



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### **Usage guidelines**

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### **About Google Book Search**

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



*The life of St. Peter Claver, S.J.*

John Richard Slattery, Bertrand Gabriel Fleuriau

**Library of**  
**essed**  
**gin's**  
**lality**

---

**Trinity**  
**urch,**  
**et, Ohio**

---

No. 98



**THE**  
**NETTIE LEE BENSON**  
**LATIN AMERICAN COLLECTION**  
of  
**The General Libraries**  
**University of Texas**  
**at Austin**

BX  
4700  
C65  
25

**BX 4700 C65 S5 LAC**

The Library  
St. Joseph's Priory









**ST. PETER CLAVER.**

(pp. 1)

*ST. JOSEPH'S MISSIONARY LIBRARY—2.*

**THE LIFE**  
**OF**  
**ST. PETER CLAVER, S. J.**  
**THE APOSTLE OF THE NEGROES.**

EDITED BY A  
FATHER OF ST. JOSEPH'S SOCIETY,  
EPIPHANY APOSTOLIC COLLEGE.



PHILADELPHIA :  
**H. L. KILNER & Co.,**  
PUBLISHERS.



**Copyright, 1893,**  
**by**  
**JOHN R. SLATTEBY.**

TO THE STUDENTS  
OF  
St. Joseph's Seminary  
AND THE  
Epiphany Apostolic College,  
THAT THEY MAY EMULATE THE LIFE AND  
DEVOTEDNESS OF  
Saint Peter Claver,  
THIS VOLUME IS  
AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.



# CONTENTS.

BOOK I.		PAGE.
Chapter	I. Birth, Parentage and Early Education . . . . .	13
“	II. At Barcelona. Progress in Science and Virtue . . . . .	15
“	III. Seeks Admission to the Society of Jesus . . . . .	17
“	IV. His Fervor in the Noviciate . . . . .	18
“	V. Pilgrimage to Mt. Serrat . . . . .	21
“	VI. Makes his First Vows.—Sent to Majorca.—Friendship with St. Alonso Rodriguez . . . . .	23
“	VII. Instructions of St. Alonso . . . . .	26
“	VIII. Maxims of St. Peter Claver . . . . .	29
“	IX. St. Alonso Foresees the Future Greatness of St. Peter Claver . . . . .	31
“	X. St. Alonso Exhorts him to go to the Indies . . . . .	33
“	XI. Ordered to Barcelona . . . . .	35
“	XII. Studies Theology . . . . .	36
“	XIII. Embarks at Seville.—Voyage . . . . .	39
“	XIV. Arrival at Carthagena.—Goes to Santa Fe . . . . .	40
“	XV. Is Ordained Priest . . . . .	44
BOOK II.		
Chapter	I. Carthagena.—Account of the Negroes . . . . .	46
“	II. The Jesuits at Carthagena . . . . .	48
“	III. Father Alonso de Sandoval and his Method with the Negroes . . . . .	50
“	IV. Father Claver Associated with De Sandoval . . . . .	54
“	V. Father Claver's Conduct toward the Negroes on their Arrival . . . . .	56
“	VI. His Method of Instruction . . . . .	59
“	VII. Administering Baptism . . . . .	64
“	VIII. Difficulties in Forming his Neophytes to Virtue . . . . .	67
“	IX. His Vigilance to Correct . . . . .	71
“	X. His Tender Charity toward the Negroes . . . . .	73
“	XI. His Labors in the Confessional . . . . .	75
BOOK III.		
Chapter	I. His Last Vows . . . . .	77
“	II. His Labors During Lent . . . . .	78
“	III. His Care for the Old and Feeble and for those in Sickness . . . . .	81
“	IV. Supernatural Lights . . . . .	85
“	V. Miracles . . . . .	87
“	VI. Instances of his Heroic Charity Manifested especially During Epidemics . . . . .	91
“	VII. His Grief at the Death or Departure of his Negroes. . . . .	96

(vii.)

	BOOK IV.	PAGE.
Chapter	I. His Labors in the Hospitals . . . . .	98
"	II. He is made Minister of the College and Master of the Novice Lay-Brothers . . . . .	103
"	III. He Takes Charge of the Leper Hospital . . . . .	107
"	IV. Conversions . . . . .	112
"	V. An English Prelate and Others Received into the True Fold . . . . .	115
"	VI. Doing his Master's Work in Patience and Meek- ness . . . . .	122
"	VII. His Attention to Prisoners.—Preparing Criminals for Death . . . . .	131
	BOOK V.	
Chapter	I. He Purchases Interpreters . . . . .	137
"	II. His Missions in Country Places . . . . .	141
"	III. Success and Miracles . . . . .	144
"	IV. He Reforms Libertines . . . . .	150
"	V. Reconciliations . . . . .	152
"	VI. Miracles and Prophecy . . . . .	155
"	VII. He Penetrates the Secrets of Hearts . . . . .	163
	BOOK VI.	
Chapter	I. His Love of God and Spirit of Prayer . . . . .	172
"	II. Devotion to the Passion and to the Blessed Sacrament . . . . .	175
"	III. Devotion to our Blessed Lady . . . . .	179
"	IV. His Love for his Neighbor . . . . .	181
"	V. His Zeal.—His Mortification . . . . .	183
"	VI. His Austerities . . . . .	187
"	VII. His Patience . . . . .	190
"	VIII. His Unalterable Sweetness . . . . .	195
"	IX. His Angelic Purity and his Spirit of Poverty . . . . .	197
"	X. His Obedience . . . . .	200
"	XI. His Humility . . . . .	203
"	XII. The Opinion of his Sanctity . . . . .	210
	BOOK VII.	
Chapter	I. He Attends the Victims of the Pestilence.—A Strange Distemper.—His Attack and Recovery. . . . .	214
"	II. His Infirmities and his Occupations in them . . . . .	216
"	III. His Farewell to the Lepers.—He is Neglected . . . . .	218
"	IV. Life of Saint Alonso. . . . .	220
"	V. He meets his Successor.—Foretells his own Death. . . . .	224
"	VI. Respect for his Sanctity . . . . .	226
"	VII. He Receives Extreme Unction . . . . .	228
"	VIII. His Death . . . . .	229
"	IX. The Obsequies . . . . .	231
"	X. His Portrait.—Juridical Information . . . . .	236
"	XI. Miracles after Death . . . . .	238
"	XII. Canonization . . . . .	245

## PREFACE.

---

THE Apostolate of St. Peter Claver is unique. In the history of God's Saints we read of heroic souls giving themselves as slaves in exchange for Christian captives. Two orders, the Trinitarians and the Order of Mercy had this for their object. From 1198 to 1787 the former redeemed, from the Moors of Africa, 900,000 white slaves, while the latter from 1218 to 1632 ransomed 490,736, and added a fourth vow to the usual three, viz: "To take the place of a captive if there were no other means of effecting his ransom."

But St. Peter Claver's vocation was different. He was in a new world whose aborigenes were rapidly dying out; a new business had sprung up—the slave traffic—by which Negroes were brought from Africa to work in America. Strange commerce! Unholy scheme of money making! Banking houses, mercantile circles, clerks, skippers, *et id genus omne*, were engaged in this traffic in human flesh. In spite of the commercial loss represented by the bones scattered along the bed of the Atlantic, and over the trackless deserts of Africa, the profits of this traffic were enormous, consequently flesh and bones weighed lighter than the traders' gold.

St. Peter Claver's call was to these slaves; surely a unique vocation. No sympathy was his; no encouragement, nothing but open hostility, ill-concealed contempt, or at best an irritating apathy. For forty years he met the incoming slave ship, to repeat day by day the same round of work.

In his life there are no startling or diversified events, no frequent voyages. St. Peter Claver crossed the seas

but once, and never quitted, for the rest of his life, the country to which obedience restricted him. He performed no important negotiations, established or reformed no religious order, made no brilliant changes of places or circumstances. His actions are heroic, his miracles stupendous; but they are always the same, ever in the same place and for the same despised Negro slaves. What was done yesterday St. Peter Claver repeats to-morrow. So his forty years of labor roll on in a crucified sameness. Variety in suffering, as in pleasure, change of place as of work renders them more relishing, now every and any alternative was denied to St. Peter Claver, who for instance, a thousand times kissed and sucked loathsome ulcers; a feat which is regarded as heroic in other Saints when done but once. Nature had nothing to cling to in those forty years of Christ-like sacrifice among the slaves of Carthage.

This fidelity to duties so painfully monotonous was an essential element in the holiness of his life. In Christ crucified he found the power and the wisdom of God. And it took the strength of Christ to continue on so faithfully.

This life of St. Peter Claver is brought out in order to stimulate vocations to the Negro Missions, which even now have the characteristics of Claver's vocation. True! slavery is gone but many of its effects remain; remain not only on the Blacks but also on the Whites. Much as men are willing to forgive those, who wrong them, yet they never forgive those whom they themselves have wronged. Wretched paradox! The poor Negro is never forgiven because he is black and because he was a slave. His vices are thrown up to him by those who engendered them; his services of two-and-a-



half centuries are the reason why they who were benefitted have not a good word for him. The vocation to the Negro Missions is truly Claverine. In place of the slave-ship, we have the cheap, badly built tenements; instead of the middle passage, there are now the back streets and alleys. But the atmosphere surrounding the Negro Missions is about the same as Claver found it in Carthage; neglect, apathy, hostility, misrepresentation. A youth about to enter on the Negro Missions should know this, and to persevere he will need the spirit of St. Peter Claver. His zeal, his courage, his love for God, his thirst for the salvation of souls redeemed by Christ's Blood, his bravery under the Cross must one and all be the aspiration, if not the possession of the missionary to the Negroes.

This life of St. Peter Claver, furthermore, is chiefly a reprint of the Oratorian life, published in London, Eng., 1849. It was, however, carefully collated with several other and more recent lives, which were brought out both in Europe, and in South America. It is interesting to note that the Saint's Spanish biographer assures us that the favorite book of Pius IX for spiritual reading was the life of St. Peter Claver.

May the spirit of this saint inspire our American youth, with a thirst for the salvation of the millions of their Black Countrymen! And may God's Holy Spirit, through the intercession of Mary and Joseph, guide this life of the Apostle of the Negroes that it may fall into the hands of noble, generous souls!

St. Joseph's Seminary      REV. J. R. SLATTERY.  
for the Negro Missions.  
Baltimore, Md.



THE LIFE  
OF  
ST. PETER CLAVER,  
OF THE COMPANY OF JESUS.

---

BOOK I.

---

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH, PARENTAGE AND EARLY EDUCATION.

**W**HILST the faith, which had been established in the East Indies by St. Francis Xavier, was making rapid progress through the ministry of his successors in the apostleship, Divine Providence, which has its prescribed seasons for the distribution of its favors, was preparing in Europe a new apostle destined to sanctify the West Indies, and to renew some of the prodigies effected by the Thaumaturgus of these latter ages. It seems as though God, whose mercy extends over all nations, resolved that America should have no reason to envy Asia; and He therefore sent into the New World another Xavier, a man animated with his spirit, inflamed with his zeal, ornamented with his virtues, armed with the same power, and favored with the same gifts. This apostolic man was Saint Peter Claver.

(13)

He was born at Verdu, in the diocese of Solsona, in the principality of Catalonia, Spain, on the 26th of June, 1580, during the reign of Philip II. Nobility of blood, although possessing nothing in common with sanctity, yet gives an additional lustre, and wins for it respect and esteem. This advantage was not wanting to the servant of God. His father, Peter Claver, belonged to one of the most illustrious families of Catalonia, and his mother, Anne Sabocano, was of equally distinguished rank. Their wealth, though sufficient to maintain the honor of the family, was not however equal to their nobility, but the deficiency of riches was abundantly compensated for on the score of virtue, an advantage far more precious, because nobility depends on birth, whilst virtues are the fruit of labor and merit. His pious parents strove early to instil their own sentiments into his mind, and to bring him up in the fear and love of the Lord. From his infancy he was destined for the ecclesiastical state; not so much with a view of succeeding his uncle, who held a rich canonry in the cathedral of Solsona, as by the secret inspiration of God who had chosen this child for a vessel of election. The only motive which influenced his mother, was a holy desire to imitate those two happy women whose name she bore: Anne the mother of Samuel, and Anne the mother of Mary.

If these good Christians spared nothing in the education of their son, his docility and fine dispositions fully equalled their wishes. He may be said to have loved virtue even before he knew what it was,—a love which augmented as his reason developed itself. From his tender infancy, his sweetness of manner and his

modest vivacity gained the hearts of all. But more especially his fondness for the service of the altar and his tender affection for every thing connected with religion rendered his life even then precious in the sight of God. The candor of his soul was transparent through his countenance. His affection to his parents he manifested by a prompt and willing obedience.

---

## CHAPTER II.

### AT BARCELONA. PROGRESS IN SCIENCE AND VIRTUE.

AS soon as young Claver was old enough to begin his studies, his parents who had solely his good at heart, sent him to Barcelona, where he would find great facilities for perfecting himself in literature. Our Lord, who guided their counsels, used this means of making known to the youth the Society of Jesus to which he would afterward unite himself. Although very young, his virtue appeared so solid that his father felt no fear of trusting him to himself at such a distance from home; nor was he mistaken in his opinion of him. In a city whose grand pursuit was pleasure, young Claver did not even indulge in the innocent amusements natural to his age.

His college life was a constant prayer, his delight was to approach the Holy Sacrament, and to cultivate in his heart various practices of penance. Next to his duty to God, honor and devotion to the Blessed Virgin formed his sweetest delight. He regarded her as his own mother, and his love for her surpassed that of

the most devoted of sons. One of his most ordinary as well as most agreeable recreations, was to converse with the Jesuit Fathers at the College where he was making his studies. The wise counsels he received from them, and the great examples of holiness which he there witnessed, encouraged him to make daily progress in virtue and fervor.

He was blessed with a retentive memory and a vigorous intellect; his practices of piety, which were regulated by prudence, and the advice of his directors, caused no prejudice to his studies. A soul which seeks God in all things can always find time for every duty. In a few years his progress was such as to astonish his masters. The university of Barcelona admitted him to his degrees with marked distinction, and the bishop himself, before conferring the tonsure, and the four minor orders, commended him for his learning and virtue. On receiving these first marks of his oblation of himself to God, he felt new fervor spring up within him, and, as it were, a new spirit, which attracted him to the Society of Jesus. But the high idea which he had conceived of the perfection of that Order, whose sole aim is the greater glory of God and the salvation of men, caused him, in his humility, to fear a refusal. Therefore, as he did not dare address himself to those with whom he deemed himself unworthy to be associated, he resolved to place this important affair before Him who never fails to communicate Himself to humble souls. After redoubled prayers and penances to interest Heaven in his behalf, he unveiled to his confessor, the inmost recesses of his soul, the desires inspired by God, and the motives which induced him to

such a step. The father was well acquainted with young Claver's virtue and merit, and was delighted at this intelligence. Convinced that the glory of God was concerned therein, he advised him to apply without fear to the proper superiors.

---

### CHAPTER III.

#### SEEKS ADMISSION TO THE SOCIETY OF JESUS.

AFTER a few months' trial, the superior of the Jesuits willingly acceded to his wishes, on condition that he obtained the consent of his father, who on this occasion showed the truly Christian spirit with which he was animated. The fine qualifications and talents of his son had hitherto given him the most flattering hopes. He already looked up to him as the prop of his house, the honor of his family, and the consolation of his old age. The receipt of his letter astounded him : he sighed, and even wept ; but grace soon triumphed over nature. He loved his son, not through a selfish or worldly motive, but for himself and for God ; and therefore, full of lively faith, and truly Christian tenderness, he sent him his consent and blessing, begging the Lord to confirm it, to make him incessantly advance in holiness, and thus to console him for his loss. Thus it is that parents show their love toward their children, by procuring for them solid good. Overjoyed at this answer, and at receiving this blessing, which he always looked upon as the source of many celestial favors, he most ardently solicited his admission ; nor



was he made to wait very long for a favor of which he was the more worthy in proportion as he deemed himself less so.

---

## CHAPTER IV.

### HIS FERVOR IN THE NOVICIATE.

HIS superiors sent him at once to the noviciate at Tarragona, which he entered in the twenty-third year of his age, on the 7th of August, 1602. The reputation of his sanctity had preceded him to Tarragona, and consequently he was received with open arms, and with every demonstration of affectionate regard. But how shall we describe his own joy on obtaining the great object of his wishes, and at being free to occupy himself with God alone! As a shipwrecked traveler, after escaping the storm, kisses tenderly the shore, so did he, on entering the cell prepared for him, prostrate himself and kiss the floor with the most profound respect and most tender devotion. The more he thought himself unworthy of this favor, the more eagerly did he express his gratitude to God. He would often exclaim, "Ah, Lord! what have I done to deserve admission into Thy house? To Thy infinite mercy alone am I indebted for a place in this Paradise, and I can only repay this precious favor by the most lively and constant love. Grant me then this new boon, O my God! and since I now belong to Thee alone, let me love Thee alone, and live for Thee alone! O pleasant walls!" added he in a transport, "do I then see you,

and touch you, and possess you! O sacred cloister! wherein the soul finds its true liberty, dost thou really possess me? Holy abode! more precious than the palaces of kings, from henceforth thou shalt be my only pleasure! And Thou, O God! O God of mercy, Thou, who art my confidence, and my only support, grant that by Thy grace I may never, through my own fault, lose a treasure which I have obtained from Thy bounty!" He was a perfect novice, and therefore he led the most obedient, the most laborious, the humblest, and most hidden life. From the first day the exercises of the religious state seemed as familiar to him as if he had practiced them all his life. He had scarcely anything to learn; nor was there need of reforming anything in him. One might have said that he had been born to that state of life, and that the same spirit which inspired the founder, who prescribed the rules, had passed into the young novice, who so carefully observed them. Neither during his noviciate, nor throughout a life so varied by different occupations and labors, did any one ever see him fail in the slightest observance. This made Father Provincial Gaspard, who had been his fellow-novice, say, when he saw him several years afterward at Carthage, "I here find Father Claver as much a novice as when I knew him at Tarragona." In fact, neither his age, nor his great services, nor his universally-acknowledged merit, ever lessened in him the sweetness, simplicity, modesty, humility, and exactitude which he showed when a submissive and fervent novice. In his conduct toward others he always looked upon himself as nothing but a novice.

If the beauty of the fruit can give any idea of the

beauty of the flower whence it issued, we may judge of the solidity of the virtues he acquired in the noviciate, from those still more heroic virtues which he afterward incessantly practiced. Persuaded that everything is important, and precious in the service of the Sovereign Master, and that on the beginning depends the whole course of the religious life, he omitted nothing that could aid him in his efforts to attain to the highest perfection. Assiduity in prayer, the most painful and humiliating employments, severity to himself, affability toward others, prompt obedience to superiors, zeal in the service of his brethren, in whom as in his superiors, he saw only God; such, in short, was the general plan of his whole life. He soon gained the esteem and love of a community in which the most perfect merit was duly appreciated.

Many were the instructions which he received from his Divine Master who communicated Himself to His servant in proportion, as he showed zeal and fidelity in His service. An abridgment of them, copied from a little book which he afterward gave to one of his most intimate friends will prove a genuine pleasure:—"1st. Seek God in all things, and try to find Him in all. 2nd. Do everything for the greater glory of God. 3rd. Use every endeavor to acquire so perfect an obedience as to submit one's will and judgment to the superior, as to Jesus Christ Himself. 4th. Seek nothing in this world but what Jesus Himself sought, namely, to sanctify souls, to labor, to suffer, to die even for their salvation, for the sake of Jesus."—It is easy to see that Father Claver's whole life is comprised in these few words, and that in writing what he intended to do, he

merely marked down what he always did. To show his virtue in its full lustre, opportunity alone was wanting.

---

## CHAPTER V.

### PILGRIMAGE TO MT. SERRAT.

IT is a custom in the Society to send the novices on a pilgrimage to some place of devotion, in memory of that which the founder St. Ignatius, at the beginning of his conversion, made to our Lady of Monserrat. They always go on foot, live on alms, and lodge as much as possible in the hospitals. The pilgrimage assigned to young Claver must have pleased him much, for it was no other than Monserrat itself. He and his two companions set out with their superior's blessing, their staffs their only provision for the journey. The fatigues of the way caused no diminution of his prayer and austerities. On arriving at a resting place, his first care was to repair to the church with his companions, to adore our Lord in the sacrament of His love. Besides the days appointed by the superior, he received permission to communicate on several other days. After spending some time in prayer, he begged alms from door to door; and what ever he might receive his piety was always satisfied with it. If it was inconsiderable, he was delighted, because his love of poverty and suffering made it precious; if it was abundant, he was equally delighted, because it enabled him to relieve the poor. Thus all

turns to the good and profit of a soul that loves God. When the three young novices came to a place where they were to stop, they collected the children in some public street or square, and conducted them in procession to the church, singing prayers and canticles. It was an edifying sight, and attracted great crowds. The novices by turns catechized, and made moving exhortations on the duties of a Christian. Young Claver's zeal and powerful words produced a sensible impression on all present. The fire with which the Holy Ghost inflamed his heart passed into the hearts of his auditors; and the usual fruit of his discourse was a lively sorrow for sin, and a sincere love of God.

As soon as they came in sight of Monserrat, Claver prostrated himself to pay respect to the Mother of God, whose sanctuary is there. Rough as was the path, up the holy mountain, love made it sweet and easy to him; nor could the beauty of the surrounding scenery divert his mind for a moment from the sight of the celestial beauties which occupied it. But who could describe the transports of his heart on beholding that venerable image, which represents the majestic beauty of the Queen of Heaven, whom he had always tenderly loved as a mother! He spent three whole days in this holy place, as much moved by the charity, as he was edified by the example, of the worthy sons of St Benedict, to whom the monastery belongs. To derive the principal fruit which the novices proposed to themselves as the result of their pilgrimage, they made their confession with lively marks of contrition, and then received with most tender devotion the Body of our Lord. Claver spent all his spare time before the

miraculous image of the virgin, and he would willingly have remained there all his life. To no one did he ever relate all the favors he there received from the Queen of Saints ; but whenever, in after life, he recalled this pilgrimage to mind, he shed such sweet tears, that it was easy to judge of the delight his soul had tasted.

---

## CHAPTER VI.

### MAKES HIS FIRST VOWS—SENT TO MAJORCA—FRIENDSHIP WITH ST. ALONSO RODRIGUEZ.

ON returning to the noviciate he prepared to make his vows by a retreat of eight days, according to the custom of the Jesuits. This he did on the 8th of August 1604. “I consecrate myself to God till death,” he wrote at that time, “looking on myself henceforth as a slave whose whole office lies in being at the service of his master, and working with all my body, soul, and mind to please and satisfy Him in all and by all.” De-spoiled of all exteriorly, his interior detachment was so perfect, especially his poverty of spirit, that from that moment he seemed to love nothing but the poor and the slaves, wishing to become by virtue what they were through necessity. His perfection must have been very striking, for his superiors, retained him two months longer at the noviciate, to serve as a master and model to the other novices, instead of sending him at once to pursue his studies. He was the only one who did not perceive this mark of distinction ; his humility made him consider it less a mark of esteem than as a

longer period for acquiring that perfection in which he was deficient.

He would willingly have passed the remainder of his life in the humble condition of a novice, but his superiors thought it time to apply him to study, and sent him to the college at Girona, where he soon so distinguished himself by his abilities as to be employed as a professor. As it was a spirit of obedience to the good pleasure of God that guided him, rather than curiosity, or a natural desire of knowledge, his studies never interfered with his exercises of piety. He addressed himself to God when beginning them, continued them with God, and finished them quite absorbed in God, humbly praying that He Himself would be his Master, and teach him nothing but how to love Him sovereignly and solely.

A college had lately been founded for the Jesuits at Majorca, and it was determined that young Claver should go there to make his course of philosophy. Secret reasons attracted him to that city, and his appointment there fulfilled his highest wishes. He was then about twenty-five years of age, and his joy was great indeed at the prospect of living with Brother Alonso Rodriguez, whose virtue was then shining in brilliant lustre. Alonso Rodriguez was born in Spain, on the 25th of July, 1531. He entered the Society at the age of forty, and for more than thirty years, he performed with extraordinary piety the humble functions of lay-brother. This holy religious was canonized by Pope Leo XIII. on the 15th of January, 1888. At the time of Claver's arrival Alonso was porter in the college of Majorca. In this humble state, so mean in the sight of



men, he was one of those great souls favored with the most sublime gifts of God, one of those simple and docile minds wherein celestial knowledge dwells, and to which divine illuminations and revelations supply the deficiency of human science, one of those pure and upright hearts which detached from all besides, peacefully enjoy the familiarities of Divine love, so that even whilst on earth they seem already to taste the delights of Heaven. What an attraction was this for young Claver, to live with one so able to teach him all the secrets of the science of the saints, and the most exalted perfection! On his arrival at Majorca, he had no sooner paid his respects to his new superior than he hastened in search of him whom he looked upon as his master, and whom he had loved before he had even seen him. No sooner had they met than the feelings of their hearts alone made them mutually known. If Claver was delighted at finding in Alonso an old man already perfect, Alonso was not less so at finding such virtue in so young a religious. It was at the school of this master that such a disciple wished to form himself; and they both gratefully acknowledged the sweet dispensation of Providence which united two hearts so alike, and already so united in God. With the permission of the superior they arranged a time for daily conversation on divine things, choosing an hour that could interfere neither with the occupations of one nor the studies of the other.

Thus from the school of philosophy Claver passed to the school of sanctity. And the same purity of intention which accompanied them to both, made both equally profitable. For the one, God gave him an ex-

cellent understanding and able professors; and for the other, a heart inflamed with love and a master enlightened by the Holy Ghost, whose every word he carefully committed to writing, in order that none might be lost. The scholar, charmed with the virtue of the master, strove to imitate him, and the master, delighted with the dispositions of his disciple, concealed nothing from him that could conduct him to the most sublime perfection. Being made sensible by Almighty God of His designs upon Claver, he opened his whole soul to him.

---

## CHAPTER VII.

### INSTRUCTIONS OF ST. ALONSO.

**T**HE following are a few of this Saint's instructions as they were collected by his saintly pupil.—“A religious who would advance in virtue, must study to know himself: knowing himself, he will despise himself; by not knowing himself, he becomes proud. He must speak little with men, and much with God. When he speaks, let him always speak well of others, and as far as possible, ill of himself. He ought, like Melchisedech, to be without father, mother, or relatives; because he must look upon them as not belonging to him: God alone must hold the place of all to him. Let him behold God in all men, honoring them as His images. Let him above all pray for those who offend him; and let him do them more good than they have done him evil. Let him direct all his actions to the greater service and glory of God; let him perform them in union with Jesus Christ, so as to render them

more worthy of the Supreme Majesty; and at the end let him offer them to Him, for the spiritual good of his own and his neighbors' souls. Let God be always in his heart, in which he should make a sort of cell, and there let him incessantly beg for grace never to offend Him; and let him never do nor say anything without first consulting Him. Let him never quit his room without good reason, or without asking our Lord's permission and grace to do nothing that may displease Him. On his return, let him examine whether he comes back as he went. Let him use his senses only for necessary things and the service of God; let him not regard matters of curiosity, nor hearken to useless news which only causes distractions. Let him never speak of food, clothing, or lodging; let him eat no more than is necessary for life, and never touch delicacies: in a word, let him always act as a man dead to the world, and alive to God alone. Let him look on praise as an outrage, remembering how little he is in the eyes of God: let him love contempt for the sake of what Jesus Christ endured for him; and let him humble himself under affronts, thinking that his sins deserve much worse. Let him often meditate on the end of man, and upon death, that so he may animate himself to labor and suffer, reflecting that soon he will have no more time to meditate. In his meditations let him apply himself chiefly to the virtues peculiar to his state; and at each of these virtues let him attentively consider the greatest obstacles to be encountered in its acquirement, nor let him leave off till he has determined courageously to surmount them all for God. Let him often remember in detail the passion and sufferings

of our Saviour, return unceasing thanks and beg for a portion of His cross, carrying it joyfully for His love. Let him carefully avoid those occasions in which he may have before fallen, or where there may be danger of falling. Let him detach his heart from all creatures to give it entirely to God; and let him make frequent acts of divine love every day. Let him have a tender devotion to the Holy Virgin, serving and loving her with all his heart; and let him often visit an image of her, being exact in reciting her little office and the beads; losing no opportunity of showing his zeal for Her, but above all, let him meditate well on Her virtues, and strive to imitate them. Let him honor images of the Saints as if they themselves were present, recalling to mind the virtues that distinguished them, the shortness of their labors, and the duration of their recompense. Let him watch much and sleep little: all the time given to sleep is an abbreviation of life and of merit. Let him carefully learn what is necessary, but avoid all curious and superfluous study. In fine, let him seek God in all things and in all places, and he will always find Him at his side."

It will be seen that these short instructions include all that is most sublime in the gospel, and all that is most perfect in the life of a Christian and religious. Hence, we may judge the sanctity of him who gave them; for in imitation of Jesus Christ, he taught nothing that he had not long practised himself. This pure and holy seed, cast into the heart of a disciple so fervent and so favored by God, daily brought forth fruit a hundred-fold. Never did he swerve from these salutary maxims given him by the aged saint.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## MAXIMS OF ST. PETER CLAVER.

WE will now give a few of Father Claver's own maxims:—"1. Man's salvation and perfection consists in doing the will of God, which he must have in view in all things, and at every moment of his life; the more he accomplishes this divine will, the more perfect he will be.—2. To do the will of God, a man must despise his own; the more he dies to himself, the more will he live to God. But to acquire this double advantage we must love God, and the more we purge the heart of self-love, the more shall we love God.—3. To love God as he ought to be loved, we must be detached from all terrestrial love; we must love nothing but Him; or if we love anything else, we must love it only for His sake.—4. Let a man direct all his thoughts, words, and actions, solely to the glory of God, incessantly striving for submission to His will, insomuch as to desire neither evil nor good, unless God wills it; and in whatever trials he may be placed, the peace of his soul cannot then be troubled.—5. To derive true profit from whatever happens, a man should be silent amidst reproaches, injuries, and ill-treatment, whether there be any fault on his side or not; and when people contend with him, let him prefer silence to victory.—6. To make rapid progress in virtue a man must carefully guard his tongue, and let truth, peace, and edification

be in all his words. Let him say much in few words ; and that he may always speak well, let him always speak either of God or with God.—7. Let him prefer nothing to obedience, no matter who commands ; submitting to all creatures for the sake of God, and doing all that is required of him with great peace of mind. If however he cannot do all, and is asked the reason, let him be content with simply saying that he could not ; and whatever may be said, let him answer nothing—no, absolutely nothing : whatever reproaches may be made, let him be silent, accepting all for the sake of God ; provided there be nothing contrary to God, or to obedience. This is indeed the way in which to vanquish self.”

Such was the fruit young Claver derived from his intercourse with his holy master ; but the heroic virtues of his after-life will enable us to judge still better of this. “ Ah, my dear Alonso,” would he sometimes say, in a transport of fervor, “ what must I do to love Jesus Christ, my God and Saviour, with my whole heart ? Do you teach me, you who are instructed in His own school : I feel that He inspires the desire to belong to Him alone, but I know not how to begin.” The most devoted fathers do not love their children more tenderly than this great servant of God did his spiritual son ; but as his love was more solid and pure, he incessantly recommended him to God, soliciting for him the most signal and precious graces, Our Lord, moved by his charity and tears, was pleased to give the saintly old man the consolation of knowing that his prayers were heard.

## CHAPTER IX.

ST. ALONSO FORESEES THE FUTURE GREATNESS OF ST.  
PETER CLAVER.

ONE day as St. Alonso was praying with extraordinary fervor, he suddenly fell into an ecstasy,—a thing not unusual with him—and was raised in spirit to the abode of the blessed. There his guardian angel, who accompanied him, showed him those brilliant and majestic thrones described in the Apocalypse. One appeared more glorious than the rest; but the saint perceived that it was unoccupied and inquired for whom it was destined? The angel answered, “It is for thy disciple Claver; it is the recompense of his virtues, and of the great number of souls he will gain to God in the West Indies.” The vision then suddenly disappeared. On returning to himself, his joy was indescribable; but he carefully concealed this vision from young Claver, merely informing his confessor through whom it afterward became known. This revelation will not seem incredible to those who know Father Claver’s life. Father Joseph of Urbina who was afterward at Carthage, was enabled to closely observe Father Claver’s conduct. He frequently declared that he never for a moment doubted the truth of what God had made known to brother Alonso; for having in a manner followed Claver step by step, he had always remarked in him a perfection worthy of the brightest crown.



If Alonso had followed the first impulse of his heart, he would have imitated St. Anthony of Padua, who when he had learned by revelation that a certain man would obtain the crown of martyrdom, sought him everywhere to give him public marks of veneration. But if secrecy prevented the gratification of his piety, at least nothing could equal the respect he ever after felt for him in his heart. One day perceiving him at a distance with another young Jesuit, he said to one of the fathers standing near, "Do you see those two young religious? they will go to the Indies and procure the salvation of many souls." The event verified the prediction, and at the same time serves to verify the revelation already related with regard to Father Claver, who then had no idea of the vocation marked out for him by God, but was awaiting in peace the orders of his superiors.

At the termination of his course of philosophy in which he had greatly distinguished himself, he was required to sustain a public thesis. He obeyed, although against his spirit of humility; and having displayed as much capacity as modesty he gained a high reputation both for learning and for virtue. Caring little for this applause, though so well deserved, he applied himself to human science by obedience; for inclination led him always to that celestial learning which he acquired in the school of Alonso, and where he made such wonderful progress.

It seems that the favors with which God blesses His servants are sometimes communicated from one to another. As Claver was once going out with a companion of great virtue, Alonso, who was porter, stopped

them for a moment, and making the sign of the cross over them, said, "Remember the three adorable persons of the blessed Trinity accompany you," and then immediately fell into an ecstasy; at the same moment the holy young man felt penetrated with such love and tenderness as to be scarcely able to move. He thought of going back into the house, but reflecting that his superiors had sent him, he begged of God to moderate the excess of those sensible favors, and to give him the power to obey. He obtained his request, but there remained so vivid an impression of what he had experienced, that almost every step cost him an effort, and for the rest of the day he seemed to be transported out of himself. If a few words spoken casually produced such impression on the heart and mind of Claver, what must have been his more intimate and secret colloquies with God alone?

---

## CHAPTER X.

### ST. ALONSO EXHORTS HIM TO GO TO THE INDIES.

AS the time fixed for his departure from Majorca was approaching, Claver was obliged to make up his mind to quit his saintly master; and this separation was perhaps one of his greatest sacrifices. Before they parted God was again pleased to let Alonso serve him as a sure guide, to direct him in the path wherein he was to acquire such great merit, and to render such important service to his neighbor. If St. Gregory the Great is justly called the Apostle of England, for

having sent the apostolic laborers to plant the Faith there, St. Alonso Rodriguez has deserved the title of Apostle of Carthagená, for having sent Claver thither.

Being informed of the designs of Heaven in his regard, he went to him shortly before his departure, and unveiling to him his whole soul, said, "I cannot express to you the sorrow that I feel at seeing that God is unknown to the greater part of the world, owing to the scarcity of priests to preach His name. What tears are not called forth at the sight of so many people who stray in the wilderness because there is no one to guide them; so many who perish, not because they seek their own loss, but because no effort is made to save them! We see so many useless workmen where there is no harvest, and so few where the harvest is abundant! How many souls in America might be sent to heaven by priests who are idle in Europe! The riches of those countries are prized, whilst the people are despised. Cannot charity traverse seas already opened by cupidity? Whole fleets laden with their treasures enter the ports of Spain, but what a multitude of souls might be conducted to the port of eternal felicity! O holy brother of my soul, what a field is here opened to your zeal! If the glory of God's house concerns you, go, go to the Indies and save millions of these perishing souls. If you truly love Jesus Christ, go and labor with Him until death for man's salvation, since you belong to His society. To be willing to go under obedience to the Indies is certainly much, but not enough for a Jesuit; that being his first and most noble vocation, he should signify his eagerness for it to his superiors, and earnestly solicit such a mission. Represent your own desires

immediately to them ; beg, urge, entreat of them to send you ; reiterated entreaties are not contrary to obedience when there is reason to believe that the superior demurs only to try our constancy.”

These words, uttered with the tone and manner of an apostle, inflamed, yet lacerated the heart of Claver ; the mere thought of so many perishing souls so deeply wounded his own, that, for the salvation of one alone, he would willingly have given a thousand lives.

---

## CHAPTER XI.

### ORDERED TO BARCELONA.

**B**EING certain of the will of God, made known by the mouth of so holy a man, Claver wrote to his provincial in terms dictated by zeal and fervor. He was answered that his vocation would be carefully examined on his arrival at Barcelona, whither he was ordered to repair and commence his study of theology. In November, 1608, he left Majorca to go to Barcelona. This departure must have been painful to both these great souls so tenderly united by charity ; but their regret was only expressed by sentiments of piety and by lively thanksgiving to God for the favors He had been pleased to confer upon them. Rodriguez promised Claver never to forget him in his prayers, and gave him a few spiritual books of his own composing.

Throughout the remainder of his life Claver never lost his sentiments of veneration and tenderness for Rodriguez. Even in his old age he always called him

his holy master, and thought it a great honor to have been his disciple. Besides his writings which he carefully preserved, he collected in a little book all that he could recollect of his sayings, marking even the day and hour when they had been said; he always carried these about with him, and was never weary of reading them. They were his oracle in doubts, his consolation in troubles, his refreshment in fatigue, and even when he was receiving the Holy Viaticum, he held them tightly pressed upon his breast, that they might reanimate his fervor in those precious moments.

---

## CHAPTER XII.

### STUDIES THEOLOGY.

ON arriving at Barcelona Claver repeated his entreaties to be sent on the Indian mission. His superiors, although delighted with a zeal, so becoming in a Jesuit, thought proper to try him a little longer, more especially as the provincial, aware of his great talents, was unwilling to lose a member that excited such great and just expectations. Young Claver began therefore to apply himself to the study of theology with the same dispositions which had distinguished him at Majorca. While he looked on himself in his humility as below all his companions, he surpassed them all in assiduity and success. The study of humanities and philosophy had diminished nothing of his fervor; the study of theology, which has God Himself for its object, served but to increase his love, so that he

was justly considered the most able and the most virtuous of all the students. This is the testimony of Father Gaspar Garrigas, his fellow-student, who after his death wrote as follows to one of his friends: "When I was studying at Barcelona I saw a good deal of Father Claver. All that I can say of him is, that I always knew him to be a holy and perfect religious; he was modest, affable, and obliging to every one. He never complained of any person; his conversation was of God or of things tending to the spiritual advancement of his hearers. No one could be more humble in manner, more obedient to superiors, more exact in the observance of religious discipline. I do not hesitate to say that I never saw him violate a single rule. He strove in everything to imitate Brother Alonso Rodriguez, who had given him some books written with his own hand,—the same spirit of prayer was remarked in him, the same union with God, the same mortifications. Therefore I am not surprised that having led so holy a life, he should perform miracles after his death."

This intimate union with God, joined to constant study; this great austerity, joined with so much innocence, especially in a constitution so delicate, drew on him the most special favors of Heaven. If his humility concealed them from the knowledge of men, some few did escape in spite of all his caution. One of his companions was a witness of the following extraordinary circumstance. As the two were passing the spot in the city of Barcelona where St. Ignatius had been so ill-used by some libertines, Claver's companion, himself a very holy young novice, stopped him for a moment, and said, "My brother, it was here that

our Father Ignatius was bruised by the blows of a club; yes, this is the spot." At these words Claver raised his eyes to heaven, became motionless, and so completely lost the use of his senses as to be unable to proceed for some time. It was never known what he saw, or what was then revealed to him; but it is well known that the impression thereof remained so deeply engraven on his mind and heart, that when he afterward mentioned the circumstance to some of his intimate friends, he seemed to be almost raised into ecstasy again. This one instance will enable us to judge what must have been his communications with God, and how great must have been the favors with which he was enriched.

After two years of theology, he again so earnestly renewed his petition to be sent to the Indies, that his provincial, Father De Villegas, fearing to oppose the will of God, consented to his request. It would be impossible to describe the joy of the young Jesuit on receiving his superior's letter. He read it over several times, kissed it, and kept it all his life, that he might often enjoy the same pleasure that had been afforded by its first perusal. After he had read it, he prostrated himself on the ground to return most grateful thanks to God for this honor and favor. In the fervor of his prayer he unreservedly offered his pains, his labors, his blood, in fine, his whole self, for the salvation of those souls that were to be confided to him. Then, unable to contain his joy, he sought out his friends, to inform them of his happiness, to receive their congratulations, and to beg the assistance of their prayers.

About seven years before this, a new province of the society had been formed in the kingdom of New Granada. To equal the public expectation and correspond with the intention of the pious benefactors who had contributed toward it, Father General Aquaviva, in 1609, ordered every one of the Spanish provinces to send thither one evangelical laborer of distinguished merit. Claver was chosen by the Province of Arragon, and in this single missionary, how much did it not contribute? With the exception of St. Francis Xavier, it may perhaps be said, that the society never sent a more illustrious minister to the Indies.

---

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### EMBARKS AT SEVILLE—VOYAGE.

HE was soon ordered to Seville, to embark thence for the Indies with other young Jesuits, and Father Mexia as their superior. On arriving at Seville, Father Mexia, who knew how difficult it would be to find bishops in the Indies, wished him to receive holy orders with the other young Jesuits destined for the missions, but he begged to be excused, not feeling himself capable or worthy of such an honor; and he did it so naturally, and with so much simplicity and candor, that his ordination was deferred. After a short delay at Seville they set sail in April, 1610. From that moment he so completely forgot all he left behind in Europe, that during the forty-four years he lived in the Indies, he was never heard to speak of, or ask what was



passing in Spain. The only things he seemed not to forget, were the virtues he had remarked in some religious, and to reproach himself for not having imitated them; the sermons he had heard, of which he said he still stood in need for his conversion; and the ceremonies that took place at the Beatification of his Father Ignatius, over which he rejoiced like a good son of such a father.

The voyage was long and tedious; but Claver was the ruling genius of the vessel and soon won the affection of all. He particularly charged himself with the care of all the sick, feeding them, preparing their remedies, cleansing them, and attending them night and day. He prepared them to receive the sacraments, and brought a confessor to them. He accepted a place at the Captain's table, but on condition that he might be allowed to gather what delicate food he needed for the sick. He was all to all. These attentions so completely gained their hearts, that he managed them as he pleased. At an appointed hour, he assembled the passengers and crew for catechetical instruction, and the recitation of the beads. No one would have ventured to utter an oath, or an indecent word in his presence; and to appease the most passionate, it was quite enough to threaten to tell Brother Claver.

---

## CHAPTER XIV.

### ARRIVAL AT CARTHAGENA—GOES TO SANTA FE.

**A**FTER a voyage of some months they happily landed at Carthagená. On their arrival, Father

Mexia, who duly appreciated the sanctity and great talents of the young missionary, wished to take him on to Peru, judging that province to stand most in need of such an efficient laborer; but Providence had appointed otherwise. Claver, afflicted and confounded at the esteem thus shown him, had recourse to God, and begged that he might not be removed from a country he had so long sighed after. And finally the provincial, reflecting that the new mission of Carthagena would require a subject of tried virtue, resolved to leave Claver there. The new missionary on landing kissed the ground which was afterward to be watered with his sweat and tears, then raising his eyes to heaven, he thanked God for conducting him to a land where he should have so many opportunities of laboring and suffering for His glory. However, he remained there at first, but a short time; for having two years more to complete his study of theology he was sent with some other young Jesuits to Santa Fe, distant about two hundred leagues from Carthagena. He suffered much during the journey, but the very obstacles he had to surmount were so much the more agreeable to him as they enabled him to satisfy his spirit of mortification. The sight of the Negroes he met on the road awakened those sentiments of tenderness which he ever after retained for them. Wherever they stopped for the night he used to collect these poor creatures round him; and, deeming himself incapable of any evangelical function, he would request one of the priests to teach them a little of the catechism. His heart was thus already attracted toward a people so despised by men, but who,

in the designs of God, were to be the chief objects of his zeal.

He found the college of Santa Fe very different from what he had expected; it had no fixed revenue, nor was there any school of theology open. His first two years there were spent in the domestic offices of the house; he was sacristan, porter, infirmarian, cook; in a word, "a jack at all trades." The more lowly and humiliating the employment, the more it was to his liking; and though his zeal made him wish to labor for the salvation of souls, his humility would have made him content to remain as he was for the rest of his life. When it was proposed that he should resume his theological studies, he wrote to his provincial, and begged as a favor to be received as a simple lay-brother; his entreaties were so earnest and reiterated, that the superior at length told him, that he was to be guided by obedience. Here we cannot but admire the conduct of God over His servants and His elect. The same spirit which led Claver to defer holy orders in Europe, led him to renounce them entirely in America; and if the holy Brother Alonso had not excited in his heart the desire of laboring in the Indies, his own humble opinion of himself would never have allowed him to harbor such a thought. He obeyed the vocation of Heaven, for God knew how to reconcile these opposite sentiments of zeal and humility, and He directed both to His own glory, and the sanctification of His servant. Being obliged therefore, to resume his course of studies, the condition of the new college and the small number of religious, made it necessary for Claver to take charge of several offices; in which he acquitted himself most

satisfactorily, whilst his brilliant success in theology fitted him for the most honorable posts. He completely realized the expectations that had been previously raised of him in Spain.

Father Anthony Augustin, who had been his first master of theology, was then his confessor. This holy man on whom distinction had been conferred in Europe, and particularly in Rome, went to end his days in the West Indies, where he died in eminent sanctity. He was overjoyed at meeting Claver there. The knowledge he had of his virtues made him extremely dear to him ; and his high opinion of the young Jesuit contributed to strengthen that already formed of him.

At the end of his theology he passed through a most rigorous examination, which he supposed was merely intended as a prelude to his receiving holy orders. When people expressed their admiration of his talent, he with great simplicity said, " Good Heavens ! is so much theology necessary in order to be able to receive ordination, and catechize a few poor negroes ? " When afterward told that his examination had been a process for his admission as a professed father—the most honorable amongst the Jesuits, and the only one which irrevocably binds a man to the order,—he could not help saying to those who congratulated him, " If I had known this, I either would not have answered at all, or I would have answered much worse than I did, for I am totally unworthy of this honor.

A new house of the Society had lately been established at Thonga. He was sent there to make his third year of noviciate, as is customary among the Jesuits, before they are admitted to the last vows. Before

beginning his missionary career his superiors were glad to give him time and means to recruit his health, already much impaired by study, sickness, and excessive austerities. They felt too how useful his example would be in forming the novices to virtue; and it may be asserted, that the presence of this holy man was not one of the least advantages conferred upon the house at Thonga. Whilst there he performed the offices of porter and sacristan to the edification of all. The piety and modesty of the novices delighted him, and this house was ever after so dear to him, that when dying he sent thither, as the most precious pledge of his affection, the little book given him by brother Rodriguez when he quitted Majorca. His expressions on that occasion give a vivid idea of his own humility. "I send it," said he, "to the noviciate, that the novices may profit by it, and that the novice-father may keep it carefully, as a treasure of which I myself have not known how to make good use. I entreat of those who read it to pray to God for a sinner, who having such a precious mine at his disposal, instead of drawing from it the pure gold of sanctity, has collected nothing but its rust."

---

## CHAPTER XV.

### IS ORDAINED PRIEST.

**A**FTER all these trials Father Claver was at length sent back to Carthagena, in November, 1615. For some time he was the companion of Father Nugnez in his apostolic labors; and notwithstanding his entreaties

and excuses he was ordained priest the year following, by the bishop of Carthagena. His only thought on receiving so high a dignity, was how to acquire its true spirit and fulfill its duties most exactly. Deeply penetrated with a sense of the great purity of heart exacted by so sacred a ministry—awful even to the angels themselves—he prepared for his first mass by a retreat of several days, by redoubling his prayers and penances, and by a general confession, made with abundance of tears, though his confessor scarcely found matter for absolution. He appeared at the altar like a seraph inflamed with love, with pure hands and a spotless heart; a source of joy to the angels and of edification to men. He was the first Jesuit to say his first mass at Carthagena. He chose for this a chapel of our blessed Lady, where particular veneration was shown to a miraculous statue of this heavenly Queen. To the end of his life he expressed his gratitude to her, for her godness in lending him an altar whereon to offer the Divine Sacrifice.

## BOOK II.

## CHAPTER I.

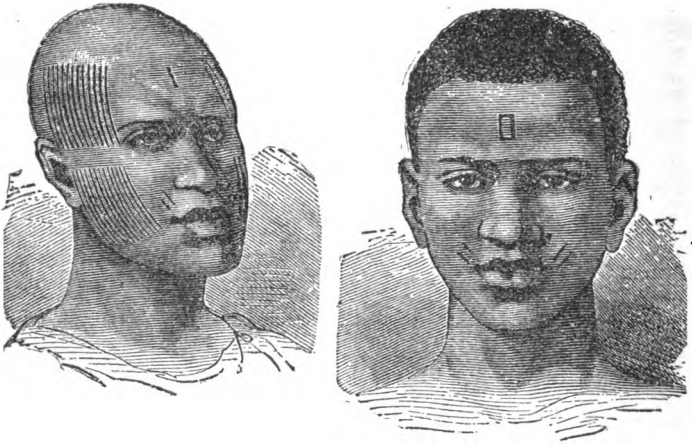
## CARTHAGENA—ACCOUNT OF THE NEGROES.

**A**T the time our Apostle's career began in Carthagena, that city was the Liverpool of South America. There was little beside a secure and commodious harbor to recommend it, the heats were so excessive, the rains so frequent, the air so unwholesome, contagious disorders so common, that nothing but cupidity or zeal could make a residence there endurable. The soil moreover was so barren, that most of the necessaries of life had to be conveyed thither from other countries; and as the neighboring seas were very tempestuous, the inhabitants were often in want of everything, though surrounded with treasures of gold and silver. All these united inconveniences had not intimidated the avarice of men. It was the general rendezvous where people from several nations repaired for traffic, especially from Mexico, Peru, Potosi, Quito, and the neighboring islands.

Vessels laden with Negroes were constantly arriving: it is they who did all the labor; they were employed in the mines and in all that was most painful. People there became rich only at the price of the sweat, and even of the blood of these poor creatures. They were







**Types of Negroes from Congo and Angola.**



**Types of Negroes from the Coasts of Guinea.**

(opp. p. 47)

brought by slave merchants from the coasts of Guinea, Angola, Congo and even from the heart of Africa. Originally purchased for about four crowns a head, they were resold for two hundred and sometimes more at Carthagena. Not less than ten or twelve thousand were annually imported. Being of different nations, their characters and language differed, hence the difficulty of training and instructing them. The Negroes of Guinea were the best formed, the blackest, the most courageous and robust ; but they were likewise the most savage, showed less reason than the others, combined with a stupid pride, which made them intractable. There were others from Mauritania, who, without having their good qualities, had all their vices and indocility. Those of Angola and Congo were the most numerous in Carthagena, and were the most mild and tractable ; they willingly embraced Christianity, and some amongst them were very fervent, but extremely ignorant. The other negroes came from the islands of St Thomas, Carabal, Arda, and Mina. The low price at which these poor creatures were sold, proved the contempt in which they were held ; they might be bought for four pieces of cow's hide, and were decidedly the most stupid and savage of all the Negroes.

It would be impossible to describe the miseries these poor slaves underwent in the course of their sea voyage. They were thrown one on another in the hold of the ship, without beds, clothing, and almost without food, loaded with chains, and plunged in their own filth. All this, added to the heat and darkness of the place, and the unwholesome diet, produced complaints, wounds, and ulcers, which increased their natural infec-

tion to such a degree, that they could scarcely endure themselves. Even cattle on board ship were not so ill used as were these miserable creatures; hence, many of them fell into despair and preferred death by starvation to their deplorable state. It often happened that when old age or infirmity made them unfit for work, they were cruelly abandoned, like beasts not worth caring for; but what was still more deplorable, their souls were not more cared for than their bodies. The merchants who sold, and the masters who purchased them, took no farther trouble than to order them to become Christians; and as fear and ignorance of what was exacted prevented them from resisting, advantage was taken of their silence, and they were baptized without precaution or instruction, not knowing what they were required to believe or practice. Baptism, therefore, was to the greater number a mere ceremony, of which they understood nothing; the consequence was, with the mark and character of a Christian, they retained their pagan morals and idolatrous superstitions, so that they themselves could scarcely say to what religion they belonged.

---

## CHAPTER II.

### THE JESUITS AT CARTHAGENA.

SUCH was the state of Carthagenæ and the character of its inhabitants when Father Claver arrived there. It was here that God opened to his zeal a career, in which he faithfully walked for more than thirty-nine years. On his return to the city he found

the establishment of the Jesuits very different from what it had been five years before. The fathers had been obliged to remove, to avoid the inconvenience caused by some new buildings of the neighborhood, which completely overlooked the interior of the college. The church was scarcely thirty feet long, so low and damp as to be usually full of mud; the house was so small, that although there were very few Jesuits, they were lodged two-and-two in very close rooms. On one side was the public slaughter-house, and on the other, a number of shops and drinking-houses; so that the noise, riot, and profane songs, usual in such places, incessantly disturbed the quiet and recollection of the religious. To add to their other inconveniences, they had no fixed revenue; they lived on alms; and God, to try His servants, often permitted them to be without even the necessaries of life. These united trials however sufficed to make the residence delightful to the new missionary. As soon as he was established there his first attention was to procure every possible help for the Negroes, amongst whom God had led him. He was well aware of all the difficulties he should meet, both from the rough indocile slaves, and from their harsh self-interested masters. He foresaw all the rebuffs, contradictions, and insults to which he should be exposed; but his zeal overcame every other consideration, and obstacles only served to increase his ardor. He could not see so many souls in danger of perishing without using all his endeavors to save them; and although his charity embraced the whole world, especially all the unfortunate, it is certain that the Negroes ever had the largest share of his tenderness and love.

He devoted himself entirely and for ever to their service. He began this laborious ministry under the guidance of Father Alonso de Sandoval. The reader will not regret the acquaintance of so holy a man, and one so intimately connected with Father Claver; to relate the heroic labors of the one, is to expose beforehand a part of what was afterwards accomplished by the other.

---

### CHAPTER III.

#### FATHER ALONSO DE SANDOVAL AND HIS METHOD WITH THE NEGROES.

**F**ATHER ALONSO DE SANDOVAL was of a family illustrious by birth and piety. His parents went to Lima in an important official capacity, and had him educated by the Jesuits there. At the end of his studies he was admitted into the society, and from that moment became distinguished for the most eminent virtues, especially for an insatiable desire of suffering for Jesus Christ. He was in time raised to the priesthood, although, in his humility, he desired only the office of lay-brother. He was appointed to the mission of Carthagena, recently established by the Jesuits. He quitted Cusco, where he had gone through his studies and his third year of noviceship, to return to Lima, whither he was called by his superiors to labor during Lent in the conversion of souls. He devoted himself chiefly to hearing the confessions of the poor, especially the Negroes, who came to him in crowds, and for which task God gave him most extraordinary talents. His su-

periors had intended to station him permanently in the capital of Peru, where he produced such great fruits ; but his zeal and love of suffering called him to Carthage, and accordingly he was sent there. He undertook this long, difficult, and dangerous journey on foot, taking nothing with him but his Breviary and a few papers of devotion. On arriving, in June 1605 he was delighted to find a house destitute of everything, excepting the opportunity of much laboring and suffering. Poverty within and persecution without constituted its most precious treasure and most solid support. Only three priests were there, and they were obliged to procure subsistence by begging through the streets. Father de Sandoval was appointed to this humiliating and fatiguing office, and during three years he daily passed from door to door with a wallet on his back. At length a brother, instructed in his school of modesty and edifying comportment, was able to relieve him. Being freed from this employment, he undertook to be the porter, together with the care of serving all the religious ; and he did this with the humility of a slave and the tenderness of a mother. He went himself to purchase the provisions, and prepared them with the greatest possible care. Whatever time remained from his domestic occupations he spent in hearing confessions, catechizing, and assisting his neighbor, so that he only changed one labor for another.

The arrival of some Caciques from Darien and Uraba, with presents to the governor and bishop of Carthage, gave the Father Provincial the idea of sending some of his religious thither, to cultivate those

idolatrous countries. At his own earnest solicitation Father de Sandoval was sent to this arduous mission; but meeting with no other success than much suffering and the constant danger of being devoured by those cannibals, he was recalled by his superiors to devote himself to other missions. His zeal was now recompensed in proportion to his labors; but he was soon after seized with a mortal sickness. As he was on the point of expiring, he was miraculously cured by St. Ignatius, to whom God had made known that He destined this excellent workman to labor for the salvation of the Negroes. Father de Sandoval never forgot that his health had been restored for this holy purpose; and he made a resolution of consecrating himself entirely to it. From that time he conceived a most tender love for the unfortunate slaves, and they were thenceforth the chief object of his missions in the environs of Carthagena. He treated them with gentleness, instructed them with zeal, consoled them in their labors, and assisted them tenderly in their maladies. Experience however taught him that all this was insufficient, and that the moment of their disembarkation at Carthagena was the time they most needed care. Being sent almost immediately to distant residences or to the mines, before it was ascertained whether they had been baptized or not, it often happened that some received baptism without instruction, whilst others received the other sacraments without having been baptized. To prevent these abuses, as soon as a slave vessel reached the port, the father and his interpreter hastened thither. His first care was for the sick, for the safety of their souls: he baptized some, heard the confession of others,

and as far as time allowed, prepared them for a Christian death.

It often seemed as if these unfortunate beings had merely awaited this moment of grace to die in peace. When the malady was not urgent, he consoled them, and fed them himself with some little delicacies he had brought with him for this purpose ; after which he undertook to regulate their consciences. As for those who were in health he took his leisure to prepare them for baptism. Day and night his dear slaves occupied him. Neither the severity of the seasons, fatigues, nor sickness, could stop him ; for he considered himself obliged in zeal and charity to be unsparing of a life which had been restored by a miracle. With the help of his interpreters he entered in his notebook the names of the Negroes according to their nationality, also the names of their masters, and places of residence. Every year he provided a little banquet for his interpreters, the better to secure their services, and for the masters of his slaves, that he might the more easily obtain access to the slaves themselves. He had also two other registers, where every nation was marked in order ; and when a Negro was baptized, his name was inscribed under that of his own country. Whenever therefore, he met with any of them, he had only to consult his book, and if they were unbaptized, he instructed them, and as he always carried some water in a flask in his pocket, he finished by conferring baptism. It is computed that in seven years he thus baptized more than thirty thousand.



## CHAPTER IV.

## FATHER CLAVER ASSOCIATED WITH DE SANDOVAL.

HIS great labors and success drew letters of congratulation from persons the most distinguished both in the church and in the state. Several great missionaries begged to be associated with him in his ministry—Father Claver had this happiness, and joined the apostolic man as soon as he received holy orders. But as Father de Sandoval was shortly afterward recalled to Lima, his disciple was left with the whole burden on himself. He acquitted himself so well of it, that Father de Sandoval on his return, judged him to be quite sufficient for Carthagená. He himself penetrated farther into the country, and traversed more than four hundred leagues, passing no habitation without leaving brilliant proofs of his zeal, and gathering fruits proportioned to the immensity of his labors. On his return to Carthagená he was employed in various offices; there was no sort of labor that he did not undertake; no virtue of which he was not a perfect model; he lost no opportunity of hearing confessions, catechizing, preaching, or being useful to any one and every one. At length, being exhausted by fatigue, covered with ulcers, overwhelmed with pain, he spent the last two years of his life stretched on a poor bed, abandoned by almost every one. For so few were the Jesuits at the college, and so overpowered were they with their du-

ties, that they were unable to properly care for him. When any one visited him, he was usually found lying on his back with his eyes raised toward heaven, his hands joined upon his breast, incessantly offering to God the double sacrifice of praise and of his life. In this state, so afflicting to nature, his only words were, "God be praised. Blessed be God!" and his only consolation was in being able to drag himself to the church, to say mass. He died on the morning of Christmas Day, 1652, in the seventy-sixth year of his age.

Such was the great master destined by God for Father Claver. What wonder then that in so holy a school, with such perfect dispositions, he should himself become so efficient a missionary? He was only one year under the guidance of Father de Sandoval; but in that short time, he was so attentive to his example and instructions, and so inflamed with his zeal and charity, that he abundantly received the double spirit of his master, whom he was soon able to surpass. It may perhaps be doubted, whether any evangelical workman, through the course of his apostolic career, ever made so perfect and generous a sacrifice. By change of country and climate ministers of the gospel, find at least new objects to animate and sustain them; the pleasure of the one may in some sort compensate for the rigor of the other; even a change is itself a relief to nature. But the climate to which Father Claver condemned himself, never lost any of its rigors; there was for him a constant succession of fresh labors and fresh sufferings, though always in the same place, and this for nearly forty years.

## CHAPTER V.

FATHER CLAVER'S CONDUCT TOWARD THE NEGROES  
ON THEIR ARRIVAL.

AS soon as a ship-load of negroes had entered the port he was immediately informed by the Governor himself or one of the chief officers. Everyone coveted this duty, for besides his promise of saying a number of masses for whoever should first inform him, they all knew what great pleasure such news brought to him. In fact, his eyes brightened, and his pale emaciated face assumed a hue of health quite unusual to it. After falling on his knees to thank God for bringing them safe to land, he inquired the language of the new slaves, sought out his interpreters, and hastened to the ship with provisions of biscuits, preserves, brandy, tobacco, lemons, and such other things as delighted those poor savages. The greater part of them supposed that the purpose in bringing them there was to use their fat as grease for the keel and sides of the ships, and their blood as dye for the sails. His first object was to remove these groundless terrors, by persuading them that this idea was an artifice of the devil, who sought their perdition; and that they had been brought to Carthagená to be freed from his slavery, and to be taught the path to heaven. He pointed out to them the happy condition of their own countrymen now at Carthagená, and finally assured them that he would

ever be their protector, advocate, master, and father. His look of tender compassion was even more effectual than his words: kindness shone in his every action, and was more eloquent than anything that his interpreters could say; there seemed to be a sympathy between his heart and the hearts of those poor creatures which even at first sight attached them to him. The distribution of his little refreshments completely gained them, and hence, when alluding to the subject, he often said, "We must speak to them with our hands before we try to speak to them with our lips." To be able to do this he usually went to one of his friends,—a very virtuous and charitable man,—to whom he would smilingly say, "A ship-load of negroes has just arrived, I must have a bait to catch them." This was easily understood, and all the provisions he needed were soon procured. When by his charity he had won them to himself, he strove to gain them to God. He first inquired how many had been born during the voyage, to baptize them; he next visited those who were dangerously ill, that he might prepare them either for baptism or confession, as the case might be. Many of them died immediately after receiving this grace, so that it seemed as if Divine Providence had preserved them to give His servant the consolation of saving them. Such favors animated him to redoubled exertion, persuaded that so great a happiness can never be too dearly bought. He caressed all the sick, one after another, cleansed their filth and wounds, fed them himself; and when taking leave he tenderly embraced each of the men leaving them as much surprised as delighted with a kindness which they had so little expected.

When the day of general disembarkation came he was punctual to the moment, and was there with his usual stock of provisions, and accompanied by some slaves from the same country. He gave them his hand to help them ashore, received the sick in his arms and placed them in carts which he had procured expressly for them. There was no one to whom he did not show affection, in so much, that all who witnessed it were struck with admiration; nor did he quit them till he had conducted them as it were in triumph to their lodgings. He felt more honored at entering Carthagena in such company, than formerly conquerors did when they triumphantly entered Rome. When they were safely lodged he visited each one of them, recommended them most earnestly to their masters, and promised to come soon again.

It was his wish to unite them all to God without delay, but his greatest difficulty was to find good interpreters. What obstacles had he not to vanquish! What persecutions had he not to undergo on this account! It cost much to pay them and to form them; but his courage accomplished the one and Providence took care of the other. Having obtained leave of his superiors to collect alms for this holy purpose, he went from door to door, appealing to the charity of the faithful; and God, who was interested in the salvation of these souls, inspired several pious persons to supply him abundantly with all that he required. These resources enabled him to obtain interpreters, to regale the poor and the sick, to redeem some slaves that were reduced to despair, and even to pay all the substitutes engaged in place of his interpreters so long as he employed

them. God having given him this desired success, he resumed his apostolic labors with renewed ardor. He proceeded in the following manner: having arranged with his interpreters the most convenient time and place to instruct his Negroes, he went to their lodgings, which were storehouses, rude and unfurnished, in fact, four bare walls. Although large enough to contain several hundred Negroes, their great numbers oblige them to be, as it were, piled one on another, with the ground only for their bed. The hot and empoisoned air exhaled from so many bodies already infectious of themselves, made it insupportable to be long amongst them, and there were few strangers who did not faint after even a short stay. But if the smallpox or some epidemic disease be added to their miseries, the poor Negroes themselves were unable to endure it.

---

## CHAPTER VI.

### HIS METHOD OF INSTRUCTION.

**B**EFORE visiting them, the zealous missionary implored the divine mercy by fervent prayers offered in presence of the blessed Sacrament, by additional austerities, and by such works of piety as the ardor of his charity suggested. He then set off with a staff in his hand, of which the upper part formed a cross, a bronze crucifix upon his breast, and a kind of saddle bag upon his shoulder, one side of which contained stole, surplice, the holy oils, medals and rosaries: the other, tonics,

scented water, biscuits, and delicacies for the sick. Although so heavily laden he walked on with such courage and agility, that his companion could scarcely keep pace with him. On his arrival he proceeded to the quarters of the sick, and began by washing their faces with scented water, to diminish the infection, giving them a little wine or brandy to strengthen them. He regaled them with biscuits and preserves, and then administered such sacraments as they were in a condition to receive. Never did he leave them till they were as much consoled as delighted with his goodness. He then repaired to those who were in health, and collecting them in some spacious place, he erected an altar on which he placed pictures suited to give those uncultivated minds some idea of the mysteries of religion. The most conspicuous of these was a very striking picture of Christ upon the cross. Streams of blood flowed from each wound into a precious vase; a priest collected it with reverence to baptize a Negro, who was kneeling to receive this grace. Popes, cardinals, kings, and princes, assisted at the ceremony, joyfully adoring the mercy of God our Saviour, who thus shed His blood for the whole world. On one side of the picture several Negroes were represented very richly adorned and shining with glory; these were such as had been already baptized, whilst those who had refused this blessing, appeared on the other side, all deformed and surrounded by hideous monsters, whose open jaws were ready to devour them. This picture, so consoling, yet so terrible, taught these poor creatures to value a benefit, honored even by the powers of this world, and to dread the misfortunes destined to those who will not profit by the mercy offered

them. It excited the desire to avoid sin by virtue of that divine blood joined to the water of the sacrament; and above all, to love that God who had suffered so much for such miserable beings. Paintings of this sort, seconded by a few short lively sentences prompted by zeal, are often more efficacious than the most eloquent discourses. Matters being so far arranged, he himself placed seats for his interpreters; and that the Negroes might be able to hear the word of God at their ease, he fetched benches, boards, and matting, which he carefully placed round the altar. All this he did so cheerfully, that the poor slaves knew not how to express their gratitude. He placed the men on one side, and the women on the other; he attended to everything, and seemed to have nothing else to do there but to be the slave of the slaves themselves. If amongst them he perceived any, the sight or infection of whose ulcers made them disagreeable to the rest, he would throw his cloak over them; indeed, he frequently made a cushion of it for the infirm, fearing they were not comfortably seated.

Before he began his catechetical instruction, he took each negro and inquired of him whether he had been baptized, doing it in a manner that the others should not hear the answers. Those who gave sufficient proof of their baptism he separated from the others, and to distinguish them, he placed around their necks a leaden medal on which were engraved the holy names of Jesus and Mary. He desired them to wear it all their lives, both as a mark of the grace they had received, and as a preservative against the dangers to which they would be exposed. He gave those whose answers left him in



doubt as to their baptism a particular kind of medal by which he might recognize them, and baptize them conditionally some other day. After these preliminaries he at length began his instructions in the following manner. Holding his staff, which was in the form of a cross, he knelt down in the midst of the Negroes and prayed for some time, his face burning with the fire of the Holy Spirit. He then, with a loud tone, and a tenderness of manner which drew tears from the hardest hearts, made the sign of the cross, repeating each word and action two or three times, in order that all might be able to follow him. After this he went round with his interpreters, desiring each Negro to make the sign of the cross. He praised those who recollected how to do it, and gently reproved those who did not; but never did he pass to a second until the first had perfectly learned it. This was as yet but a slight specimen of his labors.

He devoutly pursued the same plan in explaining the principal mysteries of the faith, selecting comparisons suited to the uncultivated intellects of his hearers. Moreover he not only inculcated what they were to believe, but taught them how to practice it. The exposition of each mystery was followed by an act of faith, which he was careful to impress strongly on their minds. He excited their hope by the prospect of the happiness and glory which the mercy and the blood of God Himself has prepared for Christians. This consideration naturally excited reiterated acts of love toward so good and great a Master who deigned to draw them out of their darkness into light. He had delivered them from damnation which they had so often



**St. Peter Claver Catechising the Negroes.**

(pp. 62)



deserved, and offered them an eternity of felicity, if they should observe His law. As in Father Claver all these various acts sprung from a heart full of faith, hope, and love, he communicated the fire which inflamed him to all those who heard him, and he availed himself of these good dispositions, to excite in them a sincere detestation of their infidelity, and an ardent desire of receiving baptism.

To make them better understand the efficacy of the sacrament, he would say, "My children, we must be like the serpent, which throws off its old skin and receives another more beautiful and brilliant." He would then draw his nails across his hand as if he would tear off the skin. The poor slaves, watchful of his slightest motions, did the same, to show him that they understood his meaning, and that they would cast off their old superstitions in order to be renovated in the saving waters of baptism. During these instructions he sometimes stood, sometimes knelt, or occasionally leaned against some old useless barrel, whilst in the meantime his interpreters and the Negroes were comfortably seated on the benches which he himself had prepared for them. It often happened that the slave-masters, wishing to witness this edifying ceremony, were surprised at the humility of the holy man, and provoked at what they thought want of respect in their Negroes. They would attempt to punish this insolence, but the father instantly ran to the assistance of the slaves earnestly trying to explain to the masters that the slaves were in the right, because everything there was done for them, whilst he was but a mere cypher. In effect, as he esteemed himself far beneath

them, it is not surprising that he sought their comfort in preference to his own.

---

## CHAPTER VII.

### ADMINISTERING BAPTISM.

WHEN he thought them sufficiently instructed, he appointed a day for the administration of baptism. He arranged them in tens, giving the same name to each ten that they might better remember it. He baptized the children first, then the men and boys, and lastly the women and girls. But before beginning the ceremony, he knelt down and prayed fervently for those poor souls redeemed by the blood of God, to whom he presented them all, conjuring Him to purify them. This being done he arose, his face inflamed like a seraph's, and approached those to be baptized, accompanied by an interpreter and a Christian Negro and Negress, to act as god-father and god-mother. The neophyte knelt down with his hands joined upon his breast, and the father showing him the baptismal water in a silver vase, said, "Behold this saving water, which in virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, washes and purifies the soul, rendering it brilliant as the sun. Behold the fountain of grace which makes men, children of God, and gives them a right to the kingdom of His glory. To obtain this favor we must repent of our sins, renounce the devil and the maxims of the world. Will you not do this with all your heart? Do you

believe in Jesus Christ? Will you enter His Church and receive baptism?" He repeated these words two or three times; and when the Negro had answered properly, he was immediately baptized. After this, in order to distinguish him from those not baptized, he put round his neck a medal bearing the names of Jesus and Mary. Whilst thus employed, were he informed that any one of the sick was in danger, he hastened immediately to him. It is impossible to say how many souls he snatched from the devil by this prompt and timely succor; for many died instantly after baptism. On such occasions he immediately knelt down to thank God for deigning to employ him in the salvation of those unfortunates who without this grace would have been irretrievably lost.

When the ceremony of baptism was over, he made a pathetic exhortation to the newly-baptized, reminding them of the great benefit they had just received, and of the obligations they had contracted. He then exhorted them to observe faithfully the law of Jesus Christ, whose members they had become, and to die rather than violate it by a single sin; adding, that if unfortunately they should sin, they would find a salutary remedy, a secure and ever-open resource, in contrition and confession. After this he explained to them the way in which Christians should receive the sacrament of penance. To strike them the more forcibly, to give them a greater horror of sin, and to incite them more efficaciously to the practice of virtue, he drew a picture to them, on the one hand, of a lost soul, with the eternal punishments which God has prepared for sinners, and on the other a beautified soul, resplendent

in glory; "Behold," he would say to them, "what you will one day be, if you are faithful in preserving the grace of baptism." All these exercises finished with a fervent act of contrition and love of God. Taking the crucifix which he wore upon his breast, he held it up so that all might see it, and exclaimed, "Behold how our sins have treated our great God and loving Father. See to what a plight He is reduced by our exceeding malice and His boundless love for us! Yes, it is for us that He died upon this cross;—for us that He was plunged in this abyss of ignominy and suffering!" These words were accompanied with such deep sighs and bitter tears, that the poor savages replied with sobs and cries that would have moved the hardest hearts. Finding them in the dispositions he wished, he taught them to say and repeat often these beautiful words: "O Jesus Christ, only Son of God, Thou art my Father, my Mother, my Treasure, my only Good! I love Thee with all my heart, and I am grieved beyond measure that I have offended Thee: yes, I love Thee with all my strength and with all my soul." Then, at length, looking upon them as true children of God, purified in the blood of the Lamb, he tenderly embraced them all. He showed a heart so affectionate, and a countenance so loving and full of joy, that these poor slaves, delighted with his goodness, and animated by that new spirit which baptism gives, knew not what return to make for so much love. In order to show their consolation and joy, they raised their eyes to heaven, clapped their hands, and threw themselves on their knees at his feet, that they might kiss at least the border of his cassock. Each one uttered redoubled shouts of glad-

ness, and in his own language and manner overwhelmed the father with a thousand blessings. Wherever they met him afterward, they always showed the same demonstrations of love and respect, and prostrating themselves on the ground called him their master, their protector, their father; never thinking that they did enough to express their gratitude. This labor alone would have sufficed to occupy several missionaries; yet to Father Claver it was not the labor of every year, but of every week, and almost of every day. At the arrival of each fresh cargo of Negroes he was obliged to recommence the same exercises, with the same care and renewed trouble; so that he often had but short intervals to devote to other labors.

---

## CHAPTER VIII.

### DIFFICULTIES IN FORMING HIS NEOPHYTES TO VIRTUE.

HE had the greatest difficulty with the Negroes from the coasts of Guinea, and it cost him much to prepare them for baptism, and engage them to embrace and practice Christianity. They were naturally proud and unyielding, and besides this were attached to a multitude of Mahometan superstitions. For them he redoubled his zeal and charity. He acted like a tender father, yielding to all their caprices, and bearing everything at their hands, and at length his prayers, patience, and meekness triumphed, where the severity of their masters failed. The holy missionary was ever watchful



over all that concerned his dear flock. Besides the Negroes, marked in the public registers, he knew that to avoid paying government duty, pilots and sailors often landed great numbers on the neighboring coasts, and then had them secretly conveyed to Carthage. They were carefully concealed and sold to merchants, who sent them to work in their sugar-plantations, where they passed for Christians, though they had never been baptized. His zeal contrived to surmount all the obstacles thus raised by cupidity. He sent to all the houses of the people connected with the sea, trusty interpreters, who under pretext of relationship or acquaintance, asked to see the newly arrived Negroes. The poor slaves, were delighted to see one of their friends. Then the interpreters inquired of each one in private whether he had been baptized. They instructed those who had not been baptized, and taught them what was necessary to be believed and practiced, in order to obtain this grace, and become thereby children of God. When the catechists thought them sufficiently disposed, they informed Father Claver, who immediately hastened thither. Not to exasperate their masters, he promised never to divulge their violation of the law, nor to do anything contrary to their interests. The masters, therefore, relying on his integrity, and touched by his kindness, willingly permitted him to instruct and baptize their slaves, and to exercise freely all his ministerial functions.

He was not satisfied with making Christians of his Negroes, he would have them good and virtuous Christians. But what additional trouble did not this occasion him! To win their confidence more and more,

and to make them docile to his advice, he spared himself in nothing. He daily visited them in their huts, consoled them in their afflictions, assisted them in their necessities, succored them in sickness, carried them remedies, or whatever he thought they liked: night and day he was occupied about them. He often spent whole hours in the market-place collecting alms; and after obtaining from the venders different sorts of provisions he packed them in a basket, and carried them on his back to his dear Negroes. Before distributing them he explained the commandments of God and the Church, taught them how to pray, hear mass, approach the sacraments of penance and the eucharist, and perform all their actions holily. He reminded them again of the recompense promised to the just, and of the terrible chastisements reserved for impenitent sinners; and he always concluded his visits by causing them to make acts of contrition and of the love of God. On festivals he went himself to bring them to mass, conducting them to the church of the college, where he had previously prepared mats and benches, to protect them from the damp. If he had too many confessions to be able to go himself, he sent some zealous Negroes, who brought them in crowds.

The sight of all these slaves was extremely annoying to the Spaniards, especially the ladies, who could not endure the scent of these assembled Negroes, and loudly complained of it. But Father Claver modestly answered, that these poor people were Christians, and were obliged to comply with the precept of the Church; and that as he was their pastor and their chaplain, it belonged to him to say mass for them, and to take care

that they heard it. At length people were obliged to yield to his zeal. After mass he had refreshments given to the aged and infirm, who were then conducted home by sure and charitable guides. Whilst he thus sacrificed himself for them, he omitted nothing to keep them within the bounds of duty, and to prevent them from forgetting their obligations. He went about wherever he thought they could be met. If he found any one swerving from the maxims of Christian propriety, he assumed a tone of authority which they could not resist. He never met any one without giving him some salutary counsels suited to his age, condition, and wants. To such as were young, he said, "Take care, do not rely upon your youth, seeds are often destroyed in the earth, nor do blossoms always produce fruit." To others of mature age, he said, "Recollect, the house is already old, and threatens ruin, confess whilst you have still time and opportunity." If he met with some libertine more intractable than the rest, he would say, "God counts your sins, and the next that you commit may perhaps be the last." These admonitions were usually effectual; fear of God's chastisements sufficed to maintain in virtue or withdraw from vice many of those savages who had been till then insensible to everything else. Moreover, the authority he had gained over their minds, and their affection for him, made them obey without reply or difficulty; the mere sight of him would check the most unruly, and even the vicious when they met him, knelt down to ask his blessing.

## CHAPTER IX.

## HIS VIGILANCE TO CORRECT.

THE slaves had a strong passion for dancing. So long as the father saw nothing in it against propriety or moderation, he allowed it, being persuaded that people so perpetually overwhelmed with labor, need some innocent amusement. But at the least symptom of indelicacy he hastened amongst them with animated look, his countenance on fire, a crucifix in one hand, and a discipline in the other, with which he struck both dancers and musicians. He collected the abandoned instruments, trophies wrested from the devil, and confided them to the care of some zealous Christian, with an order not to restore them till the owners had bestowed some alms on the poor in the leper's hospital. He could not bear to see them loitering in the streets, wasting their time and indulging in useless gossip. His appearance was enough to scatter them to their homes. If he found a Negro speaking too freely with a saleswoman in the market, he always gave them a reprimand, and sent the slave home to his master; and sometimes the woman also abandoned her stall, and then he entrusted it to some neighbor on condition that she was to return it only on the payment of a trifling alms, or some other work or piety. One of his chief cares was to prevent servile work on festivals. If in consequence they were in real want, he procured

alms for their subsistence, saying, as he gave it them, "Never fear that fidelity to God will make you lose your bread." Nor was he less exact in making them observe all the fasts of the Church, and in admonishing them to spend holily the seasons of Advent and Lent. During these times he absolutely forbade dances and games, strongly representing to them that these were periods set apart to weep for their sins, to punish illicit pleasures by the privation of such as were lawful, and that Christians could not without shame and ingratitude employ themselves in amusements at the time that God had suffered for them.

His zeal was particularly directed against drunkards and blasphemers. If he heard that any one had yielded to excess in these matters, after a severe reprimand, he made the person lick the ground with his tongue; and then to humble him more before all the rest, he placed his foot lightly on the offender's neck, saying, "Who art thou, miserable creature! that darest thus attack heaven, and outrage the divine Majesty?" On going away he left directions to be informed whether the delinquent amended or not, and he never rested until he had obtained from him what he sought. With regard to immoral connections, when every other remedy had failed, he insisted on the marriage of the parties. And if their masters objected, he boldly told them, that faults committed after marriage would be imputed to the Negroes themselves, whilst the masters would be held responsible by God for such sins as were occasioned by refusing to allow their marriage: that moreover, their dominion did not extend over the soul; and that

whatever their rights might be, they could not supersede divine and natural law.

One abuse which cost him most trouble was a sort of festival called the Tears of the Dead. At an appointed time, men and women met in the night to weep for all their dead connections. Many superstitious ceremonies took place; intoxications and other disorders prevailed. His zeal could not behold without indignation such excesses, nor would he rest till the whole affair was abolished. He had even recourse to the civil authorities for this purpose, and he obtained from the magistrates an order forbidding any kind of intoxicating liquor to be taken or sold there.

---

## CHAPTER X.

### HIS TENDER CHARITY TOWARD THE NEGROES.

**I**N proportion as he exerted his zeal and severity to check sin amongst his Negroes, so did he show gentleness, tenderness, and charity in everything else. If he met with any who were in dread of being punished by their masters for negligence in the purchase or sale of the goods entrusted to them, he either went to ask pardon for them, or if refused by their masters, he begged everywhere alms to indemnify them himself for their losses. When he learned that his poor Negroes were too cruelly treated, his heart was torn with sorrow; he hastened to the masters, sparing no remonstrance or entreaty to awaken their compassion. In fine, he undertook to re-conduct home those who from fear of

punishment had fled away, soliciting pardon for them, promising every satisfaction, and willingly offering himself as bail for them. A Negress exasperated by the harsh treatment of her mistress, resolved to run away and hide herself in the mountains, but would not set off till she had asked Father Claver's blessing. The holy man did all he could to calm her, representing to her the madness of thus exposing herself to eternal torments for the sake of obtaining a slight alleviation of transitory sufferings. He gained such complete ascendancy over her, that he brought her back to her home; and then on her behalf he spoke so effectually to her mistress, that the poor slave was never exposed again to a similar temptation.

He was particularly attentive to such as were in prison loaded with chains. He often visited them, and knowing how much they were neglected, he was careful to bring them tobacco, and other such little comforts. He spent hours with them, trying to soothe their sufferings. To make them sensible to their value, he told them with a sweetness that moved the most obdurate that whatever they suffered was the effect of God's mercy, who, to spare them the eternal torments they had so often deserved, permitted this temporary severity on the part of their masters, and that for himself he would willingly share their sufferings, and if it were possible remain in prison with them to console them. By these tender and sympathetic discourses, he saved many from despair, to which they were on the point of yielding. In order to save these slaves from desperation, he induced their masters to regulate the punishment according to the offence, and promised, in

the name of the slaves, better conduct in future. The effect was magical. They strived to their utmost to make good the promise of their father.

---

## CHAPTER XI.

### HIS LABORS IN THE CONFESSIONAL.

ALL the pains and trouble of the holy man to instruct and baptize the Negroes, was nothing compared to what he did to teach them how to approach the sacrament of penance properly. It was here that he was able to satisfy to the full his zeal and mortification. The Jesuits' church was small, very damp, excessively hot, and swarming with mosquitoes, attracted by its vicinity to the sea. Father Claver's confessional was close to the door, exposed to a broiling sun till midday. He entered it as soon as the first mass began, and remained there till he had heard the confessions of all who presented themselves. On the approach of any great festival, or particular indulgence, he went through the city, saying to those he met, "Such-a-day will be the feast of our Lord, or of our Blessed Lady; there is an indulgence to be gained; we must think of cleaning the house, and purifying the heart." On these days he entered the confessional at three o'clock in the morning, and remained there till called away to say the last mass. So long as there were any Negroes for confession, he would hear no others; but after them, he received the poor and the children of the charity schools. If, as it often happened, persons of rank mingled in the



crowd, he gently sought to send them elsewhere, telling the men they could easily find other confessors; and giving the ladies to understand that his confessional, suited only to poor Negresses, was too narrow for the compass of their gowns. There were many, however, who would not be thus repulsed. Concern for their salvation, and confidence in so holy a director, led them to surmount all obstacles; though to obtain the desired favor they were obliged to wait till all the Negroes had finished.

## BOOK III.

## CHAPTER I.

## HIS LAST VOWS.

IN the midst of all these occupations, arising from the the painful career which his zeal and charity had opened to him, toward the end of the year 1622, he was notified to prepare the last vows of Professed Father. As this degree presupposes great learning and virtue in those of the society who are judged worthy of it, he was deeply afflicted thereby, because he saw nothing of this sort in himself. He accepted it only on condition that he would be allowed to consecrate himself for ever to the service of the Negroes. His profession began in this manner: "Love, Jesus, Mary, Ignatius, Peter, my Alonso, and all ye patrons of my dear Negroes, listen to me!" He then pronounced the vows of the Professed Fathers, which he thus signed, "*Peter the slave of the Negroes for ever.*" After his first vows he looked upon himself as the slave of God; but, after the second, he would for His sake become the slave of the slaves themselves. He knew that the more he loved those unfortunate beings, the more should he testify his love for his Lord, by loving Him in that which is least lovable to man. Hence from that time,

they constituted his best delight. It was his pleasure to bury amidst poor Negroes those natural talents which would have drawn public admiration, either in schools, or in the pulpit. Thenceforward, his greatest wisdom was to despise that which he had acquired by long study, and to affect the knowledge of nothing, but what was necessary to the worthy performance of his humble ministry. To render every possible service to these coarse, uncultivated creatures, afforded him at once joy in his trials, consolation in his afflictions, and support in his labors. In a word, we may truly say, that the tenderness of a mother for her cherished babe, could not equal that of this holy missionary for his dear slaves. It was in these dispositions that he first entered the path traced out for him by Providence:—and dispositions, daily rendered more perfect and sublime persevered in even until death.

---

## CHAPTER II.

### HIS LABORS DURING LENT.

**H**OWEVER excessive may appear the labors already described, they but served as a prelude to those which overwhelmed him during Lent; of which the following may give some idea. He took care to have the church floor covered with boards which he had scrubbed frequently in order to protect the Negroes from the damp. At the back of his confessional he hung up a quantity of beads, disciplines, and hair-cloths, which he distributed from the first day. Oppo-

site to it was a little table, on which was a book of pictures, representing the mysteries of our Saviour's life and passion: above was seen a picture of a lost soul amid the flames of hell, in order that this sight might inspire his penitents with a greater horror of sin, and a more lively contrition. He did not forget the aged and infirm for whom he had always some little luxuries. These preparations being completed, he entered his confessional before daybreak, and spent eight whole hours there. At two in the afternoon, he returned to hear the confessions of the women. Before he began confessions he gave a short explanation of the gospel of the day, finishing with acts of contrition, uttered with so much tenderness and devotion as to draw tears from the eyes of all. Thus they were prepared for the sacrament of penance, which they approached with a piety and fervor that might have shamed the Spanish Catholics.

The fatigue of these labors, aggravated by the heat, the stings of the mosquitoes, and the hair-shirt which he wore, often made him sink from exhaustion. The only remedy he would then use, was to wipe his face with a linen steeped in wine. This weakness sometimes occasioned a complete fainting-fit, and then his fellow religious who happened to be in the church were obliged to carry him away, and reproach him for his excessive mortifications. On retiring to his room he refreshed himself after his labors by taking a severe discipline, and by two or three hours of mental prayer. In this holy exercise the vigor of his soul seemed to renew the strength of his exhausted body; and if sometimes, he felt overpowered with fatigue, he was so closely united

to God that he courageously surmounted it. On the Sundays of Lent he assembled the Negroes and mulattoes by ringing a little hand-bell, and conducted them in procession to the public square, singing prayers and canticles. He there taught them the Christian doctrine, and made a touching discourse, which he ended with an act of contrition. He next led them to the church, where he immediately entered his confessional to reap the fruit of his instructions. After their thanksgiving, he knelt at the altar and gave them a breakfast and some little delicacies.

From Passion-Sunday his discourses were entirely devoted to the sufferings of our Blessed Saviour. Opposite the altar of our Blessed Lady, he placed pictures representing the dolorous mysteries of our Lord's life, and as the Negroes came in he made them look at these pictures, in order to excite them before their confession to a more lively sorrow for those sins, which had cost Jesus Christ so much. On Maundy-Thursday, he displayed a picture of the same Saviour washing the feet of his apostles, hoping by this moving sight to teach his Negroes humility, obedience, and fraternal love. Confessions and exhortations succeeded each other almost without intermission, and during the two weeks of Easter so continual was his labor, that several other missionaries together could scarcely have accomplished what he did. Credible persons who observed him have declared, that during one Lent he confessed more than five thousand Negroes. Hence we may form some idea of the extent of his labors, especially if we consider the time and trouble it must have cost him to prepare so many ignorant beings for the due reception

of the sacrament. He often met with self-interested masters, who without reflecting that the better christians their slaves were, the more docile, laborious, and faithful they became, complained only of the lost time ; but this never checked the zeal of the Saint. Others, more reasonable, sometimes brought him little presents, in testimony of their gratitude ; but he judged himself wholly unworthy of them, and frankly said to the donors, "Take them to your parish priest ; he has much more trouble than I have, and deserves them far more than I do." He always thought that he did nothing, and that others did much : he even looked upon himself as one utterly useless, who ate his bread without earning it, and who was maintained only out of mere charity.

---

### CHAPTER III.

#### HIS CARE FOR THE OLD AND FEEBLE AND FOR THOSE IN SICKNESS.

**A**FTER the Easter festivals, he was less occupied in his confessional, and then he went about the town in search of the sick who had been unable to comply with the precept of the Church. His zeal made him piously curious ; he penetrated into the remotest corners, the most obscure huts, and even into old stables, to see whether any aged or decrepid Negro might be there, for he well knew that these unfortunate creatures were sometimes abandoned when they became unfit for labor. Besides many of them had been long at Carthage, and yet had not been baptized. They would

have thought themselves dishonored by receiving baptism at their advanced age, and therefore contented themselves with practicing a few exterior duties of Christianity. He spared no pains to withdraw them from their danger. God often gave him special inspirations in this matter, and not unfrequently, when least expected, he met, as if by accident, some of these living skeletons, who seemed to be forgotten by death, and who only awaited the coming of the holy missionary to be baptized and die. There was in the city a Negress more than a hundred years of age, who had long passed herself off as a Christian. The father called on her, intending to hear her confession; but before beginning, he asked her, as if by inspiration, whether she had been baptized? Not daring to tell a lie, she owned that she had not, and added, moreover, that on the previous night Jesus Christ had appeared to her on the cross, accompanied by His Holy Mother, and had severely reproached her for her negligence. The father immediately instructed and baptized her, and as she died a few moments after, he had the consolation of sending her to heaven.

When they were broken by age he knew the worst ought always to be looked for, so he regularly went his rounds in this manner twice a year; always repeating on these occasions his familiar remark, "You see the house is old and tottering, and will fall when you least expect; make use of the present opportunity, which may perhaps be the last." His prediction was but too often verified to the misfortune of those who rejected his charitable admonition.

During the rest of the year, when not engaged in

the missions, of which we shall speak hereafter, one of his chief occupations was to assist the sick Negroes. He kept an exact list of them, and commissioned trusty persons to give him timely notice if they were in danger. For the good of those poor souls, and for the consolation of His faithful minister, who was sensibly afflicted if any of them died without help, God often gave him special light on this subject. To be always secure of companions for these occasions, he used to help the brothers in all that he was able, even doing the greater part of their work, that they might have leisure to accompany him if needed. Neither difficult roads nor inclement weather could deter him. This latter circumstance was somewhat remarkable; for whilst he was studying at Santa Fè de Bogota, the heat of the sun would make him ill, nor could he even cross the court without screening his head from the intensity of its rays; yet in his forty years at Carthagena, he was constantly exposed to the greatest heats, without experiencing the least inconvenience. Nothing seemed to fatigue him. During his visits around the city he was obliged to change his companions three or four times in one afternoon; but on returning home, he desired the porter, to let him know at any hour of the night if the sick wanted him; saying, "They who work hard require rest; as for me who do nothing, I require none." His room was immediately over the gate; and as he never undressed, but spent the greater part of the night in prayer, he hastened down-stairs at the first sound of the bell. Such continual labors, courageously sustained for so many years, certainly afford one of the most striking proofs of his



great charity. His care was not limited to his Negroes in their sickness; he became the physician of their bodies as well as of their souls; his room was like a shop, open to all the sick, and the numbers who applied for relief would have furnished full occupation to any one. He made ample provision of whatever could gratify the sick poor, and when he went to see them he always carried a bag well stocked with remedies, and such little luxuries as he knew they liked. The hospital appropriated to the blind and crippled Negroesses attracted his chief attention, and however long their infirmities might continue, his charity never grew faint. During three years, he repeatedly visited and supplied all the necessities of a poor old Negress; he did the same for another during ten years. One day he heard that an aged and infirm Negro had been abandoned in a miserable hut outside the town walls. He cared for him until his death, fourteen years afterward. Often would he send charitable persons to visit him, and he himself would go from door to door begging alms, and recommending him to the care of the neighbors. Once a week he carried his alms to the poor man, swept his cabin, made his bed, and lavished on him all possible marks of tenderness and love.

God was pleased to sustain and recompense the zeal of His servant by signal favors, which remunerated him for all his trouble. As we have before remarked, many of these poor slaves seemed only to wait the arrival of their charitable father to die happily, as happened to two Negroes belonging to two Spanish captains. They were insensible and at the point of death, when the father arrived. He began to pray, and they

soon revived; he baptized them, and a moment afterward he had the consolation of seeing them die, clothed with the robe of innocence. The same grace was conferred on a pagan Negress who was abandoned and dying without help in a wretched cabin. The holy man entered as if by accident, and found her without motion, without pulse, and quite cold. In this extremity he addressed himself to our Lord: consciousness returned to the sick woman; he instructed and baptized her, when she immediately expired. In the house of a Spanish lady there was a Negro who passed for a Christian. After a few days' illness, he was reduced to extremity. Father Claver was called to him, and found him already in his agony; he began to pray for him, upon which his reason was restored, and he owned that he had never received baptism. He received the sacrament and expired.

---

## CHAPTER IV.

### SUPERNATURAL LIGHTS.

IT would be endless to attempt to relate all the wonders performed by Almighty God for the consolation of the holy missionary, and the salvation of his dear slaves. Two others, however, which are very remarkable, must not be omitted. After spending a whole afternoon visiting the sick, he was returning home exhausted and weary, when he suddenly stopped, and with a deep sigh said to his companion, "Brother, let us enter this house, we shall not be detained long." He entered, and found some poor women, who thought

they beheld an angel from Heaven. "Where is the sick woman?" he eagerly inquired; they, astonished at the question, led him to a little back-room, where he found a dying woman; he spoke to her, heard her confession, gave her absolution, and saw her calmly expire. This good brother afterward declared on oath, that the father, guided by the same interior spirit, had assisted so many others in similar circumstances, that he could not enumerate them. Passing one day along a street, he observed a Negress seated quietly at the door. He immediately asked her mistress to see that she made her confession without delay. "But, father," replied the lady in surprise, "why such haste? she is in good health." "No matter," said the holy man, "let her confess, otherwise both she and you will have reason to repent it." His advice was followed, the slave made her confession, and died that same day.

If Almighty God, to furnish new causes of labor to his servant, thus enlightened him with regard to the dangers of some, He would also recompense his charity by revealing to him the happiness of others. He had induced a virtuous Negress to shelter and take care of another Negress, who was paralyzed and covered with wounds. One day when he went as usual to hear her confession, and give her some little delicacies, the charitable hostess told him in a tone of affliction, that Ursula, the sick woman, was at the point of death. "No, no," answered the father, "she has still four days to live; she will not die till Saturday." On that day he said mass for her, and then went to prepare her for death. After spending sometime in prayer, he said confidently to the hostess, "Be consoled, God loves

Ursula; she will die to-day, but will only be three hours in purgatory: when she is in the presence of God let her remember to pray for me and for you, who have been as a mother to her." It was as he had predicted, she died at mid-day, and the accomplishment of one part of the prophecy gave every reason to believe the other. Here we may observe, how well the holy missionary could unite the most signal favors of God with the most profound humility. Confused at having allowed this secret to escape him, he humbled himself by begging her prayers whose happiness he was announcing. Going another day to hear the confession of a young person, he was informed that she had just expired; he was exceedingly grieved not to have assisted her in her last moments. He knelt down by the side of the corpse, then suddenly rising, he said with a composed countenance, "the deceased deserves our envy rather than our tears; this soul is condemned to purgatory for twenty-four hours only, let us strive by the fervor of our prayers to abridge her term of suffering." Having uttered these few words, he hastily withdrew to avoid being obliged to say more.

---

## CHAPTER V.

### MIRACLES.

TO a man thus called to the labor and to the success of the apostleship, it is not surprising that the gift of light should be sustained by the gift of miracles. The number he performed in favor of his slaves was so great, that a few only can be specified. One day he

was told that a Negress was at the point of death, being unable to give birth to an infant. He immediately hastened to her, threw his cloak over her, gave her a few drops of some perfumed water, and left her perfectly well. This miracle, of which no one doubted, led all the slaves that were still pagans, to wish to embrace a religion in which such wonders were accomplished. Once whilst he was catechizing, he heard that a non-Catholic Negro was dangerously ill; he hastened to the quarters, but as the slave was delirious and beyond recovery, the master tried to prevent the saint's entrance. Confiding in God, he entered, and after a few hours, the sick man became conscious, asked and received baptism, and arose perfectly restored to health.

A Negress belonging to Captain Gaspard de los Reyes was so near death that the blessed candle was already in her hand: the servant of God arrived at that moment without having been sent for, inquired after the sick woman, and when asked what he thought of her, replied: "Let her drink a little mint infused in water." The attendants administered this remedy, although they knew that it was contrary to the nature of the disease. The next day she had entirely recovered. No one could doubt the miraculous nature of so sudden a cure, preceded by a mortal agony, and effected by a remedy which naturally would have retarded it.

This same Spaniard having called on a friend, named Ortiz, found him in great distress, because a Negress who managed his household, was dying. Whilst the two friends were speaking at the door, Father Claver

passed by, and asked Ortiz the subject of his affliction. When informed of it, he said, with a smile, "Pray to God for her, and she will soon be delivered." He continued his walk, praying for her as he went. He had scarcely proceeded twenty paces, when her master was told that she was actually out of danger. The two Spaniards, astonished at the little time that had elapsed between the prayers of the holy man and the cure of the slave, attributed it to him.

Antionette a slave of Emmanuel Lopez, and a useful assistant at the hospital of St. Lazarus, to which she belonged, was so dangerously ill that Father Claver spent three nights assisting and preparing her for death. On the vigil of St. Lazarus he said to her: "Antionette, to-day is the resurrection of Lazarus; thank God for the health He restores to you:" then, as if he feared to have said too much, he suddenly withdrew. The sick woman was perfectly cured that same day; and out of gratitude for her cure, she ever after, on the feast of St. Lazarus, brought all her year's gains to the hospital.

Notwithstanding all his zeal and diligence, he could not be everywhere when needed. It happened that a Negress belonging to Don Vincent de Villalobos died without his assistance. Her master was giving orders for her burial when the father arrived; he stopped the ceremony, and with a loud voice, called the Negress by her name. He then began to pray by her, and in a few moments she gave signs of life. She complained of a tired feeling, and on being asked the cause, replied: "I was walking toward a delightful garden, and as I was going to enter, a child of exquisite beauty barred

my entrance, and desired me to return, saying that I could not as yet reach the charming place. I returned hither, therefore, without knowing how, or by what road, and this occasions my extreme lassitude." The father ascertaining that she was not a Christian, prepared her for baptism, which she earnestly solicited. Her mistress, who had seen her frequent the sacraments during twenty years, opposed this; but at length yielded to the authority of the holy man. Scarcely was the Negress baptized, when she expired. In the informations taken for the canonization of Father Claver, Don Vincent attested this miracle on oath.

Something of a similar nature happened in the house of Don Francis de Silva. A poor slave was found stretched on the ground apparently dead; the master and servants were particularly afflicted because she was unbaptized. On learning this accident the father hurried to the house. "Ah, father!" said they, "what a misfortune! who could have foreseen this!" "What," rejoined he with composure, "is the arm of God shortened? He is a good Father; have a little faith and confidence in Him: where is the slave?" He was shown where she was, and after a short but fervent prayer, he called her by name, and asked her if she wished to be baptized? She opened her eyes, and answered distinctly that she wished it with all her heart. It would be impossible to describe the joy, surprise, and holy terror of the spectators; but their wonder increased when they saw her immediately after baptism rise and walk away perfectly cured.

A still greater prodigy will serve to conclude these details. As he was giving his ordinary instructions at

a Negro habitation, he heard that two obstinate infidels were at the last extremity. He went to them, spoke to them, and redoubled his efforts, but without success. He withdrew for a moment, and raising his heart and voice to God, conjured Him not to let these souls which had been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, perish. Whilst in prayer he was informed that one had died in his obduracy, and hastily returning, he found the people on the point of throwing the body into a pit. He requested them to carry it back to the house, and when the others entered, they found him with his crucifix in his hand, instructing the wretched man who publicly demanded baptism. The provincial wished to know the particulars of this miracle from Father Claver himself. The holy man answered with admirable simplicity, that a Negro had died. He had hastened to him, and after remaining a short time with him, God had permitted that the slave should be found alive.

---

## CHAPTER VI.

### INSTANCES OF HIS HEROIC CHARITY MANIFESTED ESPECIALLY DURING EPIDEMICS.

**T**HESSE manifestations of Father Claver's power with God, surprising as they may appear, are perhaps less wonderful than the heroical excesses of his charity toward his Negroes. To appreciate them aright we need only reflect for a moment what his labors for these poor souls must have cost him. Their abodes were no better than wretched garrets or huts where



fresh air could hardly penetrate. When sick with fevers, cancers, dysentery, or other diseases, the foul air in these places became almost unbearable. But nothing of all this could intimidate our charitable missionary; the most infectious holes and huts were like delicious gardens to him; the most loathsome wounds and the stench issuing from them supplied the place of most exquisite perfumes. He constantly visited those who were thus afflicted, spending whole hours with them, making their beds, cleansing their wounds, and lavishing on them all the tenderness of a mother.

A young Jesuit who came from Santa Fe to Carthage for ordination, once accompanied Father Claver in his visits to the sick; but he was so startled by the spectacle he witnessed, as to own candidly, that he would never have gone if he had known the real state of the case. The same happened to another Jesuit who, before setting out for Rome, wished to be an eye-witness of the miserable condition of the Negroes, and of what the father did for them. He offered therefore to be his companion, but was so overpowered by the sight and smell of those loathsome abodes, that he almost fainted. He, however, so admired Father Claver's extraordinary charity, that he declared he would publish it everywhere, even in the capitol of the Christian world.

As for Father Claver, it is certain that his nature often recoiled from the performance of such services, but the grace of God and his zeal triumphed over his repugnance. The following is a remarkable instance. Being called to the house of a rich merchant, to hear the confession of a Negro who was covered with ulcers,

he found him extended in a corner, where he had been thrown to save others from the insupportable infection arising from his body. The master of the house and four other Spaniards followed at a distance, curious to witness his extraordinary charity. At sight of this putrid body he felt tempted to turn back, but the next moment, confounded at his cowardice, he retired into a corner and took a severe discipline, reproaching himself for his want of courage in serving one redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ. He then returned to the sick man, heard his confession, devoutly kissed all his wounds, and applied his tongue to the most loathsome. The Spaniards were filled with astonishment and respect; but he departed with as composed a look as if he had done nothing extraordinary. Don Augustin Ugarta, who had formerly been Inquisitor of Carthagená, and afterward Bishop of Quito, felt a similar curiosity; and knowing that Father Claver was called to confess a Negro attacked by a contagious disorder, placed himself where he could conveniently watch him. When he had seen what passed, he retired, unable to speak a word; but afterward he everywhere published the almost incredible prodigies of charity and mortification which he had witnessed in Father Claver.

This practice of kissing the most infectious ulcers, was so familiar to the holy missionary, that Don Francis de Cavaillero, Consul of Carthagená, who had frequent opportunities of witnessing his heroic acts in his treatment of the Negroes, hearing that juridical information of his life and virtues was being collected, came of his own accord to the rector of the college, and amongst many other things related the following: In 1628 he

arrived at Carthagena with ships laden with Negroes, amongst whom the small-pox was raging furiously. As Father Claver's zeal and charity were much eulogized, he sent for him, but first he caused all the places where the Negroes were confined, to be fumigated and sprinkled with aromatics. Father Claver found them stretched on the floor; and after saluting them with tenderness he knelt down, successively embraced them all, kissed their wounds, and then, having completely gained them by his cordiality, he heard their confessions, and distributed some refreshments among them. Cavaillero was so struck with the sight, that he ever after looked on the father as a man full of the Spirit of God, and never addressed him but with feelings of profound veneration.

On one occasion, having gone to confess a Negro who was swollen and covered with ulcers, and almost speechless and senseless, his companion and the interpreter, unable to endure the offensive air of the place, soon abandoned him. He, however, approached the sick man, placed his crucifix on his mouth and heart, then, after praying for a short time, called him by name. Upon this his two companions immediately returned, and to their surprise they perceived in the room a sweet fresh odor, and found the sick man so far recovered as to be able to make his confession. The priest then gave him Extreme Unction and left him in the charge of the interpreter, remarking that his patient would soon die—a prediction which was shortly verified.

His handkerchiefs were used much more in deeds of charity for the poor Negroes than for himself. But his cloak he utilized on all possible occasions—as a cover-

ing, a cushion, or a bed—yet God seemed to have imparted to it a special virtue; for never did it contract any unpleasant smell. In 1633, a slave belonging to Donna Maria de Maza, was so severely attacked by the small-pox as scarcely to retain the appearance of a human being. Father Claver approached her, and showing his crucifix, said to her, “Courage, daughter, here is Jesus come to cure you!” At these words her senses returned, and recognizing her good father, she made her confession with great piety. As she complained of the violence of her pain and the hardness of her bed, he desired his interpreter to lay her on the ground upon his cloak, whilst her bed was being more comfortably arranged; he then left her almost entirely cured.

In the same manner, he assisted a negro belonging to Don Francis de Cavaillero, whom he found in a most deplorable state, and at the point of death. He had him carried into the garden for better air, cleansed his wounds, administered some soothing remedies, then forming a tent of his cloak, placed it over the invalid who speedily recovered consciousness.

We may also say that nothing was impossible to him, whenever his dear Negroes were in question. One day whilst a number of them were assembled around a well, a flash of lightning fell in their midst. The wheel to which the rope was attached, was shattered into pieces, one of the slaves was precipitated into the well, and the others were thrown down senseless. All the endeavors of neighbors, and of a skilful doctor availed nothing. Father Claver accidentally appeared, and at the sight of so much misery, his heart was moved, tears

rolled down his cheeks, and raising his eyes to heaven, he fervently begged the Father of Mercies to give life to his dear children. At last he removed his cloak which he placed over every one and, at this salutary touch, those bodies which till then had been as insensible as the mysterious bones shown to the prophet Ezechiel, began to move. The slaves arose and walked about as sound and vigorous as if nothing had happened.

---

## CHAPTER VII.

### HIS GRIEF AT THE DEATH OR DEPARTURE OF HIS NEGROES.

**I**T is not surprising that the tender and generous charity of Father Claver gained the confidence of all those unfortunate slaves. The love he felt for them glided into their hearts; they hearkened to him as their master, obeyed him as their father, and looked upon him as an angel sent from heaven in their behalf. His charity was boundless and manifested itself even after the death of his Negroes. When any one died he wept for him as for a son, begged alms in order to have him decently buried, said mass for him, and mingled his tears with those of the relatives.

His grief was scarcely less acute when obliged to separate from the slaves whom he had instructed. As soon as he knew they were to be removed to other countries he redoubled his solicitude, visited them more frequently, and, if possible, instructed them more carefully. He tried to console them by telling them

that their future homes were more agreeable and fertile, that they would perhaps meet with kind masters, and have the consolation of seeing some of their own countrymen, who after having been baptized at Carthageua lived more happily in their present homes. He taught them how they might best approach the sacrament of penance; and especially he urged them to make frequent acts of contrition. Those who were best instructed, he desired to repeat the various acts to the others and thus they would be useful in time of trouble, or at the bed of death, when no confessor could be obtained. He accompanied them to the port, embraced each one most tenderly, and gave them his blessing. He intrusted them as a tender charge to the captain, and he stood motionless on the beach, like a man plunged in deep sorrow, until the vessel laden with his treasure had disappeared. Then he returned to the College, where he offered the sacrifice of the mass for them, and never ceased recommending them to God.

**BOOK IV:****CHAPTER I.****HIS LABORS IN THE HOSPITALS.**

**O**CCUPIED as the holy missionary was in the conversion, sanctification, and consolation of the Negroes, yet the ardor of his zeal led him also amongst heretics, Mahomedans, and Catholics who were a disgrace to their religion. To succeed in his generous designs, he had many obstacles to surmount, persecutions to suffer, and even injuries and calumnies to endure. His charity and courage, however, were more powerful than the efforts of men and devils; and God, by the miraculous success with which He crowned his combats, knew how to indemnify him for all he undertook for the promotion of His glory.

There were two remarkable hospitals in Carthage:—St. Sebastian's, served by the religious of St. John of God; and St. Lazarus', for lepers and such as suffered from the complaint called St. Anthony's fire. After his devotedness to his Negroes—the principal objects of his care—these were the two principal theatres of his charity.

The hospital of St. Sebastian, though without any fixed revenues, was crowded, especially in war time, with such a prodigious multitude of sick, that the re-

ligious had great difficulty in procuring necessary alms and remedies for their subsistence. Father Claver, delighted with their charity, undertook to assist them, and wherever he met them offered his services with a humility and zeal which they could not fail to admire. When not engaged in his missions in the country, he went thither at least once a week, and on reaching the hospital, he visited all the sick in succession, presenting them with his crucifix, and exhorting them to prepare for the sacrament of penance. When any of them wished to confess, he always arranged the place conveniently for them, and the reverse for himself. He particularly devoted himself to the most miserable, for whom he performed the most painful and lowly offices with incredible ardor. In time of war, when the number was greatly augmented, he did not limit himself to an ordinary care of them, but spent the entire day in the hospital, said mass, and applied himself to all that his charity could suggest, without caring, for a moment, for his own bodily needs. His prodigious abstemiousness, under such fatigues and in such excessive heats, so astonished the good religious of the hospital, that they publicly declared the life of this indefatigable workman could only be sustained by miracle. He was ready for everything, swept the rooms, made the beds, changed the clothes of the sick, served the broth, prepared the meat, washed the plates, and yet did nothing but by direction either of the prior or infirmarian. When thus occupied, if he was called to console or assist the sick, he humbly asked permission, and as soon as he had discharged his ministry he resumed his interrupted work. Never had such fervor, zeal, and courage



been seen there, and it was fearlessly said that he alone was worth more than forty workmen. His absence from the hospital was a cause of general desolation; but on his return, the sick knew not how to manifest their joy.

After what we have seen him do for the Negroes, we shall not be surprised to find that here the most disgusting and repulsive offices constituted his greatest delight. A hundred times he renewed the heroic acts so familiar to him in the huts of the slaves. Amongst the sick there was one so disfigured, putrid, and infectious, that the others were unable to endure the sight or smell of him, and the religious had caused him to be removed to a separate lodging. Father Claver sought him out; and after saluting him with great tenderness, seated himself in such a position that his face nearly touched the sick man's arm, from which a virulent matter was oozing. When begged to change his place, he replied that he suffered no inconvenience, and after devoutly kissing the wounds he spent two hours with him, consoling him, and inspiring him with Christian sentiments. He continued visiting him daily for a long time; and on taking leave he always begged the poor man to remember him when he should be with God. One day when the invalid thought himself dying, he offered some money to the father, to have a mass said for him. Father Claver, however, desired him to keep his money, and not be uneasy, for he himself would offer the holy sacrifice for his intention. After saying mass the next day, he returned, and said, as he entered, "Be composed, brother; God loves you, and I hope we shall again see you in full health in Carthagena. But

never be unmindful of Him, from whom you receive this favor, and above all, sin no more. For the rest, He will have the goodness to withdraw from you the occasion of offending Him, because He loves you." From that moment the man's health improved; but in proportion as his wounds healed his sight failed, and he ultimately became blind. Whenever the father met him afterward in the town, he begged he would pray for him when in Heaven, and from thence-forward the man's life was as holy as it had formerly been irregular.

Such is the fruit of the calamities sent by God to His elect. In His hands, the loss of health, abused for criminal indulgence; of beauty, employed to ensnare modesty; of money, used as an instrument of guilt, are precious and profitable favors. A father truly loves his son when he deprives him of the sword with which he would commit self-destruction. It was with this solid reflection, that the holy man consoled his invalid; and, for his own consolation Almighty God seems often to have sent these trials to sinners under his care. In the same hospital, there was a blind man who suffered from a violent head-ache. Hearing Father Claver pass along the room, he eagerly called to him, and complained of his double infirmity. "Bear your blindness patiently," answered the father, "as a grace to which your salvation is attached; and for the rest, confide in God." At the same time he put his cloak over the man's head, and gave him the kiss of peace: his pain was instantly removed, but he always remained blind.

His principal object amongst the poor and infirm was the cure of their souls, often much more in need of pity

than their bodies; and he neglected no means whereby he might succeed. He sought out those whose shameful irregularities had obliged them to take dangerous and violent remedies. He began by procuring them a thousand little comforters, and by paying them particular attention, and when at length he found them disposed to listen to him, he powerfully depicted how wretched was the shameful satisfaction of a pleasure which was followed by such cruel evils. "If," added he, "the remedies are so painful, what will be the chastisements prepared for such sins? The pleasure soon passes, but the pain of the body, and even of the soul, only finish with this life to recommence far more terribly in eternity. It is true," continued he, "it costs something to abstain from vices which gratify for the moment, but at least the difficulties attached to virtue are noble in the cause which produces them, sweet by the consolation which accompany them, precious by the recompenses which follow them; whereas the enjoyments of crime leave nothing but bitterness and shame." His words animated with zeal and unction made so deep an impression, that many of these unfortunate sinners determined to embrace the religious state, and to suffer for the salvation of their souls, at least as much as they had suffered for the cure of their bodies.

## CHAPTER II.

### HE IS MADE MINISTER OF THE COLLEGE AND MASTER OF THE NOVICE LAY-BROTHERS.

NOTWITHSTANDING all Father Claver's occupations, such was his regularity at home, that, after a few years, the rector of the college at Carthage wished to have him for Father-Minister. This is an important office amongst the Jesuits, and requires equal charity and exactitude; for the duties of the Father-Minister are to watch over the observance of regular discipline, and over the different offices of the house. A man who made it his pleasure and duty to obey the very Negroes, and who wished to be under the feet of all, could not without pain, without violence to his humility, undertake the direction of religious whom he deemed infinitely better than himself. He represented his inability for such a position, but at length yielded in a spirit of obedience, and so discharged his new duties as to become rather the slave, than the minister of the college. He began with the most lowly and laborious offices, sweeping the dirtiest parts of the house, helping the cook in whatever was most disagreeable; in a word, supplying for whatever the others could not do: these were the fruits of his new office. All religious persons, however well inclined, are not equally perfect, and for one who can give up what is necessary and gain merit by so doing, we may find two who cannot without risk. Necessity insensibly leads to a custom but little con-

formable to exact discipline; yet often, when the necessity no longer exists, the custom remains. To prevent this abuse Father Claver took care that every one was abundantly provided with all that was necessary, and even comfortable, in order to prevent all pretext for dispensation from regular observance. Toward the infirm in particular his tenderness and charity were displayed. He then took the place of the infirmarian, or rather, he was himself infirmarian to all the sick. Once on the feast of St. Ignatius, having found the sacristan very ill, he carried him on his own shoulders to bed, and after providing him with all necessary remedies he went off to the church to supply his office during the rest of the day.

The Father-Rector, perceiving that as minister he charged himself with all the offices of the house, appointed him Novice-Master of the lay-brothers, a duty for which he was eminently fitted. Persons of all ranks flocked to Carthagena in hopes of accumulating a large fortune in a short time; but discovering their mistake, and seeing their friends return home poorer than before, many, despising the allurements of the world, determined to seek in the religious state a fortune more holy, more secure, and more durable. Hence they offered themselves to different communities in the town, but as they were usually men of no education, and somewhat advanced in age, they could only be received as lay-brothers. Besides the common noviciate at Thonga, the Jesuits opened a separate one at Carthagena to instil into those persons that sanctity so requisite in apostolic men who devote their lives to the service of their neighbor. No one was better fitted for this

task than Father Claver ; for he was careful to inspire them with a spirit of recollection, prayer, mortification, humility, and a prompt and blind obedience to the orders of superiors. He frequently discoursed on the necessity of perfect detachment from all that retards or distracts the soul in its advancement in sanctity, on the ardor with which religious should desire the most elevated perfection, and on the means of subduing self and having no other will than God's. He was himself a perfect example of his teaching, and never did he exact from them anything which he did not practice himself in the most perfect manner. So long as his novices were weak and tottering in virtue, he was simple, plain, attentive and kind ; but as soon as he found them strong and fervent enough not to be easily overcome, he exercised them in everything which might tend to strengthen their souls in virtue. Sometimes clad in old coarse habits, with brooms in their hands, he led them through the street, as far as the hospitals ; there they served the sick, made their beds, and cleaned their rooms. At other times he made them carry a large basket of provisions to the poor of St. Lazarus. He placed on his own shoulder one end of the pole which supported the basket, whilst his companions bore the other end ; and the youngest and most robust were often extremely fatigued, by carrying so heavy a weight for a considerable distance ; yet he always went on at the same even pace as if he carried nothing. At other times he took them amongst his dear Negroes, and made them use their cloaks as cushions, or spreads over the wounds and ulcers of the sick. Often he would make them distribute, at the door, the alms which they had

begged through the town ; and the more effectually to overcome their natural repugnance, he desired them to eat with the poor out of the same dish. As he never spared them when in health, neither did he neglect to comfort them when in sickness ; the prudent severity of the master was then changed into the tender affection of the mother. He carried them in his arms, placed them in comfortable beds, prepared their food and medicine ; and would allow himself no rest until they were entirely restored to health. This happy mixture of kindness and firmness soon enabled his novices to make such progress in the highest paths of perfection, that no noviciate could show greater fervor.

The high reputation of this holy master drew to him two disciples, who gave him much consolation. They were two brothers, from Biscay, distinguished for nobility and talent, who relying on the powerful protection promised to them, had gone to the Indies to make their fortune. In vain did their relatives and friends strive to divert them from entering the society of Jesus, by representing the brilliant advantages they were renouncing, and the lowly state to which they were binding themselves by becoming simple lay-brothers. But God, who had views of mercy and salvation in their regard, sustained them against all the attacks of flesh and blood. They courageously offered themselves to Father Claver, made their noviceship under him with most edifying fervor, and two months afterward our Lord called them both to Himself, to recompense the sacrifice which they had made for His love. Nor was this the only consolation afforded him by God in his new office. An officer, highly respected for his valor

and services, came to make the spiritual exercises under the father's direction. After his general confession he was so moved by grace that he earnestly begged to be received into the house. There were fears that a resolution so hastily formed might not prove lasting, but his ardor was so intense, that he begged to be, at least, admitted as a servant. His vocation was well examined and proved, after which he was received into the Society, where he lived and died like a saint. The servant of God had not the same satisfaction with regard to a young Jesuit already in holy orders. One day, as they were walking together from Carthagena to Santa Fe, the father said three different times to him, "Alas! brother, I know you will not persevere in the Society!" The other, who had never had the slightest temptation on the subject, began to laugh and joke at the prophecy. Five months later he fell into a profound melancholy, occasioned by a severe illness. He sought to dissipate it by a variety of amusements and pleasures incompatible with the religious state. To supply for these the father provincial sent some agreeable and cheerful religious to keep him company day and night, in order to comfort and divert him. All proved ineffectual; he returned to the world to seek a more easy life, and one better suited to his inclinations.

---

### CHAPTER III.

#### HE TAKES CHARGE OF THE LEPER HOSPITAL.

**W**HATEVER employment was assigned to Father Claver he usually undertook almost all the others; so that his superiors were now forced to re-



move him from the noviciate. But their attentive charity in lightening his labors, only caused him to redouble his zeal abroad. He now resumed his former functions with redoubled assiduity; idolators, heretics, Mahomedans, libertines, the poor, the sick, the prisoners,—all were subject for his charity.

Although his love for the hospital of St. Sebastian was great, yet that of St. Lazarus, had still stronger attractions for him, because he there found greater opportunities for the exercise of his heroic charity and mortification. The flesh of some of the lepers was putrid even to the bone; their nose, their ears, half the face, and occasionally even their legs and arms had decayed; others were covered with horrible ulcers and abscesses, and emitted an almost insupportable smell. This was quite enough to gain all Father Claver's affections. When he first began to attend this hospital, it was almost without succor, and even without a priest to take care of the sick. A mass was hastily said on festivals, after which every one withdrew, to escape from the contagious air. A place so odious to others, soon became the delight of our charitable missionary. The days for recreation were his favorite days, because then he had more time and liberty to visit his dear lepers; they were truly his festivals, on which his pleasure was to carry his own meals to them.

Some time before Lent a Spanish officer met him beyond the town walls, and noticing his cheerful countenance, asked him where he was going, "I am going," answered he, "to keep my carnival with my poor at St. Lazarus." The Spaniard's curiosity was aroused, and

he followed him, strangely surprised at what he saw. He assembled at the church door all who were able to walk; and kneeling in their midst he recited some prayers, which they repeated. After exhorting them to bear patiently their suffering in this life, to shun the hideous leprosy of sin, and thus escape the purgatory of the next life, he sat down on a stone and heard their confessions, carefully wrapping his cloak round them when the weather was at all cold. He took upon his knees those who could find no easier position, although the mere sight of them made his companions retire. Thence he repaired to the more secluded cells where those were confined whose frightful condition made them insupportable to the other lepers. He handled their wounds with as much complacency as if they had been the most delicate flowers; he tenderly kissed them, and even wiped them with his tongue. He washed those who could not use their arms, fed them, and if he saw any one disgusted with the food, he would take a piece out of the dish and eat it himself, in order to encourage the invalid. One of these poor creatures, having gone to the door to beg alms of the passers-by, had not strength enough to return. The father happened to see him, and immediately took him in on his shoulders. Naturally the load was too heavy for him; yet the strength of his charity made it light, and he carried the man apparently without difficulty to his bed.

It might be said of him as of Job, that in that melancholy abode he was the eye of the blind, the arm of the maimed, the foot of the cripple; in a word, he was everything to those poor lepers. After he had heard

their confessions, he gave them some tobacco, scented water, preserves, and whatever he thought could please them. He procured for them an abundant supply of linen, sheets, rags, perfumes, and remedies; and when unable to beg alms in person, he commissioned some one else to do it in his name. His charity was not restricted to bare necessaries; he endeavored to procure them every comfort that was in his power. He had induced several pious persons to undertake some extra charities on the principle festivals of our Lord and of his Blessed Mother, and to provide him with a sort of little banquet, for those who came to the college to beg. The remnants he carefully collected and sent to the hospital; and to amuse and cheer the sick during their meal he sent also a band of musicians. In fine, notwithstanding his own poverty, he knew how to find such resources, that a religious of the order of Mercy publicly declared that were the poor to lose Father Claver, they would perish. To relate all he did for the sick would necessitate constant repetitions, because his charity was everywhere the same. Here, as in the hospital of St. Sebastian, there was a man so covered with wounds and ulcers, that he had more the appearance of a putrid corpse than of a living being. To prevent infection he had been thrown into a kind of shed, at a considerable height from the ground, and reached only by an unsafe ladder. This difficulty only gave new strength to the charity of this servant of God. No sooner had he heard of the miserable condition of the poor man, than he undertook the charge of him. It was a sight worth the admiration of angels, and well calculated to move others to compassion, to see this

venerable old man, already very infirm, and scarcely able to support himself, climbing this ladder several times a day to instruct, console, give food, and clean the wounds of the sick man. Yet such he did during several months. He became greatly attached to a place which gave him so many opportunities of succoring the afflicted.

No one would undertake to rebuild the old church of the hospital which was in ruins. But Father Claver placing his trust in God, who never abandoned him in need, collected alms, materials, and workmen. It was admirable to see the pains he took for the accomplishment of his enterprise. From morning till night he watched over the work, and encouraged the workmen by carrying clay, water, and wood for them. He took his meals in the hospital, and gave to the poor whatever was sent him from the college.

In his labors here he found means to satisfy his piety, charity, humility, and love of mortification all at once; and this it was that made the hospital so inexpressibly dear to him. He regularly visited it two or three times a week. Yet he was always willing to go when asked for, which very often happened, because those poor creatures, finding no consolation elsewhere, were never tired of sending for him. When any of the sick died he said mass for him the next morning, and God often gave him the satisfaction of knowing that his prayers were heard. One day as he was going to the hospital for this purpose, he met a Spaniard who was going to an estate a little distance from Carthagena. The father begged he would accompany him to St. Lazarus's, where he was

going to say mass, but had no acolyte. The Spaniard granted his request. As soon as they arrived, Father Claver threw his cloak over the deceased in place of a pall; he next procured some loaves, oranges, and four wax tapers, which he sent as an offering to the parish priest. When he had finished all the functions of his ministry, he humbly thanked the Spaniard, assuring him that the soul of the deceased was very much relieved.

---

## CHAPTER IV.

### CONVERSIONS.

**I**T is not surprising that these poor people, like the Negroes and the sick at St. Sebastian's, regarded him with profound veneration, and as an angel descended from Heaven. From time to time moreover God was pleased to illuminate his person with rays of glory. The Archdeacon of Carthagena, going to the hospital to distribute some alms, found the father in the midst of the sick, with the look of a seraph, his face brilliant as the sun, and a circle of light around his head, which completely dazzled the archdeacon. Filled with admiration and respect, he resolved to wait till the instructions were over, to beg the holy man's prayers, and kiss his hand. Although he had kept his eyes attentively fixed on him the whole time, Father Claver, as if aware of what had happened, quickly escaped. So many prodigies of zeal and charity gained him such respect and confidence in both hospitals, that he always succeeded in whatever he undertook for the glory of God and for the salvation of souls. When

the religious at St. Sebastian's had in vain used all their efforts to convert some hardened sinner, they finally sent for the holy man, feeling assured that he would triumph. A man was carried there whose appearance was more that of a demoniac than of a sick man. He was attacked by an extraordinary and unknown disorder: his eyes rolled in his head, and his limbs suddenly and violently stiffened. Every natural and supernatural remedy was tried, but without effect. If relics were presented to him, he threw them away in a fury; if confession was mentioned, he only answered with abusive words; if a crucifix was shown him, he turned aside his head like one in despair. After a day and a night passed in this state, Father Claver was called, as a last resource. He hastened to the hospital, old and infirm as he was, and he had scarcely been a few moments with the sick man, ere he became as gentle as a lamb. He requested the sacraments with strong marks of repentance, and died in the sentiments of a sincere convert.

The presence of the saint was useful in corporal as well as spiritual cures. A sick person desired certain very wholesome fruit which that year happened to be extremely scarce. The prior of the hospital was unable to satisfy him. He mentioned his difficulty to Father Claver, who immediately replied: "Depend on me, I will go in search of some, and I hope, with success." He immediately departed, and returned in half an hour with a large basket full of the ripest and most beautiful fruit that had been seen for a long time. The surprise was both great and general, for he was supposed to have obtained the fruit by miraculous means.

Dr. Adam Sobo, physician of this hospital, juridically declared, that when he visited the sick in company with Father Claver, he usually asked his opinion of them. When he answered, "Sir, do your part, and for the rest let us confide in God," it was a certain sign of the sick person's recovery. Hence the doctor conceived so high an opinion of his sanctity, that he always referred those to him who stood in need of any extraordinary help. One instance of this nature is very remarkable. Sobo was alone with a patient, more diseased in mind than in body; a suspicious, restless, taciturn, melancholy man, who would neither hear of confession nor of God. Suddenly this miserable being, touched by grace, asked for a confessor. "But," added he, "he must be skilful and discreet, because my malady is a hundred times greater than you can imagine; and it is not every one that could effect my cure." "Well, well!" answered the physician, "I have already found the man you want; you will tell me afterward whether I have satisfied you." In a few minutes he conducted Father Claver to the hospital. His tender and cordial manner at once gained the sick man. He was a religious, who for several years had preached with great success; but had afterward apostatized, and since led a most profligate life. The zealous missionary, after hearing his general confession, opened his eyes to the greatness of his crimes, and animated him with a salutary confidence in the Divine Mercy, which was greater even than his iniquities. So well did he know how to alarm, and at the same time to reassure him, that he soon had the consolation of seeing him perfectly converted. In proof of his repentance and grat-

itude, this man publicly declared that he was the greatest of sinners; and that no one but a Father Claver could have thus withdrawn him from the depths of hell and placed him in the path of heaven. Nor was he the only one to whom God granted a similar grace through the ministry of His servant. There were several who had apostatized, five, seven, and ten years before, and had indulged in all the excesses that occasion and accompany such a step, and who, though they had resisted the advice and reproaches of others, could not withstand the sweetness and force of Father Claver's zeal and words. They all returned to their monasteries, where they became models of perfect penance. Thus, by tenderness and gentleness, and not by severity and harshness, a true minister of Jesus Christ wins souls to God.

---

## CHAPTER V.

### AN ENGLISH PRELATE AND OTHERS RECEIVED INTO THE TRUE FOLD.

**I**T was in the hospital of St. Sebastian that Father Claver was so successful in bringing back heretics to the bosom of the Church, that few could resist him. Amongst many examples, we will select a few of the most remarkable. In one of his usual visits to the poor sick, he met a Calvinist, so obstinate that after an attempt of several days, he failed to convince him of his error. Thinking that his endeavors might be more useful elsewhere, he accosted another invalid, whom he found animated with such an implacable hatred against



an enemy, that he determined to kill him. To all the persuasions of the zealous missionary his only answer was, that when the Calvinist renounced his heresy, then he would forego his desire for revenge. At these words Father Claver fell on his knees, and addressed a fervent prayer to God. A person hastened to tell him that the Calvinist was converted, and wished to make his confession before he died. At this happy news he turned to the other man, and said to him with much kindness, "Do you not see my son, that God will have you, no matter at what price? Yes, He intends to save two sinners at once; let us go to His feet and thank Him!" The man was astounded, and scarcely believing what he heard, he ran to learn the truth from the heretic. This prodigy completely changed him. He humbly threw himself at the feet of the holy man, placed all his affairs in his hands, and became sincerely reconciled to his enemy.

But the most illustrious conversion and one which led to the conversion of many others, was that of an English prelate. To make this circumstance more clear we must revert to an earlier date. For several years, English and Dutch privateers had infested the seas of America. Having long threatened the kingdom of New Grenada, they at length took possession of the islands of St. Christopher and St. Catherine, where they established colonies, and incessantly attacked the Spaniards. They captured the vessels laden with Negroes, Mahomedans, and other slaves, whom they employed to cultivate their own lands. His Catholic Majesty was informed of the injuries done to his subjects by their troublesome neighbors, and sent out a

fleet against them, with strict orders to Don Frederick of Toledo, to expel them at any cost from those islands. This officer executed his commission so well, that he not only made himself master of the islands, but captured nearly all the English and Dutch, together with the slaves whom they had carried off. He put them in ships and conveyed them to the Bay of Carthagena. But lest they should ascertain the strength and fortifications of the place, or spread their heresies in the country, he obliged them to remain on board. Full of confidence in God, and animated with his usual zeal, Claver asked the permission of his superior and the officer, to visit the fleet, and repaired thither, with the proper requisites for the celebration of holy mass. He entered a ship in which were more than six hundred English, guarded by some Spaniards; the latter received him with great joy, and begged him to say mass for them, which they had not heard since their departure from the islands. No request could have been more agreeable to him. His devotion and modesty whilst celebrating, and the majesty of the Church ceremonies, struck the heretics, who flocked in crowds to witness a spectacle so novel to them. After mass the Spaniards invited the father to dine with them. He accepted the offer with pleasure, because he hoped to gain souls to God; and he had the example of Jesus Christ, who, in order to win sinners, sat at table even with publicans. At the end of the repast, some of the English, already half gained by his mild and amiable manner, asked him whether he would not like to see their prelate, as they called the Arch-Deacon of London, who was with them. The holy missionary hoping

to gain the head, and thus all the rest to the Catholic faith, answered that he would consider it an honor. Thereupon a venerable old man appeared. His beard and hair had grown quite long, and his deportment was serious and modest. The father arising at his entrance, saluted him with much respect, and according to the English custom very politely drank to his health. This evidently pleased the prelate who immediately asked in Latin to have a private interview with Father Claver. Whilst the other Jesuits were conversing with the English on matters of religion, these two remained together until evening, discussing all those points controverted between Catholics and Protestants. The Englishman often saw the truth in spite of himself. He was convinced, but obstacles too difficult to surmount—his wife and children—would not admit of his conversion. If he changed his religion he would leave them without resources. His courage failed him, and his temporal interests overbalanced those of his religion. All that the father could gain from him was a protest, that for the rest of his life he would be a Catholic in heart, and at his death he would publicly declare himself, and be reconciled to the Church; but for the interest of those so dear to him he must exteriorly profess the Anglican creed. Grieved at this obstinate resistance of the heart, the father was on the point of quitting him, when he suddenly recollected that the festival of St. Ursula occurred on that day. Immediately he turned to the prelate, and like a man inspired, thus addressed him, "Sir, this day is the feast of an illustrious virgin, the honor of your country; who with her companions sealed with

her own blood that Catholic religion the truths of which you yourself acknowledge. St. Lucius, King of Britain, the model of a truly Christian king, sent annually to the Holy See presents worthy of a monarch, as a tribute of gratitude and as a mark of his attachment to the Church. From his time, all your sovereigns followed his example and his piety, up to the unfortunate Henry VIII. And had not this very prince written in defence of the Church, and of the primacy of St. Peter's chair? What then induced him to forsake the ancient religion and establish a new one? Was it not to contract a scandalous and adulterous marriage with Anne Boleyn, after he had repudiated his lawful wife, in defiance of all laws, both human and divine? These were the abominations that produced your religion: judge then the effect from the cause. Ah! how can a sensible and conscientious man prefer a law, the offspring of adultery, to that announced by the Apostles, and confirmed by the blood of so many martyrs; defended by your illustrious virgins and honored for so many ages by your noble ancestors? Shall the authority of a king, notorious for vice, outweigh that of so many others, distinguished for their piety? What! can the religion introduced by the piety of a Lucius be false, and the one founded on the adultery of a Henry be true? If this prince could sustain his crimes, only by the support of a new religion, why must you, who are not guilty of the same crimes, adhere to this same religion! You say that on your deathbed you will repent and declare yourself. It may then be with you as it was with him. Are you not terrified at the awful words with which he expired? 'Omnia perdimus!—

We have lost all!’ He sought to be reconciled with the Church, but he had not the opportunity! Who has assured you that the same may not happen to you? Will not your property, your wife and children, present the same difficulties then as now? Blush, that you have not courage enough to sacrifice such things, while so many young virgins courageously sacrificed their lives. Your first interest, Sir, is yourself. Do not expose yourself to eternal torments for a few transitory goods which you must soon leave to others.” The aged prelate was so moved at these words, that with tearful eyes he begged Father Claver to pray for him—a request which was readily promised—and thus they parted. The holy missionary redoubled his prayers and penances, and the week following the festival of All Saints, as he was entering the hospital of St. Sebastian, he perceived a sick man being carried thither in a sedan chair. It was the English prelate! At the sight of Father Claver he exclaimed, “It is time, father, it is time for me to accomplish the promise I made to God and to you. I wish to embrace the religion of my ancestors,—the faith of the holy Roman Church.” He begged him at the same time not to abandon him, because he felt very ill. No words could express Father Claver’s joy at a conversion so much desired, yet so little expected. The prelate made a public abjuration of his errors, and became at once both a submissive disciple and an enlightened doctor of truth. In the most lively and moving terms he exhorted all around him to imitate his example, for salvation could not be hoped for out of the Roman Church. He made his confession with abundance of tears, received the

sacraments with exemplary piety, and died soon after, whilst sweetly conversing with his Saviour. The father, who assisted him throughout his illness, did not abandon him after death, but performed his funeral obsequies in the most honorable manner possible.

This conversion had a wonderful effect on several English soldiers who were then sick at the hospital. They were persuaded that a religion embraced at so critical a moment could not be otherwise than true, and soon followed the example of the Prelate. They all died good Catholics, fervently exclaiming, "Saints of Spain, assist us!" After so many consoling examples, the authorities with the hope of effecting more conversions, allowed the English prisoners to land. The attachment which they insensibly acquired for the Jesuits, added to the impression caused by the extraordinary conversion of their prelate, induced them to converse from time to time with the fathers. A few days before Christmas they asked to see the church. It was adorned as magnificently as possible, and when all the masses were over they were admitted. They were delighted, respectfully knelt down before the high altar, and even listened very willingly to a discourse on the Catholic religion given by means of an interpreter. They were so impressed that they begged permission to remain on land all night, and although lodgings were scarce, the zeal of Father Claver soon provided for all. Delighted with his gentle and amiable manners, they spoke of him with admiration when they rejoined their companions. Every day fresh strangers landed, and returned with similar sentiments, and in a very short time he had converted more than

six hundred. In the fervor of his joy he suggested to the commander of the fleet the propriety of separating the English converts from those who still were heretics; because communication with heresy is always dangerous to faith. He also advised him to procure honorable appointments for them, to prevent them if possible from returning to their own country with evident danger of perversion. The general, who was as pious as he was brave, easily agreed to these suggestions. He immediately provided lodgings for the English Catholics, and afterward took them into the Spanish service, in a manner suited to each one's rank. By this means he acquired at the same time, subjects for God and soldiers for the king.

---

## CHAPTER VI.

### DOING HIS MASTER'S WORK IN PATIENCE AND MEER- NESS.

**F**ATHER CLAVER was not, however, equally successful in the other conversions which he undertook. As soon as he approached some of these heretics, they either stopped their ears or insulted him; some in their fury even attacked him, tore his cloak in pieces, and threatened to do the same to himself. But his zeal and mildness eventually triumphed over these obstacles, and he had the consolation of converting more than a hundred. Amongst the poor who crowded to the Jesuits' college for alms, was one of these heretics. Moved by the father's patience and charity, he determined to embrace the Catholic faith, and appeared pub-

licly with his rosary round his neck. The others, enraged at thus daily losing one or other of their companions, threatened to murder the poor man if he did not return to their religion. Father Claver immediately shielded the poor man from their threats, provided a safe refuge for him, and supplied him with the necessaries of life. The new convert was soon freed from his troubles, for God called him to Himself, to recompense his generous fidelity. He died calmly, thanking Divine Providence for withdrawing him from the perils of eternal perdition.

In the hospital of St. Sebastian were also crowds of Dutchmen from the island of St. Catherine. The father, after many exhortations, induced one of the most obstinate who was at the point of death, to embrace the Catholic religion. He then prepared him for a happy death, and afterward took charge of his funeral obsequies, which he performed with all possible decency. This mark of attention drew many more of the Dutch to the faith, and their conversion was so sincere that they themselves asked to be separated from the rest.

Many Negroes had also been taken, and besides their native idolatry, they had been imbued with the errors of the Dutch. Hence he had to combat against both paganism and heresy. But his zeal gave him redoubled strength, and in a short time, he had instructed them in the doctrines of Catholicity. On the day of their reception into the Church, he caused a magnificent altar to be erected, and to add greater splendor to the ceremony, he engaged a fine choir of music. All the principal nobility of the city assisted at this edifying spec-



taele, several of whom offered themselves as sponsors. The wonderful devotion with which the new converts received baptism and the other sacraments, convinced every one that the finger of God was there, and contributed much to the honor of religion. All this, however, made no impression on one obstinate invalid. To all the attentions and entreaties of the holy missionary, he returned only insult and blasphemies against the Catholic Church. Whilst the father, almost in despair, was continuing this fatiguing and apparently hopeless task, fourteen other Dutchmen in danger of death were brought to the hospital. He accosted them mildly, and after tenderly embracing them, he prepared some remedies for them, arranged their beds, offered them food, and performed the most humble service for them : in a word, he omitted nothing that the most attentive charity could suggest. In the meantime he often spoke to them of the Catholic religion ; and these poor creatures, already delighted with his kindness, listened to him with pleasure. So effectually had he gained them that thirteen died good Catholics. One more obstinate than the rest, still held out ; but he was not proof against the redoubled prayers and efforts of the good priest. He finally abjured his errors and shortly afterward expired in most lively sentiments of faith and contrition. Overjoyed at this unexpected change, Father Claver resolved to have the poor man buried with great honor ; drapery, lights, music, nothing was spared. The obsequies were attended by the most respectable inhabitants of Carthagena, who were glad to let the heretics see how much respect is shown to

those who die in the communion of the Catholic Church.

Notwithstanding all this success, the zeal of the holy man was not satisfied. He had not softened the heart of the unfortunate man for whom he had taken so much trouble. He returned to the attack, but met only repulses and insult. He was branded as a hypocrite, an impostor, and was informed that he need not attempt to deceive him, as he had already deceived so many others, who were weak enough to be imposed upon. True zeal however receives humiliation and contempt as willingly as glory and success; and the thought of suffering something for Jesus Christ, helped to moderate the good priest's grief and disappointment at the heretic's continued obstinacy. Like an intelligent and charitable physician, who, ignoring the waywardness of his patient, watches the favorable moment to apply his remedies, he tried by attentions, services, and, above all, by fervent prayer, to move the heart of this wretched man.

On the day after the funeral of the last converted Dutchman, he returned to make a last attempt; his prayers had obtained what his words could not effect. As soon as the heretic saw him he exclaimed with deep emotion, "O my father, come to me, my father!" at the same time stretching out his arms to welcome him. The father in a transport of joy, ran to embrace him, and for some moments tears choked the utterances of both. At length the invalid drew a deep sigh, and said, "Hearken, father, to a surprising fact. The Dutchman whom you buried yesterday, has appeared to me this night, and given me to understand that

there is no other path to salvation than the one you teach, and that by it alone have he and his companions been saved. He then reprehended me very severely for the wrongs I have done you, desiring me to beg your pardon, and to believe your words. I cast myself at your feet then, my dear father, and place myself in your hands. Do with me what you please, during the two days I have still to live. The time is short, let us not lose it; help me, I beseech you, with your prayers and counsel." The holy man in the height of his joy even surpassed himself in the care he took of this penitent sinner; he was the son of his most bitter sorrow, and therefore became the child of his most heartfelt joy. He made his abjuration, and then asked to receive the sacraments. Whilst they were being administered, he begged the father not to bury him with honors of which his crimes rendered him unworthy, but to cast him unburied into the fields, for having so long outraged the Divine Goodness. His last words were fervent and reiterated acts of faith, hope, and love, which filled all who stood by with consolation, and led them to bless God, whose mercies are infinite.

The conversion of heretics, however, cost the holy man much less trouble than the conversion of Mahomedans. It is well known that of all people in the world they are the most obstinate in their errors. Great numbers of them landed at Carthagena in merchantships, and were also employed by the government to guard the coasts. When Father Claver heard of the arrival of any vessels with Moors and Turks, he immediately visited them, and tried to gain their friendship. He showed an interest in all their affairs, in-

quired about the voyage, how they had been treated by their masters, and whether they wanted anything. At the same time he gave them to understand that he was at their disposal, and ready to help them in any way he could. In fine, his attentions and kindness succeeded so well, that he gained them by degrees to Jesus Christ.

Amongst the poor to whom he was in the habit of giving alms, was a Turk of so harsh and ferocious a character, that any other person would have despaired of his conversion. But the holy man, far from being discouraged, only redoubled his kindness and tenderness, and always laid aside the best part of the alms for him. This sort of combat,—of insults on the one hand, and kindness on the other,—continued during several years, until at length, overcome by the meekness and patience of Father Claver, the Mahomedan begged to be instructed, received baptism, and became as gentle as he had before been haughty and intractable.

A Moor, aged about sixty years, fell dangerously ill, and his companions fearing that he would not be able to resist the zeal of the Apostle of Carthagena, went every day to encourage him to remain firm. To remedy this, the governor, Don Pedro de Zapata, had him conveyed to his own house, and informed Father Claver, who had only spoken a few words when the Moor asked for baptism and received at the same time the health of both body and soul. The governor, who knew his previous obstinacy, stood sponsor, and always declared, that, considering all the circumstances, this conversion must have been miraculous. This was fol-

lowed by another, still more remarkable. A person living in the neighborhood of Carthagena, had a very useful Moor. He possessed a sweet temper—something unusual amongst that class—but he was strongly attached to his sect. His master, after many useless attempts to convert the slave, at last took him to Father Claver, and the very sight of the saint was sufficient to move the infidel's heart. He sincerely asked for baptism, but wished beforehand to learn Spanish, that he might the better understand the Catholic religion. His progress was, in a few moments, so wonderful that Father Claver clearly discerned that God had intended to use him for His own glory. His brother had arrived on the same fleet as himself, but without his knowledge. They accidentally met in the town, and the elder, now a convert, wishing to bring the other to the light of faith, narrated to him the great grace with which God had favored him. His brother, surprised and indignant, contemptuously replied that, for his part, he had been born a Mussulman and he would die a Mussulman. The Christian hastened to Father Claver, and after relating his adventure, expressed his grief, and the little hope he had of gaining his brother. The holy man consoled him, promised to have recourse to God, and desired him to bring his brother to see him. An opportunity soon offered. The convert begged the other to go with him to thank his benefactor, for there was no one in Carthagena to whom he was under such obligations as to Father Claver. The cunning and suspicious Mahomedan saw through the plan, and said he could never consider treason against one's faith a benefit, and that he would never submit to hear what it was impos-

sible for him to endure. Yet the fame of the holy missionary's goodness softened his heart and he finally consented to go. After tenderly embracing him Father Claver spoke to him with angelic sweetness; he inquired about his affairs, how he liked Carthage, how his master treated him, what his employment was, and so forth. Then he cleverly turned the conversation upon his brother: he eulogized his good qualities, represented the consolation he enjoyed in the religion he had lately embraced, and, in fine, exhorted the other to share the same happiness. The Moor listened to him quietly, and was astonished at his own forbearance. The father, perceiving that he was shaken, then assumed the tone of an apostle, and suddenly presenting his crucifix to him, he commanded him to cast himself without delay into the arms of a Saviour who had done and suffered so much for him. Struck, as by a thunderbolt, the Mussulman tremblingly prostrated himself, and promised the holy man he would soon come to him again. The father, thinking he had done enough for the first interview, let him go. Many were the temptations of the devil to retain him within his grasp; but grace triumphed, and he soon received baptism with strong marks of faith and piety.

Other conquests, however, often cost the Saint very dear, and the sufferings which he endured from the almost invincible obduracy of the Mussulmans are beyond description. He spent twenty-two years in trying to convert a Turkish galley-slave who only when on the threshold of death, yielded to the ardent entreaties of the saint, and received baptism. He died with these remarkable words on his lips: "There is

no other law than that of Jesus Christ, in which I purpose to live and die. Cursed be the law of the false prophet Mahomet, as well as all those who follow it!" He spent thirty years also contending with the obstinacy of another Turk, who belonged to the governor's household; nor was it without the help of a prodigy that he eventually triumphed. The man went to cut wood on the neighboring mountains, and thought he saw in a dream the Queen of Heaven, who pointing to Father Claver said, with much majesty and sweetness, though in a tone of severity, "Why dost thou not do what he tells thee? Why art thou not converted?" The vision disappeared, and the man felt half convinced. On his way home, the first person he met was the father himself, who as usual pressed his conversion. He was much struck, and changed color, but would not as yet yield. He quickened his steps, pretending not to hear what was said, although he felt his heart strangely agitated. Another prodigy of charity was necessary to subdue this fierce character. About this time, a criminal was condemned to death, and as there happened to be no executioner, the Turk was ordered to undertake the office. Being unwilling to do so he fled to the castle of St. Croix; he was discovered and compelled to perform the execution, notwithstanding his repugnance. He was so much distressed at the time, that he would certainly have fainted, had not the father given him a biscuit soaked in wine. But the tenderness, charity, and zeal of the servant of God toward the criminal, gave the last blow to the heart of the Mussulman. Persuaded that the faith of so holy a man, could alone be the true one, on the very evening

of the execution, he hastened to beg instruction and guidance from Father Claver and was shortly afterward baptized in the cathedral with great solemnity.

It would be difficult, or rather impossible, to say how many Mahomedans Father Claver converted ; few could resist his voice, or the spirit of God which acted in him. Not only did he seek them in their own homes, but after meals his ordinary recreation was to take the place of the porter, that he might be able to gain some soul to God. Amongst the poor whom he relieved there were often heretics and Mahomedans whose souls as well as their bodies he strove to nourish. He usually served them on his knees, and these poor creatures, moved by his humility and meekness, willingly entered into the sentiments he labored to inspire.

---

## CHAPTER VII.

### HIS ATTENTION TO PRISONERS—PREPARING CRIMINALS FOR DEATH.

**N**O kind of misery escaped his zeal. He found means to penetrate even into the deepest and most miserable dungeons, where his attentive kindness gained the confidence and affection of the most hardened prisoners. He excited them to patience and repentance, and when he found them sufficiently prepared, he heard their confessions, as for death. He banished from the prisons all swearing, enmities, and quarrels ; and appointed one of the most docile of the prisoners to inform him punctually when any of them relapsed into those faults, that he might severely cor-



rect them. They had public prayer every day, and at night they all assembled to recite the Litanies of our Blessed Lady. His attentions were still greater to those who were confined for debt in these dungeons; he would remain shut up with them until he had entirely consoled them. There is no kind of service which he did not render to these unfortunates. He often asked the lawyers to hasten the affairs of the poor prisoners, and employed the most able counsellors to conclude the lawsuits as soon as possible, and even in capital offences he went to the judges.

He had such a magical influence on condemned criminals that every one wished to prepare for death under his directions. Most of them considered it a grace to die in the hands of this holy man. The most savage and indomitable, at the sound of his voice, became as gentle as lambs, and instead of their ordinary imprecations, nothing was heard except sighs, and the sound of the bloody discipline which they inflicted upon themselves before their execution. He would tenderly embrace the culprit, and presenting the crucifix to him he would exclaim: "Ah, my dear brother! behold the plank God offers you in your shipwreck; you can escape the tempest by no other means. How happy should I be, if like you, I could know the hour of my death! We must all sooner or later reach the same term, and the time is of little importance." He next prepared him for a general confession, and induced him to add some voluntary penance to that assigned by law. On the day of the execution, he assembled all the prisoners, and with his hand on the criminal's head, he recited a gospel; he then said mass,

whilst the prisoners sang the Litanies of our Blessed Lady for the unfortunate man. After this he presented his crucifix to all of them to kiss, and his tender and pathetic exhortation drew tears from all eyes; then he induced the condemned man to beg pardon of the other prisoners, to recommend himself to their prayers, and even to address them a little exhortation if he were capable. He made him kiss the steps leading to the place of execution, as so many steps to heaven; he sprinkled the criminal and the instrument of torture with holy water; he had at hand biscuits, liquids and other refreshments to revive the exhausted spirits of the poor man,—in fact, he rendered every succor in his power. As soon as the execution was over, he had solemn prayers intoned by the choir of the Cathedral for the repose of the deceased. So well convinced was he of the eternal happiness of almost all those whom he assisted, that speaking once of some persons who had delivered a criminal into the hands of justice, he said, “God forgive them; but they have secured the salvation of this man at the probable risk of their own.”

A Spanish captain being condemned to the flames for coining false money, asked Father Claver to prepare him to appear before God. This he did with such success that the Captain, the day on which his sentence was pronounced, was so joyous that he wrote these moving words in his prayer-book: “This book belongs to the happiest man in the world. Justice delivers his body to death, thereby to save his soul; I beg him, into whose hands this book may fall, to recommend me to the Divine Mercy. I have sinned, O my God! and

deserve not one death only, but a thousand. My greatest grief is that I cannot repent sufficiently to compensate for my offences against Thee!" He was condemned to be strangled before being burnt, but the cord broke at the first turn. Father Claver ran to him, picked him up in his arms, and pressed his face tenderly against his own whilst the executioner passed another cord round the criminal's neck. Some religious who were present immediately exclaimed that Father Claver was irregular. "Well, be it so," answered Claver with holy zeal, "if at this price I can save a soul; but no, such an action cannot make me irregular!" The cord broke a second time, and the father did the same thing again; and although these repeated efforts made the man's face frightfully hideous, the holy man held him closely embraced, never ceasing to exhort and animate him until he had expired in most Christian sentiments. One of the religious, struck with the zeal and charity, but above all, with the extreme poverty that appeared in the whole person of the priest, exclaimed in a transport of admiration, "Behold a truly religious man, one who teaches us how to become so!"

The Count of Castle-Mayor was accused of a plot to gain the mastery of Carthagen; he was arrested by order of the court, and imprisoned in the castle of St. Croix. He effected his escape, however, and reached a Portuguese vessel which with two Dutch vessels was waiting about the coast to favor his design. A sergeant and another Portuguese were suspected of having assisted him in escaping. They were sentenced to be shot. To free themselves they falsely accused several

other persons, but Father Claver easily induced them to retract their false accusations before their execution. They were still breathing when they fell to the ground, and he hastened to encourage them in their good resolutions, nor would he quit them so long as a spark of life remained. He was once called to a Moor, who when sentence of condemnation was passed on him, became so furious that there seemed no hope of bringing him to proper sentiments. No sooner had the father spoken to him than he became softened, and so willing to suffer death in punishment for his crimes, that when other religious came to accompany him to the place of execution, they found him severely disciplining himself in expiation of his former fury, and sighing only, for the moment of his going, as he hoped, to see his God.

The most obdurate sinners could not withstand the spirit of God which animated Father Claver. A Spaniard, who for a long time had been reduced to the most abject misery and want, was charitably taken into the house of a virtuous captain, who treated him like a son. A few days after, the miserable wretch carried his ingratitude and barbarity to such an excess as to assassinate his benefactor, and run away with all the money he found in the house. God did not leave this crime unpunished; the assassin fell into the hands of justice, and was condemned to death. The sentence threw him into a furious despair, but scarcely had the father approached him ere his screams and fury changed into tears and sighs. Before his execution he begged as a favor the most cruel tortures; and during the brief term of his imprisonment, he gave such lively marks of

sorrow and repentance, that his death drew tears even from those whom his crimes had most exasperated.

Father Claver was often commissioned to assist even as many as thirty criminals at once ; yet nothing could slacken the ardor of his zeal ; nor could any of them resist his charitable remonstrances.

Five fugitive negroes were recaptured and, as a warning to others, were condemned to death. He heard their confessions, and prepared them for death. One of them, however, was still a pagan. He was so moved by the example of his companions, and still more by the charity of the holy missionary, that he was converted to the faith, and requested baptism ; so that to him human justice was the precious source of divine mercy, and his very condemnation was his salvation. Good works of this kind were so attractive to Father Claver, that when ill, and even when in his last illness, he would be carried to the prisons, in order that those unfortunate creatures should not be abandoned.

## BOOK V.

## CHAPTER I.

## HE PURCHASES INTERPRETERS.

WHAT has been already related, would appear sufficient to occupy the zeal and exhaust the powers of twenty evangelical workmen, but our Saint alone sufficed for all. In the midst of the excessive fatigues in the care of the sick, the heretics, and prisoners, he never forgot the Negroes, the most tender objects of his love. Besides those who merely disembarked at Carthage to be dispersed throughout the country, there were a great number of others retained in the city for the service of private individuals, or occupied in the neighborhood in various domestic labors. He made these latter the chief objects of his care. He would have wished to gain them all to Jesus Christ when they landed, but the lack of good interpreters checked his zeal and apostolic labors. To remedy this inconvenience, so distressing to a heart like his, he learnt the Angola language, but it would not suffice for all. His interpreters, either through their own negligence or the selfishness of their masters, often were absent when most needed. So he resolved to purchase some Negroes for the service of the college, hoping by degrees to make them good and useful auxiliaries. They were not

to be held in strict bondage, but to live in the enjoyment of certain liberties as catechists and interpreters. For this purpose, however, resources were necessary which his superiors were unable to furnish; but God, who never abandoned him, enabled him to collect abundant alms, and even seemed to authorize his zeal in this matter by events that were almost miraculous. He gave to one of his friends, who was going to Guinea, sufficient money to purchase three of the most docile and intelligent Negroes he could find, assuring him that God would protect him on the voyage. When in sight of the coast of Guinea a violent tempest arose; the fleet was dispersed in a moment, and the ship in which was the friend, struck on a rock, and was partly destroyed. In this extremity, he wrapped around his body the money which Father Claver had entrusted to him for the purchase. He divested himself of the clothing, and full of confidence, plunged into the sea. In spite of all his efforts he was on the point of being drowned, when suddenly a monstrous turtle shell, apparently sent by Providence, as formerly a whale was sent to Jonas, floated toward him. He resolved to use it as a sort of skiff, and after being tossed about for some hours, he reached the shore safe and sound; but absolutely denuded of everything excepting Father Claver's money. The temptation to use the money was great, but he preferred the deprivation of absolute necessaries, rather than fail in the execution of his commission. He purchased three slaves apparently most sensible and intelligent, not doubting that if the money of the holy man had saved him in this first voyage, the use he had made of it would be his safeguard in the

next. Nor was his hope delusive ; for God pleased with his fidelity was faithful too in His turn. The voyage was prosperous, heaven blessed the merchant's undertakings, and in a few years he became richer than ever.

By the assistance of Providence the zealous missionary succeeded in procuring seven negroes, all of different tribes ; but the care and trouble in forming and making them fit to teach others was inconceivable. He was obliged to spend several days in teaching one of them to make the sign of the cross. He was ready every day at a fixed time to instruct them. He engaged them in such work as was suited to their strength ; and the small profits were spent in purchasing others, or in succoring the infirm or aged. Though naturally serious and pensive, when with them he was always gay and cheerful, and seemed unable to contain himself. Ever attentive, he inquired about their necessities, their happiness, and the treatment they received. But more especially during illness his tenderness and affection shone forth ; then not satisfied with doing all he could for them himself, he had recourse to the best physicians. His love for them was in proportion to his hatred for himself ; he cared not what he himself suffered ; but he was inexpressibly pained at the sufferings of his Negroes. One of them was afflicted with a frightful disorder, which made him unbearable to everyone. Father Claver gained the permission of his superiors to lodge him in his own room, and in his own bed. He himself slept on the floor at the foot of the bed, and for four months he fed him, washed his wounds, and prepared all his remedies. And yet all his interpreters did not appreciate his tenderness ; they



often most insolently abused his humility and meekness. For several years he endured from one of them a sort of martyrdom, yet instead of complaining or dismissing him, he bestowed more affection on him than on the others, considering him as a messenger from heaven to try his patience and purify his virtue.

Although he was grieved at the death of the Negroes, yet so great was his distress at the loss of his interpreters that he really needed consolation, and accepted with great sensibility the condolence offered on such occasions. The obsequies were performed with great magnificence: a profusion of lights, a full choir, and a number of invited priests. On other occasions he celebrated the mass of requiem himself; but when it was for his interpreters his grief and his tears so overpowered him that he could only carry the cross. It was with the assistance of such men, formed by himself, that he exercised the greater part of his apostolic functions toward the other Negroes. It is not precisely known how many he baptized. Shortly before his death, he told a religious that he thought he had baptized more than three hundred thousand; but humility always led him to diminish the number of his good works. People well-informed have affirmed that he had baptized at least four hundred thousand. What a triumph to enter heaven accompanied by so many merits, and preceded or followed by so many thousand souls to whom he had opened the door of that blessed abode!

## CHAPTER II

## HIS MISSIONS IN COUNTRY PLACES.

NOTWITHSTANDING the care of Father Claver for these poor slaves, he never thought that he had done enough. His only relaxation after his labors in Carthagená, was to undertake others in its vicinity. Country missions usually succeeded the laborious occupations of Lent, and in these he seemed to acquire renewed strength. He always traveled on foot; for neither rain, storms, nor the excessive heats could retard for a moment his evangelical work. Like his divine model, the salvation of souls was meat and drink to him; he partook of nothing till toward mid-day. Furnished with all the powers granted to ordinaries, viz., to absolve reserved cases, to reinstate invalid marriages, and to exercise all the other functions of a missionary, he set out with no other provision than his confidence and trust in Divine Providence. He took with him a negro as interpreter, and shared with him the luggage, consisting of the vestments the requisites for mass, some rosaries, and other little objects of devotion, intended for distribution. Incredible were the fatigues in visiting those Negroes who often lived far from the city. He had often to traverse rugged mountains, to climb rocks covered with brambles, to wade through bogs and ravines; but all this only increased his courage and his gratitude toward those

who allowed him thus to labor for the glory of God and their salvation. Once on his return from a journey during a rainy and stormy season, he thanked an ecclesiastical superior who had given him the necessary faculties for his voyage, although he himself should have been greatly thanked for his labor. When the ecclesiastic asked him how he had succeeded, he answered with a smile, "O, very well, for the fruit was great, and the labor was proportioned to the fruit." Well might he say so, for often he was obliged to wade up to his knees in water and mud, and to force a path through brambles and briars, so that his feet, hands, and face were covered with scratches and wounds.

Were a chapel or oratory at the place, he immediately entered and begged the help of God in his labors. If there were none, he erected a large cross in the middle of the place, and prostrate at the foot of it, fervently implored Jesus Christ to have compassion on those souls that were in danger of being lost for want of instruction and succor. He then humbly saluted every one, and immediately visited the sick or aged either to give them some refreshment, or administer the sacraments if necessary. He carefully noticed the worst and poorest hut and there he remained during his stay. In the evening, when the Negroes returned from work, he spoke tenderly to them, and after a short rest, he knelt with them, in the chapel or around the cross, and recited some prayers aloud. He then explained the motive of his visit. He aroused a sorrow for sin and a love for God by pathetic exhortations on the great truths of religion, or on the

sufferings of the next life. To satisfy their imagination he exhibited representations of hell, and of the passion of Jesus Christ. He carefully investigated all enmities, quarrels, and other scandals, in order to apply proper remedies. Thus he labored every evening until he had heard all their confessions and given them such other help as they needed. When he had dismissed them, he severely disciplined himself, and spent several hours in prayer; then, wrapped in his cloak, he slept on the ground. At day-break he was in his confessional, and finished the labor of the morning by celebrating mass. The remainder of the day he spent partly in prayer and partly in visiting the sick and catechising the children.

Although the proprietors frequently invited him to their tables, he usually took his meals in the poorest cabin, or if through repeated importunity he consented to eat with his hosts, he partook of nothing but a bit of coarse bread made of Indian corn, or a little rice cooked with salt and water, alleging that this diet suited his constitution best. All the delicacies that were set before him he reserved for the sick.

What he most dreaded was the attentive kindness of the Spaniards; and when he could not otherwise avoid their importunities, he closed the mission as soon as he could. Nothing could induce him to break the rigorous abstinence to which he had bound himself. His slender nourishment, joined to the excess and continuity of his labors, weakened him so much that he often fell exhausted in the confessional. One morning, when this had happened, his interpreter, whom he always obeyed and consulted on any undertaking, sharply rep-

rehended his indiscretion, and tried to persuade him to take something. "Not as yet," replied the holy missionary; "to-day I have performed no service for God."

---

### CHAPTER III.

#### SUCCESS AND MIRACLES.

THE wonderful success of Father Claver indemnified him for all he underwent. Baptism conferred on hundreds of Negroes who pretended to be Christians, bad confessions set right, inveterate enmities extinguished, illicit connections broken or rectified by marriage, profanity and obscenity changed for songs of devotion, a general reformation of manners everywhere; such was the success with which God was pleased to recompense His servant. If any one, rebellious to his admonitions, was a scandal to others, he sometimes threatened him with the anger of Heaven, and the chastisement soon followed the threat. On one occasion he had in vain remonstrated with an obstinate and scandalous Negro, who heeded neither his advice nor his threats. A few days afterward he was missed. And as a party of Negroes were searching for him they met an enormous crocodile which they killed, and found within, the head and some of the limbs of the unhappy slave—a conclusive proof of his punishment. This example produced such terror throughout the settlement, that the most hardened began to dread the Divine Justice. One who had at first resisted, profited by these heavenly admonitions. The holy missionary

saw him sowing corn in a field, and said to him, "You sow, but you will not reap." He fell ill almost immediately; and although his youth, the strength of his constitution, and the trifling nature of his complaint gave him every hope of recovery, he related all to the father, prepared for death, and died in most Christian sentiments.

God frequently favored the saint in his labors with supernatural powers. A certain village had long been troubled by a volcano; the smoke was insufferable, and the lava threatened speedy destruction. At the supplication of the inhabitants, Father Claver ordered them to make a large cross, which on the following day, after he had said mass, he erected near the crater. From that moment the volcano became extinct. In the parish of Tolu the drought was so excessive and continual, that there were great fears for the crops. The curate, in the name of all the inhabitants, came to the holy missionary and entreated him to recommend the afflicted country to God, for their prayers had been in vain. He knelt down, but arose almost immediately, and with a serene countenance said, "Be comforted, you will have rain before night." Toward evening, rain began to fall, and continued in such abundance during three days and nights, that the injury caused by the drought was entirely rectified. Once on a visit to Don Nicholas de Barrios, the Negro steward of the household, full of respect for the father's sanctity, received him with every demonstration of joy, and provided a handsome apartment for his accommodation; but he would accept only a mean room, full of damaged corn and swarming with insects. God, how-

ever, recompensed the charity of the good Negro, and the father, pleased with his kind heart, promised to say three masses for him. He had already said two, when on the third day he requested his host to set out with him to say the third in some other place. The Negro, surprised at the request, objected at first, but afterward consented. Scarcely had they quitted the residence, when some Dutch pirates entered, and put all to fire and sword. He performed a similar service for another colony where he was giving a mission. He advised all who were present at his instruction to seek another home for some time; because in the following night, a troop of Englishmen would arrive, and ravage the whole country. The admonition seemed extraordinary, for it was not even known that any English had reached those seas; yet the prediction was soon verified. The pirates landed that very night, pillaged the whole district and burned every house, excepting the one in which the holy missionary had lodged, and to which he had given his blessing.

Thus did God impart interior lights to His servant, for the preservation and salvation of these new Christians. Once he suddenly left the house of a Spanish officer whom he was visiting and took the path toward some rugged mountains in the neighborhood, with neither guide nor companion, perhaps to spare him the fatigue, or to conceal the favors he received from Heaven. On his return, the officer gently reproached him for venturing alone through unknown and almost impassable roads; but he answered with great simplicity, "The salvation of three souls was in question," It afterward became known that three aged Negroes,

forgotten by everyone, had been abandoned on those mountains. They had crept under the ruins of a miserable shed, and were only awaiting the succor of a priest to enable them to die in peace.

He returned from his missions thin, attenuated, and exhausted, and yet, far from seeking remedies to restore his strength, he would take nothing but a little maize ; so that his superiors were obliged to moderate his austerities. But the restraints placed upon his mortification only served to increase his charity. When no longer engaged in the country, he resumed with redoubled ardor his usual occupations with the Negroes, heretics, and Mahomedans of the town. But he was pained to the heart at the vices and indifference of Catholics. He considered his work among idolaters as trivial, when he beheld the extent of evil amongst the faithful. He attempted to remedy this by words and examples. He always appeared abroad so recollected, and so full of God, that he inspired respect and piety in all who saw him. He used to go forth into the public streets, and there make moving exhortations to the people, on the horror of vice and the chastisements in store for the sinner. If he saw a dispute or quarrel, he advanced at once, and his presence alone sufficed to bring peace. If he met persons playing at games of chance, he would himself regulate the stakes, in order to prevent, by the smallness of the sum, those excesses often caused by avarice and desperation. He used particularly to urge them to abstain from cheating by which an amusement became a disgraceful traffic, or a sinful robbery. Criminals and men of doubtful morals ; so feared him, that whenever possible they avoided



him, The liveliness of his zeal in reprimanding cursing and obscure language, usually rendered his correction as efficacious as the sweetness of his charity made it amiable. It was by this happy mixture of severity and mildness that he acquired an authority over even the most licentious and abandoned.

Beside the care of the hospitals and prisons, which he never forsook, he frequently visited the tents of the soldiers, the warehouses of the merchants, and the shops of the mechanics. He had a special talent for foreseeing and preventing the occasions of offending Almighty God. He made it his duty to go and extinguish the first sparks of enmity or discord, and seldom did he fail insomuch that he was commonly called the Angel of Peace. He constantly made war against luxury and immodesty in dress. He presented to such women a picture representing several devils tormenting a woman of the world, dressed in a style little suited to Christian propriety and simplicity. By this innocent artifice he succeeded to a great extent in correcting a defect, so common to the female sex; and this certainly was one of the greatest prodigies he had ever effected, for most zealous and most eloquent preachers had failed to remedy this disorder. He put into practice every possible means of reforming manners or of sanctifying souls. He frequently visited the workshops of the mechanics, where usually children and young people were employed. They were more likely than others to profit by his instructions. He exhorted them to fear and love God, and to cultivate a tender devotion to our Blessed Lady. When he visited the sick, he usually desired his companion to instruct the children,

or address a short exhortation to the family ; and if the invalid died whilst he was there, he took the opportunity of recommending to those present the necessity of living well, that so they might die well.

The lustre of his sanctity and the report of his miracles, attracted a great number of distinguished personages to seek his confessional and guidance ; but he was desirous of attaching himself neither to the rich nor to the great. The care of the Negroes, the sick, and the poor, gave him full occupation, and moreover he knew well that, generally speaking, from persons blinded by their passions and enervated by prosperity very little spiritual good may be expected. Whenever they were in affliction or disgrace, he willingly received them ; but in all other cases he tried civilly to avoid them. For much time must be lost in compliments, ceremony, and useless or worldly discourse, whilst he only cared to speak of God, and to attend to the salvation of souls. There were some, however, who by prayer and entreaty obtained the favor they desired. Of this small number was Peter Calderon, an officer of the Inquisition. He said, that from the time he went to confession to Father Claver, he scarcely recognized himself, because by the help of his counsels he pursued the path of virtue joyfully and without difficulty. He held Father Claver in such esteem, that he often wished to accompany him in his good deeds. One day when the holy man was returning from hearing the confession of a poor sick woman, whom he much esteemed for her virtue, and whom he had almost restored to health by his mere presence, such a furious tempest arose that he was compelled to seek shelter in

a neighboring house. The rain having ceased a little he wished to proceed, although the streets were like torrents; but Calderon stopped him, representing to him, that being already old and infirm he would order a chair for him. "No, no," said the father, smiling, "I will not allow that; a good fisherman ought not to be afraid of wetting his feet." Notwithstanding all he could say the chair was brought, and he was made to sit in it in spite of himself; it was afterward kept by the family with great respect, as a relic.

---

## CHAPTER IV.

### HE REFORMS LIBERTINES.

THE labors of Father Claver for the Spaniards met with the same success as those he undertook for the Negroes. It would seem as if God, for His own glory, had imparted to his words a powerful efficacy, and an irresistible charm; a word from him often sufficed to disconcert the most hardened libertine. Emmanuel Rodriguez declared that he had one evening placed himself behind a tree, with a criminal intention. The night was so dark that it was impossible to discern an object at a distance of two or three paces. Yet Father Claver returning from a sick-call, approached the tree, and exclaimed, "Beware, miserable man! for death is on the watch behind that tree." These words fell like a thunderbolt on Rodriguez; he took to his heels, and entirely renounced his criminal project.

This ascendancy over the human heart was so well

known, that he was always called to the most desperate sinners when all other means had failed. Two or three instances will suffice. He was told that a man was dying in a state of despair; he would hearken neither to prayers or exhortations: if the crucifix was presented to him, he turned away his head in a rage: the most zealous priests had reaped no other fruit from their labors than the grief of seeing him become more obdurate and rebellious. Father Claver hastened to him, and, from the first, was much better received than any of the others. He spent the remainder of that day in prayer for him, and returned on the morrow full of confidence in God. After saying all that the ardor of his zeal inspired, he drew his crucifix from his bosom, and presented it to the sick man, with the desire that he should reverence it, and place the end upon his mouth. He did so, and at the same moment his heart became softened; he begged pardon of God with every sign of sincere repentance, and after receiving the last sacraments with exemplary piety, he died, leaving in the minds of all an assured hope of his salvation. The holy man, full of joy, hastened to the house of a pious gentleman and begged he would join with him in thanking God for the mercy He had shown this poor sinner.

A Spanish woman who had led a profligate life was in danger of death. She seemed possessed by an impure spirit; for to all salutary admonitions, her only replies were obscene expressions. Father Claver called to see her and read a gospel over her; but his kindness was acknowledged only by obscene language. The zeal of the chaste man was immediately enkindled,

and with a countenance of holy indignation, and a voice which filled the soul of the miserable woman with terror, he presented his crucifix and exclaimed: "Go, since you will, to hell: go, by all means; and here behold your Judge, who condemns you!" Silenced by these words, she dared not even raise her eyes. He, like a good shepherd, who only strikes the stray sheep to make it re-enter the fold, immediately began in a mild tone to conjure her to hope in the mercy of a God who was crucified for her salvation. These powerful motives moved her heart; she made her confession, and her abundant tears left no room to doubt the sincerity of her conversion. But it was not the same with another libertine woman, whom the servant of God had long exhorted to lead a more regular life. In spite of all his endeavors she always persisted in deferring her conversion till some other time. "Well," said he to her one day, "continue to close your ears to the voice of God, who calls you; in a short time you will see the result of your obstinacy." The chastisement soon followed the threat; in less than a fortnight she was suddenly attacked by a violent disorder and died in the presence of her accomplice without even time for reflection.

---

## CHAPTER V.

### RECONCILIATIONS.

**I**N effecting reconciliations, Father Claver was equally as fortunate. God seems to have placed the key of all hearts in his hands. A lady of high rank sought a

divorce from her husband. Her action was a great scandal to the whole city, for she seemed to be actuated more from caprice and disgust than from any solid reason. The official to whom she carried her complaint put her under the protection of Don Diego de Villegas, who together with his wife used every endeavor to effect a reconciliation. She, however, became more obstinate than ever, refused to eat with them, or even to speak to them, and gave them to understand, that rather than return to her husband she would hang herself. Don Diego, not knowing how to subdue her resistance, begged Father Claver to undertake this difficult task. He reasoned with both parties, but found them both equally obstinate. He had recourse immediately to his usual arms, prayer. A few days afterward the lady was heard screaming and crying out for help. Don Diego ran up to her room, and found her pale and terrified. She said, that she had just seen two devils, one on either side of her bed, ready to carry her off, and that they threatened to do the same to the counsellor and attorney who had undertaken her cause. Whether this was a dream or a vision, the results were most happy. Father Claver spoke to the lady and gentleman, and on Saturday assured Don Diego that everything would be satisfactorily arranged on the following Monday. Such were the difficulties that a result of that nature seemed scarcely probable; yet so great was the holy man's power of persuasion, that both parties yielded and lived very happily together afterward.

Thus occupied, in reforming, succoring, and consoling the inhabitants of Carthage, the four last months of the year furnished still more ample matter for his

zeal. From the beginning of September until Christmas, the Spanish fleets repaired to the Bay of Carthagena to meet the vessels which arrived there from Peru, Quito, and Potosi, laden with the riches of the Indies. This accumulation of foreigners formed in a manner a new city, still more corrupt than the other. They yielded to every kind of excess without restraint:— Quarrels, enmities, revenge, and duelling raged in full fury. Abandoned women, attracted by the hope of gain, flocked in from all parts; sordid interest corrupted many others; in fine, drunkenness, usury, fraud, oaths, and blasphemies, turned this licentious multitude into a set of pagans.

This torrent of iniquity the Apostle of Carthagena undertook to stem. For this purpose, with some well-instructed youths, formed in his own school, he went to the Great Square, where the four principal streets of the city meet. There he remained the greater part of the day, instructing, exhorting, and inviting sinners to repentance, and so moving were his discourses, that no one could hear him without being softened. It would be impossible to say how many hatreds and enmities he stifled, how many improper connections he dissolved, how many usuries and other vices he abolished. The fruit of his labors was so abundant, that toward the end of the year the confessionals were as much thronged as during Holy Week; and many persons entirely forsook the world to embrace a religious state. It would have been impossible for one man to have so succeeded, had not God Himself made him the depository of His power and virtue.

## CHAPTER VI.

## MIRACLES AND PROPHECY.

**B**UT Heaven had made him the Apostle of the Carthaginian Negroes, and had favored him with the gifts of those apostles who are sent to carry the name of Jesus Christ to infidel nations. Those gifts were miracles, prophecy and the knowledge of the heart's secrets.

Although we have narrated several miracles which he performed in favor of his Negroes, yet to briefly mention a few more will not be out of place.

Franc is Lopez, who collected alms for the lights of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament, usually chose the middle of the day, because the intense heat retained most people at home: in consequence, he was attacked by a serious illness. His uncle, Peter Mercado, immediately called Father Claver, but when he arrived, Lopez was, to all appearances, dead. "He is not dead;" Father Claver said confidently to the grief-stricken family. "He in whose service he has lost his health, well knows how to restore it; and has only permitted the danger to be so great, to show forth the greatness of His own mercy." He then ordered the water from a certain sort of sponge to be squeezed into his mouth, although every one knew that this was a dangerous proceeding, and at the time useless, for the man was dead. Yet after the departure of



the priest they applied the remedy, but without avail, Mercado again hastened to Father Claver and, with tearful eyes, narrated the ill-success of the application. "What!" said the servant of God to him, "are you weeping thus for your nephew? Let us return; the remedy will perhaps succeed better the next time." He immediately repaired to the sick man's house, blessed the liquid he had already ordered, stirred it with his hand and no sooner had he given some to the sick man, than he was heard to utter a deep sigh. Every one exclaimed that this was a miracle, but in the first transport of joy the Father escaped. Yet careful as had been his humility in concealing this prodigy from the eyes of men, his precipitate flight, his confusion, and his pertinacity in insisting on a remedy which in such circumstances was often more injurious than useful, betrayed him in spite of himself; but what leaves no further room for doubt, is the fact that the man was perfectly cured the very same day.

A slave belonging to a person who lived near the college was at the point of death. She was the only servant, and consequently the loss would be irreparable. Father Claver was sent for, and after hearing her confession and absolving her, he said, "Arise, Mary, and wait upon your mistress!" She obeyed, and from that moment was able to do her usual work.

The sister of Donna Isabella Urbina was attacked with a putrid smallpox. Isabella sent a sedan chair for Father Claver, who was then very old and infirm, to come and prepare her sister for death. On his arrival he made the invalid take a little sweetmeat, and then said to Isabella, "Do not be afraid that your sister will

die. It is true, death has been very near, but it has now passed!" The physician entered a few minutes after, and finding the patient very weak he recommended the administration of extreme unction. But so confident were they of the power of Father Claver, that they disregarded the advice. Nor was there any necessity, for in a short time, the sister was entirely restored to health. But Almighty God by a very different, though not less miraculous event, gave the same lady to understand that He knows what is to our advantage much better than we do; and that in all cases we must confide in Him. Her husband was attacked by a contagious distemper, and notwithstanding the fact that Father Claver read a gospel over him, and presented to him a picture of Blessed Alonso, to whose canonization he promised, in case of recovery, to contribute a large sum of money, he soon afterward died. Isabella was inconsolable, and complained bitterly that Father Claver had deceived her, for had he prayed for the recovery of her husband, God would have certainly granted his request. "No," he answered, "I have not deceived you; and Brother Alonso himself earnestly begged of our Lord the sick man's cure; but our Divine Saviour answered him that it was much more to the advantage of the patient to die now, because he would never be in better dispositions." He so often afterward positively asserted that the gentleman was saved, that no one could doubt his knowledge of the fact; and the pious wife was consoled for the loss of her husband by the certainty of his happiness.

A slave of Donna Maria de Bellido was thought to

The Library  
St. Joseph's Priory

be dead, and the attendants were preparing to bury her when Father Claver suddenly appeared. "She is not dead," he exclaimed, "nor will she die now." He then called her by name. She immediately opened her eyes, made her confession, and was perfectly restored to health. Another day he found a man without sense or feeling and apparently dead. He placed his cross upon the body and retired, but he had gone but a few paces ere he was recalled. He was informed that the sick man wished to speak to him. He returned, and found the man who had been thought dead perfectly cured. He restored the cross with a thousand thanks to his benefactor, who promptly returned to the college without uttering a word; but his companion as much surprised at the father's silence, as at the miracle itself, no sooner arrived than he told every one what he had seen.

The devils could not resist him any more than maladies, and the number of possessed persons whom he delivered was innumerable. The following instance was witnessed by many persons. In the hospital of St. Sebastian, a pagan Negro, was attacked by an extraordinary and apparently incurable disorder. He suddenly forgot his native language, and spoke one that nobody could understand; he heard an internal voice threatening him with death, if he should ever think of being baptized, and he became so furious that he was continually trying to destroy himself. Father Claver was called, and easily discerned the artifice and rage of the spirit of darkness. Placing his hand on the poor man's head he recited some gospels and the Creed. The devil immediately took to flight, the man became calm,

recovered his natural tongue, and asked for baptism. which he had no sooner received than he was entirely freed from all his infirmities.

One day as Father Claver, all absorbed in God, was giving communion to the people, having on the richest chasuble belonging to the college, he struck against a lamp, and all the oil was spilt over him. On returning to the sacristy after mass, the sacristan was in despair at seeing his best vestment ruined, and he could not help reproaching him very severely, and in no measured terms; but finding the father made no answer, he went away grumbling, putting the chasuble in a separate place, to prevent it from spoiling the others. The holy man retired into the church and began to pray for the sacristan, who had just treated him so uncourteously. On the following day the sacristan went to look at his chasuble again, and casting on it an eye of compassion, so natural in such circumstances, was much astonished to find it as clean, and even more brilliant, than before. The surprise was equal to the joy of this good religious, who was as much pleased by the restoration of his vestment, as by the prodigy which had effected it.

We might fill a whole volume, were we to relate all the wonders performed by this holy apostle in the exercise of his ministry: we will cite one remarkable instance, which was even more spoken of than many of the others. A young Catalan, determined to embark, as surgeon, on board a vessel bound for the island of Cuba. Before setting sail he asked Father Claver to give him, as the safeguard of his voyage, some relics which he carefully wrapped in paper, and placed on his breast. The vessel in company with another was

attacked by a hostile ship, when in sight of Jamaica, and in the midst of the combat, the surgeon was struck by a ball which pierced his breast. When undressed, it was found that the ball had been impeded by the paper, and hence had made only a slight contusion on the flesh. He was eager to explain the cause of his preservation, and was consequently obliged to share the paper and relics with the crew. The enemy had disembarked the prisoner on the island of Jamaica, and the report of the surgeon's safety was soon noised abroad. The governor, who had been on the voyage, spread the news through Carthagena, and the surgeon was not long in tendering his thanks to Father Claver, and in committing to writing a fact so miraculous.

The power thus communicated to the servant of God seemed useless only to himself, so that in the infirmities which overwhelmed him he found no resource but in his patience and submission to the will of God. One day however he had a violent fall, which produced a large wound on his head; it was at first dressed by an unskilful surgeon, and another more able was called. The latter thought it necessary to re-open the wound, and on the following day finding it perfectly cured, with nothing more than a slight red scar remaining, exclaimed in astonishment, "A greater Surgeon than I am has been here!" He then asked the infirmarian for a fresh linen, under pretext of changing the bandages, but in reality that he might have the satisfaction of carrying away the linen stained with the blood of so holy a man. On reaching home he applied it to his wife's eyes, which had been in an inflamed

state for the last three months, and at the same moment they were perfectly cured.

To experience the effect of his power with God, it was not always necessary to apply to him. We have already remarked, that he often knew, as if by some supernatural means, the wants of sick or afflicted persons. This was juridically proved in the informations, and we will here relate a few instances. A poor man named Alonso Nicholas, who lived in a retired and unknown place, was dangerously ill, and much to his surprise, he one day saw Father Claver enter his lodging. The holy man exhorted him to make his confession, and finding that his name was Nicholas, he drew from his pocket a picture of that saint which he presented to him. In it was represented a troop of devils fleeing at the sight of the holy bishop. The dreadful expression of their countenances made such an impression on Alonso, that he instantly conceived a lively sorrow for his sins, and in order to begin a more Christian life he made a general confession. The father gave him a considerable alms, and continued to visit him during his illness, performing the most humiliating services for him. When he was able to walk, he went daily to the church of the college, and as soon as the father saw him, he left his confessional to help him as far as the chapel of the Saviour, where he placed him in a position to hear mass comfortably. The wonders so often performed for the Negroes were frequently repeated in favor of Spaniards also who needed prompt succor. One day whilst he was going to a sick person, he stopped suddenly in the middle of the road, and said to his companion, "Brother, let us retrace our steps,

and let us go and save a soul." He walked rapidly toward a spot, signified to him by the Spirit of God, and entered a hut, where he found a poor Spaniard, who through despair and misery, had hanged himself. As he still breathed Father Claver cut the rope, received the unfortunate man in his arms, and by his care at length restored animation. Then applying himself next to the cure of his soul, he made him understand and feel the risk he had incurred of perishing eternally. Penetrated with sincere sorrow for his crime, he confessed his sins, and resolved to accept with submission the cross which God had laid upon him.

A Spanish lady whose son had badly managed her property, became involved in debt, and was besieged by merciless creditors. So intense was her despair that she determined to poison herself, and so rid herself of all her troubles. She was about to lock her door and secure herself from interruption in the execution of her design, when Father Claver, led by a particular inspiration, entered the court. "What is now the matter, Madam?" said he, looking at her with much kindness and compassion. Struck at a visit so unexpected, she fell at his feet, and showed him the poison, exclaiming:—"Ah, father, you are welcome! No doubt you are an angel sent by God to aid me." He firmly reprehended her, and pointed out the eternal debt she was thus about to contract, the tyranny of the devils to whom she would have given herself, and the advantages of afflictions and patience. "And why," added he, "should we despair even in this life? Why not have recourse to God? Do you not know that He is a Father who never abandons those that trust in Him?" Deeply affected,

she acknowledged her fault, went to confession, and resigned herself perfectly to all that Providence should please to send.

Almighty God often deprives men of the perishable goods of fortune, to inspire them with the desire of such as are eternal, but there are few who imitate Job's resignation; the greater number suffer in this world, only to suffer still more in eternity. How many persons in Carthage would have experienced this misfortune had it not been for the zeal and charity of its holy apostle! A man had lost all his property, and was so afflicted by his avaricious creditors, and the poverty of his numerous family, that in the excess of his sorrow and despair he incessantly heard a voice saying to him, "Hang thyself, hang thyself!" He at last resolved to yield to the tempter, but God had pity on him, and led him to the house of a friend who suspected his design, and took him to Father Claver. The holy man, by means of his peculiar talent of persuasion, induced him to relate his deplorable condition, and to make a general confession. He then put a medal of St. Ignatius on his neck, and sent him home so much consoled, that in the space of a fortnight he regained both his health and cheerfulness.

---

## CHAPTER VII.

### HE PENETRATES THE SECRETS OF HEARTS.

**G**OD not only gave to Father Claver the gift of miracles, and the faculty of consoling persons reduced to despair. He also added the gift of prophecy



and of penetrating the secrets of hearts. The number of souls whom he so opportunely succored, when he could not naturally have been informed of their state, is an inconsistible proof of this. He read the hearts of the Negroes who confessed to him ; reminding them of the sins which they either had forgotten, or concealed through shame. He discovered their dissensions, secret enmities, or plans of escape, in spite of their endeavors to hide them ; and it is incredible how many he was thus enabled to keep to their duty. In a monastery where the holy man occasionally went, a nun was desired to disclose to him certain extraordinary things that occurred to her. But in her confession she made no mention of what she had been desired to tell. Before however sending her away the father reproached her for her disobedience on this point ; and so great was her surprise, that whilst she owned her fault, she also disclosed to him the whole matter.

Don Diego de Villegas had been for some time so uneasy about an affair of consequence, which he dared not communicate to any one that he could not attend to his ordinary duties. One day as he was leaving the church, Father Claver said to him in a tone of authority, "Leave that ; abandon all to God." "What is it that I am to abandon ?" asked the Spaniard in great surprise. Then the father, disclosing to him what he so anxiously concealed, entreated him not to be uneasy, but to confide in God, who would take care of all. Don Diego was so struck with what he had heard, and so convinced that there must have been in it something supernatural, that he could scarcely recover from his astonishment, and he ever after esteemed the father as

a saint, and a prophet inspired by God. Many facts might be cited to prove that Don Diego was not mistaken in this opinion. Father Claver long endeavored to effect a reconciliation between Thomas Lopez and a man who had killed his brother. The mother of Lopez fell ill, and the father, with his usual charity, went to visit her, and gave her a considerable alms to relieve her poverty. When her son was informed he fancied the holy man wanted to purchase the reconciliation, and that the gift was not a pure alms. With this idea he carried the money back to the father, who, without giving him time to say a word, said mildly to him, "No, my son, you are mistaken: my intention was to give an alms; not to make a purchase." Lopez was astounded; and seeing that it was loss of time to contend against a saint, who saw into the recesses of his heart, he became sincerely reconciled with his enemy, and put himself entirely in the hands of his benefactor.

Another young man, a great profligate, urged by the solicitations of his parents, went to Father Claver and asked if he would hear his confession. "Why should I not?" returned the father; "but why do you not come better disposed to this great grace? go immediately to the foot of the altar, prepare yourself better, and then return." The young man, after reciting a few prayers out of complaisance rather than piety, came again to the holy man, who said to him with deep emotion: "My son, we must not make a mockery of God in this way; you are now worse disposed than you were before. It is possible that you will not resolve to detach yourself from that unfortunate creature?" At these words he took him by the hand, led him before the Blessed

Sacrament, and made him recite five Paters and Aves. In an instant the young libertine became changed; he conceived a lively sorrow for his sins, and after making his confession with great sincerity, he for ever renounced the object of his infamous passion.

About the same time a little incident occurred which tended to confirm the opinion of his supernatural lights. Donna Constantia de Luna had twins of about a month old, who did nothing but pine and cry, so as to disturb the repose of the house. The family, unable to discover the cause of this incessant restlessness, had recourse to Father Claver. He went to the lady's house, and on seeing the two children he said smilingly, "Are these the two little naughty things that give all this trouble?" He then asked for water to baptize them, but he was informed that they had been baptized by a woman at the time of their birth. "I know it," he answered, "but they were not properly baptized." The woman was questioned, and it was ascertained that she had failed in an essential circumstance, whereby the baptism was null. He baptized them himself and they became perfectly tranquil.

The future was no more concealed from him than the secrets of hearts or the wants of the unfortunate. The wife of Don Gabriel de Mendez, Governor of St. Martha, before her departure for Europe, went to take leave of the Apostle of Carthage, and recommend herself to his prayers. "Madam," answered he, "go with the blessing of God; but know, that shortly after this voyage, which will be prosperous, you must undertake another and a longer one." To satisfy her curiosity, he plainly told her that the journey would be to another

life ; she would die a few days after her arrival in Spain ; and that as God intended to call her to Himself, she ought to submit to His holy will, which disposes all for our good. Though young and in perfect health, the lady followed Father Claver's counsel, and carefully prepared herself to appear before God ; and her death, which followed soon after her disembarkation, justified the wisdom of his precautions.

Another time, when in the house of Donna Anna de Villedo, he eagerly inquired for a certain slave, who had gone out on business, and desired the lady to send him as soon as he returned. "What do you wish me to do?" said the Negro, as soon as he saw him. "I want you to confess immediately, as for death," replied the father. The slave seriously objected, for he was in perfect health, and had nothing to fear ; but he finally yielded to the solicitations of the priest. On returning home he ate a good supper, went to bed quite well, and the next morning was found dead. A report soon afterward reached Carthagena that the husband of this same lady had been killed in the war in Catalonia. A friend pleaded that the news was uncertain, but her consolation was of no avail. She finally sent for Father Claver, but he refused to go, saying, "Why should I, since I can give her no hope?" Letters soon arrived from Spain certifying the death of the Spanish gentleman.

Captain Peter Doriola went to beg Father Claver to recommend to God, his son who had shortly before set sail to pursue his studies at Salamanca. "It is precisely what I was this moment doing," answered he, "for the galleons are now encountering a terrible storm, but by

Divine protection they will not perish." The captain carefully noted the day and hour of the prediction; and the first letter from his son confirmed the truth of it.

Father Claver went to prepare for death Augustine de Barona, who had been ill for some time. They had talked an hour and a-half, when the wife and son, through curiosity, wished to hear the conversation. They saw the priest on his knees, and with clasped hands, he was begging the sick man to recommend him to God, when he would, on the morrow, enter His presence. Barona tenderly embracing him, promised to do so. The wife, overwhelmed with grief, burst into tears; but her son gently reminded her of the prediction of Father Claver. Barona died the following day, and this led them the more readily to believe that the other part of the prediction had also been verified.

Of all the people in Carthagená Donna Isabella d' Urbina, his penitent, had the most frequent opportunities of witnessing the gift of prophecy with which God had favored her holy director. One day after her confession, he imposed on her by way of penance to pray for her slaves, on an estate of hers at a considerable distance from Carthagená, "And especially for that poor martyr," said he twice with great emotion. A week after Donna Isabella heard that at that same hour the master of the slaves finding one of them resting because he felt ill, imagined the poor man had left his work through negligence, and had him violently dragged to prison and loaded with irons, where he died of misery and exhaustion. During a visit to the same lady and her sister, a few days before Lent, he said, "In truth there will be no need of fine dresses here!" On the first

Sunday their father, Don John, was taken so ill, that the two sisters had quite enough to do in nursing him. At the end of a month he was so weak, that it was proposed, although against the wishes of the physician, to give him the Viaticum, but Father Claver assured them that it was not yet time. A few days later the invalid was seized with violent vomitings, which endangered his life. Donna Isabella ran the next day to her director to beg the help of his prayers. "What!" said he, striking his hand twice on the little table before his confessional, "What! prayers for that holy Job; God has for him a brilliant crown in heaven, but not before Holy Week." In effect, he died on Palm Sunday, and thus, as far as the two ladies were concerned, the Lent passed as Father Claver had informed them.

There was a talented young Spaniard at Carthagena, named Emmanuel Alvarez. Father Claver exhorted him to quit the world and take the religious habit, telling him that he would die sooner than he expected, and specifying even the month and year. Alvarez, uncertain what to do, disclosed this to no one, but pursued his studies at Santa Fe for some years. After taking the usual degrees, he returned to Carthagena, though without finding Father Claver, who had died a short time before. Alvarez took the habit of St. Francis, and toward the middle of his noviciate fell ill; his superiors wished to send him home to recover, because the illness seemed likely to be long and dangerous. "No, no," said the young man confidently; "it would be quite useless; I am to die this year, in this place, and next month too. A long time ago my holy

Father Claver predicted this, and it will assuredly so happen." And so it did; the novice died holily in the beginning of the following month.

Don Lopez D'Estrada, the eldest son of the sister of Donna Isabella D'Urbina, being punished by his master for negligence of his studies, resolved, in a fit of vexation, to enter the monastery of St. Francis, as a religious. His parents were very uneasy, and his mother informed Father Claver, that although she would be delighted to see her children choose so holy a path, yet her son was not in a condition to form such a decision. "Do not fear," answered the holy man; "Don Lopez will never be a religious, but you must make up your mind to consecrate to God your two younger sons, who will become Jesuits." The eldest son changed his mind, and the two others, who had never thought of being religious, earnestly solicited permission to join the Jesuits; but their Father, Don Pedro, could not be brought to consent. Some time afterward young Don Lopez embarked for the island of St. Catherine, and the vessel in which he sailed struck upon a rock and was shattered to pieces. The news soon came to Carthage, and the fragments of the vessel which drifted ashore confirmed the most alarming apprehensions. The pilot's mother, almost frantic, went to Father Claver to ask the assistance of his prayers. "Be consoled," said he, "and do not weep; the ship has indeed suffered, but not a man on board has perished." He repeated the same to the mother of Don Lopez, who was in extreme affliction, adding, moreover, that she would soon see her son again. In the meantime prayers were offered in all the churches of Car-

thagena, and that belonging to the Jesuits was never empty. Notwithstanding all Father Claver could say, Don Pedro could not be reassured. One day as he was praying with great fervor in the Chapel of the Saviour, he promised Almighty God that if he received good news of his eldest son, he would allow the two youngest to become religious. Scarcely had he made this promise, than on quitting the church he met a man bringing a letter from Don Lopez, informing him that he was safe at Porto Bello, with all the ship's crew. Don Pedro immediately returned to the chapel to thank God; he had a solemn Te Deum sung by the choir of the cathedral, in the very place where he had made his promise. Shortly afterward, the two young brothers entered the Society, where they acquired a high reputation for virtue. The holy missionary, who had so lately given this positive assurance of Don Lopez's preservation, soon had occasion to give melancholy tidings of him. Once after hearing the confession of his aunt, Donna Isabella, the father told her she would have to deplore a death in November, which caused her much uneasiness. A few days later, meeting her with her sister, the mother of Don Lopez, he said to them, "For October, for October." As he looked at them both with a melancholy expression, each one feared for herself, yet knew not what to think. In fine, the Spanish fleet arrived in the month of November, bringing letters announcing the death of Don Lopez, who had gone over to Spain some time before. He had reached Spain during the siege of Barcelona, and being eager to signalize his courage, had offered his services, and was killed there on the 7th of October.



## BOOK VI.

## CHAPTER I.

## HIS LOVE OF GOD AND SPIRIT OF PRAYER.

**M**EN become saints by their exalted virtues rather than by prodigies, revelations, and ecstasies, although these extraordinary gifts usually indicate great sanctity. And from what we have seen of Father Claver—his labors and his actions—we cannot but form a high idea of his sanctity. But before speaking of his happy death, and the brilliant reward which awaited him in heaven, we shall briefly fashion into one grand mosaic his most eminent virtues. They will serve to render still more credible the wonders already related, as well as those which are yet to be added.

The love of God, which is the queen of virtues, and from which all others spring, reigned supremely in his heart. All his enterprises, all his labors, all his sufferings, all his mortifications, sprang from his extreme desire of enduring something for God, and thereby attesting his love. Whatever he might do or suffer, he always thought it nothing, because neither labor nor suffering could ever satisfy his charity. Hence arose that continual prayer, which neither the most laborious occupations nor the most depressing maladies, could ever interrupt; hence too that intimate union with God,

which seemed more like that of a seraph than of a man. Any one who saw his modesty, his recollection, his serenity—even in the midst of the greatest tumult, could easily judge how completely he was absorbed in God ; neither noise, peril, nor anything else, could withdraw his mind from this divine object. One day whilst on a street of Carthagera, he would have been knocked down by two unmanageable horses, had it not been for his companion who pulled him into an open shop. So absorbed was he in God, that he neither saw nor heard anything, nor did he even ask what the difficulty was.

When not occupied in the service of his neighbor, prayer was his relaxation after his apostolic labors. Father Morillo, rector of the college, used to say that he never knew when Father Claver's prayer ended, because whenever he went to his room he always found him praying. Sometimes he opened the door quietly, and found him with a crown of thorns on his head, or a rope round his neck, and often so out of himself, that rather than disturb him he withdrew without saying a word. Those who watched him most narrowly attested that he only allowed himself two or three hours' sleep, spending the rest of the night in prayer ; and even this short sleep was often interrupted by tender aspirations to God. The thunder-storms are terrific in Carthagera, especially in the night ; Father Gonzales, his next neighbor, used to go trembling with fright on such occasions into the holy man's room, kneel down close beside him for greater security, and when the storm was over, go away again without Father Claver's hearing him, or having for an instant suspended his contemplation. The celestial favors he experienced in prayer

were never fully known, because he always took great care to hide them. But his profound humility, his prodigious mortification, his invincible patience in labor, his perfect detachment from creatures, his extreme self-contempt, his purity of life, his ecstasies, and his prophetic spirit, which unveiled to him alike the necessities of the absent, the secrets of hearts, and future events, all these are incontestable proofs of his intimate communications with God, and of the sublime degree of contemplation to which he was raised. He was often seen, during the Divine Sacrifice, or when praying amidst his poor of St. Lazarus, or even when assisting criminals at their execution, surrounded by so brilliant a light, that the eye was dazzled with merely looking at him. The silent time of night was most particularly devoted to his more fervent prayers. Some one who passed his door once saw through the crevices so strong a light, that he thought the room was on fire. He quickly entered, and perceived a soft yet brilliant light, in the midst of which was the holy man, raised from the ground, immovable, and absorbed in profound contemplation. The same thing happened to a Negro attendant. One night as he entered the room he saw it suddenly filled with a bright light. On looking for the father he saw him suspended in the air, in a kneeling posture, with his eyes tenderly fixed on a crucifix which he held in his hand. He remained in this state several hours, and at length descended to the ground and resumed his natural position.

The brother who attended him in his last illness also witnessed the same prodigy. He was so amazed, that had he not respected the humility of the saint, he

would have called the other religious. The holy man was so mortified, when he regained his senses, that he bound the brother to silence. Yet notwithstanding all the extraordinary favors he received from Heaven, he prepared for his meditation with the simplicity of a novice.

---

## CHAPTER II.

### DEVOTION TO THE PASSION AND TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

FATHER CLAVER had a particular devotion toward the Passion of our Lord. He began almost all his prayers by a lively representation of the dolorous mysteries of his divine Saviour, and from the tender consideration of His Passion he was insensibly raised to the sublime contemplation of His essence. On these occasions he usually held some little pictures, representing the mystery on which he was meditating ; they were found after his death, but almost obliterated by his kisses and his tears. On days when he was less engaged in external occupations, he made the stations before a large crucifix that was in a retired part of the house ; and when he thought no one could hear him he used to exclaim, " Oh, my Jesus ! My God crucified for me, I love Thee much ; yes, very much, with all my heart ! " He used constantly to speak of his Saviour's Passion, and always with tears and sighs, and almost fainting with love ; so that all who heard him were inspired with a holy tenderness mingled with joy. Although his face was always thin and withered, in

consequence of his austerities, yet in Holy Week it became so wan and worn with sorrow that he appeared a living image of our suffering Jesus. A religious who was well acquainted with him for many years, was convinced that the instruments of the Passion were engraven on his heart. Every Friday night he left his room unperceived, with a rope round his neck, a crown of thorns on his head, and a cross on his shoulders, traversed all the most retired parts of the house, as if to follow Jesus walking to Calvary.

If the mere recollection of our Saviour's Passion penetrated him with such tender compassion, His presence in the Eucharist inflamed him with love. He stood before Him as if he beheld Him with his bodily eyes. The sacred Humanity of Jesus, His Divinity, His Omnipotence, His infinite Love in this august mystery, attracted the emotions of his heart and mind; and his faith raised him in some sort to the state of the Blessed, who contemplate God face to face. It was in the presence of this Divine Sacrament that he spent the most of his time of prayer, coming thither frequently every day; and during his last illness, when he was unable to walk, he had himself carried thither as often as he could. When traversing the city, if he saw any church door open, he always entered to adore his God concealed within the tabernacle; and he was sensibly afflicted to see His court so deserted, whilst the public streets were crowded. On the eve of great festivals and particular indulgences he used to go through the streets exhorting people to prepare to communicate the next day. He was, above all, careful that the Negroes should not be deprived of the happiness of receiving

the Viaticum in their sickness ; and that the ceremony might be more decently performed, he would himself sweep and perfume their huts, and even cover their beds with a silk counterpane, which had been given him for this purpose. His conduct with regard to these poor slaves was much criticized. He was blamed for allowing them to communicate so often, and accused of following his piety rather than prudence ; but he well knew the most proper course, and how to exclude from this grace those who were not duly disposed. He paid little attention therefore to the sayings of men, but followed herein the plan inspired by God. They might be rude and ignorant, but then they were carefully instructed before their reception of the holy mysteries. They might seem loathsome and filthy to the eyes of others, but he looked only at the purity of their souls. If others treated them as the outcasts of nature, he respected the beauty of that grace with which they were inwardly adorned, and which made them dear and precious to him. " Why," said he sometimes, " should they, since they are Christians, be hindered from obeying the precepts of Jesus Christ and of His Church ? Why, under pretext of their wretchedness, deprive them of a sacrament especially instituted for the poor, the feeble, and the infirm ? " God Himself deigned to justify the conduct of His minister by an event which deserves to be recorded here. A nun of eminent virtue in conversation once with a religious man, alluded to Father Claver's sanctity. " I respect his piety much," replied the religious, " but I cannot excuse the manner in which he admits the Negroes to communion." The opinion of a man so highly esteemed excited some

doubts in the mind of the nun, but she was soon undeceived. On the following night she saw in a dream Father Claver shining with glory, and the religious man on his knees before him, humbly begging pardon for having sought by his words to sully the lustre of the father's sanctity.

From that same lively faith and burning love, sprung his sensible and tender devotion toward all that concerned the Divine worship, and his profound respect for everything connected with religion. But it was particularly in the adorable sacrifice of the mass that his devotion was most sensibly displayed. He was so fearful lest the faithful should fail to hear mass on days of obligation, that for their convenience he obtained leave to say two masses on the principal festivals of the year, and in particular on the festival of Corpus Christi. On these occasions he used to tell the sacristan not to give him the usual ablutions, if after waiting a little he perceived any persons coming into the church with the hope of hearing another mass. However numerous his occupations he always went to confession and spent a full half-hour in preparing for this Divine Sacrifice; from that moment till the end of his thanksgiving, he was so wholly absorbed in the thought and love of Him whom he had offered and received, that he never spoke to any one. When at the altar his face appeared so inflamed with divine love, especially on the feasts of our Blessed Lord and of His Holy Mother, that he excited modesty, piety, and devotion, even in the most insensible, and numbers of persons experienced real consolation from hearing his mass. During his thanksgiving, the infinite greatness and in-

comprehensible goodness of a God, who becomes the food of His own creature, the sight of His own lowliness, and unworthiness, so impressed him that words and sentiments of gratitude failed him, and he invariably supplicated the Blessed Virgin to supply his deficiencies by thanking her Divine Son.

---

### CHAPTER III.

#### DEVOTION TO OUR BLESSED LADY.

**F**ATHER CLAVER may be said to have imbibed in his very infancy, a devotion to this august Mother of God. He considered her the channel through which Jesus Christ communicates His grace to us, in order thus to engage us to show her more respect and love. His holy intimacy with Brother Rodriguez, and one so cherished by the Queen of Heaven, contributed much to increase his affection for her. He carried a little book upon his breast, wherein her life and mysteries were represented, and his frequent meditations on them filled him more and more with a tender love for this good Mother. When entering or departing from the house, he first went to adore the Blessed Sacrament, and then visited her in her own chapel. He usually called her the Mother of Fair Love, and to obtain through her intercession a more lively and tender love of God, he was often heard to exclaim in his prayers, "Ah, my good Mother! teach me, I entreat thee, how to love thy Divine Son; obtain for me one spark of that pure love with which thy heart always burned for



Him ; or rather, lend me thy heart, that I may at least receive Him worthily !” He celebrated her festivals with extraordinary piety, preparing himself on the eve by additional prayers, penances, and fasts. The afternoon of those days he used to employ in confessing the children of the common schools, that he might inspire them with a love for Mary in their early age. He also persuaded some rich and pious people to present to the college on these festivals a little banquet, a part of which was sent, together with a band of music, to the hospital of St. Lazarus, whilst he himself distributed the rest to the poor at the door, where he had previously provided comfortable accommodation for them. He then seated himself with the greatest pleasure amongst them, and had musicians to recreate them. At the end of the repast he endeavored in a short sermon to excite their love and confidence in her whose feast they were celebrating ; and after the recitation of the rosary with them, he sent them home delighted with his virtues and kindness. It is impossible to say how many sets of beads he gave away. Besides those disposed of in the confessional, in hospitals, and prisons, he annually distributed eight or nine thousand among the newly-arrived Negroes, and was careful to see that they never omitted wearing them. He collected a vast quantity of little hard berries, and together with his interpreters, he spent the common recreation hour in making rosaries.

Her immaculate conception, and the glory of her triumphant assumption, were the subjects upon which he most loved to dwell. He was never tired of praising the virtues of Mary. Once on the feast of the Annunciation, whilst in the domestic chapel of Don An-

drew de Vauquecel, together with that nobleman and all his family, he began to discourse on the greatness of the Mother of God. He exhibited a little picture representing the mystery, and after dwelling for some time on the infinite obligations men owe to this Blessed Virgin, he heaved a deep sigh, and gradually lost the use of his senses. So intense were the feelings of the family at this sight that they shed tears of devotion, and thus they beheld him for more than an hour, when his companion succeeded in recalling him to his senses. Next to Jesus Christ and His Holy Mother, his chief devotion was to his guardian angel, to his patron St. Peter, and to his father, St. Ignatius, of whom he always wore a medal. Moreover, he chose twenty-four Saints as his protectors, and he addressed himself to each one by turn, in order, as he said, that there might be no hour in which he had not a special advocate with God. Those who are tempted to look on these attentions as trivial, little comprehend what devotion is when animated by a lively faith and tender charity.

---

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### HIS LOVE FOR HIS NEIGHBOR.

ONE of the most infallible proofs of Father Claver's love for God, and for all that concerned His glory and service, was his love and zeal for the salvation of his neighbor; a love so pure and disinterested, that in men he saw only God, and souls redeemed by His blood; and a zeal so eager and ardent, that although exhausted with labor, he thought he had done nothing

for 'his brethren. It is needless to say that it was this ardent zeal which drew him from Spain and across the seas to suffer a long martyrdom of forty years, in a country where everything conspires to afflict nature. Yet still more remarkable was that disinterested love which attached him so strongly to the poor, the miserable, and the slaves, whilst he did not even know the names of the greater part of the rich and distinguished inhabitants of Carthagená. To instruct the rude and ignorant, to console the afflicted, to visit the captives, to succor the infirm, and to provide for the necessities of the miserable, were the delights of his heart. Many reliable persons have attested, that during the whole period of his apostleship in Carthagená, not a day passed in which he did not practice some heroic act of charity. Beside the labors which he undertook for the sake of the Negroes, to whose service he chiefly devoted himself, it cost him much to prevent these unfortunate creatures from perishing, when, as was sometimes the case, they had resolved to end their miseries by starvation. On these occasions nothing less than the charity of Father Claver could have vanquished their obstinacy. One of them, oppressed with sufferings and covered with ulcers, had taken this fatal resolution when the holy man after much entreaty persuaded him to take a mouthful of food. But after holding it some time in his mouth he cast it back again into the dish. "My child," said the father, "you must not do so; look at me." He immediately took up the rejected morsel and swallowed it before the eyes of the Negro, who, astonished at his zeal and courage, consented to eat, and was ultimately cured.

## CHAPTER V.

## HIS ZEAL.—HIS MORTIFICATION.

THE immense labors of Father Claver in Carthagena and its environs were not enough to satisfy the extent and ardor of his zeal. Whenever a privateer sailed for Guinea, he begged to be conveyed to its barbarous coasts, that he might penetrate the vast countries of Africa, and subject them to the law of Jesus Christ. Being unable to effect this, he entreated the captains to bring him all the Negroes they could, that he might instruct them. On one day of every week, he offered up most fervent prayers to God for those captains who enabled him to accomplish this good work. In the transports of his charity he often exclaimed, "Ah! who will be so happy as to reach the coasts of Guinea and Carabel, and convert those poor Negroes!" He often asked permission to go thither; and when refused, he begged his superiors to send him to those islands where the Negroes were disembarked before they were brought to Carthagena. He always distrusted their Christianity, because he found that many had either never received baptism or at least had received it in an invalid manner. He often obtained leave to go and give missions in the kingdom of New Grenada, and on his last trip he undertook, he penetrated into Cotoca, where the ferocity of the Indians had hitherto prevented the entrance of Christianity.

But a total loss of health and strength compelled him to return to Carthagera, so that in this instance too he resembled the great Xavier, whose zeal was arrested by death, when in sight of that same China wherein he had hoped to announce the name of Jesus Christ.

His fervent love and piety, his continual prayer and active zeal, were sustained by such wonderful mortification, that the mere recital would suffice to terrify even the most austere. If by mortification we gain the love of Jesus Christ: so in proportion to our love, we endeavor, by our sufferings, to please and imitate Him. Hence we may fearlessly say, that the whole life of Father Claver was in this respect a sort of prodigy, or rather, it was one long-continued martyrdom. Mild, indulgent, and tender to every one else, he was most severe toward himself. It were impossible to relate all the mortifications which he employed to subdue his body and make it a living victim to the glory of God. We will, however, begin with the least terrible, but one which demands the most sustained constancy—that mortification of the senses, which he carried to such a wonderful degree, as to seem almost deprived of them.

During his fifty-five years in religion he never permitted himself a single glance of mere curiosity; a fact the more surprising when we reflect on the multiplicity of his external occupations, and the various circumstances in which he was placed. When walking in the country he refused his eyes the innocent pleasure of gazing on beautiful scenery; and though much pleased to have the altars beautifully adorned on festivals, yet he deprived himself of the pleasure he might have derived from the sight. On the arrival of a vessel from

Europe there was in Carthagena a general discharge of artillery, the bells of the town were rung, and the people, nobility, ecclesiastics, and religious, flocked in crowds to the shore, to inquire either after friends, relatives, or Spanish news. Father Claver's window overlooked the harbor; yet, during forty years he never had the curiosity to enjoy a sight which others hastened to witness. We have already remarked that he never sought for news, but wished to hear only what concerned the service of God or the good of souls. If he were present during a conversation on merely worldly or indifferent subjects, he became so completely recollected within himself as not to hear one word. When any celebrated musician arrived from Spain, he usually went to display his talent in the Jesuits' College, but Father Claver was never present on these occasions; and though for the honor of divine worship he liked to have fine music in the church on festivals, he was so pre-occupied with celestial harmony that he paid no attention to it.

His interior recollection was so great, that it was necessary to inform him when any strange Jesuits arrived. He would hasten to welcome them and pay them every attention that the most humble charity could inspire, but he never inquired from what house they had come, their destination, or their duties.

When we consider his scanty nourishment, we can with difficulty conceive how he endured such excessive labors. His meals which never exceeded in quantity the collation of the strictest faster, were composed of remnants of bread, some fried potatoes, or when particularly exhausted, some warm drink. When com-

pelled to take better food, he used as seasoning very bitter herbs, which he said were very good for his stomach. To strengthen his stomach, and to support him a little in his labors, physicians often advised him to take a common sort of chocolate, which trivial luxury he never, however, allowed himself. When not ill, he always said the last mass, and never during the forty years of his apostolic labors was he known to eat or drink out of the regular hours,—a mortification which must have been excessive in so hot a climate. His rule of never tasting fruit was no less extraordinary. On one occasion a lay brother offered him a bunch of grapes, but he persisted in refusing them. The brother was deeply pained, and remarked that had he taken them he would have given more edification than by his refusal. He immediately ate two of the grapes, remarking with great simplicity, that they were the first grapes he had tasted in America.

It would be impossible to relate all that his love of mortification inspired him to do. The following remarkable incident would appear incredible, even in one so mortified, if the witness had not attested it on oath. One evening whilst he was the father-minister, he asked the cook for a little of the broth that was in an earthen vessel in the kitchen. He declared that it was excellent, and returned the following evening for a second portion, for which he was most thankful. The cook was so surprised at this conduct in a man who never before had asked for anything, that he resolved to taste the broth himself, but scarcely had he swallowed a spoonful or two when he began to vomit, and to suffer violent pain. He examined the vessel in which he

found an enormous spider, and several other insects, in a state of decomposition. The following day the father, who knew nothing of all this, again appeared ; but the cook, quite in a passion, told him he had thrown away all that horrible broth, and that he could not comprehend how he could even bear the taste of it. "Blessed be God," replied the holy man, "but it was a pity to throw it away, for it was very good." In the history of the ancient hermits and penitents of the Thebais we shall perhaps not find a more surprising instance of mortification than this.

---

## CHAPTER VI.

### HIS AUSTERITIES.

SEVERE as was the war which Father Claver waged against his senses, the mere recital of the rigor with which he treated his body is enough to make the stoutest heart shudder. His ordinary bed was a mat, or a bull's hide, with a log of wood for his pillow ; and for many years he slept on the bare ground. He was so accustomed to this, that even in his illnesses he quitted his bed to sleep on the boards, and if he was occasionally reproached for his indiscretion, he excused himself by saying that he slept more comfortably there. He disciplined himself to blood three times every night ;—the first time before he retired, the second about midnight, and the third when he arose ; his discipline was made either of tarred rope with knots, or of small chains armed with sharp points. His neighbors



could hear the blows, and those who made the usual nightly visit round the college, were so impressed with a certain feeling of holy fear, and compassion, that they were unable to utter a word. The only dressing which he applied to the wounds occasioned by this pious cruelty was a rough hair-shirt, that covered his whole body : moreover, he interlaced his toes with small knotted horse-hair cords, to which others, thicker and harsher, were attached, and wound about his legs,—the more easily to conceal them. He wore two rough, unpolished wooden crosses,—one on his back, the other on his chest, studded with points on the side next to the flesh. To keep these firmly in place, he bound his whole body—even his arms and wrists—with horse-hair ropes. He wore as a stole on his breast, six ropes, formed into a broad band and studded with iron points, and with the ends, he made a girdle around his loins. And that no part of his body might be without suffering, he used, when alone in his room, to wear a crown of very sharp thorns upon his head, a thick rope round his neck, and horse-hair gloves on his hands. Whilst thus engaged in his terrific austerities, he placed a stone against the door, which, when overthrown by the entrance of anyone, serves as a signal to conceal his penitential implements. But although thus bound, fettered, and in a manner crucified, no one was more alert than he in the service of his neighbor. On his missions, so brisk was he that he frequently out-walked his companions,—so true it is that charity gives wings, and produces in the saints a strength superior to every weakness. Notwithstanding the heat of the climate, he wore over what we have already described a coarse

woollen shirt, but with a linen collar like the others. It often happened that overcome with heat and suffering, he was unable to breathe, and even fainted in consequence. Thus he had lived for twenty years before his superiors were informed, and ordered him to wear linen. He chose so coarse and harsh a kind, that his obedience did not destroy the merit of his mortification.

He was always trying to invent some new mode of suffering. If seated he held one foot suspended until it lost all power, and always when kneeling, he raised his habit so that his knee might be on the hard ground. Never did he use any precaution against the inclemency of the weather, nor did he even speak of such things in conversation.

Most certainly nothing but the supernatural vigor of his mind could have sustained the natural weakness of his body, for even in the midst of his infirmities he never laid aside his terrible apparel of penance. Once in a very severe illness the brother who had care of him perceived his hair-shirt, and in astonishment exclaimed, "Ah, father! what is this? how long is the ass to be thus harnessed?" "Until death," quietly answered the father. At another time during a violent fever, he refused to go to bed because unable to undress himself, he would necessarily have to expose the instruments of penance with which he was covered. The Father Provincial sent Father de Sandoval to undress him, and ordered him to obey the physician who on seeing the manner in which he was bound and fettered fell on his knees, and with tears in his eyes exclaimed, "Ah, my dear father! how can you be otherwise than ill, whilst

you treat yourself thus? are you not actually committing suicide? Although the sick man begged the permission to undress himself, a Negro was sent, who had so much difficulty in removing the cords, that it was a wonder how he had ever placed them on himself.

---

## CHAPTER VII.

### HIS PATIENCE.

**I**T will be easy to understand that a man of such prodigious mortification, must have been proof against all trials. Usually what we suffer of our own accord, seems lighter and more endurable than what we endure from others. Not so with Father Claver; from whatever quarter sufferings might come, he always met them with the same firmness. Two great maxims which he had learned from Brother Alonso Rodriguez, and which were deeply engraven upon his heart, formed the rule of his conduct. “1st:—When I am persecuted or calumniated, either I have, or I have not deserved it. If I have, why complain? I ought rather to correct myself and beg pardon of God for my fault. If I have not deserved it, I ought to rejoice and thank God for allowing me this opportunity of suffering something for His love, and for the rest I ought to keep silence. 2nd:—When I am contradicted, why not do as the ass does? If he is abused or maltreated, he is silent. If forgotten or left without food, if made to work, if despised, if overladen, he is silent. In a word, whatever is said or done to him, he answers not—he complains not. Thus

ought the true servant of God to act, and say with David, 'I am become as a beast of burden before Thee!'" We have here in a few words the portrait of Father Claver.

We have already seen how the Negroes often abused his patience and goodness; but that was the least part of what he had to suffer on their account. The immense trouble he took with them deserved the highest praise and the most lively gratitude. Nevertheless there were several slave-owners who opposed him in everything, and who even insulted him, under the pretext that by his frequent and prolonged instructions, he caused the slaves to lose too much time, and to become most insolent toward their masters; moreover, his efforts to destroy illicit intercourse, by inducing the slaves to marry, was offensive to the owners who then considered the Negroes less serviceable. Full of such false ideas, these self-interested masters forbade their Negroes to go to him; and when he himself came to seek them, they had orders to shut the doors against him, and to insult him. On these occasions the apostolic man was silent; he was delighted to suffer something in the service of God, but he did not abandon his purpose for all that, nor did he ever lose an opportunity of laboring for the salvation of those poor creatures. Frequently, however, those masters became convinced by their own experience that under Father Claver's guidance their Negroes were daily more docile and more industrious, and ultimately left them entirely to him. Yet as this sort of contests was frequent, he had always to fight and gain his ground inch by inch. Amongst the Spaniards too there were numerous libertines, who,

infuriated because the object of their passion, or the accomplices of their profligacy were withdrawn from them, were not satisfied with insulting, and treating him as a hypocrite and seducer, but even went so far as to attack him with the poignard, and to threaten his life if he continued to molest them. But nothing could either check his zeal or disturb his meekness. "If," said he with composure, "it is the will of God that I should die, behold my life; you may take it."

But what must have been far more painful to him, was that some fathers in the college were the first to disapprove his conduct toward the Negroes. God sometimes permits the best disposed persons to fall into mistakes, to increase the merits of His saints. They claimed that his zeal was good, but indiscreet and precipitate. His success ought to have convinced them, but it is not easy to undeceive persons who estimate everything according to their own ideas, and who consider only their own actions perfect. There were even some both within and without the college, who for some years treated his zeal as the effect of caprice, his constancy as obstinacy, his mortification as harshness of character, his tenderness for the Negroes as a mania, his recollection as ignorance, and his sanctity as illusion. Others less vehement condemned the multiplicity of his occupations, the distractions of his employment, the time he lost, and the trouble he gave his interpreters, who became thereby less serviceable to the house. But were a Negro to answer incorrectly the questions put to him, or receive the Sacred Host in an awkward manner, then these zealots immediately heaped all the blame on Father Claver, and even reported him to his Superiors.

He never, however, said a word in his own defence, and was always thought to be in the wrong and accused of imprudence. Sometimes he was so severely reprimanded in public, that nothing less than a patience like his could have maintained its composure. As he always however believed himself culpable, he would punish himself for all the faults of which he was accused, but of which his conscience could not reproach him. Once when severely reprimanded by a Provincial, who was shocked at hearing a young slave spoken of as Father Claver's Negro, the holy man made no reply, although he had only procured the little Negro's admission into the college.

It would scarcely be believed how much he had to suffer from a certain Portuguese brother, a rough man, bold in speaking, and whose conduct was so unlike that of a religious that he was expelled from the Society some time afterward. He showed his unwillingness to accompany the father, by keeping him waiting by continually scolding him on the road, and by obliging him to wait until his whim had passed. Within the house there was no sort of outrage that he did not inflict upon him; he called his saintly occupations ridiculous fancies, and his piety hypocrisy, and staring impudently in his face, he used to reproach him with being nothing better than a fanatic. The holy man never replied, but humbly considered him a scourge justly sent by God to punish him for his sins.

In the last years of his life his patience was displayed in all its lustre. Some enemies of the Jesuits—for those who labor for the glory of God never fail to have enemies,—took occasion of the arrival of a visitor-gen-

eral at Carthagena to raise a violent storm against them, and especially against Father Claver. Amongst other things he was accused of repeating baptism and in consequence he was forbidden to baptize in future. He well knew that he had never baptized except in cases of well-founded doubt, and then only conditionally; yet he preferred to suffer in silence, and much though it cost him to thus abandon his poor slaves, he considered that silent obedience was most proper for him. For a long time he lived under a superior who through prejudice was continually on the alert to annoy and tempt the extraordinary virtue of the saint, yet never did he notice the slightest manifestation of anger or impatience. On one occasion, during a dispute, he was publicly insulted as an ignoramus, although all knew that he was proficient in all matters of doctrine, yet his only reply was an acknowledgment of his ignorance. When surprise was expressed at his composure on that occasion he answered, "It matters little whether we are thought learned or ignorant, but it matters much that we be humble and obedient."

Once during Holy Week, he saw in the church, a woman dressed in a most worldly, unbecoming manner. He immediately reprimanded her, and reminded her that such attire was unsuited both to the season, and to her age and condition. Such a reference to her age, so aroused the vain woman, that her cries brought to the spot the father-sacristan who heaped reproaches on Father Claver for his foolish indiscretion. The rector soon appeared and whether he wished to appease the woman, or judged the father guilty from his silence, he severely chided him for his impetuous zeal which could distin-

guish neither the position nor the merits and qualifications of individuals. The humble religious, prostrate at the feet of his superior, begged pardon for the scandal he had given, and asked for a penance proportioned to his fault. This so astonished the lady that she immediately resolved to lead a more edifying and Christian life; even the rector could not help considering Father Claver's virtue proof against everything. Such treatment, however, from his superiors was a bad example to the Negroes. They often complained that he gave them too much to do, that he alone employed them more than all the rest together, but that no one need wonder at such conduct from a whimsical fanatic, whom nobody could endure. All these insults had an inexpressible charm for him; he heard them with a joy that appeared in his very countenance.

---

## CHAPTER VIII.

### HIS UNALTERABLE SWEETNESS.

THE virtue of Father Claver, however, like a pure light which dissipates the darkest clouds and the deepest obscurity, was too brilliant not to scatter to the winds the prejudices of his persecutors. His was not an austere melancholy patience, that strikes the mind without gaining the heart; it was ever sweetened by an amiable meekness, which insensibly soothed the hearts of all, and triumphed equally over the natural ferocity of the savages and the hatred of his most inveterate enemies. Hence, he was justly looked upon



as an universal remedy in the most overwhelming afflictions, and as a wall that could not be shaken by any attack however violent. This opinion was confirmed by the following circumstance. A woman who had long owed a sum of money to the college strove by artifice and imposture to elude payment. She daily collected round her a set of people, before whom she decried and censured the Jesuits. It was thought advisable to try and appease her by means of mildness. The high esteem in which Father Claver was held, induced his superiors to send him to appease, were it possible, her fury. She showered on him and his companion a torrent of abuse, and not satisfied with this, she resolved to pass from the insult to ill-usage. Under the pretense of sickness, she sent for him to hear her confession, expressing deep sorrow for her misconduct toward him. No sooner had he entered than two fugitive slaves, whom the pretended sick woman had concealed in her room, fell upon him like two furies, whilst she in her rage volleyed forth a torrent of abuse. His companion, a vigorous and intrepid man, shielded him with his cloak, and effectually defended him whilst he called aloud for help. The assassins immediately took to flight, and the woman, touched and surprised at the meekness and humility of the holy man, threw herself at his feet, humbly begging pardon for her fury, and promising to amend her life.

## CHAPTER IX.

### HIS ANGELIC PURITY AND HIS SPIRIT OF POVERTY.

**A**S Father Claver may be held up to the most perfect Christians as a model of all virtues, so was he, in an eminent degree, remarkable for his love for those virtues which constitute the difference between religious and people of the world.

His purity, which was that of an angel, will not appear surprising when we reflect on his extreme modesty, his excessive mortification, and his continual watchfulness over his senses. During his fifty-four years in the Society he was never seen to fix his eye on a woman's face, and his confessors have openly declared, that never had he stained the purity of his baptismal innocence. Even from his tender infancy he seemed to have received from God, a special love for this virtue, so that even in the world he might have been held as a model to religious. But from his entrance into the noviciate, his advance in the path of sanctity was most rapid—he vigorously examined his conscience every day, shed abundant tears over his sins, which he daily confessed. He carefully observed the least emotions of the heart, whilst his love for God filled him with a lively fear of offending Him, and kept him constantly in a state of most scrupulous watchfulness. In a word, his recollection, temperance, and austerities, but above all, his particular devotion to the Immaculate Concep-

tion of the Mother of God, through which he obtained the grace of a purity worthy this Queen of Angels, formed a buckler impervious to all the envenomed arrows of the tempter. Against violent temptations, he always recommended devotion to the pure heart of Mary as a remedy which sooner or later would produce the most salutary effects.

He regarded religious poverty, in the spirit of his holy founder, as his own mother. Everything in his person and mode of life breathed of poverty. His chamber was dark and close, his bed was but a hide or mat, spread on the floor, his furniture consisted of his instruments of penance, two rough wooden seats, a little stool, a table on which was his Breviary, which served him all his life, and two volumes of cases of conscience. The decoration of his room corresponded with the furniture—a crucifix coarsely painted, between two pictures, one representing our Lord at the column of flagellation; the other, St. Peter on his knees, weeping for his infidelity; a wooden cross at the head of his bed, and above it a picture of Brother Rodriguez. We might perhaps be unwilling to expose these minute details to the cold criticism of worldly wisdom, were it not for the sake of those truly religious souls who know the value of everything that can render their condition more conformable to that of our blessed Saviour, whose poverty was such that He had not wheron to lay His head. Anxious for all that could assimilate him to this Divine Model, Father Claver generally made use of what others had rejected; his berretta always served him ten years, and even then he would not have a new one; as for his cloak, it was

wonderful how it lasted so long, considering the many different purposes to which it was applied. One day when obliged to take a new cassock, he looked so embarrassed, and even distressed, that out of very compassion his old one was restored to him. In his extreme poverty, he often deprived himself of things which would be considered trivial, were we to overlook the motive which influenced him.

Often he returned home fasting and exhausted by fatigue, and found that the cook had forgotten him. But instead of complaint, he always acknowledged the fault as his for his absence at the time of meals. When someone wished to inform the superior of this neglect, he replied: "Oh, no! I beg you will not! besides, what is there to complain of? how many others pass not only a single morning, but even several days, without a morsel of bread?" He employed all alms in relieving the poor, and when forced to accept anything for himself, he immediately distributed it amongst the needy. They were first and last in his thoughts.

During a severe illness, his friend, Captain John de St. Martin, could not, with all his entreaty, induce him to accept any relief, and as he persisted the father at last answered, "Well, then, a little cloth to dress a Negro." A dozen ells were accordingly sent him. He cut off what was precisely necessary and returned the rest. Another time, having consented to accept a bottle of wine, of which he stood greatly in need, he was asked whether he preferred white or red? "Oh," said he, "poor people have no choice;" and as soon as he received it he sent it to another father in the house much less ill than himself. He carried his delicacy on

this point so far, that even in his greatest need he would never touch preserves and any of those other little luxuries usually given to the sick; or if he was obliged to accept them, he carefully reserved them for the poor and infirm.

---

## CHAPTER X.

### HIS OBEDIENCE.

**S**TRIKING as was the purity and poverty of Father Claver no less remarkable was his spirit of obedience. Persuaded as he was that man's perfection depends upon his conformity to the will of God, he was always happy in the thought that a religious has in his power the best opportunity of observing obedience. His constant effort was to have no will but that of his superior. The following remarks relating to the subject were found amongst his papers. "In religion there is no shorter path to perfection than obedience to superiors; hence I rely more on one of their words than on a hundred private revelations. When the superior orders me to do anything difficult, I will raise my heart to God, representing to myself that it is He who commands me, and I will obey Him with the same promptitude as the angels, thanking Him for condescending to employ me in the execution of His will. His conduct was conformable to these great principles, and the respect he bore to those in authority was like to that which he bore to God Himself.

As soon as his most intimate and familiar friends became his superiors they were objects of veneration to

him. He saw in them—no matter who or what they were—only Him whose place they held, so that he may be said in truth never to have changed his superiors. He appeared before them, like the youngest novice, in the most humble attitude, with his head uncovered, his eyes cast down, his mind attentive to the least sign of their will. Neither difficulties nor dangers could ever make him hesitate for a moment when he once knew their will. But his obedience and respect were not confined to the mere fulfilment of the orders of his superiors. His whole heart was open to them. He gave them an exact detail of his prayers, penances, and the least movements of his soul, begging them to guide and reform him in the manner they judged most proper. He who in this respect was so great a master to others, held as a maxim, that as we never see ourselves correctly, we can never stand judge in our own case, but we must trust to the judgment of another.

To be the better assured of his perfect obedience his superiors often subjected it to the severest tests. Once he was severely reprimanded for a trivial offence, and, although very old and infirm, he was requested to kneel on the floor. This he did with the greatest joy for an hour, and had not the penance been changed, he would have remained the entire day. His superior had ordered him to change his method of instructing the Negroes, and to abandon certain practices from which he had up to that time derived great fruit. He immediately obeyed, merely replying in his humility and obedience: "What a miserable creature I must be, since I cannot do a little good without occasioning a great deal of evil, and without troubling the whole house! But it

is what may be expected from an ignorant indiscreet person, and from such a sinner as I." At another time, whilst he was giving a mission at Tolu, a village at a considerable distance from Carthagena, he was recalled by the rector. The parish priest, the officers, and the soldiers, in their affliction, used all their endeavors to detain him—the desolation of the people, the loss of so many well-disposed souls, the inclemency of the weather, the bad condition of the roads—every one a sufficient and reasonable excuse for delaying his departure. But notwithstanding all this, and painful though it was to behold so much fruit lost, he hastened to Carthagena on the appointed day. It seemed, indeed, that God recompensed his obedience, for the rain, which until then had been incessant and abundant, suddenly ceased.

He was equally careful to fulfil the commands of all the officers of the house. In the kitchen he removed his cap and with down-cast eyes performed the wishes of the cook, in the refectory, he submitted himself to the orders of the brother who had charge. At the first signal from the porter, he was prepared to obey. The sacristan always found him ready to assist in the preparations for mass, or in the adornment of the altar. When he went out into the town, he had no other will than that of his companion, who decided every movement. If he entered the novices' quarters, he asked the commands of the one who presided, and for the time respected him as his superior. In fine, his passion for obedience, if we may so speak, was so strong, that when obliged to go on his missions, with only a Negro interpreter, he gave this slave full authority over him.

From this great principle of most perfect obedience-

sprung his affection and absolute fidelity to all the rules of St. Ignatius. Never was he seen to break them in the slightest degree. This seems the more remarkable, for many of them appear to have in themselves little importance, and, owing to various circumstances, are very difficult to observe; but his vigilance and courage overcame every obstacle. If in the haste of his departure, he forgot to register his name at the door, he immediately retraced his steps to obey the rule on this point. He was always the first at all the common duties of the community. If a letter was given to him unopened, he was much distressed that his superiors did not, by reading it first, enable him to practice an act of subordination and dependence. Still less would he ever write letters without showing them to his superiors. So scrupulous was he in this respect, that once when he was ordered by the father-general to write to another Jesuit in the Indies, being unable to show his letter to the superior of the house, he carried it to the provincial, who happened to be then at Carthage.

---

## CHAPTER XI.

### HIS HUMILITY.

ALL the brilliant virtues of Father Claver were grounded on a profound humility. In his own eyes there was nothing so vile and abject as himself. We have already seen with admiration his efforts to be admitted into the Society in quality of lay-brother; and he always reproached himself for not having in his ex-



aminations answered in such a manner as to make himself appear unqualified for the degree of professed father. However well calculated by the elegance of his mind, by the power of his talents, and by his well-proved capacity, to discharge the most important functions in the pulpit, the schools, or even in domestic government, he always confined himself to the Negroes, the poor, and the sick. It never occurred to him that he was fit for anything else. To see him in this humble ministry, he would have been taken for an illiterate man of no capacity, whose whole merit was his charity. Great, indeed, must have been a humility which could thus bury in the obscurity of hospitals, prisons, and cabins, so many varied talents! In important affairs, or difficult cases of conscience, he used to answer, "Those matters are too deep for me; you had better apply to some other father more able and learned than I."

He omitted nothing that could make him appear as the last of men. Twice a week he went through the town laden with linen, sheets, and all kinds of provisions for the prisoners and the sick. We have already related how pleased he was to eat at the door with the poor from the same dish and in the lowest place; but all this did not satisfy him. When the meal was finished he helped to wash the cups and dishes, put aside the seats, swept the place, and in a word, did all that could have been exacted from the meanest servant.

The least mark of esteem afflicted him, and honors were to him what the most outrageous insults are to the haughty; hence he avoided all intercourse with the rich and great, to devote his life to the lowly, the poor,

and the simple. When distinguished persons wished to see him, they pretended that some Negro or poor person wanted him. But no sooner did he detect the artifice than he affected ignorance and simplicity and requested his companion to speak to them, whilst he hastened to catechize the poor slaves.

During the Lenten sermons, he placed himself on the staircase leading to the gallery of the church, and there, enveloped in his cloak, he implored the blessing of Heaven upon the preacher's words. The devil could not endure so much humility in this holy man, and so much ardor in the people to hear the word of God. He gave a proof of his rage which well nigh cost the life of Father Claver. On these occasions the pulpit was usually placed near the church door, so that the women outside might hear as easily as the men who were within. One day when the congregation was unusually large, a dark cloud appeared in the air, and a noise similar to that caused by a wagon rapidly driven over a rough pavement was heard. In the middle of the sermon the storm suddenly burst upon the people. In the first moment of panic the tumult became dreadful. Some tried to enter the church; others, to escape; whilst many finding it impossible to retreat, ran to the altars to implore the assistance of heaven. In the meantime the people in the gallery rushed to the staircase where Father Claver was seated. In a moment he was knocked down, trampled upon, and carried, covered with mud and blood, as far as our Lady's Chapel. Here he recovered himself a little. And as soon as the excitement had somewhat subsided, he so convinced the people that all this commotion was an effect of the

devil's jealousy and rage, that the eagerness to hear the word of God was very materially augmented, and the after-fruits were more abundant than ever.

Tranquil and patient under all other circumstances, it was only when some mark of esteem or respect was shown him that he lost his ordinary mildness. Once a poor woman to whom he had given a small alms and some salutary advice exclaimed, "Ah, holy Father Claver, what is said at Lima is surely true, that God has pardoned Carthage on your account!" At these words he became troubled and confounded: "Go," said he with emotion; "you know not what you say; and if I ever hear that you circulate such absurdities, I will have you driven out of the city: beg God's pardon for your imprudence!" During the rest of that day he scarcely dared raise his eyes. He hastened to the hospital, to expiate by some new humiliations the praises which his modesty transformed into a crime. This conduct will not appear surprising in a man who sincerely believed himself the most guilty of sinners.

We wonder, sometimes, how the saints can truthfully think so disadvantageously of themselves, yet there is nothing in all this that is not perfectly simple and natural. Their sole contemplation is the infinite grandeur and purity of God, and no sooner do they cast their eyes on themselves that they find nothing but impurity and miseries. Father Claver has so well expressed this in his own words: "The truly humble soul rises with all her might to God, whence she perceives His sanctity and His infinite love for man. Then re-entering into herself, she sees the immeasurable distance there is between Him and her; and just as the

sun's rays, passing through a window, enable us to see the atoms which float in the air, so by favor of the divine light which enlightens her, she discovers her own blemishes." It was this reflected knowledge of God and of himself which inspired him with a holy fear when before the Divine Majesty ; and, as if he were the most hardened of sinners, he incessantly kept before his mind the remembrance of death, judgment, and hell. "Beware," he would say to himself on these occasions, "how you abuse the graces of thy God. Be not amongst thy brethren like Judas amongst the apostles. Reflect that those who entered religion with thee, run with rapid strides in the ways of perfection, whilst thou art still ungrateful, still a sinner!"

Penetrated with these sentiments he frequently called himself a miserable worm of the earth—whom, if people knew, they would avoid as a putrid corpse. Hence, he never thought he did enough to expiate his guilt. One day the superior found him with a crown of thorns upon his head and a curb in his mouth. He reprehended him for such indiscreet excess. "Ah, father!" answered Claver with a sigh, "I have contracted so many debts that it is impossible for me to discharge them." Everything he saw served only to confound him. At the sight of the heavens and stars, he would say, "What ! so many, and such noble creatures accomplish the will of God without resistance ; whilst I, a miserable worm of the earth incessantly resist it!" If he cast his eyes on a bed of flowers, he said to himself, "Ungrateful creature! after so many celestial influences, thou hast produced nothing but thorns." Once whilst looking at a pond of muddy

The Library  
St. Joseph's Priory

water he said, "Thus is the pure water of grace corrupted in my impure heart!" At seeing a piece of iron put into a furnace, he remarked, "It is thus I ought to be purified in the fire, so to avoid the flames of hell. If Thou dost not treat me thus, O my God, never wilt Thou soften the hardness of my heart." When requested to recommend some affair to God he would reply that "There could be no surer means of losing it." When he assisted criminals at their execution he embraced them, and said with much tenderness, "Alas, brother! Why am I not as you are, and at your feet: take me with you, and do not leave me longer in this miserable world." It would be necessary were we to make known all the wonderful instances of his humility to give in detail his whole life. Whatever reasons he might have for his conduct, he always approved those who found fault with it.

His cleverness in concealing his virtues, especially his humility, was as wonderful as his humility itself. As he chose the time of night for his extraordinary penances and prayers, it often happened that the rector of the college, who went to confession to him, found him occupied either in his austerities, or immersed in profound contemplation and ecstasy. The humble servant of God, in his confusion, begged the superior either to come at some other time or choose another confessor. He endeavored to present all his most extraordinary actions in a light which would tend to degrade him in the public opinion. If his labor and zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls were commended, he would candidly say, "It ought to be so, but there is in it nothing but self-love. It is the

effect of my ardent impetuous temper, for without these occupations I would become insupportable to others and to myself." If any one was surprised that he enjoyed the conversation of Negroes and other ignorant people, he ascribed it to a secret pride, saying that the poor and idiots were less likely than others to detect his weakness and ignorance. If his prodigious mortification, which led him to dress and kiss the most loathsome sores, was remarked, he treated the whole affair as a jest, saying with a laugh, "Oh, well, if being a saint consists in having no taste, and in having a strong stomach, why, I own, I may be one." Moreover, from the same principle, he attributed all the cures he performed to a relic, a medal, the wood of the cross, the fervent prayers of others, or to some trifling remedy which of itself had no specific virtue. One of his own maxims beautifully illustrates his estimation of humility. "A truly humble man," he says, "desires contempt, and without seeking to appear humble, he seeks to appear deserving of humiliation. He submits to every one, he obeys every one, he corrects nobody. He wishes every one to despise and ill-treat him; to make every one who inflicts sufferings on him, believe that he suffers, not because he is humble, but because he really is most despicable. Therefore when we are treated with contempt, we ought to pretend that we are extremely confounded and afflicted, whilst in our inmost heart we are delighted, and this from a principle of holy self-hatred."

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE OPINION OF HIS SANCTITY.

SUCH in general were the heroic virtues of which Father Claver was an example to Carthagena, during nearly forty years. By these means, in spite of all the contradictions and persecutions to which he was always exposed, he ultimately subdued the most venomated hatred, and compelled the most abandoned licentiousness to respect him. These were the causes of his prodigious successes, and acquired for him the title of the Apostle of the West Indies. They enabled him to change a corrupt city into one of sanctity, where for some time the piety of the primitive Christians again flourished. By these he effected so many conversions and prodigies, that the whole country resounded with his praises. The opinion and esteem of his sanctity became so great and universal, that all orders, ranks, and ages, eagerly sought to testify their veneration, confidence, and tenderness for him. The bishops and grand vicars of Carthagena, when granting him the necessary powers for his apostolic functions, took pleasure in confiding their flocks to him. Prelates, who from time to time visited Carthagena, never failed to visit him and to beg his prayers for those souls of which they had charge. Generals of the army, officers of the navy, and all the most distinguished personages, visited him on their arrival. They

undertook nothing of importance without asking his prayers, nor did they depart without bidding him farewell, and asking his blessing for a prosperous journey.

The governor of the town together with the nobility often came to recommend to his prayers the preservation of Carthagera and its inhabitants. Prelates and priests made it their duty to consult him in the most difficult cases of conscience, and received his decisions as oracles. Religious addressed themselves to him as to a model of the most accomplished virtue and perfection. Merchants would not embark without receiving his blessing, and on their return their first inquiry was after him. In a word, persons of every rank and condition had such a high opinion of his power with God and of the rectitude of his views, that they seldom undertook any important enterprise without asking the assistance of his prayers and advice. People ran to meet him, falling at his feet, and kissing his hands, nor would they leave him till they had obtained his blessing. Almighty God made use even of the innocent mouths of children to bear witness to the virtues of His servant. If they met him in the street, they crowded round him on their knees, kissing his hands, and saying, "Holy Father Claver, recommend us to God." A report had spread through the Indies, and especially at Lima, that God had revealed to a very holy person His determination of destroying Carthagera had it not been for the merits and prayers of its apostle. For several years after this, children might be heard singing in the streets, "For Claver's sake God has spared Carthagera."

The best testimony of sanctity is the evidence of the



people with whom a man lives, for they are beyond suspicion, and they are usually the most difficult to satisfy. The most minute actions and slightest defects are observed. But the long residence of Father Claver in the college of Carthagena only served to confirm and augment the highest opinion of his sanctity. If to try the patience of His servant, God sometimes permitted him to experience the censures and contradictions of his own brethren, there was not one of them who did not soon regret the little persecutions they had made him suffer. Whilst they seemed to forget the respect due to him, the reverential sentiments of their heart completely contradicted the indiscreet expressions of their lips. His superiors frequently spoke of the wonders of his sanctity, and the praise and eagerness with which they wished to enlist his prayers caused infinite pain to his humility. They gave a very convincing proof of their estimate of his sanctity during a severe illness he had twenty years before his death. It was necessary to bleed him. The blood was carefully collected, and all the fathers of the house procured some drops on linen, which they kept with great respect.

To all these testimonies, so honorable to the memory of this apostle, may be added that of Don Pedro de Zapata, who had been twice governor of the whole province of Carthagena. In the juridical informations which he caused to be taken soon after the father's death, he attests. "So great and so universally diffused was the reputation of Father Claver's sanctity, that he was considered the column and support of the state. In a city where the Jesuits have had many enemies, never had any one been found to speak ill of him.

It was impossible for him to recollect all the virtues and heroic actions of which he himself had been the witness, nor all the miracles performed through his intercession; but that all which he had seen and heard of him, equalled whatever is related of those who are recognized and honored as saints by the Catholic Church.

## BOOK VII.

## CHAPTER I.

HE ATTENDS THE VICTIMS OF THE PESTILENCE—A STRANGE DISTEMPER—HIS ATTACK AND RECOVERY.

FOR thirty-six years Father Claver had edified Carthagera by his example and virtues; sanctified it by his zeal and labors; and though he scarcely went beyond its inclosure and environs, he was looked upon as the apostle of all the West Indies. Exhausted with fatigues, and consumed with austerities, he was ripe for the recompense of so many merits; but God determined, by purifying His victim still more and more, to crown him afterward with greater glory. In an exercise of the most heroic charity, he contracted a dangerous complaint, followed by an habitual infirmity of four years' duration, during which he had no other occupation than prayer and suffering.

News reached Carthagera that the plague, after ravaging Havana, Porto Rico, and Vera Cruz, had reached the shores of Terra-Firma, where it was causing great destruction. Animated with tender charity, with a zeal more lively than ever, and with a courage beyond his strength, although already exhausted in laboring to dispose the people for the jubilee of 1650, Father Claver wished to visit the Negro residences along the

coasts, in order to prepare all hearts for the pestilence. The fruits of this mission surpassed his most sanguine expectations, but his redoubled prayers, mortifications, fasts, and disciplines, to arrest the anger of Heaven by his penance, so reduced his strength that he was at last obliged to abandon his work. He spent nearly the whole night in prayer, and the whole day in laboring for the salvation of souls, allowing himself no respite, and scarcely taking nourishment enough to support nature. He was often drenched with rain, from which he occasionally experienced serious inconveniences, but nothing could induce him to moderate his excessive labors. His superior hearing of the state to which he was reduced, sent him an order to return. He obeyed without reply, and arrived at Carthagera so attenuated and exhausted, that no one could look at him without compassion. A singular contagious distemper then prevailed in the city, which daily carried off numerous victims. Several Jesuits amongst whom was Father Claver were prostrated. If he felt any grief, it certainly did not arise from suffering, which was for him a delight, but from his inability to aid the sick whose numbers were daily increasing. He was soon reduced to such extremity, that it was deemed advisable to give him the Holy Viaticum which he wished to receive prostrate on the ground. This impulse of fervor was however over-ruled, for fear that he would expire in the effort. We may easily imagine his sentiments of piety and tenderness at the sight of his God and Saviour, whom alone he had loved on earth, and with whom he hoped soon to be united in Heaven. "My sins," said he, "have drawn this pestilence upon

this afflicted city, and Almighty God will no longer make use of me, because I have always been the most unworthy of His ministers." These words from the mouth of a man so holy and so humble, drew tears from the eyes of all present. He was momentarily expected to expire; but the Lord, for the consolation of Carthagena, allowed it to retain its protecting angel some time longer. Contrary to all expectations, he gradually rallied, and it was surprising to behold how an infirm old man, consumed by austerities, could resist the violence of a contagion which carried off the youngest and most robust. So long as he was confined to his bed his mind was constantly raised to God. Brother Gonzales, who often visited him, always found him in prayer, and when he recommended him to pray for the sick of Carthagena, "Very willingly," answered he or, "I was just doing so." Hence many persons attributed their recovery to his prayers.

---

## CHAPTER II.

### HIS INFIRMITIES AND HIS OCCUPATIONS IN THEM.

**A**LTHOUGH he was out of danger he never thoroughly regained his strength. A violent and constant tremor of the limbs deprived him of the free use of his hands and feet, so that he was deprived of his sweetest consolation, the celebration of the divine mysteries. But what was very remarkable his hands ceased to tremble, and he seemed to regain new strength when he took his usual disciplines. It may be said that

the weakness of his body gave increased vigor to his mind. As he could neither rise nor walk without help, he was obliged to be dressed by a Negro, whom he instructed how to fasten on his hair-cloths, and in this condition, he dragged himself to the church. When he could not walk he was carried thither, to hear mass and communicate, which he did with a fervor incredible in one suffering from such infirmities. He confessed every day with abundance of tears, and as if he had to appear the next moment before God. So long as he could walk he would not allow his confessor to come to his room; out of humility he communicated among the laity, wearing the same poor stole which had served him in his missions. Notwithstanding the sad state to which he was reduced, the zeal which devoured him did not permit him to be entirely useless to his neighbor. After satisfying his devotions by the reception of the sacraments, instead of returning to his room, he remained to hear confessions in the church until his little remnant of strength was utterly exhausted. He continually begged the sacristan to call him when any one needed a confessor, or at least to send them to his room. Nor was his zeal for the salvation of souls confined to this. As soon as he knew of any poor abandoned sick, or slaves, who stood in need of help, he found strength enough to be carried to the hospitals or to their huts. A vessel laden with barbarians from Ararais had arrived at Carthagena, none of whom were baptized. At this news the holy man seemed to forget all his infirmities. After encountering much difficulty in finding an interpreter, he had himself conveyed to the lodgings of the savages. No sooner had these poor creatures be-

held him than they ran and cast themselves at his feet, as if inspired by Heaven with a secret feeling of love and respect. The holy man on his side tenderly caressed them, and as he had long been sighing for the conversion of some Negroes of this description, he took particular pains with them. Before he left them he himself baptized all the children, and for the instruction of the adults he left a catechism translated into their own language. These last children whom he gave to the church he looked upon as the fruit of his old age, and this thought seemed to reinvigorate him for a time.

---

### CHAPTER III.

#### HIS FAREWELL TO THE LEPERS.—HE IS NEGLECTED.

AS the heart of Father Claver was ever at the hospital of St. Lazarus, he hastened to take leave of his dear lepers before he died, and, for the last time, to animate them to patience. When they bade him a last adieu, with no hope of ever again seeing him in this world, they wept bitterly, and all felt that they were losing a protector, friend, and father.

It was during these little excursions that he went to hear the confession of Donna Isabella D' Urbina, who had always furnished him with large sums for the poor, and who since her husband's death had stood in great need of consolation. Conversing with her one day, he told her that the pestilence which had lately afflicted Carthage had been of service to a great number of

souls, and that it would return the following year for the profit of many more, who had not been sufficiently prepared for death at its first visit. "What, father!" said the lady quite terrified, "the pestilence again at Carthagena?" "You will give me news of it in the month of October," replied the holy man. This terrible malady, which did not fail to return at the time specified, left the lady no room to doubt any of the predictions of her saintly director.

In proportion as his infirmities increased and nature became weaker, grace gave new strength to his virtues. And certainly if his patience was ever tried, it was during the last years of his life, but as in every other trial, he came off victorious. As the pestilence had reduced the Jesuits to a very small number, and as each of them was laden with several different employments, they could not assist him as they would have wished. And what is still more surprising, this great man, who had so long been the admiration, love, and oracle of Carthagena, was all at once, by the special permission of God, and by the effect of man's natural inconstancy, forgotten and abandoned by all. The ladies Isabella and Jeromina d'Urbina, were almost the only persons who remembered him, and remained ever faithfully attached to him. Hence he was left to the care of a few rough Negroes, and of these his immediate attendant was a young boy, as bearish and awkward as if he had but just quitted a horde of savages. He brought him his food,—only the common fare of the community,—quite cold, and often after he had consumed the best part of it himself. He presented it with hands that would have disgusted any other one whose pleasure it had been to eat



out of the same dish with lepers and to kiss their wounds. Sometimes he left the poor man entire days without any attention. Never, however, was he heard to complain of his Negro ; all that he sometimes seemed to lament was, that he did not help him dress, so that he might hear mass, or visit the Blessed Sacrament. As his piety led him to the church as often as was possible, he used to try to dress himself alone, but he frequently fell from weakness, and sometimes so rudely as to severely wound his head. His room being over the sacristy, the brother ran whenever he heard him fall, and finding how difficult it was for him to dress himself, willingly offered him some little assistance. But Father Claver, seeing how respectful he was toward him, begged to have his Negro, who soon gave him opportunity enough to practice patience. In effect the wretch made him suffer martyrdom. When dressing him he would shake him, push him violently against the wall or furniture, and treat him with a harshness bordering on barbarity. And yet whatever he had to endure either from this slave or his own infirmities, he never uttered a complaint, or showed the slightest change of countenance: "My sins," he would say on such occasions, "deserve much worse."

---

## CHAPTER IV.

### LIFE OF SAINT ALONSO.

**A**MIDST such affliction and pain God sent Father Claver a soothing consolation, and one well calculated to satisfy the tenderness and devotion which through life he had retained toward his first mas-

ter in a spiritual life. A religious of the house, brought to him one day the *Life of the Venerable Brother Rodriguez*, recently published in Spain. "Father," said he, "here is the *Life of holy Brother Rodriguez*, which is just published; no doubt, he wished from heaven to procure you this satisfaction before you die." At this news and at the sight of the book, Father Claver, transported with joy, could not find words to express his thanks. He took the book, and reverently placed it on his head, heart, and lips, saying, "Blessed be God, who at length allows me the consolation of seeing what I have so long desired!" The portrait of the holy religious placed at the head of the work, and which he pronounced a striking likeness, redoubled his delight. He revered it with every mark of affection, and seemed anxious to have the book left with him. This circumstance served as a good pretext to extract from him some secrets, which he would not otherwise have disclosed. He was asked, therefore, whether it was true that Brother Alonso had predicted his passing over to the Indies, to the kingdom of New Grenada, and more particularly to Carthagen. He answered, that the brother had repeatedly assured him of this. Inquiry was then made about some other particulars, beginning with that extraordinary ecstasy related in the first part of the book, which whilst the father was relating, he himself seemed to pass into a similar ecstasy. His eyes suddenly closed, his speech failed, and it was by signs only that he could express the interior delights which then inundated his heart. A few moments afterward the sacristan thinking him in a slumber withdrew, carrying the book with him.

But no sooner was he gone, than Father Claver returned to himself. He missed his treasure. At his earnest request he was dressed, and supported by affection, which at that moment lent him strength, he repaired to the sacristy to request the brother not to refuse him the consolation of again enjoying the sight of his dear master's Life and portrait. Respect would not allow him to send another person for it; and notwithstanding his excessive weakness he would go himself, in order that he might be able to say that if he owed the happiness of first seeing it to the kindness of others, the second sight of it at least should be the reward of his own affection. Some persons much attached to the college, amongst whom were Don Antony de Betancour, Governor of Jamaica, happened at this moment to enter the sacristy, and were so surprised at Father Claver's transports, that they begged Brother Gonzales to read them some part of the Life, especially such as Father Claver had himself witnessed, and the truth of which he confirmed. We are not surprised at the father's earnestness on this subject, when we consider the high opinion he had formed of the sanctity of that great servant of God, and the feelings of veneration with which from the first he had been penetrated. We have already stated that he had carefully preserved all his writings. By the permission of his superiors he gave before his death part of them to a holy religious whom he much esteemed, and whom he had as his companion for twenty-two years in his various functions amongst the Negroes; the rest he sent to the noviciate at Thonga, to form the novices to true perfection.

One of the richest ornaments of his room was a pic-

ture of Brother Alonso, which hung in a little wooden frame at the head of his bed. This he showed to every one who went to see him, and did all he could to excite love and devotion for this holy brother. He carried it with him in his missions, and when a few days before his death all his little movables were seized by the piety of those who wished some of his relics, this picture alone remained, as if Alonso was unwilling to abandon in death a man who had so tenderly loved him in life.

His strength finally failed to such an extent that he was unable to sleep. He spent nearly the whole night in prayer and devout colloquies with our Lord, in a manner so sweet and tender that he seemed to have a foretaste of the delights prepared for him in heaven. He was glad therefore to have a light in his room, that he might be able to fix his eyes from time to time upon his crucifix and other objects of devotion. But as the candles were very small, he was obliged to request the Negro who slept in the room to replenish the light. As the boy was often too indolent to get up, the light went quite out, and then he was obliged to procure another for himself. When the Negro found another candle lighted, he would ask in surprise where it came from? "Sleep, sleep, child, and do not trouble yourself about that," was all the father answered. What is quite certain is, that when Father Claver himself put the candle in the candlestick, or gave it to the Negro, it was sure to last all night however small it was, and this never happened so in any other case. In the meantime the holy man gradually became weaker, and spoke of nothing but his approaching death. Toward the

middle of the year 1654 he positively affirmed to several persons, but especially to Brother Nicholas Gonzales, that he should die on a festival of our Blessed Lady.

---

## CHAPTER V.

### HE MEETS HIS SUCCESSOR — FORETELLS HIS OWN DEATH.

ABOUT this time the Spanish fleet arrived at Carthagená under the command of the Marquis de Montenegro. Father Claver hearing symptoms of extraordinary rejoicing in the house, inquired the meaning of it, and was told that Father Diego de Farigna who had been sent to succeed him, and who had been commissioned by the King to baptize all the negroes, had just arrived. "Ah!" exclaimed he, in a transport of joy, raising his eyes to heaven, "to baptize the Negroes! O what good news!" He immediately arose, dragged himself to the room of Father de Farigna, prostrated himself before him, and respectfully kissing his feet, congratulated him on the glorious office assigned to him. De Farigna, surprised and confounded at the honor shown him by this aged man, was much more so when informed that it was Father Claver, so famous in Carthagená for the greatness of his labors and the lustre of his virtues. He in his turn fell at the feet of the servant of God, protesting that he should ever regard him as his master. The respective humility of these two holy men was an edifying sight to those who had just then entered to welcome the new missionary.

Father Claver's joy was however a little damped by hearing at the same time that the king had ordered the demolition of part of the college, situated above the town walls. He could not without regret see several of his brothers, then actually ill, driven out of their lodgings and at the risk of being deprived of that help in which they stood really in need. He therefore prayed our Lord to spare him this grief, and to withdraw him beforehand out of this world. Almighty God heard his prayer, and revealed to him the precise time of his death, of which he apprised Donna Isabella d' Urbina, who we may well imagine was deeply afflicted. A few days before his death he went to give her a last proof of his gratitude, and advised her to choose Father de Farigna, for her future confessor. She replied that so long as she could have the happiness of confessing to him she would have no one else. But he told her positively that she would never see him there again, for he would very soon die. Seeing her extreme affliction, he promised not to forget her before God; and, as the whole family, hearing the lamentations caused by her sorrow, gathered round him in tears, he strove to console them all, and withdrew after giving them his blessing. The words of the saintly director made so deep an impression on Isabella's mind, that when soon afterward she heard that Father de Farigna was dangerously ill, she boldly declared that he would not die, because Father Claver had appointed him to be her confessor. His speedy recovery verified the prediction.

A few days afterward in a conversation with Brother Gonzales on his approaching death, he begged to be buried at the foot of his confessional close to the door.

“No, no,” replied the brother, “it shall be in the chapel of our Lord.” The brother then begged him to recommend the city of Carthage to God when he should be in heaven, and always to love a country watered with his sweat, where he had gained so many souls and acquired so much merit. “Alas!” replied the holy man, with a sigh, “I have lost all by my impatience under suffering.” Notwithstanding the holy fear inspired by his humility, he constantly spoke with perfect confidence of the happiness that awaited him in heaven, so much so, that the same brother gave him a list of several of his friends whom he begged him to remember before God. The holy man promised to do so, with the appearance of one who had been assured of his salvation.

---

## CHAPTER VI.

### RESPECT FOR HIS SANCTITY.

WHEN the report was spread abroad of the probable death of this great servant of God, the Marquis de Montalegre, out of respect to his sanctity, went to visit him before re-embarking for Spain. After saluting him with great reverence, he begged him to recommend to God the success of the voyage and safe return of the fleet, because there was great danger of their meeting with the ships of many enemies of Spain. The father assured him that he and the whole fleet would reach Spain without any serious accident, although they would be several times in danger. The Marquis then asked for a slight memento, but Father Claver replied

that a poor man like himself had nothing fit to offer to a nobleman. Recollecting, however, that the Marquis had married the niece of St. Francis Borgia, he unfastened from his beads the precious medal of St. Ignatius, which he had so often used to effect miraculous cures, and humbly presented it to him.

He received shortly after this another visitor, far more pleasing to his taste and piety; a very holy man of the order of St. Francis, and also his spiritual son. These two saintly souls conversed long on the things of God; when the religious expressing his regret at the near destruction of the college, "I shall not see it," said Claver to him. "How so?" rejoined the Franciscan, "since I am told the work of demolition begins to-morrow?" "Because," continued the father, "I have begged our Lord to call me to Himself beforehand, and He in his goodness, has promised to do so."

From that moment he strove absolutely to forget everything of this world, and to be solely occupied with the things of eternity. His humility led him to request Brother Emmanuel Lopez to destroy the signatures of a great number of billets, already prepared for distribution among the Negroes, in proof of their having been to confession. But the Brother first consulted one of the fathers of the house, who requested him to collect them and bring them to him. He procured a number for himself, although Father Claver tried to prevent him, and afterward shared them with the people, who received as a precious boon, the autograph of the saint.



## CHAPTER VII.

## HE RECEIVES EXTREME UNCTION.

ON the 6th of September, which that year fell on Sunday, he went down to the church supported by two Negroes; and after communicating with sentiments of extraordinary devotion, he was carried back to his room. On passing the sacristy he said to the brother, "I am going to die, what do you desire of me in the next life?" "That you recommend this city and house to God," replied the brother. He promised to do so, and having been helped into bed, he spent the rest of that day in most tender colloquies with God. In the evening he was seized with violent fever, and this was much augmented by the vehemence of his love. As all remedies were deemed useless, the doctor was not sent for until the next morning. The infirmarian who had care of him during the day, going very early in the morning to inquire how he had passed the night, found him speechless, motionless, and senseless; but with a countenance of such sweet composure, that he looked like one calmly sleeping or ravished in ecstasy. All the fathers of the house hearing of the state to which he was reduced, immediately hurried to his room; less afflicted at his condition than touched by the sweet conduct of Providence in his regard. On the physician's arriving he declared that all further remedies would be useless. Extreme Unction was then administered, although a slight pulsation of the heart was the only remaining sign of life.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## HIS DEATH.

SCARCELY was this ceremony concluded, than those in the house, anxious to have some relic of the saint, carried off everything in the room except the bed-quilt upon him, and the portrait of Blessed Alonso, which one of the religious vigorously guarded. Father Claver seems to have foreseen what would happen, for a few days before he had given a little spiritual book to a brother, and said to him, "Take care of it, or it will be carried off." In the meantime the news having spread through the town that Father Claver was dying, all former sentiments of tenderness and veneration for the holy man, which seemed to have been slumbering during his long infirmity, instantly revived in the minds and hearts of all. People from all parts came in crowds to have the consolation of once more seeing him. At first, only some persons of the highest distinction were admitted, but in a short time the tumult became so great that the door was forced open, and the college filled with ecclesiastics, religious, nobility, and poor; all anxious to kiss his hands, and apply their beads to his body whilst he was still alive. In all directions children were crying in the streets, "The Saint is dying! The Saint is dying!" At length they collected in such numbers that it was impossible to keep them out of his room. They fell on their knees, and kissed his hand

with all the warmth of affection peculiar to their happy age. The Negroes too showed their gratitude. They kissed his hands, watered them with their tears, exclaiming that they had lost their protector and their father. This immense concourse lasted until night, and even then it was difficult to close the doors. Some of his penitents sent two artists to take the portrait of their saintly director. This certainly was not difficult, for he lay there motionless, with the appearance of a man sweetly ravished in God, rather than of one at the point of death. Shortly after midnight on Tuesday, the festival of our Blessed Lady's Nativity, he seemed utterly exhausted, and the prayers for a departing soul were recited. Thus at two o'clock in the morning, on the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, and whilst the assistants were invoking the names of Jesus and Mary, he sweetly yielded his soul to his Creator. This was in the year 1654, the seventy-first, or according to others, the seventy-third year of his age, and the fifty-fifth from his entrance into the Society. He began his immortal life in heaven on the same day that she, whom he had ever regarded as his Queen and Mother, began her mortal life on earth. His body, emaciated and attenuated by austerities and labors, became more lively, fresh, and florid than it had been during his life; his face, so calm and beautiful, seemed to breathe a sweet air of tender devotion which inspired others with the same; his feet and hands were flexible like those of a living man; and from his body there exhaled a most pleasing odor. As soon as he expired all present fell on their knees to kiss his feet, and what was singular, the thought of praying for him occurred to none. No

sooner was he robed in his sacerdotal vestments, than his room was again pillaged of everything; his poor clothes and bed covering were torn to pieces, in order to furnish relics.

---

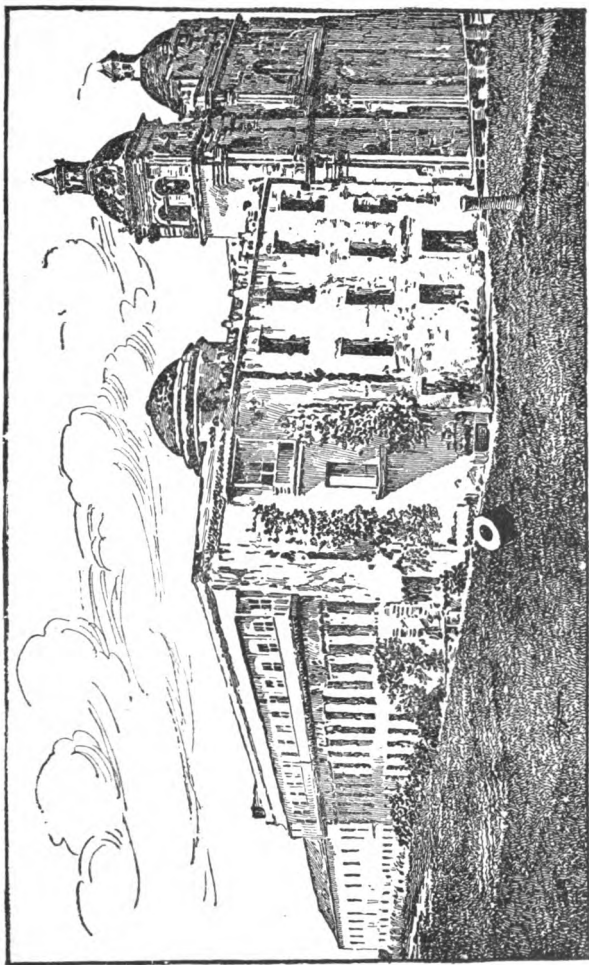
## CHAPTER IX.

### THE OBSEQUIES.

THE obsequies of the holy missionary corresponded with the high esteem in which his virtue was held; and the honors paid to his memory equalled those shown to the greatest saints. To be better able to judge of this, we will take the facts as related by the rector of the college, in a circular letter addressed to all the superiors in the province.

As soon as the Father Prior of the Augustinians heard of Father Claver's death, he caused the bells in his church to be tolled; and about eight o'clock in the morning came to the college at the head of all his religious. After they had recited a few prayers in the chamber of the departed, they descended to the church and sang a solemn mass, with the same ceremonies as if the body had been present. By this time the whole city was aroused, and on all sides might be heard praises of the holy man. The Negroes of the town and neighborhood pressed forward to show their respect; and all wished to kiss his feet and touch his body with their beads. Donna Isabella D' Urbina, the most cherished of his penitents, sent a magnificent shrine of cedarwood, lined with the richest materials, fringed with gold, and all the mountings highly gilt.

Don Pedro, Duke of Estrada, furnished a magnificent supply of lights ; but Don Pedro de Zapata, governor of the province, in his veneration for the memory of this great servant of God, carried his generosity still further. He assembled the magistrates, and proposed to have the obsequies of so illustrious a man as Father Claver defrayed at the public expense, in order to show their gratitude for his signal services. Two commissaries were accordingly deputed to the college, to request the Father Rector to defer the burial till the next day ; and in the meantime to have the body conveyed into the church, to satisfy the devotion of the public ; and also to commission some one to prepare a funeral oration. When all had been arranged, numbers of the clergy presented themselves to carry the corpse ; but it was almost impossible to keep back the crowd which pressed round to touch the body with their rosaries. From all the churches in the town were sent beautiful tapestries and hangings to decorate the altar and tomb, whilst some pious persons cut a palm, intending to place it in Father Claver's hands. Before the removal of the body the most distinguished persons of all orders were admitted into the room where it reposed, and all disputed for the honor of carrying so precious a burden. The greatest difficulty was to penetrate through the mass of human beings congregated at the entrance of the church and house, and in fact it was found necessary to carry the corpse out through the great door of the college. At length it entered the church, where nearly every one held a lighted candle. Instantly the people rushed in crowds to kiss his hands and feet, and if force had not been used to keep them back, everything



(pp. 232)

**The Jesuit Church, Carthage, wherein repose the relics of St. Peter Claver.**



would have been pulled to pieces, in their eager desire to procure relics. First came the superior of the Order of Mercy at the head of all his religious; and though that day was the greatest feast of their order, they left their own church to go to that of the Jesuits, in honor of one to whom the whole city was indebted. The Marquis de Montalègre arrived soon after at the head of all the Spanish nobility. He immediately knelt down to kiss the dead priest's hand, though to facilitate his approach, the clergy, together with the Religious of Mercy and of St. Austin, were obliged to assist the Jesuits in keeping off the populace, which insisted on surrounding the body. Don Suarez de Melo, canon of the cathedral and grand vicar of the diocese, came next, accompanied by all the ecclesiastics and officials of his congregation. Toward night the concourse was infinitely augmented by the arrival of the Negroes and the lower classes, all eager to touch the body with their beads, linens, ribbons, or any available object. The governor then sent the city guard to protect the body, but the soldiers were unable to reach the church. The prior of the Augustinians, with six of his religious, advanced to relieve the Jesuits, who were quite fatigued with having contended all day against the pressing crowds. An attempt was made to cover the corpse with a black velvet pall, but this was prevented by the cries of the multitude, who demanded the consolation of seeing the saint, as they called him, once again.

The next morning, at day-break, the concourse and tumult recommenced just as if no one had yet seen the holy apostle of Carthagen. Rich and poor, the strong and the weak, all alike hastened to show their respect



and implore the intercession of the saint. Toward eight o'clock the religious of St. John of God arrived, and sung a solemn mass. The Augustinians arrived at nine with the city magistrates, in their robes of ceremony, preceded by their halberdiers, and followed by the governor accompanied by his lieutenant, and all his staff. When they had all knelt down and kissed Father Claver's hands, the Augustinians celebrated the office and mass, at the end of which a religious of the Order of Mercy pronounced the funeral oration upon this text, "He that believeth in Me shall live even after his death." After the sermon the body was carried to the grave by the governor, the chief magistrates and some naval officers. It was interred in the chapel of our Lord, on the epistle side, and in a sort of niche excavated in the wall. The concourse of people did not diminish during several successive days. On Monday, the 14th of September, the city corporation, with the music from the cathedral, repaired to the Jesuits' church, and celebrated a magnificent service; the rector of the college sung the mass, and an Augustinian delivered a funeral oration. On the following day the governor, in testimony of his gratitude and private affection, caused a repetition of the same honors at his own expense. Mass was sung by the grand vicar, after which, followed a fine eulogium of Father Claver by Father Joseph de Pacheco, an Augustinian. He took occasion to speak of the persecutions raised against the Jesuits, and added, that God had only called this holy man to Himself that he might not witness the chastisements prepared for the city now that it was deprived of its most powerful protector. The audience, comprising

all the most distinguished of the clergy, nobility, magistrates, and merchants, highly applauded the orator's discourse. The city, at its own cost, erected, in honor of its apostle, a superb tomb, on which were embossed the city's arms.

The negroes, more interested than any others for the glory of a saint who had always so tenderly loved them, wished also to show him their respectful and sincere gratitude. They chose a particular day for a solemn service, to which they invited the governor with all the nobility and the navy. Never was any ceremony performed with more order and propriety. They arranged themselves according to their different nations, each with its own chief; and as if they would spare nothing to honor the memory of their common father, they distributed lighted torches indiscriminately to every body there. The mass was sung by a fine choir, and the funeral oration was delivered by the treasurer of the church of Popayan. No other orator was more diffuse on the virtues, sanctity, heroic acts, and stupendous miracles of Father Claver. To inspire still greater gratitude and tenderness in the hearts of his hearers, he endeavored particularly to prove that the ministry to which Almighty God had called Father Claver amongst the Negroes, had been the principal cause of the many wonders admired in him.

In all the neighboring habitations other Negroes testified their zeal for their common father in a manner less pompous, it is true, but much more touching. As soon as his happy death became known, nothing was heard among those poor slaves, but tears, sighs, and lamentations. For several days it was impossible to

console them under the loss of him who had been their only consolation in all their miseries.

These details have been taken from the letter of the rector of Carthage; and to conclude in a few words, we may say that at the death of Father Claver, all that we read of most wonderful and brilliant in the greatest saints was renewed. Never was there a more universal veneration for their memory, more confidence in their merits, more eagerness to possess their relics. Every voice conspired to canonize him at once; and we have reason to believe, that it was not without a secret inspiration of Heaven, that ecclesiastics, religious, nobility, and people, all at the same moment concurred in paying him all the permitted honors usually shown to the most illustrious personages consecrated by the Church in her Calendar.

---

## CHAPTER X.

### HIS PORTRAIT.—JURIDICAL INFORMATION.

**F**ATHER CLAVER was of the middle height, naturally erect, but somewhat inclined, from a habit of looking on the ground and keeping his eyes cast down. He had a large head, a full face, and dark complexion; his forehead was broad and wrinkled, his temples sunk, his eyes well set, but the eyelids, from the abundance of tears he used to shed, were somewhat red and inflamed. His nose was moderately aquiline, his lips thick; he had a full beard, a short neck, a voice tolerably strong, but more sonorous than flexible.

Nature had given him a robust constitution, but he soon ruined it by excessive labor and austerities.

However great had been his reputation for sanctity during life, the multitude of prodigies which God was pleased to perform after his death manifested his glory. The first circumstance that excited surprise was when a palm was placed in his hand, in sign of the many victories he had gained over hell and over self. The hand opened of itself, received the palm, and immediately closed again. This wonder was quickly succeeded by many others, which greatly contributed to augment the opinion already formed of his great power with God. Don Pedro de Zapata, governor of Carthagena, proposed to the city authorities to request the chapter of the diocese to institute a verbal process and juridical inquiry upon the life, virtues, and miracles of the holy man. The city immediately presented the request through Don Anthony Moëquez, Don Rodriguez Percy, and Don Pedro d'Aguilar, king's counsel. Father Diego Ramirez de Farigna, examiner of the holy office, and then director of the college, joined his request to that of the city. The chapter willingly consented. It appointed Doctor John Guerrero, priest and examiner of the holy office, to be commissary judge in this affair, and nominated for secretary John Tollez, also a priest, and notary of the Inquisition. After the usual oaths and formalities, they were ordered to present to the chapter the original of the informations taken, so that, after mature deliberation, they might be better able to grant the request. The juridical informations began on the 7th of September, 1657, and finished in the month of November, 1660. During

this interval fifty-nine witnesses were heard, of every condition in life: priests, religious, gentlemen, and magistrates, all persons worthy of belief. It is from their depositions, confirmed on oath, that we have extracted all the remarkable events related in this history, as well as the miracles performed since, a few of which we shall briefly narrate.

---

## CHAPTER XI.

### MIRACLES AFTER DEATH.

**D**ONNA ISABELLA DE BETANCOUR was so troubled with a constant and painful complaint in her eyes, that, anxious as she was to visit the body of Father Claver the night it was exposed in the church, she dared not, for fear of increasing the malady. At the urgent request of her mother and sister, she was however present at the funeral. She knelt down near the corpse, and after kissing the hand placed it on her eyes. At the same moment the complaint disappeared, and never again returned. During the obsequies of Father Claver, Bartholemew Sanchez was ill at the hospital of St. Sebastian with a violent fever which had brought him to the point of death. At the moment he seemed ready to expire his brother left him, to be present at the funeral of the holy man. On his return he offered him a little slip of rosemary, which he had taken from the bier, saying, "Brother, take this branch; it has been lying on Father Claver: recommend yourself to him; he can cure you in a moment." At these words

the sick man opened his eyes, took the branch, and raised it to his mouth. "What are you doing?" cried his brother. "Do not eat it, for perhaps you may be injured." "No, no!" answered the dying man, "it comes from a saint, and cannot hurt me." He then ate some of it, and was cured. When juridically questioned on the subject, all he could recollect was, that he had found the rosemary very sweet and pleasant, and falling into a peaceful slumber he seemed to revive. At the end of an hour he felt perfectly cured, ate with a good appetite, slept soundly all night, and returned home the next day in full health. In the year 1659, when pressed to go in person and declare this fact, he excused himself at first, in consequence of having a large tumor in his loins, which gave him great pain and prevented him from walking. But he immediately reproached himself for his ingratitude, and consented to go to the Jesuits' College. Before he had even arrived, he found himself freed from his pain. He approached Father Claver's tomb, thanked him for this new favor, and then, as he proceeded with his deposition, he felt his abscess sensibly diminish. He attested the whole of this on oath, and such was his reliance in the holy man that he felt very certain he should never again experience the same sufferings.

Don Vincent de Villalobos, first commissary of Carthagena, had adopted a nephew of his wife, named Dominic de Betancour, aged about eight or nine years. This child was attacked by such a violent fever, that his life was endangered. Don Vincent had recourse to Father Claver, to whom he was particularly devout. Prostrate at his tomb he prayed most fervently to him,

and afterward asked the sacristan for one of his stoles. On his return home, full of confidence, he put the stole upon the child, and immediately a profuse perspiration ensued, producing such good effects that in a few hours' time the physicians pronounced him cured. After some time whilst changing the child's linen, the stole was removed. The perspiration immediately returned, but so cold that the child fainted; and other unfavorable symptoms appeared which again brought him to the brink of the grave. His aunt noticing the absence of the stole put it round his neck herself, and withdrew to an adjoining room, there to give full vent to her tears. "Oh, holy Father Claver!" exclaimed she, sobbing, "since you have begun, do complete your work, that every one may impute this cure to your power." Scarcely had she uttered these words, than the perspiration and fever suddenly ceased, and the little de Betancour arose as strong and healthy as if he had never been ill. The physicians who were present ascribed this cure to a true miracle, and one of them afterward affirmed this fact on oath.

Donna Augustina Talabera, who lived close to the Jesuits' college, had been long afflicted with violent rheumatism in her side, which quite crippled her. Brother Nicholas Gonzales sent her Father Claver's beads, which she applied to the infirm side, and all her pains immediately ceased. She arose from her bed and stood upright perfectly cured. She went the next morning to the church, where prostrate at the tomb of her benefactor she shed abundance of tears. Some time afterward as she was going to aid a poor slave whom her husband was treating most cruelly, she contracted a

severe cold and her pains returned with renewed violence. She wished to apply her former remedy ; but the beads were not then at the college, so they sent her a little prayer-book, which Father Claver had occasionally used. She put it where she felt most pain, and was cured as promptly as she had been on the former occasion.

The daughter of Don Sebastian de Torrez, had an artery severed by unskilful bleeding, in consequence of which an immense tumor formed in her arm. The physicians and surgeons despaired of her cure, because in that hot climate few remedies are available in such cases. Her god-mother, who had already experienced the efficacy of Father Claver's intercession, had the child carried to his tomb. The little girl entered the church screaming with pain. The sacristan immediately placed her on a large bench near the tomb, so that she might easily stretch her hand out toward it, but perceiving her unwillingness, both from pain and because she feared her arm was to be cut off, he himself took her hand, and wrapping a stole of Father Claver's round it, placed it on the top of the tomb. At that same instant the tumor appeared smaller and less inflamed. The next day the little girl came again, and in five days was so completely cured, that Doctor Bartholomew de Torrez protested such a cure could not be otherwise than miraculous.

Donna Sebastiana de Talabera had for eight months suffered such violent internal pain that she was often unable to breathe. The malady seemed to increase, and to be beyond the reach of remedy. She procured a piece of Father Claver's cloak, and had no sooner



applied it to her stomach than the pain disappeared to return no more. She also sent to her mother a small twig of the palm which had been placed in the father's hand on the day of his burial. This twig was afterward given to a lady who was suffering from violent pain in her chest. She was so perfectly and promptly cured, that no entreaty could induce her to return it. In the same lady's family was a slave who, six years before, had lost the use of his feet. His mistress had him carried to the father's tomb, and after the first visit he was able to walk with a stick. She feared that the sudden cure of such an inveterate complaint would not be durable, and applied fomentations of wine and aromatic herbs to complete the cure. But she soon had reason to regret her excessive charity. In a very short time the slave's feet and legs were covered with frightful ulcers; he could not bear the sight of food, and was soon reduced to extremity. The lady then humbly acknowledged her fault, had him carried again to the church, and begged the holy man's pardon for her want of confidence. The slave returned home, healthy and robust; he ate with good appetite, and was in a few days perfectly cured.

A young Indian fifteen years old had a terrible fall, which occasioned a large tumor on the spine, by which the nerves of the right leg became contracted. In order to walk at all he was obliged to use a stick with one hand, and support his right knee with the other. One Sunday morning the sacristan saw him waiting for mass near the church door, and said to him, "Poor young man! how are you? What brings you here?" "Alas, brother!" replied the Indian, "I could scarcely

be worse than I am ; I die every day and yet do not cease to live." "But," resumed the sacristan, "why not have recourse to venerable Father Claver ? Why not visit his tomb, where such wonders are daily performed ? Let us go there together, I will myself conduct you ; but have confidence and say to him, I will not stir from here till you have cured me." At the same time he took the young man by the arm and helped him to drag himself along to the chapel where reposed the body of the holy man. The next day he went there alone with no other assistance than his stick ; and on the third day he returned again without so much as his stick, and found himself as well as he had been before his fall. Meeting with the sacristan he told him he was cured, and did not even feel any pain. The brother could scarcely believe his own eyes, and made him walk round the church two or three times, advising him however to say nothing about it till there was full assurance that the cure was complete. The Indian answered, "Ah, but in truth, all those at home have witnessed the cure, and I have already told them that I am indebted to Father Claver for it."

A daughter of Simon Anaja, named Teresa, became quite blind. An excrescence of flesh, which completely covered the pupils, formed in the cavities of both eyes. The whole family despaired of her cure ; but what cannot be effected by great love, when animated with great confidence ! One of the child's relatives, grieved at her deplorable condition, took her in her arms and gave her some wax tapers which she had just bought, saying, "Here are some candles ; you must yourself take them to Father Claver's tomb, as soon as he has

cured you ; we shall see whether his charity can be unmoved at our affliction." At these words the little girl opened her eyes, eagerly turned them about in all directions, and they immediately became bright as two lighted torches. The fame of this miracle was soon spread abroad, and then there were few infirm people who did not have recourse to the servant of God.

Don Garcia de Zerpa declared on oath that he had witnessed a multitude of miraculous cures by the mere application of a cross which Father Claver had given to his sister Leonora de Zerpa. The Rev. Don Juan de Zerpa, his brother, declared the same thing, adding that on the very day of his deposition, a lady, to whom his sister had lent the cross, had just been freed from excruciating pains in her legs and arms. He moreover declared that he himself had within that year been cured of a violent attack of gout by merely applying the cross.

But a prodigy still more singular and incontestible than all that has been hitherto related, was the condition in which the body was found when transferred two years and a half after the death of Father Claver. The provincial of the Jesuits, wishing to give it a more honorable resting place, had a new shrine prepared, in a recess formed in the wall of the same chapel. On the 1st of March, 1657, the brick-work of the tomb was removed, when the wood of the coffin, linen, fringes, and even the ornaments, were found completely ruined by the damp. But on opening the coffin the body, which had been put in unslacked lime, was found whole and entire without the least sign of corruption, excepting one part of the head which had been

injured. The flesh was fresh, all the limbs firm, and placed in their natural position, the whole exhaling, as Dr. Bartholomew Torrez remarked, a sweet perfume similar to soft clay impregnated with odoriferous water. This experienced physician, after examining all the fingers one after another, declared on oath, that the state in which he saw the body with all its skin, nerves, and other parts so sound and healthy, notwithstanding the quantity of lime which covered it, and the humidity of the place, appeared to him a miracle above nature. After replacing the whole with great respect in the new shrine, it was deposited in the niche formed in the wall, which was carefully closed up. The provincial then expressly forbade all rectors of the college ever to allow the least part of the precious relics of this holy missionary to be removed without an order from their superiors. The privilege of incorruptibility after death is so remarkable, that God has been pleased to honor thus only a few of His most illustrious saints.

---

## CHAPTER XII.

### CANONIZATION.

**A**FTER this brief narrative of the heroic life of St. Peter Claver, we deem it proper to conclude with a short account of the two great miracles which caused the Sacred Congregation of Rites on Nov. 1st, 1887, to canonize the Apostle of the Negroes.

It is a pleasure to notice that both miracles, as well as those approved by Pius IX, on the 17th of Aug., 1848, happened in America. It seems that God was pleased to glorify his servant in an especial manner in

that land in which he had so long labored for the propagation of the faith.

Barbara Dressen, who was the subject of the first miracle, was born at Treves in 1779. She emigrated to the United States, and after the death of her husband, lived at Milwaukee. At the age of seventy a small wart appeared on her right cheek. At first she considered it a trifle, but soon it began to increase and to assume a reddish color. She then consulted Doctor Bayer who at once pronounced it an incurable cancer which would inevitably cause her death. The unfortunate woman knowing that the doctor was a man of deep learning, lost all hope of recovery from natural means and placed her trust in heaven alone.

Father Weninger of the Society of Jesus, was at that time giving a mission in Milwaukee. He was propagating the devotion to the Blessed Peter Claver, chiefly by applying the relics to the bodies of the sick. Barbara came to him and requested him to apply the relics to her malady. She faithfully recited the prayers which he had enjoined on her, and during two or three years she noticed that the disease gradually disappeared, so that there was every hope of a complete cure.

But God, with a view of glorifying his servant, intended for her a still greater trial. Unexpectedly the evil returned, the wart changed into an ulcer, and the flow created successive scabs of an itching and most excruciating nature. For ten years she endured the most intense suffering, yet never did she omit for a single day her prayers to the Blessed Peter Claver. Her faith was soon to receive its reward. Father Weninger

after ten years' absence, returned to Milwaukee, and one of his first visitors was Barbara. Feeling an increase of faith, she hastened to him, and told him the history of her ten years' martyrdom. "I see," said she, "the Saint alone can help—can relieve me." She then knelt and begged to be again blessed with the relics of Blessed Peter Claver. Father Weninger, moved with compassion, applied the relics, first to the diseased cheek, then to the forehead, and finally to the left cheek. All pain instantly ceased. Her joy was intense,—thanking the priest she hastened from the house. On reaching the open air, she found that she had been cured,—the wind did not as formerly irritate her cheek—small scales as fine dust, fell from her face, and before she had arrived home, all traces of the evil had disappeared. Those who had known her, were struck with amazement, and sealed their testimony by an oath. She was eighty-two years of age, when thus marvellously cured, June 29th, 1861. Five years afterward, the commission sent to interrogate her upon the miracle, was forced to acknowledge that the evil so miraculously expelled, had never reappeared.

The second miracle took place in St. Louis. In 1853 Ignatius Strecker had brought his family from Germany to the United States, and in 1861 he was working at St. Louis in a soap factory. One day he happened to strike his breast against an angular piece of iron. The shock was very violent, and although no exterior injury was apparent, the breastbone had been bruised. He suffered acute pains followed by a burning sensation and a swelling of the wounded part. And yet it was only after two years that he resolved to

consult a physician. A large tumor had grown on the breast. He called in Doctor Heitzig, who immediately said that the bone was ulcerated. He had exhausted nearly all the resources of his medical skill, and at last after nine months he was forced to hold a consultation with his partner, Dr. Schoeneman. They did all in their power to check the ulceration which, by this time, had spread to three ribs of the left side. All remedies proved ineffectual to stop the progress of the evil, but rather complicated the maladies,—asthma, fever, a cough, suffocation, night sweats attacked the man in turns. He was so reduced that his skin was almost transparent. For two years had he endured all these sufferings, without one interval of rest. The doctors finally pronounced his case hopeless, and told him that he could not live beyond the 15th day. He then absolutely renounced all treatment and dismissed his physician.

His wife had heard Father Weninger preach upon the efficacy of recourse to Blessed Peter Claver, and she induced Strecker to have recourse to him. He went with great difficulty to the church where Father Weninger was applying the relics to a large number of sick. He was touched and blessed with the relics and his strong faith was soon rewarded. From that moment, the tumor ceased to flow, an indication that the ulceration had come to an end. In a few weeks, the wound healed, and all the accompanying evils, as well as the advanced symptoms of consumption, disappeared, so that shortly after his visit to the church, he had recovered his former vigor. He justly acknowledged that he owed this great favor to the intercession

and merits of Blessed Peter Claver, whom God had wished once more to glorify. Dr. Schoeneman, who had despaired of his recovery, was greatly surprised at this unexpected cure; and although not a Catholic, he regarded the fact as a manifestation of God's omnipotence.

On the canonical verification of these two miracles, the Sacred Congregation of Rites proclaimed on the 26th day of November, 1887, that the canonization of Blessed Peter Claver might be undertaken; and on the 15th of January, 1888, Leo XIII placed St. Claver upon the altar, together with his holy friend, Alonzo Rodriguez—thus uniting in glory those whom God had so intimately united here below.

**THE END.**





# APPENDIX.

---

## ST. JOSEPH'S SOCIETY.

ST. JOSEPH'S SOCIETY, which has so much to do with the evangelization of the American colored people, is composed of clergy and laity. Its clergy are secular priests ordained in the same way as the diocesan clergy *ad titulum missionis*. The priests of St. Joseph are essentially missionaries; hence they take the title of their ordination from the missions, and, like all sons of the Propaganda, must look to the missions for support.

The object, therefore, of St. Joseph's Society is to evangelize the races of men alien as yet to the Gospel. Up to this the American Church has taken no hand in the evangelization of Asia, Africa, and Oceanica. Italy, France, Germany, England, too, and, within the past fifteen years or so, even afflicted Ireland, have their sons and daughters doing battle for Christ against the triumph of Satan in those eastern lands so long in his bondage. Are Americans to form the homeguard of Christ's Army? By no means. Right at our doors is a missionary field as uncultivated as it is inviting—the negroes of the Southern States. The bulk of them are strangers to the Gospel. Living amid Christians, they are far from being such. Strange disposition of Providence: to save men by means of men! Human

means, human agencies, human hearts and hands are allied to God in his own peculiar work—saving souls. He would become a man and die for men. He also would use men to save men. Here is the *raison d'être* of St. Joseph's Society. Ample provision exists for saving souls to whom the Gospel is no stranger; other means are necessary to win to Christ those who are ignorant of the Gospel.

#### WHAT HOPES OF AMERICAN SUBJECTS?

There is every hope, and our hopes are based chiefly on this, that the Church is essentially missionary and aggressive, and also that in America she is in her normal condition. Free and expansive in the glorious atmosphere of American intelligence and liberty, the Catholic Church here, if true to her Spouse, must become the greatest of all missionary churches. American political ideas are permeating the whole world; their influence is felt everywhere; American trade begins to knock at the gates of all nations; it has opened the ports of Japan and reached China's great wall. And, most suggestive fact of all, American Protestant missionaries are everywhere in the East, laboring, if with the limp of Protestant error, yet with the courage of American sincerity for the Gospel of Christ as they understand it. And are not these people bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh? Does Catholicism warp the American genius? Shall we deny to our American Catholic youths the energy which animates their Protestant brethren?

Self-preservation will make Americans missionaries.

This country is to be won to the faith ; it will be done by going beyond our own people. In trying to convert the blacks of the South we shall be strengthening our citadels of the faith in the North.

#### EIGHT MILLIONS OF THE AFRICAN RACE

Are in this country, less than two hundred thousand of whom are members of the True Church. More than half do not profess any sort of Christianity, and of those who do, a great proportion follow but low and superstitious forms of the more vulgar Protestant sects. Yet the colored people are naturally intelligent, have admirable moral qualities, and are remarkably gifted by nature with the religious sense, being fond of participating in public worship, easily led to accept the truths of revelation, and have a bright perception of the beauties of a moral and religious life.

#### THE COLORED RACE LIKE THE CHURCH.

Taken as a body, this people is not averse to Catholicity. On the contrary, the missionary efforts already made, have demonstrated not only the general religious traits we have just mentioned, but a particular aptitude for the Catholic faith and discipline. Wherever intelligent and zealous efforts have been undertaken to evangelize them, these have resulted in conversions, and that is especially the case in localities where our holy religion had been before hardly so much as known. We have found the Negroes easy to convert. We have found scarcely any difficulty in opening schools to

which non-Catholics willingly send their children, in face of the certainty that they would be trained up there in the Catholic faith. In country places we have been able to gather about us numerous audiences of colored people, not one of whom was a Catholic, and to establish Catholic schools in their midst.

#### THE HARVEST IS GREAT.

In one word, there is a ripe harvest of converts ready at our very door. A whole race of men, newly elevated to the dignity of American citizenship whose career in the world is barely beginning, are willing to hear the Word of life, and whose future depends on Holy Church's success among them.

The difficulty is to obtain apostolic men to preach that Word. From every part of the South the loud call for negro missionaries is heard. The bishops of the Southern States are asking for missionaries to open churches and schools in their dioceses. The answer, hitherto, has always been "no." But, by the providence of God, St. Joseph's Seminary, with its feeder, the Epiphany College, has been established to supply this rich harvest field with apostolic laborers. Already generous youths are assembled in these institutions, pursuing their studies and exercising themselves in the virtues of their heroic vocation. Their hearts are afire with the flame of divine love for souls which our blessed Saviour came on earth to scatter among men, and which the breath of His Holy Spirit is daily enkindling in the choicest souls.

GOD HATH SET FORTH US APOSTLES, 'AS IT WERE, MEN  
APPOINTED TO DEATH.

We cannot invite young men to join us by promising an easy life in the priesthood. There is no such thing for any good priest, least of all for a missionary. But we dare affirm that the consolations of our life will give a reward capable of compensating for a thousand times greater hardships than it is possible for man to bear. St. Francis Xavier wrote home from India that one minute of the divine joy that sometimes filled his heart amply repaid him for the dangers and sufferings he underwent in his long voyages. The noblest souls of the Catholic Church have gone before us in this royal way of the missionary vocation—are daily going this way from all the Old Catholic Nations of Europe. They bid adieu forever to home and kindred; they tear asunder the sweetest bonds of human attachment; they forsake their very names and mother tongues that they may bear the banner of the cross beyond the frontiers of Christendom. They combine in this the heroism of finely constituted natures with the supernatural graces of high spiritual perfection.

GO AND TEACH ALL NATIONS.

And how much more perfect is the profession of piety when it enables one to rise superior to family, race, caste, and every other form of narrowness. When a man has risen above his own blood he has gone far in the conquest of self, and little remains between him and God. The young man who comes to our seminary or college with a sincere heart has put under foot one of the most powerful enemies of Christian charity—

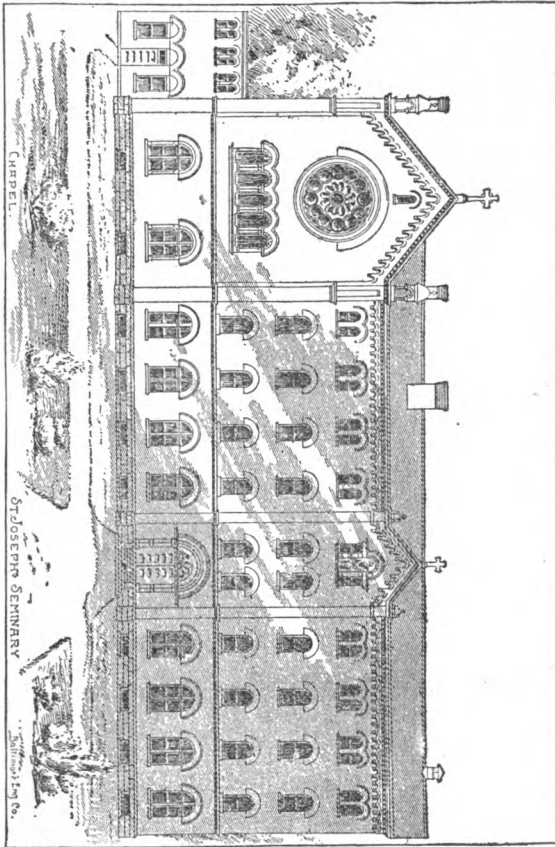
race prejudice. His faith is truly universal, strictly Catholic, and his charity tallies with it. The truly God-like man longs to be adorned with some divine mark of universality, and there is none more significant of predestination to eternal life than that of the missionary. He has a near view of the truth. He has a broad and loving view of humanity.

Therefore, we invite Catholic youths to consider the missionary vocation for the conversion of the Negro race in America. Make it a subject of prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you. Take the advice of spiritual men. Implore the prayers of the mother of God. Ask the intercession of St. Joseph, under whose invocation our work is dedicated to God.

#### TRAINING OF SUBJECTS.

St. Joseph's Society has no distinct novitiate in the sense of a definite period of time set apart for exclusively devotional exercises and entire abstention from study. The greatest care is bestowed, however, on the formation of the spiritual character, upon which the missionary's future chiefly depends. No sentimental piety or superficial virtue will answer for a missionary career. Only a growth in solid virtue fits a man for his vocation in St. Joseph's Society. Let us summarize the maxims and precepts of our Rule. Faith, the basis of all holiness, must be the strong root, whence springs the missionary's life, which is to be spent in propagating the truth and morality of Christ's church. The missionaries of St. Joseph's Society must ever make Jesus Christ the special object of their study, imitation, and love. They shall never cease to ponder over

the Gospel, which mirrors before them Divine Love Incarnate. The thought of our Lord's love, of which the



Sacred Heart is the emblem, will urge forward the missionaries to undertake all manner of labors and sufferings in his service.



## LOVE OF SOULS.

From the love of Jesus Christ comes the love of souls, his brethren. We promote the honor and glory of God by preaching the Gospel and laboring to save souls. St. Joseph's Society is instituted for this purpose, and its members consecrate themselves to labor for the souls that are most abandoned and in the greatest need. Everything is done to foster a generous spirit of self-sacrifice for souls, which should be the constant aim of men devoted to the apostolic life. Many motives concur: the priceless value of a soul redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus Christ; the horrible destruction of souls by vice and crime going on ceaselessly, day and night; the nine millions of Negroes who depend for the light and knowledge of the Gospel upon the faith and charity of apostolic men; lastly, the thought of what God has done for the missionary himself, individually. All these motives should inspire a generous co-operation in this work of God's special predilection, the salvation of souls.

## JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH.

The Blessed Virgin Mary, as the Immaculate Queen of the Apostles, is the mother of the missionaries, to whose maternal heart they daily resort for intercession. St. Joseph is their father. The young institute bears his name, and is pledged to follow him in his love and service of Jesus and Mary. St. Joseph was the first foreign missionary when, by order of an angel, he "took the Child and his mother" and went to Africa, thus becoming, in St. Hilary's words, "the type of all apos-

tolie men." The apostolate should cement the members in the closest bond of union. The sweet bond of fraternal love should be the unifying principle of their institute. And union is the source of strength. The success of the society depends on the union and concord of many hearts and minds.

#### THE VIRTUES OF A MISSIONARY.

While every virtue ought to adorn a missionary, there are three above all others which should be his: prayer, obedience, and apostolic poverty. Prayer is the soul and mainstay of the interior life, which is the true apostolic life. By prayer is meant, above all, that constant communion of the soul with God which is carried on by aspirations and movements of the will at all times, while traveling or at work, in the midst of crowds and in solitude, in sickness as in health. The model of obedience for the missionary is Jesus Christ, "who pleased not himself;" "whose meat and drink were to do the will of his Father;" "who humbled himself, becoming obedient until death."

Certainly the motive power in obedience is God's love. For apostolic men the aim of authority is to conduct souls by example, as Christ himself first did, and then taught. "Jesus began to do and to teach." And when men are the pioneers of Faith, they need a guidance which will lead them to build up and nurture the little mustard-seed of incipient Christianity. In apostolic work everything is to be done by love as the chief motive; an encouraging, stimulating authority will ever find a cheerful and efficacious obedience. Just as love is the first law of heaven and of earth, so,

too, must love be the ruling spirit of superiors and subjects. Love is the unitive virtue, and obedience ministers powerfully unto it.

Disorder is the surest mark of Satan's presence. In other temptations nature or our fellows may be the immediate cause; but disorder and rebellion and disunion are always the handiwork of the enemy of souls. Hence, obedience, the opposite of rebellion and the cure of disorder, is ever the mark of the Spirit of God. Obedience is, therefore, an apostolic virtue. In the Gospels love and obedience are linked together. "If any man love me, he will keep my commandments." "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, that ye have love one for another." "If you love me, you will keep my word." Our obedience is but an ornament of Christian freedom. As in our own glorious land every citizen, while liberty loving, is ever dutiful and obedient to the laws, a firm defender of order, so the apostolic laborer plants his vineyard with the hedge of order around it, while breathing an apostolic freedom, and inspired with inextinguishable love for souls.

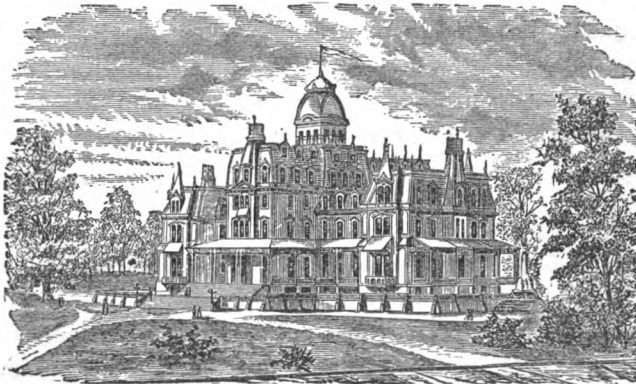
#### APOSTOLIC POVERTY.

"As St. Joseph's Society is an apostolical institution, endeavoring to follow in the footsteps of our Blessed Lord and his apostles, it attaches the highest importance to the spirit and practice of evangelical poverty, which is described by a spiritual writer as 'the foundation of the apostolic life.' Thus, though the vow of poverty is not prescribed by the Rule of the society, the conscientious practice of this apostolic virtue is held to be an essential condition of its health and of its

very existence. Hence it is understood that, by becoming a member of the society, a serious engagement is entered into with God and with the society to live in the practice of evangelical poverty. Thus the Society would keep before the minds of all the example of generosity and detachment set forth by Jesus Christ, who emptied himself and became poor for our sake, and that of the glorious saints who are the patrons and models of the society. Thus the spirit of private interest and selfseeking will give way before a desire to do everything possible to extend the kingdom of Christ.”—(*Rule.*)

#### THE EPIPHANY APOSTOLIC COLLEGE.

Into this college youths are received for their college course, getting a good classical and scientific education.



EPIPHANY APOSTOLIC COLLEGE.

It is called apostolic to express its purpose of fostering the missionary spirit among its students. The characteristic trait of a missionary is love of the truth, as it is

the universal heritage of all mankind; in other words, a mental grasp of the Church's breadth. In his eye the Church overrides mountains, rivers, and oceans, brings together and unifies all people and tribes and families, and makes the human race one. Possessed of truth himself, the apostle longs to impart it to others; wistfully his eye gazes on those other sheep not as yet of the fold; and longingly does he stretch out his arms toward them and lift up his voice to call them. And these traits must be fostered. They are implanted in the soul by the Holy Ghost, but they have a growth, need careful cultivation and direction, which the Epiphany Apostolic College will labor to impart. It is best, too, to take boys fresh from school and train them from a comparatively early age to their holy vocation. In Epiphany Apostolic College they are so trained and influenced from the beginning of their classical course onward, to the end that they may be ever drinking in the apostolic spirit and continually studying the methods peculiarly adapted to their vocation.

#### THE CONDITIONS FOR ADMISSION.

- 1st. A decided inclination for the colored mission.
- 2d. Recommendation from a priest.
- 3d. A sound preparatory course in a good school.
- 4th. Good health and not less than fifteen years of age.
- 5th. Love of study and discipline, together with a docile and cheerful disposition.
- 6th. Besides supplying their own clothing and books, students are expected to pay as much as possible to-

ward the expenses of tuition. The annual pension is fixed at \$150, which will be modified as circumstances demand.

All these students are in preparation for

#### ST. JOSEPH'S SEMINARY

which provides the aspirants for the negro missions with their course of divinity. Its students attend the lectures in philosophy, theology, natural sciences, liturgy, canon law, and Sacred Scriptures at St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, receiving together with the diocesan clergy the superior training imparted by the Sulpician Fathers, who are specially devoted to the training of priests. At St. Mary's our young men are thrown in contact with the future pastors of a great part of the land. Friendships will be formed which are sure to tend, in one way or other, to the evangelization of the negroes and spread of the missionary spirit.

#### RULES OF ADMISSION.

1st. Students on entering become postulants for membership in St. Joseph's Society, as members of which they intend to devote their lives to the salvation of the negroes.

2d. Previous noviceship or profession in any religious order or congregation, or dismissal from any missionary society, prevents admission.

3d. They must be fit to enter upon the study of philosophy, at least, and be able to follow the lectures at St. Mary's Seminary.

4th. Every postulant, if able, shall pay an entrance fee, and also provide himself with clothing, books and stationery until he becomes a full member of the society.

**ST. JOSEPH'S SOCIETY IS ALSO COMPOSED OF LAITY.**

“All persons contributing prayers and an annual alms, or giving substantial aid for the education of the missionaries, or for their work upon the missions, are affiliated members of St. Joseph's Society and participate in all its merits and good works.” The laity become members of St. Joseph's Society by means of our annual paper, *The Colored Harvest*. It is issued every October at twenty-five (25 cts.) cents yearly subscription. All of its subscribers are affiliated members of St. Joseph's Society, and thus, besides the special favors offered for themselves, are in touch with the whole missionary work of the society.

**REV. J. R. SLATTERY,**  
St. Joseph's Seminary,  
**BALTIMORE, MD.**

**REV. D. MANLEY,**  
Epiphany Apostolic College,  
**HIGHLAND PARK,**  
**BALTIMORE, MD.**

PUBLISHED AND SOLD FOR THE BENEFIT OF ST.  
JOSEPH'S SEMINARY AND THE EPIPHANY  
APOSTOLIC COLLEGE.

---

**Life of Bl. Martin De Porres.**

(An American Colored Saint.) In cloth, price 45 cents ;  
in paper, 25 cents ; for a dozen copies, 15 per cent. off.

**Life of St. Peter Claver.**

(The Mortified apostle of the Negroes.) 75 cents.

**A Martyr of Our Own Times.**

From the French of Mgr. D'Hulst ; with an introduction  
by His Eminence, Cardinal Gibbons. 75 cents.

**The Child-like Spirit.**

A work of solid piety from the French of Rev. J. Blanlo,  
sub-deacon. 30 cents.

**The Heart Watch.**

Per copy, 7 cents ; per dozen, 60 cents ; per hundred, \$4.00 ;  
per thousand, \$6.50.

**People's Manual of St. Joseph.**


Per copy, 5 cents ; per dozen, 50 cents ; per hundred, \$2.25 ;  
per thousand. \$27.

**Leo XIII on Devotion to St. Joseph.**

Per copy, 3 cents ; per dozen, 30 cents ; per hundred, \$2.25 ;  
per thousand, \$18.

**Bl. De Montfort's Way of Saying the Rosary.**

In leaflets—per hundred, 35 cents ; per thousand, \$2.75.

 Proceeds toward the support of St. Joseph's Seminary  
and Epiphany Apostolic College for training missionaries to  
the colored people.

(265)



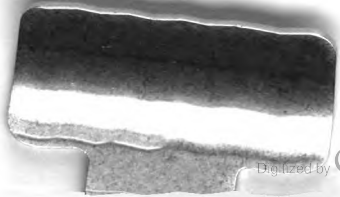








Digitized by Google



UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN - UNIV LIBS



3023165365

0 5917 3023165365