which contributed both to purify her soul, and to prove more clearly her spirit of prayer. In 1559, St. Peter of Alcantara, commissary-general and visitor of the Franciscans, coming to Avila, conversed several days with St. Teresa. Few saints seem to have been more experienced in an interior life, or better versed in the supernatural gifts than this holy man. He discovered in Teresa the most certain marks of the wonderful graces of the Holy Ghost, expressed great compassion for her sufferings from the contradictions and slanders even of good men and learned doctors, and publicly declared, that except the truths of holy faith, nothing appeared to him more evident than that her soul was conducted by the spirit of God ; but he foretold her that she was not come to an end of her persecutions and sufferings. The authority of this glorious saint, the reputation of whose judgment and sanctity gave his confident decision the greatest weight turned the stream exceedingly in favour of the holy virgin. It is not to be expressed what comfort and advantage she received from the conversation of this holy man, who strongly recommended her defence and direction to F. Balthasar, at that time her ordinary confessor, though he was shortly after removed to another place. After the trials already made, and the judgment passed by St. Peter of Alcantara, not only F. Balthasar, but many other persons of the greatest piety, learning, and authority declared confidently that the marks and reasons were most clear and convincing, that in her ecstasies and prayer she was conducted in a supernatural manner by the Divine Spirit. In her life, written by herself, we have a general account of the wonderful things she experienced. She sometimes suffered interior trials of darkness in the mind, and great anguish of soul, joined with extreme pain of bodily sickness, so that the powers of her soul seemed on some occasions suspended through excessive sorrow, almost as they were usually in raptures through excess of joy. For these afflictions God made her very ample amends ; for they were always followed with a great abundance of favours, and her soul seemed to come out of them, like gold more refined and pure

out of the crucible, to see our Lord within herself. Then those troubles appeared little, which before seemed insupportable, and she was willing to return again to suffer still greater tribulations and persecutions ; for all in the end bring more profit, though the saint says she never bore hers as she ought. Besides interior troubles and temptations, she sometimes met with exterior afflictions, and frequently saw devils in hideous figures ; but she drove them away by the cross or holy water : and when the place was sprinkled with holy water they never returned. One day, whilst she was in prayer, she had a vision of hell, in which she seemed in spirit to be lodged in a place which she had deserved, that is, into which the vanities and dangerous amusements of her youth would have led her, had she not been reclaimed by the divine mercy. Nothing can be added to the energy with which she describes the pain she felt from an interior fire and unspeakable despair ; the thick darkness, without the least glimpse of light, in which she knew not how, she says, one sees all that can afflict the sight : from torturing discontent and anguish, the dismal thought of eternity, and the agony of the soul by which she is her own executioner, and tears herself, as it were, to pieces, of which it is too little to say that it seems a butchering and a rending of herself.—The saint says, that in comparison of these pains all torments of this world are no more than pictures, and burning here a trifle in respect of that fire. This was but a representation of those torments ; yet she says that after this vision all things seemed easy to her in this life, in comparison of one moment of those sufferings. She continued ever after most heartily to thank God for having mercifully delivered her, to weep for sinners, and to compassionate the blindness of so many who swallow down, as if they were nothing, even most grievous sins, which though she had been most wicked, she had by the divine mercy always shunned, as murmuring, detraction, covetousness, envy, and the like.

If the various proofs by which it pleased God to try Teresa served only to purify her virtue, the heavenly communications with which she was favoured gave her a new lustre. In her ecstasies, revelations were imparted

to her, with visions, and other great favours, all which served continually to humble and fortify her soul, to give her a strong disrelish of the things of this life, and to inflame her with the most ardent desires of possessing God. In raptures she was sometimes elevated in the air, of which she gives the following description. Having said that the soul has a power of resisting in the prayer of union, but not in raptures, in which her soul was absolutely carried away, so that she could not stop it, she adds: " Sometimes my whole body was carried with it, so as to be raised up from the ground, though this was seldom. When I had a mind to resist these raptures, there seemed to me somewhat of so mighty force under my feet, which raised me up, that I know not what to compare it to. All my resistance availed little; for when our Lord hath a mind to do a thing, no power is able to stand against it. The effects of this rapture are very great. First, the mighty power of the Lord is hereby made manifest; for when he is pleased, we are no more able to detain our bodies than our souls: we are not masters of them, but must, even against our will, acknowledge that we have a superior, that these favours come from him, and that of ourselves we are able to do nothing at all: and a great impression of humility is made on the soul. Further I confess it also produced in me a greater fear (which at first was extreme) to see that a massy body should be thus raised up from the earth. For though it be the spirit which draws it after it, and though it be done with great sweetness and delight (if it be not resisted), yet our senses are not thereby lost; at least, I was so perfectly in my senses, that I understood I was then raised up. There also appears hereby so great a majesty in him who can do this, that it makes even the hair of the head to stand on end; and there remains in the soul a mighty fear to offend so great a God. Yet this fear is wrapt up in an excessive love, which the soul conceives afresh toward him, whom she finds to bear so great a love to such wretched worms as we are. For he seems not content with drawing the soul to himself, but he will needs draw up the very body too, even whilst it is mortal, and compounded of so filthy an earth, as we have made it by our

sins. This favour also leaves in the soul a wonderful disengagement from all the things of this world. In raptures of the spirit alone there seems a total loosening of the soul from all things, as it concerns the spirit. But here it seems that also the body partakes of this disengagement. And it breeds such a new aversion and disgust of the things of this world, that it makes even our life much more painful to us," &c.

Bishop Yopez relates, that the saint, when she was prioress of the convent of St. Joseph at Avila, as she was going to receive the communion at the hands of the bishop, Don Alvarez of Mendoza, was raised in a rapture higher than the grate through which (as is usual in nunneries) she was to receive the holy communion ; of which also sister Mary Baptist, prioress of Valladolid was an eye-witness with others. Likewise Bannes, a very learned theologian, of the order of St. Dominic, whose name is famous in the schools, and who was for some time confessor of St. Teresa, testified that the saint one day, in public, as she was raised in the air in the choir, held herself by some rails, and prayed thus : " Lord, suffer not, for such a favour, a wicked woman to pass for virtuous." He mentions other instances in the public choir ; but says, that at her earnest request, this never happened to her in public during the last fifteen years of her life. Richard of St. Victor teaches, that raptures arise from a vehement fire of divine love in the will, or from excessive spiritual joy, or from a beam of heavenly light darting upon the understanding. We learn from St. Teresa, that these three effects of an external grace usually concur in raptures. She says, the faculties or powers of the soul are lost by being most straitly united to God, so that she thought she neither saw nor heard, nor perceived any thing about her ; but this was only for a short space during the highest part of some raptures ; during the rest of the rapture, the soul, though she can do nothing of herself as to the exterior or the voluntary motions of the body, understands and hears things as if they were spoken from afar off. When she returns to herself, her powers continue in some degree absorbed, sometimes for two or three days. In these raptures a

soul clearly sees and as it were, feels, now perfectly nothing all earthly things are : how gross an error, and abominable a lie it is, to give the name of honour to what the world calls so ; real honour being built on truth, not on a lie. A like idea she has of the vanity and folly of the love of money, and of the baseness of earthly pleasures ; and she learns that nothing is really true but what conduces to virtue, and makes no account of anything which brings us not nearer to God. The greatness and goodness of God, the excess of his love, the sweetness of his service, and such other great truths, are placed in a great light, and made sensibly manifest to her ; all which she understands with a clearness which can be no way expressed : the impression whereof remains afterward in the soul. In the rapture she acquires also a liberty and dominion, which results from her perfect disengagement from creatures, upon which she looks down, as raised above them, and above herself ; and she is filled with confusion that she should have been so miserable as to have ever been entangled by them. She looks back upon her former blindness with amazement ; and considers with compassion the misery of those who still remain in the like. But no effects of a rapture are so remarkable or profitable as the clear sight which the soul receives in it of her own imperfections, baseness, and nothingness, together with the most profound sentiments of humility, and on the other side, a great knowledge of the goodness, majesty, and boundless power of God, with the most ardent love and desires of speedily possessing him for ever. Hence St. Teresa, when her soul was deeply wounded and totally inflamed, as it were, by a spark falling from the immense fire of the love our Lord bore her, often repeated, with incredible earnestness, that verse : "As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." Among the visions which the saint had of the joys of heaven, in one she saw her parents in bliss ; in others, much greater secrets of that glorious kingdom were shown her, at which she remained amazed, and was ever after exceedingly moved entirely to despise all things below ; but she found it impossible to give any description of the least part of what she saw,

the brightness of the sun being mean and obscure in comparison of that light, which no human imagination can paint to itself, nor any of the other things which she then understood, and that with a sovereign delight, all the senses enjoying a superior degree of sweetness, which cannot be declared. She remained once about an hour in that condition, and our Lord showing most admirable things, said to her: "See what they lose who are against me: do not forbear to tell them of it." "But, O Lord," said the saint, "what good will my telling do them, whom their own malice blindeth, unless thou givest them light?" She adds that the contempt of this world, and the desires of heaven with which these visions inspired her, could not be declared. "Hence, also," says she, "I lost the fear of death, of which I had formerly a great apprehension." Such was the value she learned to set upon the glory and happiness of loving and praising God in his eternal kingdom, that for the least degree of increase in it, she should have been most willing to suffer all that can be imagined to the end of the world, though to her who deserved hell, the lowest place in heaven would be an infinite and most undeserved mercy.

She sometimes saw the mystery of one God, in three persons, in so clear and wonderful a manner, as much comforted and amazed her; sometimes Christ in the bosom of his Father, and frequently his humanity in its glorified state so beautiful and delightful, that she comprehended that to behold one glorified body, especially the adorable humanity of Christ, would alone be a great felicity. She often heard his Majesty say to her with demonstration of great love: "Thou shalt now be mine, and I am thine." She was favoured with many visions in the holy eucharist: and sometimes with apparitions of the Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph, and other saints; and frequently of angels of different orders standing near her, though she did not know their orders; for they never told her this. One of these visions she describes as follows: "I saw an angel very near me, toward my left side, in a corporal form (which is not usual with me; for though angels are often represented to me, it is only by the intellectual vision). This angel appeared rather lit-

tle than big, and very beautiful ; his face was so inflamed that he seemed to be one of those highest angels called seraphim, who seem to be all on fire with divine love. He had in his hand a long golden dart, and at the end of the point methought there was a little fire : and I conceived that he thrust it several times through my heart, after such a manner that it passed through my very entrails ; and when he drew it out, methought it pulled them out with it, and left me wholly inflamed with a great love of God." She says that this wound caused her a great pain in her soul, which also affected her body ; but this extremity of pain was accompanied with excessive delight, and whilst it continued, she went up and down like one transported, not caring to see or speak, but only to burn and be consumed with that pain, which was a greater happiness to her than any that can be found in created things. The saint's desire to die, that she might be speedily united to God, was tempered by her ardent desire to suffer for his love : and the excess of his love for her, and of the comforts which he so often afforded her made her esteem it as of no account that she should desire to suffer afflictions for his sake. And she writes : " It seems to me there is no reason why I should live but only to suffer ; and accordingly, this is the thing which I beg with most affection of God. Sometimes I say to him with my whole heart, Lord, either to die, or to suffer : I beg no other thing for myself. It comforts me also to hear the clock strike ; for so methinks I draw a little nearer to the seeing of God ; since one hour more of my life is past." The saint mentions several instances of persons of remarkable virtue, some in a secular, others in a religious state, of her own nunnery, and of several other orders, whose souls she saw in visions freed from purgatory through the prayers of devout persons, and carried up to heaven, several hours or days after their departure ; though their penitential and holy lives, their patience in long illnesses, their great regularity in their convent, and their tears, humility, and compunction at their death, which edified all who knew them, had persuaded her they would be admitted straight to glory. Besides the particular instances she relates, she adds,

she had seen the same of many others. "But among all the souls which I have seen, I have not known any one to have escaped purgatory, except three, F. Peter of Alcantara, a religious man of the order of St. Dominic, (F. Peter Ivagnez,) and a Carmelite friar." She was given to understand that this last was exempted from purgatory by the indulgences granted to those of his order, he having been a religious man, and having faithfully observed his profession: "which," says she, "I suppose was signified to me to imply, that more is required to make a religious man than the wearing of the habit," namely, the spirit and faithful observance of his rule. Spiritual graces require this condition. All these visions and raptures tended exceedingly to the spiritual improvement of the saint in humility, divine love, and all other virtues. By them she was advertised of all her failings, and made courageous, and perfect in the practice of all virtues; she learned that it is a misery, and a subject of patience, to converse in the world, to behold the comedy or puppet-show of this life, and to be employed in complying with the necessities of a mortal body by eating and sleeping, which captivate the mind, and are the occupation of our banishment from God. When she once grieved that all her Spanish pious books were taken from her, our Lord said to her: "Let not this trouble thee; I will give thee a living book." This she experienced by mental prayer, and his heavenly communications; she learned by these raptures, great heavenly mysteries, secrets, and things to come, which she foretold; and as she assures us, not the least tittle of what was thus revealed to her, ever failed to come to pass, though, at the time of her revelation and prediction, all appearances were contrary. She mentions that God, through her prayers, brought several sinners to repentance, and granted great graces to many others, as she learned by revelations. Also, that at her earnest request he restored sight to one that was almost quite blind, and health to some others labouring under painful and dangerous distempers.

The account which this saint has drawn up of these visions, revelations, and raptures, carries with it the intrinsic marks of evidence. It is not possible attentively

to peruse it, and not be convinced of the sincerity of the author, by the genuine simplicity of the style, scrupulous nicety, and fear of exaggerating the least circumstance, making what might be doubtful appear certain, or in the least advancing any thing which might be false or allowing any thing to conjectures; also by her unfeigned humility, which makes her speak everywhere against herself, omit nothing that could tend to her disgrace, magnify the least faults of her life, according to the apprehensions of her pure and timorous conscience, and leave every where the strongest impressions of her guilt, though she was commanded by her confessor not to exceed moderation in speaking of her sins, and though, as Bishop Yenez, who was thoroughly acquainted with her, and knew her whole life, observes, could she have instanced in any other sins in particular, she would certainly have been more explicit; and she was obliged to acknowledge that God had preserved her from detraction, envy, impurity, and the like vices. The saint assures us, that she may be deceived, but would not lie in the least point, and would rather die a thousand times. Her doctrine is called by the church, in the prayer of her festival, heavenly, is conformable to the spirit of the saints, and highly approved by the most experienced proficients in divine contemplation. All acknowledge that the most secret *adyta* of the sanctuary are here laid open, and the most abstruse maxims, which experience alone can teach, but no words utter, are explained with greater perspicuity than the subject seemed capable of bearing; and this was done by an illiterate woman, who wrote alone without the assistance of books, without study, or acquired abilities, who entered upon the recital of the divine favours with sentiments of humility and reluctance, submitting every thing, without reserve, to the judgment of her confessor, and much more to that of the church, and complaining that by this task she was hindered from spinning. The circumstances and the manner of the narration in each part furnish a chain of corroborating proofs in favour of the work; and as Mr. Woodhead observes, her frequent pertinent digressions, the devotions, ejaculations, and colloquies with our Lord, which she everywhere inter-

sperses, from her habit of prayer, the prolix parentheses, and the iterated apologies for these surprises of herself, show that neither her matter nor her method was pre-designed. The heroic sentiments and practice of all the most sublime virtues with which this book is interspersed in every page, suffice alone to evince that what is here written could not be founded on chimerical illusions, or be the effect of a heated imagination. In the raptures and visions of this saint we admire indeed the divine goodness in his infinite condescension; but what we ought chiefly to consider and study herein are the great lessons of virtue which we meet with in the relation of these miraculous favours, and in the wonderful example of this saint.

How perfectly she excelled in obedience appears from this circumstance, that on all occasions she preferred this virtue to her revelations, saying, in them she might be deceived by the devil, but could not in obedience. In founding her convents, and many other things, when she had received a command from Christ, she availed not herself thereof, but waited till, by the rules of obedience, she was authorized to execute the divine commission, depending, however, steadfastly on him who promised or commanded the undertaking, that he would carry the same by the regular means into execution; in which she was never disappointed. F. Balthasar Alvarez said of her: "Do you see Teresa of Jesus? What sublime graces has she received of God! yet she is like the most tractable little child with regard to every thing I can say to her." She called obedience the soul of a religious life, the short and sure road to perfect sanctity, the most powerful means to subject our will perfectly to that of God, and to overcome our passions, and which is the sacrifice of our whole lives to God. "I esteem it a greater grace," said she, "to pass one day in humble obedience, putting forth sighs to God, from a contrite and afflicted heart, than to spend several days in prayer. Is it nothing great to abandon, in some sense, the enjoyment of God, in order to do his will manifested to us in obedience? Long prayer will not advance a soul at a time when she is called to obedience," &c. She used often

to repeat : "Obedience is put to the test in different commands." All murmuring excuses, or delays, she condemns as contrary to obedience. As for her own part, even when superior, she studied by many contrivances to obey others, and always obeyed her confessor as she would have done God himself.

A desire most perfectly to obey God in all things, moved her to make a vow never with full knowledge to commit a venial sin, and in every action to do what seemed to her most perfect,—a vow which in persons less perfect would be unlawful, because it would be an occasion of transgressions. Humility, the root of true obedience, and the fruitful parent of other virtues, was that in which she placed her strength, and her humility increased in proportion as she received from God the more extraordinary favours, which she saw to be his pure gifts without her contributing any to them ; and because she profited so little by them, she condemned and humbled herself the more. The virtues of others seemed to her more meritorious, and she conceived that there was not in the world one worse than herself. Hence she was the more inflamed to love and praise the gracious goodness of God, to whom alone she entirely ascribed his gifts, not usurping an atom of them to herself, and separating from them her infidelities and miseries, which was all that was of her own growth, and of which, by an infused light, she had the most extensive and fullest knowledge and the most sincere feeling. Hence, seated in the centre of her own baseness and unworthiness, she was always covered with confusion and shame in the divine presence, as a spouse blushing at the remembrance of her treasons and infidelities towards the best and greatest of lords and husbands. She treated with all men, confounded in herself, as unworthy to appear before them. She sincerely looked upon herself as deserving every sort of disgrace and contempt, as one who deserved hell, and whose only support against despair was the infinite mercy of God: and she endeavoured to convince others of her wretchedness and grievous sinfulness with as great solicitude and affection as an ambitious proud man desires to pass for virtuous. There are many who affect to use this language

of themselves, but cannot bear from others any contempt or injurious treatment. This St. Teresa received on all occasions with great inward joy, and exceedingly desired; and all honours and marks of esteem were most grievous to her. This satisfaction which the heart feels in its own just contempt is, as it were, the marrow and pith of true humility, says Bishop Yopez. These dispositions were in her so perfect, as to surprise above all other things those who were best acquainted with her interior, and are sufficiently discoverable in her writings.

Nothing is more dangerous or nice, and nothing more difficult than for a man to speak much of himself without discovering a complacency in himself in speaking superfluously concerning what belongs to him, and without discovering symptoms of secret self-love and pride, even in a studied affectation to disguise them, or in colouring or suppressing his own disgraces or weaknesses, and in displaying covertly his own talents and advantages. And nothing seems a clearer proof how perfectly our saint was dead to herself by sincere humility than the artless manner in which she constantly, and not on certain occasions only, speaks of herself with a view to debase herself in every thing. Her exterior conduct breathed this sincere disposition of her soul. Though superior and foundress, she chose unaffectedly the greatest humiliations that could be practised in her order. If she pronounced a word in the divine office with a false accent, she prostrated herself in penance; confessed in chapter, and humbled herself for the least faults of inadvertence with surprising humility and alacrity, and underwent the most humbling penances in the refectory, and elsewhere, with the same. It was her pleasure to steal secretly into the choir after the office, to fold up the cloaks of the sisters, to choose for her part of the work to sweep the most filthy places in the yard, and to perform the lowest offices in serving at table, or in the kitchen, in which place she was often seen suddenly absorbed in God, with the utensils or instruments of her business in her hands: for every place was to her a sanctuary, and no employment hindered her from offering to God a continual sacrifice of humility and of ardent love and praise. Nothing is more

admirable than the lessons of humility, which she gives in her writings, and which she inculcates to her religious, recommending to them especially never to excuse themselves in faults, never to murmur, but to rejoice in abjection; never to justify themselves when accused falsely, unless charity or prudence made it necessary; to abhor every thought or mark of pre-eminence or distinction of ranks, which she extremely exaggerates as the bane of all true humility and virtue in a religious community, &c. It was her usual exhortation, that, though we cannot arrive at the perfection of other virtues, or at a perfect imitation of our blessed Redeemer, we can humble ourselves low enough, and be ashamed to fall so far short of Christ, our model, in the cordial love of contempt, and in embracing humiliations, which he underwent for our sake, but which are our due and remedy. She teaches that false humility is attended with interior trouble, uneasiness, and darkness in the mind in the confession of faults, and in embracing humiliations; but that true humility does these things with alacrity and interior light. She used to repeat to her sisters, that sincere humility is the groundwork of prayer, this whole edifice being founded in it; and that as humility is the foundation, so is it the measure of our progress in the spirit of prayer, and all other virtues.

Her spirit of penance was not less edifying than her humility. Who, without floods of tears for his own insensibility, can call to mind the wonderful compunction with which the saints wept and punished themselves during their whole lives for the lightest transgressions? St. Teresa had the misfortune in her youth to have been betrayed into certain dangerous amusements and vanities; though she would not for the world have ever consented knowingly to any mortal sin; for she had always hell and her sins before her eyes, penetrated with the compunction of a Magdalen, or a Thais. Her love of penance, after she was well instructed in that virtue, made her desire to set no bounds to her mortifications, by which she chastised and subdued her flesh by long watchings in prayer, by rigorous disciplines, hair-cloths and austere fasts. Moved by this spirit of penance she restored the original severity

of her rule: and notwithstanding her bad health, observed its fasts of eight months in the year, and other austerities, unless some grievous fit of illness made them absolutely impossible. On such occasions it was with great repugnance that she consented to use some small dispensations, but said she understood this repugnance proceeded rather from self-love than from a spirit of penance. Her prudence and pious zeal for religious discipline, and penance, appear in the caution with which she guarded against the granting dispensations too easily on account of weak health, which opens a wide door to all relaxations in religious orders. She tells her nuns, that it is often the devil that suggests the idea of imaginary indispositions; or that sloth and immortification magnifies those that are slight; that it is often a mark of self-love to complain of little ailments, and that the more the body is indulged, the more numerous and craving its demands and necessities grow. She insists on the universal self-denial, by which a religious person studies to do his own will in nothing: which practice, if it sounds harsh, will be found sweet, and will bring much contentment, holy peace, and comfort. St. Francis of Assisium seems not to have carried the love of holy poverty higher than St. Teresa, though she mitigated some points of her first reform in this particular. If even in secular princes, excess, vanities, and superfluities are sinful, how carefully ought the shadow of such abuses to be banished from a religious life! It was her saying, that the least inordinate attachment hinders the flight of a soul upwards; to prevent which she obliged her nuns often to change every thing they used; reduced every thing in their mean clothing coarse diet, and cells, to what was indispensably necessary. She speaks most pathetically against superfluous or stately buildings. She worked with her hands to gain a subsistence. The modesty of the countenance of this holy virgin was a silent, strong exhortation to the love of purity, as Bishop Yepez testifies, who was persuaded shenever felt in her whole life any importunate assaults against that virtue. When one asked her advice about impure temptations, she answered, that she knew not what they meant. A noble and generous disposition of

soul inclined our saint to conceive the most tender sentiments of gratitude toward all men from whom she had ever received the least service. The gratitude she expressed to God for his immense favours was derived from a higher source. In her writings she everywhere speaks with respect and affection of her persecutors, and putting pious constructions on their words and actions, represents them always as perfect servants of God, and her true friends. Contumelies she always bore in silence and with joy. She often said of those that reviled her, that they were the only persons that truly knew her. Under grievous slanders with which she was attacked at Seville, one asked her, how she could hold her peace? She answered with a smile: "No music is so agreeable to my ears. They have reason for what they say, and speak truth." Her invincible patience under all pains of sickness, provocations, and disappointments; her firm confidence in God, and in her crucified Redeemer, under all storms and difficulties; and her undaunted courage in bearing incredible labours and persecutions and in encountering dangers cannot be sufficiently admired. God once said to her in a vision: "Dost thou think that merit consists in enjoying? No: but rather in working, in suffering, and in loving. He is most beloved by my Father, on whom he lays the heaviest crosses, if these sufferings are accepted and borne with love. By what can I better show my love for thee than by choosing for thee what I chose for myself?"

An eminent spirit of prayer, founded in sincere humility, and perfect self-denial, was the great means by which God raised this holy virgin to such an heroic degree of sanctity. If she remained so long imperfect in virtue, and was slow in completing the victory over herself, it was because for some time she did not apply herself with a proportioned assiduity to the practice of devout prayer, some of her confessors having diverted her from it on account of her ill health and exterior employments; which mistaken advice was to her of infinite prejudice, as she grievously laments. F. Balthasar Alvarez took much pains with very little progress for twenty years on the same account. And Sister Gertrude Moor, the devout

Benedictine nun, complains she had been led into the like false persuasion by directors unacquainted with the rules of an interior life. A right method of prayer replenished all the saints with a spirit of devotion, which wrought a wonderful reformation of their affections, and changed their interior so as to make them spiritual men. St. Teresa inculcates above all things in her writings the incomparable advantages of this spirit of prayer, and gives excellent lessons upon that important subject. Our divine Redeemer, and the mystery of his incarnation and death were a great object of her adoration and most tender devotion. She suggests this often as the most easy method for beginners to accustom themselves to the familiar use of aspirations, that they imagine themselves in spirit conversing with Christ, representing his humanity as present with them, whether by their side or in their heart. She observes that all religious persons are not called to contemplation, but all can use assiduous prayer with aspirations. It is a maxim which she strongly inculcates, that the most advanced ought not entirely to abandon the method of sometimes representing to themselves Christ as man, and considering him as the object of their devotions, and this sometimes occupied her soul in her highest raptures. The opposite doctrine, that to contemplate the humanity of Christ belongs only to the imperfect, and that perfect contemplatives consider only things purely spiritual, is an illusion of the false mystics. Her singular devotion to the holy sacrament of the altar appears in her works. She used to say, that one communion is enough to enrich a soul with all spiritual treasures of grace and virtue, if she put no obstacles. To unite ourselves most frequently and most ardently with Christ in the holy eucharist she called our greatest means of strength and comfort in our state of banishment, till we shall be united to him in glory. Her ardour to approach the holy communion, and her joy and comfort in presence of the blessed sacrament are not to be expressed. In her most earnest prayers she conjured Almighty God, for the sake of his divine Son, present on our altars, to stem the torrent of vice on earth, and preserve the world from those horrible profanations by which

his mercy is insulted. Thus her devotion sprang from that inflamed love of God which all her actions and writings breathe. From the same source proceeded her burning zeal for the conversion of sinners, whose souls she continually recommended to the divine mercy with many tears charging her religious never to cease from that office of Charity, and from praying also for those ministers of God, who labour for the salvation of souls. Her grief for the wicked was inexpressible, and she was ready to suffer with joy a thousand deaths for one soul. She would have the divine love in all souls to be both contemplative and active, yet so that the exterior actions proceed from, and be animated by the interior fire; or be flowers of this plant, the root of which is the vehement affection of love reigning in the heart, from which they must draw their whole substance without any foreign mixtures; thus a preacher ought so entirely to have the divine honour in view as not to think even indirectly of pleasing men. The first among the external actions in which divine love is exercised, she everywhere reckons patience in suffering persecutions and trials; and she says, that he who loves, finds his delight in sufferings, and gathers strength from them. The second great exterior employment of love consists in labouring to extend the kingdom of God by advancing the sanctification of souls, but of our own in the first place. These and other exercises of love, and above all things, the will of God (perfectly to acquiesce in which is our sovereign happiness) were the motives which tempered the earnestness of her desire immediately to see God in his glory, which yet she indulged by the most ardent and loving sighs, crying out: O death, I know not who can fear thee, since it is by thee that we find life!" &c. And, "O life, enemy to my happiness, when will it be allowed to close thee? I have care of thee, because God is pleased to preserve thee, and thou belongest to him; but be not ungrateful. How is my banishment prolonged! All time indeed is short to gain eternity." No saint expressed stronger or more lively sentiments of fear of being eternally separated from God; but these fears she resolved into humble hope in the pure clemency of God. The operations of the same divine spirit are various. Though

fear, humility, love, and compunction reign in all devout souls, the Holy Ghost excites in some this, and in others that virtue in a more sensible manner, and in some this, in others that gift appears more eminent.

St. Teresa, burning with a desire to promote with her whole strength the greater sanctification of her own soul and that of others, and of labouring to secure by the most perfect penance her eternal salvation, concerted a project of establishing a reform in her order. The rule which had been drawn up by Albert, patriarch of Jerusalem, was very austere; but in process of time several relaxations were introduced, and a mitigation of this order was approved by a bull of Eugenius IV. in 1431. In the convent of the Incarnation at Avila, in which the saint lived, other relaxations were introduced, especially that of admitting too frequent visits of secular friends at the grate, in the parlour, or conversation-room. St. Teresa one day expressing a great desire of living according to the original institute of the order, her niece Mary d'Ocampe, then a pensioner in that house, offered one thousand ducats to found a house for such a design, and a secular widow, lady Guyomar d'Ulloa, zealously encouraged the design; which was approved by St. Peter of Alcantara, St. Lewis Bertrand, and the bishop of Avila, and the saint was commanded by Christ in several visions and revelations, which she recounts, to undertake the same, with assured promises of success and his divine protection. The lady Guyomar procured the license and approbation of F. Angelo de Salazar, provincial of the Carmelites in those parts. No sooner had the project taken wind, but he was obliged by the clamours which were raised against it, to recal his license, and a furious storm fell upon the saint through the violent opposition which was made by all her fellow-nuns, the nobility, the magistrates, and the people. She suffered the most outrageous calumnies with perfect calmness of mind and silence, contenting herself with earnestly recommending to God his own work. In the mean time, F. Yvagnez, a Dominican, esteemed one of the most virtuous and learned men of that age, secretly encouraged the saint, and assisted Madame Guyomar to pursue the enterprise,

together with Madame Jane of Ahumada, a married sister of the saint, who began with her husband to build a new convent at Avila, in 1561, but in such a manner that the world took it for a house intended for herself and her family. Their son Gonzales, a little child, happened to be crushed with a wall which fell upon him in raising this building, and was carried without giving any signs of life to Teresa, who taking him in her arms, put up her ardent sighs to God, and after some minutes restored him perfectly sound to his mother, as was proved in the process of the saint's canonization. The child used afterward to tell his aunt, that it was a duty incumbent on her to secure his salvation by her prayers and instructions, seeing it was owing to her that he was not long ago in heaven. After a most virtuous life he died soon after St. Teresa in extraordinary sentiments of piety. A great strong wall of this house falling in the night as soon as it was finished, many were discouraged; but the saint said it was the effect of the impotent rage and jealousy of the devil. The lady Louisa de la Cerda, sister to the duke of Medina Celi, being in the deepest affliction for the loss of her husband, Count Arias Pardo, prevailed upon the provincial of the Carmelites to send an order to Teresa at Avila, sixty miles from Toledo, to repair to her in that city. The saint remained in her house above half a year, and promoted exceedingly the spirit and practice of eminent virtue, not only with the lady, who had for her the highest veneration, but with her whole household and many other persons. All this time she abated nothing of her usual mortifications and devotions, and her provincial no sooner released her from the tie of obedience which he had imposed on her of living in the house of this lady, and left it to her choice, either to go or stay, but she returned to her monastery of the Incarnation at Avila. A little before she came back, at the time of the election of a prioress, several of the nuns were very desirous she should be chosen for that office, the very thought of which very much afflicted her: and though she was willing readily to endure any kind of torment for God, she could not prevail with herself to accept of this charge: for, besides the trouble in a numerous commu-

nity, such as this was, and other reasons, she never loved to be in office, fearing it would greatly endanger her conscience. She therefore wrote to the nuns who were warmest for having her chosen, earnestly entreating them not to be so much her enemies. Our Lord one day when she was thanking him that she was absent during the noise of the election, said to her in a vision: "Since thou desirest a cross, a heavy one is prepared for thee. Decline it not, for I will support thee: go courageously and speedily." Fearing this cross was the office of prioress, she wept bitterly; but soon after heard that another person was chosen; for which she gave God most sincere thanks, and set out for Avila. The same evening that she arrived at Avila the pope's brief for the erection of her new convent was brought thither. St. Peter of Alcantara, who happened to pass that way, Don Francisco de Salsedo (a pious gentleman with whom St. Peter lodged), and the famous Dr. Daza persuaded the bishop to concur, and the new monastery of St. Joseph was established by his authority, and made subject to him, on St. Bartholomew's day in 1562, the blessed sacrament being placed in the church, and the saint's niece, who had given a thousand ducats, and three other novices taking the habit. Hereupon a great noise was raised against the saint in the town; the prioress of the Incarnation sent for her from St. Joseph's, and the provincial being called, the saint was ordered to remain in her old monastery of the Incarnation, though they were somewhat pacified when the saint had clearly shown them that she had not taken the least step contrary to her rule, or against the duty of obedience. The governor and magistrates would have had the new monastery demolished, had not F. Bannes, the learned Dominican, dissuaded them from so hasty a resolution. Amidst the most violent slanders and persecutions the saint remained calm, recommending to God his own work, and was comforted by our Lord, who said to her in a vision: "Dost thou not know that I am mighty? What dost thou fear? Be assured the monastery shall not be dissolved. I will accomplish all I have promised thee." In the meantime Don Francisco of Salsedo and other friends to the new establishment

deputed a very pious priest, named Gonzales de Aranda, to go to court to solicit in its favour, and at length all things were successfully concluded by a new brief from Rome, by which the foundation of the house without rents was confirmed, and toward the end of the year 1562 the bishop prevailed with the provincial to send Teresa to this new convent, whither she was followed by four fervent nuns from the old house. One of these was chosen prioress ; but the bishop soon after obliged Teresa to take upon herself that charge, and her incomparable prudence in governing, others appeared henceforward in her whole conduct. The mortification of the will and senses, and the exercise of assiduous prayer were made the foundation of her rule: strict inclosure was established with almost perpetual silence. The most austere poverty was an essential part of the rule, without any settled revenues : the nuns wore habits of coarse serge, and sandals instead of shoes; lay on straw, and never ate flesh. St. Teresa admitted to the habit several fervent virgins; but would not have above thirteen nuns in this house, for fear of dangers of relaxations and other inconveniences, which are usually very great in numerous houses. In nunneries which should be founded with revenues, and not to subsist solely on alms, she afterward allowed twenty to be received. But this regulation as to the number is not everywhere observed in this order. The fervour of these holy nuns was such, that the little convent of St. Joseph seemed a paradise of angels on earth, every one in it studying to copy the spirit of the great model before them. The general of the order, John Baptist Rebeo of Ravenna, who usually resided at Rome, coming into Spain and to Avila in 1566, was infinitely charmed with the conversation and sanctity of the foundress, and with the wise regulations of the house, and he gave St. Teresa full authority to found other convents upon the same plan.

Out of an ardent zeal for the conversion of sinners, she asked his leave to establish also some convents of religious men, and the general allowed her at first to erect two. St. Teresa passed five years in her convent of St. Joseph with thirteen fervent nuns, whom she discreetly exercised

In every sort of mortification, obedience, and all religious exercises, being herself the first and most diligent not only at prayer, but also at spinning, sweeping the house, or working in the kitchen. Among these holy virgins many were of high birth; but having renounced the world they thought of no distinction but that of surpassing each other in humility, penance, and affection for one another and for their holy mother: they abounded with heavenly consolations, and their whole lives were a continual course of penitential exercises, and contemplation; they never suffered their prayer to be interrupted night or day as far as the weakness and frailty of our mortal state would admit. For St. Teresa declares assiduous prayer, silence, close retirement, and penance, to be the four pillars of the spiritual edifice she had raised, and the fundamental constitutions of their state. In August, 1567, St. Teresa went to Medina del Campo, and having conquered many difficulties, founded there a second convent. In her history of the foundation of this house, she gives her spiritual daughters excellent advice concerning mental prayer, saying, that it consists not so much in thinking or forming reflections (of which every one is not equally capable) as in loving; in resolving to serve God, to suffer for him joyfully, and to do his will; and in asking grace for this. Her instructions concerning obedience are not less important; for it is happy obedience and perfect resignation that gives the inestimable treasure of liberty of spirit, by which a soul desires nothing, yet possesses all things; neither fears nor covets the things of this world, and is neither disturbed by crosses nor softened by pleasure. The countess de la Cerda, whom St. Teresa had visited at Toledo, most earnestly desiring to found a convent of this order at her town of Malagon, the saint and the countess attended that work. Thence St. Teresa went to Valladolid, and there founded another nunnery. She was much affected with the virtue and happy death of a young nun in this house, and has given an amiable description of her perfect humility, meekness, patience, obedience, fervour, and perpetual silence and prayer. She never meddled in any matter that concerned her not, and therefore she discerned no defect in any one but

in herself. In her last sickness she said to her sisters: "We ought not so much as turn our eyes but for the love of God, and to do what is acceptable to him." Another time she said, "It would be a torment to her to take satisfaction in any thing that was not God, or for him." St. Teresa made her next foundation at Toledo. She met here with violent opposition and great obstacles, and had no more than four or five ducats when she began the edifice. But she said: "Teresa and this money are indeed nothing; but God, Teresa, and these ducats suffice for the accomplishment of the undertaking." At Toledo a young woman who had gained a reputation for virtue, petitioned to be admitted to the habit, but added, "I will bring with me my bible." "What," said the saint, "your bible? Do not come to us. We are poor women, who know nothing but how to spin, and to do what we are bid." By that word she discovered in the postulant an inclination to vanity, and dangerous curiosity and wrangling, and the extravagancies into which that woman afterwards fell, justified her discernment and penetration. St. Teresa had met with two Carmelite friars at Medina del Campo, who were desirous to embrace her reform, F. Antony of Jesus, then prior there, and F. John of the Cross. As soon, therefore, as an opportunity offered itself, she founded a convent for religious men at a poor village called Durvello, in 1568 (of which F. Antony was appointed prior), and, in 1569, a second for men at Pastrana, both in extreme poverty and austerity, especially the latter. After these two foundations, St. Teresa left to St. John of the Cross the care of all other foundations that should be made for the religious men. At Pastrana she also established a convent for nuns. Prince Ruy Gomez de Sylva, a favourite courtier of Philip II., who had founded these convents at Pastrana, dying, his princess in the sudden excess of her grief, made her religious profession in this nunnery; but when this passion abated, claimed many exemptions, and would still maintain the dignity of princess; so that St. Teresa finding she could not be brought to the humility of her profession, lest relaxations should be introduced in her order, sent a precept to the nuns to leave that house to her, and

retire to people a new convent in Segovia. Afterward she would not easily admit ladies, who had been long accustomed to govern. When Bishop Yopez entreated her once to admit to the habit a certain postulant, who was a lady of the first quality, advanced in years, and very rich both in money and vassalages, she would never hear of it, saying, that great ladies, who have been long accustomed to have their own will, seldom sufficiently learn humility, obedience, and simplicity, without which they are more likely to overturn than support a religious order. In 1570, St. Teresa founded a convent at Salamanca, and another at Alva. Pope Pius V. appointed apostolic visitors to inquire into relaxations in religious orders, that they might be reformed. Dr. Peter Fernandez, a Dominican friar, famous for his virtue and learning, was nominated visitor of the Carmelites in that part of Spain, and in the discharge of his office, coming to Avila, he found great fault in the monastery of the Incarnation, in which were fourscore nuns, that inclosure and solitude were not better observed. To remedy these disorders he sent for St. Teresa, who had formerly consulted him in her doubts, and commanded her to take upon her the charge of prioress. It was a double affliction to the saint to be separated from her own dear daughters, and to be placed at the head of a house which opposed her reform with jealousy and warmth. The nuns also refused to obey her. She told them that she came not to command or instruct, but to serve and be instructed by the last amongst them. It was her custom to gain the hearts first before she laid her commands; and having by sweetness and humility won the affections of this whole community, she easily re-established discipline, shut up the parlours, and excluded the frequent visits of seculars. At the end of the three years of her superiority, the nuns much desired to detain her, but she was appointed prioress of her reformed convent of St. Joseph in the same town. The provincial ejected St. John of the Cross and other fathers whom St. Teresa had appointed confessors to the house of the Incarnation, and involved her in the persecution he raised against them. She, however, continued to settle new foundations at Segovia, Veas, Seville.

Caravaca, Villa-Nuova, Palencia, Granada, Soria (in the diocess of Osma), and Burgos. The mitigated Carmelites complained loudly of the great number of foundations which she made, fearing lest in the end they themselves should be subjected to her severe rule. The general who had favoured her was compelled to order her not to found any more convents. There was among the barefooted Carmelites a man of great reputation, called F. Gratian, who was son to one who had been principal secretary of state to Charles V. and Philip II. As he had been very active in propagating the reform, the mitigated Carmelites proceeded so far as to pronounce a sentence of deposition against him.

St. Teresa felt most severely the persecutions which St. John of the Cross, F. Gratian, and others suffered: yet bore every thing with admirable patience and resignation, and wrote to the general with perfect submission and wonderful tranquillity, and cheerfulness of mind. Bishop Yopez, who was at that time her spiritual director, was amazed at her constant joy, courage, meekness, and invincible greatness of soul under all manner of afflictions, and the most atrocious slanders with which even her chastity was attacked. In the mean time, she did all the good offices in her power to every one of them that persecuted her, always spoke well of them, and would never hear the least sinister construction put upon any of their actions. She felt only the sufferings of others, being entirely insensible to her own. When FF. Gratian, Marian, and the rest gave up all for lost, she assured them: "We shall suffer, but the order will stand." The only answer she made to calumnies which were whispered against her, was: "If they thoroughly knew me, they would say much worse things of me." She told her persecuted friends, that nothing seemed to her a surer mark of the divine mercy toward them, and that nothing is of more advantage or necessary than to suffer, that we may learn better to know both God and ourselves, and be assisted more perfectly to extirpate pride and the love of the world out of our hearts. "I return God a thousand thanks," said she, writing to a friar of her order, "and you ought also to thank him on my account. What

greater pleasure can we enjoy than to suffer for so good a God! The cross is the secure and beaten road to lead our souls to him. Let us then love and embrace it. Woe to our reform, and woe to every one of us, if crosses fail us." After recommending her undertaking with many tears to God for the honour of his divine name, she wrote to the king, imploring his protection: and his majesty, upon the information of certain Dominican friars of great reputation, warmly espoused her cause, and that of her establishments; and an order was obtained at Rome, to exempt the reformed from the jurisdiction of the mitigated Carmelites, so that each should have their own provincials. This expedient satisfied both parties, and put an end to these troubles in 1577.

Though the wonderful success of this saint in her enterprises, undertaken for the divine honour, was owing to the blessing of God, and to the divine light and assistance which she drew down upon her actions by the spirit of holy prayer, the great channel of grace, she was certainly a person endowed with great natural talents. The most amiable sweetness and meekness of her temper, the affectionate tenderness of her heart, and the liveliness of her wit and imagination, poised with an uncommon maturity of judgment, gained her always in the first part of her life, the particular love and esteem of all her acquaintance. Bishop Yopez assures us, that her deportment in the latter part of her life was not less agreeable than it was edifying; and that the gravity, modesty, and discretion of her words and carriage had such a dignity and gracefulness, and such charms, that even her looks composed the hearts and regulated the manners of those who conversed with her. He adds, that her prudence and address were admirable. Such was her love of simplicity, truth, and sincerity, that if she heard any nun repeat something they had heard with ever so trifling an alteration in a single word, she reprimanded them with extreme severity; and often said, that a person could never arrive at perfection who was not a scrupulous lover of candour and truth. This appeared in all her dealings, and she would have rather suffered the most important affairs to miscarry, than to have said any word in which

there could be the least shadow or danger of a lie or equivocation. She used to say, that our Lord is a great lover of humility, because he is the great lover of truth, and humility is a certain truth, by which we know how little we are, and that we have no good of ourselves. For true humility takes not from us the knowledge of God's gifts, which we have received; but it teaches us to acknowledge that we no way deserved them, and to admire and thank the divine goodness so much the more as we more perfectly see our own baseness and unworthiness, and the infidelities and ingratitude with which we repay the divine graces. The wonderful confidence in God, and constancy and firmness of soul which she showed under all difficulties and dangers, arose from her distrust in herself, and in all creatures, and her placing her whole strength in God alone. To have neglected the means of human industry and prudence would have been to have tempted God, who will have us employ them, though we expect the whole issue from him, who is pleased to make use of these, or perhaps other instruments if he rejects these: but St. Teresa had recourse to the succours of the world so as to place no part of her confidence in them, and she says of them: "I perceive clearly they are all no better than so many twigs of dried rosemary, and that there is no leaning upon them, for upon the least weight of contradiction pressing upon them, they are presently broken. I have learned this by experience, that the true remedy against our falling is to lean on the cross, and to trust in him who was fastened to it." As one unworthy of all heavenly consolation, she never durst ask any comfort of God, whether she suffered the most painful aridities or abounded with spiritual favours, a conduct which Dr. Avila and other experienced directors exceedingly approved, regarding it as a mark that her visions and raptures were not illusions. Humiliations and sufferings she looked upon as her due and her advantage. "When I am in prayer," said she "I cannot, though I should endeavour it, ask of our Lord, nor desire rest, because I see that he lived altogether in labours; which I beseech him to give me likewise, bestowing on me first grace to sustain them."

St. Teresa lived to see sixteen nunneries of her reformed order founded, and fourteen convents of Carmelite friars. One of these latter was founded by a famous lady called Catherine de Cardona, who had led an eremitical life in a cave in a desert eight years, when she built this friary, near her hermitage, in the diocese of Cuenza. She was of the family of the dukes of Cardona ; had been governess to Don Carlos and Don John of Austria, and was much caressed at court ; in the world she had been much given to the practice of penitential severities ; but the austerities with which she treated her body after she had retired into the desert seemed to exceed the ordinary strength of her sex. St. Teresa, who corresponded with her, very much commends her piety and virtue. This lady died in her cave in 1577, five years after she had built the friary, which she called our Lady of Succour. St. Teresa was returning from founding a convent at Burgos to Avila, where she was prioress, when she was sent for by the duchess of Alva. She was at that time very ill of her usual distemper—of a palsy and frequent violent vomitings. Yet when she arrived at Alva, on the 20th of September, she conversed with the duchess several hours, then went to her convent in the town, understanding that our Lord called her to himself. On the 30th of that month she was seized with a bloody flux, and after communicating at mass, took to her bed, and never rose out of it any more. The duchess visited her every day, and would needs serve her with her own hands. Sister Anne of St. Bartholomew, the saint's individual companion, never left her. On the 1st of October, having passed almost the whole night in prayer, she made her confession to F. Antony of Jesus. He afterwards, in the presence of the nuns, entreated her to pray that God would not yet take her from them. She answered she was no way needful to them, nor useful in the world. She gave every day many wholesome instructions to her nuns with greater energy and tenderness than usual. She besought them, for the love of God, to observe their rules and constitutions with the utmost diligence, and not to consider the bad example such a sinner had given them, but to forgive her. The holy viaticum being

brought into her chamber on the 3rd of October in the evening, she sprung up in her bed, though exceedingly weak, and, among other fervent ejaculations, said: "O my Lord, and my spouse, the desired hour is now come. It is now time for me to depart hence. Thy will be done. The hour is at last come, wherein I shall pass out of this exile, and my soul shall enjoy in thy company what it hath so earnestly longed for." At nine o'clock the same evening she desired and received extreme unction. F. Antony asked her if she would not be buried in her own convent at Avila? To which she answered: "Have I any thing mine in this world? Or will they not afford me here a little earth?" She recited often certain verses of the *Miserere* psalm, especially those words: "A contrite and humble heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." This she repeated till her speech failed her. After this she remained fourteen hours, as it were, in a trance, holding a crucifix fast in her hand, and calmly expired at nine o'clock in the evening on the 4th of October, 1582, the next day (by the reformation of the calendar made that year by cutting off those ten days), being reckoned the 15th, the day which was afterwards appointed for her festival. She lived sixty-seven years, six months, and seven days, of which she passed forty-seven in a religious state, and the latter twenty in the observance of her reformed rule. Her body was honourably buried at Alva; but three years after, by a decree of the provincial chapter of the order, secretly taken up, and removed to Avila, in 1585. The duke of Alva, resenting this translation, obtained an order at Rome that the relics should be restored to Alva, which was done in 1586, the body being always found entire, of the same colour, and the joints flexible. There it remains incorrupt to this day. St. Teresa was canonized by Gregory the XV., in 1621. The history of many miracles wrought by her relics and intercession may be seen at Yepez, and in the acts of her canonization.

St. Teresa having tasted so plentifully the sweetness of divine love, earnestly exhorts all others, by penance and holy prayer to aspire to the same. She cries out: "O admirable benignity of thine, O my God, who

permitted thyself to be looked upon by those eyes which have abused their sight so much as these of my soul hath done ! O great ingratitude of mortals ! O you souls which have true faith, what blessings can you seek which may any way be compared to the least of those which are obtained by the servants of God, even in this mortal life, besides the happy eternity hereafter ! Consider it is most true that God, even here, gives himself to such as forsake all things else for the love of him. He is no acceptor of persons; he loves all; nor hath any one an excuse, how wicked soever he hath been, since our Lord had dealt with me so mercifully. Consider also, that this which I am saying, is not so much as a cypher of that which may be said. It is no way in my power to declare that which a soul finds in herself, when our Lord is pleased to impart to her these his secrets; a delight so highly superior to all that can possibly be imagined here, that with good reason it makes those who possess it abhor all the pleasures of the earth; which all put together, are no more, comparatively, than mere filth and dross; nay, it is loathsome to bring these into comparison at all with them, even though they might be enjoyed for ever. Yet of these celestial consolations, what kind of mean proportion is that which God is pleased to bestow in this world ? No more than, as it were, one single drop of water of that great full-flowing river which is prepared for us. It is a shame, and I apply it to myself (and if it were possible for souls to be ashamed in heaven, I should be justly ashamed there more than any other), that we should desire such great blessings, and infinite glory, all at the cost of the good Jesus, and not weep at least over him, with the daughters of Jerusalem, if we will not help him to carry the cross. Oh, how can we ever think of coming to enjoy, by the way of pleasures and pastimes, that which he purchased for us at the expense of so much blood ! This can never be. We take quite a wrong course ! we shall never arrive at our journey's end by such an erroneous way. Your reverence must cry out aloud to make these truths be heard. Oh, how rich will he find himself another day, who left all the riches he had for Christ ! How full of honour, he

who rejects all worldly honour, and takes pleasure in seeing himself debased and despised for the love of Him. How wise will he see himself then, who rejoiced to see the world hold him for a fool, since they called Wisdom itself by that name !” &c.



NOTE.

ON THE DANGER OF READING IDLE BOOKS, AND OF VAIN AND WORLDLY COMPANY.—*See page 5.*

Romances are so called, because in the first invention of such compositions, whilst other writings in France continued still to be published in Latin, these fictitious histories of imaginary adventures were the first compositions that were committed to writing in the vulgar language called Romanciere, when the Latin began to be corrupted among the common people. Rivet (*Hist. Litter. t. 6, et t. 7, præf. p. 66*), and his continuator (*t. 9, p. 19*), and Henault (*Hist. Chron. de la Fr. t. 1*), prove that this kind of books was first produced in the tenth century, two hundred years before Fleury, Calmet, and the last historian of the city of Paris date their original. Such compositions are extremely pernicious both to morals and to true literature. In them neither the laws of order or method, or truth or probability are usually observed. Those few that are written with some degree of elegance and spirit, are generally very defective in these particulars, and tend to destroy all true taste in studies, being quite different from the parables and fables under which the ancients sometimes couched moral precepts, to render them more agreeable, and the better to strike the senses. Secondly, Romances, by substituting falsehood for true history, and a foolish idle amusement instead of solid instruction, destroy in the mind that laudable thirst after truth which the author of nature imprinted in it, and inspire a baneful love of trifles, vanity, and folly. A third most pernicious effect of such reading is, that instead of forming, it perverts and depraves the heart, poisons the morals, and excites the passions, which it is the great business of a Christian to restrain. This is true even of those writings of this kind which seem least dangerous, since such fictions only please by insensibly flattering vanity, pride, ambition, and the like criminal inclinations. If this be so with regard to those romances, which by some persons in the world are called innocent, what censures shall we find

severe enough for the generality of such compositions which are filled with scenes of intrigues of love, and tend to awaken, cherish, and expand the most dangerous of the passions? St. Teresa writes thus of herself (c. 2.): "This fault (of reading romances) failed not to cool my good desires, and was the cause of my falling insensibly into other defects. I was so enchanted with the extreme pleasure I took herein, that methought I could not be content if I had not some new romance in my hands, and I began to imitate the fashions, to take delight in being well dressed, to take great care of my hands, to make use of perfumes, and to affect all the vain adornments which my condition permitted. Indeed my intention was not bad; for I would not for the world, in the immoderate passion which I had to be decent, give any one an occasion of offending God; but I now acknowledge how far these things, which for several years appeared to me innocent, are effectually and really criminal." This demoralising literature changes all the good inclinations a person has received from nature and a virtuous education; it chills, by little and little, pious desires, and in a short time banishes out of the soul all that was there of solid virtue. By it young young girls soon lose the habit of reserve and modesty, assume airs of vanity, and make show of no other anxiety than for those things which the world esteems, and God abominates. They accept the maxims, spirit, conduct, and language of the passions, which are there artfully instilled under various disguises, and what is still more pernicious, they conceal all this irregularity with the appearances of civility, and an easy, amiable, gay humour and disposition. Let all young persons avoid this dangerous snare, laid to entrap their innocence. "Let them not be hurried away with this dismal torrent," says St. Augustine, (Conf. l. 1. c. 16.) "which drags along the children of Eve into that vast and dangerous sea, out of which even they can scarcely escape and save themselves who pass over upon the wood of the cross of Christ:" that is, by a penitential Christian life of mortification, modesty, and devotion.

St. Teresa writes of the danger of vain or bad company as follows (c. 2.): "I had some cousins-german who came

frequently to my father's house. He was very circumspect to forbid all entrance to any but to them, (and would to God he had used the same caution as to them also !) for now I see the danger there is when one is of an age proper to receive the first seeds of virtue to have commerce with persons who, knowing the vanity of the world, entice others to engage themselves therein. Were I to give counsel to parents, I would warn them to be well advised what persons frequent their children in that age; because the propensity of our corrupt nature leads us rather to bad than to good. I found this by myself; for I made no profit of the great virtue of one of my sisters, who was much elder than myself; whereas I retained all the evil example which a relation gave me who frequented our house." She afterwards says: "I am sometimes seized with astonishment when I consider the evils that come from bad company." She laments that the familiarity she had with a female cousin, and one other person who practised the same kind of folly, so changed her as to leave no sign of former impressions of virtue. What would St. Teresa have said of herself, had she ever frequented balls, assemblies, and public dancings, in which the flesh and the devil assault the minds and the hearts of young people by all the ways whereby vice can be instilled into them, and where a general conspiracy of all the allurements and charms of the senses enervate the soul, and flatter its many passions? St. Chrysostom, exhorting parents to keep their children at a distance from such places, and teach them to fly them as a plague, the poison whereof is mortal to their souls, says: "Surely when we see a servant bearing about a lighted torch, we seriously forbid him to carry it into places where there is straw, hay, or such combustible matter, for fear when he least thinks of it, a spark should fall which might set fire to the whole house. Let us use the same precaution towards our children, and not expose their senses to such allurements. If such persons dwell near us, let us warn our children to avoid them, and to have with them neither commerce nor conversation, lest some spark falling into their souls should cause a general conflagration, and an irreparable damage."

THE LIFE OF FAITH.

“Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ.”—1 Cor. xi.

Meditate frequently on these words of the Apostle : “The just man liveth by faith.” Rom. i. 17. O! what great things are contained in this life of faith!

To be animated by the life of faith, the Christian must necessarily first die to himself. By this spiritual death is understood the beginning of life: “You are dead,” said the apostle (Col. iii. 3), “and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”

To live in faith, we must be totally taken up with objects of faith—think only on the promises of faith—and regulate our judgment of the things of this world, only with respect to their conformity to the objects of faith.

To live by faith, is to lead, as to the exterior, the ordinary life of a Christian :—whilst interiorly, we unite ourselves continually to God, through Jesus Christ.

The life of faith receives its principal support from mental prayer, and a frequent participation of the blessed Eucharist. Prayer puts to death the old man; and the holy Communion gives life to the new man.

Nothing is more prejudicial to the life of faith than a desire of associating with the fashionable world, and partaking of the vain amusements of theatres, balls, assemblies, and public spectacles, idle visits, silly attentions and frivolous conversation; whilst, on the contrary, the life of faith acquires redoubled strength and vigour, by associating with the truly virtuous—by pious conversation—and reading such spiritual books as are calculated to excite in the soul solid and pious reflections.

The life of faith is also greatly impaired by the too great hurry and tumult of business, by anxiety, scruples, and a desire of rendering one’s self conspicuous; by a thirst after possessions and the esteem of the world. These maladies produce a gangrene in the soul, which gradually undermines and destroys the life of faith.

The man with living faith is mild, kind, and courteous; he is a man of veracity, generosity, simplicity, and sincerity; an invaluable friend, a wise counsellor, and an edifying companion: his temper is always even: his conversation ever cheerful and easy; and, amidst the variety of those calamities incident to human nature, he is always ready to assist his neighbour.

To live truly the life of faith, three conditions are necessary; first, an absolute and unreserved love of Jesus Christ; secondly, a sovereign contempt, not only for the world, but for all that the world esteems; and thirdly, to be always prepared to meet death, counting only on the present day.

The evidence of the conformity between the life of faith and the life of Christ consists in a love of humiliations, poverty, and sufferings. All the saints have lived by faith: amongst the innumerable heroes of faith, St. Paul, St. Francis, and St. Teresa are particularly distinguished.

In order to conceive an idea of the smallness of the number of those that live by faith, it is only necessary to cast a cursory glance on what passes in the world. Many Christians pray—frequent the sacraments—give alms—practise austerities, &c., and yet, after all, cease not to live in themselves—for themselves—and with themselves. They have their particular humours—pretensions—violent inclinations—vanities—oddities and singularities. They are averse to sufferings—unwilling to be forgot—to want any thing, or to deny themselves the liberty of judging their neighbours: in a word, they are only devotees, or Christians enslaved by self-love, and consequently ignorant of that life, which has God for its object, which is the life of faith, the interior union of the soul with Jesus Christ.

He who said: "I live now, not I, but Christ liveth in me," (Gal. ii. 20,) was truly a man of faith—with a soul entirely animated by faith—a heart from which the world was totally banished. He had no longer a being or life of his own. Jesus Christ was all in him, and he was wholly in Jesus Christ.—He who said it was St. Paul. O Christians, let us then live by faith, and

we shall be always cheerful, easy, and happy. The kingdom of God will be within us; and we shall neither fear men, death, nor devils. We shall have the cross of Jesus Christ for our wealth; the sacrament of his precious body and blood for our food; and our treasure shall infinitely surpass the riches of all the kings and potentates of this world.

ON THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS.*

Consider that the Church of God honours with a solemn festival the virtues, the triumphs and the eternal glory of all the Saints and citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem. First, in order to give glory, praise and thanksgiving, on their account, to the God of all the saints, and to His Son Jesus Christ, the Author of all their virtues, of all their triumphs, and of all their glory, and to honour the Lord in his Saints. Secondly, to encourage all her children to follow the glorious examples of the Saints, and to walk in their blessed footsteps, in hopes of one day enjoying their happy company. Thirdly, to teach them to associate themselves in the mean time to the Saints, by a holy communion with them, and to procure the assistance of their prayers and intercession. O how just, how pious, how wholesome it is to glorify God in His Saints, who are the most excellent of all His works; to honour in them the bright trophy of the blood of Christ; to learn of them the practice of all Christian virtues, and especially of divine love, and to be admitted to share in their powerful prayers, and to a happy communion with them in all that is good! "*You are come,*" says the Apostle, Heb. xii. 22, &c., speaking to the children of the Church, "*to Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the company of many thousands of Angels, and to the Church of the first-born who are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of the just made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the New Testament,*" &c. O happy communion indeed! O joyful festivity, in which the Church Militant solemnly associates herself with the

* Challouer's Meditations.

whole Church triumphant, in the worship, praise, and love of their common Lord, through Him that is the Mediator of them both, and through the great sacrifice of His blood !

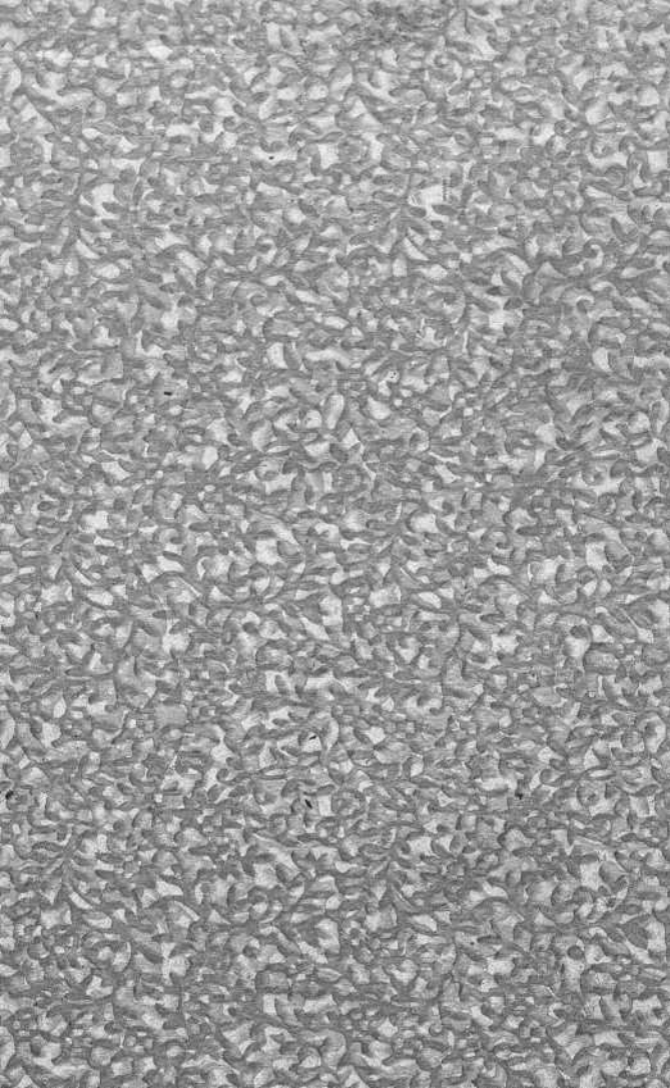
Consider also what encouragements we here meet with to dedicate ourselves, in good earnest, to the holy service of our God, when we reflect on that eternal weight of glory in heaven, with which He rewards the light and momentary labours and sufferings of his servants here upon earth. All these holy ones have entered into the never-ending joys of their Lord at a very cheap and easy rate. The yoke of His divine servitude, which they bore for the short time of their pilgrimage, was very sweet to them, and their burden was very light. Grace and love made all things easy that they either did or suffered for their beloved. He Himself supported them in such manner, as to carry as it were, both them and their crosses too, upon His own shoulders. He never left them in life or death, till He took them to Himself to His heavenly kingdom, where they shall live and reign for ever with Him.

Conclude ever to love, honour, and imitate the Saints of God; but more especially to love in them what God loves in them; that is the gift of His divine grace; amongst which the most excellent is love. Then shalt thou be best entitled both to the intercession of the Saints at present, and to their happy society hereafter.

THE END.







MARQUÉS DE SAN JUAN DE PIEDRAS ALBAS

BIBLIOGRAFÍA TERESIANA

SECCIÓN III

Libros escritos exclusivamente sobre Santa Teresa
de Jesús.

Número.....	599	Precio de la obra.....	Ptas.
Estante.....	4	Precio de adquisición.	»
Tabla.....	2	Valoración actual.....	»

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