

PAUL MARY PAKENHAM
PASSIONIST



REV. JOSEPH SMITH, C.P.

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FATHER PAUL MARY PAKENHAM, C.P.

(From an old Authentic Portrait at Mount Argus)

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BY

REV. JOSEPH SMITH, C.P.



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FOREWORD

THE short biography here presented to the reader may seem strangely belated, so many years have passed since its saintly subject was called to his reward. But his life has not remained wholly without record. Brief memoirs have appeared from time to time in various countries (in Italy and Australia as well as in Ireland and England), giving the main outlines of his brief but notable career. They have long since gone out of print; but, apart from these, his story laid a strong hold on the popular imagination in Ireland which has never slackened, and it may still be heard—at least it was till a few years ago—recounted, with the inevitable legendary additions, or sung in rude ballads, around the firesides of the country people. It has, however, been thought that a fuller and more authentic presentation of the facts of his life should be attempted before the further lapse of time rendered it impossible. The attempt has been made in the following pages. It is hoped that the story they set forth, besides helping to keep alive the memory of a great soul, may also serve a higher purpose. Instances are happily not rare even in these materialistic days of the renunciation of wealth and ease and high worldly prospects for the service of the Crucified, but rare indeed are the instances in which the renunciation is made with such almost ruthless completeness or carried to a conclusion so heroic as in the case of Father Paul Mary Pakenham. For all this, there is nothing extraordinary or abnormal

in the complexion of his sanctity, nothing of compelling magnitude in the sum of his works and sufferings: the simplicity of his spiritual life matched the noble simplicity of his natural character. His example may not be the less welcome or the less telling on that account, and we trust that it may serve as an inspiration and encouragement to those who are called, as all Christians are in varying degrees, to take part in that warfare of the spirit in which he exchanged the sword for the Cross, and to which he devoted himself with the single-hearted and passionate zeal of the true Knight of God.

For his materials the writer has had access to most of the notices of the life of Father Pakenham already given to the public, as well as to the manuscript memoir left by Father Salvian, his master of novices, and to the annals of the Congregation of the Passion. He has also had the advantage of knowing several religious who were contemporaries and companions of the saintly Passionist, and who retained very vivid recollections of him. From the reminiscences of these and of some persons of the outside world who had known him much valuable assistance has been received towards the composition of this little volume.

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PAUL MARY PAKENHAM PASSIONIST

CHAPTER I

EARLY DAYS—ENTERS THE ARMY

“BEAUTIFUL is old age—beautiful as the slow-dropping mellow autumn of a rich and glorious summer. In the old man nature has fulfilled her work: she loads him with her blessings: she fills him with the fruits of a well-spent life: and surrounded by his children and his children’s children she rocks him softly away to the grave, to which he is followed with blessings. God forbid we should not call it beautiful. It is beautiful, but not the most beautiful. There is another life, hard, rough, and thorny, trodden with bleeding feet and aching brow: the life of which the Cross is the symbol: a battle which no peace follows this side the grave: which the grave gapes to finish before the victory is won: and—strange that it should be so—this is the highest life of man.”

The “Forgotten Worthies,” with reference to whom the above words were written, had little in common with the subject of the present biographical sketch. And the rationalist writer of them—albeit he was a

rationalist "perpetually on the borderland of the Catholic Church"—would hardly have held them honoured by association with one who abandoned a career of brilliant promise in the world for the penitential obscurity of the cloister. Yet perhaps no words could better express the sharp contrast between the reality and the might-have-been which leaps to the mind as one considers the career of Paul Mary Pakenham. Noble rank, fine talents, charming personality, brilliant prospects, influential friends—he had all that might have smoothed out the path of life to a peaceful and honoured old age. But he was of those with whom life was "no summer holiday, but a holy sacrifice offered up to duty," and he chose early and deliberately that other path, "hard, rough, and thorny, trodden with bleeding feet and aching brow." He soon found his Calvary: his life was brief—some might say ineffectual. He was cut off in his thirty-sixth year with little that the world would reckon "work" to his account. And yet his memory is still held in benediction by thousands who have but a vague tradition of the fulness of his sacrifice and the sanctity that crowned it.

The Honourable Charles Reginald Pakenham (to use for the present his worldly style and title) came of a distinguished Irish family, the first member of which we find mentioned in connection with this country being Edmund Pakenham, who accompanied his cousin, Sir Henry Sidney (father of the famous Sir Philip), when he went to Ireland as Lord Deputy in 1576, and whose grandson Henry, captain of a troop of English horse in the rising of 1641, received for his services a grant of what are now the family estates in Westmeath. He was the fourth son of Thomas, the second Earl of Longford, in the peerage of Ireland, and Baron Silchester in that of the

United Kingdom. His mother was Georgiana Emma Charlotte Lygon, daughter of William, first Earl Beauchamp. He was closely related to the great Duke of Wellington, the hero of Waterloo, by the romantic, though in the event not very happy, marriage of his aunt, Lady Katherine Pakenham, with that celebrated man. It is a fact not generally known, but for which there is excellent authority, that this marriage furnished the inspiration for one of the best known and loveliest of Moore's Melodies. In his early days as aide-de-camp in Dublin the future Duke had met Lady Katherine at Castle entertainments and had apparently paid marked attentions to her. He left for the Netherlands in 1794, and subsequently for India; on his return, after the lapse of ten years, finding that the lady had had the misfortune in the interval to have her beauty sadly marred by small-pox, he felt it his duty to marry her. The marriage took place in 1806, and the whole incident, seen through the golden haze of romance, may well have inspired the beautiful lines first published in the following year:—

Believe me if all those endearing young charms
Which I gaze on so fondly to-day,
Were to fail by to-morrow and fleet in my arms,
Like fairy gifts fading away,
Thou wouldst still be adored as this moment thou art,
Let thy loveliness fade as it will,
And around the dear ruin each wish of my heart
Would entwine itself verdantly still.

With such advantages of lineage and relationship Charles Reginald Pakenham was born into the world at Longford House, 10 Rutland Square (now Parnell Square), Dublin, on the 21st September, 1821. By a curious irony of time and chance the house later served as the premises of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland and similar institutions of Irish Protestant

bigotry. It has been remarked by some who delight to discover a providential significance in even slight things that the day of his birth was Friday, and the feast of St. Matthew (the special patron of vocations); and that the month was that dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows. Thus we have an early presage, in the manner of the old hagiologists, of the extraordinary vocation which was to attract him to the Congregation of the Passion.

Of his childhood and early life, little, unfortunately, is known with any certainty. His earliest years were passed chiefly between the Dublin residence of his parents and their country seat, Pakenham Hall, Castlepollard, in the county of Westmeath. A pretty story, strangely prophetic of his future career, is told of those days on the authority of a country nurse, Mrs. Shanley, who tended him through a serious illness, the result of a cold caught on the journey from Dublin to Castlepollard. During the child's convalescence she took him out for an airing to her native village of Kiltoom, a little distance from his home, and while there, being a devout Catholic, went into the little Catholic chapel of the place to say her prayers, bringing her charge with her. The old parish priest, a man with a reputation for holiness of life, happened to meet them, and speaking with the boy was charmed with his quick bright intelligence. There was a strange attractiveness about this little Protestant visitor from the "Hall"—something more, it seemed, than could be set down to the common graciousness of childhood—and as the old man patted the curly head at parting he murmured, "This child will be a light in the Church of God yet." Possibly the holy priest's blessing had something to do with the fulfilment of his prophecy.

The little that is known of his youthful days we

owe in great part to the recollections of one of his fellow-novices, Father Tenison Woods,¹ who afterwards left the Congregation through ill-health, and who, while labouring as a secular priest in Australia, wrote a short sketch of Father Pakenham's life for an Australian Catholic magazine. "He was naturally averse," says this authority, "to speak of his former life. He would have made no exception in my case but for one circumstance. He was for some months infirmarian at a time when I chanced to be laid up with a tedious illness, and he used to make me forget my pains and beguile the weary sleepless hours by turning my attention to other things. Thus I came to know many parts of his early career which are indelibly fixed upon my memory. Poor Pakenham! How well I can remember his appearance as he sat by my bedside in the long Gothic infirmary of St. Wilfrid's Retreat, Staffordshire. His gentle but animated face, his mortified yet affable manner, his light, spare form in the austere habit of the Passionists are not easily forgotten, and when one heard his words, so full of piety, of sense, and even of lively wit at times, he soon came to be as much impressed upon the heart as upon the recollection."

While still very young Charles was sent to a preparatory school at Richmond in Surrey, where he received the first elements of education. Here he seems to have remained some years. He is described as being at this time a shy, gentle boy, distinguished already by that conscientiousness and devotion to duty which were so conspicuously characteristic of him in after life. It has been stated in several printed notices of his life that he was subsequently entered at Winchester College, then, as now, one of the most

¹ All that we have found trustworthy in the sketch by Father Tenison Woods we shall incorporate in the present narrative.

famous of the English public schools. Inquiries, however, have failed to substantiate this statement. His name does not appear on the Registers of the students of the college. To supplement these Registers, which were indifferently kept up to 1836, an index of the "Commoners" of the college was prepared some twenty years ago, and from this also Charles Reginald's name is absent, though those of three of his brothers are given. On the other hand, he is quoted (with what accuracy we cannot say) as speaking humorously of his experience as a "fag" at Winchester: "I learnt nothing there but how to clean boots and carry up coals." Be this as it may, his residence at "courtly and cloistral Winchester" could scarcely have been long enough to have exercised any great influence upon his character. Personal inclination as well as the choice of his parents destined him for a career in the army, and he entered the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, on the 14th July, 1835, before he was yet quite fourteen years of age. He passed with distinction, as the college records show, through the usual course of studies, and four years later (14th June, 1839) was gazetted as ensign to the 72nd Regiment. His regiment was at that time in Barbadoes, and he was obliged, as a matter of form, to make the voyage out to the West Indies, where he remained, however, only a few weeks. The rest of his military career, marked by rapid promotion, need only be briefly outlined. On the 12th October, 1841, he became lieutenant in the regiment which he had joined, and early in 1846 obtained a captaincy in the 69th Foot. On the 20th October of the same year he was transferred as captain to the 1st Battalion of Grenadier Guards. His uncle, Major-General Lygon, who at this period was Inspector-General of Cavalry, appointed Captain Pakenham his aide-de-camp. This appoint-

ment necessitated much travelling to the various military stations, and, though the young officer did not particularly like the experience, it increased his knowledge of his profession. "He used to say," says Father Tenison Woods, "that he led a wild and dissipated life at this time, but it does not appear so from other circumstances, at least in the sense in which dissipation is usually taken. He was too studious, retiring and temperate to be dissipated, and at the very time he has told me that he was so hard a student that he would spend six or eight hours a day in study when not otherwise engaged. Thus he acquired not only a thorough knowledge of his profession but also of four or five modern languages, all of which he could speak with tolerable fluency."

CHAPTER II

SOLDIER AND STUDENT

THE testimony of Father Tenison Woods to young Pakenham's studiousness and generally serious bent of mind at that trying period of his life receives striking confirmation from one of the few memorials left of him. It is a little commonplace-book of some hundred and fifty pages filled with short excerpts evidently made in the course of his reading and drawn from a great variety of sources, sacred and profane. The date inscribed under his name on the fly-leaf of the book is 15th October, 1846, just five days before he received his brevet as captain in the Grenadier Guards. He was then but twenty-five years of age and leading a very active life; yet he seems to have read omnivorously and in many languages, in each of which he was at home. As we turn over the pages of this old note-book, yellowed with age and covered with the lines of faded ink, that hold the refined and delicate, almost feminine, handwriting of the young officer, it is curious to observe how everything he read, even the unlikeliest things, helped his mind towards gathering that happy bias which led to his subsequent conversion to Catholicism and finally to his abandonment of the world. Here are passages from the Fathers of the Church, from the "Imitation" and the "Spiritual Combat," from Newman and

Pusey, as well as elder lights of the Church of England: but also from German and Italian poets and philosophers, from French and English writers, infidel and orthodox, Goethe, Schiller, Herder, Dante, Tasso, Silvio Pellico, Rousseau, Voltaire, Gibbon, Locke, and many others—all quoted in the original and with definite and accurate references. For he was no student at second-hand. Yet when all came to be indexed by him on one of the last pages, they fell under a very few headings such as these:—

Charity.	Modesty.
Contempt of the World.	Mortification.
Conversion.	Truth.
Devotion.	Use of Time.
Duty.	Vanity of Earth.
Good Works.	Virtue.
Innocence.	Vocation.

The youth who spent his scant leisure in gathering flowers of this kind could hardly ever have been of the company of those whose motto is written in the Book of Wisdom: "Let us fill ourselves with costly wine and ointments, and let not the flower of the time pass by us. Let us crown ourselves with roses before they be withered: let no meadow escape our riot!" And it is not merely that the course of his reading and his choice of extracts show a serious and devout, not to say mystical, turn of thought, or that they imply many hours of patient and conscientious study, but they also represent years of labour in which he acquired the easy familiarity indicated with several languages other than his mother tongue. Latin and French, German, Italian and Spanish are prominent among the languages in which these notes are written: and not one of them save French appears to have been

included in the school curriculum during his years at Sandhurst. All the rest were acquired by the young officer's own industry during the intervals of a busy military life.

He took his profession, too, as he took everything else in life, seriously. It was something more to him than a fashion or a pastime, and the studies peculiar to it were not neglected. Among those of his books still preserved are some dealing with military matters which bear traces of careful reading, such as the "Esprit des Institutions Militaires," by Marshal Marmont, Duke of Ragusa, one of the most celebrated of Napoleon's generals. It was published in 1845, and Pakenham seems to have lost no time in procuring it, for that is also the date on the fly-leaf. The marks and notes (sometimes by way of correction and criticism) pencilled on the margin are evidence of the interest and thoroughness with which the book was studied. And, as will be seen later, there is higher and more direct testimony to the keen interest which he took in his military duties.

We may thus discount his confession that he led a wild and dissipated life at this time. But if he was studious and serious-minded he was far from living like a hermit or a recluse in his off-duty hours. There was nothing of the puritan or the devotee in his habits. He mingled freely in society and shared with zest in all the pleasures and amusements of his class. It was his nature to throw himself heartily into whatever engaged his attention for the moment, whether it was work or play. As one who knew him well has said, "he did nothing by halves." He was extremely popular with his brother officers, and entered merrily into all the pranks and pastimes that varied the monotony of regimental life. An otherwise trivial anecdote may serve the purpose of illustrating the

lighter side of his character. One of the superior officers of the regiment in which he served had shown himself something of a martinet, and naturally came in for a good deal of odium. After some unpleasant incident or other in which this gentleman distinguished himself, Captain Pakenham, who among his other accomplishments sketched excellently, amused his fellow-officers and perhaps soothed their feelings by drawing a caricature of their unpopular superior with charcoal on the white wall of the mess-room. The drawing, which hit off to the life the unenviable characteristics of its subject, caused much merriment. When Pakenham's back was turned, however, and he had probably forgotten all about the matter, one of his comrades roguishly completed the picture by drawing a rope round the neck of the figure and a rude representation of a gallows underneath. The next person to look upon this unseemly portrayal of a malefactor dangling in mid-air was the victim of the caricature himself, who, easily recognising his "counterfeit presentment," fumed and stormed at the insult and in due course demanded an investigation. Needless to say, nothing came of it, and the harmless boyish freak passed unpunished. The undesigned collaboration of the two artists probably dispensed either from making the *amende honorable*. And the incident would hardly be worth mentioning were it not for the glimpse it gives of the more human side of a very saintly man.

That it was in its way characteristic is clear from the fact that the light-hearted, joyous side of his personality seems to have impressed his companions more than any other. "The gayest fellow in the regiment" was the phrase in which an old brother officer summed him up many years afterwards, as he laughingly lamented the fate that doomed the young

guardsman to isolation from the world in a monastery. Perhaps from the exalted heights which he reached in after years, the harmless gaieties that after all could have engaged but a small portion of his life, became distorted into the wild dissipation with which he unjustly reproached himself.

Such was Captain Pakenham about his twenty-fourth or twenty-fifth year—"looked upon," says Tenison Woods, "as a promising and rising young officer whose uncle, 'The Duke,' was well inclined towards him. He had everything in his favour. His talents were of a high order, and his manner and address singularly graceful and winning. He was tall and slight, very fair, and of fresh complexion. Large, clear, and most expressive blue eyes, with light brown curly hair, gave his face a most youthful and innocent appearance, while there was something of such dignity and sweetness in his regular features that one could not help respecting him at the first glance."

All that we can gather of his life in those early years proclaims him to have been both in person and character almost the beau-ideal of the true Christian soldier, a *chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*; haunted, like another Sir Galahad, amid the activities and the pleasures of his military calling, by visions and presentiments of higher things, beckoned onwards, whither he little dreamed as yet, by the awful light of the holy Grail. How well, had he but known it, he could have made the words attributed to that hero his own:—

When down the stormy crescent goes,
A light before me swims,
Between dark stems the forest glows,
I hear a noise of hymns:

Then by some secret shrine I ride:
I hear a voice, but none are there:
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
The tapers burning fair.
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
The silver vessels sparkle clean,
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
And solemn chaunts resound between.

Then move the trees, the copses nod,
Wings flutter, voices hover clear:
"O just and faithful knight of God!
Ride on! the prize is near."
So pass I hostel, hall, and grange:
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
All-armed I ride, whate'er betide,
Until I find the holy Grail.

CHAPTER III

IN THE WAKE OF THE TRACTARIANS

IT was not to be expected that one of Captain Pakenham's character and temperament should remain unaffected by the great religious movement which shook the England of his day. The propaganda of the Tractarians had ceased in 1841 with the publication of Tract 90: but the movement was by no means at an end and stirring events were to follow. In the summer of that year Newman began to live at Littlemore, where he was soon joined by a company of disciples. There, as he confessed afterwards, he lay on his death-bed as regarded membership of the Anglican Church, though at the time he became aware of it only by degrees. He might well have used the figure of a death-bed in speaking of those years immediately preceding his conversion, for it was only through an agony of mind and heart such as few can have a notion of that he reached the new life of Catholicism. He gave touching expression to his feelings in an apostrophe to the Church of his birth: "O my mother whence is this unto me that thou hast good things provided unto thee and canst not keep them, and barest children yet darest not own them? Why has thou not the skill to use their services nor the heart to rejoice in their love? How is it that whatever is generous in purpose, and tender

or deep in devotion, thy flower and thy promise, falls from thy bosom and finds no home within thy arms?" At length, after his much wavering and hesitation the light dawned upon him, and on 8th October, 1845, he was admitted into the one Fold, at Littlemore, by the Venerable Father Dominic of the Mother of God, who had come to fulfil the dream of his life by founding the Passionists in England. By his conversion, as has so often been said, the Church of England received a blow under which it reeled and from which it has never since recovered. His reception was speedily followed by that of Ward, Oakley, Faber, St. John and many other men of mark.

The loss of such a leader as Newman was a serious shock to many earnest and devoted souls in the English Church. They turned for light and guidance in their dark distress to Pusey and Keble, who did their best to rally the shattered forces of Anglicanism. But these able and devoted men seemed to share the confusion that seized upon their followers in the crisis. Witness the words of Pusey writing to a friend of Pakenham's on the subject of Newman's conversion: "The first pang came to me years ago when I had no other fear, but heard that he was prayed for by name in so many churches and religious houses on the Continent. The fear was suggested to me: If they pray earnestly for this object that he may be won to be an instrument of God's glory among them, while among us there is so much indifference and in part dislike, may it not be that their prayers may be heard, that God will give them whom they pray for—we forfeit whom we desire to retain. And now must they not think that their prayers which they have offered so long, at times, I think, night and day, or at the Holy Eucharist, have been heard, and may we not have forfeited him because there was com-

paratively little love and prayer? We ought not to disguise the greatness of this loss. It is the heaviest loss we could have had. They who have won him know his true value. It may be a comfort to us that they do. In my deepest sorrow at the anticipation of our loss, I was told of the saying of one of our most eminent historians, who owned that nothing could meet the evils with which they were beset, that nothing could meet them but some movement which should infuse life into their Church, and for this he looked to one man, and that man was Newman. I cannot say what ray of comfort this speech started into me. Our Church has not known how to employ him. And since this was so, it seemed as if a sharp sword were hung up in the scabbard or hung up in the sanctuary, because there was no one to wield it."

This, then, in meagre outline, was the state of things in the Church of England in the later forties of last century when Captain Pakenham, perhaps as a consequence, began to turn his thoughts more seriously to religious matters. Though all his family were staunch Protestants of the Irish type which has little sympathy with any Catholicizing tendencies—his uncle was at the time Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin—Charles, who had lived most of his life in England, had been drawn into the circle of the High Church party, and had followed with sympathetic interest the doings of the Tractarians at Oxford. He must, therefore, inevitably have felt with all the keenness natural to a religious and sensitive spirit such as his the crushing blow dealt to the Church of England by the secession of Newman and his entrance into the one true Fold.

CHAPTER IV

ADMISSION INTO THE ONE FOLD

FATHER PAKENHAM was once heard to declare that during the earlier part of his military life he had never been troubled with a serious thought on matters of religion—possibly because he had no doubts about the security of his religious position. He had certainly never come much into contact with Catholicism or things Catholic, though one or two anecdotes of a passing brush with them have perhaps an interest in the light of subsequent events. During a visit to Ireland about 1841 he happened to travel on the stage-coach between Sligo and Longford. The driver was McCloskey, still remembered in Ireland as a wit and "character," who had like many Irish country folk of his time a great liking and some aptitude for religious controversy. The young officer occupied the box-seat and was soon engaged by the driver in conversation and finally in a discussion on the merits of the Catholic Church. The long talk came to nothing, as such controversies generally do, but at parting McCloskey presented his young antagonist with a Catholic book—probably an account of the famous Pope and Maguire controversy, or some such popular pamphlet—asking him to read it carefully, and promising him that if he

did so he would be of a different mind when next they met. If the discussion had little influence on the young soldier, the promise at least was prophetic. When Charles Reginald Pakenham next returned to Ireland he was a Catholic and a priest of the Congregation of the Passion.

Another incident which happened in those early days was perhaps not so barren of influence. Charles came one day into the room of his sister (afterwards Lady Katherine Freke), and seeing among other trinkets on her table a little silver medal of the Blessed Virgin, asked her the meaning of it.

"Well, Charles," she said, "a French lady left it here: I will give it to you if you promise not to wear it."

"Why not?" he asked.

"Oh, they say that all who wear these medals become Romanists."

"Well then," he said, at once suiting the action to the word, "*I will wear it to disprove what they say.*"

He wore that medal till the day of his death, and often used to tell the story of how he came by it. Who can say how much it contributed to his conversion?

The change in his religious attitude made itself noticeable in 1846, and as we have already said, was probably influenced by the conversion of Newman and his followers. He began to have serious doubts about his position as a member of the Church of England, and manifested an eagerness by reading and discussion to find out the truth. He had always been an ardent admirer of Newman, and now began to read his works assiduously, particularly the "Parochial and Plain Sermons"—"those mournful sighings for better things, where the silvery prose of beautiful language is like

the distant harmony of a village choir." His copy of these sermons, still preserved, bears evidence of a constant and repeated course of reading, in the dates pencilled at the end of each for the years 1847-1850, and in the marginal lines and notes opposite to the passages which most struck him. Some of them were especial favourites, and on their lightly scored pages can almost be read the history of his religious development. The oft-read sermon on "The Ventures of Faith," for instance, with its reproach to Christians for venturing nothing, and its appeal to them to "risk largely upon their Saviour's word" was preparing him for the great adventure on which he staked all he had. The reproach and the appeal equally he applied to himself. "He who after falling into sin repents in deed as well as in word: puts some yoke upon his shoulders: subjects himself to punishment: is severe upon himself; denies himself innocent pleasures; or puts himself to public shame—he too shows that his faith is the realizing of things hoped for, the warrant of things not seen." And again, "How is it that we are so contented with things as they are—that we are so willing to be let alone, and to enjoy life—that we make excuses if anyone presses on us the necessity of something higher, the duty of bearing the Cross, if we would earn the Crown of the Lord Jesus Christ?" Such passages as these he applied to himself and his own case with utmost literalness. "It was Newman who taught me the beauty of religion," he used to say. "I gladly embraced his teaching. Fasting, prayer and constant attendance at church became my delight." He certainly began to fast in good earnest. On Fridays he took no food whatever until evening. He was asked once whether he did not think there was much self-love in all this. "Yes," he replied. "It amuses

me now to remember with what a self-satisfied feeling I would step into my cab or stalk along the streets in the fashionable hours, knowing that I had not tasted food that day. But really it was a good thing for me who once delighted in feasting. After the morning's parade at St. James's, you can't think with what real gusto I hastened to the splendid breakfast that used to be provided." His abstinence and his religious tendencies began to be remarked by his brother officers, but led to no unpleasant consequences. "He braved the censures of the world," Fr. Ignatius Spencer writes of him, "by following up all alone his religious exercises without concealment, yet without ostentation, in the midst of his comrades, though he once declared, when the question was asked him, that such was the high breeding and gentleman-like feeling in the regiment, that not one contemptuous or unpleasant remark was ever passed upon him on this account by others, not even by those who followed the most opposite course. This respectful deportment of his brother officers towards him, which he thus attributed to their high tone of gentleman-like feeling, is to us at the same time a striking evidence of the high character which he bore among them as a soldier and a man of honour, without which he could hardly have escaped so well."

Some of his friends began to grow anxious about him. His mother, the Dowager Countess of Longford, used to complain of the serious turn Charles was taking. Other friends of his had already contributed to emphasize this serious turn. A friend and fellow-officer, an Anglican of a devout habit of mind, one day persuaded Pakenham to accompany him to one of the leading Puseyite churches in London: Margaret Chapel, once the scene of Canon Oakley's pastorate, and since the fruitful mother of many a convert. It is now replaced by the fine church of All Saints, Margaret Street.

Captain Pakenham was much struck by what he heard and saw there, and, after the service, asked to be introduced to the clergyman who had just officiated. This was the Rev. Upton Richards, a well-known man in his day, between whom and Pakenham a close intimacy soon sprang up. The young officer adopted Mr. Richards as his spiritual director, frequently went to confession to him, became by his advice a regular communicant, and was constant in his attendance at Margaret Chapel. But his religious exercises were not confined to church: he devoted himself with assiduity, encouraged by the same spiritual guide, to the practice of mental prayer, choosing for that purpose passages from a book which was always a favourite with him, "The Imitation of Christ." And it is even said that Mr. Richards was the first to teach him the "more excellent way" of meditating on the Passion of Our Lord.

As Captain Pakenham began rapidly to assimilate Catholic ideas and accustom himself to Catholic practices, under the guidance of Mr. Richards, his uneasiness about his spiritual position in the Church of England increased rather than diminished. The many discussions he had with his friend brought him no permanent peace. At last what seemed a mere accident opened for him a way to the light. Mr. Richards one day gave him a little book entitled "The Spirit of St. Alphonsus Liguori"—apparently a collection of extracts from the Saint's works—and advised him to read it for his further instruction and enlightenment. He was so captivated by the book that when he had finished it he made it his business to purchase the other ascetical works of St. Alphonsus. In these he found many things which it puzzled both him and his guide to reconcile with the principles and practices of Anglicanism. And the more he studied

St. Alphonsus the more convinced he became of the untenableness of his own position. He asked advice in many quarters but without receiving any great satisfaction. Gradually it began to dawn upon him that the Catholic Church was to be his home. He felt himself gravitating towards it—but difficulties and scruples still stood in his way. With the thoroughness which was always characteristic of him, he determined to go to the fountain-head of Catholic truth in England and expose his doubts and the state of his soul. It was in the summer of 1849 that, happening to be at Hastings, he procured an introduction to Cardinal Wiseman (then simply Bishop Wiseman) who at that time had a small country house in the neighbourhood to which he used frequently to retire from London. Dr. Wiseman took great pains to clear up his difficulties and convince him of the divine authority of the Catholic Church. Still nearly a year passed before Pakenham could make up his mind to enter it. His conversion, like that of his master, Newman, was to be a process of slow and gradual conviction. But the day was near. The last pages of the little note-book to which we have already referred show a sudden transition from the writings of Pusey to such works as Mœhler's "Symbolism" and Balmez's "Protestantism and Catholicity Compared," and as one of the last extracts we find transcribed the fine apostrophe of Allies, reconciled to the Church in the same year as Captain Pakenham:—"Whither, then, shall I turn but to thee, O glorious Roman Church, to whom God has given in its fulness the double gift of ruling and teaching? Thine alone are the keys of Peter, and the sharp sword of Paul. On thee alone with their blood have they poured out their whole doctrine. Too late have I found thee who shouldst have fostered my childhood and set thy gentle and awful seal on

my youth; who shouldst have brought me up in the serene regions of truth, apart from doubt and the long agony of uncertain years. Yet before I understood thee I could admire: before I acknowledged thy claims I could see that undaunted spirit which could resign everything save the inheritance of Christ, that super-human wisdom by the gift of which, while earthly states have had single conquerors or legislators, a Charlemagne here, a Philippe Auguste there: in Rome alone the spiritual ruler has dwelt for ages, smiting the waters of the flood again and again with the mantle of Elijah, and making himself a path through them on the dry land. But now I see that the God of Elijah is with thee. O too long sought and too late found, yet be it given me to pass under thy protection the short remains of this troubled life, to wander no more from the fold, but to find the Chair of the Chief Shepherd to be indeed the 'Shadow of a great Rock in a weary land.'"

The Gorham Judgment in 1850 by which the Privy Council decided that baptismal regeneration need not be held to be one of the doctrines of the Church of England, probably hastened the conversion of Pakenham as it did that of many others. A mind so sensitive to dogmatic religion could hardly have remained unmoved by that judgment and the controversy it aroused. Be that as it may, it was in this year that the light of truth fully broke upon him. He visited Mr. Richards, probably for the last time, and told him that he had decided to seek admission to the Church of Rome. The answer was characteristic. "Well," said his spiritual director, "of course it is useless to try to stay in *the Church* if you have lost faith in her system." And so they parted.

A few days afterwards Captain Pakenham again went to Hastings and was received into the Catholic

Church by Cardinal Wiseman on the feast of the Assumption, 15th August, 1850. Reviewing his position some time later, he said to a friend: "I did not leave one moment too soon. Already some of the leading Tractarians had made their choice between Rome and infidelity in favour of the latter. And I began to fear for my faith. Yet it was a hard fight, because the spirit of irreligion had sunk so very deeply into society in England that I stood quite alone. I met no sympathy anywhere. My uncle advised me to travel. My brother, Lord Longford, was amazed at my mental anxiety about such a trifling matter. My favourite sister wished me to see a very high authority on the Roman question, but on inquiring his name I found that it was the Rev. Tresham Gregg, one of the very men who, I may say, had driven me out of the Church of England. It was a hard struggle for me who had nothing in a pecuniary sense to lose by the change. What then must be the difficulty where Rome means penury or almost starvation?"

CHAPTER V

THE CALL TO HIGHER THINGS

THERE is a sentence of St. Jerome to Demetrius which Captain Pakenham was fond of calling to mind—we find it copied in his commonplace-book and pencilled on the margin of one of his favourite books of spiritual reading—*If thou canst not brook the look of relatives, how couldst thou face the tribunal of persecutors?* During the latter days of his Anglican life, when the cold surprise and mistrust of those dearest to him made the narrow way he trod lonelier and more difficult, his sensitive and affectionate nature may doubtless have needed that salutary reminder. The need was surely greater now that he had crossed the threshold of the Church. His family were deeply pained at the step he had taken. His mother in especial felt it intensely and could not conceal her distress; it is questionable, indeed, whether she ever saw him again. The attitude of his eldest brother, Lord Longford, who had come into the family title and property early, and had not been remarkable for steadiness of life, was one of mingled contempt and amazement. We have already seen how his favourite sister had striven to avert what she regarded as a dire calamity. The

spiritual peace which he had found in the Church after years of thought and study and prayer, had its sharp contrast in the sword which his conversion cast into the circle of his domestic relationships. It was but what he had expected, and he had steeled his soul against the inevitable suffering. "*If thou canst not brook the look of relatives, how couldst thou face the tribunal of persecutors?*" He was not to find exemption from the common lot predicted by Our Divine Master for His chosen disciples: "Think ye that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, no; but, separation" (Luke xii. 51).

There was, however, one notable exception to the general estrangement of his family.

When only fourteen he had lost his father, for whom he had a specially intense affection, and whose death he ever afterwards regarded as the first great grief of his life. He was more than once heard to speak in terms of veneration of the father who had understood him in his shy, strange childhood so much better than anyone else. But with his father's death he was not wholly bereft of a father's care. During his youth and early manhood his maternal uncle, Major-General Lygon, who was without children, looked upon Charles in the light of a son and treated him with all the affection and confidence that could be expected of the fondest of parents. The conversion of his protégé was a great blow to the good man, but, though exceedingly annoyed, he soon recognised that argument and expostulation were useless, and after the first words of brusque, soldier-like remonstrance were out, he made up his mind to accept the inevitable. He little dreamed how soon a heavier strain was to be put upon the loyalty of his affection.

So it came to pass that uncle and nephew having agreed to differ and to be no worse friends, Charles,

shortly after his reception into the Church, went down to make a lengthened stay at General Lygon's country house, Spring Hill, in Worcestershire. Together they lived a quiet secluded life there in the shadow of the Cotswolds. The nearest Catholic church at the time was that of the Passionists, in the village of Broadway, three miles distant, and thither Pakenham went regularly to assist at Mass and discharge his other religious duties. The presence of the tall, handsome young guardsman, so recent a convert, created something of a sensation in this quiet, old-world spot as he took his place Sunday by Sunday among the handful of villagers that attended the humble little church; but the more lasting impression received alike by the congregation and the religious community was that made by the deep, manly, and unaffected piety of him whom they soon began familiarly to call "The Captain." Only a short time elapsed before he became acquainted with Father Vincent Grotti, then Superior of the Passionist house at Broadway, and at his invitation paid several visits to the community, gaining the affections of all by the charm of his manner and conversation.

On Ash Wednesday, 1851, he waited on Father Vincent and asked leave to make a few days' spiritual retreat in the monastery. His request was immediately complied with, though he did not begin the religious exercises until the ensuing Holy-week. Whether he entered on this retreat with the definite object of seeking light on the subject of his vocation or simply with the general view of his spiritual advancement is not known; but certain it is that in the course of his retreat a very definite resolution took shape in his mind. On the Wednesday of Holy Week he sought an interview with the superior and, to Father Vincent's amazement, begged to be admitted a novice, a lay

brother—he did not dream of becoming a priest—into the Congregation of the Passion. He met at once with a very decided refusal. The delicacy of his constitution and the sort of life to which he had been accustomed made him, in Father Vincent's judgment, a very unsuitable subject for the religious life. He was reminded, moreover, that of all religious institutes the Congregation of the Passion was one of the last he should think of joining; the austerity of the life and the strictness of the rule, which were represented to him in somewhat lurid and exaggerated colours apparently, would be for such as he an almost unbearable burden. And in his case there would be the further initial difficulty that the rule of St. Paul of the Cross enjoined that "one of noble family should be proved by a more strict and prolonged trial." All these difficulties seemed to the fervent postulant purely imaginary; at the best, they but served as fuel to the fire of his zeal. To good Father Vincent's warning that among the Passionists he must bid farewell to bodily comforts and break through all his previous habits of life, he answered naively that it was not comforts he was seeking, since he had abundance of them at home.

Seeing him bent on entering the religious state, and still fearing that his bodily strength might be unequal to bearing the yoke of the Passionist rule, Father Vincent urged him to turn his thoughts to other institutes less austere, mentioning several in which he could similarly consecrate his life to the service of God. But his determination to become a Passionist resisted every argument to the contrary that the superior's ingenuity could suggest. Accordingly he was presented with a copy of the Rules and Constitutions of the Congregation of the Passion, which he was advised to study carefully, while at the same

time pondering with more deliberateness the subject of his vocation.

It was observed that on Holy Thursday and Good Friday he remained for long hours prostrate before the altar absorbed in prayer. When the Holy Week services were at an end he returned to Spring Hill with a new light in his heart, brighter and more joyous than the Easter sunbeams that played around his path. He had finally fixed his resolution, come what would, to leave all things and follow his Suffering Master as a humble lay brother in the Congregation of the Passion.

CHAPTER VI

ENTERS THE PASSIONIST NOVITIATE

THE blank bewilderment of General Lygon when his nephew came home that Easter day and quietly let him know that he meant to exchange the brilliant uniform of the guardsman for the rough black habit of the Passionists saved anything in the nature of a scene; the old man was so crushed by the force and suddenness of the blow as to have little spirit left for remonstrance or reproach. He seems, indeed, hardly to have grasped at first the full import of the announcement, as Charles, for his part, apparently misconstrued the calmness with which it was received. He did not know it was the calmness of despair, and so he proceeded with the least possible delay to make the necessary preparations for his change of state. On the Easter Monday he went to London to settle his worldly affairs and take leave of his friends. He resigned his staff appointment, sold his commission in the Guards (for over £2,000, it is said), with his regimental accoutrements, etc., disposed of his library, with the exception of a very few books, and of his

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other effects. The money thus realized he distributed in charity, the bulk of it going to a religious institute of women (then struggling with their early difficulties) engaged in charitable work which had a special attraction for him. A comparatively small sum invested in the consolidated funds and yielding an annuity of some £70 he afterwards transferred to the Provincial of the Passionists for the maintenance of a village school for the Catholic children of Broadway.

While he was engaged in this process of summarily denuding himself of all worldly things his friends looked on with something like consternation. He made no secret of the meaning of it; told them with all the old charm of manner of the call he had felt to higher things. Some few who knew him less intimately took the matter lightly, laughed as at a bit of whimsical quixotism, and said that he would soon regret his hasty resolution. The many who fully recognized the iron will that lay beneath the calm and placid exterior of the man viewed his proceedings with alarm: he would bring disgrace on his family: he would kill himself: he would die in a lunatic asylum: he was already mad. Some tried entreaty with him; others, quiet reasoning. Friends to whom by reason of their age and experience he had been accustomed to look for counsel in the past, now took him in hand and admonished him on the rashness and folly of his undertaking. "You have always led a regular and edifying life in the world," they said, "why not continue to do so? You have vast opportunities for doing good, if you will only use them; why throw all away and bury yourself in a living tomb? You cannot expect your family to acknowledge you, if you persist in such conduct—even your inferiors will despise you. You are inflicting the most cruel pain on all who love you, and for a mere foolish fancy which you

will live to regret." From his mother he received repeated letters, couched in most affectionate terms, begging him by the most tender and sacred memories not to embitter her old age and bring dishonour on their house. His sisters, to whom he had always been tenderly devoted, were equally moving in their entreaties, though they felt it hard to restrain their indignation. "I wish he were dead," said one of them, "but the worst of it is we shall be like the Spencers, who have not only the sorrow of losing their near relative, but the shame of seeing him go about barefoot, like a dirty, mad mendicant, begging prayers for the conversion of England."

Even the few Catholic friends he had, looked grave when they heard of his determination. Cardinal Wiseman, whom he went to visit before leaving London, did not quite discourage him, but expressed the fear that his health would not bear the strain of the sort of life he contemplated.

Strange to say, the only one of his Protestant friends from whom he had a word of hearty encouragement—and it was a valued and gratefully remembered one—was his uncle, the Duke of Wellington. The "Iron Duke," as he was called, knew well the metal of which his young nephew's character was made, and had always admired his high military talents. He lost no time in remonstrance, which he knew would be fruitless, but remarked with characteristic bluntness as he bade Pakenham good-bye: "Well, you have been a good soldier, Charles; strive to be a good monk!"

Though he successfully withstood all the assaults of worldly wisdom and all the blandishments of friends on that farewell London visit, the efforts made to break his resolution were not without painful effect. On the lonely journey back to Broadway the numerous representations on the folly of his conduct thrust upon

his notice individually during the foregoing few days, now returned to his mind in their collective force and caused him the acutest suffering. Were his friends right, and was he wrong, after all? What if he were indeed unable to conform to the rules of the Order? What if his strength broke down under the strict conventual discipline? Had he been wise in throwing up his position and foregoing his prospects, perhaps only to cut a ludicrous and sorry figure on his enforced return to the world? He had been so happy in the new-found grace of Catholicism; would it not have been better to content himself, humbly following the beaten track with the common faithful, rather than to chase after a possibly unattainable ideal? Then the pain and humiliation he was inflicting on his dearest relatives, the heart-break he would be sure to cause to the dear and generous uncle whom he now dreaded to meet—these and myriad other thoughts of a kindred nature beset him like so many evil spirits, and racked his heart with anguish all the long solitary journey from London to Spring Hill. Nature seemed at length to prevail over grace in the weary struggle, and the vocation which he had welcomed as a high message from the court of God began to be as the mutterings of some unholy spell to which he could not close his ears.

But his sternest trial was yet to come. General Lygon, who, as we have said, acted the part of a father to Charles, and who, indeed, loved him with all the tenderness of a devoted parent, had recovered from the almost dazed condition into which the shock of his nephew's first announcement seemed to cast him. He took heart of grace again and made the most of the few days that remained before the doors of the grey monastery below on the village outskirts would close on his boy, in a last pathetic effort to

restrain him. They were days of sorrow and distress for Charles. His warm and generous disposition made him sensitively responsive to the least tokens of affection and prompt in gratitude for even the smallest favour. To his uncle's friendship he owed much; the slender patrimony which he inherited at his father's death, and which of late years had scarcely been sufficient for his becoming maintenance, had been liberally supplemented by General Lygon. He had what was hardly less valuable to a young man of his station and surrounded by his peculiar temptations, the affectionate intimacy of one much older than himself, thoroughly conversant with his circumstances, and whose store of wisdom and experience was ever at his disposal. It was, moreover, common knowledge that Charles was destined to be heir to General Lygon's estate, worth some thousands of pounds a year. All the hopes of his uncle were therefore centred in him; he knew it, and the knowledge sharpened the sting of the words of penetrating appeal addressed to him. But he did not flinch from his purpose, and outwardly showed the same quiet and gentle firmness, however keen the conflict that went on in the solitude of his own heart.

"Good God," cried the old man one day as he found his nephew engaged in making some preparations for his departure, "Good God, Charles, you'll break my heart. Why do you persist in this madness? I have never hindered you in your religion; you have had your own way in everything. If you like to be a Roman Catholic, that is nothing to me. If you wished to sell your commission, that also, though a disappointment, I did not so much care about. But why this new madness? My dear Charles, what you want is change. You have studied too hard and led too confined a life. Well, now, go abroad for a couple of

years. You often said you would like to make a long tour in Italy and Greece. Well, go now and give up your present folly."

To this Charles had but one reply, that he felt it a sacred duty to respond to what he believed a divine call, that, much as he loved his uncle, he had to regard the words of Christ: "He that loveth father and mother more than Me is not worthy of Me"; and he had felt that the invitation of Christ was personally addressed to him: "If thou wilt be perfect go sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and come and follow Me."

"But surely," the General remonstrated, "the Saviour could not have meant that for such as you!"

And so the wearisome discussion went on, leading like their many previous ones to nothing, and ending, as they all ended, with the old man's snapping out some short, sharp expression of disapproval.

"Mark my words, boy," he would say, "you'll die in a ditch."

The struggle, however, was now nearly over; even General Lygon came, in the end, to recognise the futility of further expostulation, not, indeed, it is said, before he begged his nephew on bended knee to allow compassion for the lonely old age of one who so loved him to weigh with him before taking the final step. It was the last cast, and it failed. No more was said, and for the short time that remained both tried as best they might to master their sorrow.

Then, one Saturday afternoon, early in May, Captain Pakenham rode out of the park gates, accompanied only by a groom. They headed their horses for Broadway. At the monastery gates Pakenham dismounted and sent back his horse in care of the groom, with an affectionate note bidding farewell to his uncle. That was their parting.

That same evening, as the novices were at recreation, the Father Master presented a tall, distinguished-looking young postulant to them.

"What are we to call him?" they said.

"Oh, call him Brother Charles."

But it was remembered that there was already a Father Charles in the province, a young priest lately sent over from Belgium, and soon to become widely known for his eminent virtues¹; so to avoid confusion of names it was decided that the new novice should be known as Charles Mary—a name which he bore among the Passionists for some years. Shortly after the Beatification of their founder, St. Paul of the Cross, he obtained permission to change it to Paul Mary.

¹ Father Charles Houben, who after a very holy life died in the odour of sanctity at Mount Argus, Dublin, on 5th January, 1893, and the Cause of whose Beatification and Canonization has recently been brought before the Holy See.

CHAPTER VII

FIRST DAYS AS A NOVICE

THUS unceremoniously began Captain Pakenham's life as a Passionist. The prophetic menace uttered by one of his sisters shortly after his reception into the Church now seemed sufficiently justified. "For goodness sake, Charles," she had said, "get married as soon as you can or you'll end by becoming a monk." But, for all his splendid courage and his fidelity to grace, his first experience of the religious life found him in no mood to sing his "Nunc Dimittis" to the world. He was still to learn the lesson that vocation, as conversion, is "not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy" (Rom. ix. 16). His master of novices, in some notes left concerning his saintly charge, describes the condition of "the poor postulant" on his arrival at the novitiate house as one of almost complete prostration by reason of the spiritual and emotional conflicts through which he had recently passed. "He was scarcely able to speak and seemed like one bereft of consciousness. But all this was little in comparison with the pain he had yet to endure. You may judge what he must have

suffered during the next three days from the fact that during that time the expectations which he had formed of conventual life were anything but realized. So far was he from being enamoured of it that it filled him with disgust. The religious observances seemed monotonous and unmeaning, the devotional practices extravagant, the very sound of the bells tormented and perplexed him. He told me afterwards himself that his anguish during that time was indescribable."¹

It was, perhaps, in the circumstances appropriate that his novitiate should begin by his tasting something of the loneliness and spiritual strife of Gethsemane. And through God's mercy he was able to give fit answer, by his fortitude and resignation, to the crucial question which must have exercised his soul: "Can you drink of the chalice that I drink of: or be baptized with the baptism wherewith I am baptized?" (Mark x. 38). The conflict, though sharp and bitter, was not long. At the end of three days his heart overflowed with sweetness and consolation; and peace, once gained, was a permanent possession. The struggle was never renewed. Every day added to his happiness and increased his gratitude to his Divine Master for the grace of a vocation which associated him so intimately with the saving mysteries of the Passion.

On a fly-leaf of his copy of "The Spiritual Combat" we find transcribed by his own hand, probably at such a time as this, the following beautiful passage from Cowper, which witnesses to the peace that filled his heart as a result of his flight from the world to the sanctuary of Christ's Wounded Heart:—

I was a stricken deer, that left the herd
Long since: with many an arrow deep infixt
My panting side was charg'd, when I withdrew
To seek a tranquil death in distant shades.

¹ Manuscript Memoir by Father Salvian, C.P.

There was I found by One Who had Himself
Been hurt by th' archers. In His Side He bore
And in His Hands and Feet the cruel Scars.
With gentle force soliciting the darts,
He drew them forth, and heal'd and bade me live.

Meanwhile he was subjected to the ordinary routine of daily menial work interspersed with prayer, imposed by the rule of the Congregation on its postulants and novices. To "wash the dishes, serve in the kitchen, sweep the house, and give other proofs of Christian humility and patience" . . . to be "publicly reprehended, particularly in the refectory," to "eat sometimes upon the floor,"¹ and the like, now entered into the common round of the erstwhile brilliant young officer's life. Nor did his high estate give any ground on which exemption might be looked for: rather the contrary. "Let no regard be had of any person," the rule directs, "whatever may be his condition. Let one of noble family be proved by a more strict and prolonged trial. . . ." After several days spent in these exercises, his sincerity and piety having been seen to emerge successfully from the ordeal, the local chapter (consisting of the Provincial, then on a visit to Broadway, and the priests of the community) was convoked to consider whether Brother Charles, as he now was, should be admitted to receive the habit of the Congregation. When the Fathers had each given his opinion the postulant was called into the chapter-room and asked the usual pointed questions: to all of which he replied satisfactorily, adding that he "had duly considered everything and the more he knew of the institute the more he was charmed with it." A ballot was then taken and all the suffrages were found to be in favour of his receiving the habit. Accordingly, after the ten days' retreat prescribed by rule, which

¹ Rule, Chapter vi.

he made with exemplary fervour, he was invested in the black habit of the Passionists by Father Vincent Grotti on the morning of Thursday, 22nd May, 1851.

Among those who witnessed that ceremony, so memorable in the life of Father Pakenham, was another eminent convert, who seems to have been deeply affected by the scene, and by the devoted self-renunciation of the central figure in it. "On the occasion of his clothing," again to quote Father Salvian, the master of novices, "the Rev. Dr. Manning, who was at that time making the spiritual exercises (in our house at Broadway) preparatory to his ordination, being present, was much moved by the devotion with which the fervent novice made the oblation of himself to God. He told me he envied very much his happy lot, and that he would gladly follow his example had not the Divine Will, manifested to him by his superiors, ordered it otherwise." When the novices were brought to Dr. Manning's room a few days later to bid him good-bye, in the kindly words he spoke to them he addressed himself particularly to Brother Charles, we are told, in words of great encouragement, which were ever afterwards remembered by him with gratitude.

As already mentioned in the course of this narrative, when Captain Pakenham first applied for admission to the Congregation he begged in his humility to be received as a lay brother. The superiors had not a moment's hesitation in denying him this request. His delicate constitution would have unfitted him for hard manual labour, while his superior education and judgment gave hopes of his being able to render excellent service in the sacred ministry. But so ardent was his love of the humbler state and the completer sacrifice, so deep his desire to live and die in poverty and obscurity, unknown and unregarded by the world

outside the convent walls, that when the year of his probation was nearly expired and he was almost on the eve of his profession, he earnestly renewed his petition, begging to be allowed to exchange his condition of cleric for that of lay brother, though this would have entailed the obligation of making his novitiate afresh. His request was again refused. Indeed it had the very opposite effect to that which he intended, for it did but serve to strengthen the authorities of the Congregation in their conviction of his singular fitness to preach to men, by word and example, contempt of the world and its ways, and to fix their minds and hearts on "Jesus Christ and Him Crucified."

At the time Brother Charles began his novitiate there was a full community of novices, and the effect of his presence among them was soon apparent in a remarkable increase of religious fervour. His example was of a kind to edify and inspire. "He was rigorously exact," says his fellow-novice, Father Tenison Woods, "in the least observance of the rule, and was obedient to his superiors to an extent which elicited the unmeasured admiration of all." So there seemed to spring up in the hearts of his young companions a holy emulation which carried them along the rugged path of virtue almost without conscious effort. How, indeed, could it have been otherwise, when they saw this man, so much older than they and so much more heavily weighted with the chains of alien custom and tradition, yet running the race of perfection as though, of all that ran, but one could reach the goal and win the prize? And their admiration was all the greater as they could not help knowing the frequent external difficulties, the almost daily distractions with which he had to contend in preserving that fervour and recollection of spirit so marked in his every action. The

“living tomb” predicted by some of his friends turned out less of a reality than he might have desired. Several families of rank, with whom he was on friendly terms, lived in the neighbourhood of Broadway or within easy distance. Visitors would call, and could not always be denied: or they would surprise him at some duty in the church, or hail him as he walked abroad with the other novices. Let us turn again to the biographical sketch by Father Woods: “His first office was to assist the sacristan, a very subordinate position. Yet in this his exactness and his humility went hand in hand. Day by day he would assist in sweeping out the sanctuary, in dusting the ornaments of the altar, and in carrying water, replenishing the cruets, renewing the flowers. As may be supposed, he was not very handy in employments which were so new to him; but he made up by cheerful alacrity for his want of skill. He would never do anything without permission; and it was not an uncommon sight to see him trudging upstairs and along the corridors, broom in hand, to obtain leave to speak to some of his old friends in the world who had surprised him while sweeping the church. One day it was Lord Northwick, and another day Viscount Elmley, his cousin. But it made no difference, Brother Charles was not disconcerted. We used to go out for a walk along the country roads twice in the week, and very frequently would meet some of his old acquaintances, who would whisper as he passed: ‘That’s the Captain.’ Meanwhile he would modestly and even gaily walk amongst the long procession of black-habited novices and seem not to notice what was said of him. One day as we were resting on a grassy bank, a groom rode up and asked which was the Hon. Mr. Pakenham. Brother Charles stepped forth and spoke a few kind words to the man, who dismounted, and, hat in hand, seemed

strangely impressed as he listened to the bare-footed monk. He came to ask us to go into the General’s conservatory, which was hard by, but of course the invitation was declined. The groom actually wept as he rode away, for he was an old and faithful servant, but Brother Charles talked on as cheerfully as ever. . . . Lord Campden came to see him once, and I think the present Marquis of Exeter, his brother-in-law. There were also many other visitors whose names I have forgotten. The General (Lygon) sent presents out of number to his nephew: but Charles would never look at them, but desired them all to be placed at the disposal of the community.”

On occasion of the chance encounters referred to above the conduct of Brother Charles was always the same: he observed the novitiate rule of silence rigidly till released from it for the time being by his superiors. The master of novices mentions the instance of Viscount Campden’s visit, when Charles happening to meet first him and then Lady Campden, both of whom would have entered into friendly chat with him, smilingly gave them to understand that his lips were sealed by obedience. Once, too, when a priest with whom he was well acquainted was leaving the monastery after making a retreat, and, chancing to meet him in the corridor, bade him good-bye, Charles shook him warmly by the hand, but maintained absolute silence. He cared little whether people thought him odd or scrupulous in his observance; no human consideration would induce him to violate his rule, even in the smallest detail.

Not all his meetings, however, were as pleasant as these. One day as the novices were walking out, wearing their religious dress as usual, a gentleman passed who had known Charles in other days, and saluted him somewhat jauntily with “How d’ye do,

Pakenham?" Receiving only a bow, which he may not have noticed, in reply, he was evidently much annoyed and, turning, shouted out: "I say, Captain, your legs will be frozen before you get to the top of the hill"—alluding of course to the sandalled feet of the novices. The gibe was hardly in the highest taste; but, let it be remembered, this was about the time at which Father Faber could write to Mr. Watts Russell—"Even *gentlemen* shout from their carriage windows at us." The passions enkindled by the re-establishment of the hierarchy in England and the subsequent controversy were in full flame. The little incident, however, far from agitating or in any way troubling Brother Charles, highly amused him and was the source of much innocent pleasantry for a long time afterwards. Another small exhibition of bigotry and bad manners, belonging to the same period, would, doubtless, have given him equal amusement, had he but known of it. At the opening of the schools for the Catholic children of the village, done with all the pomp and ceremony possible, Brother Charles was appointed to carry the cross at the head of the procession. A Worcestershire newspaper, describing the function, devoted of course a line or two to the distinguished cross-bearer, thus:—"The Honourable Charles Reginald Pakenham, who has lately become a lay brother among the Passionists, degraded himself by carrying the cross"!

Some time after Charles's clothing he was obliged to pay a visit to his uncle at Spring Hill. The General had written several times begging that he would come: the old man would not go to the monastery lest he should be refused an interview with his nephew. At length the superiors determined that the novice should accept the urgent invitation, and a day and hour were fixed for the visit. The master of novices (who of

course accompanied him) gives a short note of the visit, which throws an interesting side-light on the spiritual life and character of Charles: "Before we reached the house, he perceived his uncle coming to meet him, and fearing lest I should receive any slight or be occasioned the least embarrassment, which would have caused him the deepest pain, he delicately anticipated my wishes by not pressing me to go up with him to the house. I gladly promised to wait for him, expressing a wish that I had some book to enable me to pass the time. Charles said he had one, and taking from his pocket a little volume, gave it to me. He then left, and after a few moments I saw him locked in the embraces of his kind old friend. After thus warmly greeting each other they retired into the house. I do not know what the uncle's feelings must have been in seeing his nephew for the first time clad in the long rough tunic of the Passionist, with broad felt hat, leathern girdle, and sandalled feet: I know I could not, myself, refrain from reflecting on the total transformation of the young man.

"Left to myself I opened the book and found it to be an Italian copy of 'The Imitation of Christ': I perceived that in many places it was very much underlined with lead pencil. On examination I found that the passages thus marked all treated of self-denial and of carrying the cross with humility and resignation.

"After half-an-hour the uncle and nephew reappeared and, warm adieux being exchanged on both sides, they parted.

"Some weeks afterwards I was looking through the spiritual books Charles had brought to the novitiate and found them pencilled similarly to 'The Imitation,' especially the sixth chapter of 'The Spiritual Combat': *e.g.*, 'The soul must not fail to place her confidence in God. She must not be discouraged or abandon her

spiritual works ; on the contrary, she ought to excite herself to new fervour and redouble her efforts against the enemy.'

"I must mention that 'The Spiritual Combat' and 'The Imitation of Christ' which were Charles's favourite and constant pocket companions were Italian editions, as he knew that some Protestants endeavoured to improve and accommodate those beautiful works to their own views."¹

¹ That his fears in this respect were not groundless the following note prefixed to an English edition of "The Imitation of Christ," published a very few years ago by Henry Frowde, and a copy of which now lies before us, will serve to show:—"This book forms one of a series of works provided for the use of members of the English Church. The process of adaptation, in the case of this volume, is not left to the reader, but has been undertaken with the view of bringing every expression, as far as possible, into harmony with the Book of Common Prayer and Anglican Divinity." The note, it must be said, is very honest and very thought-provoking.

CHAPTER VIII

PUTTING ON THE ARMOUR OF GOD

THE first months of Brother Charles's novitiate passed without further noteworthy incident, marked only by his daily rapid growth in holiness and in the spirit of his new-found vocation. The long summer days, filled with the hundred little details of work and prayer and innocent recreation, flitted by lightly and pleasantly as some heaven-sent dream : and, as the novice retired to his cell after the evening prayer and glanced out on the quiet landscape still glimmering under the soft and mystic light of departing day, he must have felt that here at least the world was very far away indeed. The quietude and beauty of his surroundings mirrored the peace of his beautiful soul. "How little I have given up for so much!" was his thought each evening as he knelt for a last word of thanksgiving to God before composing himself to rest. The narrow bed, a camp-bed truly, with its pallet and pillow of coarse straw and its poor covering, was rough indeed to eye and touch, but sufficient for the short repose of five hours before the midnight bell summoned him to matins and to another day in this campaign of the spirit.

So the time sped on in a round of duties which to worldly eyes might seem monotonous and dreary, but to him, labouring with all his heart to be "a good soldier of Christ," were full of interest and significance.

Then came his first great trial, in the form of a severe illness. His constitution, never very strong, may have been overtaxed by the austerities of the Passionist rule, though, truth to say, austerity had been no stranger to him of late years. However this may be, three months of his novitiate had scarcely passed when he was afflicted with a painful inflammation of the eyes which necessitated his remaining all day in a darkened room and deprived him of the consolation of following the regular exercises of community life. This indisposition, though unattended with danger, was a cause of much suffering to him, but he bore it with a patience and cheerfulness greatly edifying to all who came in contact with him. The novices who visited him in turn found him always the same genial and pleasant companion, always in the same good spirits, ready to amuse and be amused. When the conversation turned upon some devotional subject, as it often did, it was a delight to listen to him. Those visits to the sick-room were coveted by his young companions who felt the duty of charity changed into a pleasure by the simplicity and beauty of his character and the charm of his conversation. One of his chief anxieties was not to give trouble to the community or to the infirmarian who attended on him. Hence he would ask for nothing, well content with what fraternal charity prompted the religious to do for him, and often protesting against the attentions he received. He would hear of no medical assistance but that of the village doctor, who, as it chanced, was the very reverse of skilful. One day this gentleman made some mistake in his directions which caused his patient

much pain and inconvenience; Charles only laughed at it, but the religious who were present could not help seeing how greatly he suffered. Possibly it was this blunder no less than the long continuance of his illness which determined the superiors to seek further medical advice. They called in an eminent physician from Cheltenham, who, on examining Charles, made a somewhat alarming report. The inflammation of the eyes he did not consider of very great consequence, but the patient's general health was much impaired and some functional disorder of the heart threatened serious results. A change of air was imperative as soon as the invalid could be safely removed.

His worst fears seemed now about to be realized. In the long, lonely watches of his tedious illness he had been haunted by the thought that his break-down would result in his being dismissed from the Congregation, or that, failing this, his relatives hearing of his illness and gaining access to him, would be inspired with fresh hopes of his return to the world and torment him by a renewal of their assaults on his vocation. Perhaps they would even bring pressure to bear on his superiors and so procure his dismissal. His anxieties were at least partially justified. His uncle, General Lygon, was informed of his serious condition, and invited to visit him. The scene when the old man came was a most affecting one. Seeing his nephew, whom he held dearer than a son, reduced to such a state of weakness and prostration, he was unable to speak, and silently shed tears. Charles did his best to put a brave face on matters, making light of his illness and talking and laughing with gay nonchalance. But he made little impression on his devoted relative, and the moment which he so greatly dreaded soon came. Renewed appeals were addressed to his common sense: fresh arguments were adduced to shake his

constancy : and a great deal of unnecessary pain was caused, with the best of intentions, to both parties. This was the sole result of the numerous well-meant efforts, made on this and many subsequent occasions during his illness by his uncle and others of his relatives to induce Brother Charles to abandon his vocation. Their plausible reasonings may readily be imagined. The wild experiment had been tried and had failed : broken health after a short three months was surely sufficient indication that the life he had so rashly chosen did not suit him : he had invoked the Will of God on his side—was it not clear now that God's Will pointed a different way ? All this was a great trial to the poor invalid, but though he was physically almost helpless, his placid strength of purpose was in nowise affected by those good-natured, if ill-timed, onslaughts. On the contrary, he rather regarded his illness as a sign of God's good pleasure in his choice, a sealing of his vocation, a purifying fire which would render him less unworthy of the high place to which he was destined in the service of his Divine Master.

When he was well enough to be removed from the monastery he was sent by his superiors for the prescribed change of air to Prestbury, near Cheltenham, in Gloucestershire. Towards the end of October he set out, accompanied by Brother Seraphim, his infirmarian, for the house of a Catholic physician there who undertook the charge of him during his convalescence. The manner of life followed by the two religious in their temporary home, which has been briefly described by the brother infirmarian, is in itself high testimony to the fervent spirit which always animated the frail body of his patient : " We adhered," he says, " as closely as possible to the rules observed at the Retreat. In the morning, immediately after rising from bed, Brother Charles recited Prime and

Tierce, whilst I said my usual prayers : we then breakfasted, and he made spiritual reading for half an hour. (Mass could be attended only on Sundays at Cheltenham.) Afterwards, if the weather and Brother Charles's health permitted, we walked for a short time in the garden. Before dinner he recited Sext and None, and after dinner three-quarters of an hour were given to recreation, which time having expired, we observed a rigorous silence for the space of one hour. Then Brother Charles said Vespers, and we devoted another half hour to spiritual reading. At the appointed time we recited Compline, after which we made together an hour's meditation. After supper we spent three-quarters of an hour in recreation and then we said the Rosary and retired to bed." Brother Charles was, of course, in no sense bound to the recitation of the Divine Office : but judging from this account the probability is that he recited all the canonical hours daily during his absence from the monastery, Matins and Lauds being said privately as distinguished from the hours recited in the quasi-choir formed by himself and his infirmarian.

After some weeks' stay at Cheltenham, Charles, although yet far from well, begged with great eagerness to be allowed to return to Broadway and community life. He was especially anxious to be at home in time to take part in the novena in preparation for Christmas, a festival which was a great favourite with him for the touching mystery of Divine Love it commemorates. When his request was granted, the joy of his heart was almost childlike in its ingenuous simplicity and fulness : and his cup of happiness was full indeed when he found himself once more safely ensconced in the holy and peaceful solitude of the novitiate. But the joy was not all on his side : to the community, and especially to his young com-

panions, his return was a peculiar delight. Amidst their warm greetings, indeed, there was an element of misgiving, for they could not fail to notice how sadly stricken his illness had left him; "and as we looked," said one of his fellow-novices, "on his manly features so pale and emaciated, we felt that God had not given him to the Passionists for many years."

His return to the novitiate house, however, seemed to benefit his health even more than his sojourn at Cheltenham. He began at once to regain strength. "Immediately after his return," writes his master of novices, "he became much stronger, and every day found him still better, so that in a short time he was able to attend the regular observances with the rest of the community. During the Lent of this year, 1852, he never ate flesh meat: nevertheless, he found himself so strong and in the enjoyment of such comparatively good health, that he attributed his recovery not to the virtue of medicine, but to the salutary observance of our holy rule, which he was accustomed to call '*his medicine*.'" Father Tenison Woods, speaking in more qualified terms of Brother Charles's health, is equally emphatic as to the strictness of his observance: "His health mended very slowly, and he was always a sufferer, but he rose at midnight with the community, and in the depth of winter was just as exact as the youngest and strongest."

During his novitiate he was visited with several other attacks of illness: but if he could not entirely conceal his ailments he always made light of them, fearing to give the least trouble or in any wise embarrass the community. "He was in truth rather morbidly afraid of this," is the comment of his fellow-novice whom we have so often quoted. He suffered much from rheumatism, yet was never heard to complain, though his features distorted with pain often

told the tale he strove to conceal. Only obedience would induce him to avail himself of the little indulgences usually accorded to the sick. Though always delicate, he abhorred having any distinction made in his favour. His superior was often obliged to command him when ill to make use of the more nourishing diet provided for him. His own desire was in every respect and in all circumstances to conform to the common use of the community. "I am a Passionist," he would sometimes say, "and if any distinction is to be made it should be in favour of those who have given their youth and energy to God's service and not to one like me who has come into the monastery quite tired of the world."

As the time of his probation drew to its close, the improvement in his health was on the whole so marked that it relieved his superiors of any hesitation they might have felt as to the prudence of admitting him to his religious profession. On any other score than that of health there was no room for doubt. By his brethren indeed he was already regarded as a saint: while the nobility of his character and the eminence of his virtues together with his fine talents gave promise that he would one day do great work for God and souls as a priest of the Congregation of the Passion.

A few words on the virtues which most distinguished him both in the novitiate and in after life may fitly conclude this chapter. Of these none glowed with brighter lustre than his charity. When it is remembered that his fellow-novices were all young, scarcely half his age, and drawn from a far different sphere of life, it will readily be understood that living in their midst continually he had often to make very large allowances. Their tastes and habits of mind were in little harmony with his, and his patience and forbearance must have been frequently put to the test:

yet he was never known to show the slightest antipathy or resentment, and was gentle and affable to all alike. He used to say that before he entered the Congregation one of the things which had most strongly attracted him was the joyous countenances and unaffected simplicity of the novices. Now that he was one of themselves he was simple, unaffected and happy as the least among them. And the highest testimony to the affectionate kindness of his bearing towards them is the avowal made by one of their number in later years—"I can hardly express in words how all the community loved him." We may be sure, since love begets love, that it was the beautiful fraternal charity so manifest in all his conduct which inspired this touching affection of his brethren. His master of novices tells us how "he loved to cover or at least diminish their faults and whenever possible to take the blame upon himself. If at any time he perceived one of them to be in trouble or distressed or downcast, he would ask permission to speak with him, and in the sweetest and gentlest manner would endeavour to console him. In this he generally succeeded: melancholy fled before his sunny smile, and peace and joy were always his attendants."

The infirmarian who had attended him during his illness was himself once taken seriously ill. Charles immediately petitioned for the office of waiting upon him. "Poor Brother Seraphim," he said, "has attended me for more than two months, and it is only right that I should do the like good office for him." So he became the lay brother's infirmarian and served him with the tenderness and gentleness of a mother. Every moment that he could snatch from his other duties throughout the day was spent by the sick man's bedside. He waited on him as though he were the humblest of servants, cleaned and

arranged his room, made his bed, did all the most menial duties that fall to the lot of a nurse, and in everything tried to anticipate his patient's wishes. Yet so unostentatiously and with such a grace and cheerfulness was all this done, that he gave the impression of one receiving rather than conferring a favour.

We need not tire the reader with instances. Suffice to say his charity for his fellows was no new or suddenly acquired thing. It was simply of a piece with that which characterized him while still in the world, when, it is said, his compassion for the poor was so great that he could refuse them nothing: and often when travelling he was known to dispense in alms all the ready money he happened to have with him, thus exposing himself to grave inconvenience.

No wonder indeed that his charity to his neighbour was so intense and so marked: for it was but the outcome, the overflowing of that love of God which burned in his heart, and which made him take to himself with utmost literalness those words of Christ: "Sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor . . . and come, follow Me."

Hand in hand with this beautiful charity went a deep spirit of humility. He was never once heard willingly to allude to his former position and standing in the world; on the contrary, he seemed studious to avoid those topics which might bring such matters up in conversation. When he had the opportunity of making choice of anything for his own use, he always chose the meanest things available, the poorest habit, the smallest and most uninviting scraps of bread at collation, things passed over or rejected by others as useless or unworthy of notice.

His love of holy poverty was equally noticeable. Poor in fact, he was poor in spirit also. It was his

custom frequently to subject his cell to a rigorous examination, and if he found there anything which he did not absolutely require, he at once removed it. Even things which to other good religious might seem useful and even necessary he preferred to be without. Often after those searches he would bring one trifle or another to his superior's room—ludicrously small they might seem if mentioned: but to him the possession of the veriest trifle when unnecessary was a burden, and he enjoyed no peace till he was rid of it.

His fidelity and fervour in these respects did not go without reward even in this life. The hundred-fold of contentment and peace was indeed his: often he spoke to the novice-master of the relief he felt in being disburdened of all worldly goods, and of the happiness which possessed his heart in the religious state, far more than sufficient to compensate him for any sacrifice he might have made in embracing it. Nor was this all. "The consolations he received during time of prayer," says Father Salvian, "are indescribable. Mental prayer was to him a constant source of sweetness and delight." Though he was loth to speak of those graces to anyone but his spiritual director, even his young companions could observe in the holy joy that irradiated his features the visible token of his habitually close communion with God.

The chief subject of his daily meditations, as it was the devotion that held the foremost place in his heart, was of course the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ. It was the continual thought of Calvary and the mysteries of divine love clustering around it which inspired the spirit of mortification and the thirst for suffering so characteristic of him throughout his life. And the Gift of Love so closely associated with the Passion was also linked with it in his spiritual life.

His devotion to the Blessed Sacrament was of rare intensity. Even in his Anglican days, so great was his reverence for what he regarded as Our Lord's Body that he used to fast from six o'clock on the eve of the day he received Communion until a late hour the following day. Need we say that the ardour of his love did not wane when, a Catholic and a religious, he possessed with the fulness of assured faith that which he had long believed rather perhaps from the ardour of his wish that such a blessed thing could be than from any deep-seated conviction of its truth—for how often with religious people outside the fold does not the wish seem father to the thought?

And next to his devotion to Our Lord in these divine mysteries was—strange, surely, in so recent a convert from Protestantism—his love and reverence for the Mother of God. One of the devotions which he loved most and practised faithfully throughout his religious life was that in honour of the Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin. Devoted Passionist as he was, he could hardly think of the Mother of Jesus but as the Mother of Sorrows standing by the Cross of her Son. "He was a true son of Mary," we are told, "and loved our beautiful Mother with a tender devotion. It was sweet indeed to hear him speak of her. It was the grateful outpouring of a heart that owed everything to her. There was a novice there who had a great devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and Brother Charles with great humility used to ask him to teach him something of this devotion, and would listen with affectionate interest to all that was told him."

So the days of his novitiate passed while he busied himself in putting on the armour of God for that new warfare to which he had dedicated his life. As the time for his profession drew on and he was again formally questioned as to his resolution to consecrate,

himself to God, he replied with such firmness, such energy and modest confidence that no doubt could be entertained of the sincerity and thoroughness of his vocation. Accordingly, the 23rd May, 1852, was appointed as the date of his religious profession.

CHAPTER IX

RELIGIOUS PROFESSION AND STUDENT LIFE

It was with a longing like his Divine Master's for the Cross that Charles looked forward to the mystic crucifixion implied in the religious profession: "I have a baptism wherewith I am to be baptized, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished" (Luke xii. 50). But far from being overcast with any such mournful shadows as were inseparable from the first Calvary, his heart sang and made melody to God for joy of the sacrifice he was so soon to offer. Often he had anticipated that sacrifice during his novitiate days by the eagerness with which he aspired to its consummation: and now that the time approached when he was to make formally and publicly that entire surrender of himself to God which he had so frequently made in spirit, the rapt intensity of his fervour was like that of one whose perfect renunciation had already merited the reward exceeding great. His profession was in truth to him a bridal rather than a sacrifice. And the last ten days of his novitiate were spent sedulously perfecting for his soul, in the silence and prayer of retreat, the precious wedding-garment—the "fine linen, glittering and white"—in which it

should be arrayed on the morning of its espousals with the Lamb.

That morning found the saintly novice from early dawn kneeling absorbed in prayer before the tabernacle in the little domestic chapel of the community. As he rose from those long hours of intimate and solitary converse with God to join the religious for the ceremony of profession in the church attached to the Retreat, his almost transfigured look, the pale ascetic features lighted with a joy and peace not of this earth, gave token of the extraordinary graces with which his soul had been favoured. The profession ceremony, always so solemn and touching and significant, seemed that day to take on an additional tenderness and fulness of meaning. The tall, worn figure of the novice lying prostrate before the altar as one dead: the passing-bell tolling mournfully without, amidst the life and promise of the fair May morning: the purple-stoled priest reading aloud in the silent church the Passion of Jesus Christ from the Gospel of St. John: surely never was symbolism with more moving appeal, and never did it verge so closely on reality. Those who were present could not help thinking of the heroic renunciation of the honours and amenities of life by him who lay there, of his almost more heroic perseverance in the rough and narrow way. But no such thought crossed the meditations of the single-hearted novice. His sole desire was to be able to say in all truth "With Christ I am nailed to the cross" and thus to live and die, the world crucified to him and he to the world.

When the priest reached the last poignant words of the Passion narrative, "*Jesus said: It is consummated. And bowing down His head He gave up the ghost,*" Brother Charles rose and advanced to the altar, the eagerness of devoted love showing in every

line of his face and form. There kneeling, his hands in the hands of his superior, he pronounced in clear and fervent tones the four vows which made him a Passionist: those of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience, with the fourth and distinctive vow of the Congregation of the Passion, to promote among the faithful the knowledge and love of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

A week after his profession, on the 1st June, 1852, Charles was sent to St. Wilfrid's Retreat (formerly known as Cotton Hall), Oakamoor, Staffordshire, which then served as a house of studies for the Passionists. Cotton Hall, with several acres of land adjoining it, had been given as a residence to Father Faber and his companions in 1846 by the then Earl of Shrewsbury. Here Father Faber made his well-intentioned but ineffectual effort to found the "Congregation of the Will of God," which his friend, Venerable Dominic of the Mother of God, it is said, once jokingly suggested should be called the "Congregation of the Will of Faber." In less than two years the Brothers of the Will of God amalgamated with the Oratory, and, after lying almost derelict for two years more, the property passed into the hands of the Passionists. It was a picturesque spot with its graceful cluster of buildings, its ample lawns and spacious gardens, set among the woodlands in the deep-breasted valley of the Churnet, and protected on the north and east by the sheltering arms of the Weaver Hills. "It was here that I saw Pakenham again," writes Father Tenison Woods, in a pleasing though in parts somewhat fanciful sketch of their life at St. Wilfrid's, "after he had made his vows, when we commenced our studies together. We had both of us read some philosophy before we entered the Order, and therefore did not follow the usual course. Our life in the house of study was something like that

of the novitiate with just a little less of the severity of the rule. We had longer recreations, and we availed ourselves of these to have many a ramble amidst the woods, valleys, cliffs, and changeful scenery of this part of Staffordshire. It was a beautiful spot indeed. Every different road brought us into the most varied prospects, which the Oratorians had made as Catholic as their opportunities permitted. On the face of one rock a beautiful crucifix had been cut in the stone, and there were little memorials and crosses wherever they could be raised. Its recollections, too, were of an almost classic kind, and in a few years, when time has mellowed down old memories, they will be treasured in Catholic England. It was here that the poet Caswall, now a priest, composed his most beautiful hymns,¹ and here his young wife lies buried. Every year there is a distribution of bread on the anniversary of her death, and people remember gratefully how good the converted minister and his wife were to the poor. It was here also that Hutchison, Wells, Stanton, and Dalgairns, all converts from Protestantism, most of whom had been parsons, lived and laboured translating the well-known Oratorian Lives of the Saints. . . .

“Brother Charles did not get much stronger in St. Wilfrid’s, but his health mended slightly at first, and he made that an excuse for being most exact in the rule. We were a small community, and therefore had plenty of room to roam about in the large monastery. The cells were very spacious, rather too large for the scant furniture of the Passionist rule. They were very cold, and in the winter we all suffered—but none more than Brother Charles, who had been used to so different a kind of life. But he never complained. It became necessary for his superior to watch

¹ Written in 1870.

the effect of any order or employment he gave him, for he would try to do it no matter what it might cost him. His work was generally above his strength, because of his heart trouble, but no one could tell this unless in watching his tottering step or difficult breathing. . . . He used to eat very little, and only the plainest and poorest of what was put before him. He was often pressed to take a little of what was more palatable, but he would do so only when his abstinence attracted attention. ‘I have a treacherous appetite,’ he would urge, ‘and if I give it the upper hand I shall get no peace. The only way to conquer the devil when he tries to bring back bygone days is to curb my appetite.’”

His health, indeed, especially in view of his reticence about it, his abhorrence of singularity, and his total disregard of everything conducive to bodily ease and comfort, gave both his superiors and his fellow-students a good deal of uneasiness. With him the word of a superior was of course law, but when others with affectionate solicitude urged him to have a care and to take things a little more easily, he was never short of plausible reasons against yielding to their gentle importunities. “What does it matter”? he would say with a smile. “You know I cannot live very long at best, and if I take notice of every little ailment I shall end by doing nothing at all for my time in the world.” In every detail of the religious observance, whether of the day or night, he was exact and punctual to a degree. The only instance of the semblance of a fault in this respect is one which but serves to set in clearer light his humility and love of mortification. It chanced that the rector of St. Wilfrid’s had more than once admonished the students to observe punctuality in ringing the bell for night prayers. On the evening of Charles’s arrival from

the novitiate the bell was again a few minutes late, and this time the offended superior prescribed for all the students a rather severe penance. Knowing, however, that Brother Charles as a stranger was faultless in the matter, he called him aside after prayers and told him that the punishment was not intended for him, but only for those who had been old transgressors. But the good student could not hear without pain of this separate treatment: and as he could not take all the blame on his own shoulders, he tried to explain that he was as much in fault as anyone else, and begged to be allowed to share in the penance imposed on the rest.

His conscientiousness and scrupulous exactness sometimes cost him dear. His punctuality at the choir observances being especially noticeable, he was appointed to the office of sounding the "rattle" to awake the community for midnight matins. No one of course dreamed what a fresh source of suffering this would be to him. Fearing lest he should oversleep the usual hour, he obtained permission to keep in his cell an alarm-clock: which being old and out of order was very erratic in its movements and went off at the most unexpected times, sometimes an hour or two, frequently half-an hour, too soon. The consequence was that he hardly passed a night without rising twice or thrice to ascertain the correct time, and that he derived little or no benefit from his short and broken slumber. Moreover, when he found it wanting but half an hour or so of the time, he never returned to rest, but passed the interval in spiritual reading, prayer or meditation. Far from complaining of this inconvenience, he made it a new means of mortification, and possibly would never have mentioned it had not accident led to its discovery.

It would be little to say that the virtues which

distinguished him in the novitiate were equally characteristic of his life as a student. "The path of the just as a shining light goeth forward and increaseth unto perfect day" (Prov. iv. 18)—and with Brother Charles, as with the saints, every day was counted lost that did not bring him a step nearer to the perfection at which he aimed. To this everything was subordinated, and if he pursued his studies with an ardour and assiduity which were the wonder of his companions, it was above all because he regarded them as an additional means to the great end. His progress in learning was rapid and brilliant. Not that he had no difficulties to encounter: his age and his previous training rather tended to blunt his taste for the subtleties of scholastic philosophy. Then by the necessities of the case he was unequally yoked: his fellow-students were much his juniors in years, as they were probably his inferiors in ability. Their slow and painful plodding through Goudin or Roselli could not have been attended with great interest for him. In the customary weekly disputations he had need of much patience and tact in face of the enthusiasm and excitement of young and inexperienced opponents. He laboured, in a word, under the disadvantage of being in mind and attainments *major inter aequales*. Yet he was to all appearances unconscious of this: he threw himself into his work with all the vigour and earnestness of an enthusiast. His industry was untiring and incessant: every moment at his free disposal was given to his studies. So much indeed was this the case that his rapid progress was sometimes thought due rather to his intense application than to his quickness or ability. Of his character and conduct as a student we have again the welcome testimony of Father Tenison Woods: "His docility, simplicity, and the real interest he took in the studies of his companions were very wonderful

to those who reflected on the great difference between this and his former career. . . . In his delicate state of health it must have been very difficult for him to study at times, especially in winter when the monastery was cold and damp and the cells without fires. Still he was rarely unable to attend the class-room. No matter how much he suffered, he could enter with a smiling face and go cheerfully through the lesson. He was always lively, cheering others on with a kind word, a winning smile, or some little act of kindness. . . . He had to suffer many little inconveniences from the temper or excitement of his younger companions, especially in matters of dispute. This required wonderful self-control which showed itself upon his face, but he always tried calmly to point out what was right to those who differed from him, and if this did not avail, put the matter aside with some slight pleasantry. Owing to his steady perseverance he perhaps made more progress than any of the others, and thus he was looked up to in class: yet whenever he gave his opinion he qualified it by deferring to the judgment of the Father Lector. . . . We wondered to see him relinquish every other intellectual pursuit for his studies, but in this I believe he was actuated by a sincere desire to detach himself from everything but what would make him fit for his duties as a priest. There was great perfection in this, which will only be understood by those who have like him changed the cherished pursuits of a lifetime for things completely new and for the glory of God. He was careful in all this not to let his studies interfere with his piety. It was astonishing to observe his recollection at class and study. The thought of the presence of God seemed ever before him. He told us once of a device he had for resting in his studies, and that was for a moment to rest upon the Sacred Heart of Jesus as

Saint John did at the Last Supper. We used often to remark the sudden pause and half-abstracted gaze with which he would for a moment rest in class. Perhaps he was listening to Our Blessed Lord or speaking to Him in his heart. We seldom heard much from himself of his practices of piety. In this respect he was very reserved. 'I have no devotion,' was his reply to my question. 'I am always dry and weary at prayer.' And then he would add smiling: '*Montes excelsi cervis, petra refugium herinacis*'—'The high hills are a refuge for the harts, the rocks for the irchins' (Ps. ciii.)."

CHAPTER X

APPOINTED VICE-MASTER OF NOVICES—THE STUDENT PREACHER

BROTHER CHARLES'S term of residence at St. Wilfrid's was not long. It came to an end in less than a year, when the unprecedented choice of his superiors placed him in an office for which, brief as was his experience of the religious life, his prudence and piety admirably suited him. But before we come to narrate the circumstances of this extraordinary appointment, we shall here set down the few remaining scraps of reminiscence recorded by Father Tenison Woods.

"In the month of September we used to have a vacation, during which we had no classes, but studied in private and had a walk out in the country when the weather permitted. The vacation of 1852 is imprinted on my memory because of my having Brother Charles assigned to me as a companion on the walks. This gave me an opportunity of learning much of his beautiful spirit, and a little more about his manner of serving God. The characteristic of his piety was its gentleness. He liked to be considerate of everyone: for, 'depend upon it,' he would remark, 'people's

virtues are often mistaken for faults. The best way is to give way to everyone, and never refuse what you can grant without sin: for after all that may be said about the spiritual life, charity is the bond of perfection.'

"The walks in the neighbourhood of St. Wilfrid's are most picturesque and varied. Oakamoor, with its thickly-wooded hills, Alton with its shady lanes, Alton Towers with the wonderfully picturesque alleys and roads around the grounds, and, finally, Wootton, a beautiful Elizabethan mansion of the purest style, where J. J. Rousseau lived when in England. One day as we were walking over the grounds at Wootton, Brother Charles spoke of the former impressions he had derived from Rousseau's works, and the bad influence they would exercise over a young mind. . . .

"In an excursion we made to the beautiful church of Cheadle during this vacation, a poor old man in the town expressed the greatest desire to see and converse with Brother Charles. He was an old pensioner and had served under the Duke of Wellington throughout the Peninsular War. Brother Charles went to see him and spoke cheerfully to him. But the old man's wonder and surprise at the appearance of the monk's habit prevented his attending to what was said. He would only repeat over and over again—'And are you really a nephew of the great duke? Well, who would have thought you could have come to this?' Brother Charles was much amused, and said: 'You see I am a soldier of Jesus Christ now, and this is His uniform. You must pray that I may be worthy of it,' or words to that effect, and walked back to his companions!"

In the beginning of 1853 Father Tenison Woods, owing to ill-health, left the Congregation, and his personal relations with his saintly fellow-student ceased.

But the impression made upon him during those happy days of companionship with Brother Charles at Broadway and St. Wilfrid's seemed to deepen with the years. The secret of that impression he gives in remarkable words as he tells how "after a most sorrowful farewell," he parted company with Brother Charles and the religious life: "We had been so much together during our novitiate and the commencement of our studies that it was natural we should be much attached to each other: but on my side there was something more than affectionate attachment. Constant intercourse with him and a daily opportunity of witnessing his eminent virtues had filled me with reverence for his sanctity. He was a chosen soul. Every act and word of his were calculated to instruct and edify. His humble piety and his exalted wisdom, his affable cheerfulness and his hidden austerity, his hatred for sin, yet his gentle winning demeanour to all, made everyone love him. For my own part, separation from him was one of the very severe trials of my life."

After the Lent of 1853 Brother Charles's health again showed signs of failing. During the latter part of his sojourn at St. Wilfrid's he had suffered intensely though uncomplainingly from rheumatism, the attacks of which were sometimes so acute and disabling that he was obliged to use sticks when walking, and not infrequently to climb upstairs almost on hands and knees. His efforts to preserve his usual cheerfulness and to go through with his duties as if nothing were the matter, could not blind his superiors to his condition, and they feared another serious break-down for him. It chanced about the same time that he received from Broadway the distressing news that his uncle, to whom he was so devoted, was ill and suffering from extreme depression of spirits. He would have

gladly gone to cheer and console this dear old friend whose kindly patronage had laid him under such obligations; but fearing that there might be something human and selfish in the thought, he refrained from expressing it to any of his superiors. He prayed instead, as in all his troubles, that what was for God's glory might be brought to pass. And his prayer was heard and granted in a much larger measure than he could have anticipated. One morning as Charles was making his thanksgiving after Holy Communion the Provincial, who was then at St. Wilfrid's and intended leaving for Broadway that day, sent for him and ordered him to be in readiness for the journey to the novitiate house. The intention was to give the student's impaired health the benefit of a change of air and to afford him the opportunity of paying a visit to his uncle. But the journey had a further and unforeseen consequence.

It was arranged that during his stay in Broadway Charles should live in the novitiate and not in the portion of the house occupied by the professed religious. Thus he accompanied the novices in their various exercises as though he were still one of them and had never left the novitiate: and by the beauty of his example, inspiring as it was unostentatious, he unconsciously diffused a new and fascinating influence around him that seemed to lift those young beginners at once to a higher plane of spirituality. They saw beside them, walking and talking with them, one whom they could not help regarding as the very impersonation of the ideal at which they aimed. They were captivated, too, by that subtle mixture in him of the natural and human elements with the supernatural which constituted his chief charm: which while it made him so strict in all his duties, so earnest and absorbed at his religious exercises, so severe upon

himself, left him that gay *abandon* by which he merited the description so often applied to him as "the life and soul of the recreation hour." Those young men looked up to him as something above and beyond them, they venerated him as they would venerate a saint, but, above all, they loved him. This was perhaps one of the most wonderful things about Father Pakenham, that with all his grave, austere holiness, everywhere he went throughout his life, and in every position he occupied, he exercised a sort of magnetic attraction on all with whom he came in contact: he had the secret of calling forth love.

As the office of vice-master of novices was vacant at the time, the master, admiring the influence which Brother Charles had over the young men, conceived the idea of asking the Provincial to appoint him vice-master. It was a very extraordinary request, seeing that Charles was scarcely a year professed and had not proceeded far in his ecclesiastical studies: but the Provincial, Father Eugene Martorelli, a man of great piety and learning and of extreme prudence, seems to have made no difficulty about granting it. Some provision was made for his continuing his studies under the tuition of one of the Fathers of the community, and Brother Charles at once entered on his duties as vice-master of novices.¹

With this new responsibility laid upon his shoulders he considered it a sacred duty to lead the way to his young charges in the practice of virtue. Consequently he redoubled his efforts to "walk worthy of the vocation in which he was called," trying to show

¹ It may be explained, perhaps, for the general reader that though his charge is an important one, requiring prudence and tact, and always fulfilled among the Passionists and other Congregations of clerics by a priest, the duties of the vice-master are chiefly disciplinary, like those of the prefect in a seminary.

forth by his own example what he desired to see conspicuous in the lives of others. Now more than ever was the least tittle of the holy rule observed by him with most jealous exactitude: and though his work was chiefly engaged with externals and required much attention, he always seemed entirely recollected in God and was in every respect a model of the interior life.

Though his affability and charity were unfailing, he could use severity when occasion demanded, but with such judgment and tact as to attain the desired end without inflicting the least pain or leaving any sting behind. If in a rare instance a reproof was taken amiss he knew how to gain the same object by sweeter methods. One day he had occasion to correct a novice who committed some fault to the disedification of his companions. The reprimand, though a very gentle one, was received with something less than the common share of humility. In the course of the evening Brother Charles met the novices again at some other exercise, but before beginning he humbly knelt down and begged pardon of the young fellow who had taken his reprimand so ill. This lesson in the virtue in which he was himself so deficient covered the unfortunate culprit with shame and confusion, and made a more lasting and salutary impression on him and his companions than volumes of admonitory discourse.

His discernment was remarkable. Very often on the occasion of a new arrival at the novitiate he would be able to tell at once whether the postulant would persevere. He had a particular aptitude, too, for distinguishing between true and false fervour however indistinguishable to outward show. And though many novices passed through the novitiate during his term as vice-master, his judgment was never once known to be at fault.

In those days the Passionist communities in England were largely composed of Italians. Comparatively few suitable subjects offered themselves till the Congregation some years later found a home in Ireland: and the handful of English-speaking priests, with those few Italians who had gained some sort of acquaintance with the English tongue, were in constant request for missions and retreats. As a consequence of these exceptional circumstances and, we suppose, as a concession to foreign customs "more honoured in the breach than in the observance," things were sometimes done which in our eyes seem strange. So it was that during the month of May this year Brother Charles was appointed on several occasions to conduct the devotions in honour of Our Blessed Lady in the public church—that is, to recite the customary prayers and to read a short meditation or instruction from a book, followed sometimes by a sort of catechetical lecture or commentary. This he did with so much grace and unction that it was thought advisable to give him further opportunity of exercising "the ministry of the Word." It has always been the custom with the Passionists to observe the feast of St. Aloysius with special solemnity in their novitiates and houses of study. In Italy a student or novice delivers to the people a panegyric of the boy-saint on his feast day, the 21st of June. This practice was transplanted to Broadway, and Brother Charles was chosen as panegyrist in 1853. Though it was with the greatest reluctance he undertook the task, humbly confessing his inability to attempt it, he put aside his own will in the matter and composed an excellent panegyric, which he delivered with such energy and power that few who heard him would have believed that it was his first effort in the difficult art of sacred oratory. Part of his success was no doubt due to the feeling of

his audience that in depicting the career and extolling the virtues of the youthful Saint, he was all unwittingly drawing a picture of himself: for had he not the same difficulties to contend with, the same temptations to overcome before, like Aloysius, he could sacrifice distinction, rank, and influence for the poverty and obscurity of religion? And the chasm of well-nigh three hundred years that separated the youthful saint and his youthful panegyrist did not lessen the likeness of their virtues.

After this discourse it was suggested to the superiors that great good might result to Protestants as well as Catholics if Brother Charles were sometimes to give a catechetical instruction in the church on the Sunday evenings. The requisite permission was obtained from the ecclesiastical authorities: the lectures were delivered and the expectations formed of their effect were fully realized. The little church on those evenings was crowded to excess. Protestants as well as Catholics flocked to hear the young *conferencier*, some travelling many miles for the purpose: and there is every reason to believe that much good was done through those simple discourses, that many anti-Catholic prejudices were corrected and the seeds of truth sown in unlikely places.

Meanwhile he did not neglect his other duties, and though his health was still poor and he suffered frequently from heart attacks—the palpitation being sometimes so violent as to shake the bed on which he rested—he always took the most scrupulous care with the work which was assigned to him as vice-master and as student.

After nearly a year's residence in Broadway he was again sent to rejoin his classes at St. Wilfrid's, whither he went on the 5th March, 1854. His loss was deeply felt in the novitiate house and was mourned equally

by the superiors and the novices. "For a long time," says Father Salvian, "the bare mention of his name would bring tears to the eyes of many." Their affection for him did not wane with time, and old men who made their novitiate in that year used to look back upon it very wistfully, counting his presence an added grace.

CHAPTER XI

ORDAINED PRIEST AND SENT TO ROME

BACK again at St. Wilfrid's, where his advent was a joy to the community, and especially to his fellow-students, Brother Charles, now free from other responsibilities and with health somewhat restored, resumed the regular classes and pursued his studies with redoubled zest. With the ripened spiritual experience derived from the additional year spent in the novitiate, he was, needless to say, more than a learner in the way of sanctity, and the influence of his conversation and example even on his fervent young companions was easily observable from the first day of his return. Though he came little in contact with the outside world, the impression left by his occasional appearance was profound and lasting. One remarkable scene in particular was remembered by the little congregation of St. Wilfrid's long after he had gone to his reward. On Good Friday he was appointed to read at devotions in the public church the narrative of Our Blessed Lord's Passion. He did so with such unction as drew tears from his audience; and, though by no means of an emotional temperament himself, when he came to the words describing the death scene on Calvary, powerless any longer to control his feelings, he burst into tears, and was unable to proceed further. Another

religious was obliged to take the book and finish the narrative. The incident was recalled on each succeeding Good Friday by those who had witnessed it, and while it increased their devotion to the Passion and their sympathy with the sufferings of their Saviour, it could not fail to enhance their veneration for him of whom they spoke as "a true Passionist indeed, another Paul of the Cross."

It was during this second sojourn at St. Wilfrid's that Charles changed his name to that by which he afterwards became so well known. He had long desired to drop the name which he had borne in the world, and which reminded him too forcibly, as he confessed, of "old times," and to adopt that of the founder of the Passionists. So, this year, the first anniversary of the Beatification of St. Paul of the Cross, having obtained the requisite permission from his superiors, he became Brother Paul Mary of St. Michael the Archangel, combining in his name three devotions very dear to him: to St. Paul of the Cross, the Blessed Virgin, and the angelic patron of the Congregation of the Passion.

After a short three months spent at St. Wilfrid's, Brother Paul, as we may now call him, was sent with the other theological students to pursue his studies in St. Joseph's Retreat, The Hyde, near London—a Passionist foundation which was afterwards abandoned for the more convenient centre at Highgate. Here, under the guidance of competent professors, he laboured to complete his knowledge of the science of theology and to prepare with what care he could for the sacred dignity of the priesthood. In those days of strenuous missionary work, when the harvest was indeed great and the labourers were but few, it was found necessary to restrict the course of study within very narrow limits. The pressing need was, or was

felt to be, to have holy and earnest workmen in the field with the least possible delay, possessed of a sufficiency of knowledge, of course, to serve their turn, but little more: missioners, not learned priests or accomplished theologians. Hence to be "made perfect in a short space" in matters theological was, wisely or not, the ideal set before the students. However it may have worked out in other instances, in that of Brother Paul, with his previous training and his exceptional abilities, it was not likely to be the occasion of any serious disadvantage. And the zeal and industry which he brought to his work, and the high supernatural motives which inspired him, would of themselves have afforded a sufficient counterbalance to more alarming defects of training.

There was an additional reason for curtailing the theological course in Brother Paul's case. His continued weakness of health began to cause his superiors grave uneasiness, and they determined to try the effect of a warmer climate on his constitution. Accordingly they obtained the consent of the Father General of the Passionists that after his ordination Brother Paul should proceed to Rome, where, apart from the benefit they hoped might accrue to his health, he could complete his ecclesiastical studies and obtain a fuller knowledge and experience of the spirit and customs of the Congregation of the Passion.

The date of his ordination was, therefore, as far as possible, accelerated. He was but three years a professed Passionist, and little more than four years a Catholic, when he received the clerical tonsure and the four minor orders at the hands of Cardinal Wiseman, the same illustrious prelate who had admitted him into the true fold, and who ever retained a very special and affectionate interest in him. The ceremony took place in the church of the Oratorian Fathers at

Brompton, on the 22nd February, 1855. A month later (on 24th March) he was ordained sub-deacon in the little church of St. Joseph at The Hyde by Cardinal Wiseman, who was accompanied on the occasion by Dr. Manning.

Shortly afterwards his superiors again transferred him to Broadway, probably as in a previous case for reasons of health, and here he passed six months of study and prayer in preparation for the reception of the sacred orders of diaconate and priesthood.

To enter into minute detail concerning his life during the months of his residence at The Hyde and at Broadway would be in great part to repeat what we have already said of him. The quiet uniformity, almost monotony, of the life of the student in a religious Order is necessarily devoid of incident and indeed of interest for the outer world—even (or perhaps we should say all the more) if the student happen to be a saint. One day is like another, and all are filled with the same goodly store of prayer and work. Some few anecdotes of those days still linger, indeed, but are mostly too trifling for record. One, however, that serves to show Brother Paul “in his habit as he lived,” so to speak, tells of a visit paid him by two young noblemen, former companions of his, while he was living at The Hyde. It was recreation hour, and they found him in the garden shelling peas. He greeted his friends with the greatest cordiality, and after the usual courtesies were exchanged quietly and unaffectedly resumed his occupation. The young men were somewhat taken aback for the moment, but the naturalness and good-humour of Paul were so infectious that they soon laughingly joined him at his work and thus passed the remainder of their visit.

Father Salvian, his master of novices, who knew him so intimately from his earliest days as a Passionist,

thus succinctly summarizes his career as novice and student: “During Father Paul’s noviceship, and afterwards whilst pursuing his studies, he spent some time, more or less, in all the Retreats of our Order in England. Every member of the different communities in each house loved and admired him for his humility and charity and, I may say, for the possession of every virtue calculated to adorn the life of a saint.” And during these latter days of his student life those virtues shone with an ever-increasing brilliancy which made him the admiration and the model of all who had the happiness of knowing him.

On the 22nd September, 1855, Brother Paul was ordained deacon by Dr. Ullathorne, Bishop of Birmingham, at St. Mary’s College, Oscott, and a week later saw the consummation of all his hopes in his elevation to the dignity of the priesthood. Doctor Ullathorne was again the ordaining prelate, and the ceremony was performed at Oscott College on the 29th September, the feast of St. Michael the Archangel, to whom Paul had a particular devotion as being the heavenly protector of the Congregation of the Passion, and whose name he bore as his religious surname. The devotion and reverence with which he prepared for the priesthood may be inferred from the fact that when he returned to his monastery, immediately after his ordination, he spent a whole week in preparing with the greatest fervour for the celebration of his first Mass, which he offered in the little church at Broadway on the feast of the Holy Rosary, 7th October, 1855. What feelings of joy and thankfulness and heavenly peace must have filled his heart that day! The altar before which the inspiration had first been whispered to his soul to leave all things and follow Christ, before which in the closing days of a Holy Week only four years before he had fought out in the solitude of his

own heart the battle of his vocation, the altar at which he had first put on the habit of the Passion and had made the vows that bound him indissolubly to the service of the Crucified, was the same at which he now stood a sacrificing priest to immolate the holy and unspotted Victim for the sins of the world. How little and light seemed the difficulties and trials that beset his spiritual pilgrimage, how poor and mean the renunciations he had made, in the presence of a joy like this!

The angelic fervour and recollection with which he celebrated his first Mass were equally noticeable on every occasion on which he offered the holy sacrifice during his all too brief priestly career. While the minutest rubrics were observed with an almost scrupulous fidelity, the light of seraphic love that overspread his countenance showed that all the powers of his soul were absorbed in the contemplation of the adorable Victim of the mystic Calvary.

In less than three weeks after his ordination, on 18th October, 1855, he set out for Rome in the capacity of spiritual director to a class of students who were on their way to finish their course of studies in the centre of Catholicity.

Scant record remains to us of his stay in Rome; but from the few particulars we can glean, there is ample evidence that his holiness of life caused his brethren to regard him with special veneration. One of the chief reasons that had moved his superiors to choose Rome as his residence was that he might draw refreshment and strength for his faith at the very fountain-head of Christianity, and that he might learn more deeply and intimately at its mother house on the Celian hill the spirit and character of the religious institute which he had embraced. But even in SS. John and Paul's, still fragrant with the memory of the holy

founder of the Passionists and of many of his disciples who had died in the odour of sanctity, the young pupil in the spiritual life soon came to be looked up to as a master in the ways of holiness. A brief sketch of his life published in Italy some years ago has the following: "In Rome Father Paul continued to give the most beautiful example of virtue. A Consultor General who was his companion writes thus: 'I knew Father Paul Mary for about two years. He was a subject of great edification to our students and to all the community. Though of very delicate constitution, he abhorred any special treatment accorded to him on that score. He was unwilling that the infirmarian should give him the more nourishing food prepared for delicate religious. He was a man of God, and therefore always appeared recollected. In recreation and on the walks he spoke only of things edifying and devotional. In the regular observance he was most exemplary.'" ¹

Father Tenison Woods, who seems to have made particular inquiry of those who came in contact with Father Paul during his sojourn in Italy, tells how in Rome "he continued to give the same edification that he had given amongst the religious in England. He was most exact in the least rule, and followed the observance as closely as if he had been in robust health. Here also he rose at night and did not dispense himself from a single one of the austerities. He was soon almost idolized by the community: indeed those Passionists I have heard from that were with him in Rome spoke in the most fervent terms of the way in which he endeared himself to all. But his health declined in Rome as elsewhere. He went to other places in Italy, and then realized the fond dream of

¹ Conversione e vita del Capitano Carlo Reginaldo Pakenham tra i Passionisti P. Paolo Maria di S. Michael Arcangelo. Roma, 1903.

his youth, of which he had so often spoken to me—that of travelling in Italy. I know not what his feelings were, but I know that when I left him he cared but little for anyone but God, and no foreign scenes or distant travel could detach his heart from that centre in which it now rested.”

The scenes and travel in which Father Paul found opportunity to indulge during his residence in Italy were, on the contrary, strongly calculated to draw his heart and mind more closely to God and detach it from all else. And one can imagine his feelings as he looked down daily from the garden of SS. John and Paul's on the Coliseum where the earth had been empurpled with the blood of unnumbered martyrs for the faith of Christ: as he visited the catacombs, the hiding places and the tombs of the early Roman Christians: or as he followed the footsteps and revived the memories of St. Paul of the Cross on Monte Argentario and in other solitudes sanctified by the life and austerities of the holy founder of his Order.

CHAPTER XII

CALLED FROM ROME TO FOUND THE CONGREGATION
OF THE PASSION IN IRELAND

HE had been but eight months resident in Rome when, towards the end of June, 1856, he was recalled by his superiors to England. An occasion had arisen which seemed to them providentially designed to call into active use and turn to the best account the rare gifts of nature and of grace with which God had blessed him, and which he had cultivated to such high purpose.

There was as yet no house of the Congregation of the Passion in Ireland: but during the spring and summer of this year Father Vincent Grotti, the superior of the English province, was bestirring himself in good earnest to supply the deficiency. One of the leading motives that inspired him was surely his love of Ireland and the Irish: for, though an Italian, Father Vincent's love of Ireland and her people from his first contact with them amounted almost to a passion. He was never so happy as when working on the Irish Missions or among the poor Irish exiles in the slums of the great cities of England: and for years it had been the dearest wish of his heart to see a foundation of the Passionists in Ireland. But he had another and higher motive: the Congregation was now fourteen years established in England, and though it had covered a large field of work and become known throughout the length and breadth of the land, it could count only nine priests

of native origin. Unless it struck root in Ireland, where the apostolic spirit had lost none of its vigour, it seemed little likely that the infant province would survive many years. In 1852 Father Vincent had already approached Cardinal Cullen, then Archbishop of Dublin, with the view of making a foundation in that diocese, but in spite of the cordial encouragement with which his overtures were met, he was unable to proceed for lack of a suitable site. At length, after years of delay and disappointment that would have daunted a man of less tenacity of purpose, he succeeded, chiefly through the instrumentality of the Rev. Matthew Collier, then a curate in the parish of Rathmines, in securing the property now known as Mount Argus, on the outskirts of Dublin. Negotiations for its purchase were completed in May, 1856.

His next care was to find a superior whom he could trust to preside over the destinies of the new foundation in the trying times that usually attend the initial stage of such undertakings. In this he had little difficulty. Everything pointed to one man as ideally suited for the position. No one who knew Father Paul Mary, young as he was in the priesthood and the religious life, could have thought of any person worthy of mention with him as a candidate; and Father Vincent, who had received him into the Congregation, knew his merits and his gifts as few others could have known them. It was therefore no surprise to anyone but himself when on reaching London on 1st July, Father Paul found that he had already been designated rector of the new Retreat at Mount Argus.

His fitness for the office was in truth almost unique. Apart from the natural and supernatural qualities requisite in the good superior of a religious house—and that he had these in full measure will have been

sufficiently clear to the reader of these pages—he had much that would appeal to the imagination and attract the sympathies of the people among whom he was to introduce an institute till then almost unknown to them. Father Ignatius Spencer, addressing the Irish people in the columns of a daily newspaper on the morrow of the young rector's death, chiefly with the object of dissipating the notion that his loss would prove fatal to the infant foundation, speaks thus of him: "It might very probably appear to the minds of some that the removal of Father Paul Mary would prove a death-blow to this, our infant establishment—that we ourselves would be greatly discouraged in our efforts to support it, and that consequently others who were so well disposed, as many have hitherto been, to assist us, would begin to think the undertaking a hopeless one and change their minds about it. Humanly speaking, and at first sight, the loss which we have met is almost beyond calculation and might well discourage us. I do not speak of pecuniary loss. This loss might easily be calculated and repaired, and in this respect his death does not affect us here. He came to Ireland poor, like the rest of us; and poor he died. It was in far more important respects that he was so valuable to us. Had it not been that we possessed a subject fitted for the undertaking as he was, it is very probable that we should not have ventured, at least at this time, to attempt our first entrance as an Order into Ireland. It might seem as if Providence had called him amongst us on purpose to be the leader of our first colony in this country. There was everything, we may say, in him which would recommend him to the affections of the Irish people and thus qualify him to do them good. As a worthy member of one of the first and most respected families of the aristocracy of the country, he would

receive honour from your people, in whom I have always observed and admired the really Christian and Catholic disposition to give honour to whom honour is legitimately due, whether from personal virtue and worth or from rank and station, secular as well as ecclesiastical. But there was in him what would be far more valued and honoured in Ireland than earthly greatness of whatever kind—and that was that in the midst of its glitter he turned his mind and heart to the pursuit of what religion and faith present as great, and that as soon as ever the bright light of God's truth shone before his eyes, for the excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ he trampled under foot all that the world admires, and entered at once on the imitation of his crucified Lord in a life of deep poverty, penance and humility. He was indeed what a Passionist ought to be in his own character and at home. The time was not given him to show us what he was calculated to be as a missionary. . . . Had it pleased God to preserve his life and health, he would, I believe, have taken a worthy place among the noble army of apostolic men whom the Catholic Church has in all ages produced to defend the cause of God and His truth. Fervent, devoted zeal for souls is the first, the vital quality of a missionary. This he had, and it was in a most remarkable way the spiritual necessities of his own dear country people which most peculiarly interested him. . . .”

In writing this last sentence good Father Ignatius had probably in the recesses of his mind a thought, expressed by him on a later occasion without reserve, concerning another attribute of Father Paul's which would not have made him unwelcome in the Ireland of those days. Some will, perhaps, consider it a blemish in so saintly a character: Father Ignatius certainly did—but let it be set down. Though he came of a

family of the “ascendancy” in Ireland, no member of which had ever been other than hostile to the national aspirations, and though from a child he had spent all his life in England exposed to every influence that should have exaggerated his hereditary bias, Father Paul Mary, strange to say, betrayed on occasion in the most marked way all the national feeling and prejudice of the most patriotic and democratic of Irishmen. How and when a change as remarkable in its own way as his conversion to the faith came about it is now impossible to say with certainty. Possibly it was the result of a close study of Irish history: for one who knew him intimately throughout his religious life told the writer that his knowledge of the history of Ireland was quite remarkable: “He had his country's history at his finger-ends.” Father Ignatius Spencer, whose whole priestly life was one fiery apostolate for the conversion of England, knew the extreme views of his saintly fellow-Passionist and felt them as a sort of personal grief. In a letter written in the early days of the foundation at Dublin he thus gives expression to his feelings: “. . . As to the Passionists, I do not think those who managed our coming here (to Dublin), which was all done during my absence in Germany, had any idea of serving England. I believe the prime instigator of the move was Father Paul Mary, who was born in Dublin, and was through and through an Irishman in his affections, though trained in England. He, to the last, had all the anti-English feelings, which prevail so much through Ireland, and never would give me the least hope of his being interested in England. I fall in, notwithstanding that, with all the notions of his great virtue and holiness which others have: and, I think, moreover, that the best Catholics in Ireland are to be found among those who have been the most bitterly prejudiced against England. But I think

there is in reserve for them another great step in advance—when they lay down this aversion and turn it into divine charity in a heroic degree.”

“Father Ignatius always felt keenly,” writes Father Pius Devine, “Father Paul Mary’s not taking up his ideas about England with more warmth. When he was on his death-bed, Father Ignatius spent many hours sitting by him. In one of their last conversations Father Ignatius urged his pleas for England as strongly as he could: when he had done, and was waiting for the effect, Father Paul said in a dry, cold manner: ‘*I don’t think Ireland has got anything to thank England for.*’ These words were perpetually ringing in the ears of Father Ignatius: they were the last Father Paul ever said on the subject, and the other used to say: ‘Oh, I used to enjoy his beautiful conversation so much, but I never could hear one single word for England.’”

Formal possession was taken of Mount Argus on the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, 15th August, 1856, and on the morning of that day Mass was said by the new rector for the first time in one of the rooms of the old dwelling-house, which was henceforth called, in honour of the recently beatified Founder of the Passionists, “Blessed Paul’s Retreat.” It was a modest beginning, with the bare requisites for Mass and a little congregation of five persons, including the lay brother who served at the altar, Father Matthew Collier, and the former mistress of the house. But it was an auspicious one too, under the patronage and on the most glorious feast of the Mother of God to whom Father Paul always had the most tender devotion and to whom indeed he attributed his conversion. An active and fervent community of some eight or nine members was soon gathered from the other Passionist houses of the province, and work

began. The little temporary chapel fitted up in the Retreat soon became too small for the numbers who thronged it daily to assist at Mass and to receive the Sacraments. Many were obliged to kneel outside in the open air on such occasions, and the fathers themselves soon felt the grave inconvenience of hearing confessions in the house. Blessed Paul’s had already become a centre of spiritual life in Dublin, so that the necessity of providing a suitable chapel became imperative almost immediately. Accordingly a simple structure connected with the house was commenced, the foundation stone being laid by Father Vincent Grotti on 17th September, scarcely more than a month after the opening of the Retreat. The work was completed in three months, and the building was solemnly blessed for the service of Almighty God on 19th December under the invocation of St. Patrick and Blessed Paul of the Cross.

Meanwhile the work of building up the spiritual edifice at home had not been neglected. Father Paul was little likely to forget the opening words of the rule which direct with some emphasis that “the religious ought in the first place to provide for their own eternal salvation in the manner prescribed by these Constitutions. *Then* they should devote themselves with diligence to offices of charity towards their neighbour, doing with prudence and assiduity whatever, according to the circumstances of time and place, may be available for the promotion of God’s glory and their own spiritual advancement: which two objects should never be absent from their mind and heart.” So his chief anxiety was for the sanctification of his own soul and of the souls of those immediately entrusted to his care: no external work was suffered to interfere with this primary duty. In a short sketch of his life, edited by Father Ignatius Spencer, we read: “He

took possession, as superior, of the ground and house at Harold's Cross, where this first settlement of the Passionists was to be, without a shilling at command to pay the purchase-money. He had no anxiety on this score: all he was bent upon was that in this new colony the spirit of the Founder should live, that the rule whole and unmitigated should be observed by all, and that plenty of work should be done for the people, and he confidently relied on Providence for the rest."

It seemed indeed to be the desire of Father Paul not only that the spirit of the Founder of the Passionists should live and flourish at Mount Argus, but that the fervour and austerity of the early days when St. Paul of the Cross and his holy brother lived as hermits on Monte Argentaro should be reproduced and rivalled. Not only were all the observances of rule carried out both by night and by day with the most scrupulous fidelity, but even certain small indulgences and privileges permitted by rule, which seemed to his fervent spirit unnecessary, received scant countenance. And his zeal was such a consuming fire, or rather perhaps the beauty of his example was so infectious, that the members of his community felt themselves entirely at unity with him in his reforms, and saw one accustomed comfort after another drop out of their lives without murmur or resentment. It would be little to say that in every act of self-denial or austerity he led the way himself, for the one consolation he seemed to feel in his position as superior was that there was no external authority in the house to interfere with his own life of mortification. He made the amplest use of his opportunities in this respect, and not even the ingenious devices which he constantly employed to conceal his penances could blind his religious to the heroic discipline by which he sought to "chastise his body and bring it into subjection."

One of his theories was that a religious vowed to poverty should feel the pinch of it in something of a like degree with the very poor of the country in which he lives. Hence food should be of the poorest and plainest, and everything with the appearance of a superfluity should be dispensed with. In pursuance of this idea he was accustomed at first to do the marketing himself accompanied by a lay-brother: they would go around the small shops of Patrick Street and its slum-like vicinity and buy scraps of meat and other necessaries for the table—dealing just as the poor dealt and purchasing only what was within reach of the very poor. The fare at table was at the best meagre: soup—an economy in religious communities—was banned as a luxury; puddings, permitted on rare days, disappeared; the morning cup of coffee was taken without sugar, and for the rest, the only beverage was water. This rigid rule was afterwards slightly relaxed in deference to suggestions from the Provincial, and perhaps from the doctor. And one of the heaviest mortifications which Father Paul had to bear was, on his own confession, that when he fell ill the first thing the doctor prescribed for him was soup or beef-tea. The mellowing effect of time and experience would doubtless, as those who knew him best declared, have cured him of this somewhat impractical rigorism and ripened his judgment to a truer appreciation of the quality of the golden mean.

This passion for poverty ran all through his life. "One of the most striking features," says Father Pius Devine in his graphic way, "of Father Paul Mary's religious life was his love of poverty. If he had his way, our houses should be but one storey high, coming as near as possible to the style of early Irish architecture which had just emerged from the cloghans. In food, in furniture, in the few comforts allowed, he was most sparing."

An amusing story illustrative of his scrupulous insistence on this point is preserved in Father Salvian's memoir. The lady who had formerly occupied the house which was now Blessed Paul's Retreat had left some handsome articles of furniture behind her which she did not require and which she thought might be of use to the community—as indeed they were. But the presence of these somewhat fine things in the monastery caused great uneasiness to Father Paul: they were too good for poor religious, and useful though they were, there would be more merit from the inconvenience of doing without them. Unwilling, however, to take any action without first seeking counsel, he mentioned the matter more than once to some of the older religious, who, feeling convinced that the furniture was necessary, treated the scruples of the superior with indifference. But Father Paul's conscience was not so easily settled: one day when all the religious happened to be particularly engaged he sent for a dray, and packing all the offending finery upon it despatched it to the lady with a graceful note in explanation of his action and in acknowledgment of her kindness.

CHAPTER XIII

WORK IN IRELAND

STRICT as was his régime during his brief tenure of office, there has rarely been a superior more beloved by his community than was Father Paul Mary Pakenham. The gentleness and amiability which had always distinguished him, the charity towards the wants and weaknesses of others, and the considerateness of their feelings which had marked his whole religious life, were equally conspicuous now in all his dealings with his subjects. The writer has often heard religious who were members of that first community at Mount Argus speak of the young rector not merely in terms of the deepest veneration, which was to be expected, but with a touching affection which gave eloquent though unconscious testimony to the love they bore him. There was, indeed, nothing repellent or forbidding about the personal austerity or the discipline, rigorous though it was, of Father Paul; nothing dour or harsh in his disposition. If he was vigilant and uncompromising in his care that the rule should be fully and faithfully observed, he cheerfully led the way, bearing more than his share of the burden of its austerities. If his ideals seemed a trifle strained, and the pace he set somewhat exacting, it was manifestly because of his burning desire to have the spirit of the Congregation thrive and flourish in all its pristine vigour in its new home. His religious could not but

sympathize with his aims, and there was no sacrifice which they would not willingly have made to further their attainment. Very possibly St. Paul of the Cross, who had occasion once to reprove his holy companion, Father Fulgentius, for overmuch zeal as superior, might have more than once found it necessary to curb the fervour of Father Paul: but there is little doubt that of him he would also have used the words which he spoke of the earlier Passionist—"He is a great saint."

With such a high exemplar of the religious life constantly before their eyes, it is small wonder that the community as a whole reflected the fervour of their superior. So, beyond the general admonitions prescribed by rule, Father Paul's voice was seldom heard by his religious in exhortation or rebuke. But when a correction seemed called for, he had a peculiar art of giving it with a dignity and impressiveness which produced a lasting effect, but left no sting behind. Once, during the time of silence, a good religious, moved by some harmless joke, woke the echoes by a succession of immoderate bursts of laughter. Suddenly, in the midst of his mirth, he became aware of the tall, attenuated figure of the superior standing near, and heard in calm level accents that betrayed no trace of emotion—"Brother ——, I am extremely angry with you!" That was all: not a muscle of the face moved, nor did any sign of anger ruffle its usual serenity, and Father Paul walked quietly away before the offender had recovered from his surprise. But the impression made was as permanent as it was salutary, and the reproof was remembered, and the very tones in which it was spoken, when told us after more than sixty years, with the freshness of a happening of yesterday.

No one, however, could enjoy a pleasantry in season with greater zest than Father Paul Mary himself, and

his natural spirit of gaiety found free vent in the daily recreations, where, indeed, he seemed to be in his element. His manner at all times was bright and genial, and he had a peculiarly winning smile which was rarely missing from his face: but at time of recreation, it was as though the joyousness of his soul overflowed and found expression in the happy faces and merry laughter of those around him. As a conversationalist and raconteur he had few equals, and his brilliant flow of talk and anecdote enlivened many an hour that might otherwise have been dull, and sent the religious back to their duties with spirits refreshed and lighter hearts. But even in these breathing-spaces which interspersed the serious work of life, the supernatural bent of his whole being was in no less prominence. He seemed ever conscious of God's presence, and now and again would deftly introduce a word or a reflection that suddenly shed a new and spiritual significance over the most ordinary subject. He could not endure to be a moment idle, and even at recreation hour a work-box was beside him and he was continually engaged in making rosaries or such other devotional objects as he had the skill to fashion.

The deep affection which Father Paul inspired in the members of his community had its counterpart in the "enthusiastic, distant, respectful love" with which the outside world regarded him. The little chapel attached to the Retreat was like a place of pilgrimage, and the hours that remained over from the daily duties of the religious observance were spent by him in the confessional helping the fallen in their effort to return to God, or counselling and consoling those who came to seek aid and advice in the difficulties and trials that beset their paths. Or if not in the confessional, he was engaged in catechizing and instructing the ignorant or preaching the word of God to the crowds

that flocked to Blessed Paul's. The comparative strength of body which he had attained during his stay in Italy was expended now without stint and without thought of self. He seemed to realize that his time on earth would be short, and to be filled with a desire to make it as profitable to souls as might be. So day and night he worked, garnering the grain of God from fields that were indeed white to harvest. Among all that sought him, the poor were his especial favourites, and the tender care he had for all their wants, whether of soul or body, gave him a peculiar title to their love and veneration which they were not slow to acknowledge. His work at Mount Argus was, in truth, a perpetual mission, which sorely taxed a constitution already worn down by years of ill health and austerity of life.

In the midst of his labours at home, however, he was appointed to take part in a formal mission opened by the Passionist Fathers in the Catholic church at Rathmines on 9th November, 1856. He had as companions Father Vincent Grotti and two others. This was to be his introduction to a missionary career, from which all who knew him anticipated an abundant spiritual harvest. Needless to say he received the appointment with much joy. In those early days, when such functions were a rarity and attracted people from all quarters, the work falling to the lot of missionaries was incomparably heavier and more exacting than at present. The mission at Rathmines was no exception: it drew the faithful in crowds from all parts of Dublin: the confessionals were thronged until far into the night, and some notion of the extent of the work done may be formed from the fact that twenty thousand persons are said to have approached Holy Communion (in those days of infrequent Communion) in the parish church during the month which the

mission lasted. Father Paul Mary, as might be expected, threw himself into the work with all his accustomed ardour, and spared no effort in ministering to the spiritual necessities of the many who came to him. But the severe and constant strain of the long hours in the confessional and the sermons in the crowded church soon proved too much for him. Before the mission was half-way through he was visited with an attack of his old heart trouble. He would fain have gone on, ill and almost prostrate though he was, but his superior, seeing the state to which he was reduced, obliged him at once to desist and return home. It was a keen disappointment to Father Paul, but he resigned himself with humility to what he recognised as the Will of God. After a few days' rest he felt somewhat better, but his zeal for souls was so intense that instead of allowing himself due time for recovery, he resumed without delay all his usual duties. Very shortly after his return he was once more at the call of everyone who visited Mount Argus: after celebrating an early Mass he spent most of the remainder of the day in the confessional and preached to the people nearly every evening. When his fellow missionaries came home after their labours, expecting to find him taking the repose he so much needed, they saw him, to their surprise, almost as busily engaged as if he had remained with them till the end.

The mission at Rathmines was the only one upon which Father Paul Mary was ever engaged, but his brief spell of work there and at Mount Argus justified the high hopes entertained that blessed and far-reaching results would flow from his missionary career were God pleased to prolong it. He had not only that consuming zeal for souls which caused one of the saints to cry out: *Da mihi animas, cetera tolle*, but he was richly endowed by Heaven with the talents to

make his zeal effectual. The gifts and qualities requisite in the confessor and spiritual director he possessed in a fulness rarely found: for with his wide and precise knowledge of theological science in all its branches, went an equally large knowledge of the human heart that came of his extensive and varied experience of the world, an uncommon acuteness of judgment in dealing with men and things, a well-balanced mind, and withal a profound and large-hearted sympathy with the ills and weaknesses of humanity such as is only given to the saints. And here let us say that one of the characteristics of Father Paul, which those who knew him best in his daily life especially insist upon, is that with all his idealism and unworldliness he had all the shrewd, practical common-sense generally associated with the "man of the world." As a preacher, too, he was singularly gifted. His language in the pulpit was of set purpose, plain and simple, as became one "sent to preach the gospel to the poor." His manner was quiet, his gestures few, the style of his discourses almost catechetical, his aim rather to instruct his hearers than to play upon their emotions. But without intending to be oratorical he produced an effect which few pulpit orators produce, and while his words were meant for the poor and lowly, the little ones of Christ, they had a penetrating force which found entrance for them where more pretentious efforts might have failed. Part, perhaps indeed the greater part, of the impression produced by his preaching was no doubt due to his personal sanctity and the inspiration it lent to his words. So much seems to be insinuated by Father Tenison Woods, who had his information from contemporaries and companions of Father Paul. "I have met many since who knew him in those days (at Mount Argus). He was looked upon as a saint

by almost all who knew him, for his humble zeal and untiring charity. In the pulpit his simple earnestness had a beautiful persuasive force; numbers of his old friends used to come and hear him, and the effect upon all was the same. One eminent peer, who is still alive, and who had known Pakenham under far different circumstances, wrote to a friend that he had never heard anyone speak like Father Paul—he could listen to him and never desire to hear another. Another said that to see Father Paul was enough without hearing him speak a single word." His appearance must indeed have been a veritable sermon: we remember that the one vivid recollection retained by an old man who had seen and heard him often, and told us with great impressiveness, was of the striking personality of the holy Passionist, his grave dignity of bearing, the modesty and humility of his demeanour, the down-cast eyes, the recollected look as of one aloof from the world about him and continually rapt in God.

CHAPTER XIV

“MADE PERFECT IN A SHORT SPACE”

HE was, in truth, in those days, drawing very near to the better world on which his heart was set. For nearly two months after his return from the mission which was his first and last, he laboured on at Mount Argus with broken health that was sensibly declining. He would not hear of rest or medical attention: as in his student days, “the holy rule was his medicine,” and why rest when souls were clamouring for his aid? So he continued to go about his duties as usual—“dying on his feet,” as one of his religious has told us. As long as he could stand at the altar he daily offered the Holy Sacrifice, to which he had an extraordinary devotion: and he relaxed in nothing his daily routine of work. Thus he went on throughout the winter, until about a week before Lent (towards the end of February, 1857) came the inevitable break-down. The heart complaint from which he suffered impaired his circulation and affected his constitution in a variety of ways. This time he was seized with a serious attack of the liver, accompanied by a violent and continued nausea and retching which compelled him to take to his bed, and in a short time so exhausted him as to leave but slight hope of his recovery. The most skilful physicians were called in, but little relief could be given him, and on the 21st February Sir Dominic

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Corrigan, who had been invited for consultation, pronounced his case hopeless. On the following day, in presence of the assembled community, he received Extreme Unction at the hands of Father Vincent Grotti, but the nature of his illness did not admit of his receiving the Viaticum. The scene of the administration of this last Sacrament was a most affecting one. With a painful effort the dying superior addressed a few parting words to his dear religious, now kneeling grief-stricken and in tears about his bed. He blessed God for the precious and unmerited grace of dying in the Congregation: he thanked them all for their affectionate solicitude on his behalf, for their unwearying kindness to him, their patience with his shortcomings: and finally he begged their pardon for whatever he had done to disedify or displease them, and implored their prayers for his poor soul. Then praying God to bless them, he said: “I can speak no more,” and gave himself up to silent prayer.

They were almost his last conscious words. Shortly afterwards he fell into a state of delirium which continued unabated till his death. He had borne his illness throughout with the most edifying patience and resignation, indeed with cheerfulness, and had even prayed that his sufferings might be increased in punishment of his sins. But how dear his restraint must have cost him was evident now when the piteous cries wrung from his unconscious lips witnessed to the agonies he suffered. For a whole week, quite contrary to the expectation of his physicians, he lay thus, racked with pain, dying a death surely very like that of his Master—with loving hearts near, but far beyond the reach of their sympathy or comfort. The loneliness of Calvary was indeed around that death-bed. And the dying religious would not have had it otherwise. Only once had he a passing glimmer of

consciousness, and the word he spoke in that brief moment was truly significant of the spirit and character of the man. As it was impossible for him to retain any of the ordinary kinds of nourishment the doctors had given directions that he should receive from time to time a spoonful of champagne. In the one lucid interval that came to him he suddenly perceived with something of a shock what the brother infirmarian was giving him, and murmured in pathetic protest. "This," he said, "is a nice way for a religious to die. . . ." and immediately relapsed into unconsciousness.

"And when He had tasted, He would not drink."

It was his last word: the ruling passion—the passion for penance and self-denial—was strong even in death. For a few days more he lingered on, anticipating, we may hope, by his long and painful agony, the cleansing fires of Purgatory, so that he might at once be made free of the courts of the Most High. At length very early on the morning of the 1st March, shortly before the community rose to matins, the merciful release came and he breathed forth his pure, brave soul to God. He had not yet completed the thirty-sixth year of his age nor the sixth of his religious life.

The sensation caused in Dublin by his death was extraordinary. Comparatively few of its people had seen him during his short six months' sojourn amongst them, but nearly all had heard of him and knew something of his story; and his reputation for sanctity of life was universal. One of the newspapers of the day said with perfect truth that "all Dublin mourned over him with an almost universal cry of sorrow."

The date of his death fell on a Sunday. He had promised a short time previously to preach on that day in the church of the Jesuit Fathers, Gardiner Street, on behalf of the children's orphanage kept by

the Poor Clares at Harold's Cross. But when the time came his earnest voice was hushed for ever. His place in the pulpit was taken by his friend, Father Ignatius Spencer, whose announcement of the death of Father Paul Mary was heard by the crowded congregation with intense and evident grief. Many were moved to tears.

The sort of impression produced by the news in the district surrounding Mount Argus may be judged from the following instance: "I happened to be in Bucharest in 1902," says the writer of an Italian sketch of Father Paul's life, "and being struck with a photograph of one of our religious which I saw there, I asked one of the missionaries (Father Louis Irwin, C.P.) what was the name of the Passionist. 'That is Father Paul Mary Pakenham,' he said. 'He was a saint. I remember, when I was a little boy, going to serve Mass one morning in the church of the Passionists in Dublin, and I met a great number of people on their way to the Retreat and heard them saying to each other: the saint is dead, the saint is dead.' It was Father Paul Mary Pakenham."

On the Monday morning the remains of Father Paul, clad in the black habit he had loved so well, were carried down to the little church which he had built and there laid out on a simple wooden bier after the manner traditional in the Congregation of the Passion. During the two days that intervened before the obsequies were celebrated, the church was thronged incessantly with people who came from every part of the surrounding country to pay their tribute of respect and affection to all that was mortal of this brave soldier of Christ. Those who moved daily in the brilliant society which he had abandoned and the poor to whom he had devoted his life jostled each other in that strange pilgrimage, vied with each other for the

sympathize with his aims, and there was no sacrifice which they would not willingly have made to further their attainment. Very possibly St. Paul of the Cross, who had occasion once to reprove his holy companion, Father Fulgentius, for overmuch zeal as superior, might have more than once found it necessary to curb the fervour of Father Paul: but there is little doubt that of him he would also have used the words which he spoke of the earlier Passionist—"He is a great saint."

With such a high exemplar of the religious life constantly before their eyes, it is small wonder that the community as a whole reflected the fervour of their superior. So, beyond the general admonitions prescribed by rule, Father Paul's voice was seldom heard by his religious in exhortation or rebuke. But when a correction seemed called for, he had a peculiar art of giving it with a dignity and impressiveness which produced a lasting effect, but left no sting behind. Once, during the time of silence, a good religious, moved by some harmless joke, woke the echoes by a succession of immoderate bursts of laughter. Suddenly, in the midst of his mirth, he became aware of the tall, attenuated figure of the superior standing near, and heard in calm level accents that betrayed no trace of emotion—"Brother ——, I am extremely angry with you!" That was all: not a muscle of the face moved, nor did any sign of anger ruffle its usual serenity, and Father Paul walked quietly away before the offender had recovered from his surprise. But the impression made was as permanent as it was salutary, and the reproof was remembered, and the very tones in which it was spoken, when told us after more than sixty years, with the freshness of a happening of yesterday.

No one, however, could enjoy a pleasantry in season with greater zest than Father Paul Mary himself, and

his natural spirit of gaiety found free vent in the daily recreations, where, indeed, he seemed to be in his element. His manner at all times was bright and genial, and he had a peculiarly winning smile which was rarely missing from his face: but at time of recreation, it was as though the joyousness of his soul overflowed and found expression in the happy faces and merry laughter of those around him. As a conversationalist and raconteur he had few equals, and his brilliant flow of talk and anecdote enlivened many an hour that might otherwise have been dull, and sent the religious back to their duties with spirits refreshed and lighter hearts. But even in these breathing-spaces which interspersed the serious work of life, the supernatural bent of his whole being was in no less prominence. He seemed ever conscious of God's presence, and now and again would deftly introduce a word or a reflection that suddenly shed a new and spiritual significance over the most ordinary subject. He could not endure to be a moment idle, and even at recreation hour a work-box was beside him and he was continually engaged in making rosaries or such other devotional objects as he had the skill to fashion.

The deep affection which Father Paul inspired in the members of his community had its counterpart in the "enthusiastic, distant, respectful love" with which the outside world regarded him. The little chapel attached to the Retreat was like a place of pilgrimage, and the hours that remained over from the daily duties of the religious observance were spent by him in the confessional helping the fallen in their effort to return to God, or counselling and consoling those who came to seek aid and advice in the difficulties and trials that beset their paths. Or if not in the confessional, he was engaged in catechizing and instructing the ignorant or preaching the word of God to the crowds

that flocked to Blessed Paul's. The comparative strength of body which he had attained during his stay in Italy was expended now without stint and without thought of self. He seemed to realize that his time on earth would be short, and to be filled with a desire to make it as profitable to souls as might be. So day and night he worked, garnering the grain of God from fields that were indeed white to harvest. Among all that sought him, the poor were his especial favourites, and the tender care he had for all their wants, whether of soul or body, gave him a peculiar title to their love and veneration which they were not slow to acknowledge. His work at Mount Argus was, in truth, a perpetual mission, which sorely taxed a constitution already worn down by years of ill health and austerity of life.

In the midst of his labours at home, however, he was appointed to take part in a formal mission opened by the Passionist Fathers in the Catholic church at Rathmines on 9th November, 1856. He had as companions Father Vincent Grotti and two others. This was to be his introduction to a missionary career, from which all who knew him anticipated an abundant spiritual harvest. Needless to say he received the appointment with much joy. In those early days, when such functions were a rarity and attracted people from all quarters, the work falling to the lot of missionaries was incomparably heavier and more exacting than at present. The mission at Rathmines was no exception: it drew the faithful in crowds from all parts of Dublin: the confessionals were thronged until far into the night, and some notion of the extent of the work done may be formed from the fact that twenty thousand persons are said to have approached Holy Communion (in those days of infrequent Communion) in the parish church during the month which the

mission lasted. Father Paul Mary, as might be expected, threw himself into the work with all his accustomed ardour, and spared no effort in ministering to the spiritual necessities of the many who came to him. But the severe and constant strain of the long hours in the confessional and the sermons in the crowded church soon proved too much for him. Before the mission was half-way through he was visited with an attack of his old heart trouble. He would fain have gone on, ill and almost prostrate though he was, but his superior, seeing the state to which he was reduced, obliged him at once to desist and return home. It was a keen disappointment to Father Paul, but he resigned himself with humility to what he recognised as the Will of God. After a few days' rest he felt somewhat better, but his zeal for souls was so intense that instead of allowing himself due time for recovery, he resumed without delay all his usual duties. Very shortly after his return he was once more at the call of everyone who visited Mount Argus: after celebrating an early Mass he spent most of the remainder of the day in the confessional and preached to the people nearly every evening. When his fellow missionaries came home after their labours, expecting to find him taking the repose he so much needed, they saw him, to their surprise, almost as busily engaged as if he had remained with them till the end.

The mission at Rathmines was the only one upon which Father Paul Mary was ever engaged, but his brief spell of work there and at Mount Argus justified the high hopes entertained that blessed and far-reaching results would flow from his missionary career were God pleased to prolong it. He had not only that consuming zeal for souls which caused one of the saints to cry out: *Da mihi animas, cetera tolle*, but he was richly endowed by Heaven with the talents to

make his zeal effectual. The gifts and qualities requisite in the confessor and spiritual director he possessed in a fulness rarely found: for with his wide and precise knowledge of theological science in all its branches, went an equally large knowledge of the human heart that came of his extensive and varied experience of the world, an uncommon acuteness of judgment in dealing with men and things, a well-balanced mind, and withal a profound and large-hearted sympathy with the ills and weaknesses of humanity such as is only given to the saints. And here let us say that one of the characteristics of Father Paul, which those who knew him best in his daily life especially insist upon, is that with all his idealism and unworldliness he had all the shrewd, practical common-sense generally associated with the "man of the world." As a preacher, too, he was singularly gifted. His language in the pulpit was of set purpose, plain and simple, as became one "sent to preach the gospel to the poor." His manner was quiet, his gestures few, the style of his discourses almost catechetical, his aim rather to instruct his hearers than to play upon their emotions. But without intending to be oratorical he produced an effect which few pulpit orators produce, and while his words were meant for the poor and lowly, the little ones of Christ, they had a penetrating force which found entrance for them where more pretentious efforts might have failed. Part, perhaps indeed the greater part, of the impression produced by his preaching was no doubt due to his personal sanctity and the inspiration it lent to his words. So much seems to be insinuated by Father Tenison Woods, who had his information from contemporaries and companions of Father Paul. "I have met many since who knew him in those days (at Mount Argus). He was looked upon as a saint

by almost all who knew him, for his humble zeal and untiring charity. In the pulpit his simple earnestness had a beautiful persuasive force; numbers of his old friends used to come and hear him, and the effect upon all was the same. One eminent peer, who is still alive, and who had known Pakenham under far different circumstances, wrote to a friend that he had never heard anyone speak like Father Paul—he could listen to him and never desire to hear another. Another said that to see Father Paul was enough without hearing him speak a single word." His appearance must indeed have been a veritable sermon: we remember that the one vivid recollection retained by an old man who had seen and heard him often, and told us with great impressiveness, was of the striking personality of the holy Passionist, his grave dignity of bearing, the modesty and humility of his demeanour, the down-cast eyes, the recollected look as of one aloof from the world about him and continually rapt in God.

CHAPTER XIV

“MADE PERFECT IN A SHORT SPACE”

HE was, in truth, in those days, drawing very near to the better world on which his heart was set. For nearly two months after his return from the mission which was his first and last, he laboured on at Mount Argus with broken health that was sensibly declining. He would not hear of rest or medical attention: as in his student days, “the holy rule was his medicine,” and why rest when souls were clamouring for his aid? So he continued to go about his duties as usual—“dying on his feet,” as one of his religious has told us. As long as he could stand at the altar he daily offered the Holy Sacrifice, to which he had an extraordinary devotion: and he relaxed in nothing his daily routine of work. Thus he went on throughout the winter, until about a week before Lent (towards the end of February, 1857) came the inevitable break-down. The heart complaint from which he suffered impaired his circulation and affected his constitution in a variety of ways. This time he was seized with a serious attack of the liver, accompanied by a violent and continued nausea and retching which compelled him to take to his bed, and in a short time so exhausted him as to leave but slight hope of his recovery. The most skilful physicians were called in, but little relief could be given him, and on the 21st February Sir Dominic

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Corrigan, who had been invited for consultation, pronounced his case hopeless. On the following day, in presence of the assembled community, he received Extreme Unction at the hands of Father Vincent Grotti, but the nature of his illness did not admit of his receiving the Viaticum. The scene of the administration of this last Sacrament was a most affecting one. With a painful effort the dying superior addressed a few parting words to his dear religious, now kneeling grief-stricken and in tears about his bed. He blessed God for the precious and unmerited grace of dying in the Congregation: he thanked them all for their affectionate solicitude on his behalf, for their unwearying kindness to him, their patience with his shortcomings: and finally he begged their pardon for whatever he had done to disedify or displease them, and implored their prayers for his poor soul. Then praying God to bless them, he said: “I can speak no more,” and gave himself up to silent prayer.

They were almost his last conscious words. Shortly afterwards he fell into a state of delirium which continued unabated till his death. He had borne his illness throughout with the most edifying patience and resignation, indeed with cheerfulness, and had even prayed that his sufferings might be increased in punishment of his sins. But how dear his restraint must have cost him was evident now when the piteous cries wrung from his unconscious lips witnessed to the agonies he suffered. For a whole week, quite contrary to the expectation of his physicians, he lay thus, racked with pain, dying a death surely very like that of his Master—with loving hearts near, but far beyond the reach of their sympathy or comfort. The loneliness of Calvary was indeed around that death-bed. And the dying religious would not have had it otherwise. Only once had he a passing glimmer of

consciousness, and the word he spoke in that brief moment was truly significant of the spirit and character of the man. As it was impossible for him to retain any of the ordinary kinds of nourishment the doctors had given directions that he should receive from time to time a spoonful of champagne. In the one lucid interval that came to him he suddenly perceived with something of a shock what the brother infirmarian was giving him, and murmured in pathetic protest. "This," he said, "is a nice way for a religious to die. . . ." and immediately relapsed into unconsciousness.

"And when He had tasted, He would not drink."

It was his last word : the ruling passion—the passion for penance and self-denial—was strong even in death. For a few days more he lingered on, anticipating, we may hope, by his long and painful agony, the cleansing fires of Purgatory, so that he might at once be made free of the courts of the Most High. At length very early on the morning of the 1st March, shortly before the community rose to matins, the merciful release came and he breathed forth his pure, brave soul to God. He had not yet completed the thirty-sixth year of his age nor the sixth of his religious life.

The sensation caused in Dublin by his death was extraordinary. Comparatively few of its people had seen him during his short six months' sojourn amongst them, but nearly all had heard of him and knew something of his story ; and his reputation for sanctity of life was universal. One of the newspapers of the day said with perfect truth that "all Dublin mourned over him with an almost universal cry of sorrow."

The date of his death fell on a Sunday. He had promised a short time previously to preach on that day in the church of the Jesuit Fathers, Gardiner Street, on behalf of the children's orphanage kept by

the Poor Clares at Harold's Cross. But when the time came his earnest voice was hushed for ever. His place in the pulpit was taken by his friend, Father Ignatius Spencer, whose announcement of the death of Father Paul Mary was heard by the crowded congregation with intense and evident grief. Many were moved to tears.

The sort of impression produced by the news in the district surrounding Mount Argus may be judged from the following instance : "I happened to be in Bucharest in 1902," says the writer of an Italian sketch of Father Paul's life, "and being struck with a photograph of one of our religious which I saw there, I asked one of the missionaries (Father Louis Irwin, C.P.) what was the name of the Passionist. 'That is Father Paul Mary Pakenham,' he said. 'He was a saint. I remember, when I was a little boy, going to serve Mass one morning in the church of the Passionists in Dublin, and I met a great number of people on their way to the Retreat and heard them saying to each other : the saint is dead, the saint is dead.' It was Father Paul Mary Pakenham."

On the Monday morning the remains of Father Paul, clad in the black habit he had loved so well, were carried down to the little church which he had built and there laid out on a simple wooden bier after the manner traditional in the Congregation of the Passion. During the two days that intervened before the obsequies were celebrated, the church was thronged incessantly with people who came from every part of the surrounding country to pay their tribute of respect and affection to all that was mortal of this brave soldier of Christ. Those who moved daily in the brilliant society which he had abandoned and the poor to whom he had devoted his life jostled each other in that strange pilgrimage, vied with each other for the

honour or the consolation of looking on those nobly beautiful features so expressive of all he had lived for, even in the immobility of death. The avenues leading to the Retreat were blocked during those days with visitors and vehicles of all sorts. So vast and pressing were the crowds which beset the little church that a number of police were requisitioned to assist in preserving order and in clearing the building at night. Within the church a strong wooden barricade had been erected around the bier to protect the remains against the importunate devotion of the people, and behind this three or four religious stood constantly employed in touching the body with the rosaries, medals or other objects of piety handed to them by the faithful. For, everyone who came was desirous of carrying away, as a relic or memorial, something, no matter how trifling, that had come for a moment in contact with the venerated dead. Even so, many had to return home with their devotion unsatisfied, happy only in the thought that they had been privileged to take part in this public demonstration of reverence towards one whom they regarded as already in the company of the saints.

The solemn obsequies were celebrated on Wednesday, the 4th of March; His Grace the Most Rev. Dr. Cullen, Archbishop of Dublin, presiding at the Office and High Mass, which were attended by a full representation of the secular and regular clergy of the diocese and by a great congregation of the faithful—"including," says a newspaper report of the time, "numbers of the poor of the immediate district who had profited by his teachings and example." The same newspaper, which notes especially the attendance of the poor, remarks also on the absence of those who had been his friends and admirers in the world: "Amongst all the noble friends and relatives of the deceased, of all

those who knew and admired him as a denizen of the gay world, none were present save two military officers, who had once been his comrades in arms, and who came to offer the last tribute of friendship and respect to his memory. Such was not the case with the poor. Crowds of the tenantry of the Pakenham estates in the Midlands were present, not only on Wednesday, but on the two previous days."

He was laid to rest in a corner of the little chapel at Mount Argus, and over the spot where his remains rested an altar was afterwards erected, we are told, "to perpetuate his memory." Chapel and altar have long since disappeared: but his memory needed no such adventitious aids to perpetuation, for, is it not written, "The just shall be in everlasting remembrance"? And so the children and the children's children of those who knew Father Paul Mary Pakenham rise up still and call him blessed.

A wasted life, the world would say, a brief and ineffectual tragedy! Yes, truly, to one who forgets or ignores that other Life of which Calvary was the climax. The cross met Charles Reginald Pakenham as it meets all on their way through life, and while some pass it by unheeding, and some, like the Cyrenean, bear it with what grace they may, making a virtue of necessity, he like the heroic soul he was stripped himself of all and mounted its rough beams, and tasted of its pain and dereliction, and died its death. With the clear-eyed vision of the elect he saw the one choice open to the Christian and made it with all his great heart without regret or reserve. Of him, as of his

master, Newman, the fine verses of Lionel Johnson might be no unfit epitaph:—

The freedom of the living dead ;
 The service of a living pain :
 He chose between them, bowed his head,
 And counted sorrow, gain.

In March, 1894, thirty-seven years after the happy death of Father Paul Mary, the chapel built by him, which had long stood useless, was finally removed to give way to a new cemetery for the use of the religious community at Mount Argus. During the removal of the remains of the dead religious from the old burial-place to the new, the members of the then community, doubtless moved by a holy curiosity, had the coffin containing the body of Father Paul Mary Pakenham opened. Whether it was due to natural or supernatural causes we do not care to conjecture, but the body was then found perfectly intact and incorrupt, and the face wore a most life-like expression as of one who lay in a peaceful slumber. The writer had the happiness of being present on that occasion and will never forget the sight, nor the emotion of some members of the original community who stood by the coffin then as they had stood by it in their fresh sorrow for their saintly father's loss almost forty years before. The coffin was afterwards closed and reverently lowered into its new resting-place where now, close beneath the great Celtic cross which overshadows the cemetery, all that is mortal of Father Paul Mary Pakenham awaits the resurrection of the just.

APPENDIX

“THE DEAD PASSIONIST”

WE give as an appropriate appendix to this sketch of the life of Father Paul Mary Pakenham the article published in *The Nation* during the week of his death, and written by its distinguished editor, John Cashel Hoey, who was among the visitors to Mount Argus at the obsequies of Father Paul. It is unfortunately disfigured by some errors of fact which can, however, easily be corrected by reference to the foregoing pages, and so we print it as it originally appeared in the pages of *The Nation*. It is entitled:

THE DEAD PASSIONIST

Ten years ago the Honourable Captain Charles Reginald Pakenham was one of the most promising officers in the Guards. Amid that gay, glittering London world, with all its splendours, and dissipations, and temptations, he had kept the “whiteness of his soul,” and was beloved with a certain gentle awe by all who knew him, for the rare angelic amiability and purity of his nature. His uncle, the Duke of Wellington, even evinced a degree of affection for him, which he was slow to show to his other relatives—for the old

Marshal had his instinct of the true and staunch heroic metal that was in him. When the Queen came over to Ireland in 1849—"all clinquant, all in gold," in the splendid scarlet of the Household Troops, and the rich aiguillettes of the royal staff, he came in her train as one of her Majesty's aides-de-camp—and all the house of Longford, from the Earl to the Dean, welcomed their kinsman to his native city—welcomed the Honourable Captain Charles Reginald Pakenham, of her Majesty's Coldstream¹ Guards—since known in this world and the next, as the Very Rev. Father Paul Mary of St. Michael, the Passionist, who was this week buried before the Altar of his Order, at Mount Argus. As he lay there, the most impressive image of the holiness of death that human eyes could behold—his face full of a happy radiance long after life had ceased—his limbs decently and gracefully composed, as though angels had laid him at rest—lying there with the crucifix clasped in his hands, in the long black robe of his order—its stern spirit of mortification even in death itself displayed in the rough plank bier, the bare feet, and the pillow of bricks—the most irreverent must have felt as in the presence of one already beatified. Visible there were the fine fingers and arched instep, the delicate transparent skin, and chiselled features of his high patrician blood—there, the stamp of his old soldierly life, almost effaced in a more rigid and militant discipline, whose many marks might be traced in that lithe mortified figure, and the brave, clear calm of his face; but over all a halo which was not of this earth, and which filled the grim austerity of the grave with grace, and lifted death into the light of the life beyond—the slow fading of a glorified soul, as of some grand sunset, which, long after it has gone

¹ One of the errors referred to above,

below the horizon, still leaves its glow on the earth and in the air.

None who saw Father Paul will ever forget that most touching spectacle which preached a more inspiring and a more eloquent sermon than the Holy Spirit within him had ever uttered, or than men may read in the marvellous moral of his life. His, perhaps, was the most miraculous of all the English conversions to the Church. Hardly could the supernatural eye of Blessed Paul of the Cross, himself, whose heart implored so fervidly, and foresaw so clearly the conversion of England, through the dew of prophetic ecstasy, have prefigured the singular fact, that both in England and in Ireland his humble Retreats should be, as it were, inaugurated by two such extraordinary conversions out of that race of nobles who have been, for three centuries, the most powerful enemies of the Church in the world, as Father Ignatius Spencer, and Father Paul Pakenham. Upon Father Paul, grace seems to have fallen like the flash which smote the Apostle at Damascus, and in the yet unabated glow of his first fervour he gave up the ghost. When Dr. Newman, Father Faber, Provost Manning, and the long series of clerical and lay converts who were influenced by their teaching, entered the Church, it was by slow degrees, after long delays, with tendencies which gradually developed, and with predispositions manifestly determined. Their conversion had been prayed for in the Catholic, and predicted as a certain catastrophe in the Protestant Church. Dr. Pusey, as it was said, had constituted himself the signpost from Oxford to Rome, and many looked down the road, and saw there shining beyond the sandy tract and darksome marsh the fair turrets of the City of God. In the wonderful and happy ways of Providence, it was ordered that many of the most remarkable of

them, clerics and laymen, should either enter the Church, or receive the earlier and moulding graces of the Catholic character from one of Blessed Paul's Barefooted Clerks of the Most Holy Cross and Passion. The holy Father Dominic, of that Order, received, in one day, Doctor Newman, Father Dalgairns, and the whole community of Littlemore into the Church. And the influence which the great Passionist had upon the two most conspicuous lay champions of the Church in England, Frederick Lucas and Ambrose Lisle Phillips—men otherwise so totally different in character, and in the order of their works—God only knows. Charles Pakenham, it is said, was converted by reading a volume of the writer whom, above all others, Protestants abhor with a horror far beyond that which is lavished in such happy ignorance on poor old Peter Dens—the little volume called "The Spirit of Saint Alphonsus Liguori." And reading therein, in his Hounslow quarters, he is said to have got some glimpses of a higher truth than had yet dawned upon his soul, but coming through such apparent incongruities and superstitious vulgarities as an enlightened young officer in her Majesty's Coldstream Guards could hardly be expected to comprehend. He determined, however, to trace this gleam divine, though it did apparently shine like the spark that led Sinbad out of the cave through dead men's bones to the clear day. A Puseyite Minister, whom he asked for light, could not penetrate the mystic meaning of these passages—thought, perhaps, they were part of the non-essential mummeries of Popery, without which the religion would be on the whole rather respectable and graceful. Charles Pakenham went straightway to Cardinal Wiseman, determined to search out the truth and the whole truth, manifest or mystery as it might be. The end was a fitting reward for such absolute

simplicity and purity of intention. He became a Roman Catholic almost immediately; and soon after (this was in the year 1851) being near the Passionist Retreat in Worcestershire, he felt the call to Orders. For the last two days of Lent, prostrate before the altar of that community, which commemorates in every act of its discipline and every word of its preaching the Passion of Christ and Him Crucified, the neophyte prayed that his call might be made clear, and his grace sufficing. Father Vincent, the superior of the House, earnestly endeavoured to dissuade him. He naturally feared lest the awful austerities of the Passion should be intolerable to one so delicately nurtured, and of a frame already fragile—the cutting discipline, the broken sleep, the severe fast, the stern vow of life-long poverty, and the rough routine of the humblest of all the Church's ministries. Why not the subtle and chivalrous Order of Loyola for a noble and a soldier—or the simple and genial rule of Saint Vincent—or the gentle, liberal air, half ascetic, half poetic, of dear old Saint Philip's Oratory? But the young soldier had embraced the Church and the Cross with all his soul and all his body—to leave the world and the world's ways at once and altogether—to bury every trace of the old Adam, and arise renewed and regenerated: a noble, a soldier of the Court, a man of fashion—therefore, the chosen Priest of the meanest of the vulgar, and the most squalid of the poor: one who had lived a life of inherited opulence, of customary luxury, in an atmosphere closed against privation or pain, and lit with genius, and passion, and wit—therefore, hunger, and thirst, and broken rest, and the voluntary lash, and the bare foot, and the shaven crown, and the contempt and obloquy of all the world. He deserved to have and he had his will. The Passionists at last consented to receive him. On

Easter Monday he returned to London, sold his commission, and all his other property—divided the money among asylums for widows, orphans, and female penitents—then returned without a penny in his pocket to Broadway, and was received as a novice of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ, under the invocation of St. Michael the Archangel. The old Duke is said to have been the only one of his relations who could comprehend this most singular step. He hoped Charles would go through with the regular discipline, as he had undertaken it, and went to see him in his cell—finding him as everyone else did who went thither—not the fiery fanatic you might imagine, but more gentle, and genial, and graceful in all his ways than he used to be in the drawingrooms of St. James’.

And so he lived the life of a long, slow agony of all that was mortal in him—“knowing for certain that he must lead a dying life,” as it is said in the “Imitation of Christ,” whom he imitated in all things and even unto the end, loving and living among the vulgar and the lowly poor, and mortifying even the natural grace and flow of his rich intellect, that he might speak to them in the plainest and humblest words the great living lesson of God’s Cross. He had one external reward only—priceless to one of his perfect humility. Fame utterly shunned him. Until almost immediately before his death, the world had not heard of the sacrifices he had made, of the sanctity of his nature, of the great hope in which he was held. Then as death drew nigh, even in the eyes of men, the crown descended and the glory grew about his head. The last was made first—the novice became the Rector and the Founder—and a certain mild sovereignty and unworldly attraction diffused itself over all who saw him. When death struck him in a day, like a re-

velation, his name and his virtues became familiar to the whole city—and of all the thousands and thousands who gazed on the shell of a soul so holy, there was not one who did not seem to feel that a Saint had gone home to the House of God.