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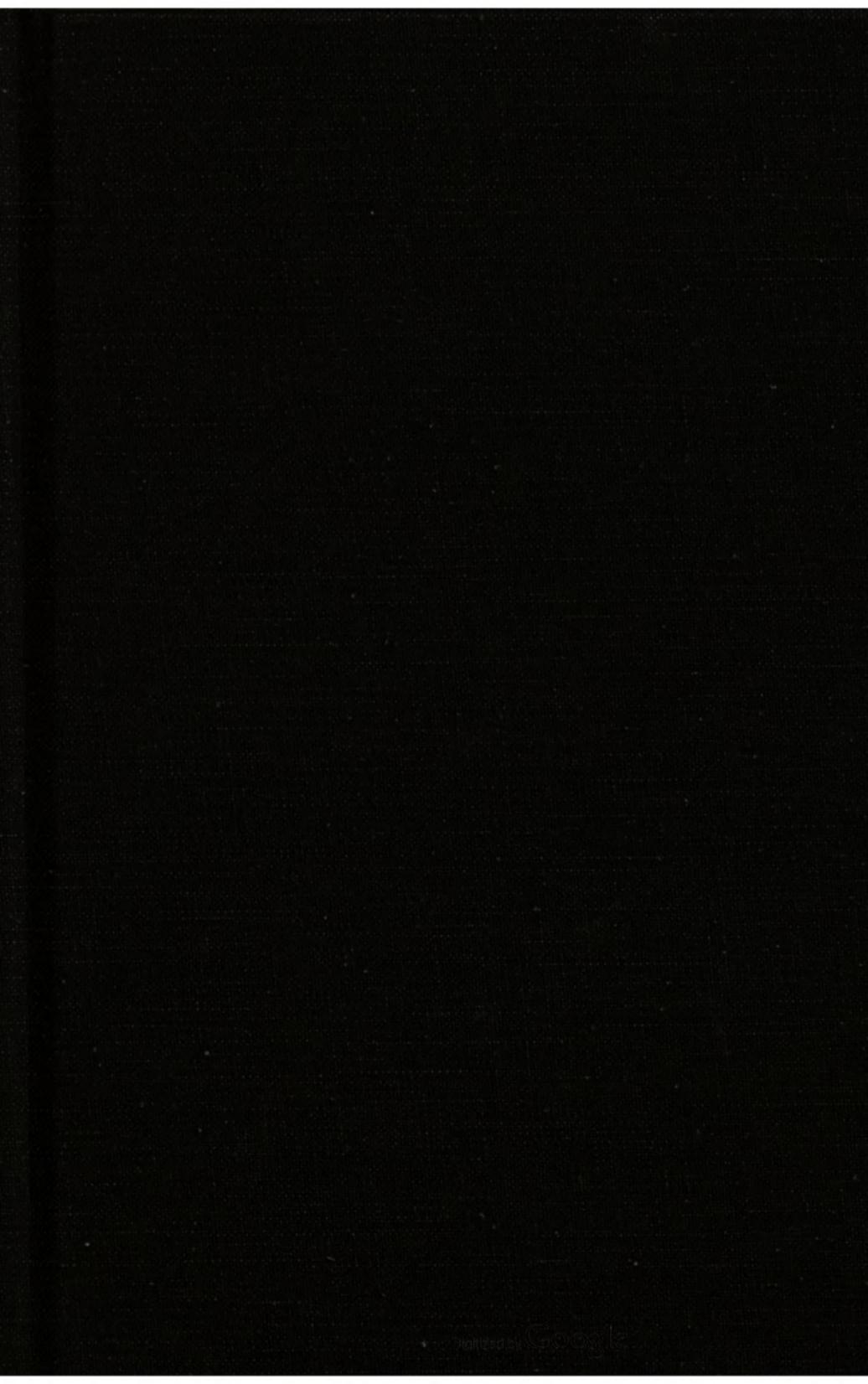
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The Saints and Servants of God.

THE LIFE

OF

S. ALPHONSO MARIA DE LIGUORI,

BISHOP OF ST. AGATHA OF THE GOTHs,

AND FOUNDER OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MOST HOLY
REDEEMER.

"Gaude Maria Virgo, cunctas hæreses sola interemisti in
universo mundo."—*Antiph. Ecclesie.*

PERMISSU SUPERIORUM.

VOL. V.



LONDON:

THOMAS RICHARDSON AND SON,

172, FLEET ST.; 9, CAPEL ST. DUBLIN; AND DERBY.

M. DCCC. XLIX.

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We hereby approve of this Series of Lives of the Canonized Saints and Servants of God, and recommend it to the faithful of our District, as likely to promote the glory of God, the increase of devotion, and the spread of our holy Religion.

Given at Birmingham, this 29th day of October, 1847.

Thomas
Bishop of Combyopolis

Nicholas
Bishop of Melipatenus

TO
THE REGULAR CLERGY
OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN ENGLAND,
THE CHILDREN
OF ST. BENEDICT AND ST. BERNARD,
ST. DOMINICK AND ST. FRANCIS,
AND THE SONS
OF THE HOLY IGNATIUS,
THE GREAT MASTER OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE,
AND THE NURSING-FATHER OF SAINTS AND MARTYRS,
WHO,
IN THE STRAITNESS AND NEGLECT
OF THEIR UNHONOURED CLOISTERS,
OR THE CHEERLESS SOLITUDE
OF THEIR HIRED LODGING,
HAVE JOYFULLY EMBRACED THE POVERTY OF JESUS,
AND EARNED BY LOVING ZEAL
THE CROWN OF MARTYRDOM,
AND WHO,
THROUGH SCENES OF AWFUL SACRILEGE,
AND TIMES OF BITTER PERSECUTION,
THROUGH THE LONG AND WEARY VISITATION
OF ACTIVE MALICE OR OF COLD CONTEMPT,
HAVE PERPETUATED,
AMONGST THEIR UNWORTHY COUNTRYMEN,
THE BLESSED LINEAGE
OF THEIR HOLY FOUNDERS.

ST. WILFRID'S,
FEAST OF ST. BERNARD,
M. DCCC. XLVII.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Lives of the Companions of St.
Alphonso Liguori are in the press, and
will be published on the 24th of August.

*The Oratory, London,
Feast of our Lady of Mount Carmel, 1849.*

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THE LIFE
OF
ST. ALPHONSO LIGUORI.

BOOK IV. CONTINUED.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ALPHONSO did not remain in the hands of the Lord as a statue fashioned in a mould, but as one of those living stones which must be perfected by the stroke of the chisel. When he at length saw his congregation justified from the calumnies of his enemies, he was in his eighty-third year, and it seemed as if he might finish his long career in peace; but a fresh storm soon approached and caused him the greatest anguish. As the devil could not gain the victory by besieging its walls, he sought to stir up treason within in order to cause it to be ruined through itself.

Our rule was confirmed by the Pope, but it had not been sanctioned by the government, and it was a stumbling-block to all our enemies, as we have already seen. When through the decree of the 24th of August, 1779, the

royal approbation had been obtained on divers points, it was thought to be a favourable moment to ask for a general approbation which might at length put an end to all the attempts of our enemies. The plan was a very agreeable one to Alphonso. He however wished to act with prudence, and that the opinion of wise and enlightened men should be taken on the subject.

Mgr. Testa, the grand-almoner, was spoken to, and he did not hesitate to promise his protection, provided the rule were transcribed, and that the part which was opposed to the royal decrees regarding the acquisitions and the rentals of the houses were left out. When all was thus arranged, the affair was entrusted to Father D. Angelo Majone, one of the advisers-general, who had hitherto acquitted himself in his post very well, and who was in the habit of frequenting the tribunals and the courts with reference to the interests of the congregation. Alphonso was jealously anxious about the preservation of the integrity of the rule, and several times protested that he would not permit any change to be made in it, except that he would agree to pass over in silence what referred to the acquisitions forbidden by the king. It was an undertaking which must obviously again excite the indignation of our enemies, and Father Majone did not appear to be without fear regarding it. "If opposition be made," said he, "and if we receive a refusal from the king, it will be a blow we shall always feel, especially if the

thing becomes known, which seems to me inevitable, unless the whole matter remains as a secret between the consultors." From these reasons, Alphonso and the other members of the council, were all persuaded to take an oath to preserve secrecy in regard to all that might be done in the course of this affair. But Father Majone was not faithful. This good father wanted to be wiser than Alphonso and than the Holy See itself. He and the consultor who had been associated with him at Naples, and who was imbued with a similar spirit of innovation, made the most arbitrary changes in the rule, adding to it, modifying or abridging it, entirely according to their own fancy. Notwithstanding the precautions of Father Majone in keeping the things so secret, this very circumspection was not long of creating suspicions as to his intentions. A report became current amongst us that innovations were going to be made in the rule, and general alarm ensued. Protestations were addressed to Alphonso expressive of fear, and of their wish not to have the rule altered. The poor old man, who had no reason to suspect any treachery of the kind, endeavoured to reassure every one. "My dear Father D. Anthony," he wrote to me at Iliceto, "not only you, but others also have informed me that it is wished to alter the rule. This is not true, certain things are being done, but they will not be of the least injury to the rule; be pacified and pacify the others also; it is all false, false, false."

On the 4th of September, 1779, he also wrote to Father Corrado, at the house at Ciorani, "My dear D. Bartholomew, I have heard that there are some who manifest fear lest I should make new rules differing from the former one. How can any one have been able to conceive such a suspicion, as all must know that I have always been most jealously careful in preserving that rule intact, according to which I have always governed the Congregation? Until my last breath I will always employ all my strength to prevent its sustaining the slightest alteration."

In another letter of the 15th of December to the same father, he said to him, "I have received your letter, and I have weighed all its words. I hope that you do not suspect me of deceiving you, of lying, or of being so weak as to allow the least change to be made in the rule. I will say no more than this; if after that I am not believed, what do you wish me to do? I accept it all for my sins. It is a great sorrow to me to hear all these things, for I see that these are the devices of the devil to make us remain in disquiet. I repeat to you, on my conscience, that you may rest assured that nothing is being done against the rule or against its general observance. If after this you will not believe me, there is nothing left but to have patience!" He gave the same answer to the other houses, not doubting that Father Majone and his colleague would faithfully execute what had been agreed on.

There were some, amongst whom I was one, who wrote to Father Majone himself, to demand an explanation; but he did not hesitate to deny everything, and boldly to reply, that what was being done at Naples was not at all relating to the rule and constitutions. But as he was afraid his plans were seen through, he wrote to Alphonso on the 22nd of August, saying, "The want of caution which has been exercised in this affair, has endangered its success, and has excited the persecution of the whole congregation against me, by whom my conduct and intentions have become suspected, so that some have gone so far as to write me unbecoming letters full of menaces. I have been obliged to dissimulate, but I keep their letters that I may obtain satisfaction when the time for it arrives. You see, therefore, that prudence and discretion are absolutely necessary." Nevertheless, as it became known that some innovation as to poverty and life in community was in question, unceasing protests were addressed to him and to his Lordship. The poor old man persisted in believing in his sincerity, and assured us all that there was nothing to fear: "I assure you," he one day said, taking the little cross he wore on his breast in his hand, "that nothing is being done against the rule; what is to be retrenched only relates to the acquisitions, because the king does not choose to have them, and we must obey him."

So many appeals, however, aroused the attention of Alphonso; in order to become more fully

acquainted with the real state of the case, he wrote to Father Majone: "You have informed me that our fathers tease you by a thousand suspicions as to your proceedings, and you tell me to dispel them, but you do not say what it is of which they suspect you. If it relates to the matter which we agreed upon, I say that the things are to go on as before settled, but if it refers to anything else, I cannot say anything about it."

Alphonso plainly told him that some innovation in regard to poverty and life in community was suspected: "As for what you say to me touching life in community," Majone replied to him, "to wish to do away with this regulation, would be to wish to destroy the congregation. I hope that Divine Providence will punish all those who thus spread discord, and that He will expel them to a distance from us rather than let the congregation be destroyed." It was by means of these ambiguous answers, that this perfidious man reassured Alphonso as to his conduct.

His intrigues did not end here. In the month of September he came to Nocera, and with audacious effrontery, he presented the regulations he had made to Alphonso, assuring him that with the exception of what related to the acquisitions, all the rest was in conformity to the rule. The poor old man could not read it himself, as the writing was small and illegible, and covered with erasures and interlinings, so he gave it to Father Villani to be examined with care. He was much surprised at seeing that the vows had

been done away with, and that holy poverty had also been injured. "The king does not wish to have vows," Majone said to him, "because they would make us semi-regulars. Besides," he added, "it is not for us to make the laws; we must receive them from his Lordship the almoner; and if some slight changes must be made in order to obtain the approbation of the rule, it matters little."

As Father Majone was of a violent and overbearing temper, Father Villani had not the courage to oppose either him or his colleague; he therefore went to Alphonso, and fearing to overcome him by revealing such sad tidings to him, he told him that all was going on well; and his Lordship believed this, and became tranquil, in the expectation of a happy termination.

Father Majone returned to Naples, and there consummated the work of iniquity, and on the 2nd of January, 1780, he wrote to Alphonso with inexplicable boldness, saying, "If any one examines the rule, and says that he will not observe it except as it was formerly, you can boldly reply to him, that when anything is proposed to be observed which is not prescribed in the royal decrees and in the rule, he need not observe it." Then, in order to justify himself with regard to the obscurity of his letters, of which Alphonso had complained, he adds, "As your Lordship cannot read, I am afraid lest that my letters may be read by others, which is the reason why I am cautious in writing to you." Thus after having asked for secrecy that he might be able

to act with security, he made use of this same wish for secrecy to justify the ambiguity of his answers.

Alphonso being thus reassured, and especially by what Father Villani had said, no longer doubted that the mistrust felt by his subjects was the work of the devil. He was not however without uneasiness in regard to a clause in the decree of the 21st of August, 1779, by which the members of the congregation were at liberty to abandon it at pleasure, and freely to return to their homes. In order to dispel his uneasiness on a point on which he said the existence of the congregation depended, he wrote to Father Majone to represent to his Lordship the almoner in his name, that such a contract between the congregation and the subject was not equitable. "If," said he, "the congregation binds itself to maintain the subject, to instruct him, and to provide him with all that he requires, it is not just that the subject should be at liberty to abandon it, and to deprive it of the benefit of his labours; this is contrary to all equity, for whilst the congregation cannot dismiss a subject without a valid reason for so doing, the subject on his side, ought also to have a legitimate reason for quitting the congregation. Such liberty," he added, "is contrary to the intention of the king, who wishes the work of the mission to be continued and maintained in fervour, and this cannot be done without this reasonable contract."

This recommendation, which was several times

renewed, was not agreeable to Father Majone, who had quite different ideas in his head; and in order to get out of the difficulty he said that there was no longer time to do anything. "I flatter myself," he wrote, "that the affair is already on the eve of being completed: in limine expeditionis, so that we have now nothing more to do."

Amidst these disquietudes, Alphonso was distressed at the extreme poverty to which the two houses in the Pontifical States were reduced, and especially that of Frosinone. "I am in such an embarrassing position," he wrote to Father Majone, "that I am nearly bewildered by it. The rector at Frosinone has written to me, that he thinks of coming here because he does not know how to maintain his companions. I have this morning sent the four services I had to be sold, but what is that to supply for such numerous wants? I had thought of leaving off chocolate and disposing of my carriage; but if I do not go out any more to breathe the air as I have hitherto done, I fear I shall accelerate my death. If your Reverence could find any one who would advance half my pension for this year I might be able to assist them a little; but I know not to whom to apply. What I receive from the college of doctors is far from sufficient, and your Reverence is also impoverished by all the expenses which the negociations at Naples have occasioned. All these reflections quite stupefy me, and I remain as if I were stunned, not knowing on what to resolve. I will conclude,

that I may not become still more distressed. I entreat you to send me the money for the services in notes, that I may send it to Frosinone, for I am afraid of seeing the rector and all his companions arrive here, which might overthrow their house. I bless you, and conclude; for I cannot say more."

Such was Alphonso's solicitude for the houses in the States. But let us return to those of the kingdom. On the 1st of January, 1780, the affair was proposed to the royal council. Father Majone did not find it difficult to obtain all that he wished; the favour of the king, and the venerated name of Alphonso, of which he made use, smoothed all before him. As they were ignorant of his deceitfulness, Mgr. Testa, the grand-almoner, the Marquis of Mario, and all the council of state, entered willingly into what they thought would be agreeable to our aged saint; the Marquis of Tanucci, however, on hearing that the missionaries could not have anything to do with treaties of marriage nor other contracts, wisely wished that it should be added, "nor with wills." But Father Majone showed that Mgr. Liguori had also thought of this, and that it was only through an oversight of the transcriber.

The king most graciously gave his approbation, but the marquis was not satisfied with the answer of Father Majone, and in a letter of the 22nd of the same month to the grand-almoner, whilst he informed him of the king's consent, he took care to add that the intention of

his Majesty was that the missionaries should not take any part in wills. On the 19th of February, the grand-almoner informed the king of the insertion of this clause. The whole being thus settled, Father Majone, in order to confirm his work, managed that two copies of the said regulations should be sent to the office of the ministry, by royal authority, one of which was intended for the procurator-general, and the other for the royal council.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ON the 27th of February, 1780, on the third Sunday in Lent, the mutilated rule reached Nocera, accompanied by an official letter from the grand-almoner. Father Majone did not bring it in person, as he was afraid of the consequences which he foresaw would happen, but he sent it by Father Don Gaspar Cajone, who was also a consultor. This latter arrived at the time of the siesta after dinner; as soon as this became known, the impatient subjects awakened one another, and the whole house was in a state of anxiety; they went together to awaken Father Villani, (who was vicar-general and superior,) and Father Marrini. They did not then open the papers, because Alphonso was too ill for it. In the evening the fathers went to speak to him, and his Lordship said

to them in quite a joyous tone, "On Good Friday we shall receive the rule after it has been approved, and we shall offer it up to Jesus Christ in sacrifice." "We will do so," was the reply, "after we have read it and weighed its contents." The same evening the fathers managed so well, that before Father Villani went to bed, they got the statutes into their hands. No one went to bed, but the sheets of the regulations were divided amongst us in order to copy them. Ere day-break they went to awaken Alphonso to tell him of the havock that had been made in the rule and to ask for justice. At these tidings the poor old man was in the greatest distress; he asked for the fatal pages, he looked over them with his failing eyes, and in sorrow of soul, he exclaimed, "It cannot be, it cannot be!" then turning to Father Villani, he said to him, "Don Andrew, I did not expect such deception from you." He then addressed the community, and said, "I deserve to be dragged at a horse's tail, for I ought to read everything myself as I am superior." He then turned himself to the crucifix with his eyes bathed in tears, and exclaimed, "My Jesus, pardon me, I trusted to my confessor; on whom could I have better reposed confidence? You know," said he, addressing the community again, "how much it costs me to read even a line;" he then gave way to his tears, "I have been deceived," he said with sobs; and he then was silent.

He passed the whole morning in profound

silence, and in such a state of dejection, that sorrow seemed to have quite overpowered him; he would hardly consent to take any nourishment, and what he had he mingled with his tears. "Ah, Lord," he repeated, "punish not the innocent, but punish the guilty one who has destroyed Thy work." His heart was transfixed with the most poignant anguish; he no longer slept and his life was soon in danger.

Not knowing on what to resolve to do, the poor old man was constantly sending first for one subject then for another, in order to obtain the assistance of their advice. He sent for me from Iliceto. On the 10th of March he wrote to Father Corrado who was then at Naples: "My dear D. Bartholomew, I am in danger of becoming delirious, for I find that the new regulations made by Majone are quite contrary to my opinion. The young men here are clamorous about it. I entreat you to leave everything, and to come and see me if you do not wish me to lose my senses and to die of grief." A company of our fathers returned from Calabria where they had been on a mission, and visited Alphonso; as soon as Alphonso saw them, he said to them weeping, "They have spoilt the rule."

On hearing that Father D. Gaspar Cajone, one of the consultors-general, and at that time the superior at Benevento, had had a secret understanding with Father Majone, he wrote to him on the 7th of April: "I much wish your Reverence would carefully examine the things which

Father Majone has changed;" he then drew a parallel between the regulations and the rule, and added, "Our rule was examined at first by Mgr. Falioja, who is a holy man and has wrought miracles, it was afterwards revised by Cardinal Spinelli, and finally approved by Benedict XIV. ; and now it is entirely spoiled and changed. I cannot think who can be bold enough to prefer the present regulations. It is not the king who has done it, nor his minister; it is the work of Father Majone. He may have had a good intention, but I cannot call a change of this sort the work of God. As for me, I am on the borders of death; I am eighty-four years of age, the time I have to live is then but short, and my chief desire is to die at the feet of Jesus crucified."

Father Majone on seeing what opposition he met with, put on a semblance of zeal, and feigning to pity Alphonso, he represented the poor old man to the grand-almoner as sinking under affliction in the midst of rebellious subjects. The latter therefore immediately intimated to the Congregation in an official letter of March 1st, 1780, an order to follow the new regulations in every particular. This letter was couched in the most imperious terms, and was, as was afterwards discovered, the work of Father Majone. The following was its conclusion: "Your Lordship, as founder and superior-general of the Congregation, must inform each member in my name, that this regulation must be put in force, from this time, without any

alteration or retrenchment whatsoever, for it is now the only rule, and is binding in all its parts on all the members of the Congregation present and future, on superiors, priests, students, or lay-brothers, without any room for reply or opposition."

It can be imagined how this letter served to increase the flames which burst forth in all the houses. Whilst Alphonso endeavoured to allay it, he did not wish for the death of Father Majone, who was the cause of all these evils; but rather that he should be converted and dwell always amongst his children. He wept on seeing everyone bent upon his ruin, and neglected nothing in order to save him; he wrote to him at Naples on the 20th of March, 1780, and without speaking of his treachery, he said to him, "I write you this letter whilst embracing the feet of Jesus Christ; I entreat you also to do the same on your side, in these days when Jesus Christ gave His life for our love. My dear Don Angelo, let us forget the past, and pass over all that has been done. I beg you to retire into your house at Ciorani; if that house does not please you, chose whichever you please. Be sure that I shall love you as before, and more than before. I am ready to prove this to you. You will continue to be consultor-general as formerly, and you will give your opinion in all the important affairs of the congregation. As for your honour, place that in my hands, I will not cease to defend it in the congregation and to strangers. Let us then become

tranquil, I conjure you by the sacred wounds of Jesus Christ; I have nothing else to say. Take counsel from the blessed Sacrament, and then send me an answer when you please. I bless you and pray Jesus Christ to fill you with His holy love, and to draw you wholly to Himself as He wishes to do."

He wrote to Father D. Bartholomew Corrado, on the same day, saying, "I have thought it right to act with all mildness towards Father Majone, because such is the will of Jesus Christ, and it is thus He inspires me to act. I have written him a very kind letter, begging him for the love of Jesus Christ to forget all the past. I shall continue to act thus in his regard, until God restores peace to us. I have begged him to retire to Ciorani or any other such house as he pleases to select. I hope that by this method, which is certainly one pleasing to Jesus Christ, I and all the others may obtain peace. We must have patience and recommend ourselves to Jesus Christ and to the Blessed Virgin, who is the mother of peace."

Far from yielding to such loving measures, Father Majone got more and more inflamed with indignation against the congregation and against Alphonso himself: on seeing his designs thus thwarted, he resolved to address a petition to the king to get him to constrain the subjects to embrace the new regulations, under pain of being expelled from the congregation. This news, which caused him to become still better known, supplied fresh fuel to the fire already

kindled ; his Lordship became full of uneasiness, and hastened to prevent the consequences of such a step ; he therefore instantly wrote to Father D. Salvador Gallo at Naples, on the 12th of April, to take away the procuracy from Father Majone, and to transfer it to Father D. Bartholomew Corrado. "I have heard," said he to this father, "that the perfidious Majone wishes, by means of a sheet of the new regulations to which my signature is attached, to obtain an order from the king, by which I am to be authorised to expel any one from the congregation who shall refuse to accept the regulations ; in fact, he wishes to make me the executioner of my brothers." Alphonso then charged Father Corrado to inform the grand-almoner of everything. "If Mgr. Testa," said he, "is not convinced as to the deceit which has been practised, we can obtain nothing from him, because he will say that he has granted me all that I wished for ; but it is Father Majone who has obtained all that he wished, and not I. If the regulations are to be maintained, I am afraid that several will lose their vocation. Try and make him understand the state of our congregation : tell him that we have more than a hundred young men who have finished their studies in it, and who have honourably distinguished themselves at the Sorbonne or at Louvain ; but Father Majone would destroy them all in order to attain his end."

The poor old man could not calm himself, and this same day he addressed another letter to the

grand-almoner to represent to him the treachery of which he was the victim. He also wrote to Father Corrado that he might unite with Father Gallo in putting before him the affliction into which the congregation was thrown. "I hope that the grand-almoner," he said to him, "will listen to you with kindness. Your Reverence must inform him of the spirit which actuates Father Majone, who, in order to increase his own powers as consultor, has tried to take away all the faculties of the superior-general, and has put into the regulations, which are his composition, and not the least mine, everything that his own fancy suggested to him."

As Father Majone did not hesitate to say that Alphonso's mind was in a disturbed and weakened state, in order to cause the ministers and the grand-almoner to think lightly of him, Alphonso, in order to overthrow this fresh manœuvre, added to his letter, "Tell the grand-almoner that I have not become imbecile, as Father Majone would wish him to believe; my head is still of use to me; although this father labours to make me lose my senses."

As he also had confidence in Don Joseph Cantore, who was one of the first clerks in the ministry, he wrote to Father Corrado, "Speak to Don Cantore and to Vecchietti if you can. Assure them that the changes which Father Majone has made are not trifles, but very essential things, which destroy the right management of the congregation. He has even arrogated to himself the right of expelling subjects, even if they

be priests, and he has also tried to establish other things which are odious to the fathers, so that they are in distress in all the houses, and perhaps are contemplating quitting the congregation."

The subjects, on finding themselves called on by reiterated letters from the grand-almoner to follow a rule which they had never promised to observe, protested against the consultors, and even against Alphonso himself, for having kept the thing a secret. Their dissatisfaction was so great that they lost that veneration which they had always manifested for his Lordship; the poor old man did not know where to steer in such a stormy sea, and did nothing but groan in silence at the foot of the crucifix. As his only hope was in the protection of the grand-almoner, he wrote him another long letter, to cause him to understand the critical position in which he was placed more clearly. Amongst other things, he said to him, that if the rule were changed, he looked upon the congregation as destroyed, and that if he did not deign to prevent this, he himself would run the risk of losing his life. Alphonso at the same time wrote to Father Don Januarius Fatigati, who was the superior of the Chinese college, and was a great friend of Mgr. Testa, to solicit him to deign to use his influence to cause the rule to be re-established in its pristine integrity. As Alphonso thought that Mgr. Bergame, the bishop of Gaeta, might also have some influence on the mind of the grand-almoner, he informed him of what had been done, and of the evil consequences which he dreaded, and

begged him to come to Nocera that he might tell him of the serious difficulties in which he was placed regarding the congregation. "I wished," he wrote to him, "to go and see you myself; but at the age of eighty-four years, and paralytic as I am, I have not strength to travel; I shall therefore expect to see you here, and entreat you to do me this kindness: God will assuredly reward you for this journey; for I hope that your presence will bring peace amongst us again. All the fathers of this house unite with me in entreating you to come. The preservation of this congregation, which has sanctified so many provinces, is in question. Your Lordship is full of zeal and of charity, and I hope much that you will give me this comfort."

Mgr. Testa, on whom Alphonso had centred all his hopes, was far from acceding to his wishes. As he had had part in the composition of the new regulations, he maintained that they were excellent, and refused to annul what he had done with the consent of all parties. He was beset by Father Majone, and instead of condescending to the prayers of Alphonso and his excellent friends, he urged the execution of the regulations.

From the 25th of January of this fatal year, 1780, Alphonso had foreseen this calamity. One day he aroused himself from a profound meditation, and said to us, and also wrote on the same day to Father Cajone at Benevento, "I foresee that the devil will do all in his power to overthrow us this year. Your Reverence must therefore cause the short prayers marked in the

inclosed paper to be recited every evening in common, from the month of February until the end of May." We have to regret the loss of the note which contained these prayers.

CHAPTER XXV.

THAT which at times befalls an unfortunate pilot who is exposed to a violent tempest, and who casts himself on one rock in order to escape another, now befel Alphonso; for in order to reestablish order and peace in the congregation, without incurring the displeasure of the Pope or of the king, he suspended the execution of the regulations. "If each one," he wrote on the 14th April, 1780, "is at liberty to have recourse to his prince to obtain his favours, or to make known his intentions, I think it will not be out of place in us to expose our difficulties before the sovereign, and the fears we entertain with regard to fresh changes." After he had recommended the matter to God, and implored the protection of the Blessed Virgin during several days, he decided that on the return of the missionaries a general assembly should be held, composed of two subjects out of each house, and that the result of the deliberations should be presented to the king by common consent, after the affair had been thoroughly examined. He consulted several persons on this

subject at Naples, and they all assured him that these measures would be attended by the most happy results. He informed the grand-almoner of this resolution, and begged him to lend him his support; but he gave him no answer: for this reason Alphonso commissioned a father who was then at Naples to inform the grand-almoner of his intentions; and in order that he might express himself in entire accordance with his wishes, he wrote down the very words he was to use: "Tell his Lordship," he wrote to him, "that if he will not hear us, I will go to him myself, all paralysed as I am; I was not able to sleep last night, from knowing that the father who had the charge of my letter was not able to obtain an audience of him an account of the crowd; in conclusion, if he will not hear you, I will send a thousand letters to the Marquis of Marco, and a thousand petitions to the king."

When the grand-almoner saw the real state of things and of the general dissatisfaction he had produced, he showed a disposition to favour Alphonso, who hastened to communicate the news to all the houses, and to urge them to be tranquil. He also informed them that a general meeting was to be held on the 1st of May, and that two subjects were to be elected by a majority of votes out of each house to compose this assembly, which was intended to remedy the present evils.

Whilst Alphonso thus sought to heal these wounds and to extinguish the flames kindled in the houses of the kingdom, the devil was

not backward in making a fresh attack, and enkindling a fire in the houses in the Pontifical States which was calculated to reduce everything to ashes. The house at Frosinone at that time contained amongst its members one of those restless and factious characters who are always a burthen to the community, and who was constantly obliged to be removed from one place to another; these changes were very displeasing to him; he got indignant against his saintly founder, and took advantage of the circumstances to create discord between the houses in the states and those in the kingdom. He concealed his perfidy under the mantle of a lively zeal, while he suggested the raising the standard of rebellion against Alphonso, and the effecting a separation which would render the missionaries independent of the Pontifical States. In consequence of this, steps were taken to have a council held at Rome, on the 3rd of February; Alphonso was there denounced as an accomplice as regarded the innovations, and deprived of his dignity as superior; it was decided that the Pope should be informed of it, and that he should be entreated to convoke a general chapter of the houses in his states, to pronounce their separation from those of the kingdom, and to give them power to elect another head.

Alphonso's circular ordering the meeting of which we have spoken, was far from being welcomed by the missionaries of the states with their ordinary docility. As they believed that the object was to constrain them to adopt the new

regulations, they did not even reply to it. They carried their resistance so far that the poor old man felt obliged contrary to custom to intimate an order to them to repair to this chapter by virtue of holy obedience. "I issue it," he wrote to the rector of Frosinone on the 1st of May, "as a formal command to your Reverence and to your companions," and that there might be no doubt as to his signature, he caused it to be certified by the public notary.

"I feel constrained to exact this obedience," he said to the superior of Benevento, "on account of the contempt which has been shown to my authority by not answering my letters." The deputies of the houses of the states arrived at Nocera at the same time as those of the kingdom, and the subject of whom we have spoken, whom we shall designate as the procurator, repaired thither as the deputy of the house at Frosinone. He came there filled with thoughts of insubordination and discord, firmly resolved to shake off Alphonso's yoke, and to carry out the separation he had projected. The assembly was opened on the 12th of May, when flames burst forth on all sides. They all testified great zeal, some from love for the rule approved by the Pope, and the others from love for a party which passion had caused them to embrace. The priests were clamorous, and so were the students and even the lay-brothers; but above all the procurator. The greater part were prepossessed against Father Majone and his colleague, whom they considered as the enemies of the congregation, and

wished to expel them, or at least to depose them : on seeing such exasperation, Alphonso regretted having convoked this meeting, which only seemed to forbode disastrous consequences. Alphonso's position was a most painful one ; on the one side he saw the partisans of a dangerous novelty, and on the other the friends of the rule were ready to revolt against him ; with a sense of the impossibility of re-uniting them, he pressed his crucifix to his heart and shed tears of bitterness. "On one side," said he, "I see the disciples of Jesus Christ, and on the other the instruments of the devil."

There were two distinguished fathers at Naples who had been elected to form part of the assembly ; Alphonso wrote to them, "My dearest brothers, I entreat you as a favour not to do anything against the two consultors, for that would overthrow everything. It is true that several persons cannot bear them, but I hope that all these troubles will be appeased by the assistance of the Blessed Virgin Mary, that the work will remain on its former footing, and that God will continue to reap glory from it. But if we break up everything, I fear that the disagreement which will ensue will aid the efforts of the devil. I feel that God inspires me with this resolution ; the grand-almoner will not be against it, and you must also do all you can to convince yourself of its truth. I am sure that as I am head of the congregation, God will not inspire me with a sentiment prejudicial to His glory. I see that hell makes every possible effort to sow discord, but as for me I

feel drawn to peace, and it appears to me that it will assuredly be obtained by following this course. Write me a few words of peace on Sunday morning."

Alphonso at the same time was striving to convert the accomplice of Father Majone, and he begged him to endeavour to convert him in turn. "Father N." he wrote to Naples on the 3rd May, to the above-named fathers, "came here yesterday evening; I spoke to him, and hope I affected him. Let us leave the matter to God; until now I have done nothing but speak to stone walls." "I was deceived," he again wrote to him on the 12th, "when I thought I had convinced, or at any rate moved Father N. I see he is more than ever disposed to defend Father Majone. However, God will help us."

When Father Majone saw the impossibility of escaping, he strove secretly to thwart the measures which were adopted at Naples in regard to the grand-almoner. Nothing further was needed to put the finishing stroke to the disunion of the assembly. General dissatisfaction was felt at the compassion Fathers Villani and Mazzini showed towards the two consultors, and led away by the semblance of holy liberty, they audaciously went beyond their prerogatives, and deposed the six consultors on the 20th of May. If they abstained from taking Alphonso's office from him, they forced him to resign it himself. The saintly old man submitted unresistingly to all. He would have liked to be the only victim

of the tempest, to restore calm to the troubled sea, and to save all his sons from shipwreck.

After many difficulties they proceeded to a fresh election, and on the 26th of May, Alphonso was re-elected as superior-general, but of the former six consultors, only Fathers Villani and Mazzini were reinstated, and this was only done as a favour in consideration of their previous valuable services.

His Lordship, who was unable to prevent this disorder, adored the secret judgments of God, and in order to avoid still greater evils, he adopted the decisions of others as his own. Father Villani was no longer vicar-general, and in his stead Father D. Bartholomew Corrado was nominated; the latter did not wish to take such a charge upon himself; so Alphonso wrote to him from Naples saying, "I entreat you to accept and fill this post; if it be necessary, I cast myself at your feet, and I hope that you will not refuse me." With the shadow of authority which still remained with him, he even obliged him to accept this office, under pain of grave sin.

As Alphonso had been unable to preside at this assembly, they adopted the most arbitrary decisions at it, both in contempt of the rule as well as in its favour. Amongst other things, they determined to ask the sovereign's permission to make the solemn vows of obedience, poverty, and life in community, as well as that of perseverance, but they obtained nothing from the king. In a word, the rudder was without a manager, and the congregation was in the

midst of rocks, like a vessel without a pilot during the height of the tempest.

In the midst of this confusion, the father procurator did not lose sight of his criminal designs; wishing to emancipate himself from Alphonso's authority, he did all he could to consummate the separation between the houses in the kingdom and those of the states. As he was unable to succeed in his unjust pretensions, he withdrew from Nocera with his partisans, with a mind filled with wicked thoughts, and thus the assembly which ought to have procured peace, was in truth only an occasion of hatred and discord to the congregation.

During the twelve days which this contest lasted Alphonso was aimed at by all; his neutrality in regard to the parties was looked upon as the cause of all the evil; some reproached him for having kept the secret as well as the consultors; others for not having listened to the general complaints; and instead of admitting the validity of his reasons, they only thought of their present misfortunes; they forgot the respect which was due to his person, and loaded him with reproaches. An ill-regulated zeal must necessarily fall into the greatest excesses. "You have founded it," they said to him, "and you have destroyed it. We know not if God will forgive you for this fault."

Alphonso suffered all in silence, attributing everything to his sins; far from complaining, he only replied to every one with words of respect and kindness: however bitter were his

sorrows, he received all as from the hand of God, and submitted to drink the last drops of that chalice, of which the dregs were not yet fully exhausted.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HELL could not have had a more favourable opportunity for increasing the confusion already existing in the work of God. A town suffers when its walls are surrounded by enemies; but we look upon it as surrendered when its inhabitants are divided. After the assembly was dissolved, Alphonso no longer found in the congregation the spirit of submission which had existed there before, nor that peace and harmony which formerly united the houses of the kingdom to those of the States. Division of opinion produced that of hearts, and even in the houses of the kingdom several parties arose; each one constituted itself judge of what was done; some approved, while others blamed the deposition of the ancient consultors, and they did the same in regard to all the decisions of that unhappy assembly.

In order to attain his ends, which were to mortify Alphonso and to divide the congregation, the procurator hastened to go to Rome and to present himself before the Holy Father; with a great display of zeal he stated to him

what injury the rule had sustained in the kingdom, and then by his protestations of submission to the Holy See, he obtained the Pope's protection for himself and for the houses of the States. He was silent as to the treachery of which Alphonso had been a victim, and without speaking of his innocence, he represented him as caring little about obeying the decrees of the Holy See. The Pope was deceived by these calumnies, although he could not conceive how it was Alphonso, once so devoted to the Holy See, and endowed with its favours, had been able to fall into such an extravagance as to alter the wise regulations which Benedict XIV. had given him in his office of Head of the Church. All Rome shared in the astonishment of the Holy Father, and spoke as he did about it. The procurator pursued his perfidious designs; he got into favour with the members of the Sacred Congregation, and told them that if his Holiness did not adopt suitable measures in order to put a stop to these innovations, Mgr. Liguori would soon introduce them into the houses of the States: this put the finishing stroke to the indignation of the Pope; he sent for Mgr. Carafa, and ordered him to write as follows to Cardinal Banditti of Benevento, on the 12th of June, 1780:

“As the Holy Father has heard that in the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer changes have been made, or are wished to be made, in the rules and constitutions approved by Benedict XIV. of happy memory, in 1749, his Holiness,

in an audience granted to Mgr. the secretary of the congregation of bishops and regulars, on the 9th instant, ordered me to write to your Eminence, to inform the members of the said congregation who are in the two houses in your diocese, that his will is, that they strictly observe the rules and constitutions approved by Benedict XIV., without changing anything. He wishes your Eminence to obtain a copy of the said rules and constitutions, and to take care that they undergo no alteration; should they do so your Eminence must inform the Sacred Congregation of it, that it may remedy it by efficacious measures." A similar letter was despatched to Mgr. Giacobini, the Bishop of Veroli, in regard to the houses of Scifelli and Frosinone.

This decree of the Sovereign Pontiff, so far from displeasing Alphonso, gave him courage. "God be praised!" exclaimed he; "by this order of the Pope's the subjects of the States are deprived of the liberty to make changes in the rule. My Jesus! bless the work, for it is Thine own doing." But Alphonso's hopes were once more deceived. As soon as the decision of the Sovereign Pontiff was known in the houses in the kingdom, a great number of the subjects who were faithful to the rule went into the houses of Benevento and of St. Angelo, with the knowledge of Alphonso and in contempt of him, in the fear of being obliged by the grand-almoner, and even by the king, to observe the new regulations. Amongst them there were twelve students of Illiceto, who were the

hope of the congregation, and they were accompanied by their superior and their prefect. This transmigration was the more painful to Alphonso from being unexpected, and because it proved to him that he was forsaken by the young, who were specially dear to his heart; however, his resignation was always perfect, and bowing his head, he only blessed the hand which struck him. But as an intrepid pilot never abandons the helm of his vessel, however great the danger may be; so Alphonso, without ever losing courage, saw a last resource in the protection of Cardinal Banditti, to whom he applied without loss of time. "My Father and Lord," he wrote to the cardinal, "after a thousand different thoughts having crossed my mind, I have finally felt it a duty to address your Eminence, to tell you that if you wish to save the congregation you must espouse its cause and act with freedom, doing as God may inspire you; for if you do not, discord will continue amongst us, and we shall never obtain anything good. It is necessary, I repeat, for you to take our cause in hand, without regard to anything which may have been written by us, nor to the assembly and the elections which were then made. Even if your Eminence wishes to deprive me of my office of superior-general, I say do as you think right before God. I have no other wish than that of seeing peace restored to my poor congregation, and I know of no one but your Eminence who can succeed in doing this. Do not listen to what any one says, and write to the

Holy Father what you think may be most calculated to resuscitate this corpse. I pray the Blessed Virgin to aid you to triumph over all obstacles. I have ordered them all to obey your Eminence blindly. I kiss the hem of your sacred vestments, and subscribe myself, with all humility," &c.

However, the insubordination of the subjects caused this wise expedient to fail, as no one would submit his judgment to that of the cardinal.

Whilst Alphonso was doing all he could to re-establish the rule in the kingdom, amidst an ocean of sorrow, he was treated as a faithless equivocator at Rome. The procurator pursued his measures without any one being able to resist him: he compared the meeting which had taken place at Nocera to the false council of Ephesus; he represented Alphonso as having intruded himself into the office of superior-general; he declared the election of the new consultors to be null and void, and demanded in consequence, that the houses in the States should no longer be subjected to the authority of the superiors of the kingdom; in fine, his representations were such, that on the 4th of August an order was expedited in the Pope's name to Cardinal Bandidi at Benevento, and to Mgr. Giacobini at Veroli, to the effect that no obedience was to be paid to the superiors of the kingdom in anything, and that no subject was to be permitted to leave the houses of the States. When Alphonso heard some indistinct tidings of the Pope's having made arrangements in regard to

the houses of the States, he immediately sent for the most ancient Fathers of Benevento and St. Angelo, to inquire about it; but they replied to him that they were not bound to obey him, as he was no longer their lawful superior. These words were as a sword which pierced the heart of Alphonso. The interior conflicts they caused him to endure twice endangered his life. All this took place at the beginning of August in 1780. His soul however was inseparably united to the will of God, and he awaited death with calmness; but the Lord, in order to crown His servant more gloriously in heaven, had still severer trials in store for him to bear on earth.

After the procurator had gained the favour of the Sacred Congregation, he, without making known any of the reasons which excused Alphonso, drew up a petition on the 4th July, in the name of the four houses of the States, to obtain the convocation of a chapter, or at least the nomination of a president for these houses, which were, he said, left without a superior; but this wise assembly acted with its usual prudence, and before adopting these extreme measures, they examined more thoroughly into the state of affairs. His Lordship, the internuncio at Naples, was therefore instructed on the 12th of August, secretly to inquire into the matter and to make a faithful report thereupon. Mgr. Liguori received an order from Cardinal Caracciolo to remit all the acts which were drawn up at the last assembly to the Sacred Congregation, with an exact account of all that had taken place

there. But this order threw Alphonso into the greatest perplexity. The court of Naples at that time most strictly forbade any intercourse whatever to be held with the court of Rome. Not knowing what to do, in order to obey the Pope, and also not to fail in the duty he owed to his sovereign, Alphonso replied to the cardinal on the 24th of August, in consequence of his embarrassments what to do, and in conformity to the advice he received, that he would send two of his fathers to Rome the following November, to give all the wished-for information by word of mouth. "The auditor will state to your Eminence," he said to him, "all that I am at liberty to do, in conformity to your revered orders. I hope that my great age, for I am eighty-five, and the accumulation of miseries which oppress me, will obtain some compassion from your goodness, both in regard to my delay in sending this answer, as well as for the absence of the details which were asked for. As soon as the time of year will admit of travelling, I shall send one or two of my brothers, that they may dissipate the clouds which obscure the truth by word of mouth, and cause things to assume a better aspect. I never expected to be reduced in my old age to the state in which I now am; but I thank our good God for not having taken His grace away from me as I deserved. I recommend myself to your Eminences amid the anguish which I suffer, and conjure you to preserve the work of the Lord which I

have established at the cost of so much labour and so many tears."

The sorrowful old man afterwards began to think that his having sought for delay might be found fault with at Rome, so after having again taken advice, he hastened to write once more to the same Cardinal Caracciolo on the 28th of August, to set before him a summary of the critical conjunctures in which he was placed, the unhappy nature of the attendant circumstances, and his total want of power to remedy them. "At the age of eighty-five," he said to him, "my infirmities no less than my old age have reduced me to a most miserable condition. Would to God that I could myself go and speak to the king; but paralytic as I am that is impossible, and so I must pass my days in sorrow."

After having specified the things in detail, he added, "To sum up all; the greatest contradictions now happen to me through some of my brothers, especially those of the houses of Frosinone, who wish to see the congregation divided and governed by two superior-generals. The thing matters little to me, who am on the borders of the grave, but I am distressed at seeing the Congregation on the brink of destruction. I entreat your Eminences to do what you can to prevent this misfortune, by opposing this separation."

Mgr. Bergame, the bishop of Gaeta, was moved with compassion at seeing the really alarming position Mgr. Liguori was in, and he himself

wrote to Cardinal Caracciolo on the 5th of September, to represent Alphonso's innocence to him, and to entreat him to suspend all decision, assuring him that Mgr. Liguori would not fail to make known to him the uprightness of his intentions, and fully to justify his conduct.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ALPHONSO believed that the measure he had adopted would cause him to regain the favour of the Holy See; but God did not make the Pope discover his innocence so speedily. The procurator did not fail to cause the delay which he asked for, to pass for a piece of chicanery, made use of by Alphonso in order to gain time and to elude the orders of the Holy See. He multiplied his petitions in the name of the houses of the States, he exaggerated as far as he possibly could the pretended offence of Alphonso, and more especially the injury which the absence of a head would occasion to the houses of the States, and he redoubled his solicitations that a superior should be given to them. The centre of all the clamour was the house at Frosinone; that house for which Alphonso had four months before sold his four services, and had wished to sell his carriage and do without bare necessaries. The procurator was listened to, and through the misunderstanding which at that time existed be-

tween the courts of Naples and of Rome, he succeeded in defaming Alphonso still more. Pius VI. was ill-informed, and as none of us were in Rome to justify Alphonso's conduct, he took for a holy zeal on the part of the procurator what was nothing but passion, and declared that the houses of the kingdom should no longer form part of the Congregation. He stripped Alphonso of his authority, and appointed Father D. Francis de Paul superior of the houses of the States. O, the depths of the judgments of God! who could have imagined that Mgr. Liguori could ever have been looked upon as wanting in submission to the Holy See, and as such should have been deposed, condemned, and disgraced by the Sovereign Pontiff! This fatal blow was inflicted on the 22nd of September, 1780. Mgr. Carafa informed Cardinal Banditti of it on the 25th of the same month, and in the following terms: "Our Holy Father the Pope, being anxious to provide a lawful superior for the houses of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer of your diocese and of that of Veroli, has deigned in an audience granted on the 22nd instant, to Mgr. the secretary of the Congregation of bishops and regulars, on the 22nd instant, to appoint Father D. Francis de Paul, the present superior of Frosinone, as president of the said houses of the Redemptorists. His Holiness confers on him all necessary faculties, so that according to the tenor of the rules and constitutions of the Redemptorists, which were approved on the 25th of February, 1749, by

the brief 'Ad pastoralis dignitatis fastigium' of Pope Benedict XIV., the said Francis de Paul may be able to govern the houses and their members, instead of him who was formerly the superior-general of the aforesaid Congregation, and who having with his partisans adopted new regulations, essentially different to those which have hitherto been professed, has now ceased to form part of the Congregation and to enjoy the prerogatives and privileges which were granted to them by the Holy See. I inform your Eminence of this, in order that you may have the goodness to command all the members of the said Congregation who may be in your diocese, in the name of the Sovereign Pontiff, faithfully to observe all the rules and constitutions approved by Benedict XIV., and to recognise as their chief superior Father Francis de Paul, who is nominated as president by his Holiness."

A similar letter was despatched to Mgr. Giacobini. The procurator did not rest here; he everywhere proclaimed his odious triumph; he sent letters to all his friends in the kingdom, and neglected no method of increasing Alphonso's humiliation. He went on with his cunning devices, and obtained a rescript from the sacred penitentiary, to the effect that the Congregation was abolished in the kingdom of Naples, and that no petition addressed by a Redemptorist missionary out of the Roman States should be received. He caused a paper to be circulated among the other congregations

of cardinals, in order to get a similar declaration from each of them. These hypocritical measures were taken as so many proofs of his zeal, and several prelates, who were deceived by the appearances, said in their admiration, "See how ardently this good father maintains the honour of God and the rights of the Holy See!"

As Alphonso did not know how far things had gone, he sent me to Rome with Father Don Salvadore Gallo; we arrived there on the 25th of September; it was a Sunday, and on the preceding Friday everything had been decided. The procurator on seeing me, said with feigned sorrow, "I have done everything I could to undeceive the holy father, and to prove the innocence of Mgr. Liguori to every one; but the Pope detests him, and cannot bear even to hear him named: God knows all that I have done in the congregation of bishops and in that of regulars, but nothing has been of any use in disabusing these cardinals, or in making them understand that Mgr. Liguori has been deceived." He appeared quite devoted to our cause, but in secret he thwarted all our plans. He accompanied me to the house of Mgr. Carafa and to that of the pro-secretary Abbé Zuccari. As soon as they saw me they said to me, "Mgr. Liguori has been cut off from the institute." I could do nothing; the Sacred Congregation was closed, and the cardinals had gone to their country houses. The procurator however continued to testify sentiments of love and tenderness for Alphonso, but in the end he pulled off the mask,

and then he showered forth torrents of abuse against Alphonso. "He has been disappointed of his canonization," he one day said to me with a triumphant air, as if he wished to dishonour his saintly founder even beyond the tomb.

When we returned to Nocera it was late, so we thought it right to wait until the following morning, in giving Alphonso an account of our mission. Just as he was preparing for communion and to hear mass, Father Villani informed him of the decision adopted against him: this fatal blow quite disconcerted him at first, but he soon rallied, and adoring the Divine Will as manifested in that of his Pontiff, he said with a profound inclination of his head, "I wish for God alone; it is enough for me to have His grace. The Pope wills it to be thus. May God be praised!" He said nothing more, but he quietly went on with his preparation, heard mass, and strengthened himself with the eucharistic food.

After he had made his thanksgiving, he went out in the carriage, according to custom, when the devil assailed him with a horrible temptation: he set before him the ruin of the congregation as his own doing, and as a punishment for his sins; he tried to persuade him that God had abandoned him, and that he had no further hope of salvation: during this painful conflict he humbled and abased himself; he repelled the temptation and strove to open his heart to confidence; but his humility seemed to him as if it were false, and his hopes as presumption. Notwithstanding all his efforts, he saw nothing

before him but despair. In this pitiable state he hastened to return to the house, and no sooner had he reached the threshold of the door than he burst into tears, and he exclaimed in a heart-rending tone of voice, "Aid me, the devil wants to make me despair; aid me, for I do not wish to offend God." At these cries Fathers Villani and Mazzini hurried to him, but his Lordship did nothing but repeat, "Aid me, the devil tempts me to despair." The whole community soon surrounded the saintly old man, who addressing them all, saying, "My sins have caused God to abandon the congregation; aid me, for I do not wish to offend God. The devil wants to lead me to despair." Fathers Villani and Mazzini succeeded in calming him by showing him the snare of the devil, and assuring him that God would not abandon His work; after being thus encouraged, his mind regained strength, but his weakened body remained in a state of entire prostration. When the temptation was dissipated, he turned towards the crucifix and a figure of Mary, and repeated several times over, in a joyous tone, "My mother, I thank you; you have aided me now; aid me at all times, my dear mother. My Jesus, my hope; I shall never be confounded."

We went to him after supper, and found that he had quite recovered all his usual serenity. "The devil has been tempting me to despair all day," he said to us; "but the Blessed Virgin aided me, and by the grace of God I have never really lost confidence." This same temptation

returned to him from time to time. "The devil does not let me alone," he one day said to Father Villani; "but I do not wish to displease God, and so Jesus Christ and the Blessed Virgin will come to my assistance."

However great were the troubles which he could not avoid, he never uttered the slightest complaint. Whenever we began to speak of the injustice of which he had been the object, Alphonso silenced us, and said, "The Pope has thus decreed it. God be praised! The will of the Pope is the will of God." On the following Saturday, he went to the church, though he was so ill, in order that he might magnify the Blessed Virgin according to custom. "Pray to Jesus Christ and Mary for our poor congregation," said he to the people, "for it is under great tribulation. Pray that we may do their holy will, and that we may never displease them."

When Mgr. Bergame heard of the distress of his venerable friend, he instantly went from Naples to Nocera to see him; he had all the tenderness of a son towards Alphonso. His Lordship told him of the temptation he experienced while I was present. "The devil," said he, with tears in his eyes, "wished to throw me into a state of despair; but my good Mother has assisted me, and I have not made a single act of distrust, no, not one; my good Mother has aided me." But the air of triumph with which he pronounced these words was not without some mixture of remaining fear.

Full of compassion for the saintly old man, Mgr. Bergame resolved to go to Benevento to see Cardinal Banditti, and to consult with him as to how the work of the missions was to be maintained in the kingdom of Naples. I was appointed to accompany him. The cardinal was not a little distressed on hearing the sad state of things. He grieved over it; but he thought that it was not then expedient to take any steps at Rome in the matter.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CORRESPONDENCE with divine grace has the property of redoubling the strength of the faithful soul. It was thus that Alphonso's victories over hell prepared him for still more glorious triumphs. Not satisfied with having submitted his will to that of the Pope, he also wished to put himself under obedience to the new superior, the President de Paul, and he made up his mind to go and live as a simple subject in our house at Benevento. This heroic determination was, however, more admirable than possible; for his infirmities were an evident barrier to his so doing. This was stated to him, but in vain, for he persisted in his design. Upon this, Father Villani, in order to get him to give it up, told him that as the rule had not been abandoned, the congregation would always con-

tinue to exist in the kingdom. Alphonso's answer was, "Whatever be the state of things, the Pope no longer recognises these houses as forming part of the institute." One reason alone caused him to desist from his project, and that was the disturbance which such a step would cause at Naples at a time when the king was not on good terms with the court of Rome; but though the mere fear of causing some annoyance to the Pope was alone sufficient to stop him, he lost no time in writing to the new president, to assure him of his entire obedience and of his readiness to repair to whichever of the houses in the States he liked to point out to him. In fact, he did not regain his tranquillity until after Father de Paul had commanded him to remain at Nocera, with the assurance that he should always form part of the congregation. This is a fitting time to recal to mind the prophecy which he twice made, once was in 1774, the other time was in 1776, concerning this deposition, which the event alone could render credible.

The measures adopted by the Pope were as a thunder-bolt to the houses of the kingdom. We have already said that several members of these houses passed into those of Benevento and of St. Angelo; but when this terrible blow was inflicted, one may almost say that the whole congregation retired into the Papal States. Those who had the most respect for Alphonso went to ask his advice, and received no other answer than this, "Obey the Pope." The others,

without regard to his Lordship, abandoned him without even previously warning him of it, and there were others who made shipwreck in the storm and who returned to the world again.

The justice of God never fails to punish the guilty. One of them who had been brought up in the congregation, and whom Alphonso had loved with tenderness, had the courage to distress him by taking the part of Father Majone and that of his colleague. He returned to the world, and became canon of the cathedral, and as he had the advantage of possessing the favour of the bishop, he obtained the most honourable offices. I know not how his conscience stood with God, for he was suddenly summoned to appear before the supreme tribunal. He was still in the flower of his age, when one morning he was found dead in his bed. I pass over other instances of similar chastisements in silence, for they would be too painful for me to repeat.

As Alphonso did not wish for the death of Father Majone, but rather that he should acknowledge his fault and humble himself for it before God, he did all he could in order to win him over to Jesus Christ; but on seeing all the evil he had done to the congregation, and the sorrows Alphonso had to endure in consequence, he had not courage to return amongst us. After having recalled him several times without success, Alphonso on seeing him thus deaf to his paternal entreaties, signified to him by a public notary, that if he did not return within a given space of time, he would be look-

ed upon as excluded from the congregation. The unhappy man, in his blindness, preferred to devote himself to the service of a baron of rank as his secretary. It was there he terminated his days by a premature end; but as he shed tears before he died over the ills he had caused, and over his own unhappy fate, we may hope that he has obtained pardon through the merciful loving-kindness of the Lord.

Alphonso was insensible to his own humiliation, and only thought of the desolation of his disunited children; what distressed him the most, was the displeasure which this afflicting separation caused to the Sovereign Pontiff, and the cruel thought that he himself had fallen into disgrace with him. "The Pope is much irritated against us," he wrote to the father president on the 8th of October; "if he knew that we have been in danger of losing everything, he would not assuredly have condemned me. I hope to inform him of all in time, and to regain his good opinion, for I have never forgotten the affection he has always shown towards me, miserable being as I am, and I hope that I shall always live and die as a most devoted servant of himself personally and of holy Church."

In his distress Alphonso again had recourse to the protection of Cardinal Banditti: he begged him to represent to the Pope the serious difficulties of his position, as well as that of so many of his subjects who were deprived of his favour. He himself composed an abridged his-

tory of the vexatious vicissitudes which had agitated the poor Congregation from its rise up to these latter days, and he sent this memorial to Cardinal Banditti that he might confirm it and remit it to the Pope. To this recital he added a statement of all the good that his missionaries had done in the two kingdoms of Naples and of Sicily, where labourers in the Church's service were so rare, that every year six or seven companies of his fathers gave upwards of fifty missions there within the space of eight months.

Such were some amongst the representations he made to the Pope. "I have been toiling for three days," he wrote to Father Cajone at Benevento on the 10th of November, "in preparing this letter which is to be remitted to the Pope, and I hope it will be previously confirmed by the cardinal. It is through the assistance of the cardinal that we must hope to recover the favour of the Pope." I have caused a novena, consisting of nine Paters and Aves, to be commenced this evening at Nocera by all the community for the good success of this letter. On Friday I will send to Naples to have a novena begun by the Capuchins of St. Francis. I bless you all, and beg you to recommend this matter to God; all our hopes are in prayer. I have caused a mass to be sung in every house in the kingdom for the success of this measure."

The cardinal signed this letter and sent it as if it came of his own accord; but as truth

approached the pontifical throne, so calumny strove to repel it. When the procurator heard that the letter had been handed to the Sacred Congregation, he was filled with fresh fury against Alphonso, pleaded for the separation, and invented a thousand falsehoods to render Alphonso more and more odious. Meanwhile, as Alphonso did not hear from the cardinal, he wrote to him on the 15th of January, 1781: "I wish to know," said he, "from your Eminence, if an answer has been received which leaves us even one ray of hope." The silence of the cardinal caused him to suspect some fresh disappointment. "I wish I could myself speak to the Pope," he went on to say, "to learn from him what we can do to regain his favour. There is another petition which is now pending against us, which has been devised by the procurator Leon. It asserts that the king ought to suppress us, because our rule was approved by Benedict XIV. As this is the state of things, what can we do to satisfy the Pope? The faculties we possessed through the Penitentiary have also been taken from us, and we are hardly sure of retaining those which are granted by the bishops. We are punished, without being guilty. I repeat again, what must we do to regain the favour of the Pope? The congregation is still divided, and this division prevents as much good being done as formerly was the case. I entreat your Eminence to give me courage and counsel." The cardinal wrote to

exhort him to be resigned, without giving him any satisfactory answer.

The sorrowful old man was in a state of extreme desolation, and did not hesitate to apply to the President de Paul. "The Pope is irritated with us," he wrote to him, "and I should like to know what to do; he wishes us to reject the new regulations, but what fruit would that have except that of causing us to lose the friendship of the king, and that would lead to our being expelled from the four houses in the kingdom? I would have written direct to the Pope a long time ago, but how could it be done when the king forbids us to write before having previously obtained the authorisation of the chamber and that of his majesty? The Pope is well aware of all the prohibitions of this sort which embarrass us so much; and yet the Pope continues to treat us with displeasure, although he knows that we have no means of extricating ourselves. I entreat you to write to me, and to give me some light on the subject; for I do not know what to resolve on. I have not however lost confidence in the assistance of the Blessed Virgin in restoring our poor and much shattered little bark to good condition."

During all these vexatious circumstances, Alphonso always behaved admirably, in never putting his own interpretations on the will of the Pope. Several of us who maintained that we had not forfeited the favour of the Holy See, said to him, "If the Pope speaks of those who have aban-

done the rule, how can we who have always observed it be of the number of those whom he has condemned?" The argument was plausible, and it was assented to by Mgr. Onorati, the Bishop of Troy, and by Mgr. San Severino, the king's confessor, to whom our innocence was well known; but Alphonso wished for unquestioning submission without the use of any interpretation of our own. "It is not for us to judge," he several times said; "we cannot judge the Pope in our own cause; let us humbly bow our heads in submission. If the Pope has cast us down by one decree, he can raise us up by another; we must obey, and not put interpretations of our own on what he does."

The following is a striking instance of his blind submission to the will of the Sovereign Pontiff. Whilst I complained to Mgr. Carafa at Rome of our having been so unjustly deprived of the favour of the Holy See, his Lordship several times said to me, "But what has he done against you? The Pope did not and could not have had you in view." When our Fathers D. Matthias Corrado, and D. Francis Xavier de Leon went to see him, he also said to them, "You are theologians; how could that touch you?" But the matter was not so clear as his Lordship maintained, as the Pope had absolutely condemned the houses in the kingdom. Relying upon this answer, several of us tried to take advantage of it; but Alphonso never would listen to them. "Mgr. Carafa's

words prove nothing," said he, "those of the Pope alone are those which we ought to attend to."

Mgr. Affitto, the bishop of Lettere, was touched with compassion for us, and addressed a petition to the Pope to represent our desolation to him, and to obtain some explanation of these doubts. Mgr. Carafa said to him, in his answer in the name of the Pope, "As the Holy See did not bestow its favours, indults, and privileges on any congregation of the Redemptorists, except that which was instituted by Benedict XIV., according to the rule inserted in the bull of approbation, with the clause that it must be inviolably observed, it follows that all those who do not follow this rule in its integrity, but who obey another, require, even were it analogous, (much more so if it be essentially different,) that they, I say, no longer belong to the Congregation of the Redemptorists, and have no part in the favours, indults, and privileges granted to it; but that all they do, trusting to these privileges, is against the canonical laws and is unlawful, as is also the case in regard to all those who cannot take advantage of these pretexts."

This letter was a fresh source of discouragement to us. When Alphonso heard that the will of the Pope was so definite on the subject, he embraced it as the will of God, and did not utter one word of complaint.

Alphonso was chiefly distressed at the way in which this privation of pontifical favours, in

regard to the exercises of the missions, acted to the injury of souls: "At Rome," he wrote to the President de Paul, "they endeavour to make me hope that the Pope thinks of restoring the office of superior-general to me; but the blow which has struck me is not that; it is the loss of faculties for the missions, of those faculties without which we can be of but little assistance to souls. I wish that we could regain them, that we might be of mutual aid to each other, as we have been until now." He then went on to commission him to use his interest for that purpose, and he also begged Father Cajone to have the kindness to go to Rome to discuss this affair. "I am not able to travel," he said to him; "were I not reduced to the state in which you see me, I should have set out ere now. Your Reverence must go there, and try to get the Pope to restore these faculties to us. If we obtain them we shall have obtained everything. I had a hundred and seventy ducats; but I have been obliged to pay so many expenses that I cannot promise you any money; for I do not even know if I have anything left. Let us each do all we can for the good of the congregation."

Though things were in such a state of confusion, Alphonso did not forget the missions: as a valiant captain rallies his soldiers after a great defeat, and then resists the enemy, so he assembled together the few subjects who remained with him, and made them fight against sin, by encamping them in the principal intrenchments.

“We have not ceased to labour for the good of souls in the kingdom,” he wrote to Cardinal Banditti, in a letter of the 15th of January, 1781; “we have given a great many missions. That of Foggia may be counted for four, as it will last for a month and a half; that of Nola will soon take place, and will continue for a month; similar ones will also be given at Nocera and elsewhere; but we are obliged to labour without extraordinary faculties, which is a great loss to many souls. I entreat you to write me a few words; for I am in the greatest affliction on account of this unexpected storm.”

Whilst the servant of God thus manifested such courageous solicitude for the work of the missions, the affairs of the congregation grew daily worse and worse, thanks to the calumnies of the procurator. We were now only looked upon as a reproach among men, and as loaded with the indignation and censures of the Holy See. Several bishops took us for schismatics, and refused our missions, and if the people asked to have us, their requests were rejected, and we were slandered. This caused acute pain to Alphonso and to us. Mgr. Zuccaro, the bishop of Capaccio, on receiving a request from the authorities of Pisciotà for a mission, replied, “I grant it to you, provided it is given by the missionaries of the Pontifical States, for they alone are acknowledged by the Pope as true children of our Holy Church and of the congregation of the Redemptorists. The Cioranists in the kingdom have rebelled against the head

of the Church, and have been deprived of their privileges. May God enlighten them and cause them to understand the miserable state of him who has sought to withdraw from obedience to the chief pastor whom Jesus Christ authorised to feed His sheep and lambs." They would no longer make use of us for novenas and other such exercises, and candidates for orders were no longer sent to our houses.

Some looked upon our houses in the kingdom as illegal in the eyes of the Church through malice, others did so through respect for the Holy See. "Yesterday evening," a person of distinction at Naples wrote to us, "I was in a company of Neapolitan missionaries, amongst whom there was one in authority, who said that he would not dare to advise a young man to enter into one of the houses in the kingdom. 'I know not,' added another, 'how the members of these houses can remain there with any conscience.'"

Alphonso was so cast down by these humiliations, that his only consolation consisted in meditating on the Passion of Jesus Christ, or on the truths of eternity, and in reading over and over again the Life of the Blessed Joseph Calasanctius,* whose old age had also been af-

* St. Joseph Calasanctius was born in 1536 of a noble family in Arragon. After he had aided in the re-establishment of discipline among the clergy, as vicar-general of Urgel, he went to Rome, where he founded the Congregation of Clerks Regular of the Pious Schools for the instruction of youth. He was horribly persecuted by three members of his Congregation when he was upwards of

flicted by a cruel persecution. Excepting when he was occupied in speaking to us what it was necessary to say, he maintained constant silence, and kept himself closely united to God. His sight was much weakened, and he was to be seen for hours together with his book almost resting on his forehead. He adored the will of the Pope, he did all he could to prevent the smallest complaint being uttered against it, and was still more anxious that nothing should be done to cause him the slightest displeasure. On hearing that several of us thought of soliciting the king's protection, Alphonso was afraid that that would occasion altercations between the courts of Rome and of Naples. "I cannot acquit him of sin," he wrote on the 3rd of January, 1781, to the vicar-general, Father Corrado, "who wishes to have recourse to the king now. I entreat your Reverence expressly to forbid it."

CHAPTER XXIX.

AMIDST this thick gloom a ray of hope appeared to console Alphonso and his children. The king, as we have already seen, had munificently promis-

eighty years of age. He was arrested and brought before the tribunal of the holy office, when he was deprived of his office of superior-general, and obliged to submit to the yoke of his chief persecutor. His congregation was suppressed by a papal brief, but this brief was revoked after his death, as he had himself predicted. He died in disgrace at the age of ninety-two. Clement XIII. placed him amongst the saints.

ed on the 22nd of October, 1779, to recompense the services of our missionaries, whom he had appointed to publish the jubilee. As God had blessed this work throughout the kingdom, Alphonso, in order to profit by the clemency of the prince, asked that it might be made lawful for the subjects of his congregation to strip themselves of all property, to make an oath to God to lead a life in entire community in holy poverty, and to remain in the congregation until death. He determined on asking to make these oaths to God, because the grand-almoner would not allow of vows. Having become assured that Innocent II., in 1664, had commuted the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience of the priests and clerics of St. Joseph into so many oaths, he thought that his conduct would be approved by Pope Pius VI., especially as a promise to God by oath is even more binding than a vow itself.

He therefore wrote to Father Cajone of Benevento on the 2nd of January, 1781, saying, "I entreat you to pray to God about this favour which we have asked for from the king; if we obtain it, the congregation will present quite a different aspect. When they hear at Rome that the king has granted us these favours, I expect that the Sacred Congregation and the Pope will no longer object to consenting to our reunion. We are praying for it here, I hope you will do so also."

When the President de Paul, who was at Frosinone, heard of what was being done in the king-

dom, he candidly replied, on the 14th of the same month, "Father Tannoja has written to Mgr. the secretary, to get all proceedings of every sort suspended for two months, and this has been consented to. If the king listens to you, the cause is ended, and the reunion will be brought about."

As the discussion of our cause was still pending in the royal council, and one of the grievances alleged against us was that we were mendicants, Alphonso demanded the privilege of being allowed to beg for some assistance from the friends and benefactors of the congregation during the wheat and olive harvest. The petition was laid before the king, and Alphonso in addressing it to the Marquis of Marco implored his protection: "My very dear and much honoured Marquis," he wrote to him, "your Excellency has always had the kindness to wish me well, unworthy though I be. I should have come to lay my petition before you in person, but I am eighty-four years of age, and cannot move from my arm-chair. Not knowing to whom to apply, I have recourse to your Excellency, who so much wishes for the glory of the Lord, to beg you to read this petition to his Majesty, and to try and console me by obtaining its success."

Whilst he made use of human measures, Alphonso grounded all his hopes in prayer. Amongst other things, he ordered that the Blessed Sacrament should be exposed in each house for the adoration of the community du-

ring every evening for nine days, and that divers prayers, which he appointed, should then be recited. All of us adopted a spirit of penance; many masses were celebrated with this intention, and large alms were distributed amongst the poor.

“Let us do all we can to obtain reunion,” Alphonso wrote to the President de Paul. “If God wills that we be divided, I can only say, ‘Fiat voluntas sua.’ For myself, I am already on the brink of the grave; if there are two superior-generals after my death, the congregation will come to an end. To speak plainly, if we do not succeed in obtaining a reunion, the place in which we shall gain most souls will not be Rome, but the kingdom of Naples, where our missions are so necessary and so much desired; if we remain divided, the congregation cannot do as much good as it has done. In conclusion, my only prayer to God is that His good pleasure may be accomplished.”

The king had the kindness to grant Alphonso all that he had asked. “His Majesty,” the Marquis of Marco replied on the 24th of February, 1781, “is full of gratitude for the indefatigable labours of your missionaries, and the success they have obtained in the publication of the jubilee, and so he has deigned to grant you all the favours you have asked for. He therefore permits the missionaries of your institute to make, 1st, the oaths of a life in community and of poverty, without prejudice to their claims on their patrimonial possessions and usu-

fructs: 2nd, that the said missionaries may take the oath of perseverance in the congregation, which oath may be dispensed with by the superior-general for lawful reasons: 3rd, he also consents that the missionaries may ask for some assistance from their friends and benefactors in the time of the wheat and olive harvest."

These tidings filled Alphonso with joy, and he fancied that everything was now put to rights; so he wrote as follows to Father Corrado, in expression of his thankfulness to God: "The Lord has consoled me, Blessed be His name for ever! I did not expect to obtain this favour, but God has granted it to us through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph." He notified it to all the houses in the same manner, and wished that they should all offer up their fervent thanksgivings for this blessing to Almighty God and to the Blessed Virgin before the Blessed Sacrament during its exposition. He exhorted each of them to observe the rule more rigorously than ever, and to redouble their vigilance in the service of God. "I send you the decree which we have so happily obtained," he wrote on the 24th of February, 1781, to Father Don Celestine de Robertis, the superior of the house at Caposele; "go to the choir and return thanks for it to the adorable Sacrament and to the Blessed Virgin Mary. We despaired of ever receiving such a favour, we must therefore attribute it to a miracle of the Blessed Virgin. Yes! it is a great miracle. Therefore let us manifest our gratitude to

Jesus Christ and His divine Mother, in order that they may restore the exact observance of rule. We must now begin again to observe the rule carefully, which has been so much neglected until now. I bless your Reverence, and embrace you one by one and all. I wish," he added at the end of the letter, "that you would all let me know that you are contented and thankful."

Joy was felt throughout all the houses. The following was the reply sent by the rector of Liceto: "Our consolation has exceeded our sorrow; we were dead, and now we are restored to life again. The inhabitants around us have made bonfires in rejoicing. These people shared in our desolation, and now they share in our gladness. The chapter of the cathedral have sent us their treasurer to congratulate us, and the agent of the prince and some other gentlemen have dined with us. Let us pray to God, that after He has thus consoled us, He may also cause peace to be re-established amongst us. A great many masses have been said to obtain this favour, and they are said now in thanksgiving to God."

As soon as the decree was published, Alphonso sent a copy of it to Cardinal Zelada, who presided over the Sacred Congregation as prefect through the death of Cardinal Caracciolo. He again explained to him how he had been deceived, and showed him that the wound was healed through the oaths sanctioned by the king; he also told him of the spiritual wants

of the kingdom, and the great injury which would be done if all the members of his congregation did not participate in the favours of the Holy See. "I will not fail," he replied on the 2nd March, "to hand over your letter and the annexed document to the congregation, that it may be added to the report, and that the whole may be presented to Mgr. Ghilini, who is the reporter, and whose office it is to examine all which relates to this case ; as regards the slight share that I can take in the matter, rest assured that I will only have in view the true interests of religion and of the faithful. I thank your Lordship for the pious office you render me in always remembering me in your prayers, of which I confess I stand in great need, and whilst offering you the disposition of my poor services, I kiss your hand in all sincerity."

Whilst the whole congregation in the kingdom and in the Pontifical States impatiently sighed after the reunion, the implacable procurator did all he could to hinder it. Alphonso on the contrary was full of generous confidence, and wrote to him thus, on the 26th of March: "My father, in speaking to Father Paul about our reunion, I wrote to him, that we hoped that the king would grant what we asked in regard to the life in community, poverty, and perseverance ; he has replied to me, that if the king grants us these favours, all will be set to rights between us. By God's grace, we have obtained every thing from the king. In consequence of this, I entreat your Reverence to cooperate in this

reunion, which is so much wished for on both sides. I trust that Jesus Christ will give us the consolation of being united together as we were before, and I do not believe that your Reverence wishes to oppose this.....I pray your Reverence to remember, that if you persevere in wishing for the separation, and obtain what you wish, you will, as I believe, spend the remainder of your days in sorrow, especially when you see that it is too late to remedy it. I entreat you, by the love of God, to consider this point at the foot of the crucifix. I embrace you, and pray God to enable you to do His Holy Will. My constant and only prayer is, 'My God! grant that I may never in any measure deviate from Thy Holy Will in any degree.' My death is near at hand, and that makes me pray."

Whilst these matters were being transacted at Rome, Alphonso begged the Archbishop of Benevento once more to speak favourably for him to the Holy Father. Everything seemed to foretell a happy termination of affairs, but the iniquity of the procurator triumphed once more. "Mgr. Liguori's pretensions are too numerous," he said on presenting himself to the Sacred Congregation; "he wants to act as Pope, or at least not to take any notice of the Pope. The oaths are another alteration he wishes to make in the rule. The Pope is not to receive the law, but to give it. But besides this, the rule is altered from one end to the other. We wish to have the rule of Benedict XIV., and not the reform of Mgr. Liguori." He then reproduced under

fresh colours all that could make his passion appear as zeal, and render Alphonso inexcusable in the eyes of the cardinals; and as he also took special care to take advantage of the misunderstanding between the two courts, which prevented Alphonso from pleading his cause before the Sacred Congregation, he had no difficulty in gaining attention, and in dissuading the cardinals from all measures of conciliation. Yet Cardinal Zelada, who had an extreme veneration for Mgr. Liguori, and who knew his inviolable attachment to the Holy See, could not put faith in the declamations of the procurator. He knew that his advanced age obliged him to leave things to others, and he was convinced that he was innocent, and a victim to his own generous confidence. This wise cardinal was sensibly affected at his humiliation and trials, and proposed to the Sacred Congregation that they should respect his person, and make some arrangement in favour of reunion; but he was alone in this opinion, and all the other cardinals, and especially Cardinal Ghilini, the reporter of the cause, were of a contrary opinion. The Pope was misinformed by his secretary, and beset by the procurator, and far from granting him anything, he confirmed all the previous decisions. When Alphonso heard of it, he said, "I wish for what God wills. The will of God makes all things straight."

CHAPTER XXX.

WHILST the powers of hell were thus let loose against the congregation, Alphonso, whose courage was indefatigable and whose faith was invincible, was unceasingly labouring to rebuild the ruined towers of Jerusalem; but to his great sorrow, he found what he repaired in the evening thrown down in the morning; yet although his affliction on hearing of his fresh defeat at Rome was very great, he did not despair of regaining the favour of the Pope. As the Father President de Paul had to go to Benevento, Alphonso on the 6th of March wrote to Father Corrado, who was then at Naples, to beg him to go there also, in order that they might consult together as to the measures to be adopted to effect the reunion. "In the houses of Benevento," he said to him, "a great fête has been held, on account of the favour which the king has granted us, in allowing us to take the oath of perseverance, and the cardinal is much rejoiced at it; but if we do not succeed in bringing matters to a happy issue, all that has been hitherto gained will be lost. I am a poor paralytic, and I can scarcely move. But God will aid us, so let us take courage."

In the morning of Friday, the 3rd of April, the Fathers Corrado and Constance of Nocera, Father Augustin, the rector of Caposèle, Father Carmin Picôme, the rector of St. Angelo, and I, of Illice-

to, arrived nearly at the very same hour at Benevento. Our meeting was truly providential, for we had not preconcerted it. We were all of one mind, and settled on the measures to be adopted for the reunion with the father-president; amongst other things, it was decided that two provinces should be established, and that of the states should be under his direction; we also determined on immediately sending two fathers to Rome, to settle this matter with the Pope. The Father President gave proof of entire sincerity, especially by asking the others, when I was absent, to send me to Rome, as I should be welcome to Mgr. Carafa and the advocate Zuccaro, who was the pro-secretary of the Sacred Congregation.

The father-procurator was irritated at this pacific interview, and dissatisfied with the father-president, so he threatened to upset everything in the kingdom and in the states. The hatred which he had conceived against Alphonso increased day by day. He swore that he would never permit a reunion to take place. "This is a satisfaction," said he, "which Mgr. Liguori and his adherents will never obtain from me." He did not wish for peace, because he feared some mischance thereby happening to himself. "If Mgr. Liguori had me in his power," he one day said to me in Rome, "he would ruin me outright." Therefore, the unhappy man, whose malice was thus openly evinced, acted as if he were quite desperate.

As the Sovereign Pontiff had to go to the Pontine Marshes after Easter, Alphonso on the 6th of April begged Cardinal Banditti to take the trouble to go thither in person, in order that he might see his Holiness there, and inform him of the real state of things. "I know," said he, "that your Reverence has written several times in favour of the reunion, but I expect much more success from a private interview than from all the letters in the world." He made the same request to Mgr. Bergame, bishop of Gaeta, who was well acquainted with the Pope. Pius VI. was then at Terracino, but his mind was quite prejudiced against Alphonso and his houses; Mgr. Bergame said all he could in order to dispel the prejudices which had been instilled into him against the innocent old man, and he also dwelt on the good which the congregation did in the provinces of Naples, where it was nearly alone in devoting itself to apostolical labours.

"Let them then state all that has been done," said the Pope, "for it is not well to change the rule of a religious congregation without the sanction of the Holy See." Mgr. Bergame insisted on the attachment which Mgr. Liguori had unceasingly testified towards the Holy See. "I know," replied the Pope, "that he is a saint, and that he has hitherto been attached to the Holy See; but on this occasion he has not adopted the same course." The cardinal finally represented the state to which he was reduced, and the unfaithfulness of the two

consultors ; but the Pope would give no other answer than this, "Let him send some one to Rome to inform me about it all." Mgr. Bergame then begged him to give Alphonso his blessing. "Yes," replied the Pope, "I bless him with all my heart, and I also bless all the members of his congregation."

Mgr. Bergame, who took the greatest interest in Alphonso's peace of mind and in the welfare of the congregation, was not satisfied with what he had done, and when he took leave of the Pope, he entreated him to show clemency towards Alphonso and towards his houses. "Let them come," replied the Pope, "and tell me of all that has been done with sincerity." "They will come," his Lordship answered, "to the feet of your Holiness, and they will give you a faithful statement of everything."

At the end of May, Alphonso, at the advice of Mgr. Bergame and Cardinal Banditti, sent the Fathers D. Bartholomew Corrado, and D. Francis Xavier of Leon to Rome. The sorrowful old man counted each moment from his great desire to regain the favour of the Pope. For this end, he ordered prayers and masses to be said, and he exhorted the houses of St. Angelo and of Benevento to cooperate together equally in furthering the success of this matter. In the midst of these embarrassing circumstances, Alphonso had one source of distress which we did not understand. Through his love for holy poverty, he had made a vow to depend on the

local superior, just like any other subject, when he felt in any doubt regarding property, but as the rectors in the kingdom were not at this time lawful superiors of the houses, as the Pope did not acknowledge them as such, he did not know to whom to apply, and was continually afraid of sinning. He therefore charged Father Corrado to speak about it to his Holiness for him: "Your Reverence must know," he said to him, "that as I am obliged by the rule to keep the vow of poverty, I wish to observe it as I am bound to do; but in order to observe it thus, I require to depend on the dispensation of the local superior in my particular doubts; now at present there is not any superior in the congregation on whom I can depend, which causes me to be in a state of terrible agitation, and the devil tempts me to despair. I do not wish to offend God in the smallest degree. I therefore entreat your Reverence to speak to the Pope and to inform him of my uneasiness, which causes me to be in a state of continual death. Entreat him then, to cause me to submit to the will of the superior or of my confessor in all my doubts. Oh, entreat his Holiness to grant me this favour, and remind him that there was once a time when he looked upon me with an eye of favour."

Father Corrado did not apply to the Pope, but to the cardinal who was the grand penitentiary, who was filled with admiration at Alphonso's delicacy, and at the vow which he had made in regard to poverty, which was so

new a thing in a superior: "Acquiescat suo confessario," was the answer which the cardinal gave.

Our proceedings at Rome had not such fortunate results as we had hoped. It is the fate of divisions, to be as hard to repair as they are easy to make. As the procurator did not care about the rule, but only about casting off the yoke of submission to Alphonso, he managed so that all that had been done at Benevento and at Terracino came to nought.

The answer to Alphonso's petition was presented to the Pope and remitted to the Sacred Congregation; the following answer was sent on the 22nd of June: "Audiatur procurator generalis congregationis præsens in curia." Our fathers stated all the reasons which were in our favour. The procurator also presented his statement on the 9th of July. "I never knew," he ironically said, "that any decree was issued depriving the plaintiff and his partisans of the favours of the Holy See; but if the question is to decide whether absolution is needed for having deserted the institute in which one has been professed, and for having adopted a new rule, the answer will depend on the clemency of your Eminences; however, in order that absolution may not be nullified by perseverance in desertion, dispensation will also have to be obtained as regards the vows of religion."

Such was the beginning of this discourse, I cannot bring myself to relate the rest. He had the boldness to reproach the houses in the king-

dom for having banished evangelical poverty, the sole support of life in community. He said that the rule required that the revenues derived from patrimonial property should be administered by the superiors, while the regulations left them at the disposal of the subjects. He was answered by saying that as the rule was ambiguous, Mgr. Liguori, in order to prevent annoyance to parents, had from the first wished that these revenues should be abandoned to them, and that the procurator's own practice, as well as that of all the houses in the states, was in conformity to this custom. He also objected, that in the concession of the oath of perseverance, nothing was said about the Pope, and the rector-major alone is spoken of as regards dispensations from its observance, as if the rule did not grant this power to the one as well as to the other. His words had little in them calculated to produce conviction, but there was such a prejudice in his favour, that he once more gained his cause; in the report which was addressed to the holy father, quite the contrary was asserted to that which he had heard at Terracino from Cardinal Banditti and Mgr. Bergame, and his dissatisfaction against us was converted into indignation; he therefore sent us an answer on the 24th of August, 1781, to this effect: "Standum in decisis per sanctissimum sub die 13 Septembris, 1780;" and as a double victory for the procurator, these words were also added, "Et amplius non admittantur preces."

This confirmation of the preceding decision of the Sovereign Pontiff was a final triumph to the procurator. In his fury he unceasingly pursued his project of humbling and grieving Alphonso, by calumniating him personally and destroying his work. Whilst on a mission at Narni he related to the bishop what had taken place at Rome and in the kingdom, and kept repeating in ridicule of Alphonso, "He has failed as to his canonization." His Lordship was so scandalized at this language, that although he had until then never omitted daily to assist at the instructions which this father gave in the church, he from that time ceased to repair thither, and only put up with him afterwards with regret.

The Fathers returned to Rome in November; when Alphonso heard of the decision which had been adopted, he exclaimed, with all the calmness of perfect resignation, "For six months I have asked for nothing from God but that His will might be accomplished: Lord! I only will what Thou will'st."

Thus did Mgr. Liguori make a perfect holocaust to God of that work which he had maintained for forty years, amidst numberless difficulties, and for which he had sacrificed his repose, his honour, and his reputation.

The judgments of God, although unfathomable, are ever adorable. Alphonso, who had in so many ways always manifested his submission and respect towards the Head of the Church, was nevertheless looked on with an eye of sever-

ity, and treated with rigour; but the most glorious amongst the sons of men also felt the rod of the Lord, who saw Him clothed in the mantle of our iniquities.

From this however it must not be thought that the Sovereign Pontiff continued to look on Alphonso as guilty after his death. When they proceeded to the examination of his virtues in the Congregation of Rites, with that scrupulous exactness always practised there, the calumnies against him were discovered, and his innocence was brought to light by means of that balance of the sanctuary which never deceives. When the Holy Father was undeceived, he wept at having grieved a saint, and did not hesitate to declare in a solemn decree which he issued on the 29th of April, 1796, that Alphonso had always been most submissive towards the Holy See: "*Memoria tenemus pietatem singularem et observantiam servi Dei erga hanc sanctam apostolicam sedem, voce sæpe, rebus gestis et scriptis ab ipso testatam.*"*

He even imposed perpetual silence on the subject, so that during the course of the process of the canonization no further allusions to the faults of which he had been supposed to be guilty should be made: "*Sicque....per quoscumque judices, ordinarios et delegatos etiam causarum palatii apostolici, auditores, S. R. C.*

* "We cherish the remembrance of the pious and singular obedience of this servant of God towards the holy and apostolic See, and his words, his actions, and his writings, have often testified it."

cardinales etiam de latere legatos, et apostolicæ sedis nuntios, sublata eis, et eorum cuilibet quavis aliter judicandi, et interpretandi facultate, et auctoritate judicari et de finiri debere, ad irritum et inane, si secus super his a quocumque quavis auctoritate scienter, vel ignoranter contigerit attentari, non obstantibus constitutionibus, et ordinationibus apostolicis, cæterisque contrariis quibuscumque.”

CHAPTER XXXI.

God, who sometimes seems to abandon His works, only for the purpose of afterwards raising them up more gloriously than before, gave a fresh addition to the congregation, at the very time when it was threatened with entire ruin. Pope Pius VI., from knowing how advantageous it would be to his states, and how useful for the Church, established a house of our missionaries at Rome, in the church of St. Julian, not far from that of St. Mary Major. This favour on the part of the Pope was immediately made known throughout the kingdom. A friend of Alphonso's interrogated him as to whether he knew anything about this new house at Rome. He replied, "I am quite ignorant, and I no longer occupy myself about these matters; I should be wrong were I still to wish to enter into fresh negotiations. God wills it thus, 'Gloria Patria;' I will however write to tell them how they ought

to act, and that they must not place themselves under the Roman police."

As he wished to be satisfied as to the truth of what he heard, he wrote as follows to the President de Paul, on the 29th of January, 1781: "There is a report current here, that you who belong to Romagna, are going to have a foundation at Rome. Inform me if this is true. We must continue to treat one another as brothers and friends: I do not think you have cause to suspect that I wish to spoil your affairs."

Not satisfied with granting us this favour, Pius VI. gave us fresh proofs of his protection by founding two houses at Gubbio and at Spello, in the diocese of Foligno, in order to supply the necessities of his states. Father Francis de Paul, the president of the houses of the states, and specially those of Rome, informed Alphonso of this; so far from remembering his own consequent humiliations, he experienced the greatest joy at the tidings; and although he had before been opposed to our establishment at Rome, now that the will of the Pope was plainly expressed on the subject, he testified as much satisfaction as if it had been his own work, and as if he had been recognised as superior.

"Yesterday the 22nd instant," he replied to Father de Paul, on the 23rd of November, 1781, "I received your much-esteemed letter, which tells me of the double foundation at Foligno and at Gubbio, as well as of that at Rome. It has given me great consolation, for not only

will this be a means whereby you can be of mutual assistance to one another, but it will also give you a new field in which you can give many missions so much needed in these days when corruption everywhere exists. Do not forget the truths of eternity—death, judgment, heaven, and hell, must be constantly preached.”

Father de Paul also informed him of the flourishing state of his noviciate. “I am much rejoiced,” said he, “at the fifteen novices whom you have received, because you will now require a greater number of subjects on account of these new missions.”

Whilst our fathers at Rome were rejoicing at the opening of the two new houses, they wrote word that they were also demanded at Ravennes, just as if the foundation were already made. “Our brothers in the states,” said Alphonso, “are well pleased, because they have acquired a new field of action. I am glad that they are to have one at Ravennes; may they do that which God wills; but you will see that Ravennes will not take root. To conclude, I shall find pleasure at seeing the progress of the affair.” That which he predicted came true: all the negotiations as to obtaining Ravennes were fruitless.

Father de Paul wrote to Alphonso that it was through him that all the good which was done had been commenced. “I thank our good God,” he replied to him, “that he has made use of me to commence all the good that has

since been effected through you, and principally by the Pope, whom God has deigned to console in so many ways. I rejoice that you are shortly going to give missions at Foligno and at Gubbio. I hope that God will make use of you to increase His glory, and I will not cease to pray to Him for this end. Thank you for the Ave Maria which you recite every evening for me; apply it specially for a happy death. I feel bound to tell you several very useful things, and I entreat you to suggest them to your companions. Recommend them to preach on what a great means of grace prayer is, it is a subject on which I have written a whole work. God wishes to diffuse grace, but He wishes to be solicited for it; he who does not pray, does not obtain. Constantly recommend devotion to Mary to all who wish to be saved. Arrange so that the sermon on the Blessed Virgin be delivered every Saturday, and that it is never omitted in mission time, to show how all stand in need of recommending themselves to her by reciting the Ave Maria, especially during temptations. These things seem to some people as only fit for devout women, but they may save many souls. Several congregations have introduced the custom of giving a sermon on the Blessed Virgin during missions; never omit it in the exercises which are given to nuns or priests. I embrace you, and pray God to grant that you and your companions may be wholly His."

Father Villani also wrote to the president to

assure him what great joy and satisfaction Alphonso felt at the success of the congregation in the Papal States. "Thank you for the good news you give us; I assure you that we all share in your joy, but especially his Lordship our father, who they have filled with gladness; he praises God for these tidings, and is unceasingly speaking about them; the inclosed letter is all his own dictation."

If age, infirmities, and domestic misfortunes did not deprive his Lordship of life, they at least abridged the number of his days; but his solicitude for his children was not thereby rendered the least less lively or less universal. As his head was no longer strong enough to enable him to dictate his letters, he communicated his sentiments to Father Francis Anthony. "Mgr. our Father," the latter wrote to the President de Paul, in a letter dated 9th of May, "has twice told me to write to your Reverence as from him; he wishes you to know that he feels affection for you all, and wishes you to pray to God for him with your companions. He says that he feels ill, and begs you not to forget the time when you dwelt together. These are the words he ordered me to use in writing to you."

The president informed Alphonso that the congregation had made great progress under his administration, that they prayed for him in common, and that the masses prescribed by the constitutions should be offered up for him at his death; he was greatly comforted by this

last piece of information, and thanked him for it in the tenderest manner. This letter arrived on the 21st of June, 1782, and notwithstanding his sufferings, he sent his answer the same day.

“I thank your Reverence and your companions,” said he, “for your remembrance of me; I assure you I do not either forget you. I thank you and your companions with all my heart, for your intention of applying the masses to me after my death. Write me a few lines when you can, because your letters comfort me. I am also comforted by the noviciate at Scifelli, which contains twenty-two young men. May God render you more and more fervent in His love. I thank Him for having caused your houses to prosper, and permitted that I shall die in humiliation, as it is a sign that He wishes to pardon my sins. I do not cease to recommend you to Jesus Christ, and to pray that He may fill you with his holy love; I also entreat you to ask Jesus and Mary for this love for me, and to pray God to enable me to die full of confidence in His passion. Once more let me beg you to recommend me to Jesus and Mary, and I will not cease to pray to them for you all, that they may fill you with love to them. And now I embrace you and all your companions, and bid you farewell.”

This letter Brother Francis Anthony assured the president, was entirely his Lordship's dictation. As he acknowledged the father-president as his superior, he did not conclude it any more than the others by giving him his bless-

ing, but said, "I pray Jesus Christ to bless all your houses and all your companions," and he signed it with the formula made use of in addressing the superior major, viz., "your very affectionate and very grateful brother, Alphonso Maria of the Most Holy Redeemer."

There is no need of saying how much his heart was afflicted at seeing the other houses deprived of the grace conferred by the Holy See. This was especially manifested when a vomiting of blood came on, which reduced him to the last extremities; during the delirium of the fever, he said, "What! are we not of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer? Do we not acknowledge the rule of Pope Benedict XIV.? If we submit to the rule of the Pope, why are we out of the congregation?" And at other times he said, "We have the rule of the Pope, we have taken the vows and we keep to them; therefore why are we not belonging to the congregation?" On another occasion he said, "Perhaps they doubt that we do observe this rule, and this is why we are now rejected; God wills it to be thus; let us have patience." As his state excited great compassion, he was told, in order to calm him, that we were really Redemptorists; he then became silent and tranquil. It was observed that during these deliriums he never uttered a word indicative of the slightest dissatisfaction against the Pope or any one whatsoever.

During his recovery, several of our fathers, on their return from a mission at Somma, went

to him to get his blessing; Alphonso, who always had this same idea before his mind, said on seeing them, "I cannot make out how it can be said that we do not belong to the congregation of the Redemptorists, since we received the rule of Benedict XIV. and this rule has been always observed by us, and is so still." "There can be no doubt on the subject," responded Father D. Alexander de Meo, "both the Pope and the king designate your Lordship as 'its founder.'" "I do not wish to be spoken of any more in this world," his Lordship replied, "but I wish it to be known that the rule which is observed by us is the very one which we received from the Pope, and from which we have never departed." "Yes, my Lord," the father answered, "it is so; it will always be acknowledged that the congregation exists here, and that the rule which Mgr. Liguori received from the Pope is here observed." On another occasion, when he again received the same answer, he replied with agitation, "What does my name signify? What I care about is that it should be known that we are subject to the Pope. Let us bless God for all that He has done."

However deplorable was his situation, Alphonso always rose above his misfortunes, and never ceased to hope for happier days for the congregation. Once when they tried to persuade him that it would never be re-established again as before, he answered, "I assure you that God has willed and still wills that the con-

gregation shall subsist in the kingdom; I founded it for the kingdom, and it is for that God has given me the vocation."

However much he might be cast down, he unceasingly inspired us with fresh courage by the assurance that we should one day be reunited again, and that the Pope would restore his favours to us. "Do not lose courage," said he, "Lazarus arose on the fourth day: be faithful towards God, who can do all things; let us pray and be resigned."

CHAPTER XXXII.

WHEN the houses of the kingdom were deprived of the favour of the Pope, the bishops shared in our sorrow. They were alarmed at seeing themselves deprived of a congregation of workmen who took such part in their solitudes, and so most of them felt it a duty to represent Alphonso's innocence to the Pope, to Cardinal Zelada, or to Mgr. Caraffa, and to tell them of the sad consequences which would result to their dioceses if Pius VI. had not the clemency to restore his favours to the missionaries of the kingdom as before.

Amongst them all, those who were most conspicuous for their sollicitations to the Holy Father, were the Archbishops of Capua, of Amalfi, of Matera, of Conza, and of Salerno, Mgr. San-

felice, bishop of Nocera, Mgr. Lopez of Nole, Mgr. Amato, of Lacedogna, Mgr. Nicodèma, of St. Angelo, Mgr. Buonaventure, of Musco. I cannot refrain from citing some of these letters, as a proof of their sorrow and Alphonso's innocence.

Mgr. Amato, a prelate who was so full of zeal and so celebrated for his probity and prudence, added, after having previously shown that he spoke with full knowledge of the cause in question, "The fault, most Holy Father, was only committed by two individuals, as is well known. All the others, as I have ascertained, are quite innocent, and especially Mgr. Liguori, who has always deserved much from the Holy See by his words, his writings, and by all his actions. The poor old man is eighty-five years of age; he can no longer act for himself, but was deceived without there being any fault of his own. If any one in the kingdom ought to suffer, it should be the two offenders, and not the whole congregation, and above all not poor Mgr. Liguori, who only has survived so many sorrows through a miracle."

After having thus made an apology for Alphonso and for us, he exposed the great injury which this state of things would inflict on souls. "This kingdom," continued he, "experiences great want of spiritual assistance, and is now destitute of evangelical labourers. It is true that there are some in the capital; but they do not leave Naples, and the missions which they give are not numerous. It may

be safely said then, that all the rest of the kingdom depends on the Redemptorist Fathers. It is only they who toil during eight whole months in giving missions throughout all the dioceses. Some of them go into the Calabria, others into the territory of Labour, into the Abruzzes, the province of Lecce, and throughout all the kingdom. They specially devote themselves to the assistance of a great number of poor abandoned country people living in the little hamlets and the abandoned country of la Pouille. There is not a diocese which does not profit by their labours, and if in mine and in those which surround it, morality and the fear of God are seen to reign, it must all be attributed, Most Holy Father, to the labours of these workmen, and to the indefatigable zeal of Mgr. Liguori. If they are deprived of the benediction of the Holy See, this kingdom will sustain such a serious injury, that it will be left almost destitute of spiritual assistance. The wound however, is not incurable; Mgr. Liguori, with the aid of your Holiness, will be well able to heal this, as he has before done in regard to many others."

Mgr. Sambiasi, the Archbishop of Conza, wrote to Cardinal Zelada, as follows: "I cannot tell you what spiritual benefit the greater number of the inhabitants of my diocese derived from the labours of these apostolical labourers. I may truly say that if I had not had the assistance of these fathers, I should have had no one to whom to confide the great work of the missions,

and of the spiritual exercises, both as regards the seminary, and also all the other parts of my diocese. I have been just informed that they no longer enjoy the protection of the Holy Father. If that be true, and that it be the result of some wicked reports, I humbly venture to entreat your Eminence to be their defender, and I assure you of their constant devotion and respectful attachment to the Holy See."

Mgr. the Archbishop expresses himself in a similar manner in his letter to Mgr. Caraffa: "You may imagine how much I must be interested in this congregation; I have one of their houses in my diocese; I feel a special degree of esteem and affection for them, and I make use of them for the missions and all the other exercises. I have this day heard that the congregation is out of favour with the Holy Father, and that he intends to deprive it of his favours; I can assure you that the subjects of this house lead an exemplary life, and that they profess such great devotion to the Holy See, that they do not deserve to be neglected, and still less to be thought ill of. I earnestly entreat you to take the most efficacious measures to cause the Holy Father to deign to restore his favour to them, if they have lost it, or to continue to bestow it on them, if they still enjoy it."

The worthy and zealous Mgr. Tortora, who is now Bishop of Fondi, and who was then vicar capitular of Bovino, wrote to the Pope as follows: "Most Holy Father, the reasons which lead me to apply to your Holiness, have no other

end in view than the salvation of souls, the good of the Church, and the welfare of this diocese. I look upon these missionaries as faithful labourers in the Lord's vineyard; I may truly say, that they alone preach Jesus crucified; they show us how to sacrifice one's life for the salvation of souls, and if they cease to exist, or if they are deprived of the protection of your Holiness, not only this diocese, but also all the other adjacent ones, and all la Pouille, will be abandoned. They alone labour continually for the good of the clergy and the monasteries. They are engaged in mission work from the month of October until the end of June."

"Most Holy Father, the steps taken by the two consultors are condemned by all the other subjects of the congregation; but they have not the power to remedy them. I am however convinced that they neglect nothing in order to show their great attachment and submission to your will. They are all worthy of mercy, because they are innocent and victims; but much more so Mgr. Liguori, who has been deceived in extreme old age and when suffering under grave infirmities."

The canons of Foggia, who had experienced the happy fruits of our labours in the preceding month, did not fail to address a petition to the Pope: "Most Holy Father," said they, "we humbly represent to your Holiness how useful the fathers of this congregation are to souls; we daily have sensible proofs of the spiritual advantages which this town reaps from the labours of those among these missionaries, who

are established in the neighbourhood of the diocese of Bovino. If their labours are diminished through lack of workmen, or by the privation of the protection of the Holy See, the result will assuredly be of very serious injury to souls, and specially to those of this town who derive so much profit from their exertions."

D. Vincent of Sangro, Prince of San Severo, who had recently appreciated the fruits of our labours, in regard to the vassals belonging to his territories, did not hesitate also to represent to the Holy Father how prejudicial the loss of this congregation would be to the kingdom. After having enumerated the works to which we devote ourselves, he went on as follows: "Your Holiness can see how well this congregation merits your apostolical benediction, by means of which this wound will in time be healed, which was made without any fault of Mgr. Liguori's, or of the greatest part, or I may even say, of any of his sons."

Mgr. the pronuncio, was very slow in acquitting himself of his office, through an excess of prudence; he did not present his report to the cardinals of the Sacred Congregation until the 17th of October, 1782. After having represented the painful position of the congregation, which was in imminent risk of being suppressed, he manifested the deceit of which Alphonso had been the victim, and clearly exposed his consternation and his innocence. He said, that when he received the new regulations, accompanied by an official letter from the grand-almoner, he immediately

withdrew the office of procurator from Father Majone, and transferred it to another father who was at Naples, and that he had also convoked a meeting in order to consult as to the methods of obtaining what they stood in need of from the king.

After having related what had taken place in the assembly, and the sentiments of Mgr. Liguori, he said, "I believe that he acted so that his conduct cannot be censured, as the plaintiffs belonging to the houses of the states have attempted to do; it must therefore be worthy of approbation."

After that, Mgr. the pronuncio examined the four demands made to the Holy Father by the subjects of the states: to convoke a chapter to elect a president, to annul the decisions of the assembly, as well as the elections which had been there made, and to prevent the subjects of the states from passing into the kingdom; he also added, that that would lead to an open separation and an entire withdrawal of authority from Mgr. Liguori, who was venerated in the kingdom and looked upon as rector-major by the minister and the court, and that this could not be done without open contradiction to the Neapolitan government. He finally represented that the preservation of the missionaries was indispensable to the kingdom and to the welfare of its population; and that several bishops and other respectable persons had assured him of the zeal and utility of this congregation. "I think it my duty," concluded he, "to beg and implore the kind interest

of their Eminences the cardinals, in favour of the re-establishment of union and harmony in this congregation, that it may continue to do the good for which it was instituted by Mgr. Liguori, and which has caused it to merit the protection of the sovereign."

For more than a year and a half Alphonso had deplored his disgrace, without daring as it were to raise his eyes to Heaven, nor to address the Holy Father, and this was especially the case after he saw that he was abandoned by so many cardinals who had until then felt such great veneration for him. In this state the poor old man's greatest suffering arose from seeing the work of the missions paralysed by the loss of the favours conferred by the Holy See. Strong in his innocence, and confiding in the clemency of the Pope, he addressed a petition to him in March, 1783, but he couched it in very incomplete terms, and so it was like the prayer of one who knows not how to express his wants :

"Most Holy Father,

"Mgr. Alphonso Maria Liguori prostrates himself at the feet of your Holiness, and humbly entreats you to grant to his missionaries all the graces, faculties, and privileges conceded by the Holy See to the venerable Congregation of the Redemptorists in the Pontifical States".....&c.

The report of Mgr. the pronuncio, and the petitions of so many bishops, could not fail to make an impression on the heart of Pius VI.

The Holy Father, however, did not yet feel it right to acknowledge the congregation in the kingdom as forming an ecclesiastical body; he however restored a sufficient portion of his favours to Alphonso and all his children, to enable them to continue the work of the missions. He therefore granted to Alphonso and to all the present and future members of his congregation all the indulgences and spiritual favours which the Redemptorist missionaries in his States enjoyed during mission time, and in all other exercises of their ministry.

“*Sanctissimus ex speciali gratia,*” wrote Cardinal Zelada on the 4th of April, 1783, “*concedit oratori quoad vixerit et singulis missionariis qui idem exercitium assumpserunt, vel in posterum assumpserint, usque quo quilibet eorum in suscepto exercitio perseveraverit, indulgentias et gratias spirituales tantum, ad instar illarum, quibus ex apostolico Indultu gaudent in missionibus peragendis aliisque ecclesiarum functionibus presbyteri Congregationis Sanctissimi Redemptoris qui existit in statu ecclesiastico.*”

This rescript wounded the very heart of the procurator. Not knowing how else to thwart this favourable decision, he forged a petition under my name, addressed it to the Pope, and presented it to him himself; it contained several questions, and a prayer that the graces conferred should be specified. By this means he hoped to reduce our powers to that of blessing rosaries and medals; but his intrigue failed, and

he was told that the matter did not admit of explanation.

At this time God granted Alphonso the consolation of seeing himself exculpated before the royal council, and justified from all the criminal accusations with which the procurator-advocate had loaded him. On the day which was fixed on for pronouncing the sentence of pardon or condemnation, a group of advocates sat on the side of our adversaries, according to custom, and they seemed to congratulate themselves as to their victory before-hand; but God blessed the decision.

The wise senators of this tribunal separated the public cause from the private one, as the procurator had done. They dwelt upon the royal decree of the 21st of August, 1779, to justify us from the offence of living as a congregation with a rule, constitutions, and superiors. They also entered into the spirit of the law which the Catholic King had issued in our favour, in 1752, and represented to the Sovereign, that by this law the king whilst declaring that he did not recognise the houses of the missionaries as religious communities, had not forbidden them to live under a rule and superiors, as was done not only in seminaries, but even in prisons. "If the Cioranists," said they, "live in union, they do not do it by virtue of a tacit consent, but by the express permission of his Catholic Majesty." They then contradicted the calumny in regard to our independance of bishops, both by the attestations of these prelates, and by the

very rule itself which the procurator-advocate had produced. They did not enter into the question of the doctrine and conduct of the missionaries, as the king had approved them, in another decree of the 22nd of October, 1778. They passed over the complaint on the subject of our asking alms in silence, as it was rendered null by the last decree of his Majesty. They concluded by saying that we could not be accused of being a burthen to the state, of not being lawfully established, nor of professing erroneous doctrines. From this they went on to the private suit.

The end the baron had in view in accusing us of such serious crimes, was only, as we have said, that he might be able to recover his vineyard: as soon as we were justified before the king, the cause fell of itself. "When this cause was spoken of formerly," Alphonso wrote to his sons, on the 1st of January, 1783, "we were accused of contraventions of rule, which made us all afraid, but now that we enjoy the king's favour, it will not be easy to overthrow us, because that takes away all the force of the grievances on which the baron dwelt so strongly. "I rejoice," said he in another letter, "because it seems to me that the Blessed Virgin will assuredly save us from this tempest." And so it was. After the senators had repeatedly heard the respective advocates, as well as the king's procurator, they all with one accord represented to his Majesty that they did not see any right nor reason for the contested

property being claimed by Sarnelli, since the proprietorship of the vineyard had been given to the Archbishop of Salerno, by virtue of a royal decision, and by the will of the former proprietor, the late Don Andrew his brother, and the fruits appropriated to the maintenance of the fathers at Ciorani, with a certain stipend for each of them, the surplus being given in alms to the poor; and that besides the opposition which the Baron Sarnelli must meet with in the will of the donor, his deceased brother, which had been implicitly approved of by the sovereign power and by a special decree of his Catholic Majesty, he had also his own will against him, as declared in favour of the fathers of Ciorani by the act of agreement which took place between him and the Archbishop of Salerno, on the 16th of September, 1755.

Such was the report which the royal council addressed to the king on the 4th of February, 1784, by which they acquitted us of all the charges against us, and in consequence of which his Majesty decreed, through the ministry of the Marquis della Sambuca, on the 10th of April, that there was no ground for admitting the pretensions of the Baron Sarnelli; and that the declaration of his Catholic Majesty on the 19th of December, 1752, must be executed.

This favour on the part of the king, which coincided so well with that of the Pope, filled Alphonso's heart with unspeakable joy, and raised up the dejected courage of his desolate children. He desired that special thanksgivings should be

offered up to God and to the Blessed Virgin in all the houses for what he called a great miracle, and a miracle in truth it was, but it was the fruit of the prayers and penances of this great servant of God, and of his unlimited confidence in the protection of Mary.

The tribunals at Naples were occupied about these affairs for no less than nineteen years, and I am bound to say, that, after God and the Blessed Virgin, the congregation had no other stay than the clemency of the king and the impartial justice of the Marquis of Marco. The latter especially broke the arms of our adversaries in their own hands. He knew the passionate temper of the lord of Iliceto, he represented our innocence to the king, and justified us on all occasions.

When matters were thus tranquillised, divers things happened which were calculated to divide the houses of the kingdom from those of Sicily, and these latter again from those of the states. The father-procurator only thought of the houses in the states, and he neglected nothing in order to attain his end. A chapter was convoked on the 15th of October, 1783, in the house of Scifelli, with the consent of the Pope, and the Father-President de Paul was re-elected rector-major. Our fathers in Sicily declared against us, and Father D. Peter Blasucci was nominated rector-major by this party. We thus lost all hope of reconciliation. Our fathers, on the other hand, fearing that they would lose their principal sup-

port by the death of Mgr. Liguori, also held a chapter in the same month at the house of Ciorani, with the permission of the king, and they elected Father D. Andrew Villani as the coadjutor and future successor of Alphonso.

I will not enter into further particulars with regard to these affairs. I leave them to any one who may wish to retrace their history. I will only add that in the midst of all these difficulties, Alphonso never lost the hope of seeing the congregation re-established under one head; he often repeated on different occasions, "Act uprightly towards God, and God will not abandon the congregation; matters will be settled after my death." One day, amongst others, he said to Father Cardone, "I should like to have seen things settled before my death; I have asked for it, and continue to ask for it, of the Blessed Virgin; but it is not the will of God. Things will be arranged, but that will be after my death."

And what he had predicted came to pass four years after his death, and even through the very orders of Pius VI. in consort with Ferdinand IV., our august sovereign. The latter decreed an edict of the 29th of October, 1790, that we should observe the rule of Benedict XIV., and consented that our houses in his kingdom should be reunited to those of the states. Pius VI. on his side (I went to Rome for this purpose) restored all his favours to us on the 5th of August, 1791, and wished that after the reunion one single rector-major should

be elected by common consent in a general chapter, and that the whole congregation should for the future contain but one fold under one shepherd. We cannot doubt that such a happy termination as this was obtained by the powerful intercession of our blessed father, and we confidently trust that he will continue to protect us more and more, for our welfare and the good of the Church.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

If it be true that the mouth speaks out of the abundance of the heart, Alphonso's words in the midst of his greatest tribulations are an undeniable proof of his perfect union to the Divine will.

Father de Paul was touched with compassion in thinking of the sorrow which Alphonso must feel in seeing the congregation divided and placed under another head, and did not fail to represent to him, when he was elected president, that he felt constrained to displease him thus through the mandate of the Pope. When Alphonso heard him speak of displeasure in regard to a thing which was ordered by the Pope, whose most trifling wishes he revered, he replied to Father de Paul as follows: "By God's grace I have never lost my judgment, I rejoice that your Reverence is appointed superior; all is

right, and you must accept everything, because it is the Pope's will." He was so indifferent as to his deposition, that when Father Emmanuel Calderera, of the Oratory, came to visit him to console him for the division which had taken place, and testified his great displeasure in regard to the election of the president, Alphonso heard him in silence, and made no other answer than this, "I care little about my dignity of rector-major being taken from me; it is enough for me that they have not taken Jesus, my Saviour, and my Mother Mary away from me."

When some persons called the subjects of the states ungrateful in his presence, Alphonso did all he could to exculpate them. A religious asked him if a schism had really been made, he replied, "Yes, there has been some misunderstanding between us, because several have wished to separate themselves from us. We pray to God for them, and they also pray for us, so that I hope that both we and they are agreeable to God, and that we shall all become saints."

One day when our fathers were quite inconsolable, Alphonso said to them in a tone of entire resignation, "The Pope has willed it to be thus, and it is thus God wills it also; they will do good who are in the states, and you will do it here; this is the way things go on in the world." And on another occasion, he said, "They go as God wills. God guides them, and he who says otherwise, says

what is wrong; we ought to say, God has willed it thus."

The local rector accused Father Majone of having been the author of all these evils, at which Alphonso was dissatisfied. "Leave it to God to judge him," he said to the others; "for us, we should say, God has willed it thus. God has willed it, that we may also have the houses of Foligno and of Gubbio. If this disagreement had not taken place, we should not have had these houses. God has permitted a cloud to cover the houses in the kingdom, in order to extend and establish the congregation in the states. May God be ever glorified! The will of God sets all wills and all things to rights."

The unhappiness of Father Majone and of his companions were also spoken of; Alphonso replied, "May God make them both happy, and cause them to become saints; they are worse spoken of by the Pope than we are. He has been told that they are the authors of all the mischief: I am sad at their unhappiness, for the storm has destroyed them; may God make saints of them. If they had acted as God willed, they would not have brought down all these sorrows on themselves, nor caused us so much pain. But God has willed it to be thus, praised be His name for it for ever."

Throughout all these vicissitudes, he was always most desirous that the bond of charity should not be broken between the subjects of the kingdom and those of the states, though causes of resentment were not wanting; there

were some who were dissatisfied that the fathers of the states enjoyed the favours of the Pope, and who never spoke of these houses but with contempt: "I strive to instil a spirit of charity into all my brothers," he wrote to Father de Paul; "your Reverence must do the same thing on your side, for God loves those who love charity." He was deeply wounded at the least word which militated against the union of hearts; he interrupted the conversation, and took the part of those who were attacked. "What would you have them to do?" he one day said, "the Pope has obliged them to stay, and they remain in these houses and labour there by his will;" and at other times, he said, "All have not wished to leave us; how many there are who grieve over the division! It is the will of God, for them as well as for us."

As the father-procurator and his party persisted in disunion, Alphonso said to Father Villani, "I have confidence, and I predict that even those who oppose the reunion will one day ask to be readmitted amongst us; but the will of God must be done." In fact, when things were pacified there were a great many who detested their former conduct, and addressed repeated petitions to us to be allowed to return into the kingdom; and two of them in particular, who had been the most obstinate in maintaining the separation, protested that they wished to return, and were content to take the lowest place. In a word, they met with so many imitators, that the president, on seeing that his houses were

becoming depopulated, asked the Pope if he could in conscience permit these transmigrations, and he received a negative answer. "Sanc-titas, Sua," said Cardinal Zelada in his rescript, "declaravit non licere transitum ad domos regni Neapolis, in quibus Congregatio S.S. Redempt. legitime non subsistit." This last verdict was as the dregs of that bitter chalice which Alphonso had to drain. "If the Pope thinks so," said he, "I also wish it. The holy will of God turns all that is bitter into sweetness; the will of the Pope is the will of God."

He loved the president, as if he had been elected by him himself, and congratulated him on all his good success. "I hear," he wrote to Father de Paul, "of the favours the Pope has conferred on you at Villettri and in other places, and I pray God to continue to be favourable to you. I participate in your joy; I advise you to profit by the favours of the Pope to procure the glory of God in all places. I have heard of the missions of Sabina; establish them there and wherever else you can. All your success consoles me, because I hope that it will only serve to extend the glory of God. When you make any further progress, let me know, that I may thank God for it, as I will always do when good befalls you. Pray to God for me and for our brothers, in order that all may be employed in serving Jesus Christ. Pray for my good end, I shall not live much longer; and I pray that God will make you continually increase in His love, and that He will send you

fresh foundations as well as subjects. A great many come to us here at Naples, and in Sicily: let all be for the glory of God. I beseech Jesus Christ to bless you all and all your houses. Send me some accounts of your progress, that I may thank God for it. May Jesus and Mary bless you all."

In another letter to the same Father de Paul, he said, "None of you all who belong to the states must forget to recommend me at mass in regard to my death, which is at hand. I have loved you very much each and all. God has permitted this division. His will be ever praised! If you could sometimes write and tell me of your success, you would give me great pleasure. May Jesus and Mary bless you all. Pray for me."

Father Don Gaspard Cajone informed Alphonso of the happy success of a house at Villettri, and of the satisfaction which Cardinal Albani felt at it; he was extremely consoled at hearing of the conversions which were made there, and felt so much joy at them, that he had the letter read over and over to him. "My Jesus," he exclaimed in a transport of joy, "mayest Thou be glorified by all." He also rejoiced at the mission given at Frosinone, and at the demand for five new missions which the president received from the Abbé of Monte Cassino.

Two distinguished subjects of Germany, John Clement Holbaur and Francis Hubel, who came from Vienna, belonged to our Congregation at Rome as novices; what made them settle to join us, was the edifying lives of our mission-

aries, and above all, because our founder was Mgr. Liguori, well known in Germany for his holiness and for his learning. These good Germans burned with a holy zeal, and ardently wished to see one of our houses established at Vienna. The ardour of their zeal was so great that they could perceive no difficulties, and looked upon it as if already founded. This German house was laughed at amongst us: but when Alphonso heard of the pious project of these Germans he thought differently, and it caused him extreme joy: "God," said he "will not fail to spread His glory into this country by their means. The suppression of the Jesuits has caused this population to be nearly abandoned. The missions however ought not to be like ours; instructions are more useful there than sermons, as the people are living amidst Lutherans and Calvinists. At the commencement they should be made to say the Credo, and then the faithful should be prepared to abandon sin; these good priests will do good, but they will require greater lights than they have. I would write to them, but God does not will that I should have to do with it. My Jesus! humble me more and more, and reap therefrom Thy glory." The foundation took place, as we shall relate bye-and-bye, not at Vienna, but at Varsovia.

In proportion as the houses in the states became more flourishing, those in the kingdom seemed to decay, and whilst Alphonso was consoled at seeing the prosperity of the first, he could not see the others languishing and in lack

of subjects without sorrow. Father Villani represented to him that the house at Iliceto was no more capable of maintaining the students, and that the father-rector at Ciorani being in poverty and distress, was unwilling to give any assistance. "Now," at last said Alphonso sighing, "all our houses are falling into ruin: Ah! Lord, Thy will be done, let the consequences be what they may."

Alphonso's humiliation and that of his houses was not enough to satisfy the hatred of the procurator. Alphonso's kind way of acting towards him was not enough to soften his heart; in order to abase him still more, he asked the Holy Father to specify in a brief the number and the names of the true houses of the Redemptorists. He succeeded, and in a special brief, "*Datum Romæ apud Sanctum Petrum sub annulo pisciatoris, die decima septima Decembris 1784,*" the Pope plainly declared that the only houses of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer were those of Benevento and of St. Angelo, of Scifelli and of Frosinone, of Spello and of Gubbio, and also the hospital which was opened at Rome in the Church of St. Julian. At the solicitations of the said procurator, his Holiness also declared that the house of St. Julian should be regarded as the general and principal house of the whole congregation. "*Nos igitur ejusdem procuratoris votis hac in parte, quantum cum Domino possumus, favorabiliter annuere domum Sancti Juliani de urbe in caput Congregationis constituimus ac declaramus.*"

The procurator had something still further in view in this petition. He was pained at seeing the number of graces and privileges which the Pope had restored to Alphonso. He was always ruminating on how to disturb this peaceful state of things. He determined on taking the cardinal whose office it was to draw up the brief, by surprise, and as he presented to him the decrees which had been previously issued against us to him, he caused him to insert all that they contained to our disadvantage in this last one, that is to say, that the houses in the states were confirmed in possession of the favours of the Holy See, and those of the kingdom were deprived of them as refractory. "*Nec esse membra ejusdem Congregationis, et uti ac frui omnibus privilegiis, gratiis et indultis ab hac sancta sede eidem Congregationi concessis.*"

The procurator intended that this pontifical declaration should cause fresh sorrow to the houses in the kingdom; he therefore immediately wrote and informed a great number of persons of it, and represented us to them as having become objects of the abomination and anathemas of the Holy See; but on reflection he got afraid of being compromised, and gave up this piece of deceit. Nevertheless he tried to make people believe that Alphonso was imbecile, and even that he was out of his mind. Mgr. Buffo, now a cardinal, went to St. Julian's one day, and asked the procurator how Alphonso was, being ignorant of his sentiments. "Poor old man," he answered, "he is in a pitiable state;

his mind is so impaired that he is no longer a man, but a child; and what is worse, he falls into extravagances. When he is spoken to about the Pope and the affairs of the Church, he replies with emphasis, that the Pope is the Pope, and the Church is the Church; in a word, he has so lost his senses, that he has become quite a child." Who could have believed it? he went so far as to try to deprive him of the glory of founder. A young Theatine, who was Alphonso's grand-nephew, had made a panegyric with great success, and a prelate, who had heard him, went to St. Julian's, and began to praise the young religious, and to congratulate our fathers on his being related to their founder. "When was Mgr. Liguori ever our founder?" replied the procurator with emphasis; "Mgr. Faliuja is our founder, and not him." The prelate could scarcely control his indignation at hearing this contempt. "It would be no such slight glory for you, however," he said to the procurator, "to have a chevalier of as much holiness and learning as Mgr. Liguori for your founder." In order to show that Mgr. Faliuja was our founder, and not Alphonso, he tried to introduce the cause of that servant of God into the Congregation of Rites. He wrote to Castellamare on the subject, but he did not receive any favourable documents.

He was full of vanity on account of the two houses opened at Gubbio and at Spello, and adopted a new tone of speaking in consequence. "Mgr. Liguori founded the congregation, it is

true," said he, "but he has himself destroyed it; I am the one who deserves to be called the founder, for if the congregation still exists, it is to me, and not to Mgr. Liguori, that all obligation is due; I have maintained it, and I maintain it still." Such were some of the opinions of Alphonso's persecutor, and he did not change them whilst the servant of God lived. What do I say? his fury followed him even beyond the tomb: at the very time when God glorified Alphonso's sanctity by miracles, the implacable persecutor wanted to prevent his canonization; but his odious conduct excited the indignation of the whole court of Rome against him. Pius VI. perceived, but too late, the hypocrisy of this impostor, who went so far as to seek to divide the cardinals and disquiet the Pope; however, he was at length unmasked and seen through; he was forbidden to approach the Vatican any more, or to enter the congregation of the bishops and regulars. This unhappy man's change of fortune did not produce a change of conduct, and he always continued to act as an enemy and persecutor of virtue. Alphonso had predicted on seeing the prosperity of this impious man, that he would one day receive a great chastisement from the hands of God. This unhappy being fell ill in the year 1801, and death overtook him suddenly, on the very day when we celebrate the solemn ceremonies in honour of our Most Holy Redeemer in our congregation. He would not have any advice, for in his madness he fancied he was

quite well, and when the Viaticum was proposed to him, he answered that it was not necessary; there was scarcely time to administer Extreme Unction to him; the agonies of death soon came upon him, and he died striking his hand violently against the bed, a prey to all the torments of despair, and without uttering a single word which could give reason for hope as to his eternal salvation.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

SOME time before the fatal catastrophe of 1780, Alphonso was reduced to a state of extreme weakness, and seemed to have arrived at his last moments; but after the fatal blow which separated him from the greatest part of his children, we may say that his life was nothing but a prolonged death. Until this time he had never ceased to preach to the people every Saturday on the virtues of Blessed Mary. Crowds hastened to hear him, and to gather, as they said, the last precious pearls which fell from the lips of the pious bishop. The same thing took place when he gave the novenas, preparatory to the feast of the Blessed Virgin. He recalled the passion of Jesus Christ to the people every year on the evening of Holy Thursday in a most touching manner. In order to put a stop to this admirable zeal, which was shortening his days, the express orders of the

doctors and those of his director, Father Villani, were necessary.

Charity perfects itself in the midst of sufferings. Alphonso had always been a model of perfection in his zeal for the salvation of souls; but his solicitude appeared to redouble itself in proportion to the increase of his afflictions. When the companies of our missionaries set out for the missions in the month of October, he was as much interested in all concerning them as it was possible to be; he wished to know the places to which they went, and what bishops had asked for them; and encouraged them to have the glory of God and the salvation of souls at heart. When they came back again, he received them with open arms, and was delighted at hearing them give the recital of any extraordinary conversions. He one day asked Father Pappacena where our fathers were; he replied, that wherever they were most prodigious conversions were related; Alphonso was quite consoled at hearing this, and burst into tears. "And I!" he exclaimed, "what do I? I am useless, nay, I am even a burthen to the congregation." "The others labour," replied the father, "and as you are their founder, you take part in their labours." "Founder, founder," replied the old man with vivacity, "what am I but a poor miserable creature! I can only do evil; it is God who has founded the congregation. God alone is its Founder, and I have only been a worthless instrument in His hands."

He took a similar interest in the welfare of the Church. When any one came to see him from Naples or elsewhere, he forgot all his pains to inquire into the state of religious affairs in all Catholic countries, and as to what sort of footing subsisted between sovereigns and the Pope; if he heard any bad news on this subject, he said, "Let us beseech God to restore harmony and concord between the court of Rome and the Catholic powers. Poor Pope!" exclaimed he, with emotion, "how he is afflicted and grieved by his own children!"

He was inconsolable when he heard that morals were corrupt and religion despised. One day when he was deploring the disorders of the capital, he said, "Unhappy Naples, the Lord whom thou hast offended will not forget to punish thee. God will not bear for ever, and if His mercy is disdained, it is changed into malediction." He often offered himself up in sacrifice to stay the anger of the Lord. He felt such keen sorrow when the misfortunes of the day were spoken of, that Father Villani was obliged to forbid our fathers to speak to him of such, especially of the disagreements between the Pope and the states.

As he had no longer strength to avenge the cause of religion by his writings, he took pleasure in reading those authors who undertook its defence, such as Father Valsecchi, and Father Bennetti. Once when I went to see him after supper, I found him with Valsecchi's book in his hands. He shut it on my arrival, and said,

“We must thank God for having caused us to be born in the faith, and in the pale of the Church. The Gospel has been spread, but a thousand heresies have opposed it; for us, we are not only in Europe, but in that part of Europe which is the centre of the faith. How miserable are those who are without Jesus Christ! Jesus Christ is our only hope, and He is not known; *Dolores nostros ipse portavit*. At the day of judgment, Ah! how few there will be who will hear him say, ‘Come on my right hand.’” He read the works of the Abbé Nonnotte and others against the errors of Voltaire, and of Jean Jacques Rousseau. He also thanked God when he heard that the ministers of the Gospel were aided by bishops and sovereigns. He did not cease to offer up thanksgivings to God on hearing that the Jesuits were established in Russia and Prussia, and to magnify the hospitality of the august Catherine. “People assert that they are schismatics,” said he, “but they talk nonsense. I know that the Pope recognises them as members of the Church, and protects them. Let us pray to God for these holy religious, because their institute is a work which is calculated to promote the good of souls and that of the Church also. Schismatics! what does that mean? Pope Ganganelli was God’s instrument to humble them, and Pius VI. is also God’s instrument to raise them up. It is God who kills and brings to life again; let us pray to Him, and He will not fail to bless them.” He was deeply grieved when he heard of any

who were disposed to become infidels, and his distress at hearing of the triumph of the zealous Jansenists, as he called them, was still greater. "Poor blood of Jesus Christ, despised and trodden underfoot!" he used to say, "and what is worse, despised by those who say they are called on to restore the doctrines and fervour of the primitive Christians. It was by a kiss that Judas betrayed Jesus Christ; and it is also by a kiss that they betray Jesus Christ and souls." At other times he said, "It is a hidden poison, which causes death before it is discovered."

He had established the custom of the frequentation of the sacraments at Amalfi, from the commencement of his residence at Scala, and now he heard that a religious of a strict order, who was imbued with the spirit of Anthony Arnould, instead of animating the faithful to approach holy communion, was in the habit of keeping them at a distance from it, and that during the space of several years, on the specious pretext of want of sufficient advancement in perfection. This news made Alphonso shed tears of sorrow: "That which has taken place at Bourg-Fontaine," said he, "has not happened in a congress of Jansenists, but in an assembly of demons. Anthony Arnould could not have chosen a better method of rendering this great sacrament inaccessible, and of exaggerating the dispositions which St. Paul requires in order to receive it worthily. I know," he went on to say, "that the angels are not worthy, but Jesus Christ has deigned to grant it to man to solace

him under his miseries. All that we have of good comes to us from this sacrament, and if this assistance be wanting to us, all will be destroyed." He was doubly afflicted on hearing that this religious taught his doctrine publicly, and that he was supported by others, and had won several priests and confessors to his side. As he was unable to do anything to remedy this himself, he did all in his power to get our fathers to disabuse those who had been thus deceived, and especially the confessors; he even wished that Mgr. Puoti, Archbishop of Amalfi, should be warned on the subject in his name.

He was always filled with indignation against those confessors who repulse sinners. "Jesus Christ," said he, "always received them with kindness; do not then repel them by too protracted delays, as is the fashion now-a-days; that is not the way to aid them, but to destroy them; when the sinner acknowledges the evil of his state, and detests it, he must not be abandoned to his weakness; he must be assisted, and the greatest assistance is that of the sacraments. They supply that which we cannot do of ourselves. To defer absolution for whole months, is the doctrine of the Jansenists; they have it not at heart to inspire the faithful with love for the sacraments, but to render them useless to them. Many sinners certainly do present themselves who are not well disposed; but the way to inspire them with sentiments of repentance is to set before them the grievousness of sin, and the insult it is to God, the loss of Para-

dise, and hell opened beneath their feet ; therein is manifested the true charity of a confessor. There are some who wish to place sinners on the funeral pile, when they should hold out a helping hand to assist them."

Although Alphonso's zeal was hindered by his numerous infirmities, yet he did not remain entirely idle : when the spiritual exercises were given to the people at our house, he was in the habit of being carried to the church on the last day, that he might encourage the faithful to persevere in the grace of God : on one occasion amongst others, he determined to give his accustomed counsels, although he had been bled in the morning. He expatiated on the love we should feel towards Jesus and Mary, and on their love for us ; he commenced his exordium thus : "The reward of love is love," and he preached quite a sermon which lasted for a whole hour. At the end, when he wished to give the benediction to the people with the large crucifix, the effort he made reopened the wound, and the blood flowed in abundance whilst he gave the blessing. While returning home again, he did not perceive the accident, nor was it observed by those who were supporting him, so that all the way he went along to his own room was covered with blood. The faithful hastened to collect it with religious respect, striving to steep their handkerchiefs in it. There were some free-thinkers there, and two in particular, who were the sons of a notorious infidel, repented of their evil thoughts, and imitated the

eager crowd, and carried home even the very earth which was reddened by the blood of our saint.

He was also in the habit of sending for the seculars or ecclesiastics who might be in retreat in the monastery, and going through some spiritual reading with them on the triumphs of the martyrs, the passion of Jesus Christ, or the glories of Mary. He profited by these opportunities to inspire them with piety and to confirm them in goodness, and he specially excited them to devotion towards the Blessed Sacrament, and advised them to visit it daily; he also tried to lead them to love the most holy Virgin Mary: "If all those who come here," said he, "only carry away a devotion to the Madonna when they leave us, that will suffice to save them." He then entered into a holy rapture; "My Queen!" he often exclaimed, "I wish to remain at your feet, because on you I have founded all my hopes."

He also yielded sometimes to the wishes of the nuns, who were always most eager to hear him. He went to the Convent of Purity for the last time in the month of June, 1781. He spoke to them of the detachment we should have in regard to earthly things, of the love we owe to Jesus Christ, and the filial trust we ought to have in the most holy Virgin. His sermon lasted for nearly two hours; but it seemed to these pious nuns as if but for a moment. They gave him a nosegay of flowers at the end, which he instantly refused, but when

he was told that he could offer it to the Blessed Virgin, he consented to accept it.

During the indulgences of the Porziuncula in the convent of the Poor Clares, he went there in order to gain them. The religious asked him to give them an exhortation, and he spoke to them at length and with great fervour on love towards the Blessed Sacrament and the Blessed Virgin Mary. He especially extolled the religious vocation, and the strict observance of rule.

He was always anxious to maintain fervour amongst his sons; he therefore urged them to pray much, and to prepare for it before commencing: "This is enjoined by the Holy Spirit," he said: "Ante orationem præpara animam tuam." He one day sent for the brother whose office it was to ring for the exercises, and enjoined him to sound the bell about half a quarter of an hour before the meditation, in order that each one might repair to the choir to recollect themselves. He was not satisfied when he was told of the books which were read out at meals, and wished that the Lives of the Saints should be substituted, "for scientific reading," said he, "only occupies the mind, without exciting the will."

He wished the prayers in common to be said with the greatest devotion. One morning when he returned from taking his accustomed walk, he entered the choir just when the particular examination was being made; as the hebdomadary recited the litanies too quickly, he said

with severity, "What a way of addressing the Blessed Virgin! that is not to honour her, but to treat her with contempt."

One day when he assisted at the mass of a young father who celebrated with rapidity on account of his scruples, he was quite scandalised, as he did not know this priest's state of mind. He therefore went to the choir, where the community were still assembled for the particular examination, and spoke very forcibly on the necessity of observing the rubrics and of giving due time for the proper celebration of mass. "Do not let us complain any more about persecutions," said he; "what makes me tremble is to see the custom of saying hurried masses introduced into the congregation; what causes me pain, is the contempt which is shown to Jesus Christ. Poor Jesus Christ!" At these words he burst into tears.

The students were always dear to him. He was one day told during dinner, that the studies had been resumed at Iliceto: he was filled with joy at the tidings, and not knowing how to contain himself, he several times exclaimed, "Gloria Patri," &c. He asked what author was followed there, and was satisfied on hearing that it was Father de Brescia; he inquired who was the lecturer, and on hearing that it was Father Constanzo, he wrote to him, saying, "You have comforted me by having accepted the office of instructing the young men. I do not know how those who have refused to do so can be at peace before God, as they were well aware that it was His will.

I bless you and thank you, and pray God to give you much consolation for this act of obedience." "I hope," he wrote to the same father, "that the prefect causes the students to observe their ancient constitution; but as there is some reason to doubt whether he observes it or not, I beg you to let him know that it is my desire that it should be observed fully and punctually."

Our young clerks went from Iliceto to Nocera to receive his blessing. It gave him pleasure to see them around him, and they felt as if they could never be tired of listening to him. One day during dinner he gave them this bit of advice: "St. Francis of Sales said to Mother de Chantal, 'You wish then to give yourself up wholly to God without reserve, to renounce the world entirely, and to please God alone.' I say the same thing to you, and I hope that you are all resolved to become saints. Yes! be filled with love to Jesus Christ, now whilst you are young. In time of temptation call on Jesus and Mary, who always go together. Always meditate on the passion of Jesus Christ. Seek God alone. O what a lovely thing it is to see a young religious united to Jesus Christ!" After some little time, he went on to say, "It is certain that God wishes you to be saints. I recommend two things to you: 1st, obedience, were it even to the cook; obedience is that which preserves us; he who wants obedience is wanting as regards his duty to God, and God will drive him out of the congregation. 2nd, I also recommend poverty to you, for it is that which unites

us to God. I regard faults against obedience and poverty as capital offences."

His infirm state did not prevent his holding the ordinary conference with us every Saturday. The last he gave was in the November of 1780. He enlarged upon the efficacy of prayer, on its necessity and its advantages, and he did so with so much fervour and emotion, that every one was filled with astonishment.

The corporal wants of his children did not call forth less of his sollicitude. He inquired from time to time as to how the community was treated with regard to food; on hearing that they made some few complaints about it, he was quite disturbed, and sent for Father Villani. "I do not know," said he, "who is rector nor who is minister; I hear that they go to the refectory fasting, and come out again as hungry as when they entered it. It is but fair that the community as well as strangers should receive proper nourishment; as for me, I know nothing of what happens, but you are present in the refectory, and ought to know. Tell the rector and the minister to be careful not to give any subject cause for complaint, if they do not want to make me have recourse to penances."

Whilst he had the holiness of others so much at heart, his special labour was to sanctify himself. When he became incapable of celebrating mass, he did not therefore dispense himself from assisting at the Divine mysteries. Every morning after he had heard mass in his oratory, received holy communion, and made his

thanksgiving, he went down to the church, with the assistance of his servant and of Brother Francis Anthony, and was placed at the side of the high altar: he staid there without moving from his chair for several hours, and heard as many as five or six masses. During the course of the day, he was again conducted to the church, that he might pray for several hours before the Blessed Sacrament. Brother Francis Anthony declared that his Lordship remained before the sacred altars for at least from five to six hours every day. It is impossible to describe what pain he felt at not being able to celebrate mass.

A young Chinese of the college of the Holy Family once came to visit him, when Alphonso asked him how Father Fatigati was; he replied that he was well, and added, without much thought, that the Pope had granted him leave to say the mass of the Blessed Virgin. "How happy he is," his Lordship exclaimed, "to be able to celebrate this beautiful mass, which I can no longer say!" He then turned to us and said, "Pray for this college, the object of which is the conversion of the unbelieving and the spread of the Gospel." Father D. Francis Garzilli celebrated mass in his oratory every day, although he too was aged, for he was ninety years old, but he was always agile and at ease in his movements. One day Alphonso said to him, with holy envy, "Jesus Christ does not will that I should celebrate any longer. God's will be done now and ever!"

His love for the Blessed Virgin increased with

his years ; he seemed as if he conversed with her face to face ; and he never omitted any act of homage in her honour. There is a miraculous statue of the Blessed Virgin at Paganì, which is called the Madonna of the Fowls. It is carried in procession during the octave of Easter and on the last Sunday of July, and it is the custom to offer fowls to her on that occasion, and to deposit them at the feet of the statue. During the procession the clergy never failed to enter our church, in order to gratify the tender devotion of Alphonso. As long as his Lordship was able to go there, he never omitted to make an offering of two fowls to the Blessed Virgin on each occasion. He was sometimes at dinner when the statue arrived, but he immediately got up and hastened to perform his act of devotion. He was jealously anxious to turn every moment of time to profit, and he therefore never lost one minute ; he was constantly engaged in meditation and in reading, and he was especially occupied by the Life of his advocate St. Theresa, and by the actions of the first heroes of the reform of this saint, and when he came to any passage which he thought particularly worthy of attention, he communicated it to those who went to sit with him after supper.

That which was most admirable in Mgr. Liguori, was his constancy in performing the exercises of the community and his own private devotions. He was most punctual at the morning and evening examen, attentive as regards

the spiritual reading and meditation after dinner, besides all the other rules which he could observe. He even performed the Way of the Cross every day. This perseverance was a distinctive characteristic of his Lordship. "I do not want great things," he often said to us; "let them be but little, provided they be but constant."

His greatest trial under his infirmities was the anxiety they caused to others. If he asked any one to do him some service, he made his request in the humblest terms. As he fancied that it was an inconvenience to the community for him to take his meals in his own room, he determined to take them with the others in the refectory. This design amused us greatly; he would not however yield to the reasons that were alleged against his so doing; he could only be got to yield by being told that his slow way of eating would be inconvenient to the community.

His Lordship went out in the carriage up to the year 1784, as the doctors, and still more the community, were most anxious to prolong his life. On the 19th of September of this year, he was then eighty-eight years old, an internal rupture took place, which got worse by the shaking of the carriage, and suddenly placed him in the most perplexing predicament. He was obliged to be taken out of the carriage, and to have recourse to the charity of a poor woman, who received him into her house; he was placed on a bed, and remained there as

if he were quite dead. On hearing these tidings all our fathers ran off to see him; some were in slippers, and others with bare feet, followed by a crowd of people. The surgeons succeeded in replacing the intestines; but he was brought back to the house in a most alarming state. The doctors were convinced that he required some exercise, they therefore ordered that he should go out in a sedan chair. As soon as he heard of this, his Lordship found a thousand pretexts for dispensing with it; but as the rector told him that it was the doctor's order, he consented. The day after the first essay, he opposed a second trial so much that the rector and the fathers united together in endeavouring to persuade him to use it again in vain. "What!" he said to them with tears, "must I be carried on the shoulders of these unhappy men! The thought of this made the going out yesterday more painful than salutary." Our fathers replied that these sort of people were used to such labours, and that they gained their bread by it; but he testified so much repugnance on the subject, that the doctors, in order not to distress him, made him get a wheel-chair to go up and down the corridors.

When he was freed from the necessity of going out in the carriage, he sent the horses to Naples to be sold, and on the 24th of September he wrote as follows to Father Hilary: "As for the horses I send you, I do not want to have any scruples about them: mention therefore

that one of them suffers in the jaws, and cannot eat either hay or oats; the other, that is to say, the oldest of the two, suffers from giddiness, and throws itself on the ground from time to time, and its ears must be pulled in order to raise it again. Explain all this, as I wish to be free from scruples." His horses therefore were not, as we may see, over expensive ones. One of them was sold for four ducats and the other for twenty-one carlins. Such was the end of Mgr. Liguori's pompous and superb equipage!

God deprived Alphonso of his greatest consolation during this same year, that is to say, he was no longer able to go on saying mass. The celebration of the holy mysteries had been most painful to him, especially as he would observe the rubrics minutely, and make the genuflections to the ground. As Father Villani perceived that he became daily more and more infirm, and that he had several times been nearly unable to go on, he told him that it was the will of God that he should abstain from celebrating the holy sacrifice any more. As soon as he heard that it was the will of God and that of his director, Alphonso bowed his head in submission, and on Friday the 25th of November, 1784, he celebrated mass for the last time.

CHAPTER XXXV.

It might seem that Alphonso, exhausted as he was by so many combats, was no longer in a state to bear arms any longer; he had already abandoned all the interests of the congregation into the hands of Providence, that he might only think of his soul; but fresh torments were reserved for him, and God, who wished to prove this gold in the crucible, gave him up, as He had done holy Job, to all the malice of the enemy of our salvation.

Twenty-two years of the most painful infirmities, and twenty-four of the most furious persecutions, had borne witness to the heroism of the saintly old man, when the most excruciating trial of all came which brought it forth to the utmost. I allude to distress of mind, to scruples, terrors, and perplexities, the martyrdom of privileged souls.

Thick gloom overspread his mind, and a torrent of iniquities came to alarm his heart. He saw nothing but sin and offences against God; he who had directed thousands of souls, who had comforted them in their distresses, enlightened them in their doubts, and reassured them in their fears, was himself the sport of temptations and of the illusions of the devil, to such an extent that he thereby lost all his

peace and serenity. To the fear of being at enmity with God, was soon added a distrust as to his salvation. "Who knows," said he weeping, "who knows if I am in a state of grace, and if I shall be saved!" During these violent anxieties, he turned his eyes to the crucifix, and exclaimed, "Ah, Jesus, do not let me be damned! O Lord, do not send me to hell, because in hell I cannot love Thee." One day when he was asked how he was, he replied, "I am under the scourge of the justice of God." Then turning towards the crucifix, he exclaimed, "Ah, Lord, punish me as I deserve; but do not cast me out from before Thy face."

His only support during all this anguish, was the voice of his confessor; but the tempter was continually putting into his mind all sorts of doubts and reasons to the contrary. "My head will not obey," said he. It was beautiful then to see him triumph over himself, and submit to the decisions of his director. He was often heard to exclaim, "My Jesus, enable me to overcome myself, and to submit. I do not wish to give way to myself, and I do not want to cavil."

Scruples were not the only causes of his sufferings. He had to endure everything; he had to endure the rebellion of his senses, and continual thoughts of vanity, presumption, and incredulity. "There is not one of our holy mysteries," Father Mazzini said to me, "against which he had not temptations. At one time the devil would attack him on one point, at another

on something else; but that which most excited my compassion was, to see him attacked on several points at the same time." "I have been terrified at his temptations," said the same Father Mazzini to me, "and delighted at his courage in surmounting them." When he was attacked against the faith, he repeated with fervour, "I believe, O Lord, and I wish to live and die as a child of Thy Holy Church." His confidence in Jesus and Mary caused him to invoke their names unceasingly, when he was tempted by distrust. His temptations against purity were especially overpowering to him. "I am eighty-eight years of age," he one day said to Father Criscuoli in tears; "and the fire of my youth is not yet extinct." Father Mazzini told me that his temptations on this point were horrible, and he often recommended him to our prayers. He was sometimes heard to exclaim during the night, "My Jesus, grant that I may die rather than offend Thee! O Mary, if you do not assist me, I may sin more than even Judas!" Concupiscence became at times so enkindled within him, that he was no longer able to distinguish the feeling from consent, and he then used to break forth into loud groans and strike his feet against the ground. During this time a priest went one day to see him. "My Lord," said he to Alphonso, "you seem to me to be melancholy, you who used always to be so cheerful." "Alas!" replied Alphonso, "I endure the torments of hell."

As he was often unable to resist so many as-

saults, and was afraid of sending for Fathers Villani and Mazzini too often, he was often to be seen dragging himself to their rooms in search of some relief, and descending from the upper corridor to the lower one, to our great regret; and when he could not find either of these two confessors, like a hart thirsting for some spring whereat to refresh itself, he went to the first father he happened to meet with. He got to such a low opinion of himself, that he forgot his episcopal character and his theological knowledge. Very often in the middle of the night, when he was unable to sleep through his temptations, he awoke the servant or the brother who assisted him, that he might aid him in dissipating his terrors, and sometimes they were so very violent, that he went to speak to Father Villani. His only relief was in prayer; but he often found no support even in that. "I go to God," said he one day to Father Villani, "and at every word I say, He seems to reject me. A fresh storm assailed me this morning. I said, 'My Jesus, I love Thee,' and I heard a voice which answered, 'That is not true.'" He was sometimes in a state of such mental darkness, that he believed that Paradise was closed against him. "Alas, then, my Jesus," said he, while gazing on the crucifix, "shall I not have the happiness of loving Thee eternally?" Then turning to the Blessed Virgin, he said, "My good Mother, why must I not love you in eternity?" His chief reason for thinking himself lost was because he could not

remember having ever done any one good work. Father D. Joseph Henry overheard him once conversing with Father Villani, and repeating these words in a voice of terror: "I have trodden underfoot all my obligations; I no longer say mass, I no longer say office, I do not do any good works; my senses are rebellious, and I eat like a wolf; I cannot tell how God can bear with me any more."

All kind of nourishment was a torment to him, and he never ate anything without regret. "In the circumstances in which I am," said he to Father Villani, "I ought to be vigilant in mortifying my senses and my appetite." Many times the fear of sinning made him suddenly put his knife and fork down and stop eating. At other times he could not make up his mind to take anything. One day when he was at the height of desolation, Father Villani hastened to see him and spoke to him in terms of consolation. "I hear a voice which says to me," replied Alphonso, "'Thou hast abandoned thy God, and thy God has abandoned thee.'" Father Villani then magnified the goodness of God, and in order to excite confidence within him, he cited the following passage from Ezechiel to him, "*Nolo mortem impii sed ut convertatur et vivat.*" That succeeded in taking away his fears. "O my God!" he exclaimed, "how many times have I said those words to sinners for their encouragement, and see how I have forgotten them myself!" Many times a single text of scripture opportunely

quoted, dispersed all his fears. His inquietude was especially great just as he was going to communicate. His love for Jesus Christ made him long to be united to Him, and the fear of being in an unfit state to do so, made him draw back. Sometimes even the celebrant himself was obliged to interrupt his mass to tranquillise him. Father Garzilli, who generally said it for him, was several times obliged to wait until his Lordship recovered his composure. One morning after he had said *Ecce Agnus Dei*, and when he was at the word *Corpus*, &c. Alphonso was still hesitating. In order to make him decide, Father Garzilli said to him, "My Lord, do not keep Jesus Christ any longer waiting in the ante-chamber." He several times could not have communicated if Father Villani had not just arrived in time to make him do so. We twice had the pain of hearing him lament not having communicated. One day when he was greatly disturbed, he remained irresolute until it was twelve o'clock; but when the cloud was at length dispersed, he exclaimed weeping, "Give me Jesus Christ." But as all had said mass, it was necessary to carry him to the church in an arm-chair, to enable him to have the happiness of communicating. Another day when his extreme agitation had prevented his communicating, Father Villani at last succeeded in tranquillising him, when his fear of sinning changed into such an ardent desire of receiving his God, that in order to console him it was necessary to take the Blessed Sacrament to him

to his room. He was so inflamed with the desire to communicate, that moments appeared as ages to him. "When will you come," he kept exclaiming, "when will you come, my dear Jesus?" Although rejected by God, as he said, he was only therefore the more eager to converse with Him in the Blessed Sacrament. "I wish to satiate my love," said he, "and I hope to love my God eternally, although I have deserved hell through my sins." When he was the most assailed by his ordinary temptations, he redoubled his entreaties to be carried to the church. "He testified a great desire to be before the Blessed Sacrament at such times," said Brother Francis Anthony, and he told me that the devil left him in peace when there. Whilst in this state of desolation, he did not leave off welcoming people who came to see him from without, and consoling them in their troubles. One of his cousins, who was a religious at Naples, was tormented by scruples and temptations at this same time, and he wrote to ask his advice, and Alphonso said in reply, "Your Reverence tells me that there are times when you believe that you are lost; let us console one another and be of good courage, for I am under a similar trial. Although I am so near death, temptations do not leave me, and like yourself, my only resource is to gaze on the crucifix. Let us then embrace the cross, and remember always to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ dying. In this way we have ground to hope that He will not send us to hell, where

we should be separated from Him, and unable to love Him any more, which would make the hell of our hell. Let us therefore continually say to him, 'Lord, cause me to love Thee, and then send me where Thou wilt. I deserve all sorts of trials through my sins; chastise me as Thou wilt, but do not deprive me of the happiness of loving Thee; deprive me of all, but do not deprive me of Thyself.' I hope you will recommend me to Jesus Christ, especially after holy communion. I will do the same for your Reverence; when I am nearer death I will let you know, that you may give me special aid in my passage to eternity. Although you are amid all these disquietudes, do not forget always to recommend poor sinners to Jesus Christ at the end of your meditations."

Alphonso continued for upwards of a year in this deplorable state, during which time, according to the testimony of Father Villani, his blind obedience and self-abandonment in the hands of God never once quitted him. He had such faith in obedience, that as he could not always have Father Villani in person to speak to when he wanted advice, he used often to send his servant or the brother to tell him of the object of his uneasiness; but they did not always feel it necessary to go to him. Alphonso perceived this, and complained of it, with tears in his eyes, that he was not attended to. What consoled him the most was to abandon himself to the goodness of God. One day when he was tempted as severely as possible,

Father Criscuoli was touched with compassion and said to him, "My Lord, look at the crucifix, and say with me, *In te Domine, speravi.*" Alphonso had no sooner done so than he regained his peace of mind, and he went on repeating, "*Non confundar in æternum.*" He himself said to Father Villani, "My only resource amid my distresses is to cast myself into the hands of God; He alone can give me peace; I do trust that Jesus Christ, through a pure effect of His mercy, will not send me to hell."

It is true that Alphonso recovered his serenity at certain intervals; but these moments were very fleeting, and resembled those meteor lights which gleam for an instant amid the darkness of night, and are then immediately extinguished. However, this interior desolation never caused him to omit his devotional exercises; his whole time was consecrated to prayer and spiritual reading. He took particular pleasure in the *Life of St. Gregory Nazianzen* and in that of *St. Francis of Sales*, as they had both gone through the same trials.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

As the devil had not succeeded in shaking Alphonso's faith and virtue by all the temptations of which we have spoken, he tried to overthrow him by the only weapons still untried by him; he strove, therefore, to cause him to fall

into his power by presenting himself before him under the form of strange phantoms.

Father Corrado told me that one day when Alphonso had violent temptations against faith, he sent for him with the greatest haste, and said to him in extreme alarm, "An enemy has been here who has thrown me into a state of great distress; he says that I have no faith, and that I shall be damned." "Do you believe," said the Father, "what God has revealed to Holy Church, and what she teaches?" "Certainly," his Lordship answered, "and I am ready to give my life for the faith." "Do you hope," the father went on to say, "for eternal life through the merits of Jesus Christ!" "I hope for it," replied Alphonso in an animated tone of voice. "I hope for all through the blood of Jesus Christ, who died for me." He became calm after this; but soon afterwards his trouble returned, his brow contracted, and he asked who he was. When Father Corrado had told him his name, he recovered serenity, and said, "I have not attached any faith to all that he wished to make me believe, and I have not really doubted. I believe all that Holy Church teaches, and I hope to be saved through the merits of Jesus Christ and those of the Most Holy Virgin Mary." Father Corrado repeated all this to Father Mazzini, who told him, without manifesting any surprise, that his Lordship had for some time been tormented by similar apparitions, sometimes under one form, and sometimes under another.

Alphonso's humility was what displeased the devil the most; for this reason he did all he could to cause him to feel complacency in regard to his good works. One day he appeared to him as a Neapolitan missionary. He began to converse with him on his numerous works, and told him that every one was always praising his writings, and full of admiration at the good they everywhere effected in all directions. At these words Alphonso humbled and abased himself: "I have done what I could," said he, "but all the good is the result of the assistance of God." "That is true," replied the pretended missionary; "but it will always be said that they are your works, and that you are the author of all this good." Alphonso upon this felt some temptation to gratify self-love, and humbled himself still more; he recurred to God by prayer and made the sign of the cross, which caused the phantom instantly to vanish.

The devil went to him on another day under the form of a priest, and spoke to him about the spread of his books: "After all your labour in composing so many works, what have you gained? All that you have said and written is useless as regards yourself; you will be damned just the same, for there is now no hope of your salvation. Something besides books and missions is necessary for salvation." His Lordship humbled himself interiorly and replied, "I have done and could do nothing good of myself; I have no merit before God, save the merits of Jesus Christ and the Most Holy Virgin Mary."

And upon this the phantom immediately vanished.

One day when he was tormented by the thorn of the flesh, the devil came before him under the appearance of one of our fathers: Alphonso was deceived, and humbly confided his temptation to him. "O that is nothing," replied the impure spirit; "those are natural feelings, to which one need not attend." Alphonso was seized with horror, and invoked Jesus and Mary with so much agitation that he nearly fell from his chair, and put the tempter to flight.

Another time the devil appeared to him under the likeness of a gentleman who had been in Alphonso's confidence, and for whom he had great esteem. While speaking to him of different things he endeavoured to lead him to despair. His Lordship, who felt no reason to distrust him, assented to what he said, acknowledged his faults, but nevertheless said that he trusted in the merits of Jesus Christ. "But what can you hope for," said the supposed gentleman, "or what have I to hope for myself, if we are among the number of those unhappy beings who are destined for hell?" "Even in hell I will love Jesus Christ," replied Alphonso: "I do not put my trust in my works, but in the merits and passion of Jesus Christ." This put the devil to confusion; he was obliged to manifest who he was and to disappear.

This generous soldier of Jesus Christ did not fail to receive the consolations of the Lord from time to time even in the midst of all these alarms.

As our Blessed Saviour received the visit of the angels in the desert after He had triumphed over the devil, so Alphonso had the joy of finding celestial favours succeed the assaults of hell. His ecstasies and ravishments were, in fact, more frequent than ever. As I was at Nocera in the October of 1784, I had several times the opportunity of observing his Lordship before the Blessed Sacrament, and I can testify that he sometimes fell into such raptures of love that he made the most animated gestures, in spite of the weakness of his body. At other times our fathers have perceived a ray of light which issued from his forehead, and shone upon the book he held in his hands.

Father Volpicelli was once passing along the corridor before his Lordship's room, when he heard him utter a loud cry. He went in to know what was the matter, and saw him in an ecstasy, with his arms extended and his eyes fixed on the crucifix, and instead of the ordinary paleness of his face, it then appeared inflamed as that of a seraphim.

Alphonso had a supernatural instinct, which plainly told him of the presence of Jesus Christ in his heart after holy communion. Father Garzilli, who was ninety years old, as we have already said, had communicated his Lordship one day as usual, but as soon as Alphonso commenced his thanksgiving, he said to Brother Francis Anthony, "Father Garzilli has not consecrated this morning." The brother was astonished at this, and hastened to inquire about it from Alexis

the servant who had served the mass, and he found that Father Garzilla had inadvertently passed from the Memento of the living to that of the dead.

On the evening of Holy Wednesday, his Lordship was in bed and alone, when the servant who was outside his room heard him exclaim ten times over in a sort of transport of joy, "To-morrow is the feast, to-morrow is the feast of the blood of Jesus Christ." On finding that he did not stop, he called Brother Francis Anthony. "Listen to what his Lordship says," he said to him. The brother went in, and found Alphonso continually repeating in his joy, "To-morrow is the feast of the blood of Jesus Christ." "That is true," the brother said to him, "to-morrow is Holy Thursday, when commemoration is made of the body and blood of Jesus Christ." His Lordship did not say another word, finding that he had been overheard.

It must here be mentioned, that his Lordship had for some time been unable to distinguish any of the months of the year, and much less the weeks and days. One day he seemed quite joyous, and sending for the students after dinner, he asked them for an explanation of a stanza of a hymn by St. John of the Cross. No one was able to understand the mystery, when his Lordship explained it to them with so much unction and such knowledge, that all the fathers and clerics who were present were filled with admiration at it.

Another day when Alphonso was sitting in

silence on his chair, Brother Joseph, who was in a corner, observed that his Lordship in an ecstasy darted forwards towards the altar as if he wanted to take or to embrace something, and that he did so several times. Brother Francis Anthony then came in, and perceived that his eyes were turned towards the figure of the Blessed Virgin, which was on the altar; he immediately took it up and presented it to him. His Lordship seized it with holy impetuosity, he kissed it with a thousand acts of love. After some time he exclaimed in a sort of rapture, "I cannot, I cannot separate myself from the love of Jesus Christ."

Whilst he was being taken round the corridors, he was unceasingly reproaching himself, fancying that he did not satisfy his obligations. Father Volpicelli felt compassion for the state he was in, and went up to him once to tell him that his age and infirmities dispensed him from all, and that he could supply every want by one act of love. "By an act of love!" his Lordship repeated with emotion. "Yes," replied the father, "you can do all by one act of love." "Teach me then how to make this act of love," his Lordship said. As Alphonso was rather deaf, the father went close to him, and said in a loud voice, "My God! I love Thee with all my heart." And Alphonso immediately repeated, "My God! I love Thee," but with such a sudden motion of his head, that it struck against the father's chin, which was inclined towards him.

Don John Mauro, one of the royal architects, went to Nocera to examine our church, and also went to pay his respects to his Lordship. Alphonso hastened to ask him if the theatres were frequented at Naples, and if his nephew Don Joseph attended them. "My Lord, they are a good deal in fashion at present," replied Don Mauro. Alphonso was silent for some minutes, and then he added with still more interest, "Are the chapels much frequented?" "Yes," answered Don Mauro; "and you cannot imagine what good results from this; a crowd of people of all classes go to them now, and we have saints even among the coachmen." At these words his Lordship, who was lying in bed, jumped up suddenly and exclaimed, "Saintly coachmen at Naples! Gloria Patri!" &c., and he repeated this three times. The joy which these tidings gave him prevented him from sleeping the following night, and calling sometimes for the servant, sometimes for the lay-brother, he kept constantly repeating, "Saintly coachmen at Naples! What do you think of that? You heard what Don Mauro said: Gloria Patri! There are saintly coachmen at Naples."

In spite of the pains which his Lordship took to spend his last days in obscurity, his charity sometimes caused him to abandon his seclusion, and God, who never leaves a light under a bushel, was pleased to manifest at such times the holiness of His servant.

During an eruption of Mount Vesuvius, the mountain of Somma, which is close to Pagani,

threatened some fresh disaster, to the great injury of the Tower. We saw it emitting torrents of fire from our house. Our fathers were alarmed at this sight, and hastened to inform Alphonso of it; the poor old man immediately dragged himself to the window and appeared filled with sorrow. They begged him to bless the mountain, but he resisted; however, on our reiterated entreaties he raised his hands, and said, "I bless thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." He had scarcely done speaking ere the danger ceased; the fire went in another direction, and the volcano emitted its eruptions and its stones into the gorge of a valley near Ottojano.

Theresa Desiderio of Nocera had a child of about eight years of age, who had suffered from divers very serious maladies for several years. She took it to his Lordship to ask him to bless it. Don Thomas Desiderio, who was related to the child, met it near the door, and took the child himself to his Lordship, and told him how much it suffered. His Lordship blessed it, and told him daily to recite three Aves in honour of Mary. The child was cured that very instant; he continued to have good health, and afterwards became a priest. This was attested to me by D. D. Gaetan and Thomas Desiderio.

A gentleman of the diocese of Nole, had a son who was deaf. He one day took him to his Lordship to beg him to bless him; Alphonso did so, and the child returned home entirely cured. The gentleman was filled with gratitude,

and sometime afterwards he returned to Nocera with his son to thank his Lordship and to receive his blessing again.

Alphonso had a very special tenderness for little children, on account of the innocence depicted in them. When he used to go out in the carriage, mothers used to press forward on the road to meet him, and to present their sick children to him, praying him to bless them. Alphonso's great charity caused him to stop the carriage, and while the servant held the little children, he laid his hands on them and said some prayers, after which he restored them to their mothers safe and sound, and said to them, "Recommend them to Mary." When these drives ceased they used to bring the little children to us; the servant then took them to his Lordship, who imposed his hands on them as before, which healed them instantly. Alexis the servant, and Brother Francis Anthony, declare that he effected thousands of such cures.

He often prophesied during his later years; and amongst other things, he one day predicted the death of our Father Don Alexander Meo. "Our congregation will sustain a great loss soon," he said to our fathers, and about this time our Father Alexander was seized with apoplexy in the pulpit, whilst preaching at Nole, and he died in the church itself.

A young Neapolitan had been sent to Nocera for the recovery of his health by Counsellor Celano. He went to see his Lordship one day, and begged him to recommend him to God,

that he might obtain a perfect cure; but his Lordship only said these few words to him, "Pray to the Blessed Virgin to assist you to die well." The poor young man understood the meaning of these words but too well; he returned to Naples, and in a few days he had ceased to exist.

Alphonso also foretold the entrance of the French army into Naples, and the misfortunes which ensued. One day, as our Fathers Bartholomew Corrado and D. John Maria of St. Augustine, who were present, have related to me, his Lordship suddenly aroused himself from a profound meditation and exclaimed, "A great calamity will befall Naples in the year '99, and I thank God for sparing me from witnessing it." Now, it is well known what a sad year this was for Italy.

A gentleman came to Nocera one day, accompanied by one of his sisters, who said she had been possessed for some time. She would have liked his Lordship to come down to bless her and to recommend her to God. When he was asked to go and comfort her, he several times cast his eyes on the crucifix and the figure of Mary; and then with a sigh he said to the father who had come to speak to him about her, "Possession! possession! Tell her to make a good confession." The young lady approached the sacrament of penance, and the evil spirit which tormented her remained in the confessional.

One day he said to us, as if he were awa-

king out of a deep sleep, "There is a wicked intercourse being carried on near this," and he repeated this several times with signs of the greatest uneasiness; but no one understood what he meant. He immediately sent for the priest and complained to him of what was taking place in his parish with impunity. The priest was confounded. "That is true," said he, "it is a hidden disorder which I have not yet been able to do away with." No one knew anything about it in all the neighbourhood.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

As Alphonso's body became visibly weaker day by day, his soul only became thereby stronger and his fervour more admirable. The more closely he approached the end of his course, the more did he redouble his efforts to become pleasing to God, to be enriched with merits, and to embellish his eternal crown. He was always submissive to the will of God, suffered all his ailments without ever murmuring, and the crosses which were inseparable from the state he was in, never caused him to commit the slightest act of impatience.

One day when he asked Father Villani some question, he was not able to catch his answer: "What can I do," said he, "if God has also visited me with deafness? Blessed be His name

for ever!" One evening when he could not read a passage of scripture, he said in a cheerful tone, "When one once gets old, one loses one's sight and one's hearing: if this be the will of God, our best remedy is patience. Once when some iced water was given to him to drink, he exclaimed, "How good Thou art, my God! how much Thou hast done for us!"

His humility seemed to increase as he approached his end. It seemed as if his sole desire were that of concealing and abasing himself. Some sick persons presented themselves before him one day to beg him to heal them. "If I were a Saint," he said to them, "and if I knew how to work miracles, I should cure myself, who am so crippled and worthless."

During his last years he sometimes used to go to the door of the convent to get a little air; several persons used to take advantage of this opportunity to ask his blessing: this alarmed his humility, and he consulted Fathers Villani and Mazzini to know if he ought to give it. They replied that as it is a bishop's office to bless, it would not be proper for him to refuse. One day a number of young children came and ranged themselves before him. "Look at these young sparrows around an old owl," said Alphonso cheerfully. Canon D. Gabriel Genga, the superior of the Propaganda at Naples, went to see Alphonso, at which he was quite delighted, but when the canon asked for his blessing, he said, "It is you who ought to bless me, for I am your subject, and you

are my superior." The contest was quite a serious one; the canon made urgent solicitations and his Lordship also; at length the canon yielded, but only on one condition, which was that he would bless Alphonso as superior, and that Alphonso should bless him as bishop.

A spirit of obedience naturally springs from such humility. Although a superior and a bishop, he always depended on the local rector as regarded all his actions. When tormented by thirst and in need of a little water, if the rector were absent, he sent the servant or the lay-brother to ask the permission of the father-minister. He always had his drink blessed during his illnesses, and he was in the habit of saying *Benedicite* to all the fathers who came to see him.

He did not like even to move, I may say, without the permission of the rector, or of him who presided in the house. Father Mazzini when he was rector, had exhorted him not to undertake vocal prayers, but without commanding him not to do so. After this, Alphonso once felt disposed to recite some prayers for the souls in purgatory. It was on the 31st of July, 1785; "Go," said he to Alexis the servant, "and tell Don John to bless as many Pater Nosters as I want to apply to the souls in purgatory; but tell him that I want to recite a great many, and ask him to bless them all." He did not begin to pray until after he had received the answer.

Alphonso, who always preferred obedience to

sacrifice, even sought out for opportunities of submitting to the will of others, and even when he was badly served he still returned thanks with humility. In fact, Brother Francis Anthony and the servant Alexis really made him do all they wished.

His respect for the commandments of the Church was the same to the last. One Friday, it was the 14th of October, 1785, a little hashed meat was served up to him with some vegetables, and then a little fish. His Lordship began to reflect whilst eating, and asked what day it was; and he was told that it was a Friday, and that the feast of St. Theresa was celebrated that day. "It is a Friday," his Lordship replied, "and I have eaten meat and fish." Father Corsano told him that he had only eaten fish. "I assure you," his Lordship answered, "that I have eaten both meat and fish." The fact was, that he was right, and the father was mistaken. His Lordship continued to be uneasy through the fear of having transgressed the precept of the Church, until Father Mazzini assured him on his conscience that he had not sinned.

As he had taken holy poverty as his spouse, anything like property made him tremble. One day when going round the house in his wheelchair, he was taken into the library, where he saw a harpsichord, and asked Father Pappacena what it was. "It is your harpsichord," replied the father. "It is the one which your brother gave to you." At these words, Alphonso replied in great alarm, "Your harpsichord! I

have nothing of my own ; it was not given to me, but to the community." In consideration of his episcopal character, the rector of the house had allotted a silver fork for his use ; but Alphonso only used it with regret. As he did not want to make a profession of sanctity, he employed some little address in order to get rid of it, and tried to prove that the fork was not sharp enough. "I do not like this fork," said he, "give me a steel one, such as the community have ; they are sharp and good." He complained of it so often that it was at last felt necessary to give him one. Alphonso was quite pleased at this, and made use of it for some days ; but as Father Villani did not think it suitable for a bishop, and especially before strangers, he forbade him to go on with it. His Lordship did not say a word in remonstrance, but it was perceptible how painful it was to him to make use of a silver fork.

If the food was not quite plain, his Lordship became uneasy, and even refused to eat. He would have no other fish than sardines at Nocera as at Arienzo, because they are of little value. "I am poor," said he, "and I ought to eat as the poor do." Two mullets were served up to him one day, but he would not even taste them. "What is the good of getting these mullets," said he, quite agitatedly, "buy sardines ; they are just as good." He became tranquil however on being told that they were a present from D. Lucius Tortora ; but he only eat them to please that gentleman.

One day when a rare fruit was served up to him, which he had heard was sold at a very high price in Naples, he took it in his hand and looked at it, but nothing the servant could do would persuade him to eat it.

He was so scrupulous on this point, that the servant and the lay-brother did not know what device to have recourse to in order to deceive him. One day, it was the 23rd of October, 1786, his Lordship eat nothing at all; as it had been observed that he had had no relish for any kind of nourishment for some time, a mullet was prepared for him; when he saw it he asked what it was. The servant was afraid of the consequences of telling him, so he replied, "It is some fish." His Lordship did not venture to touch it in such an uncertainty. "Tell him it is a mullet," said one of our fathers, "and then he will eat it." It was just the contrary; at the very name of mullet Alphonso exclaimed excitedly, "Take away this dish—take it away; it is not fit for the poor." The servant bethought him that he would cut it up into pieces and put vinegar with it, and then serve it up to him as another dish; but Alphonso discovered it and sent it away. He was then given some blanc-mange. "Here is some semilino," was said to him, "taste it; it is a dish which the poor use." His Lordship tasted it, but finding what it really was, he also sent that away, and as it was Wednesday he would not eat any fruit either, and so he remained fasting.

Another time, as it was observed that he had

scarcely eaten anything, a little bit of Spanish bread was presented to him ; his Lordship looked at it, but would not take it ; and as the servant urged him to eat it Alphonso replied excitedly, " I never eat it even in the world, and do you wish me to eat it in a monastery?"

Alphonso was so far from ever making any complaints, that he forgot his own sufferings to sympathise in the pains of those who waited on him. As he fancied it was a trouble to the brother and servant who had to draw him about in his wheel-chair, he never entered it without regret. He wanted to dispense with this relief, but the orders of the doctors and of Father Villani prevented his so doing.

He also thought that the noise of the wheels of his chair might incommode the others during the time of silence and study, and this was a fresh source of disquiet to him. In order not to hinder the observance of the rule, he made so many entreaties, that they consented to have the wheels of the chair covered with leather.

He was so particular in all that concerned modesty, that he would not even allow his nails to be cut, and it often required the express orders of the doctors and of his director to make him consent to have his wounds dressed.

This sense of delicacy made him watchful over others also, and gave him a holy horror of all sorts of rough play. One day when he saw a father playing with a stranger at the door, he reproved him for it with severity: " Laugh if you will," said he, " but I cannot put up with romping."

He was so jealously anxious about the preservation of the angelic virtue of purity, that the mere shadow of danger alarmed him. On one day seeing a little child, who was the son of the joiner of the house, coming out of one of the fathers' rooms, he was greatly troubled, and repeatedly exclaimed in a loud voice, "Children in the rooms of the fathers! I cannot allow it." In order to quiet him, Father Villani himself went to him to do away with his scruples.

Together with the love of poverty, Alphonso always cherished that of mortification, which is inseparable from it. One day he had unthinkingly manifested a wish to have some little cakes, and the brother had at once procured them for him, but nothing would make him eat them when they were brought to him. They were again put before him on the following day, but Alphonso exclaimed, as he had done the evening before, "No, no," these delicacies are not befitting the poor." Another time, Brother Francis Anthony cooked three fishes for him, but only put two before him, and left the bones in the other. After he had eaten them, his Lordship being still hungry, was just going to cut the third. "Leave that," said the brother, "for it is full of bones." His Lordship made no answer. Upon this, Father Henry, who was present, made the lay-brother a sign to prepare it for him, but his Lordship felt as if he had been guilty of a want of mortification, and refused to eat it, as if it had been a sin.

The doctors ordered raisins to be put in his soup; as Alphonso liked them, he carefully put them aside when he found them; he even forbade them to be served up to him again, but Father Villani commanded him to take them.

On Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, he did all he could in order to abstain from meat, although he had a dispensation to eat it from the doctors. One day, some livers of fowls were served up to him; as he fancied it to be Wednesday, he wanted to send them away, pretending he had no relish for them. "Meat does not suit my stomach." The brother did all he could to persuade him to take them; but Alphonso said to him, "It is Wednesday to-day, and I keep it, because I wear the scapular." "You are mistaken," said the brother, "it is Tuesday, and not Wednesday." He began to eat them, and his stomach felt no further repugnance.

He also made it a rule, and indeed he perhaps had made a vow, not to eat fruit when it first came in season, and he never touched it even when a nonagenarian. Some cherries just ripe were one day put before him; but as it was on a Saturday, he had a double reason for abstaining from them; he examined them, and put them down again, saying, "I will not eat them, they are not ripe." And when efforts were made to get him to do so, he repeated, "I will not, they might disagree with me."

Grapes were not yet fully in season, when one day when he had eaten little or nothing,

some early grapes and some figs were offered to him. "Take these grapes," said the servant to him, "they are excellent; the Abbé Tortora sent them to you." His Lordship eat the figs, but no entreaties could prevail on him to take the grapes. He got out of doing so by saying he really could eat no more.

All dishes were insipid to him if they were not seasoned by the salt of mortification. His pocket was always filled with bitter herbs, which were dried, and often reduced to powder, and it was with these aromatics that he seasoned all his food; he even put the fruit he took in salt in order to mortify his palate. For some years he had been in the habit of taking two small glasses of wine every night before going to bed in order to obtain some rest; but latterly he did without it, and in order to conceal his mortification, he said, "A little water is better than all the cordials in the world."

He had such an avidity for mortification, that he was constantly complaining to his director and others, and saying that he led an easy life, and did no penance. "It is not thus the saints lived," he often said with sorrow.

As he could not crucify his flesh by instruments of penance as he would have liked to do, he found an expedient which he could always practise. There was one thing which was noticed in regard to his Lordship which appeared incredible; it was the motionless position in which he remained in his chair from morning till night. The servant on one day seeing him placed in an

uncomfortable manner, said to him, "Move a little, my Lord, for you are in an awkward position." But Alphonso replied, "What is the use of my moving, I am always crooked?"

His apparent insensibility caused him to appear more like a block of marble, than a living being; and he practised this heroic act of penance during the twenty years which his illness lasted. The grand-vicar Rubini witnessed it at Arienzo, and I who never left him afterwards still feel wonder and admiration when I remember it.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

CHARITY, that noble bond which unites all virtues together, was also in Alphonso both the foundation and the summit of his perfection, and in all his actions he only had union with God in view. "By the mercy of Jesus Christ," said he one day to Father Villani, "I do not feel attached to anything." His transports of love towards God were so frequent, especially in his last years, that it seemed as if he formed but one single act of love from morning till night.

Notwithstanding all the weakness produced by his maladies, he still always performed even the smallest practices of religion: he never took the least nourishment without blessing it and reciting an Ave to Mary. When he heard the clock strike he was always faithful in doing homage to the Blessed Virgin by an Ave Maria.

His respect for the holy sacrifice always prevented his omitting to cast himself, or rather to throw himself, on his knees at the consecration, until Father Villani forbade him to do it. After he had communicated he lost all control over himself; he entered into a sweet ecstasy, and often repeated in an audible tone, "My Love, my God! O my mother, love Him for me!" From the time he retired to Nocera until he reached his eighty-eighth year, his great delight was to remain all day before the Blessed Sacrament. In October, 1784, on the last day of the novena of St. Theresa, which he had followed with the people, he entered into a long ecstasy, and continually repeated, "Eternal Love, I love Thee." As Father Villani saw with regret that these transports of love attracted general attention, he tried to persuade his Lordship that his health no longer permitted him to go to the church. His Lordship obeyed; but this privation was the greatest he had to endure. When the time when he had been in the habit of being taken there arrived, he testified the most incredible ardour to go there; he dragged himself to the staircase, and tried to descend it, and not being able to do so went away again quite in affliction. One day when he was alone, and had succeeded, though with much difficulty, in nearly reaching the staircase, the brother hastened thither, and Alphonso immediately begged him to conduct him to the church. "You can make your visit here," said the brother. "But Jesus Christ is not here," answered his Lordship weeping. Bro-

ther Francis Anthony then tried to change his purpose by saying, "Let us go to the chapel where there is Jesus crucified." But Alphonso replied, "The Blessed Sacrament is not in the chapel." Another day when he persisted in wishing to go to the church, he was told that he would have to descend upwards of fifty steps, and that he was too weak to do so. "Not so," his Lordship replied; and then as he would not yield the point, he made the attempt to go thither leaning on the brother and the servant, and he did not give it up until he was nearly ready to fall through exhaustion. When he made his visit in his own room, it was with solemnity and lighted candles on the altar; his heart then supplied him with sentiments of adoration, love, and confidence, which he expressed in a loud voice for the benefit of all who were present.

One day he was taken down into the court to breathe the air. When there he heard the church bell, and asked what it was for; on being told that there was benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, he eagerly asked to be taken there. The brother replied, that the church was too hot for him. "Jesus Christ," answered his Lordship, "does not seek for coolness." And he at the same time prepared to get up to go there, but he was told that Father Villani would not like it.

When the servant wheeled him up and down the corridors, his Lordship only thought about Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. "Let us go to the church for a little," said he; "let us

visit Jesus Christ." "How can you wish to go there?" said the servant. "You cannot do it." "Who told you that?" quickly replied Alphonso; "do you know that it is months since I went to church to visit Jesus Christ?" He sometimes got so agitated on this subject, that Father Mazzini was obliged to be sent for to calm him.

Even in his sleep he only dreamt about the Blessed Sacrament and the Most Holy Virgin Mary, and made the most affecting aspirations. The cleric D. Pascal Volpicelli once entered his room whilst he slept, and found him dreaming and saying, "How lovely art thou, O Mary! How beautiful thou art, O Mary! how beautiful art Thou, my Jesus!" Another time he heard him repeat, "I wish to please God, even if the whole world were to be overthrown; I ever wish to please my God."

His affection for Jesus crucified was no less ardent; His image was always before his eyes, and his acts of love never ceased. He loved it, and looked at it with tenderness; his meditation never had any other object, he himself asserted, than the Passion of Jesus Christ. He would have liked to give his blood for a God who had shed His blood for him. He performed the Way of the Cross daily in a large corridor up to the age of eighty-eight, when he was forbidden to continue it, and after that he never omitted to perform it in spirit in his room before a large crucifix.

His love towards the Most Holy Virgin Mary

became more ardent than ever in his latter years. He never passed by an opportunity of rendering homage to her. As he was deaf, he wished to be told when the Angelus bell rung, and as this generally happened during his dinner, his Lordship immediately stopped; after having prayed he remained some time longer absorbed in the contemplation of the grand mystery. If it were on a Saturday evening or Sunday, and he always required to be informed of this beforehand, he took care to recite it standing; and when it was tried to persuade him to remain seated, he answered, "One does not gain the indulgences if one does not stand." The same thing took place in the evening when the bell rung for the *De profundis* for the dead. He continued to say this until the eighty-ninth year of his age, when Father Villani, in consideration of the great difficulty he had in making these acts, ordered that he should no longer be informed when they took place.

As the rosary had always been his special devotion, he recited it several times a-day with the servant or with Brother Francis Anthony, whilst they took him up and down the corridors; he never omitted to meditate on the mysteries which were latterly pointed out to him by the brother. It once so happened, that the latter mistook one for the other. "You tell me the mysteries as they come into your head," said his Lordship upon this, "whether you understand them or not; you should say them ac-

ording to the day of the week, and not at random." Another time when the brother had again been found fault with, he replied that meditation on the mysteries is not essential: "Then there is no longer any rosary," answered Alphonso, "for if we wish to gain the indulgences, the rosary includes the consideration of the mysteries."

There was not even a sigh which he did not consecrate to God by solemnly offering it up to Him. In order to relieve him from all uneasiness, Father Villani commuted all his vows into the recitation of the rosary; after which he was to be seen with his rosary in his hand from morning to night. It was beautiful to hear the altercations he daily had with the brother or the servant, sometimes because he had not made the intention properly, sometimes because he fancied he had not carefully distinguished the mysteries, and then he would recommence afresh. One day when his dinner was ready, he fancied he had not finished his rosary, and he resisted going to it, saying, "An Ave Maria is worth all the dinners in the world." Another day when he did not remember having recited it, the brother told him he had done so. "But," said he, "you forget that my salvation depends upon this devotion."

In 1784, as he was in a profound lethargy one day, Brother Francis Anthony said to him, by the advice of Father Villani, in order to arouse him, "My Lord, we have still to recite the rosary." At the simple word rosary, his

Lordship moved, opened his eyes, and began, *Deus in adjutorium meum intende, &c.* He continued to perform this devotion up to the time of his last illness.

One Wednesday a little boiled meat was served up to him, but he remembered that it was one of his abstinence days: "You know quite well," said he, "that I keep Wednesday in honour of our Lady."

From the time he entered into religion he never drank anything on Saturdays, either at meals or throughout the whole course of the day. And he kept this practice up until he was eighty-eight years of age.

At this period the doctors ordered that he should daily have a cup of cold chocolate. Alphonso would not take it on Saturdays however; but as he was unable to distinguish the days of the week, he often asked if it were not a Saturday; and in order that he might not be deprived of this remedy, it was often necessary to have recourse to Father Villani.

He was always careful to recommend devotion to the Blessed Virgin to all who came to see him. "Be devout to the Blessed Virgin," said he to them; "he who is devoted to her will be saved." He recommended every one to visit her images, to recite the rosary, and to fast in her honour on Saturday and on the vigils of her feasts.

He recommended three things to our young men, and especially to those who entered the noviciate, viz. Obedience to superiors, manifes-

tation of conscience, and devotion to Mary. "Love the Blessed Virgin much," said he, "for she is the Mother of perseverance, and he who loves Jesus Christ and the Holy Virgin Mary, will become a saint." One day when he was animating us to confidence in the protection of Mary, he said, "In my youth I also did wild things, but the Blessed Virgin called me to religion; I am wholly indebted for it to my mother Mary, for she called me, and she has supported me until now."

A young cleric, on setting out for the novitiate, in the year 1784, went to him three times to ask for his blessing, not being satisfied with the first, and three times did this saintly old man welcome him with love and give him these counsels: "My son," said he the first time, "if you wish to persevere, communicate several times a week, and be devout to the Blessed Virgin and to the Blessed Sacrament." The second time he said to him, "My son, I recommend holy obedience to you. By your obedience you will please God, and you will be liked by the congregation, but I especially recommend you to be devout towards the most holy Virgin Mary and to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament." And at the third time, "If the enemy of God," said he, "tempts you to quit the congregation, immediately have recourse to Jesus and Mary, and do not cease to invoke them until the temptation has passed."

The following are some devotional practices which Alphonso never omitted before going to

sleep; they would have remained unknown, had he not caused Brother Francis Anthony to write them down one day in the year 1784, for fear of forgetting them. Here they are :

Ten acts of love ; ten acts of confidence ; ten acts of sorrow ; ten acts of conformity to the will of God ; ten acts of love towards Jesus Christ ; ten acts of love to the Blessed Virgin ; ten acts of love towards the Blessed Sacrament ; ten acts of confidence in Jesus Christ ; ten acts of confidence in the Blessed Virgin ; ten acts of resignation to suffering ; ten acts of abandonment to God ; ten acts of abandonment to Jesus Christ ; ten acts of abandonment to Mary ; and ten prayers to do the will of God.

Alphonso's confidence in Jesus and Mary increased in proportion to his love. One evening when he was in a fever, he exclaimed in his delirium, "I cast myself into the arms of Jesus Christ, I die without uneasiness, and I believe that I shall be saved by the merits of Jesus Christ and of my Mother Mary ; yes, I hope to go and thank them in Paradise." To his love of God was united that for his neighbour also ; when he heard that any one of his brothers was ill, he was sensibly distressed ; he immediately caused himself to be conducted to him in his chair ; as it could not be taken into the room, he caused himself to be carried there, and he conversed with the sick person for some time. He inquired into his maladies, exhorted him to patience, but above all to conformity and union with God. He manifested

this solicitude for all, and as much in regard to the lay-brothers as to the fathers.

He was far more interested when the good of souls was concerned. He constantly prayed for the perseverance of the just and the conversion of sinners; he was seen to burst into tears for the latter, and to offer himself as a victim to God for them. In order to see him look young again, it sufficed to tell him of some extraordinary conversion. He started on hearing of it, and the satisfaction of his heart was then depicted on his countenance.

When Father Falcone went to kiss his hand on his return from Romagna, the first thing his Lordship did on seeing him was to inquire about the success of our missionaries in the Pontifical States, and on receiving a satisfactory reply from the father, he did not cease to testify his joy, and to repeat in the gladness of his soul, "God be praised for ever! God be praised for ever!"

On the other hand, he was distressed on hearing of scandals and offences against God. The lack of bishops afflicted him most of all. "When shepherds are wanting," said he one day, "the sheep are dispersed, and the wolf comes and devours them."

One day he heard that there was some hope of a reconciliation between the courts of Rome and Naples, which caused him much joy. "I am anxious," said he, "that the bishoprics should be provided with saintly bishops. When there are no bishops, things go wrong, and souls

are lost. Do you know what results from the absence of bishops? the loss of souls, without any one taking any notice of it. This has caused me to weep before God for six months or whatever time it is. The lack of bishops is the ruin of dioceses."

Mgr. Bergame, the bishop of Gaeta, and Mgr. Rosa, the bishop of Avellino, went to see Alphonso one day whilst he was at dinner, and when they inquired as to the state of his health, he replied, "How do you wish me to be? I am as one who must soon appear before the tribunal of Jesus Christ." He burst into tears while saying these words. When Mgr. Bergame was just going to set out, Alphonso said to him, "Now that you are going to Naples, I entreat you to send for Father N., and to tell him from me not to ill-treat souls which have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ."

This Jansenist zealot, of whom we have already spoken, caused him the greatest uneasiness. In a word, the good of souls and the glory of Jesus Christ were to Alphonso as two loadstones which attracted his heart. One day during these last years, he was heard to exclaim, "Lord! Thou knowest well that all that I have thought, said, done, and written has been for souls and for Thee." It sufficed to say the words, "the glory of God and the salvation of our neighbour," to reanimate and give him fresh strength. It was also during these last years that God caused him to acknowledge the innocence of his life. Whilst

conversing one day with Father Villani, he let these words escape, "I am a bishop, and I ought to tell the truth; I do not remember having ever uttered a deliberate story even when I was a child."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

WE have now reached the ninetieth year of Alphonso's life, and the eighty-sixth of his century. In proportion to the nearness of his approach to the end of his days, did he put off more and more all affection to earthly things, and purify himself from all that was not of God. Visits of mere civility had become insupportable to him; however, he continued to receive them from persons of distinction; but whatever might be the rank or the merits of these persons, he knew how to get rid of them speedily; either by affecting an air of puerile simplicity, by manifesting weariness, or by making his deafness an excuse for keeping silence; thus most people imagined that he was imbecile, or in a state of second childhood, and speedily took their leave. He acted very differently with regard to religious people who conversed with him about things which merited his attention. Father Pascal de Robertis once went from St. Agatha to visit him, accompanied by Father Carotenuto. Whilst they spoke to him about indifferent things, his Lordship did not say a word,

and did not even appear to recognise them; but when Father Carotenuto went up to him, Alphonso, on hearing that he was a religious, asked if he were a priest also, upon which the latter stated all his necessities to him, and received full satisfaction. Two other conventual fathers also visited him in these his latter days. He was told that one of them, who had recently been ordained priest, wished to kiss his hand. At the word priest his Lordship exclaimed, "A great dignity! a great dignity is the sacerdotal dignity!" The priest then recommended himself to his prayers. "I am a miserable creature," said Alphonso, "you must pray to God for me, who am on the eve of taking the great journey from time to eternity, and of presenting myself before the tribunal of God." He said these words with such an expression of fear, that the two religious retired in terror, saying, "If his Lordship trembles, what will become of us?"

He had such a high idea of the priesthood that he could not think of it without rapture. Our young fathers Pappacena and Pizzo, on being raised to the priesthood, went to his Lordship to thank him and to kiss his hand; but Alphonso through respect for the dignity with which they had just been invested, kissed their hands, and while he did so he exclaimed, "Oh what a great dignity! Oh what a great dignity it is to be a priest! You are now exalted above sovereigns, kings, and emperors!" Counsellor D. Gaetan Celano came to see us in the October of 1786, with his wife and the Marquis of St.

Lucia. It is well known what obligations his Lordship and all the congregation were under to this great benefactor, who had always supported us at Naples under the most embarrassing circumstances. Before they took leave of us, they wished to kiss his Lordship's hand. He was at dinner at the time; but as soon as he heard that Counsellor Celano was there he stopped eating and had the things removed. He received these distinguished guests as well as he could. He turned the conversation upon the duties of the marriage state, and strongly exhorted them to have but one will, assuring them that their happiness depended upon it.

The rectitude of his judgment and his presence of mind were no less to be appreciated in more important and more difficult affairs.

In a consultation which was held, our fathers decided on the expulsion of a subject, and they asked for his Lordship's consent, according to rule. After Alphonso had reflected for some time, he asked if all the consultors were of one accord; "If there is but one," said he, "of a different opinion, I wish to know his reasons, and what is said in answer to them, and if the subject has been previously punished for his misconduct." Not satisfied with that, he asked if the consultors met together to vote in concert, or if they had each done so in private and by letter. "When they meet together," added he, "the matter is then examined with more maturity, the truth appears and is manifested much more clearly." It was not until after he was

satisfied on all these points that he took up his pen and ratified the decision of the consultors.

Father Villani told him that a certain employment was destined for a father, rather to inform him of it than to consult him. "Do you not know," said his Lordship, "that this subject acted in such a manner on such an occasion?" His reflections made such an impression that the project was abandoned.

Father Folgori, of the Congregation of Pious Workmen, came from Naples to consult him. When his Lordship heard of this, he ordered him to be admitted, and conversed with him for about a quarter of an hour. When he left him, this father said to us, in admiration of his wisdom, "Before I came here they tried to persuade me that his Lordship's head was deranged; but I am thoroughly convinced of the contrary; he has understood all that I have said to him, and he replied to everything in the most satisfactory manner possible.

The goodness of his memory was no less to be admired. A long time before this, Don Lucius Tortora had begged him through Father Leonard to recommend his brother D. Thomas to God; he came himself to visit him after this, (on the 8th of November, 1786,) with D. Michael Tortora. His Lordship remembered the request which had been made to him, and asked D. Lucius how his brother D. Thomas was, which greatly astonished the two gentlemen.

The superioress of the convent of St. Marcellinus, where his niece was, wrote to tell him that

she injured her health by excessive abstinence. There was some trouble in causing him to comprehend this. He remained undecided for a moment, and then asked who was the superioress; he was told that it was D. Brianna Caraffa; upon that he reflected on the character of this person, with whom he was well acquainted, and wished his niece to be written to, and told to obey her. He was then reminded that he had also received a letter from D. Theresa, who told him that she did not do so through mortification, but because her stomach did not require more food. Upon this his Lordship changed his opinion. "We must now have a third," said he. He therefore caused the reverend mother to be told to apply to the confessor, and his niece to obey the superioress. This took place some months before his Lordship's death.

On the 27th of September, 1786, which was the anniversary of his birthday, Father Villani, after celebrating a solemn mass, at which the community assisted in thanksgiving for the preservation of their common father, went to his Lordship accompanied by our fathers, to announce to him that he had happily entered into his ninetieth year. At these tidings Alphonso was confounded. "I do not deserve such attention," said he, "all is the result of God's mercy." In saying these words he shed sweet tears of joy. Father Villani then told him that the mass had been sung in thanksgiving. "I thank all the fathers," he replied, "God will reward them for their charity."

On the 10th of November of the same year, Father D. Francis Garzilli, who was still more aged than his Lordship, preceded him into eternity. Alphonso was informed of this, that he might recommend his soul to God. When he received the tidings of his death, his Lordship made an act of resignation, and after having recited a *De profundis*, he said, "And I too, I am one of these young men."

In December, 1786, his Lordship's physician, D. Francis Tortora, was taken ill, and sent Brother Leonard to beg him to recommend him to God. "Let us say an *Ave Maria* to the Madonna," said Alphonso; after which he also said the litanies. When the brother retired, he recommended his Lordship to continue to pray for the sick man; but Alphonso at once, without any hesitation, replied, "He will die." The next day Brother Leonard again recalled the doctor to his remembrance, but his Lordship made no answer. The illness did not appear to be mortal, but two days afterwards, on the 27th of the same month, D. Francis Tortora, though contrary to all expectation, had passed into eternity.

The Father-Master Caputo, he who had lived with Alphonso at St. Agatha, as president of the seminary, was taken ill at the monastery of St. Peter the Martyr, at Naples, and when the Dominicanesses at Nocera, of whom he had been prior, heard of it, they informed his Lordship that he might recommend him to God. Some days afterwards, that is to say, on the

8th of October, 1786, at about four o'clock in the afternoon, his Lordship suddenly turned round towards Brother Francis Anthony, and said, "The Father-Master is dying;" and on his assuring him that he was alive, and that the religious begged him to recommend him to God; "Believe me," his Lordship replied, "he is on the brink of death." And so it was: this same day at about eight o'clock in the evening, the Father-Master passed into eternity after four hours' agony.

I will now give another and a no less surprising instance. We kept a debauched and incorrigible Neapolitan in our house by the king's order at the commencement of the year 1787. One evening he had had the audacity to introduce a female into his room disguised as a soldier. About seven o'clock that evening his Lordship began to exclaim, "There is a woman in the house; send her away instantly." The brother and the servant thought that his head was wandering, and said to him in order to tranquillise him, "The house is shut up, and there is no female in it." As the same thing took place again the next evening at the same hour, his Lordship was again agitated, and exclaimed, "I have already told you, and I repeat it now, there is a woman in the house; let no time be lost in turning her out." It was still believed that the thing was impossible; however, when the brother went to supper with the servant, at the second table, they laughingly related this supposed proof of Alphonso's being in

his dotage to the others. The young man, who was also at the table, on hearing what was said, was seized with a mortal terror, ran to his room, and sent the woman out of it with all possible speed, and he himself, from the fear of having been discovered, set out secretly next morning, and withdrew to Naples. He confided this to a young man of la Cava, whose conduct at that time was no better than his own.

CHAPTER XL.

God, who has always revealed the approach of their deliverance to His saints, made known the time of his death to Alphonso also. He had predicted it in the month of September, in the preceding year of 1786; the Carmelite father, D. Joseph Imperato, came to see him then, as he was in the habit of doing every year, when Alphonso said to him, "Father Joseph, we shall not see each other again next year." He was sitting motionless in his chair, and seemed quite absorbed in God. At a later period, that is to say, on the 16th of July, 1787, he turned to Brother Francis Anthony, and said to him in quite a joyful tone, "Brother, I have a new function to perform." He spoke of his funeral. The mystery was understood when he was attacked by a violent dysentery during the night of the 18th.

On the morning of the 19th, he was attacked by fever, after he had assisted at mass, and received holy communion; on the morning of the 20th, he got up to hear mass and to communicate, although the fever had not left him. In the after part of the day, he fell into such a state of weakness and prostration, that he seemed as if he were just going to expire. He took some nourishment, and after having recovered some strength he slept during a part of the following night.

As soon as his death drew near all his scruples vanished, and serenity never again left him throughout the whole of his painful illness. As I was at Nocera at the time, I was constantly by his bed-side, and not the gentlest sigh of him who had so loved me passed me unheeded.

When his Lordship's extreme danger became known in the town and neighbouring villages, gentlemen of high rank, religious, and priests hastened to visit him daily. Mgr. Sanfelice especially never once omitted to come. When the nuns heard of it, there was not a monastery in which they did not pray in common for the recovery of his health; and the faithful were everywhere excited by their pastors to be as concerned as they were for the preservation of his days.

As the fever had not left him on the 21st of July, and as his weakness was extreme, an altar was prepared in his room; mass was said there for him, and the holy communion was administered to him. In the course of the day he said

that he was hungry, and he ate as if he were better, but he sunk back into a state of great weakness afterwards. He slept very well on the following night, and required no assistance; it was a Saturday; when benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was given, the state his Lordship was in was announced to the people, which caused general affliction.

Towards eight o'clock on the morning of the 22nd, as he was still in full possession of his intellectual faculties, he was asked if he would like to hear mass and to communicate. "Make haste," replied his Lordship with much agitation. When he was told that mass had commenced, he made the sign of the cross as usual, and repeated, "Make haste." At the reception of the holy Blood he was no longer quite himself, but he was told that he must then communicate; upon this he recovered his senses, communicated, and continued to make acts of love towards Jesus in the Blessed Eucharist. Later on the father-rector inquired how he was, and he replied, "Recommend me to Jesus Christ." As the doctor ordered him to take some lemonade, he obeyed, and then fell back into a state of recollection.

After dinner our fathers went to see him, which seemed to please and comfort him. Father Villani was confined to his room by indisposition, so he sent him a very beautiful little picture of the Blessed Virgin, which had belonged to Mgr. Falioja. Alphonso was pleased to receive it; he kissed it with tenderness, and then kept it in

his hand looking at it for a few moments. One of the fathers who was going to give a novena went to take leave of him, and he was told that this father and all the others wished to have his blessing. He manifested satisfaction at this, and raising his hand a little, he made the sign of benediction.

About four o'clock he was asked how he felt, when he replied, "Thanks be to God." Brother Francis Anthony then suggested to him that he should bless all the fathers and brothers of the house as their superior. "And you also," replied Alphonso, and he repeated it several times, "you must pray to God and the Blessed Virgin for me." And he blessed them while saying these words. Like another Jacob surrounded by his children, Alphonso looked upon us with complacency, and was constantly prophesying to us all sorts of blessings.

His Lordship was quite calm and serene until the evening, but fever then seized him, and he became delirious. "Give me Jesus Christ," he said, extending his arms....."What lady is that there?.....Be quick, let us say mass. I wish to communicate."

He became worse on the night of the 23rd. As soon as it was day-light, Brother Francis Anthony told him that it was time to hear mass and to communicate. "Let them make haste," replied his Lordship in a state of great prostration of strength. On seeing that there was a delay, he repeated several times over, "Will you not then give me communion?" But when

the time arrived for giving it to him, he had lost his senses. The doctor was summoned, who gave him over. He was told to prepare to receive Extreme Unction, and this was repeated several times to him; but he answered, "I do not understand." At length, as he saw that he did not receive communion, he said, "I wish to have His body;" he was again told to prepare to receive Extreme Unction, and he once more said, "Give me His body." His wishes were not satisfied, for we feared that he was not sufficiently conscious for it. After Extreme Unction had been administered to him, Father Villani told him to bless the whole congregation; but although he repeated it over to him, he could not the least understand what was said. As Father Villani was anxious that he should understand, he bethought him of telling him that he must bless the congregation as bishop and as superior in obedience to the names of Jesus Christ and the Blessed Virgin; on hearing the word obedience, Alphonso became quite collected, he raised his hand and gave the wished-for benediction.

When his Lordship's life was despaired of, Father Villani lost no time in sending the tidings of it to all the houses. It caused general lamentation; for the mere remembrance that Alphonso was alive, was a source of encouragement and consolation to all; on receiving the sad news, there was not a subject who did not wish to fly to Nocera to assist at his death, and to receive his last blessing. All the rec-

tors set out to see him, accompanied by all the subjects who were not wanted in their houses. They all arrived within three days, even those from Benevento and St. Angelo. As soon as the saintly old man perceived them, although he was dying, he manifested pleasure, and blessed them with the sign of the cross.

Towards seven o'clock on the morning of the 23rd, he appeared a little relieved after the application of blisters, and in order to anticipate his wish to communicate, a second mass was at once celebrated; when he heard that mass was being celebrated, and that he was going to receive Jesus Christ, he testified extreme joy; as doubts were entertained as to his being in a fit state to communicate, an unconsecrated particle was first given to him; and it was perceived that all his physical strength had abandoned him. After some time, his Lordship himself asked for his rosary, and he felt about with his hand here and there as if to find it. It was given to him, and although he had lost his senses, he went through it in a stammering way, but what he said was unintelligible.

As he continued in the same state, the doctors wished him to swallow some bark with the lemonade; after he had taken three or four spoonfuls, he did not want to have any more; but he was told that the doctor required it and that he must take more under obedience. At the words doctor and obedience he instantly opened his mouth; he then held out his pulse to the doctor, who had asked to feel it, saying, "Here

I am, O my God." He also wished to feel his feet, to ascertain if they were still warm, but as soon as he perceived this, Alphonso exclaimed, "Do not touch me!" and drew back his legs. As he felt tormented through the blisters on his legs, the mustard poultices at his feet, and compresses on his stomach, he said in a dying tone, "I feel torn to pieces from top to bottom."

Although he was burning through the extreme heat of the weather, his love for modesty never allowed him to be at all uncovered: one day when the sheet was a little displaced in order to wash him, he exclaimed in a tone of complaint to the servant Alexis, "They have uncovered me, is not that sinful?"

As his Lordship was everywhere held in very great veneration, when it became generally known that he was dying, it would be difficult to believe how many demands for relics of him were made even from distant countries. The linen which was sent to the wash at this time was either not sent back to the house, or was only returned in fragments. Handkerchiefs full of rosaries and other objects of devotion were constantly being brought with the request that they might touch his body. A number of ecclesiastics, of regulars and of seculars, vied with each other in coming to gaze on him and in seeking for his relics. Mgr. Sanfelice, who considered him as a saint, never lost sight of him. His Lordship's state underwent little change during the 23rd. As it was observed that his mind seemed

more alive at about three in the afternoon, he was asked if he wished for communion. At this proposition the saintly old man started for joy, and when he was told that the time was come, he joyously exclaimed several times, "Come, my dear Jesus." He also made many acts of desire, and manifested a saintly eagerness by his gestures. After he had communicated he said, turning towards Father Magaldi, "Now, what ought I to do?" He wanted the acts of thanksgiving to be suggested to him; this was done, and his Lordship listened and stammered them out, but without our being able to make out the words. Amongst other things it was said to him, "Thank Jesus Christ, whom you have in your heart, and pray to the Blessed Virgin to thank Him for you." "But you must also pray to the Madonna for me," said Alphonso. The father went on, and told him to bless all who were present in the name of Jesus Christ. His Lordship then raised his hand rather high, and blessed them all in a perfectly collected manner. When I heard that his Lordship was better, I and some others also hastened to go and receive his blessing.

His penitent, D. Salvatore Tramontano, had hastened from Naples to be present at the last scene; he was not satisfied with being blessed amongst the others, and presented himself alone before his bed. His Lordship recognised him, appeared much pleased to see him, and blessed him, saying, "Pray to the Madonna for me." "Yes," replied Father Magaldi, "we will pray

to Jesus Christ and to the Madonna for you—to that beautiful Madonna which is at St. Clare; do you remember it?” “Where?” replied his Lordship; and the father repeated, “The Madonna at St. Clare; do you not remember it?” “Yes,” he replied quite joyously. He became delirious again some time afterwards, and said, “Celebrate mass.” He was told that it was night, and that every one was asleep. “Do not let me miss communion,” added he. When the night was further advanced Father Neri told him to make acts of love and to have recourse to Jesus crucified. Alphonso understood him, recalled his senses, and repeated what the father suggested to him as well as he could. Amongst other things he distinctly said, “My Jesus crucified, I love Thee with all my heart, for Thou didst die for me.”

Several votive masses were said in his room on the morning of the 24th. He had received Holy Communion at about six o'clock on the preceding evening, but he appeared to have forgotten this. When it was about four o'clock his Lordship repeated with great urgency, “Give me Jesus Christ.” The acts of desire which he made, and his impatience to be soon consoled, drew tears from all our eyes; he was satisfied, and after having communicated he remained in a state of recollection, and made acts of love and of thanksgiving.

As fever came on again, his Lordship's strength was once more prostrated and he lost the use of his faculties; but when Father Magaldi sug-

gested to him to recite the Ave Maria and to have recourse to the Blessed Virgin, he moved his lips and repeated the Angelic Salutation. Brother Francis Anthony on seeing him in this state, put his large rosary round his arm; Alphonso feeling something, and not knowing what it was, said, almost weeping, "They have bound me." It was then taken off his arm, and placed in his hands; he immediately recited the Ave Maria all by himself, and turned to Father Magaldi to know if he had said it properly; he then continued to stammer through the rosary.

As his Lordship's nephews had received tidings of the illness of their uncle, D. Joseph left Naples and came to see him towards evening, accompanied by his wife and her uncle, the Prince of Polleca. They asked for his blessing, but there was much difficulty in making him understand what they wanted; however, he raised his hand and blessed them. D. Joseph told him that he had come expressly to see him: "I thank you," said Alphonso, "I bless you." He afterwards asked him to give him some good advice; his Lordship then answered in a collected manner, "Save your soul." D. Gusmana afterwards came into the room with the prince: his Lordship after having comprehended who they were, but with some difficulty, blessed them also. D. Joseph then came closer to him, took his hand and told him he was his nephew; his Lordship pressed his hand, and held it for some time; after which he again blessed him.

On seeing that they did not go, he said to them, "Be satisfied; it is finished. You can go now." The devil could not continue to leave him in peace. On the morning of the 25th, he said, while Father Neri was celebrating mass, "He who sins is the enemy of God." As the father saw that he was tempted, he interrupted the mass and exhorted him to confide in the merits of Jesus Christ, and to have recourse to the most holy Virgin Mary; his Lordship then breathed freely again and regained his serenity, but fever came on again at the same time, and as his mind was perturbed, he could not communicate. He was thus tempted afresh about four o'clock, and said, "Do you wish to make me despair?" The same father immediately reminded him of the passion of Jesus Christ and the merits of the Blessed Virgin Mary. When he heard of the merits of Jesus Christ and of the most holy Virgin Mary, his Lordship opened his eyes and listened attentively. It was suggested to him to offer up his sufferings to Jesus Christ, and he replied in a distinct tone of voice, "I offer all to the passion of my Jesus." Some minutes after he exclaimed, "I believe and I wish to believe all that holy Church teaches me;" and then he added, "and therefore I have hope." As the father continued to suggest other acts of faith and of confidence to him, his Lordship repeated them interiorly and moved his lips. Some time afterwards, he said in broken accents, "What can I do in order to merit?" and he received for answer,

“Do the will of God.” He remained silent, and at intervals he was seen to fix his eyes on the picture of our Lady of Sorrows. During this time masses were constantly being celebrated in his presence.

Such great faintness came on about seven o'clock, that it was believed that the hour of his agony was approaching. The prayers for the dying were commenced, and he received the absolution. Whilst this took place he recovered his senses, and the doctor asked him which of his knees was in front; as soon as he heard that he replied, “I am dying.” The doctor then asked for his blessing, and his Lordship said in a distinct voice, “Dominus noster Jesus Christus te benedicat!” The brother and the servant also knelt down, and asked him to bless them. Brother Francis Anthony suggested to him to bless all the houses of the congregation and all the subjects. “Yes,” replied his Lordship, and he raised his hand and blessed them. We all melted into tears and came and kissed it, which seemed to give him pleasure.

In this extremity his Lordship had not yet been reminded of the houses in the states, but Brother Francis Anthony now begged him to bless them also, saying that they laboured to procure the glory of Jesus Christ, and the good of souls. After the brother had taken great pains to make himself intelligible to him, his Lordship raised his hand twice and blessed them. As the devil is skilful in seizing opportunities, he did not lose this one of representing

to him the sorrow he had previously endured from these houses. At the end of half an hour, Alphonso, undoubtedly to surmount the temptation, opened his eyes and said in a loud voice, "I bless the houses in the states;" and he pronounced these words so distinctly that I heard them in an adjoining room. After an interval he was asked to bless the diocese and the nuns of St. Agatha and of Scala; his Lordship then moved his hand to signify that he blessed them; and afterwards he said in a loud and intelligible tone of voice of his own accord, "I bless the king, all the generals, the princes, and the ministers, and all the magistrates who administer justice."

The rector of the house then asked him if he wished to receive Jesus Christ. Full of joy at this, he replied, "Give me communion; yes, give me communion." He said this with so much ardour, that one of us lost no time in going to the church to gratify him; but as it was not quick enough to satisfy his ardent desires, he several times repeated, "Is communion coming?" On hearing a sound he opened his eyes, and on seeing the priest with the holy ciborium, he appeared as if in an ecstasy, and began to make a number of acts of love. He seemed as if changed into something divine, and he exclaimed in the transports of his love, "My Jesus, do not leave me." Some time afterwards a picture of our Venerable Brother Gerard was given to him, and he was told to recommend himself to him. His Lordship had a special devotion to

this holy brother; he looked at it for a moment, and asked who it was, and on being told, "Brother Gerard," he replied, "God does not will that he should cure me."

He was asked if he wished to hear mass, and he moved his head affirmatively. When it was commenced, he made the sign of the cross three times according to his custom, and distinctly pronounced the words the third time. When the doctor inquired how he felt, he replied, "I am ill." The doctor then again asked for his blessing, and he gave it. Afterwards Father Neri presented to him a picture of the crucifix without saying anything: his Lordship made a sign with his trembling hand that he wished to have it; when it was given to him, he put his lips to it, and kissed it, and held it thus for some time, after which the delirium returned again.

When it became known that his Lordship was dying, vows and prayers for his happy passage were addressed to heaven from all quarters. Naples was plunged into grief. All the nuns interested themselves about his state, and many religious followed their example; amongst others, the Fathers of the Oratory, of the Pious Works, and of the Holy Family. Canon D. Gabriel Genga, the superior of the Congregation of Apostolical Missions, in concert with the superior of that of the Conference, hastened to inform all their subjects. The town and the diocese of St. Agatha also displayed their attachment to their former bishop. "As soon as I received the

sad tidings," wrote the archdeacon and vicar-capitular, D. Nicholas Robertis, "I communicated it to the nuns, to the chapter, and to all the clergy, that all might address their prayers for him to the Most High. And as the intelligence reached us at the cathedral just as we were finishing the offices of the choir, the Litany of the Blessed Virgin was instantly sung, and it was decided that the Blessed Sacrament should be exposed next morning at mass; finally, the collect, *pro infirmo*, was ordered to be said throughout the diocese." A great number of priests and bishops who were his Lordship's friends, acted in a similar manner on this occasion. As soon as Mgr. Puoti, the archbishop of Amalfi, and the bishops of Cava and of Lettere, heard of it, they offered up the holy sacrifice for Alphonso, and got their flocks to pray for him.

Donatus Cafullo, a gentleman of Caposele, who was at Naples at the time, was speaking about Alphonso in Father Carotenuto's room, in the monastery of St. Laurence; two gentlemen of St. Agatha who were present, and who had not before heard anything at all about his illness, were so surprised on hearing that he was dying, that one of them could not restrain his tears. "You cannot imagine," said they, "what great good Mgr. Liguori did in the diocese of St. Agatha: the tidings of his death will cause sorrow to every one there."

CHAPTER XLI.

A SERIOUS misfortune happened, which added more to the sufferings of the servant of God. The large wound near his throat, from which he had suffered so much at Arienzo, was reopened, and rendered his condition an intensely painful one; but through his patience and resignation this accession of suffering only served to increase the splendour of his crown. Whilst in this painful state, he consoled us by a miracle. Canon D. Dominic Villani went to visit him towards the evening of the 24th. He had been suffering from a complaint in the knee for three years, which had prevented his being able to walk without crutches, but he had scarcely taken leave of his Lordship, than he felt that he was completely cured; and he said in a most joyous tone to the priest D. Gaetan Fusco, and D. Andrew Calabrèse, two priests whom he met at the door, "I came here a cripple, and I go away perfectly healed; I secretly applied his Lordship's scapular, which was on his bolster, to my leg, and now I am cured." Yet up to this time the canon had tried several remedies, such as the baths of Isca and mercurial rubbing, but without any success. Five days afterwards, the prince of Polleca asked him how he was. "I am quite well," replied the canon, "and I am ready to

give all the judicial attestations of my miraculous cure."

The feeble ray of hope we still had of being able to keep his Lordship amongst us, made us determine to call in two doctors from the capital; they arrived about ten o'clock at night, and found the invalid much better, and this continued until the morning of the 25th. He heard mass and communicated at day-break, after which two more masses were said for him; but in the middle of the second he got perturbed, and said, "What are you doing? You are putting me in danger of committing a mortal sin." Some acts of love and confidence in Jesus Christ were suggested to him, and he became calm again. Six of our students arrived from the house at Ciorani at this time. His Lordship recognised them, testified pleasure at seeing them, and blessed them twice.

He appeared to be so faint between ten and eleven o'clock in the evening, that he was thought to be dead: our fathers hastened to aid him in his passage by their prayers and the holy sacrifice, and so they began to say masses on the 26th, at about two o'clock in the morning. The holy communion was proposed to him, but he did not answer. When the Sanctus bell rung during the first mass, his Lordship opened his eyes and looked at the celebrant; as he did not see the elevation, he closed them again; he aroused himself again at the elevation, he looked towards the altar and moved his lips. He had a fresh attack at three o'clock, absolution was

given to him, and the prayers for the dying were commenced; but his Lordship regained his senses at the end of the litanies.

At a later period, after another mass was commenced, we tried to find out if he wished for communion, and he manifested an ardent desire for it. He communicated, and during the following mass he continued to make his thanksgiving although extremely faint. He stammered out the words, but we could only catch the following: "It is thus I hope." Some time afterwards, he distinctly asked for his rosary. When he received it, his lips were seen to move, and he went through the beads.

During this time his room was always full of gentlemen and ecclesiastics. Father Samuel of Naples, the ex-provincial of the Capuchins at Arienzo, and a great friend of Alphonso's, was not behind hand. As his efforts to obtain his Lordship's benediction had been in vain, he took his hand, and raised it to his head making the sign of the cross with it, and he also touched one of his ears which was diseased with it, which was immediately healed. Our Father Buonapane had suffered from an abscess in the throat for two days, and much apprehension was felt as to the consequences; in the evening he applied a little piece of linen which had been used in bandaging his Lordship's wound, and the next morning the father was cured.

The 27th was a day of suffering to Alphonso. About seven o'clock in the morning he was sud-

denly seized with such a severe colic, that he could not find any rest, and exclaimed, "Aid me....unbind me....put me on the ground." During the violence of these attacks, he several times fixed his eyes on the picture of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, and said in a faint voice, "My Jesus." A small picture of Immaculate Mary was presented to him in a little water, but he could not swallow it. When his sufferings were a little alleviated, he himself asked for the little picture, and swallowed it; but mortification had commenced. As his sufferings continued, his bandage was taken off, and a poultice was applied instead; when he felt that he was touched, he turned towards Father Criscuoli, and said in broken accents, and with tears in his eyes, "They have touched me." When he was told it was the aged Father Leonard, his confidant, who had done so, he became tranquillised. On the 28th, at about two o'clock in the morning, he was asked how he was; he replied, "I am dying." After that, on seeing the eagerness of our fathers and that of the medical men, he said, "All is over." On being interrogated as to whether he wished to hear mass and to communicate, he seemed quite joyous, and made a sign in the affirmative. He made the sign of the cross before communicating, and also made his preparation. He heard two masses during his thanksgiving. When preparations were made to rub him, he said quickly, "Do not touch me." But he afterwards submitted through obedience; the doctor again asked him how he felt, and

he once more replied, "I am dying." Upon this, the former asked him to bless a picture of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and he did so.

As his mind was weakened and he was exhausted, his Lordship wished to be aided in having recourse to God, and in suffering with courage; he took pleasure in the holy affections which were suggested to him from time to time, and repeated them in a faint tone. I often feared that he would be oppressed by these aspirations; but he signified that this was not so. Mortification went on increasing, and as his sufferings became greater, they caused him frequent spasms. On seeing how much he endured, without its being possible to relieve him, we looked at him in silence; but Alphonso was dissatisfied that the aspirations were not suggested to him as before, and asked with a remnant of strength which his love gave him, "Have you no more holy thoughts to suggest to me?" His weakness went on increasing, and we believed he was just going to expire; the blessed candle was lighted, and the prayers of the Church for the recommendation of his soul were commenced. When it was perceived that he recovered his senses, a picture of the Most Holy Virgin was given to him; his Lordship opened his eyes, moved his lips, and joined his hands together in a prayerful attitude; after that he kissed the picture, and recited an Ave Maria in a distinct voice. After that he seemed to be agitated, and putting his hand to his forehead, he said, "My thoughts will you not let me

rest?" Two of our fathers arrived from Castellamare at this time, and when they asked for his blessing, Alphonso gave it to them. At seven o'clock in the morning, his Lordship seemed again dejected: the crucifix was offered to him; he took it, raised it to his lips, and held it in his hands, often opening and reopening his eyes to contemplate it. A picture of the Blessed Virgin was also given to him, and he was told to place his life and his soul in her hands; his Lordship understood this, extended his arms to signify that he made the offering, and he turned his eyes towards the holy picture, murmuring some words which we could not catch. The night was better than before, and he slept quietly.

Although he was better on the morning of the 29th, he was not in a state to communicate. Whilst mass was being said before him, he exclaimed, "What a number of foreign enemies!" Several masses were said in his room; the death of Jesus Christ was recalled to his mind, and it was suggested to him to make an offering to Him of his own death. His Lordship listened attentively, raised his hands, clasped them together, and moved his lips for some time; he then turned his eyes to an image of the Blessed Virgin; at this movement, it was suggested to him to have recourse to the Blessed Virgin, and he recited an Ave Maria in a distinct voice. A picture of St. Joseph was given to him to kiss; he took it into his hands, looked at it for some time, and then turned to the brother and said, "Is this St. Joseph?" He was told

that it was so, and that he should recommend himself to him; and he then began to murmur something whilst keeping his eyes fixed on the picture of the holy spouse of Mary.

The servant Alexis asked if he wanted anything, and he replied in a faint tone, "It is finished!" Father Magaldi began to suggest holy thoughts to him, when his Lordship said of his own accord, "Give me the Madonna." When he had it in his hands, he began to pray to her. The death-rattle then commenced, and never quitted him again. Our fathers were anxious to excite him to confidence in the Most Holy Virgin, and placed a picture of her in his hands; he kissed it, and slowly and with difficulty also pronounced the words of the Ave Maria.

His beard had become very long, and we were distressed at the great discomfort which this must cause during such great heat, to a person dying. Brother Raphael cut it off as well as he could, and his Lordship seemed relieved. When the operation was over, these few hairs were much sought for, especially by the students, and they afterwards became precious relics, and were eagerly sought after.

He was extremely ill during the whole of the 29th, and nearly unconscious; about nine o'clock in the evening it was believed that his agony had commenced. The whole community surrounded his bed, and the prayers for the agonising were commenced; but he came to himself again. He was again asked to bless all the congregation,

and as he could no longer raise his hand, he moved his head in acquiescence. On the morning of the 30th several masses were celebrated, and it seemed to us that he wished for communion. Father Villani would not however allow it to be given to him, as he feared that he was unable to swallow the sacred Host. A little ice was put into his mouth by the doctor's orders; upon which he said, but so indistinctly that we could hardly understand him, "What am I taking?" Father Grossi arrived from St. Angelo, and asked to have his blessing. His Lordship understood him, manifested his pleasure, and raised his hand and blessed him.

Mgr. Tafuri, the bishop of la Cava, came to receive the blessing of the dying saint; but as he could not recognise him the bishop kissed his hand and placed it on his forehead. A Carmelite father came about this time to give him the last indulgence of the scapular. It sufficed to remind him of the sacred names of Jesus and Mary, or to give him a picture of his holy patrons, to make him quite collected. Father Crisuoli suggested some pious reflections to him, and offered him the picture of St. Michael the Archangel, which he generally had at the head of his bed; he took it into his hands and kissed it, and opened his eyes to gaze on it; he then moved his lips and recommended himself to the archangel. He also was seen to open his eyes and to murmur whilst the acts of faith, hope, and charity were suggested to him. When a brass crucifix was held out to him, he showed a

wish to have it in his hands ; he pressed it with love, and three times endeavoured to raise it to his mouth ; but as he was unable to do it, Father Capriola assisted him to kiss it, and he moved his lips to do so. As he still suffered much internal pain, he moved his hands about as if in search of ease ; but after having raised them with difficulty, he joined and crossed them as a sign of conformity to the will of God.

He took some spoonfuls of milk with relish at about eleven o'clock ; after that he refused all that was offered to him. He preserved the use of his faculties during all that day and the following night, although so very weak, and we saw that he assented to the holy affections which were suggested to him, either by opening his eyes or moving his lips.

At about two o'clock in the morning of the 30th, as his agony was near at hand, masses were begun to be said in his room, in the church, and in his oratory ; a crucifix was offered to him, he opened his eyes, looked at it, and took it in his hands. A picture of the Most Holy Virgin was also presented to him, and he looked at it with devotion. At about seven o'clock the crucifix was again presented to him, and he was exhorted to have confidence, and he kissed it with tenderness. At about twelve o'clock he took a picture of the Blessed Virgin which he had at his breast into his hands ; he kissed it and pressed it to his heart ; he took it up again at about two, and held it for nearly a quarter of an hour ; a fresh attack came on at three ; it

was believed to be the commencement of the agonies of death, but he again came to himself.

The Blessed Virgin did not fail to assist and to console him in his last moments, and it was a favour which he ardently desired during life, and had unceasingly prayed to her to grant him. The following is the prayer he wrote on this subject in one of his works:* “O Consoler of the afflicted, do not abandon me at the hour of death.....Obtain for me the grace of invoking you often, that I may expire with your sweet name and that of your divine Son on my lips. Pardon my boldness, O my Queen, and come yourself to console me with your presence before I expire. I am a sinner, it is true, and I do not deserve it; but I am your servant, I love you, and I have great confidence in you. O Mary! I hope in you, do not then refuse me this consolation.” And elsewhere he said in addressing the Blessed Virgin, † “When I am in the last struggles of death, O Mary my hope, do not abandon me; then above all assist and strengthen me, that I may not despair at the sight of my sins, which the devil will then place before my eyes. O my Queen! pardon my temerity; come yourself then and console me by your presence; you have conferred this favour on many others, and I also long for it; if my boldness is great, your goodness is still greater, and seeks

* Visits to the Blessed Sacrament.

† The Glories of Mary.

out those who are the most unworthy, in order to console them."

His prayer was heard. He became worse at every instant, but his peace and serenity were unalterable. At about six o'clock, when he was being attended to by two of our fathers, and held a picture of the Blessed Virgin in his hand, his face suddenly became inflamed and resplendent, and a sweet smile also overspread his lips.

The same thing happened again before seven. The rector and Father Buonapane were then at each side of his bed, and Father Fiore was at the foot. Father Buonapane put a picture of the Most Holy Virgin before him, and suggested to him to invoke her that he might have a good death; as soon as his Lordship heard the sweet name of Mary, he opened his eyes and looked at the picture, and seemed again to have a mysterious interview with the Queen of Heaven.

He was in a state of most complete prostration of strength, throughout the whole of the following night, but he was always tranquil and serene. He was quite recollected, and listened with pleasure to the holy affections which were suggested to him. When the crucifix was presented to him, he endeavoured to kiss it. On the morning of the 1st of August, when some compresses were applied to him, he caught hold of the sheets in order to cover himself.

Masses were unceasingly celebrated in his room, in the church, and in the oratory from one o'clock in the morning. His children tried

to do a holy violence to heaven to obtain special assistance from Almighty God for the last moments of their common father. He grew worse at half-past nine. From the early part of the evening his Lordship clasped the crucifix, and as every one wished to have a crucifix which had been for some time in the dying hands of his Lordship, a fresh one was constantly being substituted. Alphonso had always wished to die amongst his dear children. "O my God!" he exclaimed in one of his works,* "O my God, I thank Thee now for the favour Thou wilt grant me of dying surrounded by my dear brothers, who will then have no other anxiety than that of my eternal salvation, and who will all aid me to die well." God did not deprive him of this consolation: our fathers continued to arrive from all the houses, and Alphonso, like another Jacob, entered into his last agony surrounded by his numerous children, who were his joy and his crown. He seemed not so much to be struggling with death as to be conversing with God in a prolonged ecstasy. No change was observed in his body, no oppression of breathing, no painful sigh, but whilst holding a picture of the Blessed Virgin in his hands, and amidst our prayers and tears, Alphonso gently and sweetly expired, or rather he tranquilly fell asleep in the arms of the Lord and of the most Holy Virgin Mary, at the very moment when the bell was rung for the Angelus.

* Preparation for Death.

Alphonso Maria de Liguori died on the 1st of August, 1787, at about eleven o'clock, A.M., and at the age of ninety years, ten months, and five days. Pius VI. then occupied the pontifical See; the Emperor Joseph was on the throne, and the kingdom of Naples was happily governed by Ferdinand IV., the august son of Charles III., king of Spain. The congregation had then reached the fifty-fifth year of its existence. Alphonso was of middle size, with rather a large head and of a fresh complexion. He had a full forehead, pleasing azure blue eyes, an aquiline nose, a small mouth, and smiling lips. His beard was thick and his hair black; he kept them short, and often cut them himself; he was short-sighted and made use of glasses; but he always took them off in the pulpit or when he spoke to women. His voice was clear and sonorous; however spacious the church might be, and however long a mission might last, it never failed him, and it continued thus until his last infirmities. He had an imposing mien, his manners were grave and gracious at the same time, in fact, all combined to make him most winning.

His natural qualities were admirable. As his judgment was subtle and penetrating, his memory was prompt and tenacious, and his mind precise and methodical; his success in all scientific branches is easily accounted for.

His whole life was one continued application; he was never occupied about indifferent things,

nor even about matters which were more curious than useful.

He was enterprising, but not rash, and he weighed all his thoughts. He succeeded in everything by his self-distrust and his confidence in God. He was always the same; adversity did not cast him down, and prosperity did not puff him up. He was averse to all impiousness of manner, and entreated rather than commanded; but if he was obliged to do so, he would be obeyed, and did not allow resistance to go unpunished. He was energetic in his reprimands, but he knew how to soften their bitterness by gentleness. He made himself all to all. All was justice in him; he only punished with regret, and returned thanks when himself reproved. He was of a passionate temper, but through virtue he became a model of sweetness. He was always master of himself, so that no passion could take him by surprise; he opened or closed the avenues of his heart at will; he was unpitying towards himself, yet all charity to others, and thus he practised all which constitutes the double character of the saints.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE funeral of Mgr. Liguori was extremely solemn, not through the pomp and magnificence of the preparations, but through the tears and veneration of all who assisted at it. No sooner had his Lordship rendered up his pure soul to God, than our fathers, foreseeing the enthusiasm of the people, applied to D. Gualenga, the commander of the royal cavalry, before ringing the knell, to have a detachment of horse to keep order at the door of the house. When the body was properly placed on a bier, which was surrounded by a great many lights, and in that part of the church which was destined for the confraternity of gentlemen, we announced his death by our little bell, to which all those in the other churches echoed, as Mgr. Sanfelice of Nocera had ordered. The whole town was immediately thrown into a state of agitation, and crowds of people flocked to our house; the door was opened, but we did not allow them to enter, and every one was obliged to be satisfied with having the saintly body touched with rosaries, scapulars, and other objects of devotion. Several persons brought baskets of flowers which they had strewed on the body, and then carried away with them to distribute them as so many relics.

When our fathers had paid their last homage

towards their common father by the recitation of the whole office of the dead, the fathers of St. Francis of Paul and the Carmelite fathers sung the Libera together. The missionary priests of the town also rendered their homage to the deceased, and united together to chant the whole office in their turn, which was followed by the Libera. During this time, a great number of gentlemen from the high town of Nocera arrived accompanied by Don Gualenga and all the staff. It was seven o'clock in the evening, yet they had the greatest difficulty in shutting the door.

Mgr. Sanfelice had already made arrangements to have the funeral conducted in the most solemn manner possible. In consideration of the saint's virtues and the veneration of the people, he had settled, that besides the chapter of the cathedral, the seminarists and the clergy of Pagani, all the religious and all the confraternities should be invited to accompany the sacred remains in procession through the town, with military escort, to the convent of the Poor Clares, which is very near the high town of Nocera; and that after having consoled these religious, as well as those of the Purity, by chanting the Libera in their respective churches, the funeral procession should return to our house by the same streets and with the same pomp.

This would have been a triumph for Alphonso, which would have been without parallel; but the inhabitants of Pagani or of the low town, and especially the gentlemen, suspected that

his Lordship had some pious stratagem to transport Alphonso's remains to his cathedral, and strongly opposed the execution of this design. When his Lordship was returning to his palace in the evening, they stopped his carriage, and all protested that they would not allow such a translation. The bishop solemnly asserted that they were wrong in their suspicions; but they did not believe him, and at eight o'clock in the evening the crowd were still assembled and in a state of great disturbance; their minds became tranquillised however when we ourselves went to them and assured them no such project was in contemplation; but as his Lordship feared some tumult in which the venerated body might suffer, he altered the arrangements he had before made, and determined that no invitations should be issued, and that the funeral should be celebrated in the simplest manner possible.

On the morning of the 2nd of August we could not open the door until after the arrival of a detachment of twenty soldiers. After that, an immense concourse of people of all classes flocked from the villages of Nocera, San Severino, la Cava, and other places; they all ranged themselves before our house, protesting that they wished to render homage to the saintly bishop and to have some of his relics.

Mgr. Nocera remained with us for a long time, and although no one had been invited, the chapter of the cathedral, the seminarists, the clergy of Pagani, the priests amongst the regulars, the fathers of St. Francis of Paul,

and the Carmelites, arrived of their own accord to honour the memory of Alphonso.

The ceremony was commenced by the clergy of Pagani, who sung the *Libera*, in which the canons of the cathedral and the regulars joined them. During this time, as a number of altars had been erected on the preceding evening, a great many secular and regular priests offered up the holy sacrifice of the mass.

When all was ready, Mgr. Sanfelice arranged the procession; it was decided that it should not enter the town, but that it should go out by the door of our house, make a semicircle before the monastery, and then return to our church. The fathers of St. Francis of Paul went first; after them came the Carmelites, our fathers, our students, and our lay-brothers; they were followed by the clergy of Pagani, the rector of the mother church, and the four priests. The cathedral chapter came last.

Six gentlemen wished to bear the bier, and it was almost necessary to use force in order to prevent their doing so; the precious burthen was placed on the shoulders of the four rectors of our houses; canons held the four corners of the pall, and six gentlemen with lighted torches surrounded the coffin. Mgr. of Nocera followed with a candle, and behind him were the troops of the town, and a great number of gentlemen.

When the body was deposited in the church, the canons chanted all the office, Mgr. of Nocera assisting, and mass was celebrated by D.

Baptist Villani, who was canon and vicar-general. D. Fortunatus Pinto, who was then a canon and patrician of Salerno, and who is now the very excellent bishop of Tricarico, pronounced the funeral sermon. As the church was too small to contain the crowd, care had been taken to place the pulpit near the door.

The catafalque was not very high, as the church was too low to admit of it; the body was raised about six palms from the ground, and this was providentially ordered, for if it had been otherwise, the people would not have been able to satisfy their wish to kiss it, to touch it with their rosaries, and to strew it with flowers. Brother Francis Anthony and the servant Alexis stood at each side of Alphonso's body, and many mothers presented their little children to them that they might touch the lips of the saint's body; as they could not seize on any relics of it, as it was surrounded by soldiers, every one enriched themselves by carrying away some flowers or rosaries which had touched it.

At this time a celebrated painter from Naples came to take his likeness, without our having sent for him. It was about eleven o'clock when he wished to form the cast, and there was the greatest difficulty in shutting the church. The body had preserved its bloom and appeared quite animated. When the cast was taken off, a part of the skin of the left nostril adhered to it, and a quantity of bright blood issued from it, which was eagerly collected in handkerchiefs.

When the operation was over the church was

reopened, and a multitude of gentlemen then arrived from Salerno, Vietri, la Cava, San Severino, Nole, Sarno, la Tour, Lettere, and other places, so that all the ground in front of our house was crowded with carriages. There were whole communities of regulars who also formed part of the concourse. Besides those of Pagani, there were the fathers of Mount Olivet, of Nocera, those of Montovagine, as well as many Conventuals, Augustinians, and Observantines. Several Benedictines also came from la Cava, as well as the Camaldoles of Angri and other places, and an abbot of the order of St. Basil from the monastery of Mater Domini, with all his community. Every one at Pagani showed the greatest enthusiasm, and our fathers were insufficient to distribute to all these devout persons pieces of linen which Alphonso had made use of; it is said that more than ten thousand people came to do honour to the ceremonies of his funeral.

At about seven o'clock in the evening, as Mgr. Sanfelice saw what a multitude of people there were, and feared some disagreement between them and the military, he ordered the holy body to be interred, but it was not without much difficulty that the soldiers succeeded in emptying the church. Several gentlemen solicited the honour of taking the body down from the catafalque. It had remained there for thirty-three hours; and yet notwithstanding the heat of the weather, and the mortification which had reached the flesh, the limbs remained flexible, and emitted no unpleasant smell.

Mgr. de Nocera, who was staying with us, wished that it should be tried to bleed him. It was done first at the right arm, then at the hand, and at the jugular vein, but all was in vain. This disappointment discouraged those who were present, as it was not known that Alphonso had foretold this long before. When he was at Nocera, our fathers were one day relating what had happened at St. Angelo after the death of our father D. John Rizzi, that is to say, that it was attempted to draw blood from his body, but as none would come, the rector commanded it to do so, upon which the blood at once flowed, which was reiterated some days afterwards by virtue of holy obedience; his Lordship smiled at this recital and said, "When I am dead, such wonders need not be attempted; for I will yield no blood."

The holy remains were deposited in a leaden chest. It was sealed with six seals of the chapter of the congregation, four of the town of Pagani, and two of the congregation. It was shut with three different keys; one was given to the Prince of Polleca, D. Joseph Capano Orsini, who assisted in the name of the nephews of Alphonso; the second, to the regents of the town; and the third remained in the hands of the rector of the house. After these precautionary measures, the chest was deposited at the left side of the high altar.

The sepulchre was no less simple than the funeral. For some time there had been an idea of raising a magnificent mausoleum in marble

to Alphonso ; it was to have been made by the famous royal architect D. Joseph Mauro ; the design he drew was very beautiful ; it was surmounted by a bust of Alphonso, and at the bottom were the arms of the house of Liguori and those of our congregation, together with some little cherubs, whose features betokened sadness. The celebrated father of the Pious Schools, D. Joseph Cavallo, had composed the following epitaph, which was to have been placed in the middle of the monument :

“ Alphonsi sum effigies
 Neapolitanus
 Patriciorum, Caussidicorum, Sacricolarum
 Ordo
 Ob Ligiorum gentem
 ob advocati præmia
 ob sacerdotis labores
 suum illum vocat
 parentem suum
 Sanctissimi Redemptoris Congregatio
 ortu institutis forma
 ab ipso indesinenter accepta
 sponsum suum
 perditorum esciccata colluvie
 ovibusque Christi
 ad opima pascua actis
 Sanctæ Agathæ Gothorum ecclesia
 voce manu calamo
 instructus terrarum orbis
 suum doctorem prædicat
 at ego
 illum annis XC. mensibus X. diebus V.
 peregrinum terris egisse
 cælis nunc eidem
 Perpetuo regnaturum
 doceo.”

The celebrated Emmanuel Compolongo composed another which was to have been placed at the end of the monument; it was as follows:

“Locus requietis
 Alphonsi de Liguori patricii Napolitani
 S. Agathæ Gothorum pontificis
 vigilantissimi
 cujus irreprehensa vita lucida perpetim
 omnifariam tuita oves est
 collustravit ovilia
 sodalium S. S. Redemptoris
 Ab eo institutum auctum amplificatum
 lacrymis inexhaustis
 conditori patrono vindici
 monumentum vivax ponendum curavit.”

This project was several times attempted to be realised, but from divers reasons its execution was always suspended; so that at his Lordship's death we were obliged to content ourselves with closing the door of his vault by a simple slab of marble, bearing the following inscription:

“Hic jacet corpus
 illustrissimi et reverendissimi domini
 D. Alphonsi de Liguorio
 episcopi S. Agathæ Gothorum
 et fundatoris Congregationis
 Sanctissimi Redemptoris.”

Who cannot see the dispositions of Providence in this, who wished to satisfy Alphonso's humility, even after his death? On the following evening, a fresh concourse of people and of persons of distinction arrived from Nole, from Salerno, and from other distant places. They even arrived from the town of Ariano, which

was two days' journey from Nocera ; as they found that Alphonso's body was already placed in the vault, they collected together some remains of the mortar which had been used in fastening the stone, as if it were a precious relic. Others went away satisfied at having been able to touch it with their scapulars or their rosaries. A great number of little children did homage to Alphonso's sanctity, by kneeling down on the sepulchral stone, which they kissed with humility and devotion.

God was not long in glorifying His servant : signal favours were obtained through his intercession on the very day of his funeral. D. Angela Tortora had suffered violent and frequent toothache for a great number of years ; when she heard that Alphonso was exposed on the catafalque, she applied a little piece of his vestment to her mouth, and she was instantly cured. Another woman had been nearly blind for some months ; she had specks on her eyes and a great many pimples on the eyelids ; she invoked Alphonso while his funeral rites were being celebrated, and was instantly cured. There was a woman who had suffered a great pain in her side three days ; she had recourse to his Lordship, and after having applied a morsel of his raiment to it she was healed. The Father Abbot of Monteverginé had a diseased liver ; he applied a piece of the saint's clothes to it and was also relieved. A lay-sister in the convent of la Pureté had a sore in her leg, which had begun to mortify ; she made use of a relic

of Alphonso, and was immediately in a state to wait on the community. In the village of Cartoli there was a lady who had for several years been afflicted by a tertian fever, attended by pains all over the body, and obstinate vomitings; and she too was cured by the mere touch of a relic of Alphonso.

Angela Oliviero, a nun at Naples, who was a former penitent of Alphonso's, and sister of D. Oliviero, the celebrated sinner, who, as we have seen, was converted by Alphonso, had great devotion for him, and was inconsolable when she heard of his death. But whilst she was thus sorrowing, Alphonso appeared to her in glory to console her.

When his death became known at St. Agatha the inhabitants of this town also resolved to fly to his patronage. A woman who was there had been tormented by pain in the side for three days; she had recourse to his Lordship, and was instantly cured. Another woman, who suffered most acutely from toothache, applied a thread of the saint's vesture, and became perfectly free from pain. Canon Lucca, who had suffered from violent colics, had no sooner made use of a letter of Alphonso's than his pains disappeared. For some days the brother of a poor woman had been confined to bed by a high fever, and in order to allay it he was ordered to take quinine, which would have cost six or seven carlins, but as she could not command such a sum she did not know what to do; in her distress she had recourse to Alphonso, and casting herself down on

her knees, she exclaimed, "My blessed Lord, come to my aid, for I cannot aid myself." Animated with confidence, she took some threads of linen which his Lordship had used, and caused her brother to swallow them. The fever instantly ceased, and two days afterwards he was labouring in the fields.

I pass over many other similar prodigies in silence, but I cannot refrain from relating one striking miracle, which took place in the church during the celebration of the funeral rites. For ten days Joseph Maria Fusco, a little child of rather more than a year old, and who was the son of D. Thomas Fusco, had been suffering from a high fever accompanied with dysentery. He got worse on the 19th of July, and on the 2nd of August all hope of saving him was abandoned. As his aunt, Ursula Fusco, had heard what was said of Alphonso, she resolved to take the baby to the church, and she did so in spite of the opposition of her brother, of another relation, and of the mother, who feared that the sick child would die on the way. At first the saintly body was touched with a rosary, which was afterwards placed on the dying child, and then the mother, who had followed it, suddenly became filled with great confidence, and begged Brother Francis Anthony to let her son's face touch the body of his Lordship, which was scarcely done ere the child was cured.

On the evening of Friday, the 3rd of August, his uncle, D. Gaetan Fusco, who was a priest, came to our house and informed us of the mi-

raculous cure of his nephew. We had just then received some pictures of Alphonso from Naples, which D. Salvatore Tramontana the priest had had engraved, and we gave one of them to D. Gaetan. He carried it home with him. He then sent for his nephew and held it out to him, as if he would say, Behold him who has saved you. After the little child had looked at it with attention he seemed to be raised out of himself, and suddenly exclaimed, "Alphonso! Alphonso!" and pointing with his finger to the picture he raised his little hands and said, lifting up his eyes to heaven, "Alphonso is in heaven!" His parents were filled with admiration; the little child became more animated and joyous, and repeated, "Alphonso! Alphonso! the saint! the saint!" while pointing to the picture; then after again raising his hands and eyes to heaven, he exclaimed, "The saint is in heaven! the saint is in heaven!" This unanswerable testimony from the mouth of a child who had never before spoken, and who was not old enough to do so, contributed greatly to spread Alphonso's renown everywhere; and as God daily glorified His servant by fresh prodigies, crowds were soon seen coming to his tomb to implore his powerful intercession, or to make offerings to him in token of their gratitude.

The clergy of Paganì were not satisfied with the homages which had been rendered to Alphonso in the celebration of his obsequies already made, and desired to honour his memory in our church by a fresh funeral service. The

concourse of people was immense, and our Father D. Vitus Papa delivered the panegyric on the deceased saint.

CHAPTER XLIII.

As Mgr. Sanfelice thought that the obsequies of a saint could not be celebrated with too great magnificence, he decided, in concert with Father Villani, that the ceremony should be repeated with the greatest pomp on the seventh day in the cathedral at Nocera. His Lordship previously invited all the religious, the nobility, and all the authorities both civil and military to be present. The catafalque was magnificent. We all took part in the ceremony, his Lordship only assisted at mass, being unable to celebrate himself on account of his infirmities; and Canon D. Francis Xavier Calenda, who was a prodigy of eloquence, set before his audience the merits of Alphonso before God, and the rare virtues he had practised. Although the cathedral is very spacious, it was crowded to excess: every one invoked Alphonso as a saint, and all shed tears of consolation and tenderness.

Whilst the obsequies were being solemnized in the cathedral, a great concourse of gentlemen from la Cava, and Amalfi; and even from Naples and la Tour arrived at our house, de-

siring to visit Alphonso's tomb and to take away with them some precious relic of him. The obsequies were also celebrated on this same day in the house at Ciorani. The rector D. Pascal Maria Capriola spared no expense to render the ceremony as imposing as possible. The catafalque was magnificent, and worthy to be compared to the most splendid of those in the capital.

All things contributed to enhance the solemnity; Alphonso's high renown itself acted as an invitation; an immense crowd of the faithful, including even the nobility, hastened from San Severino, Siano, from the barony of St. George's and the hamlets of Bracigliano; and as if it were not the celebration of funeral ceremonies that was in question, but as if it were the fête of some great saint, they established themselves opposite to the church as if at a fair. Mgr. Nicodemus, the bishop of Marsico, happened to be at la Penta, which was his native place, at this time, and accepted the invitation to celebrate the office pontifically with great pleasure. There were a great number of priests present, and the Observantine Fathers came from Bracigliano to chant the office. Although the church was large it could not contain every one. Our father D. Francis Xavier de Leon was chosen to pronounce the funeral eulogium, and Mgr. de Marsico was so affected at the recital of so many heroic actions that he evinced his emotion by his tears and sobs. A lady, who had suffered from a cataract

for ten years and had entirely lost her sight, caused herself to be led into the church from the desire to obtain her cure. She was full of confidence, and raising her voice before all present, she exclaimed, "D. Alphonso, I will not believe that you are a saint and in heaven if you do not obtain this favour for me!" Her prayer was heard, and she returned home glorifying him who had restored her sight. It was believed that the funeral ceremonies could not be celebrated at Iliceto with much eclat or with any pomp, because this house is so solitary and isolated. However, the father-rector, D. Balthasar Apicella, being anxious to honour Alphonso's memory with as much magnificence as possible, obtained a mitre and a cross from the canons of Troy, as well as all the ornaments and draperies which were necessary. He selected D. Theodore Calvino, a canon of the cathedral at Venosa, for the funeral sermon, who was a man who had always been devoted to the congregation and to Alphonso; the archdeacon of Ascoli, D. Michael Angelo Cirillio, who was also our benefactor, sang mass. When it became known in the neighbourhood that we were engaged in arranging a catafalque in our church for the funeral rites of Mgr. Liguori, a great number of priests, religious, and gentlemen hastened to come from Troy, Ascoli, Venosa, Candela, St. Agatha, la Rochette, Bovino, Monteleone, the territory of Accadia, of Foggia and Lucera. The chapter of Iliceto also assisted in their choir dress, and the con-

course of people was so great, that it was spoken of throughout all the province.

Our Father D. Gaspard Cajone honoured the memory of Alphonso in a signal manner at Benevento. He himself gave the following recital of what was done to Father Villani: "Thanks be to God," said he, "the funeral rites of our blessed father have been celebrated here with all possible pomp. The cardinal, the magistrates, the secular and regular clergy, the nobility and a multitude of persons of all conditions, assisted at them. The father-rector of St. Angelo came with all the fathers and the students; his Eminence published an indulgence of three hundred days, and the church was as full as possible.

"The office commenced at about half-past seven, and ended at a quarter after ten. Terragnoli, the archpriest, celebrated mass, and the cardinal assisted in his pontifical vestments, and we had the chaplains and the best voices in the town for our singers. The funeral sermon, which lasted for more than an hour, and yet appeared to be too short, was delivered by D. John Capobiancho, the chaplain. The cardinal listened to him with excessive satisfaction. The catafalque was very beautiful: there were two portraits of our saintly bishop on it; one was turned towards the door, and the other towards the high altar; there were about two hundred lighted tapers, and sixteen wax candles, each of three pounds' weight, surrounding the monument; four inscriptions which I myself composed decorated the four sides, and there was another which ornamented

the front of the church outside,* which was accompanied by the arms of the congregation. The episcopal insignia were supported by the emblems of death, which were very well executed. There were five solemn absolutions, of which the cardinal chanted the first. From six to seven hundred portraits of Alphonso were distributed; but we could have given away thousands, for persons

* The following were the inscriptions, and are the more worthy of being here cited, as they are a sincere expression of the feelings of a father who had been intimate with Alphonso for a long time.

For the front of the church :

“ Alphonso Mariæ de Ligorio
 patricio Neapolitano
 S. Agathæ Gothorum episcopo
 Congregationis Sanctissimi Redemptoris
 institutori
 patri benemerentissimo
 optimo incomparabili
 filii tanto præsidio orbat
 mærentes justa persolvant.”

For the front of the catafalque :

“ Alphonso Mariæ de Ligorio
 Neapoli summo loco nato
 numcli triumphatori eximio
 ecclesiastici ordinis
 catholicæ fidei
 lumini decori ornamento
 Congregationis Sanctissimi Redemptoris
 Patri Institutori
 civitatis S. Agathæ Gothorum
 episcopo vigilantissimo
 viro vere apostolico vere magno
 heu nuper e vivis
 non sine ingenti bonorum luctu
 erepto
 semptiternam requiem
 adprecator.”

of all classes even still continue to ask us for them as well as for his relics."

His eminence also wrote to Father Villani. "The office was celebrated here on Friday with great solemnity. I was present and assisted pontifically."

At St. Angelo of Cupoli our fathers were no

For the three sides of the catafalque :

"Viri innocentissimi
Alphonsi Mariæ de Ligorio
in quo absolutissimum omnium virtutum
perpetuo effulsit exemplar
memoriam immortalitate dignissimum
Deus cui unice studuit
pietas quam semper promovit
ecclesia cui tantopere laboravit
ab interitu vindicabunt.

2

"Alphonsi Mariæ de Ligorio
Viro ad quæque grandia nati
cujus pro Dei gloria animarumque salute
qua prædicatione qua scriptis
ad miraculum exantlatos labores
Neapolis, Italia, Europa,
vidit celebravit obstupuit
Nunquam satis defendam jacturam
ecquæ unquam tempora
instaurabant.

3

"Admirabilem
erga sanctissimæ Eucharistiæ mysterium
singularem in beatam Dei Matrem
pietatem religionem obsequium
Alphonsi Mariæ de Ligorio
viri nostrorum temporum
doctrina et vitæ sanctimonia
præclarissimi
nulla secula conticescent."

less zealous. The father-rector, D. Nicholas Grossi, was not satisfied with having celebrated the obsequies as soon as he heard of his Lordship's death, so he again celebrated them with much pomp on the 13th of August, after having invited the regulars and all the priests of the neighbourhood to be present. A great number of clerics who were going to be promoted to holy orders, some of whom belonged to that diocese, and others to those of Cerreto, Benevento, and Ternoli, were at this house at the time, to go through the spiritual exercises, and delivered divers discourses in praise of Alphonso.

The father-rector, D. Michael Tozzoli at Caposele, was not behind the rest. In order that the memory of our common father might be honoured with as much magnificence as possible, he sent for draperies and hangings from la Cava, without sparing any expense; all the priests of the diocese, the nobles, and the most respectable people were invited, and the canons of the cathedral of Conza also felt a pleasure in assisting at the ceremony. A superb catafalque was erected, and Father D. Joseph de Meo, a nephew of the celebrated Father D. Alexander, delighted all the audience by his funeral discourse. It was more like a triumph than funeral rites. There were stalls of all sorts in front of the church, and in fact, all which attend a great fête. Several discourses on Alphonso's virtues were also composed, of which copies were solicited in the adjacent dioceses.

The funeral pomp was no less solemn at Gubbio. Although Alphonso was only known there by his works, as soon as they heard of his death, the bishop and all the clergy and people evinced the most tender devotion towards him. A magnificent catafalque, composed of three pieces, was erected in the church of the archpriest of St. John. On the four sides of the first, the arms of the family of the Liguori were united with those of our congregation; the second was adorned with divers emblems to point out the virtues of his Lordship, and his likeness was placed on the third, which was venerated by every one as that of a saint. All the clergy assisted at the ceremony, which was accompanied with music. Mgr. Angeletti, who is now the bishop of Gubbio, sang mass. Besides a great concourse of poor people, of ladies, and of chevaliers, all the religious communities hastened to take part in the ceremony. An affecting discourse was pronounced by our Father Don Joseph Maria Martorelli, who was a very distinguished ex-Jesuit, and nothing was wanting in order to perpetuate the memory of Mgr. Liguori in this town.

Scifelli did not forget to celebrate the obsequies of our common father; but nothing very remarkable happened there, on account of its being so isolated.

At Frosinone, Father Francis de Paul, the superior-general of the houses in the states, seemed to try to surpass all the rest; we received the following account of what was done there from Father D. Michael of that house: "The obse-

quies of our saintly founder have been solemnly celebrated here," said he. "All the canons assisted at them, and the chief dignitary of the chapter celebrated mass. A tolerably large catafalque was set up in the church. The funeral sermon was much liked; it was composed by Father de Paul, and delivered by our Father D. Quatrini. The concourse of priests, religious, and magistrates was considerable. Alphonso's portrait was placed in the middle of the chapel, and all present eagerly went to kiss it. Every one appeared animated with the greatest devotion towards our blessed father, and eagerly solicited to have his relics and pictures of him."

Our fathers at Girgenti in Sicily, were no less zealous. They honoured Alphonso's memory with extraordinary pomp on the 5th of October, besides the office of the dead and the holy sacrifice of the mass which they had previously celebrated for his memory. The ceremony was celebrated in the cathedral, according to the wishes of its excellent chapter. All the religious assisted at it, as well as the nobility, and an immense crowd of people from the neighbourhood. The catafalque was embellished with a picture of Alphonso, and a great many emblems. Canon D. Dominic Spota, a vicar-capitular, and the chief dignitary of the cathedral, celebrated mass, and Father D. Peter Blasucci, the rector of the house, attracted general admiration by the recital which he made of Alphonso's virtues. All concurred in heightening the grandeur of this ceremony; and God also caused it to contribute to

the glory of His servant. There was a man who had been suffering from a great many infirmities for a long time, who having heard that the obsequies of the saintly bishop were being celebrated, caused himself to be conveyed to the church, as he could not go on foot; when there, he recommended himself to Alphonso, and he obtained a complete cure on the spot, which was visible to all present.

I pass over the obsequies which were celebrated at St. Agatha in silence. The venerable chapter of this cathedral, and especially the vicar-capitular, Archdeacon D. Nicholas de Robertis, manifested on this occasion how sincere their attachment was to their former bishop. Canon D. Pascal of Naples delivered the funeral sermon. The example of the cathedral was followed throughout the diocese. The consolation which was felt from the certain assurance of having gained a tender father and powerful protector in heaven, caused the tears which were shed at Alphonso's loss to be turned into joy.

CHAPTER XLIV.

If it be true that the just must be glorified on earth in proportion to the humiliations they have received there, Alphonso had a right to extraordinary testimonies of veneration from that world, from which he only desired to receive contempt.

The thirtieth day after his death was a day of triumph for him, and ceremonies and funeral services in his honour were everywhere to be met with. All the first orators vied with each other in exalting his virtues, and Naples was the first to honour his memory. Two magnificent catafalques were erected in the church of the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Conference, on the 30th of August; and another on the 12th of September in that of the Apostolical Missions. On the first day D. Joseph d' Onofrio pronounced the funeral sermon, and on the second d' Onofrio Scoppa, who were both considered to be amongst the first orators of the capital. Cardinal Capece Zurlo, the archbishop of Naples, added to the splendour of these ceremonies by his presence. Our Father d' Augustine, who was there, wrote to us about it as follows: "A funeral service for his Lordship has been celebrated by the Congregation of the Conference. Mgr. Jorio sang mass. Besides the cardinal, there were several bishops and grand-vicars present, amongst others, Mgr. Brancaccio, vicar of Ariano and of Capua, and now of Cosenza; D. Janvier Tortora, who is now the grand-vicar of Salerno; all the fathers of the Oratory assisted at it, and the whole church was filled with advocates and chevaliers; the funeral sermon was long; it might well be called the panegyric of a saint; Alphonso's doctrine was spoken of in it; the rigorists were greatly combated, and many prelates received a lesson from it. The Congregation of the Apos-

tological Missions have also celebrated his obsequies with the assistance of Mgr. Zurlo, of several bishops and vicars-general, as well as of a great number of religious and of persons of the first rank."

The funeral ceremonies were celebrated with no less splendour in the Congregation of Doctors at Naples, and in that of the White Monks, who both recognised Alphonso as their brother, as well as the preceding ones. The same solemnities took place in the college of the Holy Family, where Alphonso had formerly lived. We will now quote some lines which were composed by Father D. Felix Cappelli of this congregation, who was one of the most literary men of Naples, a member of the royal academy, and a great admirer of Alphonso's:

"Carmen Funebre

Alphonsi, o tu lætitia, at post funera mœror,
 Discipulis nam lux mæsta, et nox anxia perstat,
 Nunc prorsus quum crederis ætherea astra tenere,
 Jugiter exulta, et pro cunctis Numen adora.
 Tu in terris jam clara dedisti prodigia olim,
 Nunc potiora dabis, spectans cælestia regna,
 Huic semper duris rebus succurre tuorum;
 Adsis tu Sincæ Jesu Christi domui, in qua
 Dudum vixisti magno devinctus amore.
 Tu mihi denum faveas, qui carmine laudo,
 Carpore te exutum, jam nunc cæloque receptum.
 Jamque tibi hoc donum ponam, ceu pignus honoris,
 Cappellus cognomine dictus, nomine felix,
 Presbyter æternæ, qui sperat præmia vitæ;
 At prius exstiteram juris, legumque peritus;
 Tu quoque jura dedisti non suæ laude clientum
 Sed fora tristia liquimus ambo, et plena tumultus,
 Translati ad sacram Petri suæ turbine caulam.
 Nunc tu sanctus, non ego; tu mihi porridge dextram."

At Noles, Mgr. Lopez and the excellent chapter, who had had such great veneration for Alphonso during his life, also rendered their homage to him after his death. The funeral rites were magnificent, and rivalled those at the cathedral. The canons of the celebrated college of Ottajano also distinguished themselves by the way in which they honoured Alphonso's memory by masses and funeral rites: "When the tidings of his Lordship's death reached this," Canon D. Xavier Rodino wrote to Father Villani from Somma, "our chapter hastened to celebrate his obsequies. They were but feeble testimonies of the great respect with which we glory in venerating the soul of the Blessed Alphonso and his congregation, and we do not think that any of the clergy in the kingdom ought to exceed us in this." At Rosco, where the clergy were all quite devoted to his Lordship, funeral rites in his honour were also celebrated.

At Amalfi, which was in the diocese of Mgr. Puoti, all the cathedral was hung with brown hangings, which covered even the outer door. The catafalque was magnificent, the invitations were numerous, and the worthy nephew of Mgr. of Amalfi, D. Joachim Puoti, was generally applauded for his discourse on the virtues of Alphonso. The expenses of this ceremony amounted to more than a hundred crowns. Scala and Ravella, where Alphonso had laid the first foundation of his congregation, and which had also enjoyed the first-fruits of his labours, would not

be out-done in the honours which were everywhere rendered to the holy bishop.

Mgr. Amato de Lacedogna, who was so attached to Alphonso, wished to be the first to celebrate his obsequies. "On the Saturday of the first week when I received the authentic tidings of the sad loss of our benefactor, Mgr. Liguori," he wrote to Father Villani on the 8th of August, "I felt it a duty to cause his solemn obsequies to be celebrated in my cathedral. Mass was sung then, and the office for the dead, accompanied by the other ceremonies. I will continue to say mass for him for some time, although I am firmly persuaded that his blessed soul stands not in need of this assistance, but that in the heavenly country where he is, he is now praying for me, a poor sinner."

The canons of the celebrated college of Iliceto also hastened to celebrate his memory in gratitude for the great benefits they had received from him. They were not satisfied with assisting at his funeral rites in our church, but also celebrated them in their own.

Mgr. Nicodemus, the bishop of Marsico Nuovo, was no less zealous in honouring Alphonso's memory in the most solemn manner; as well as Mgr. Rossetti of Bojano, and Mgr. Rosa in his cathedral of Policastro. It may be said that these three distinguished prelates vied with each other in making known the virtue, zeal, and labours of the servant of God by their eloquent discourses.

The archpriest D. Joseph de Lucia, who desired to render the most solemn homage to Alphonso in the territory of Sanfelice, in the diocese of Muro; and caused magnificent funeral preparations to be prepared in his church, and D. Sebastian de Jacobis, the priest, and our pupil, delivered a discourse which caused his numerous audience to melt into tears. Through the zealous efforts of this archpriest, there was also an academy where divers pieces of poetry in Tuscan, Greek, and Latin, were recited in honour of Alphonso.

Mgr. Zunica, the archbishop of Acerenza and of Matera, who had venerated Alphonso so much during his life, also paid the homage of his respect to him after his death, but less as to one deceased than as to a saint in possession of eternal glory.

Splendid funeral rites were also held in the cathedral of Matera; the magistrates, the secular and regular clergy, and the first gentlemen of this town, the principal one of the province, were invited to attend.

The clergy of the town of Pagani were not satisfied with having assisted at all the offices which had been celebrated in our church and in the cathedral, but determined to repeat the funeral pomp in the mother church. The four priests, in concert with the dean of this church, D. Vincent Criscuoli, performed this solemnity with special magnificence on the 27th of September. The catafalque was handsome, and amongst those who assisted at it were to be

numbered a great many religious and gentlemen. Alphonso's eulogium was pronounced by D. Joseph Messina, a learned priest of the town. The clergy of the territory of Angri also honoured Alphonso in a no less remarkable manner.

The gentlemen of the territory of Arienzo, also resolved to testify their especial gratitude towards him who had been their bishop and their father, and as they were not satisfied with the funeral rites celebrated by the canons of the distinguished collegiate of this territory, they honoured his memory on the 13th of October, by a funeral service in the royal church of the Annunziata. The preparations were at the public expense, and were quite magnificent. The whole church was hung with black, and Mgr. Rosseti, a citizen of Arienzo and the bishop of Boiano, officiated pontifically; Mgr. Puoti also a native of this town, and the Archbishop of Amalfi was one of those who assisted at it. The funeral sermon was confided to D. Nicholas Valletta the orator, who was so celebrated at Naples, and who was also born at Arienzo. When it became known that this great function was to take place, and that D. Valletta was to adorn it by a panegyric of the saintly bishop, crowds of priests, religious, gentlemen, and persons of rank, hastened to it in crowds from divers parts of the diocese, as well as from Montesarchio, and other neighbouring places.

The Capuchin Fathers of Arienzo, in gratitude towards their distinguished benefactor, also honoured his memory fifteen days afterwards in their

church. Father Michael Angelo of Ottajano, the most celebrated Capuchin amongst those in the province, made the funeral sermon.

Finally, a great number of convents of nuns at Nocera, Naples, of the diocese of St. Agatha, and of divers other places followed these good examples. Thousands of priests from all parts of the kingdom, hastened to recite the office for the late venerable bishop. Cardinal Banditti of Benevento, after having assisted at the solemn funeral rites for Alphonso in our church of Jesus, also resolved to celebrate the holy sacrifice of the mass for him for several days. He sorrowed for the loss of a friend whom he honoured as a father; but he rejoiced still more at obtaining him as an intercessor in heaven.

CHAPTER XLV.

SCARCELY were the tidings of Alphonso's death spread, ere a great number of illustrious personages, so far from addressing letters of condolence to us, hastened to congratulate us on having such a powerful protector in heaven.*

When Mgr. D. Francis San Severino, the archbishop of Palermo and of Morreale, heard of

* As it would be tedious to go through all these testimonials, the greater part of which are couched in the same terms, we have thought it best only to preserve the whole of those which are the most interesting.

Alphonso's death through the letter by which Father Villani recommended him to his pray-ers, "Let us speak more truly," he replied, "and fearlessly assert that we stand in need of the prayers of the saintly bishop; yes, as-suredly, he has now received the reward due to his labours, his combats, and his virtues. He is now in the enjoyment of God's presence, and is a powerful intercessor for us with Him. As for me, I expect to obtain great assistance from him, because he always loved me during his mortal life. I have confidence that he will obtain from God that I may be made wholly His, and lead a better life from henceforth." When he heard of the miracles wrought through his in-tercession, he wrote again thus: "I thank you more and more for the particulars you continue to give me with regard to the saintly bishop. I trust that God will cause him to be canonized. Keep something for me which once belonged to him. I have caused your letter to be circula-ted throughout all the monasteries and through-out the whole town, where he has always had the reputation of being a saint."

The following was the answer sent by Car-dinal Banditti, the archbishop of Benevento, to the letter informing him of the death of the servant of God:

"The loss of the late Mgr. Liguori, worthy of immortal renown for his learning and for his holiness, has been keenly felt by me, in propor-tion to my great love for him. I hope that the Lord has placed him amongst the number

of those most dear to Him, and that He will cause us all to feel his happy influence in heaven." After he had received more detailed accounts of his death, he replied, "The particulars of the death of Mgr. Liguori have affected me to tears. The miracles he has wrought in all directions are a proof that God wills that he shall be numbered amongst those saints whom the Church delights to honour. Persons of all classes go about extolling him everywhere. At Naples he is never spoken of but with praise, and the funeral solemnities which have taken place here were attended by a crowd of people."

When Mgr. Puoti, the archbishop of Amalfi, was informed that Alphonso was dying, he wrote as follows on the 31st of July: "The tidings of the state to which our venerable Mgr. de Liguori is reduced, have on the one hand filled me with great affliction on account of the loss which the Church militant will sustain in that of so worthy a bishop, but on the other, I have been consoled at hearing that his resignation is preparing him soon to reap the fruit of his labours. If the difficulty of travelling at this time of the year did not prevent it I should have come to assist at his death, in order to witness with my own eyes how the just die, and to excite myself to imitate him; but I hope that when he has gone to enjoy the Divine Beauty, he will, through the great kindness he has ever shown me, remember me, and obtain a double portion of his spirit for me,

so that I may both acquit myself well as regards my laborious and difficult ministry, and also terminate my days in the peace of the Lord."

Mgr. Lopez, the bishop of Nole, who was afterwards archbishop of Palermo, and vice-roy of Sicily, wrote to Father Villani on the same occasion: "My soul," said he, "has been filled with the most lively sorrow at the sad tidings of the death of Mgr. Liguori. I regret his loss as much as his venerable congregation do; if they weep for a father and a founder, I weep for a man worthy of the greatest respect for his holiness and for his learning. The bitterness of this my sorrow is tempered however by the firm confidence I feel that God has crowned him with the glory of the saints in heaven, and that in him we have a most charitable intercessor."

When Mgr. Amato, the bishop of Lacedogna, was thanked for the solemn funeral rites he celebrated in his cathedral, he replied on the 22nd of September, 1787: "In what I have done I feel that I have only performed a duty; I desired to honour the memory of our saintly prelate, the admirable Mgr. Liguori, on the seventh day after his happy passage into another life; and although I am persuaded that he is not in want of our suffrages, yet I feel bound to add the offering up of many masses to the celebration of this office, in order to satisfy a portion of the very great obligations that I have been and always shall be under towards him."

Mgr. Bonaventure, the bishop of Nusco, was so full of admiration for Alphonso's sanctity, that he was tempted to place him on the altars at once. When he heard the recital of the striking miracles by which the Lord had been pleased to glorify him, he wrote to us, saying, "I have felt my confidence increase in his powerful intercession, and I am more than ever led to invoke him in my spiritual wants. From the time I received his picture I have worn it round my neck, and I long above all things for the relic you have promised me. You can send it to me in a letter. 'Mirabilis Deus in sanctis suis.' "

On the 16th of August he expressed himself in the following manner: "Such then was his edifying life, and such was also his blessed death. His pains, and labours, and sufferings, are now at an end. He has reaped in eternity what he sowed in this mortal life. Notwithstanding the corruption of the present age, God has always had some faithful adorers. I should feel it a great favour to receive a relic of him for the consolation of my poor soul." When his desire was gratified, he wrote again as follows: "I give you a thousand thanks for the little piece of his garment that you had the charity to send me. I always wear it next my heart with very great devotion, and I hope, amid my extreme misery, to obtain everything through the intercession of him whom we unite in deploring, but whose death ought rather to cause us to rejoice than to afflict us."

Father D. Anthony of Augustine, the ex-superior general of the Congregation of Pious Labourers, who was unquestionably worthy to be raised to the purple, only considered Alphonso after his death in the light of his advocate and protector. "I have always looked upon him as a saint," he wrote to Father Villani, "and all my congregation coincide with me in this view. You tell me to recommend him to God and to get prayers for him; but you should much rather induce me to recommend myself to him with all my congregation, that thus he who has loved us on earth may continue to protect us in heaven. I will not therefore cease to have recourse to him in all my necessities, with the firm confidence that he will through his merits obtain all that we shall ask for from the Lord."

A multitude of other persons who were distinguished for their knowledge and piety, testified the same sentiment regarding Alphonso in writing to us about him immediately after his death. Amongst those deserving special mention were Mgr. Sambiase, archbishop of Conza; Mgr. Lunica, archbishop of Matera; Mgr. Sanfelice, bishop of Nocera; Mgr. San Severino, confessor to the king; Mgr. Aprilo, bishop of Melfi; Mgr. Cervone, bishop of Aquila; Mgr. Coppola, bishop of Cassano; Mgr. Santoro, bishop of Palignano; D. Xavier Saggese, who was then archpriest of Foggia, and who is now a bishop of Monte-Peloso; D. Nicholas Robertis, archpriest of St. Agatha and vicar-capitular; Canon D. Dominic

Spoto, of Girgenti in Sicily; and D. Francis Massei, superior of the College of the Holy Family at Naples. I will close this chapter by mentioning the sentiments expressed on this occasion by the foundress of the excellent convent of the Most Holy Redeemer at St. Agatha, Sister Mary Raphael of Charity. It is well known what a high reputation this religious had for sanctity, and the supernatural gifts with which she was favoured. When she heard that Alphonso was dying, she wrote to us, saying, "Such a misfortune must cause universal sorrow, because in him the world will lose a true saint, who has preserved us by the power of his prayers. Yes, it is, thanks to his prayers, I doubt not, that Almighty God has suspended the execution of His vengeance against us. However, what consoles me is, that although we have him no longer here below, we shall have him as our protector in heaven, where he will have much more love for us than he had upon earth, and where he will be our advocate in all our wants." When she was informed of the death of Alphonso she again wrote to us, "The sad tidings of our common father's passage into eternity," said she, "has produced conflicting feelings in my soul; sorrow, on account of the great loss he will be to the world; and joy, from the pious and firm conviction I feel that he is in the mansions of glory, and that he will there fulfil the office of our intercessor."

CHAPTER XLVI.

WE have seen in the course of this narration the singular esteem which the king, his ministers, the bishops, the princes, and the most distinguished personages manifested towards Alphonso. Although his only aim was to hide his virtues and talents, perhaps no one in modern days has ever been surrounded with so much respect and veneration. Some called him a true apostle, others a St. Francis Xavier; some spoke of him as a St. Philip Neri, and others again as a St. Charles Borromeo. D. Mariano Arcieri, who was a great servant of God, and a zealous labourer in His service, the process of whose canonization is now being arranged, never called him anything but the modern St. Francis of Sales. When he heard that his death was followed by many miracles, far from being astonished at it, he said, "I have always considered him as a saint, and as such I have recommended myself to him even during his life."

Charles III., king of Spain, had such great veneration for Alphonso, that he frequently recommended himself to his prayers through the Marquis of Brancone, and he never failed to bestow favours on him when opportunity offered. If divers reasons prevented his sometimes being able to satisfy him fully, he always testified regret. He constantly felt a particular affection

for the four houses in the kingdom, although the ministry opposed their establishment. What especially consoled him was the immense good his subjects derived from them, and he therefore several times desired us to give missions in his dominions at his expense. The august princess on the throne, Mary Amelia, often recommended herself to the prayers of Alphonso, and she had such great veneration towards him that she always considered him as a saint.

The Marquis of Brancone, the king's minister, also entertained such a profound respect and high esteem for him, that he acted according to his advice in everything, and never came to any decision of moment without its being previously recommended to his prayers. When he for the first time thought of resigning by reason of his infirmities, Alphonso dissuaded him from it, and he obeyed him. "I adore the will of Divine Providence," was his reply, "which thus disposes of me. I will strive to continue to bear the weight of my office with more diligence and courage, hoping that God will mercifully deign to bless me. I have never flinched from work, nor will I do so now; but as I have lost my health, I cannot help sometimes feeling my courage abated; for this cause I earnestly entreat your prayers and those of your chosen souls, in order to obtain from God better health to enable me to perform my duties cheerfully and properly."

We have also one of his letters dated the 3rd of April, 1745, wherein he said to him, "I

entreat you to continue to remember me in your prayers, to which I recommend myself with all my soul." And in another, which he wrote to him on the 13th of June, 1751, to thank him for his book of the "Visits to the Blessed Sacrament," he said to him, "When you are in presence of this Divine Saviour, then remember me in a special manner; recommend me also to your holy community, for which I shall be duly grateful, and I will not fail to manifest on all occasions that I am your most devoted servant and friend." Amongst all the services which this worthy minister rendered to Alphonso, the greatest was undoubtedly that of gaining for him the favour of King Charles and of the august Amelia. See how he wrote to him in a letter dated the 10th of February, 1753: "Last week I spoke to the king about you and your subjects, with the praise which is due to you..." And when Alphonso thanked him for the protection he had granted to his rising congregation, the Marquis replied, "I ask for nothing in return except that you will kindly when you come to Naples recite the Gospel of St. John on my head."

The excellent Marquis of Marco, another of the king's ministers, showed equal honour towards Alphonso, and always lent him the aid of his support amidst the contradictions we had to endure from our enemies. He had such a high opinion of his sanctity, that before his episcopate he generally called him a truly apostolical man, and the ornament of the priesthood,

and afterwards he never spoke of him but as the glory of the episcopate. He often recommended himself to his prayers, and never let any opportunity of befriending him pass by unheeded. The Marquis Tanucci, who was so distinguished for his learning and mental powers, also regarded him as a saint, of which we have already given proofs.

He was also held in great veneration, both as a learned man and as a saint, by the regents of the Infant D. Ferdinand, who is now our august king, and the fourth of his name. The princes, Ardore and Cendola, also honoured him in a most special manner, as well as the prince of St. Nicandre, who was tutor of the Infant, who granted to him, as we have already mentioned, the life of the three soldiers who were justly condemned to death. The Duke of Sora also always felt the same amount of esteem for him. He evinced the greatest veneration for him at Rome. In a word, all who were raised above others for their merit or by their rank, bestowed their homage and their affection upon him. Don Hector Carafa, the Duke of Andria, and a chevalier of the order of St. Januarius, very frequently came to Nocera to obtain his advice, and he never failed when he left him to kneel down and ask for his blessing, praying him to make the sign of the cross on his forehead. D. Ascagno Filomarini, the Prince of la Rocca, D. Philip Carafa, Count of Cerreto, and D. Diego d' Avolos, the Marquis of Vasto, thought no less highly of him. Once when the latter came to

Arienzo to consult him about the vocation of his daughter who accompanied him, he was so edified by his Lordship's poverty and humility, that when he returned, he said to several gentlemen, "He is undoubtedly a great saint."

The same esteem was entertained for him by a great number of chevaliers who went to Nocera or to Arienzo on purpose to consult him about their consciences, and to recommend themselves to his prayers. Several excellent ladies, such as the Duchess of Bovino, the Princesses Malaspina, de Caracciola, and others, felt that they could not find so good a director at Naples, and also went to Nocera or Arienzo to consult him.

To be esteemed by Alphonso was a passport to obtaining general esteem. D. Lucius de Sancro, Duke of Casacalenda, was in search of an advocate of unblemished character, to whom he could safely entrust the business of his house. On hearing that Mgr. Liguori employed D. Charles Melchionni, he immediately and without any further information regarding him, let him know that he was to consider himself as his man of business. When D. Charles went to thank him for the honour he had conferred on him, the Duke replied, "It is no small merit to you to possess the confidence of Mgr. Liguori."

In a word, numbers of gentlemen, of distinguished advocates and influential magistrates, felt it a happiness to depend upon him for direction and to confess to him. The Marquis of Avena, amongst others, never failed to go to him several times each year, to consult him on the

wants of his soul and the methods of fulfilling his office properly.

As to the cardinals who were at Naples during his time, it may be said that they all held him in singular consideration. Cardinal Pignatelli applied to him for advice in the most difficult cases. Cardinal Spinelli looked upon him as an apostle, and entrusted the care of his diocese to him with delight. He was a just appreciator of his merit, and traced a faithful picture of it in a letter which he wrote to the Sacred Congregation of the Index on the 9th of August, 1748: "We can truly assert that D. Alphonso Liguori, a Neapolitan chevalier, professor of theology and an indefatigable missionary, merits, as much through his rare piety as for his learning, especially in ecclesiastical matters, to receive from the Holy See the power to read and to retain the works of all the prohibited authors." Cardinal Sersale had no less esteem for Alphonso, and all Naples can testify to the honourable manner in which he treated him on all occasions, both as a missionary and as a bishop. Cardinal Orsini, who only knew him by reputation, having once come to visit his property, went in person to Nocera to recommend himself to his prayers. "I have come expressly to become acquainted with you," said he in embracing him. It is well known what esteem he testified towards him at Rome when he repaired thither for his consecration.

It was the same with the most distinguished archbishops. Mgr. Pacca and Mgr. Columbino,

the archbishops of Benevento, often recommended themselves to his prayers; and Mgr. Pacca, who wished to found a house for our fathers at St. Angelo de Cupoli, came expressly to Nocera and to Ciorani to make his acquaintance and to consult him on his own affairs. Mgr. Nicolai, the archbishop of Conza, was full of admiration for Alphonso and his disciples, and desired to have one of our houses in his diocese. Mgr. Zunica would not accept the bishopric of Acerenza and of Matera without first asking his opinion. Mgr. Gaëte, the archbishop of Bari; Mgr. Ganini, the archbishop of San Severino; Mgr. Puoti, archbishop of Amalfi; Mgr. Pignatelli, archbishop of Capua, and many others, always professed the most profound veneration for Alphonso. When Mgr. Rossi was nominated archbishop of Salerno, and had arrived in his diocese, Alphonso hastened to go and pay his respects to him. Whilst he was waiting to see him he remained in a corner of the ante-chamber, being abashed at the crowd of great lords who were there also. The archbishop happened to come out to accompany some one to the door; no sooner did he see him than he ran to embrace him, and then by an admirable quickness he seized his hand and kissed it. "D. Alphonso," he then said to him, "you have divined it; as for me, I cannot tell why God sent it to me." The next day the archbishop met three of our fathers when he was out; he immediately stopped his carriage and said to them in a joyous tone,

“I want to tell you something: I kissed Father D. Alphonso’s hand yesterday!”

This excellent prelate had such respect and veneration for him, that it was out of regard to him that he accepted the archbishopric of Salerno. Alphonso once asked him for a certificate for some one, and he replied, “I assure you I would not have granted it to any one else, I have done all for your sake, being well assured that my conscience can repose on your word in security.” The same archbishop in speaking to Pope Benedict XIV. of Alphonso’s sanctity, designated him always as a man of learning, of indisputable uprightness, of consummate prudence, and of angelical life.

The same high reputation accompanied him everywhere, and in whatever place he went bishops were seen to cast themselves at his feet to tell him of their wants, to recommend themselves to his prayers, and to take advantage of his counsels. Mgr. Volpe, the bishop of Nocera; Mgr. Coppola, bishop of Castellamare; Mgr. Borgia, bishop of la Cava, and afterwards of Averse; and Mgr. Giannini, bishop of Lettere, very frequently came to visit him, and always acted under his direction. Although Mgr. Giannini was advanced in age, he one day said to him, “I have told you that I am your son, and I wish you to treat me as such.” Mgr. Albertini, bishop of Caserte, also very often came to solicit his counsels, and to edify himself by his virtues. “I console myself,” he said to those around him, “by going in spirit to St.

Agatha, to see Mgr. Liguori, who is a perfect mirror of justice."

When Alphonso gave the mission at Nole, he went to Mgr. Caracciolo to receive his blessing, but he arose from his throne, and said, "I wish you to bless me;" and as Alphonso was preparing to kiss his hand, his Lordship, who was the more active of the two, seized his and kissed it with respect.

A number of priests, the members of whole chapters, and religious of all orders, felt it a happiness to be able to confess to him. When Mgr. Rosa, the bishop of Policastre, was still a priest at Nocera, he one day went to Arienzo to consult Alphonso on some scruples which he had. When he returned he exclaimed full of admiration, "We have now a true saint upon earth!" Mgr. Pozzuoli, the bishop of St. Agatha, did the same thing while he was canon penitentiary at Capua, and he too returned in ecstasies of delight. The following incident will give some idea of the respect he felt for Alphonso. When he was made bishop of St. Agatha, and visited the town of Arienzo for the first time, he went to the room which Alphonso had occupied, and remembering the spot where he had seen him bent down with the weight of infirmity, and wherein he had often received him, he was filled with profound veneration, threw himself with his face on the floor, and kissed the spot where his feet had rested a thousand times, and only reluctantly arose at the reiterated entreaties of

Canon D. John Fusari, the present canon of this cathedral.

“For many years,” said Canon Barba, a distinguished member of the collegiate of Avella, “his Lordship sent for me to preach in his diocese, and I also went there several times a year of my own accord: and in all the varied intercourse I had with him, I became satisfied that his life was truly like that of the saints, whom the church honours upon her altars. He always reminds me of a St. Francis of Sales, or a St. Philip Neri, through his learning and virtue.”

That famous missionary D. Joseph Jorio, being prevented going to the territory of Monteforte to give a mission, wrote to those who had asked for it as follows: “I entreat, exhort, and earnestly pray you to engage Father D. Alphonso and his missionaries to perform this work; and if needs be, get your bishop to persuade him to undertake it, for he is the first missionary in the kingdom for his learning and for his sanctity.” He has transmitted his esteem for Alphonso to posterity in the praises he gave him in his “Catechism for the Country.”

All the learned men in Naples lavished the same praises on him; and Mgr. Lupoti, before his elevation to the episcopate, had spoken of him to the Abbé Nonnotte in the highest terms. To add one more testimony to those we have already related, we will quote what was said by D. Fabius Mazza, canon of the cathedral and royal professor at Naples, in regard to several works which Alphonso had published: “They

are," said he, "worthy fruits of the fervent spirit of their author, who instructs the faithful by his writings while he edifies and inflames them with Divine love, so that he unites the twofold and true characteristics of Christian literature."

I cannot, ere I conclude, refrain from relating what was thought of him by Mgr. Alexander Kalifati, the bishop of Osia. In speaking of him in his learned Commentary on the Life of Jules Selvaggi, he designates him as very celebrated in the Church of God and in the republic of literature, for his prudence, zeal, piety, for the extent of his learning, and for his excellent works, to which advantages he added a humility which rendered him worthy of unbounded praise.

His reputation for holiness was general; there was not an ecclesiastic, secular, or regular, a gentleman, tradesman, or simple rustic, who did not desire to have something of his, were it but the bread from his table, or the clothes he had ceased to wear. During the mission at Amalfi, his old cloak was torn into pieces and another was substituted in its stead, and all his shirts were also changed: Alphonso perceived it, and said with a smile to Sister Dorothy of St. Stephen, "It is very good of you to send me away with everything new." When he passed through the crowd, they all strove to reach him to cut off the borders of his garments. "I do not know," he one day said from the pulpit on this subject, "what is meant by these absurdities." The Benedictine Nuns of the Holy Trinity were

in fact obliged to get him a new cassock. The same thing happened again with regard to his cloak at la Cava ; when he was on his way back, and perceived it, he said, "How good they are to take my old cloak and to give me a new one instead ; I suppose they fancy that I can work miracles." At Morcianisi, in the diocese of Capua, he also lost his cloak and his hat ; and such like substitutions happened very often.

The room he had occupied, and the bed in which he had slept, were religiously preserved as having been made use of by a saint. When he was at Nole, he lived in the house of the family of Zambarelli during the novena he gave there in honour of the Most Holy Virgin Mary. Now as he would not use a mattress, a pailleasse was got ready for him, and from that time, according to the testimony of Canon D. Felix, this pailleasse was preserved with respect, and is venerated up to this day as a relic. "In the year 1760," said Father D. Anthony of Augustine, the ex-superior general of the Pious Workmen, "he honoured us with his presence while giving the holy exercises at St. Marcellinus, and he lodged in our house of St. Nicholas. I gave my own room up to him out of devotion, and from that time I have always felt a religious respect for it." So true is it, that the memory of the just is eternal, while that of sinners perishes with the vain renown they seek for while on earth.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE reputation for piety and knowledge which Mgr. Liguori so justly enjoyed, was not circumscribed by the limits of the kingdom of Naples, but extended to the most distant countries. The sweet savour of his virtues spread to distant lands, and his numerous works loudly proclaimed his erudition. Persons of the greatest sanctity as well as men of the greatest learning, esteemed it an honour to be acquainted with him, and vied with each other in proclaiming either his talents, or his virtues, or rather the happy reunion of all good qualities to be found in him. The authors of the Historical Dictionary of Illustrious Men, printed at Venice in 1796, passed the following eulogium on him: "Mgr. Liguori was a truly apostolical man, a perfect ecclesiastic, an accomplished model for bishops, and one of the most powerful defenders of Christian morals. He has done a great deal for his own sanctification and for that of his brethren. As he was deeply imbued with the love of God, his zeal knew no bounds, and merely to see him was sufficient to act as an incentive to love virtue. He composed a great number of works for the learned as well as for the ignorant, for seculars and religious of both sexes, for seminaries and for bishops, for the unbelieving and

also for kings. Although in his writings one does not always meet with pleasing metaphors, flowery descriptions, vivid imagery, and harmonious cadences, to make up for this we find in them the truths of the Gospel set forth in the most instructive, and in the most attractive manner. In a word, Mgr. Liguori had an ardent mind, the love of God inflamed him, and his works, which comprise the most solid Christian morality, are all filled with those sentiments with which his own heart was animated. Religion is manifested in his writings under those pleasing characteristics she acquires when depicted by an eloquent heart, thoroughly penetrated by her grandeur and beauties. Nothing ever issued from his pen which did not first proceed from the depths of his heart. The piety, or rather the divine unction which flows from it, forms its most peculiar characteristic, and is also the most just proof of the innocency of his life, of his indefatigable zeal, and of his rare virtues. The memory of such a great man, who by his prodigious learning, apostolical zeal, and virtuous example, has been of so much use to his country, his diocese, to Italy, to the Church, and to the whole of the learned world, will survive for ever in every mind and in every heart."

Alphonso's memory was no less revered in Sicily. Amongst the innumerable proofs that I might give of this, I will select the testimony of a celebrated missionary of this country, D. Mercury Maria Teresi, who is now the very

excellent archbishop of Morreale. The following is a grand eulogium which he passed on our blessed father in his work called *Vera Sposa*: “Mgr. Liguori,” said he, “has been the hero of our age. He was a priest after God’s own heart; he was a man of truly apostolical character, a blameless orator, an excellent superior, a tender father, a bishop like those of primitive times; the Holy Spirit has ever been his guide; he was endowed with a spirit of prayer and compunction, a spirit of labour and of zeal, a spirit of knowledge and of piety. His soul was inflamed with love for Jesus Christ, and it was a firm, a generous, and a constant love. His writings, which are full of unction, are plain proofs of this; but the most touching of all was his imitation of that Divine Model from which he never swerved. All who knew him concur in saying that he was a lively image and faithful copy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

Not satisfied with these praises, Mgr. Teresi in another of his works on the employment and use of ecclesiastical benefices, designates him as a man of the greatest piety, a most useful writer, a judicious and irreproachable theologian, a celebrated founder, a truly great bishop, and the apostle of our age. “Study then,” continued he, addressing young confessors, “this bishop, who was so much raised above others by his nobleness, his faith, his charity, and his learning. His room was like that which the Shunamite prepared for the prophet Elias. A bed, a table, a chair, and a lamp, comprised all its

furniture. His food was poor and frugal, rather to prevent death than to preserve life; he retrenched all that was superfluous in order to give it in alms. He always conformed to the rules of his congregation, and led the poorest as well as the most austere and most mortified life; his greatest glory and his chief delight consisted in retrenching and doing with as little as possible, that he might bestow the more on the poor of Jesus Christ, who were his only riches and the joy of his heart."

Emmanuel Maria d' Ituriage, a learned Spaniard, and a theologian of Mgr. Comitibus, bishop of Fano, called Alphonso in his Moral Dissertations, "A man who was very celebrated and very remarkable through his piety and his knowledge."

Father Anthony Orietti, of the Oratory of Lodi, in the Milanese territory, called him "the honour of the Neapolitan people," and "a prodigy of learning and sanctity."

Alphonso was yet alive when Louis Anthony Locatelli, provost of the celebrated college of St. Mary Major at Bologna, published his book on the Ages of the Church, and specially on the affairs of the eighteenth century. "I will crown what I have said on the writers of this age," said he at the end of this work, "by citing the name of the ever-memorable Mgr. Liguori, bishop of St. Agatha of the Goths. The pen of this excellent prelate has been immortalised by a great number of works on sacred subjects, which are chiefly intended to form

the library of the priest. His marvellous zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls shines forth in them all. May God preserve him yet a long while, for the well-being and the consolation of Holy Church."

But now I will give a singular instance, which, while it is rather amusing, is not the less applicable to our subject. D. Hercules having lost one of his twin sons named Alphonso, caused such magnificent rites to be celebrated for him in the church of Mount Calvary, that this pompous funeral was talked of all over Naples. Through mistake it was inserted in a newspaper that Mgr. de Liguori was dead. This news was thus conveyed to Luca, where the good canons of the cathedral hastened to testify their profound veneration for Alphonso by the most solemn funeral service; it was not because they were under any peculiar obligations to him, but because as they then stated, that they wished to satisfy their love towards a man who had done so much for all Europe and for the Church. When Alphonso heard it, he was more abashed at this almost unprecedented honour than surprised at the amusing mistake, but he did not fail to thank this very worthy chapter for their great kindness towards him.

Even at Rome, which is always full of the most distinguished and influential persons, the very name of Alphonso was of more weight than that of all the rest put together. Our Father Cajone once entreated D. Mark Anthony Amati to use his interest to obtain certain privileges for us,

and he received the following answer : " It would be better for Mgr. Liguori to write to Mgr. Macedonio, as the eminent services he has rendered to the Church cause him to have much more influence with him than I have. He can obtain all that I can, and with infinitely more facility."

A name held so high in the capital of the Christian world must of course necessarily have been well-known in the most extreme parts of Italy, and the death of one so highly esteemed must have caused a profound sensation even in distant regions. As soon as it became known to D. Flora Petra, sister of General Petra, who is now in the service of our sovereign, she hastened to write to me from Pavia, on the 12th of February, 1788, to express the sadness which she felt at a loss which she said was such a great one to the whole Catholic world. " I should be inconsolable," she added, " were I not persuaded that I have gained more than I have lost by this memorable event."

Some years afterwards, the famous apostolical missionary, Joseph Louis of St. Catherine, expressed the same sentiments to us, but in still more energetical terms. " I have always believed," he wrote to Lesi to our father rector major on the 25th of December, 1796, " and I still believe, that the heroic virtues of the venerable Mgr. Liguori will immediately cause him to be canonized. I have always advised the sick to recommend themselves to him, and they have always been cured through his intercession."

Such an extraordinary reputation for science

and for virtue could not even be inclosed within the limits of Italy. It naturally spread beyond the mountains, and extended throughout all the countries of Europe. We therefore may say without exaggeration, that even during Alphonso's lifetime his reputation had become a truly European one, since there was not any considerable country in this favoured portion of the globe, where his writings were not spread, as well as the lustre of his knowledge and of his sanctity. We have cited a number of facts in these Memoirs which may have served to support this assertion, but we will here give further proofs of it which are no less persuasive and interesting than the first.

Peter Obladen, who is very celebrated amongst the Germans, was as it were quite the panegyrist of Mgr. Liguori. He never tired in lavishing eulogiums on him. "The works of this venerable prelate," said he, "are much known in Germany, and are eagerly sought after by reason of the unction of the Holy Spirit with which they are filled. The renowned bishop knows how to make himself all to all according to the example of the apostle St. Paul. His numerous writings, which are so solid and so substantial, are unanswerable proofs that he is both a profound theologian, an excellent director, and a most zealous pastor. There is no condition, nor age, nor sex, of which he does not trace the duties and the obligations, and to whom he does not assign the most proper methods for arriving at Christian perfection."

And besides this, when he addressed the most serene Princess Cunegonde, daughter of the august queen of Poland, and dedicated his translation of two volumes of Alphonso's Meditations to her, he designates him as one of the most learned bishops of Italy: "Unum ex doctissimis episcopum Italiae," and does not hesitate to say that his pen distilled the unction of grace while spreading abroad the treasures of knowledge; "Calamum Liguorii esse æque spiritu et doctrina plenum."

Ignatius Nendawer, a distinguished Jesuit and professor at the university of Wessenbourg, mentions in his book called, "Vera religione vindicata," the Truths of the Faith composed by Alphonso, and does not hesitate to place him amongst the number of the most celebrated writers who have defended our holy religion.

A young Pole, who retired to our house at Rome, wrote to his father to obtain a sum of money which was necessary to enable him to enter the noviciate; the latter replied to him that he was ready to send him all he asked for, provided he would go into the kingdom of Naples to Mgr. Liguori, and recommend himself and all his family to his prayers.

A celebrated Benedictine, priest of the parish church of All Saints, called in German, Alle Heiligen, which is not far from the Lake of Zurich, on the road which leads to Lindan, was also one of the first in speaking of the science and sanctity of Alphonso in Germany. He had an opportunity of becoming personally acquaint-

ed with him at Naples, and he ever afterwards was unwearied in magnifying him wherever he went as a saint, and in proclaiming the virtues he had admired with his own eyes in Mgr. Liguori.

Joseph Albert Disbach, an ex-Jesuit and patrician of the canton of Berne, and who was extremely celebrated for his knowledge and his virtue, but still more so for his numerous apostolical labours in France, Switzerland, Bavaria, Austria, and in the Milanese Territory, also contributed much to render Alphonso's name famous in the countries of the north. On this subject D. Louis Virginio, who was, as we have already said, rector of the Italian Church at Vienna, wrote to me as follows: "Mgr. Liguori is known on this side of the mountains and in divers other parts of this kingdom, through the works and the zeal of Joseph Albert Disbach, the distinguished ex-Jesuit. He looked upon him as the most illustrious writer of these times, and was never wearied in admiring the courage he had in standing up alone to oppose the prejudices of the age, and to maintain the cause of evangelical morality against the shameless multitude of Jansenists. He contributed greatly to spread his Moral Theology, especially in Switzerland, France, Bavaria, and in many parts of Germany. Father Disbach," continues the same Virginio, "also entertained a peculiar esteem for his ascetical works, and thought that they were full of the Spirit of God; he spread them everywhere, caused them to be translated, and wished

them to be recommended to the people, that they might be instructed in Christian piety. Even whilst Mgr. Liguori was still alive he had begun to honour him as a saint, and his chief pleasure consisted in hearing particulars of the innocency of his life. After Alphonso's death a funeral sermon in his praise happened to fall into his hands, and he was so afraid that it would be lost by lending it about, that he took several manuscript copies of it, which he carefully preserved. He hoped that he should one day see him canonized, and he longed for it the more ardently, as he considered that if this honour were decreed to the servant of God, it would be a most glorious triumph for the truth, of which he had been the defender." These are the very words of Virginio.

This same Disbach made Alphonso's name known even in Poland, and caused him to obtain the veneration of a number of admirers there; we have a proof of this, and one which we value much, in the following account, which our Father Holbaur sent us from Varsovia: "D. Disbach," he wrote to us on the 19th of August, 1802, "knew our venerable Father Alphonso very well indeed, and he professed the most profound veneration for him. He several times has assured me, both in private and before others, that God expressly raised him up and opposed him to the enemies of the Church as an impregnable wall, for the defence of the faith and of the holy and apostolic see."

From what is here said there is every reason

to believe that D. Disbach lived at Naples, and that he became personally acquainted with Alphonso.

A Swiss priest one day met our Father Francis Xavier de Leon at Rome; as he perceived that he was a member of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, he said to him, "Mgr. Liguori is considered as an apostle among us. As I once had to go to Naples, I took care to go also to Nocera, that I might myself gaze on such a holy and learned man, and one who enjoyed such great celebrity amongst all my nation."

At Liege in Belgium, the "Fidelity of Subjects towards their God and their Sovereign," was translated into French as being the language of all countries. The zealous Belgian translator was so anxious about Alphonso's glory, that he felt it a duty to extol him as highly as possible in his preface. "This work," said he, "is the voice of a sensible soul, whose only breath is that of love for religion and morality, whose only desire is the happiness of kings and their subjects, and whose only ambition is to lead mankind to all virtue. The author is Mgr. Liguori, who enjoys such a high reputation in Italy and especially in the kingdom of Naples. This prelate, whose name cannot be pronounced without respect, has illustrated the episcopal dignity by his enlightened piety, his distinguished talents, and all those rare qualities which characterise a great man. Mgr. Liguori," he added, "is justly regarded as a brilliant light,

and as one of the greatest ornaments of this age. His writings are rendered all the more beautiful from his never making use of any expressions but those which proceed from his heart. His soul was penetrated by the objects which interested it, and he knows how to animate those who read him by the fire with which he exposes his sentiments. This incomparable prelate," continues the translator, "never makes any parade of his virtues or of his talents; he seeks much more to edify than to please: his theological works and his works of piety are well fitted to serve as models. All that he has written betokens a solid and judicious mind, but especially that Divine love with which his own heart is penetrated. Souls which are truly religious will never neglect any method of procuring all the productions of this illustrious Italian. Such of his works as have been translated and continue to be so, are so many proofs of the author's merits and of the suffrages of a virtuous public.

"This illustrious prelate," he said in conclusion, "while exalting the work of the missions, has not been satisfied with honouring religion by his writings alone. As he is inflamed with zeal for the salvation of souls, he has occupied himself in fulfilling the functions of the apostles, and by increasing the number of worshippers of the one true God by his missions, by converting those who have been seduced by the pernicious maxims of impiety, and by reviving the fervour of the faithful who have been

living in a profound lethargy with regard to what concerns their eternal salvation."

Alphonso's memory was equally glorified in France. An officer, by name Francis Frederick, has often assured me that at Paris and other parts of France where he lived, Mgr. Liguori was only spoken of as a prodigy of science and sanctity. Father D. Bartholomew Genovese, a religious of the Carthusians of Valvona, in Languedoc, was in the habit of saying, that it was impossible to express the high idea which was entertained of Mgr. Liguori's virtue and knowledge in France.

The Abbé Claude Nonnotte, of whom we have already spoken, that intrepid warrior against the unbelieving in the eighteenth century, felt it a pleasure to translate the "Visits to the Blessed Sacrament and to the most Holy Virgin Mary" into French with his own hand. He expresses himself thus about Alphonso in the preface to his translation: "The book of which we here offer the translation is by a most worthy prelate, who is celebrated throughout all Italy by his excellent works on theology and piety. The very name of Liguori is a sufficient eulogium of the book. In him we find an enlightened, a just, and solid spirit, but still more a heart full of that tender and affectionate devotion which lives in God alone. This is the special characteristic of this little book entitled, 'Visits to the Blessed Sacrament and to the Blessed Virgin:' the words seem to flow from the fulness of a heart which is filled with divine love. We do not, it is true,

here find a studied and methodical style, but the language of feeling, and perhaps therefore it may not be relished by those who wish for ingenuity and elegance; but they who only seek to love Jesus Christ and his Holy Mother, will assuredly there meet with what will satisfy their pious desires. We cannot find any one to whom we can better compare the author of this work," continued he, "than M. Boudon, whose writings are still generally esteemed and relished in France on account of the unction they contain, notwithstanding their simplicity and unstudied style. Almost the same thing may be said of Mgr. Liguori in regard to Italy, if we can judge by the great popularity of his works there. More than fifteen editions of this work have been published under the author's own superintendance which alike proves its merit and the general satisfaction it has given."

In his letters to Mgr. Lupoli, bishop of Cerreto, the Abbé Nonnotte ever manifested his great admiration for Alphonso: "Since you have the advantage of being very closely connected with this venerable prelate," he once wrote to him, "I entreat you to present my compliments to him, and to inform him that my respect for his dignity, my veneration for his piety, and my admiration for his knowledge, are at their height. Tell him also that I most ardently pray that God may shower down the fulness of His grace and blessing on him, and that I earnestly commend myself to his prayers."

Another time he said to him, "I cannot tell

you how much joy I felt at the sight of the little note from the saintly bishop which was inclosed in your letter ; I have kissed it with much affection. It is, I think, very much easier to feel and appreciate interiorly the love which this venerable prelate has for religion, and for those who act as its zealous defenders, than to express it in words."

All the other letters of this abbé breathe forth the same sentiments with regard to Alphonso. He was not however the only foreigner who corresponded with him, for no sooner had his works rendered him renowned throughout all Europe, than a multitude of distinguished persons wrote to consult him from all countries. He received letters from all parts, and especially from Sicily, Lombardy, the Pontifical States, Germany, Switzerland, Spain, and France. Alphonso replied to all with excessive charity, and he made no profession of sanctity, but always preserved that truly apostolical simplicity which formed the basis of his character.

Although Alphonso during his long life had never been to Rome except to receive episcopal consecration, he was still considered as a most learned man by the whole of the members of the sacred college, and above all, as an extraordinary saint ; from this arose the singular esteem and profound respect which the cardinals of the Roman court testified towards him on all occasions, especially Cardinal Orsini, the two Rezzonicos, and his Eminence Cardinal Castelli. One day when several of our fathers visited Car-

dinal Rezzonico in passing through Rome, he said on seeing them, "How is Mgr. Liguori, that saintly prelate? I assure you that I pray more for his health than for my own life. I even entreat God to abridge my days, to prolong those of this saintly old man, so precious and inestimable do I believe his existence to be."

This cardinal used to glory in saying publicly that Alphonso was his director in all that concerned his conscience, as well as in the affairs of his diocese. Cardinal Banditi was of the same opinion. Once when our Father Gaspard Cajone was taking leave of him when going to Nocera, the cardinal said to him, "Give my respectful salutations to Mgr. Liguori, and recommend me to his prayers. For my part I continually pray God to shorten my days and to lengthen his, as I believe his life to be of infinitely more value to the whole Church."

We will not repeat the striking testimonies of high esteem which Alphonso received from the three Sovereign Pontiffs, Benedict XIV., Clement XIII., and Clement XIV. We have already shown how honourable the firmness with which the two latter refused to allow him to resign his bishopric was to this servant of God. We will here only add a fresh proof of the esteem which was entertained for him by the Holy Father Pius VI., of immortal memory. In the year 1798, the advocate, Vincent Picerni, dedicated to him his Defence of Alphonso's System of Morals. The Holy Father was much rejoiced at such an apology, and at the plea-

sure it would assuredly give us, thus mingling his joy with ours. "De argumento a te selecto," said he in his brief to the author, "lætitiam maximam habebunt Ligorii alumni, nobis quoque investigatio tua non injuncunda accidit." He then testified the satisfaction he felt at our having introduced the cause of the canonization of our venerable founder. "Amore erga parentem optimum ducti, acta haud defuerunt ut ejus memoria in veneratione sit causaque a S. R. Congregatione, ut in more est positum jam admissa et recepta fuit."

The Holy Father, who knew him from having seen him at Rome, and who most probably had also seen him at Naples when he was treasurer of the apostolical chamber, protests in conclusion, that he always loved him during his life, and that he could never cease to admire his lively faith, and the truly sincere piety with which he was animated. "Amavimus enim ac suspicimus, dum mortales agebat dies, Ligorii religionem pietatemque vere singularem." The brief was dated from Rome "sub annulo piscatoris apud sanctum Petrum," on the 13th of the calends of January, 1798, in the twenty-third year of his pontificate.

And now we have said quite enough to show that Alphonso was famous for his words and works; that besides the private mission he filled so well, he had a universal mission to instruct and to edify the faithful, and that he has well deserved to be set on the mountain of the Lord as a burning light to enlighten all generations past and to come.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE general veneration of which Alphonso was the object during his life was only increased by his death. No sooner did it become generally known, than persons of all classes and from all parts, eagerly sought to possess something or other of which he had made use. As soon as he expired his room was completely pillaged: gentlemen and persons of the highest rank did not scruple to carry off divers things which their piety caused them to covet. Mgr. Cappola, the bishop of Cassano, obtained a little piece of Alphonso's cassock by dint of his entreaties, and did not know how to thank Father Villani sufficiently for it. He told him that he had such great devotion towards Alphonso that he could not pronounce his name without emotion.

Mgr. Puoti, Archbishop of Amalfi, preserved a simple girdle which was quite worn out, but which Alphonso had worn when celebrating mass, as a valuable treasure; and as St. Anthony made use of the dress of palm leaves of St. Paul the hermit on solemn festivals, so Mgr. the Archbishop only made use of this girdle when he officiated pontifically.

The fathers of the Congregation of Pious Works, also made the most earnest entreaties to obtain some relics of Alphonso, through the medium of D. Maria Concetta Longobardi, a

religious of St. Clare; in consequence of this she wrote to Father Villani as follows: "These good religious have expressed to me the most ardent desire to have some relic of our saint, Mgr. Liguori; I therefore entreat you to send me some portion of his clothes which may be divided amongst these good fathers."

Canon Genga of Naples obtained one of Alphonso's shirts; he kept it as a very precious relic, and his house was from that time frequented by such a great concourse of the faithful, that the relic was soon divided into a thousand pieces, as each one wanted to have some portion. Amongst others, the Prince of Scilla carried off the collar as a precious treasure. Every one, in fact, wanted a portion, up to the superior of the Congregation of the Conference, who entreated to have some part of this article of clothing for the members of his congregation.

Mgr. Grippa, the bishop of Amorio and judge of the mixed tribunal at Naples, was anxious to have a relic of Alphonso, and so he wrote as follows to his nephew, Father Anthony de Luca, on the 4th of August: "I have heard of the blessed death of the most pious Mgr. Liguori, who has died in the odour of sanctity; as I cannot go in person to venerate the remains of this saintly prelate, I entreat you to procure me a good relic of some part of his clothes, which I will always keep about me. Ask the Rev. Father Villani for it in my name."

Sylvester Novi of Grume, secretary of the Tribunal of the Country, also made earnest entrea-

ties to obtain some relics of the saintly bishop, both to satisfy his own devotion and that of a great number of persons who asked for them from all quarters; so we sent him an old shirt which had belonged to the servant of God. "This relic," he wrote to Father Villani, "has given me unspeakable joy, and I hope that by the intercession of Mgr. Liguori, God will deign to be merciful to me, and supply all that is lacking in me."

At Lorrento Alphonso was universally proclaimed as a saint immediately after his death, and every one wanted to have a relic of him. Sister Mary Michael Grimaldi, a Dominicaness and one of Alphonso's penitents, wrote us the following lines from this town: "All those who are ill beg for some threads of his soutane, as the famished poor entreat for a morsel of bread, and miraculous cures are everywhere effected by them."

When the tidings of his death reached Pavia, D. Flora Petra, of whom we have spoken above, wrote to me, "For my consolation and that of many others," said she, "I entreat you to send me something which once belonged to Mgr. Liguori. The very high idea that is here entertained of his sanctity, and the love which is generally felt towards him, lead me to make this request. If you can satisfy my wishes, please to address what you send to my brother, D. Joseph Petra, resident at Naples, in his Majesty's service."

The town of St. Agatha was inconsolable at

not possessing the mortal remains of its holy bishop. By way of amends a mitre of which Alphonso had made use was given to the cathedral chapter. When the people saw it being taken there they all knelt down with uncovered heads; then they hurried to the church to kiss it, being full of veneration for this precious relic. All the clerks and the canons received it with the same respect. "The whole chapter," wrote the vicar-capitular, D. Nicholas de Robertis, to Father Villani, "return you the most grateful thanks for this inestimable treasure. We shall always preserve it with the greatest care, in memory of our saintly prelate, and in the certain hope that it will one day become the relic of a canonized saint, who will deign to be the special advocate of this town, this chapter, and this diocese before God."

In the year 1778 Father Romauld Maria Robertis, priest of the mission, on hearing that Alphonso was dead, wrote to Rome to our Father D. Matthew Corrado, as follows: "I have no doubt that he immediately went to heaven to receive the rich crown he has gained by his merits. I should much like to have a little bit of some of his clothes or some of his hair, for the signatures I had the happiness to possess have been taken from me against my will by pious persons who cherish them as precious relics."

All that recalled the remembrance of Alphonso to mind, was sought after with a holy avidity. It would be almost impossible to believe

how rapidly pictures of him were to be met with in all directions; as soon as he was dead they were asked for in all parts of the kingdom and even beyond it. The shopkeepers of Naples told me that more than sixty thousand were sold. On the 25th of August our Father D. John Maria of Augustine wrote to Father Villani as follows: "One dares not appear in this capital, one is so overwhelmed with demands for relics and pictures of his Lordship; the engraving which Tramontana made is entirely worn out." In another letter of the 28th of the same month, he said, "There is a holy rage here for pictures of our blessed father. Mgr. Jorio has asked for a great many, as well as Counsellor Secondo, the rector of Constantinople, Canon Vinaccia, Father Villaroso of the Oratory, &c.; but it is impossible to satisfy every one."

"Throughout all this town and its environs," our Father D. John Anthony Corrado wrote from Benevento on the 12th of August,* "this devotion is universal, and the people do nothing but ask for relics and pictures of Mgr. de Liguori. His Eminence is so moved by it, that he has determined to come in person to assist at the funeral rites which will be celebrated in our church."

Our advocate D. Vincent de Angelis wrote to me, on the 25th of August of the same year, 1787, from Foggia, saying, "In consequence of

* It will be observed that all these dates refer to the year and even to the month in which the servant of God died.

the death of Mgr. Liguori, and on account of the numerous miracles he works in all directions, I am not allowed to have a moment's rest, as people are continually asking me for his likeness; Canon Filiasi, and I, as well as many others, would much like to have some relic of him."

"Throughout all the Roman States," wrote the ex-president D. Francis de Paul, "as soon as the death of our blessed father became known, every one eagerly applied to me for relics and pictures of him."

As soon as his death was heard of at Gubbio and at Spello, where our fathers were, although he was only known there by name, they nevertheless testified the same eagerness, especially the ecclesiastics, the gentlemen, and the bishops of these two dioceses. Father Anthony Orietti in writing from Lodi in Lombardy, to Father Francis Colangelo, not only asked him to send him some pictures of his Lordship, but that he would make inquiries about all those which had been engraved here from different drawings, and earnestly begged that they should all be forwarded to him to satisfy his devotion, and that of a great number of other persons. D. Flora Petra of Pavia received several different pictures of his Lordship from me, and she informed me of the great veneration of which they were the object: "They are so much thought of here," she wrote to me, "that the same honours are rendered to them in private as to those of the canonized saints."

Father Holbaur of Varsovia, and D. Virginio of Vienna, made similar requests to us, and I sent them some myself; as our fathers at Varsovia wished to satisfy a number of persons who wanted to have these pictures, they got several new plates engraved after the original at Naples. The same thing was done at Venice, where every one wished to possess a likeness of this servant of God.

Mgr. Galloppi, who is now the nuncio in Portugal, had been accustomed to hear Alphonso spoken of at Naples; on receiving some pictures of him from Father Peter d' Onofrio of the Oratory, he wrote to thank him for them: "I have felt great satisfaction in receiving the pictures of this servant of God," said he; "they will afford great consolation to a great many people who are very anxious for them. I shall not cease to recommend the affairs of Naples to him, in order that we may through him obtain grace to do what is for the greater glory of God."

Father Mamachi, superior of the Fathers of the Mission at Rome, received several of these pictures from a Neapolitan priest, at which he evinced the greatest joy and satisfaction: "I still remember the time when he came here to be consecrated," said he. "All who knew him then predicted that he would one day be numbered amongst the saints, and the greatest veneration has been generally entertained towards him."

At Rome also several cardinals were eager

to procure prints of him, which they honoured as those of a saint. Cardinal Zurlo and Mgr. Banditi at Benevento were as eager as the rest, and placed his picture at the head of their beds, as that of a powerful protector. Mgr. Minutoli, the bishop of Milet, placed a picture of Alphonso in his room beside that of St. Philip Neri.

Not to speak of other distinguished personages, the holy Father Pius VI. also testified much veneration for him. Mgr. Galeppi was commissioned by D. Salvatore Tramontana the priest, to send him the funeral sermon composed by Father Joseph Cavallo of the Congregation of Pious Workmen. His Holiness showed great satisfaction when Cardinal Buoncompagno presented it to him. When he saw the picture which accompanied it, he kissed it with devotion, and held it to his forehead for some time with the greatest respect: "He is a saint," said he, "and I doubt not that he is now in the enjoyment of the glories of heaven; he then thanked the cardinal: "I will read it," he added, "with much pleasure."

It was marvellous to see how as soon as one plate was worn out, another was instantly engraved in a different style. Tramontana the priest alone had a dozen of these portraits done at his own expense, each one more beautiful than the other; and those who were devoted to Alphonso, not satisfied at having had the first, also wished to possess those which followed. He had a picture made representing his Lordship dying, and Canon Gabriel Genga asked to have

a hundred copies of it. The noble brothers of the Congregation of the White Monks were equally exacting in their demands.

A print-seller, by name Nunzio Petrini, foresaw the great sale of likenesses of Alphonso which would take place at his death; for this reason he had taken pains to procure one of his portraits before-hand; so that immediately after the decease of the servant of God, the town of Naples and all the kingdom were full of prints of him. There were also many persons who wished to have his portrait painted on linen. This devotion was so far from becoming lessened by time, that it only served to increase it. Every day at this very time, (1802,) persons of distinction of the kingdom, and even beyond it, are constantly applying to our fathers for pictures and relics of Alphonso. Not long since, our princess royal, the Archduchess of Austria, Mary Clementina, wished before she died to have the consolation of honouring his likeness and applying his relics; but God, who destined her to reign in heaven, has not permitted her to continue to reign on a fragile and perishable throne on earth.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE first miracles which Alphonso wrought during his obsequies, were but the beginning of prodigies without number; scarcely were they known ere people from all parts had recourse to

him for protection, and God, in recompense for the charity he had exercised upon earth, deigned to glorify him by bestowing innumerable blessings through his intercession.

Father Francis d' Ottajano, of the reformed order of St. Francis, at Palermo, had been suffering from the month of November, 1786, from a burning fever and a painful cough. In spite of all remedies the fever got worse and worse, and the sick man had already begun to spit blood and matter. Four of the first physicians of Naples were consulted, and they agreed in saying that the patient was in an incurable consumption. On seeing that no hope of his recovery was entertained, and that every one was afraid of coming near him in the monastery on account of the contagious nature of his malady, he went to Palermo to the house of an old aunt of eighty years of age. He placed himself under the care of two other doctors, who declared in the month of July, 1787, that he was in the last stage of consumption; his death was expected from day to day, and each time the knell was heard it was believed that he was no more. To this most serious malady was added a retention of urine. When reduced to this extremity, the dying man being animated by the numerous miracles related of Alphonso, thought of having recourse to his intercession. "My Lord," said he to him, "if you are really dear to God, and if you enjoy beatitude in Paradise, obtain for me that I may not die of this malady, which renders me an object of horror."

When he said that, he promised to offer up to him a pound of wax every year, and to carry it himself to his tomb. He had scarcely finished his prayer, when he felt a sudden change; and whereas all food had before caused him to feel nausea, he now eat with relish. After this he had a peaceful sleep, and on awaking he was perfectly cured. This was judicially deposed at Nocera at the time the process was arranged. This religious still continues to enjoy good health, (1802,) and every year in all weather is he to be seen bringing his offering to the tomb of his benefactor.

My intention is not to relate here all the miracles which Alphonso has effected, and which have been judicially confirmed; but for his glory and the consolation of those who have devotion towards him, I will only cite those I have collected myself, and which were not inserted in the process of his canonization. They have all been carefully examined and furnished with all the proofs of authenticity which can be desired.

The miracle effected on the person of Father Francis d' Ottajano was the cause of another, which was no less remarkable. In his monastery there was a religious who laughed at the confidence which Father Francis had in his Lordship, and often teased him on this subject, going so far as to ask him how much the wax cost, and what use was made of it by his saintly advocate. Alphonso was displeased at his conduct; he appeared to him one night, and said to him in an indignant tone, "Audacious man! when will you

cease to laugh at my servant?" The religious was seized with terror, and replied, that he had not done it with a bad intention, and that what he had said were nothing but jests. "People do not jest in that manner," answered Alphonso; and in a threatening tone of voice he added, "Go to confession, and never have the boldness to speak in that way again." The brother was terrified; he instantly jumped out of bed, and ran and cast himself at the feet of his confessor; the next morning he informed all the community of what had befallen him, and took good care never to turn religion into ridicule for the future.

In the year 1787, Vincent Cocca, a joiner at Foggia, was wounded in the chest by a knife. The injured part was cut away, but the wound remained incurable. He suffered for more than a year, and there was no further hope of his cure, as the doctors said that he was in a consumption. Our Father D. Joseph Stella, who was at Foggia, was informed of this accident. He went to see the sick man, and gave him some threads of his Lordship's cassock, and assured him that if he had confidence in him he would be cured. The mother of the joiner was animated by a lively faith; she took off all the bandages of the wound, and applied to them some threads of the holy garment. It was again uncovered a short time afterwards, when it was found to be healed, and that the skin had grown over the holy relic. The sick man was quite cured, and recovered his former health.

A lay-sister in the asylum at Frasso, who had

been given over by the physicians, recommended herself with confidence to his Lordship. Alphonso appeared to her and said, "Be comforted; you will recover." Scarcely had the vision disappeared ere the sick person got better and was out of all danger.

D. Frances Palumbo, the wife of D. Laurence Granata, had a fistula in her right eye, from whence a foul humour was continually exuding, and which no remedy had been able to cure. As it became worse, one day when she was suffering from erysipelas she invoked the aid of his Lordship, and immediately felt her eye relieved, the pain soon ceased entirely, the erysipelas disappeared, and she was freed from all suffering.

D. Peter Julian de Bosco Trecase was attacked during the Christmas novena by a tertian fever, which never left him, and which was always accompanied by great internal pain. When reduced to this state of suffering, he observed a picture of his Lordship which was hung up against the wall of his room; he placed it on his chest, and no sooner did he do so than he fell asleep. On awaking, he found that he was perfectly cured; and shedding tears of tenderness, he sent for all his friends, to impart to them the favour which he had received from Alphonso.

Donna Catherine Biscotti, a Benedictine nun in the town of Diana in the province of Salerno, was attacked by a bloody flux, which caused her to suffer severely. After fourteen months' suf-

fering, the malady got so much worse that she had no rest day or night, and the doctor D. Joseph Anthony Frezza was much afraid that mortification had commenced. While in this state, she remembered the favours which God had bestowed through the intercession of Alphonso, and invoked him, saying, "Alphonso Liguori, show me that you are really a saint, as is everywhere proclaimed. You must deliver me from this malady; and as the process of your canonization will have to be drawn up, I promise you to bear witness to my cure judicially, and to have a mass and a Te Deum sung in thanksgiving." After this prayer the nun fell asleep, and on awaking she found that she was perfectly cured. She attested this to me herself, and so did Gertrude Carrada, and Mary Antoinette Morrone, who nursed her during her illness.

On the 14th of September, 1787, there was a little girl of nine years of age at Cerignola, who received the contents of a gun filled with powder in her face, which injured it so that the skin fell off at the slightest touch. Her right eye was shrivelled, and the cornea was much inflamed. The child suffered such pain that she could find no rest. All remedies having failed, Don Xavier Caradonna, being touched with compassion, gave the mother a picture of his Lordship, and exhorted her to invoke him with confidence. This happened on the fourth day after the accident: the picture was placed on the forehead of the suffering child, and she at once opened her eyes, which were quite healed, as

well as the rest of her face. This cure was such a striking one, that every one in the neighbourhood talked of it as a miracle, and the physician himself, D. Isidore Degni, hastened to inform the archpriest of the place of it.

At Ascole Vitus Dominic Capozzi was a prey to the persecutions of a powerful person who unjustly demanded of him the sum of four hundred and thirty-two ducats. He was summoned before the tribunals of justice at Naples, and eight advocates pleaded against him. D. Capozzi recommended himself to his Lordship, he abandoned his innocence into his hands, and placed a picture of him amongst the law-papers which had to be examined by the council. He was especially grieved at being unable to find any one who would give any testimony in his favour, which arose from the high reputation enjoyed by his adversary. In order to console him Alphonso appeared to him in a dream, and said to him, "Fear nothing, you will gain your cause." And so it was, that, contrary to all expectation, the judges of the royal council decided in his favour.

At Foggia, in October, 1787, D. Michael Totta was attacked by a most violent colic on getting out of bed one morning. At two o'clock in the afternoon his malady still continued; in this extremity he thought of having recourse to Mgr. Liguori, and he exclaimed, "My Lord! relieve me!" He had no sooner said these words than he felt a sort of concussion in his side, after which he was immediately freed from all pain.

He has assured me that this malady used to attack him about every twenty days, and that it sometimes confined him to bed for months at a time; that he even sometimes passed small stones, but that after his sudden cure he had no recurrence of it.

There was a lay-sister in the convent of St. Marcellinus at Naples who swallowed a bone, which stuck in her throat. On seeing that her case was a desperate one, she exclaimed with faith, "My Lord, come to my aid!" At these words the bone was dislodged, although it was a considerable one.

At Buccino, the nephew of D. Gerard Mélé of St. Gregory, who is now the bishop of Troy, suffered from spitting of blood. A morsel of a relic of Alphonso was given to him to drink in some water, and from the moment he had taken it he was entirely cured, according to the deposition of the archpriest of the place.

For fourteen days D. Julian Jourdain, procurator advocate at the tribunal of Lucere, had suffered from a malignant fever, and from the ninth day he had been unceasingly tormented by hiccough, and his death was expected at every instant. His disconsolate sister entered her chamber, and there before a picture of his Lordship she began to pray, saying with faith, "My holy countryman," (the family of Jourdain came from Nocera,) "I, a poor stranger, have recourse to you. You must spare my brother to me. I desire to obtain this favour." After that with greater confidence still, she

took the picture of Alphonso to her brother, and showed it to him, saying, "Do you know this person?" "It is Mgr. Liguori," replied the sick man. At the same time he took the picture and placed it on his forehead. "My Lord!" he exclaimed, "succour me." At the same instant the fever ceased, and a crisis took place which was succeeded by a complete recovery.

At Foggia, D. Louisa Palatella, the wife of the lawyer D. Francis Xavier Massari, had been pregnant for eight months, when her child died in her womb, which greatly endangered her life. On hearing of the sad state she was in, I exhorted her to have recourse to his Lordship with confidence. She did so, and on applying a picture of him to herself, she promised to offer him a pound of wax, and to support an abandoned girl, provided he would heal her. Her confinement was pronounced to be, humanly speaking, impossible, and symptoms of death appeared after three days, but she did not lose confidence, and continued to hold the picture of his Lordship close to her. I encouraged her more and more, and at length we had the consolation of seeing her delivered without the least accident.

At Gubbio in Umbria, D. Maria Veronica de Contiguiddi Montegraneli, a young nun in the convent of the Carmelites, had been suffering for about nine years from a rupture which she had concealed through delicacy; but the lady then made such great progress that she was obliged to mention it. The surgeon decla-

red that it was impossible to replace the intestines, as all the membranes were broken. In fact, no remedy could relieve her. While in this state, she asked our Father Falcone to recommend her to the saintly bishop. This father sent her a relic of a portion of one of his Lordship's garments. She made use of it in the evening, and promised that if she obtained her cure she would make a public attestation of it. During the night she awoke, felt free from all uneasiness, took off the bandages, and was in fact completely cured. The nuns and the surgeon declared that the cure was a miraculous one.

At Benevento a woman of sixty years of age had suffered for nearly two years from such severe pain in the side that she was unable to walk alone. She had recourse to his Lordship's intercession, and applied one of his relics, when she was instantly freed from her complaint, and could walk quite nimbly and without any support.

At Benevento there was also a poor woman who was very often afflicted by violent convulsions. One night they were so severe that she fell out of bed, and as she was alone in the house she was unable to rise again. She had a picture of Alphonso at the head of her bed, and she invoked him with confidence, as well as the most Holy Virgin Mary. At the same moment she saw his Lordship enter her room accompanied by a most beautiful Lady, who lifted her from the floor and laid her in bed again

with the greatest compassion. His Lordship then sat down beside her and said, "See, we have come to assist you, but you must go to confession to-morrow; your pains will be redoubled until then; but when the confession is finished, they will cease." At these words the Lady and his Lordship disappeared. When the morning had arrived the poor woman sent for our Father D. John Anthony Corrado, who found her in a very suffering state; but when the confession was finished, she was entirely free from pain.

At Benevento, on the day before the eve of the anniversary of his Lordship, a little child of six months old was on the point of expiring, as four of his brothers had done, who had all died within a few months. The mother was in a state of despair, for he was her only remaining son, and the father had fainted through excess of sorrow. During this time a gentleman who had some relics of his Lordship hastened to go to the house. When he beheld this sad spectacle, he exhorted the parents to trust in Alphonso's protection. He then hurried to his own house, brought the relics, and placed them on the body of the dying child. As he did so, the little child was saved, he opened his eyes, looked at his father and mother, and consoled them by a sweet smile. There were a great many witnesses present to testify to the truth of this miracle.

At Ascole Vitus Dominic Lapozzi, of whom we have already spoken, bought two thousand

measures of barley. On his return from Salerno in November he found them in such a state of fermentation, that he feared that he should lose them all. On seeing the loss he was likely to sustain, he had recourse with great confidence to his Lordship. This happened in the evening, and next morning he found the barley as cool as ice, and in perfect preservation.

Xavier Sessa, a print-seller of about eighteen years of age, had been at Fisciano for several days, on account of spitting of blood. On the 8th of August, 1792, his complaint was still more aggravated by a high fever and a convulsive cough. Our Father Tajano happened to be at this village at the same time for the novena of the Assumption, and the young man's parents at once sent for him to come and hear his confession. When he asked the sick man how he was, he replied that he was suffering much. "Have confidence," answered the father, "I will give you a remedy; swallow this thread of the shirt of Mgr. Liguori in some water with faith, and promise me to come to confession to our house of St. Michael, and you will obtain your cure." After having recited three Paters and three Aves in honour of the Blessed Trinity with those present, and having prayed that by the toils and labours of his Lordship this favour might be granted, three threads of his shirt were given to the sick man in a little water. The fever instantly left him, he had no more pain nor spitting of blood, and he went out hunting three days afterwards.

D. Vincent Massaro, a priest at Foggia, had an attack of apoplexy at six o'clock one evening, through which he lost the use of his right side, and all his members were so affected that it was impossible to undress him. Several attempts were made to bleed him, but they were in vain. He was soon afterwards seized by violent convulsions; blood issued from his mouth, and he no longer gave any signs of life. While in this state no time was lost in administering Extreme Unction to him. At about half-past nine, as no further remedy seemed possible, Rose Guadagno urged D. Felix Inzalata and D. Gaetan Méle, two priests who were with the sick man, to apply a picture of his Lordship to his body. The thing was scarcely done ere the dying man recovered his senses, and took a quantity of sherbet. His cure was so complete that the next morning he was quite well and able to go out.

Mary Joseph Melillo, the superioress of the asylum of Frasso, once lost her confessor, the archpriest de Filippis, which gave her extreme pain. One evening on going to bed, she recommended herself to Alphonso, and during the night he appeared to her. "How do you feel?" he said to her, addressing her by name. The religious exposed all her uneasiness to him. "Well," replied his Lordship, "calm yourself and be resigned to the will of God," and on awaking she found that she had regained the peace of her soul.

Father Dominic Daffina, a Capuchin of Calabria,

who was in the monastery at Nocera, was one day conversing with the other fathers immediately before dinner ; while sitting on one of the benches in the refectory, he was seized with such a violent attack of gout that there was much difficulty in taking him to his cell. While in this condition he had recourse to Alphonso with faith, and said to him, "My Lord, see what a difficult position I am placed in, and what trouble I shall have in procuring the necessary remedies. Obtain my cure, I entreat you, and I will give a judicial testimony to that effect." At these words he applied a picture of Alphonso to the suffering part, and he was instantly relieved from all pain. When the fathers had finished dinner, and believed him to be a prey to the most acute suffering, they were quite astonished to see him coming to meet them, full of joy at the blessing he had just received.

At Conversano, D. Aurelia Mary Martucci, the daughter of the doctor D. Gaetan Martucci, and of D. Mary Renzi, who was a young lady of thirteen years of age, was suffering from fever and a convulsive cough, accompanied by painful cramps of the stomach. One day when her maladies were redoubled, fears were entertained for her life ; her aunt, Mary Theresa Martucci, placed a picture of Alphonso upon her, and the sick child recommended herself to him with fervour ; after which she was instantly cured, and began to play with her sisters.

A sister of D. Vincent de Sanctis of la Cava, who was married to Portici, had a little girl of

a year old. The servant in taking her into the garden sometimes gave her some vine leaves to amuse her, without observing that the child always put them into her mouth. For two or three days she could not suck at all, and seemed on the point of death. When her mother saw her in this state she placed a picture of Alphonso on her breast, which was no sooner done than the child threw up a quantity of small pieces of vine leaves, after which she took the breast, and was perfectly well.

For thirty-four years Leopold Marino Rousseau of Foggia was tormented by a dysentery, which had reduced him to a mere skeleton. The malady grew worse and worse, and the doctors declared that he could not live, and ordered Extreme Unction to be administered to him. When D. Paul Rousseau was informed of the state his brother was in, he sent him two pictures, one of the Blessed Joseph of the Cross, and the other of his Lordship. At about five o'clock in the evening the people of the house lit a lamp before the two pictures, and recommended the dying man to his Lordship and to the Blessed Joseph. At midnight a bishop appeared before him clad in a rochet and an almuce, he was little and bent; he inquired what was the matter with him. "My Lord," the sick man replied, "I have no strength, and I entreat the saints to pray to God to grant me deliverance from my wretched state." The bishop then assumed quite a joyous manner, and answered, "Have confidence;" and as the sick

man's entrails were supported by bandages, he went on to say, "Take off this handkerchief, and you will feel better." "How can I do so," said the sick man, "I have not strength for it;" but as his Lordship again told him to undo the bandage, he tried to do it, and perceived that it was already done; as he felt instant relief he called his daughter, and asked for a light, but he saw the bishop no more. The next morning he cast his eyes on his Lordship's picture, and said, "It is that which has cured me." When the physicians came they found him quite recovered and free from fever.

I will now mention a miracle of another kind which happened to Father Louis of St. Catherine, apostolical missionary in the Roman States. He wrote to our superior-general, saying, "I tried in vain to convert a great number of sinners who were living most obstinately in vice, and who told me they could not be separated from the object of their passion; I persuaded them to recite an Ave to Mary Immaculate, praying her to extinguish these impure flames in them through the merits of Mgr. Liguori, who had exalted her so highly. After that they all came to me again, giving extraordinary proofs of conversion; they are now reformed and have led exemplary lives from that time. I also had the consolation of seeing this same method succeed with other sinners who nourished inveterate hatreds.

"Nay more," added this missionary, "I have myself known his power with God through my

own experience. One day in the pulpit, when I felt that my strength was failing through my numerous labours and advanced age, and when I saw the slight impression which I made on my audience, I interiorly invoked the servant of God, and immediately felt my strength return; I spoke forcibly, I affected all my audience, both learned and unlearned, and all hastened to approach the tribunal of penance with deep contrition."

Let us leave the publication of an almost innumerable number of other miracles* by which God has continued to glorify His servant. I will here close the history of the life and the congregation of our blessed father. Whatever may be the reception which my labours may receive, I offer them with confidence, not indeed as forming a finished work, but as being a faithful memoir which some one else may make use of in order to give a worthy portrait of the greatest apostle of these latter days. I believe that I have attained my end by relating nothing that did not pass under my own observation, or that I did not hear of through eye-witnesses on whose veracity I could rely; so that I can truly say, with all due respect for the words of holy writ: "Qui testimonium perhibet de his, et scripsit hæc...

* In the process of the beatification alone, more than a hundred miracles which St. Alphonso wrought during his life are confirmed, not to speak of those which are not specified in the acts of this process, but which after the inquiries which were made at this time, may be numbered by thousands.

verum est testimonium ejus." Joan. xxi. 24.
"This is that disciple who giveth testimony of
these things, and hath written these things: and
we know that his testimony is true." .

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THE END OF THE MEMOIRS.

SUPPLEMENT.

NOTICE TO THE READER.

ALTHOUGH the memoirs of the author are terminated, the translators have thought that the addition of the following chapters would enhance their value, and be agreeable to the reader.

CHAPTER L.

No sooner had our blessed father gone to receive his immortal crown, than we had his heroic virtues and the miracles wrought through his intercession confirmed by the ordinary judges. Two verbal processes were drawn up on this subject, the one at St. Agatha, where he had been bishop, and the other at Nocera, where his precious remains were interred. Eighty-seven witnesses, who were all chosen from among those who were the most distinguished for their piety, knowledge, and position in society, attested the heroic actions and miracles of the saintly bishop on oath. The acts of this process were then sent to Rome to ob-

tain the introduction of the cause of the beatification and canonization. About this time many cardinals, archbishops, bishops, vicars-capitular, chapters of cathedrals and of collegiate establishments, religious bodies, magistrates of the highest rank, and a multitude of distinguished persons in the kingdom of the two Sicilies addressed earnest entreaties to the Holy See for the commencement of the process. Several of these petitions arrived too late to be taken notice of; however, those which were registered amounted to four hundred and eight. Amongst those specially deserving of notice, are the letters of King Ferdinand IV., who like his father was a great admirer of the virtues of Alphonso, and who supported all the proceedings then entered into by all the influence appertaining to so august a personage.

Our Father Don Gaetan Cardone was constituted by our congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer as the postulator of the cause before the Holy See; the advocate, Hyacinth Amici, was nominated as the defender, and by a decree of the 9th July, 1794, the Sovereign Pontiff selected Cardinal Archinto as the reporter. In consequence of the proceedings connected with the examination of the virtues of the servant of God, Mgr. Jerome Napoleon, promoter of the faith, asked whether the momentary change which was undergone by the rule of the institute which had been approved by Benedict XIV. had happened through the fault of the venerable founder. The Sovereign Pontiff on the

2nd of December, 1795, referred the examination of this incident to a private congregation, consisting of Cardinals Archinto, Livizani, and Binuccini, of Mgr. Coppola, secretary of the Congregation of Rites, and of Jerome Napoleon, promoter of the faith. After consulting together this congregation declared on the 8th of March, 1796, that they confirmed the innocence of the servant of God, and that it was forbidden to speak further regarding this modification during the rest of the proceedings of the process. This decision was confirmed by a decree of the Sovereign Pontiff, of the 9th of March, 1796, as well as by an apostolical brief, declaring that the servant of God had always had the most religious attachment towards the Holy See.

This preliminary question having been settled on the relation of Cardinal Archinto, the prefect of the Congregation of Rites, a decree was put forth on the 30th of April, 1796, in order that the cause of our saint might be introduced. Pope Pius VI. approved this decree on the 4th of the following May, and signed the commission for the cause with his own hand. Another decree was then immediately issued by which Mgr. Alphonso Maria de Liguori was declared venerable, and remissorial letters were despatched to the towns of Nocera and of St. Agatha of the Goths, to the judges appointed for the apostolical inquiries as to the virtues and miracles of the servant of God.

In conformity to the decrees of Urban VIII. it was declared in a decree of the 16th of Sep-

tember, 1797, that no unlawful worship had been paid to Alphonso, and the Pope approved this verdict on the 20th of the same month. After this, the calamities of the times and the exile of the Holy Father Pius VI. then interrupted the cause so happily commenced, but the wise Pontiff did not lose sight of it during the misfortunes of exile, and by a rescript he signed at Florence on the 7th of December, 1791, he granted faculties to the appointed judges at Nocera and at St. Agatha of the Goths, to continue to collect the depositions of witnesses of all ages, to examine the body of the servant of God, to consult all the documents, and, finally, he permitted them to draw up the process within the space of three years, and to seal it up and preserve it in the archives of their bishoprics. As the bishop of St. Agatha was dead, Pope Pius VII., on the 7th of March, 1801, substituted the vicar-capitular in his place, whom he furnished with the requisite faculties, and on the 6th of March he did the same with regard to the vicars-capitular of the other deceased bishops to whom the search through the documents had been confided. As Cardinal Archinto died, Pope Pius VII., on the 6th of March, 1802, substituted Cardinal Caraccioli in his stead as reporter of the cause. On the 27th of the same month, this prelate issued a decree in favour of the validity of the apostolical process on the reputation for sanctity enjoyed by the servant of God. On the 3rd of April this judgment was confirmed by the Sovereign Pontiff.

Before proceeding to the examination of the virtues, it was necessary to commence with that of the works and manuscripts. On the 5th of May, 1797, the Congregation of Rites entrusted this examination to the Cardinal Archbishop of Naples, the Archbishops of Benevento and of Palermo, the Bishops of St. Agatha of the Goths, of Nocera, of Scala, of Melfi, and of Nusco. On the report of Cardinal Saluces, who took the place of Cardinal Caraccioli, the Sacred Congregation of Rites decided on the 14th of May, 1803, after a theological examination, that nothing was to be found in the printed or in the manuscript works of the venerable Alphonso Liguori, which was worthy of censure,* "Nihil

* The following is the decree which was pronounced by the Congregation of Rites, and which was confirmed by Pius VII.: "Facta ad Congregationem ordinariam . . . plena relatione tum operum (B. Alphonsi) . . . impressorum quam aliorum manuscritorum omnium, cum nihil in iis censura dignum repertum fuerit, sacra eadem Congregatio rescribendum censuit, procedi ad ulteriora. Die 14 Maj. 1803.

"Quibus Sanctitas Sua benigne annuit die 18 Maj."

Although this decision was in general terms, I will here remark, that the examiners of the Sovereign Pontiff are obliged, 1st, scrupulously to weigh each and all the propositions relating to the rule of morals or the truths of religion, and to notice them according to their merits; 2nd, they are always obliged to take the most rigid decision; thus, "an opinion which is but little in accordance with the purity of the evangelical precepts, and which is capable of doing injury to morality; a system rendered suspicious through novelty, and specially if it be so in regard to frivolous questions, or a sentiment which is contrary to that of the fathers and to the common consent of Christians, are indelible stains which cause an eternal silence to be imposed in regard to any proposed process for canonization."

The works of St. Alphonso not only do not therefore contain any proposition whatever which can be called schismatical or scandalous, but also none which are either erroneous, pernicious,

censura dignum fuisse repertum," and that therefore the proceedings might be continued. This decision was approved by the Pope on the 18th of the same month. But as other writings were then produced which had not been examined, a fresh examination became necessary, of which the result was the same as the first. This favourable decision of the Congregation of Rites was given on the 17th of September, and approved on the 24th of the same month. On the 25th of June, 1803, the Pope granted a dispensation from the decree of Urban VIII. to the effect, that no proceedings with regard to the special examination of the virtues of a servant of God could be entered upon until fifty years after his death. Now only sixteen had elapsed since that of Mgr. Liguori.

This examination of virtues commenced on the 10th of June, 1806, in an extraordinary congregation, called anti-preparatory; it was continued in another and a preparatory congregation on the 17th of February, 1807, at the Quirinal palace, and terminated in a general congregation on the 28th of April, which was held on the 18th of April in the presence of Pope Pius VII. in his palace of the Quirinal, when the cardinals and the consultors unanimously declared that the virtues of the venerable Alphonso

or rash; the morals therefore of this saintly bishop cannot be censured without setting up as a censor of authority itself, without, in fine, censuring the decision of the Holy See, which has declared it to be orthodox, by declaring that it contains nothing reprehensible whatsoever.

Maria Liguori were of a heroic degree. But before the Sovereign Pontiff gave his decision, he waited for some days to implore still further illumination from the Holy Ghost. It was on the 7th of May, the feast of the Ascension of our Lord, after having celebrated mass in his domestic chapel, and after having assisted with the cardinals at the solemn mass which was sung in the Basilica of St. John Lateran, that the Holy Father published in the winter choir of this basilica his solemn decree on the virtues of the servant of God. His Holiness proclaimed that he could assert, "that the venerable servant of God, Alphonso Maria Liguori, had possessed the theological and cardinal virtues in a heroic degree: 'Constare de venerabilis servi Dei Alphonsi Mariæ de Liguorio virtutibus theologalibus et cardinalibus, earumque adnexis in gradu heroico.'"

The only thing which was now necessary for obtaining the solemn beatification was the examination of the miracles. Amongst the great number of those which were wrought by the intercession of the servant of God, three were selected as those to be proposed in the extraordinary anti-preparatory congregation. This assembly was to have taken place on the 25th of September, 1809, but circumstances did not admit of its so doing. The captivity of the Pope, the dispersion of the cardinals, and the invasion of the Roman States suspended the proceedings. All that was therefore then possible to be done was, that each of them remitted his opinion in regard to the question of the miracles to Cardinal

Pieto, who was then the apostolic delegate at Rome. After the persecution the affair of the beatification of the servant of God was resumed on the 28th of February, 1815, that is to say, at the end of about six years of interruption, the preparatory congregation regarding the miracles took place in the Quirinal palace; and on the 5th of September, in presence of the Pope and in the said palace, the third general congregation was held, according to custom, on the same question. Two miracles were all that were requisite, and therefore the congregation only approved two. The Pope wished to take still more time, in order to implore the guidance of the Holy Ghost still further, but on the 17th of September, the day on which the feast of our Lady of Sorrows was celebrated throughout the whole Catholic Church for the first time, the Holy Father decided that the decree in favour of the miracles should be promulgated, and he selected this day because of the great devotion of the servant of God for the sufferings of the Blessed Virgin. After having offered the holy sacrifice in his domestic chapel of the Quirinal on that morning, his Holiness published his decree, by which he recognised the two miracles of the second class which had been effected through the intercession of the venerable Alphonso Maria Liguori, namely, "The sudden and perfect cure of the breast of Magdalene de Murzio, of which the greater part had been cut off the evening before, on account of a mortifying ulcer, with the restoration of the flesh which had been taken away; as well as the in-

stantaneous and entire cure and recovery of the strength of Father Francis d' Ottajano, of the order of the Reformed Minors of St. Francis, who was attacked by a pulmonary consumption and complete prostration of strength."

The only thing then remaining to be done was to take the opinion of all the fathers of the Sacred Congregation, to enable the name of the venerable Alphonso Maria Liguori to be inscribed amongst the glorious names of the Blessed whom the Church has recognised among her saints. A general congregation was therefore held in the Quirinal palace, on the 10th of December, 1815, in presence of the Sovereign Pontiff Pius VII. A unanimous vote was given in the affirmative, and on the 21st of the same month, being the feast of St. Thomas the Apostle, Cardinal della Somaglia, the prefect of the Congregation of Rites, Cardinal Alexander Mattei, who acted as a substitute for Cardinal Caraccioli, who was absent, as well as Mgrs. John Anthony Sala, the secretary of the Congregation of Rites, and Andrew Cavalli, the promoter of the faith, were summoned to the Quirinal by the Pope. After he had celebrated mass, he published the decree which permitted the proceedings regarding the solemn beatification of the venerable servant of God, Alphonso Maria Liguori, to be continued. "Tuto procedi posse ad beatificationem venerabilis servi Dei, Alphonsi Mariæ de Liguorio."

In consequence of these decrees, the holy father signed the brief of the beatification on

the 26th of September, 1816, which conferred the title of Blessed on the illustrious bishop, and declared that he is most assuredly in possession of celestial glory, and that his relics and images might be exposed to the veneration of the faithful. The brief authorised the dioceses of St. Agatha and of Nocera, as well as the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, to celebrate yearly the mass for which the Pope prescribed the proper prayers* in honour of the beatified. The ceremony of the beatification took place nine days afterwards in the Basilica of St. Peter. The whole was conducted with splendour. On the front of the church, above the grand gallery, a magnificent standard floated, representing the blessed Alphonso in glory, with the following inscription at the bottom :

" Beato Alphonso Mariæ de Liguorio
 Neapolitano
 Congregationis S. S. Redemptoris
 fondatori ac olim
 episcopo. Agathensi,
 vitæ innocentia et virtutibus admirando
 charitate in Deum et Delparam flagrantissimo
 æternæ proximorum salutis curatori indefesso
 sæcularibus cænobitis presbyteris antistibus
 exemplo absolutissimo
 decreto Pii P. O. M.
 honorum cælestium et Dei festi
 dedicatio."†

* The whole of this brief as well as of the other decrees, are to be found in an excellent work entitled, "Reflessioni sulla santità e dottrina de santo Alphonso Mariæ de Liguori." (Torino per Giacento Marietti, 1839.)

† To Alphonso Maria Liguori of Naples, founder of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, and formerly bishop of St. Agatha, a man rendered worthy of admiration through his vir-

A most beautiful picture of the miracle of Foggia was also placed over the principal entrance of the majestic portico of St. Peter's, representing the moment when the rays of light issued from an image of the Blessed Virgin, and were reflected on the forehead of the holy preacher while he was in an ecstasy. There were also divers inscriptions referring to incidents in the life of the beatified, as well as to the two miracles which had been recognised by the pontifical decree. This immense church was all decorated with rich hangings in damask embroidered with gold, and in fact, all was of the most magnificent description. At the bottom of the church, above the chair of St. Peter, and amidst a dazzling light, was placed a large oval-shaped picture representing the Blessed Alphonso Maria Liguori. A prodigious number of candles of all sizes surrounded it like a sort of celestial glory. At ten o'clock in the morning, the postulator of the cause, D. Vincent Giattini, who was a member of, and the procurator-general to our Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, came forward before the whole Congregation of Rites, accompanied by the prelate who was secretary to this Sacred Congregation, and in a Latin discourse addressed to Cardinal de la Somaglia, the bishop of Frascati, vicar-general of the holy

tues and the innocency of his life, who burned with love for God, and with devotion for the Blessed Virgin, who was an indefatigable labourer for the eternal salvation of his neighbour, and a perfect model for men of the world, for religious, for priests, and for prelates, the honours due to saints, and a feast day have been solemnly allotted by a decree of the Sovereign Pontiff Pius VII.

father and prefect of the Congregation of Rites, he asked for permission to publish the brief for the solemn beatification of the venerable Alphonso Maria Liguori. After this discourse and the reading of the brief, Mgr. Guerrieri, the archbishop of Athens entoned the *Te Deum*; at the same instant the curtain was undrawn and disclosed to view the picture of the newly beatified, while amid the sound of all the bells, and the noise of numerous volleys of artillery, all present fell on their knees and offered him this first act of religious and public homage in testimony of their veneration. The hymn of thanksgiving was then sung, with a harmonious and brilliant accompaniment. After this, the archbishop who was the celebrant, said the new prayer approved by the Sovereign Pontiff, which was followed by a solemn mass sung by a numerous choir, which consisted of the first singers in Rome. At about six o'clock in the evening, Pope Pius VII. repaired to the Basilica of St. Peter with his ordinary retinue: he was there received by all the Sacred College: after having adored the Blessed Sacrament, the holy father went and prostrated himself before the picture of the Blessed Alphonso, attended by all the cardinals; when his prayer was ended, the postulator of the cause presented him with a Life of the beatified, as well as all the members of the Sacred College and of the pontifical household. Thus terminated this glorious ceremony, which was only as a prelude to those still greater honours which were in store for this servant of God.

CHAPTER LI.

God, who willed that His servant should be still more highly exalted, was not long in manifesting His will both through the fresh miracles worked through Alphonso, and also by the numerous and illustrious solicitations which were addressed to the court of Rome. The aim of these requests was the continuation of the process of the canonization of the servant of God; they were assented to by the Sacred Congregation of Rites, and on the 28th of February, 1818, the Holy Father Pius VII. signed the decree which introduced the cause of the beatified for canonization.

During this time his Holiness Leo XII. succeeded to Pius VII. of glorious memory, and our most Reverend Father D. Joseph Maria Mantone, the procurator-general of our Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, who had become postulator of the cause, in the room of our deceased Father de Vincent Andrew Giattini, obtained from the Sovereign Pontiff on the 6th of December, 1825, the needful letters to cause the requisite apostolic inquiries to be made on the new miracles; after they were finished and sent to Rome, his Holiness in a decree dated the 16th of June, 1827, substituted Cardinal Odescalchi as reporter of the cause, in

the room of the deceased Cardinal Caraccioli.* On the 22nd of September of the same year, the Congregation of Rites declared that they verified the validity of this process, and the Pope confirmed this judgment on the 26th of the same month.

They then passed on to the triple examination of the two miracles which had been selected for that purpose amongst a great many others, and for this end the first anti-preparatory congregation was held on the 19th of August, 1828, in the palace of Cardinal Odescalchi, the reporter of the cause.

The second congregation called the preparatory one, took place on the 7th of July, 1829, in the Quirinal palace under the pontificate of Pius VIII., and on the 23rd of September, 1829, the new miracles were approved in the general

* This pious prelate, who was a model of humility and abnegation, was born at Rome, on the 5th of March, 1786, of that princely family which gave the now venerable Innocent XI. to the Church. From the year 1814, when the Holy Father Pius VII. re-established the Company of Jesus, Mgr. Odescalchi, although then a prelate, took steps to obtain permission to retire into the noviciate of this order. He was raised to the dignity of cardinal in 1823, and after that to the archbishopric of Ferrara. He was recalled to Rome by Leo XII., who honoured him with his confidence. He was invested with all the highest dignities when his Holiness Gregory XVI. yielded to his pressing solicitations, and allowed him to resign his cardinalship and his ecclesiastical duties, and to enter into the Society of Jesus. Cardinal Odescalchi then left Rome for Modena, and went to the college of the Jesuits, where he laid aside the purple as soon as he heard the result of the consistory of the 30th of November, 1838. On the following night he set out for Verona, and after he had gone through his noviciate he returned to Modena, where he died on the 17th of August, 1841.

congregation of cardinals, prelates, and consultants. His Holiness confirmed this judicial declaration by his solemn decree of the 3rd of December, 1829, which was published on the feast of St. Francis Xavier, in the church of the Jesuit fathers. The following are the two miracles which were approved.

Twenty days after the solemn beatification, Peter Canuti, a lay-brother of the Order of Camuldoles, obtained the instantaneous cure of a deep and mortal wound, through touching a picture of the Blessed Alphonso.

A year after this, Antonia Furzia de Cantazaro fell from the top of a flight of stairs, under the weight of a sack of corn, and fractured her leg. The violence of the fall gave her whole body such a shock that she could no longer take nourishment, and suffered from frequent vomitings. Shortly afterwards inflammation came on, so that her death seemed inevitable, when St. Alphonso appeared to her in resplendent glory, and clad in his pontifical attire; he blessed her, and at the same instant she was cured, gave suck to her little girl, and ate with good appetite.

The only thing remaining to be done was to examine whether the proceedings in regard to the canonization of the beatified could be safely continued after this approbation. A general assembly was held to this effect on the 20th of April, 1830, and the advocate D. Hyacinth Amici, who had commenced the cause of our blessed father, having been heard, it was unanimously

declared, "that the canonization could be effected."

Finally, on the 16th of May, 1830, the Sovereign Pontiff Pius VIII. of happy memory, published the following decree :

"Amongst the labourers whom our heavenly Father ceases not to send to cultivate His vineyard, was the Blessed Alphonso Maria Liguori. He laboured much for the instruction of the people by his writings and by his discourses. He quitted the tumult of the world at an early age, and founded the Congregation of the Holy Redeemer ; after this time he became a bishop and an excellent pastor, and practised virtue in a heroic degree. These virtues and the miracles which were added to them after his death, and which were as a testimony from God, have caused him to be placed on the altars.

"But since his beatification fresh miracles have taken place through his intercession, whereby the Sovereign Dispenser of all good has shown that the glorious Pontiff ought to be exalted still higher, and that he ought to receive the name and the honours of a saint. Amongst these fresh miracles, two in particular have been examined with special care, and our most Holy Father, Pius VIII., has approved them by a decree of the 3rd of the nones of December, 1829.

"However, as it is an ancient custom that there should be a general meeting of the Congregation of Rites, to examine whether after the appro-

bation of the two miracles which have taken place since the beatification, the solemn canonization can be proceeded with in safety; the cardinals and other members of the congregation met together, on the 12th of the calends of May in this year, in the Quirinal, in the presence of his Holiness, and there they all declared unanimously 'that the canonization might be proceeded with in safety.'

"The Holy Father was of the same opinion, but before he confirmed the wishes of the consultants, his Holiness exhorted them all to address their prayers to heaven in order that he might be enlightened by God in this sentence he was to pronounce. He resolved to express his opinion at that season when our Redeemer after having vanquished death and hell appeared to His disciples and ordered them to teach all nations, for this was a precept which the Blessed Alphonso had fulfilled throughout his life. On the fifth Sunday after Easter, therefore, after having celebrated the holy sacrifice and summoned Cardinals Joseph Albani, the secretary of the state, and pro-prefect of the Congregation of Rites; Charles Odescalchi, reporter of the cause; and Virgil Pescetelli, the promoter of the faith, and the undersigned secretary to the Quirinal, his Holiness pronounced, 'that the solemn canonization of the Blessed Alphonso Maria de Liguori could be safely effected.'

"His Holiness ordered this decree to be published and preserved among the acts of the Congregation of Rites, and that the apostolical let-

ters should be prepared for the canonization, which will be celebrated in its due time in the basilica of the Vatican.

“The 17th of the calends of June, (16th May,) 1830.

“Signed: J. CARD. ALBANI,

“J. C. FATATI,

“Secretary of the Congregation of Rites.”*

It was whilst proposing fresh intercessors with God for the worship of the faithful, that Pius VIII. obtained a relief from the sorrows which the enemies of the Church brought upon him. The storm which he had predicted in his encyclical soon burst forth throughout all Europe, and as it was some time ere peace was restored after this calamity, a stop was put to the solemnisation of the feast which was so ardently desired. The Pontiff died some months afterwards, when his Holiness Gregory XVI. succeeded him on the 2nd of February of the following year of 1831. It was under his glorious pontificate that the favourable decree received its entire fulfilment. To the political reasons which still subsisted and acted as hindrances to the canonization was added the outlay which is entailed by the magnificent ceremonies which must always accompany the canonization of the saints, but divers subscriptions were set on foot to meet the expenses of the fête of the blessed who were

* The original of this document and of the other decrees will be found in the work cited in the preceding chapter.

to be canonized together, and at length the 22nd of May, 1839, was selected as the day for the canonization of those servants of God, Alphonso Maria de Liguori, Francis of Jerome, of the Company of Jesus, John Joseph of the Cross, of the reform of St. Peter of Alcantara, Pacificus of San Severino, a Reformed Minor, and Veronica Juliana, a Capuchiness.

Rome was filled with strangers who wished to assist at this great fête for several weeks before the solemnity. The Holy Father invited all the bishops of Italy to be present, and about a hundred members of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer repaired to Rome from Italy, Germany, and Belgium, to be present at the triumph of their father. The decorations for the church of St. Peter, where the solemnity was to take place, occupied several thousands of people. At length, on the 25th of May, the eve of the canonization of Alphonso, the cannons of the castle of St. Angelo, and the peal of all the bells in Rome announced the approach of the much-longed-for day. At midnight the trumpets of the guards and of the senate resounded through the town, music was heard in all directions, and at four o'clock in the morning a hundred cannons were fired in honour of this great festal day.

The innumerable crowd which had assembled in Rome from all parts of Christendom, then wended their way towards the magnificent square before the church of St. Peter.

The columns of the gallery which surrounds

it were ornamented with rich hangings, with draperies and flowers, and the grenadiers and all the guards of Rome were ranged all around in full uniform.

At six o'clock the most imposing procession which can be imagined commenced towards the Vatican. The orphans went first, followed by the schools of the Noble Children, then came the mendicant orders, the Franciscan, the Capuchins, &c., with their respective banners: they were followed by the other religious orders, by the Augustines, the Servites, and many others, and after them were the seminarists, the vicars and priests of Rome with their white stoles on. They were followed by the chapters, the numerous collegiate establishments with their crosses and banners, by several civil officers, and by the members of the Congregation of Rites, which is composed of both secular and regular priests.

Then were to be seen a multitude of people with lighted torches in their hands, and who were followed by the banners of the five new saints. The cords of these banners were held by the surviving relatives of the saints, and by the members of their respective orders. At St. Alphonso's banner were to be seen one of his nephews and several of his grand-nephews, the first a general and the others officers in the service of the king of Naples.

The members of the procession were then divided into two parts, and were ranged on each side of the place of St. Peter; after

which the Holy Father intoned the hymn *Ave Maris Stella* in the Sixtine Chapel to implore the assistance of the Blessed Virgin in this solemn action. He then ascended his throne. When his Holiness quitted the palace, all the bells resounded, the roll of drums was heard, and the most magnificent harmony was echoed on all sides.

Those who accompanied the Sovereign Pontiff from the Sixtine Chapel to St. Peter's went in the following order: the Pope's heralds went first, then came the Sovereign Pontiff's court, accompanied by the singers of the Papal chapel, who were followed by the assembly of those connected with the pontifical office, the deacons, sub-deacons, and acolytes, and by the confessors established at St. Peter's for all nations, all vested in white. They were followed by an imposing assembly of more than a hundred bishops, abbots, and cardinals, who were at Rome at the time. The mitred abbots walked first, then came the bishops and the cardinals vested in their pontifical attire. The prefect of Rome, and the principal civil officers followed the cardinals, and immediately before the Holy Father walked the three most ancient cardinals who were to assist at the pontifical office, vested as deacons, followed by the brilliant suite of the throne. At length appeared the throne of the Holy Father, whose profound recollection during this great solemnity, (as in all others,) forcibly struck all who beheld him. He had on a white cope, with a cross at his

breast. He wore a mitre ; in his left-hand he held a lighted candle, and with his right he blessed the crowd who knelt before him. A canopy of cloth of gold was held above him, and the Holy Father was surrounded by the principal personages of his court. The generals of the different orders walked behind him.

But before describing the canonization as it took place at St. Peter's, we will say a few words as to the decorations of this vast basilica, in order that some idea, although it can be but a very imperfect one, may be formed of the magnificence of the decorations of this the most beautiful temple of the universe on this occasion.

Above the principal door was a superb picture representing the five new saints, St. Alphonso Maria Liguori, St. Francis Jerome, St. John Joseph of the Cross, St. Pacificus of San Severino, and St. Veronica of Juliana, transported into heaven by angels, and above this picture there was a Latin inscription relating to the feast. Similar inscriptions were to be seen over each of the doors of the vestibule at the entrance of the church. It is impossible to describe the beauty of the decorations of the interior of the church. The walls were hung with red silk enriched with gold. Between the naves were canopies of different colours.

The throne of the Holy Father was raised on eight columns behind the altar, and covered with red velvet, between each of which were placed pictures representing divers incidents in the lives

of the new saints. The throne was surrounded by a tribune, which was also covered with red velvet, in which were the kings of Naples and of Bavaria, Don Miguel of Portugal, and the queen of Sardinia, as well as the foreign ambassadors. The hangings prevented the light of day from penetrating through the windows of the church, so that the effect of the illumination might not be interfered with. A hundred and ten golden lustres were suspended in the side naves, and forty magnificent chandeliers were suspended from the roof; thirty candelabras were placed before the pictures, and a hundred more lustres were distributed through the church, so that more than four thousand candles were lighted in this august temple.

As soon as the Holy Father arrived at the church, he went into the chapel where the Blessed Sacrament was, that he might adore it. He was then carried to the throne behind the altar, where he received the homage of the principal clergy. After the cardinals, bishops, and abbots had taken their respective places, the master of the ceremonies conducted to the throne of the Pope the cardinal who was to entreat him to grant the canonization in the name of all Christendom. The cardinal made a reverence, while his advocate who accompanied him made the following petition to the Sovereign Pontiff on his knees: "Most Holy Father! the most eminent cardinal here present, earnestly beseeches your Holiness to permit the Blessed Alphonso, &c. to be numbered amongst the

saints of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to deign to declare that they shall be honoured as such by all faithful Christians."

The Pope's secretary replied in his name, that his Holiness wished fervent prayers to be addressed to God in a case of such importance, and that the intercession of the Most Holy Mother of God, that of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and all the other saints, should be implored, in order that all might be done according to the holy will of God.

After this reply the cardinal returned to his place. The Pope descended from his throne, and knelt whilst the two cantors entoned the litanies of the saints, which were responded to by all.

After the litany the Sovereign Pontiff returned to his throne, and the cardinal came a second time to the foot of the throne, when the advocate repeated his request, adding to the former these words, "The most eminent cardinal here present earnestly entreats, and more earnestly than before, that your Holiness," &c. The Sovereign Pontiff's secretary replied to this request, that his Holiness desired that the inspirations of the Holy Ghost should be invoked by fresh supplications to that effect. The cardinal and his advocate once more resumed their places, when the Pope laid aside his mitre and knelt down, while the cardinal who was seated on his left hand exhorted all present to prayer, saying, "Orate." Every one prayed in silence for some time, after which the Pope arose, and the cardi-

nal seated at his right-hand said to all the assistants, "Levate." Two bishops then advanced with books and candles, and the Holy Father knelt down and entoned the Veni Creator, and he remained kneeling during the first stanza. He then arose, and stood until the hymn ended; upon which two acolytes approached the throne, and the Pope chanted the prayer to the Holy Ghost.

After the Sovereign Pontiff resumed his seat on the throne, the cardinal and his advocate came again to his feet to renew their petition a third time, saying, "Most Holy Father, the very eminent cardinal most earnestly entreats your Holiness to deign to inscribe among the saints," &c. The secretary replied, that the Holy Father was going to pronounce the definitive sentence. The whole of the imposing assemblage then arose while the Holy Father remained seated with his mitre on, and as doctor and head of the Catholic Church, pronounced the grand and supreme judgment in these terms: "In honour of the Most Holy and indivisible Trinity, for the exaltation of the Catholic faith and the augmentation of the piety of Christians, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and by our own, we, after mature reflection, and the reiterated invocation of the aid of God, and after having consulted our venerable brothers the cardinals of the Roman Church, the patriarchs, the archbishops, and bishops of this capital, decide and pronounce that the bless-

ed Alphonso, &c. are saints, we number them amongst the saints, and order that their memory shall be annually honoured by the worship of the Church on the day of their birth,* namely, that of the blessed Alphonso, on the 2nd of August, &c. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.”

After the Holy Father had thus recommended the new saints to the veneration of the whole Church, he entoned the Te Deum, and at the same instant was heard the roar of the cannons of the castle of St. Angelo, all the bells of Rome pealed forth, the drums beat, the trumpets sounded, and strains of magnificent harmony re-echoed throughout the church. All these marks of triumph which make such a feeble impression in profane ceremonies, produced such deep emotion on an occasion like this, that it required to be felt to be understood. After the sentence has been pronounced by the Vicar of Jesus Christ, who pronounces those who have overcome the world for the love of God to be worthy of glory, one feels that these signs of joy and triumph are not an idle show, but the commencement of a worship of praise and thanksgiving which will last until the consummation of ages; one even feels that they are but faint echoes of the harmony in heaven, where Jesus Christ the eternal Pontiff Himself crowns His saints in another sanctuary which is not made by the hand of man.

* The Church speaks thus of the day of their death, which is in truth that on which their new and blessed life commenced.

After the hymn of thanksgiving the Sovereign Pontiff invoked the newly canonized saints in the name of the Church militant, by chanting the prayer of their office and the Confiteor, in which their names is added after those of the apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, when the Holy Father gave the benediction.

Thus ended the solemnity of the canonization, which was immediately followed by a solemn mass celebrated by the Holy Father himself. At the offertory offerings of candles, bread and wine, of turtle-doves and other birds, were presented to the Holy Father according to the established usage at canonizations. On seeing this latter offering presented by the religious of the respective orders of the newly canonized saints, it was impossible to refrain from thinking of the dove from the ark which they have so well imitated, for they have returned to heaven, and have passed over the earth without ever attaching themselves to it.

After high mass, the immense multitude assembled in the Piazza before St. Peter's, to receive the pontifical benediction, (*urbi et orbi,*) that is to say, *to the town and to the world,* which the Holy Father bestows on rare occasions from the tribune of the church of St. Peter. It is well known how touching, how Catholic, that is to say, how divine a sight it is to see this innumerable mass of people fall on their knees as one man, before the successors of St. Peter, and how it verifies those words which were pronounced by the Son of God nine-

teen centuries ago, "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The most profound silence reigned everywhere, so that the words of benediction of the Sovereign Pontiff were distinctly heard when he raised his hands to bless all Christendom, and specially all the Christians who were then assembled together from all parts of the world at the feet of the common father of the faithful.

Such was the end of this brilliant ceremony, which after all was a most feeble representation of the triumph of the saints in heaven. Were it possible to add anything to it, or rather, were it allowable to form any further desire regarding the glories of St. Alphonso, it would be that of seeing him declared doctor by the head of the Church. We allude to this hope, as it is not only well-founded by what has been done by a great number of bishops and prelates of divers countries, but also because the holy founder appears to have fulfilled the necessary conditions for that purpose. The following are the conditions which, according to Benedict XIV., the Church requires for this honourable distinction, eminent knowledge, great sanctity, and the declaration of the Church. Now who can fail to perceive that Alphonso had all these qualifications necessary for obtaining the honour of the degree of doctor? Boniface VIII. says, that eminent learning is proved by combating heretics victoriously, by clearing up obscure and doubtful questions, and by setting forth Holy

Scripture with clearness. Have not the works of the servant of God on heresies and against heretics, all the pages of his Moral Theology and his Commentary on the Psalms, perfectly fulfilled these conditions? and have not the Sovereign Pontiffs themselves several times declared that the learning and sanctity of this servant of God were carried to an eminent degree? It only therefore rests with the vicar of Jesus Christ to add this new glory to the crown of the new Bishop and Confessor Pontiff.

CHAPTER LII.

BULL OF THE CANONIZATION OF ST. ALPHONSO.

GREGORIUS EPISCOPUS,

SERVUS SERVORUM DEI, AD PERPETUAM REI MEMORIAM.

Preface.

§ 1. SANCTITY and knowledge, according to the apostle of the Gentiles, ought to be the ornament of bishops, for to them the salvation of souls is confided, and they ought to possess both, so that they may set an example of a perfect life, be sure guides to their flocks in the way of salvation, and be able both to exhort them according to sound doctrine, and to convince those who oppose it. We know that the Church has in all ages possessed excellent bishops endowed with this double ornament of

knowledge and sanctity who have been lively images of the Good Shepherd, who have watched over their flocks, to whom they were models of all virtue, with wisdom and anxiety, and who as burning lights set on a candlestick, were the glory of the Church of God by their spotless lives, and the excellency of their doctrine.

On Alphonso's Virtues and Merits in general.

§ 2. In order to revive the admirable example which is given by the life of a holy prelate, God granted St. Alphonso Maria de Liguori to His Church in the last century. From his having given himself up from his tenderest youth to the practice of all Christian virtues, and especially from his possessing sacred knowledge in an eminent degree, he was called on to fill the most important of all charges, viz., that of the episcopate, in order that his labours in the field of the Lord, where he had always proved a vigilant labourer from the time he entered the priesthood, might be from henceforth still more extended and more productive of the fruits of salvation. His zeal for the glory of God was too ardent to allow him to confine its effects within the narrow limits of his life; he therefore left descendants to follow him to the most distant ages, by instituting a congregation of priests, who by being inflamed with the same charity, should consecrate all their labours and care to procuring the salvation of souls. As the examination of the admirable virtues of Alphonso, which has been performed with the

usual severity, has clearly shown that they reached the highest degree of perfection, and as the miracles by which God, who is the Author of all good, has manifested the sanctity of His servant have been duly recognised and verified; by virtue of the apostolical authority which has been confided to us, notwithstanding our unworthiness, and on the advice of our venerable brothers the cardinals of the holy Roman Church, and of the patriarchs, archbishops, and bishops who were present at Rome at that time in great number, we declare by the present letters and ordain, that the honours paid to saints be rendered to the Blessed Alphonso de Liguori by the whole Church, and his intercession with God be implored for.

*On the Birth and Education of the Blessed
Alphonso.*

§ 3. Alphonso was born at Naples of noble parents, on the 5th day of October, 1696. He was endowed with an extraordinary vivacity of mind, and had scarcely ceased to be a child ere he applied first to the classics, and then to matters of science and to the study of the law, in which he had such success that he was hardly sixteen ere he was promoted to the rank of doctor of canon and civil law, with the greatest distinction, and after having gone through the usual examinations. He entered into the profession of a lawyer in deference to the wishes of his father, and performed its duties with the most perfect integrity; but after having found

that it was full of troubles and dangers, he felt it right to leave it for the service of the Church. For this reason he despised a very splendid matrimonial alliance, as well as the fortune which belonged to him as an eldest son. He renounced it of his own free-will and with joy in favour of his brother, and entirely detached himself from all care about earthly things.

He becomes a priest; his love for chastity and his ardent love for God and charity to his neighbour.

§ 4. Being admitted into holy orders, and invested with the sacerdotal character, he exerted all his strength in extending the kingdom of God everywhere, in sowing the seeds of virtue in the hearts of men, and in uprooting their vices. But as he was convinced that no one will ever reap great fruit from his apostolical labours, if he does not commence by perfectly accomplishing what he teaches, the principal object of his exercises was to exhibit in himself all those virtues which are becoming in a minister of God and the dispenser of His mysteries. He very faithfully guarded that chastity which he had for some time vowed to God, and his thoughts and actions were all calculated to preserve it from the slightest taint, and in order to succeed in this aim he placed it with unbounded confidence under the protection of the Mother of God. His love for God was so ardent that his mind was always fixed upon Him, and his only delight seemed to be in thinking or in speaking of Him. It

is easy to understand with what charity a heart so filled with love to God must have been inflamed for all mankind. And so it was, he never declined any fatigue or labour when the bringing back to the bosom of God sinners plunged in vice and laden with crimes were in question. He often visited the hospitals, where he carefully attended the sick and especially the dying; he listened with extreme patience to the confessions of the greatest sinners during almost the whole day, and even during the greatest part of the night; he very often preached the word of God to eager crowds of auditors, and that with so much force and ardour that he triumphed over the obstinacy of the most corrupt. He brought to light so clearly the turpitude of the vices in which they had become hardened, and excited such lively repentance in the hearts of those who heard him, that he affected them to tears, so that sometimes nothing but groans and sobs were to be heard in the churches in which he preached. As he exerted all the powers of his body and mind, both night and day, in labouring for the salvation of his neighbour, he became at length weakened and worn out by the continuity and the violence of his efforts, and was seized by a dangerous illness, but as health was restored to him by a signal favour from heaven, he immediately resumed his works of charity, and with more ardour than ever.

He establishes the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

‡ 5. As soon as he knew that God had called him to be the founder of a new religious congregation, he longed to see workmen multiplied for the great harvest, and from that time he was neither daunted by the greatness of the obstacles which were in the way, nor turned aside from the pursuit and the accomplishment of an undertaking which was destined to be of such use to the Church. Being strong through the assistance of God, he heartily undertook the work, and happily succeeded in frustrating all the designs of hell, which strove to overthrow the new edifice. He united with himself twelve apostolic men of eminent piety, and laid the foundation of the religious congregation which received the name of the Most Holy Redeemer. He wished that the chief aim of its members should be to labour especially to recall to virtue those whose morals are corrupted and whose souls seemed in a lost condition, as well as those who are the most destitute of spiritual assistance, such as the poor who are dispersed about in country places. As the congregation spread through different parts of Italy in a very short space of time, and in a wonderful manner, he obtained from our predecessor, Benedict XIV., its confirmation by virtue of his apostolical authority, and he was constituted rector-major by the same Pontiff, and the example of holiness which he then gave to his subjects led them also to practise all virtue with zeal and ardour.

His humility, his penance, and his ardent love towards the Blessed Sacrament and the Mother of God.

¶ 6. Humility was a virtue in which he especially excelled, and so, although every one had the highest opinion of his sanctity, and he was venerated by the most eminent and exalted men, yet he always preserved such a lowly opinion of himself, that he believed himself to be unworthy of all honour and of all consideration. He had the most tender piety towards the Blessed Virgin, the Mother of God, and he loved her with a truly filial love. His ardent love and veneration for the Blessed Sacrament was such, that he passed whole hours in adoration before it; whilst his soul was filled with ineffable sweetness, he desired to bring his body into subjection to the spirit, after the example of the apostle, and he constantly treated it as a domestic enemy, and crucified it by all sorts of torments. The slender measure of food and drink he took in order to keep up his strength, appeared scarcely sufficient to preserve life, yet besides this, he was in the habit of seasoning the coarse food of which he partook by very bitter herbs, in order to deny himself the slightest sensual gratification. He always wore very painful hair-shirts, and constantly afflicted his body by iron chains; his disciplines were furnished with points, and he used them with such force that the blood which they caused him to shed, covered the floor and the walls of his cell, and after their use he was obliged to efface the stains, to prevent his self-macerations from being discovered.

Notwithstanding the fatigues of his apostolical labours he continues to apply assiduously to sacred knowledge, and publishes a great many works for the good of the Church.

§ 7. But what is especially worthy of admiration is, that notwithstanding his constant labours in the apostolical ministry, and the vigour with which he chastised and macerated his body, he was able to apply with so much activity to sacred studies, to devote so much time to them, and to enrich the Church with so many learned and laborious productions. But in order to consecrate himself and his whole life to the service of God, he made the very difficult, and till then almost unheard-of vow, never to allow the least instant to pass uselessly, and to employ them all in the service of God. It was thus that he wrote so many works, of which some are consecrated to the support of morality; others to instruct and perfect the ministers of the sanctuary; others to defend the truth of the Catholic religion and the rights of the Holy See; and others, in fine, to awaken piety in the hearts of Christians. In them is to be admired the richness and variety of his attainments, the rare force with which he puts it forth, and the striking proofs of his ardent zeal for religion; but what is especially worthy of remark is, that although he wrote such a vast number of works, it is nevertheless certain, after the severe scrutiny which has been made, that the faithful may read them all without the least fear of meeting with the smallest error in them.

He is raised to the episcopate, and appointed to the See of St. Agatha by Clement XIII.

‡ 8. Whilst Alphonso had thus distinguished himself by his sanctity and by his learning, he was raised to the episcopal see of St. Agatha of the Goths by Clement XIII. The holy priest feared the weight of the burthen which it was wished to impose on him, and made every effort to be dispensed from undertaking it; but as the Sovereign Pontiff persisted in his design, Alphonso recognised in his will that of God Himself; he submitted to it unreservedly, and full of confidence in the divine assistance, he resolved to accept the charge which his humility made him feel was beyond his strength.

His eminent virtues in the exercise of his episcopal functions.

‡ 9. It is difficult to express how zealously and solicitously he strove to fulfil all the duties of the episcopate, and how he assiduously watched over the flock which had been committed to him, and did all he could, so that not one of the sheep entrusted to his care should perish. His new dignity did not cause him in the least to lessen the austerity of his mode of life; he did not permit anything in his clothes or food that partook of sumptuousness. There was nothing superfluous or luxurious in his episcopal palace or in its furniture. His love for the poor was extreme; he distributed provisions, clothes, and alms to them with profusion, and he even sold his

cross and his episcopal ring to have something to give them to relieve their distress. He was in the habit of giving dowries to young persons who had not enough to settle upon, and of paying the expenses of the education of young clerics who had no fortune. He opened convents for virgins who desired to consecrate themselves to God, and also other houses of refuge which were a shelter for women in danger of losing their innocence. In his pastoral visitations he never was held back by difficulties as to roads, nor by the inclemency of the weather. He anxiously visited the little towns situated on the top of the mountains, as well as the people who were dispersed through the country, and by his words, which burned with charity, he incited them to love virtue, and turned them aside from vice, of which he led them to feel horror. But he took special pains with priests and young men preparing for the sacred ministry. What efforts did he not make in leading them to grow in piety from their early youth, and that they might also render themselves, (especially through the acquisition of sacred knowledge,) fit instruments for the ministry of the altar, and for the guidance of souls. But in truth their greatest incentive to virtue was derived from the life of their saintly pastor, which presented to them such striking instances of continency, of religion, of piety, and of all those virtues which should adorn and shine forth in a priest, if he would be of use to the Church of God.

He resigns his bishopric, and retires into his congregation, and amongst his brothers.

‡ 10. After having for thirteen years given an example of solicitude and pastoral vigilance in the government of the church which had been confided to his care, as he was laden with years and infirmities, he several times solicited Pius VI., our predecessor, to allow him to resign the heavy burthen of the episcopate, and at length he obtained permission so to do. But he did not retire into the bosom of his brothers and congregation to enjoy repose, but to devote himself to fresh cares and fresh labours, and he continued to do this until he reached a most advanced age. He also was continually composing works which he foresaw would be useful to the faithful, and in preaching the word of God so as to reform the morals of men, as far as lay in his power, and to lead them to virtue.

Being laden with years and merits, he dies in the peace of Christ.

‡ 11. When he had reached his ninety-first year, and when laden with the weight of age and ready to finish his course, he fell grievously ill. He suffered all the excruciating pains of his last and most severe illness with incredible patience, and after having most forcibly exhorted the members of the religious congregation of which he was the father, to strive after zeal and perfection in all virtue, he received the Holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction with the most

lively piety, after which his soul, which was filled with joy and gladness, whose greatest desire had ever been to be delivered from the prison of the body, in order to be with Christ, left the tabernacle of the body, and in perfect peace fled into the bosom of its God.

His reputation for sanctity is increased by the miracles he wrought. An account of his virtues and of his miracles.

§ 12. As soon as it became generally known that Alphonso was dead, an immense concourse of the faithful, who were grieved at the loss of one so dear to them, and for whom they had so much veneration and devotion, flocked to see his remains, and each of them strove to possess themselves of something which had been used by him during his life; and the almighty and good God manifested the exceeding sanctity of His servant to them all by the greatness of his miracles. As their fame spread abroad the high reputation his virtues had won for him for a long time became extraordinarily increased, and several princes and other persons of high dignity, as well as a considerable number of religious orders, earnestly besought the Sovereign Pontiff Pius VI. to decree that judicial proceedings should be commenced regarding the saintly life of Alphonso. The process was gone through with the usual severity, and after the most detailed and most careful examination of the works he had published, our predecessor, Pius VII., after hearing the opinion of the Sacred Congregation of Rites,

stated in a decree of the nones of May, 1807, that it was certain that the venerable Alphonso Maria Liguori had practised in a heroic degree the theological and cardinal virtues, together with all which depend on and spring from them.

Two miracles amongst others which were recognised by the Holy See for his Beatification.

§ 13. After this they proceeded in the said Sacred Congregation to the examination of the miracles which were said to have been wrought by the power of Almighty God at the intercession of the venerable Alphonso. Amongst this number, there were two in particular of the second class, which were recognised as very certain and incontestible: the first was the instantaneous cure of Magdalene of Nuncio, who was at the point of death through an ulcer which had begun to mortify, and which had required the amputation of a great part of her breast, but she implored the assistance of Alphonso, and to the great astonishment of all she not only arose perfectly healed, but her breast became quite whole again. The other was the equally instantaneous cure of Francis d' Octajano, of the order of the Reformed Minors of St. Francis, who was in the last stage of consumption and weakness, and for whose recovery there seemed therefore no cause for hope. After he had prayed to the venerable Alphonso for several days, he was at once cured, and not a trace of his former malady remained behind. However, our predecessor, Pius VII. of holy memory, still

abstained from pronouncing any decision in such a serious matter, in order to obtain more abundant lights from God, by ardent and continued prayer. At length, that is to say, on the 16th of the calends of October, 1815, the day of our Lady of Dolours, for whom Alphonso had always had so much piety and love during life, the same Pontiff gave his judgment, and issued the decree wherein he recognised the authenticity of the two miracles just related. After having once more heard the opinion of the Sacred Congregation, he on the 12th of the calends of January, 1815, issued the decree wherein he ordained the beatification of the venerable Alphonso, which was celebrated with the greatest splendour in the church of the Vatican on the 16th of the calends of September, 1816.

Miracles declared authentic by the Holy See and approved for the canonization of Alphonso.

‡ 14. But after the beatification, many amongst the faithful experienced the miraculous effects which were granted to his prayers, and it was clearly seen that the Divine Goodness desired to confer still greater glory on the saintly bishop, who on his part had embraced so many labours and pains to increase the glory of God. Being struck with the greatness of these new miracles, Ferdinand I. King of the two Sicilies, several other princes, and many cardinals, archbishops, bishops, and other religious, and especially the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, which justly glories in having Alphonso as its founder,

earnestly entreated Pius VII. to order that the Sacred Congregation of Rites should commence the process of the canonization of the Blessed Alphonso. These entreaties were most kindly received by the Sovereign Pontiff our predecessor. The authenticity of the new miracles was most carefully inquired into, and after a long deliberation, two were recognised, of whose truth there could be no doubt, namely, the sudden and perfect cure of Antoinette Tarsia, who was mortally injured by a fall from a very elevated place under the weight of a very heavy burthen, and who was afflicted with such serious internal injuries and bruises in consequence, that she was at the point of death, but after having earnestly invoked the aid of the Blessed Alphonso, she suddenly got up, and was restored to health, to the extreme astonishment of all present. The other was the equally sudden cure of a professed lay-brother, Peter Canalis, of the Congregation of the Camaldoles: he suffered most severely from a deep hard and mortified ulcer, and as all remedies only irritated it more and more, he had lost all hope of recovery, and expected death at every instant; but after having implored the Blessed Alphonso for several days, to deliver him from the inevitable death which seemed to menace him, his desires were accomplished, and he instantly recovered his health without there being the least trace of the ulcer remaining.

*The secret, public, and semi-public consistories
which took place before his canonization.*

‡ 15. The truly wonderful cures we have just cited having been judicially confirmed, our predecessor Pius VIII. acknowledged their truth by his decree of the 3rd of the nones of December, 1829. It was afterwards discussed according to the custom of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, whether the solemn canonization of the blessed Alphonso could be proceeded with in safety, and if none of the conditions that the holy and apostolical See requires were absent, and the same Sovereign Pontiff Pius VIII. on the fifth Sunday after Easter, after having celebrated the holy sacrifice in the chapel of the palace of the Quirinal, declared on the 17th of the calends of June, 1830, that the canonization of the blessed Alphonso might be proceeded with in safety. Being desirous to put this decree into execution, and willingly responding to the wishes of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, we previously conferred with our venerable brothers the cardinals of the holy Roman Church, who in the secret consistory of the 4th of the Ides of December, 1830, were unanimously of opinion, that the honours paid to the saints should be conferred on the Blessed Alphonso Maria Liguori. We afterwards laid this important question before a great number of our venerable brothers, the archbishops and bishops, submitted to their united judgment the acts, the virtues, and the miracles of the blessed Alphonso, which we did by word of mouth, in the

public consistory in the first place, when our dear son, Anthony Maria Cagiano d'Azevedo, the advocate of our consistorial court, defended the cause of the beatified, and afterwards we in writing communicated a copy of the authentic acts of the Sacred Congregation. After that we coveded before us at the semi-public consistory, on the 8th of the Ides of May, not only our venerable brothers the cardinals of the holy Roman Church, but also our venerable brothers the patriarchs, archbishops, and bishops who were then in Rome, and demanded if they were of opinion that the honours of the saints should be conferred on Alphonso? As they with one voice replied in the affirmative, and even manifested the most lively wish to see these honours rendered to the Blessed Alphonso, we ordered that our dear sons, the notaries of the holy apostolical See, should make a public instrument of this their verdict, and that the suffrages of our venerable brothers, after being put in writing, and signed by themselves, should be preserved in the archives of the Roman Church. However, we thought it right still to defer pronouncing the definitive sentence, and we fixed on days for solemn fasts, and pointed out several churches where the faithful might offer up their prayers to God, in order to obtain from the Father of light the abundance of the assistance of His heavenly grace.

His Canonization is solemnly celebrated on the Feast of the Most Holy Trinity in the Basilica of the Vatican.

‡ 16. The 7th day of the calends of June having been at length fixed on for that of the solemn canonization of the Blessed Alphonso, and also for that of the Blessed Francis Jerome, of the Society of Jesus, John Joseph of the Cross, of the order of the Discalceated Minims of St. Peter of Alcantara, Pacificus of St. Severino, of the order of the Brothers of the Reformed Minors of the Observance, and Veronica Juliana, abbess of the Capuchinesses, we repaired to the Basilica of the Vatican with solemnity, accompanied by all the regular and secular clergy, by the dignitaries and officers of our palace and of our court, and by our venerable brothers the cardinals of the Roman Church, the patriarchs, archbishops, and bishops. Before ascending the altar to celebrate the holy mysteries, we again received from our dear son Aloysius Lambruschini, cardinal-priest of the title of St. Callistus, by the advocate of our consistorial court, the prayers of the Christian princes, bishops, and people, that the Blessed Alphonso should be placed in the number of the saints, and we prostrated ourselves in order to pray the choirs of angels and all the court of heaven to aid us by their suffrages; we afterwards repeated these prayers with still more earnestness, and ardently invoked the aid of the Holy Spirit to strengthen us by His Divine power, when we should be called on to pro-

nounce the final decision. Finally, as the same petition having been presented to us for the third time, and with still greater earnestness by the postulator of the cause, and in consideration of the desires of the universal Church, of the very rigid examination which had been made use of in such an important matter, and of the suffrages given by so many holy prelates who had been aided by God, we by virtue of the apostolical authority, which, notwithstanding our unworthiness, has been given to us as a successor of St. Peter, the prince of the apostles as regards the supreme government of the Church, to the honour of the holy and indivisible Trinity, for the exaltation of the Catholic faith and for the glory of religion, have delivered our solemn and definitive sentence, and placed the Blessed Alphonso Maria Liguori, so distinguished for the lustre of his Christian virtues and the splendour of his miracles, among the number of the holy confessors and bishops; and we have ordered that his memory be celebrated on the 4th of the nones of August by the universal Church. We afterwards granted an indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines to those who shall visit the tomb of St. Alphonso on this day, and on the days allotted for visiting the bodies of the other saints.

*Public Indulgences granted on occasion of his
Canonization.*

‡ 17. We then offered up to God the Immaculate Lamb, on the altar of the basilica of

the Vatican. Finally, from the height of the upper balcony of this same basilica, we affectionately gave the assembled multitude our solemn benediction, granting in the name of God a plenary indulgence to the faithful who had been present, as well as to those who had assisted at the ceremony of the canonization.*

The faithful are excited to virtue by the great example given by St. Alphonso.

§ 18. It therefore befits us well to give up our hearts to sentiments of rejoicing, and that we render worthy thanksgivings to Almighty God, who does not cease to give His Church fresh

* Besides this special indulgence for the canonization, the holy father granted the following in perpetuity:

“Amongst those bright lights which have been the ornaments of the Catholic Church, St. Alphonso Maria Liguori shines forth pre-eminently. He was always most distinguished for his doctrine and for his sanctity, for the ardent zeal which inflamed him, for the manner in which he practised all virtue to an admirable degree, as well as for his numerous writings, which are so full of the greatest knowledge and the greatest piety, and whose only effort through life was to procure the glory of God and the salvation of his brethren, and who is now, after having led a most holy life, in the enjoyment of the crown and palm of immortal glory, and triumphing with God in heaven. In order therefore to increase the piety and devotion of the faithful towards this great saint more and more, we have most willingly consented to unlock the divine treasures of Holy Church. For this cause, we have yielded to the request of our dear son John Camillus Ripoli, the rector-major, as we are assured, of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer founded by this saint, and trusting in the mercy of Almighty God, and in reliance on the power of His holy apostles, Peter and Paul, we grant to each and all the faithful of Jesus Christ, of both sexes, who being truly contrite, shall, after having confessed and communicated, devoutly visit one of the churches of the said Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, on the feast of the said St. Alphonso Maria Liguori,

instances of virtue, to excite us to walk with more ardour in the way of salvation. Therefore, encompassed as we are by so many perils, and assailed by our infuriated enemies on all sides, let us pray St. Alphonso to be our intercessor with God, in order that we may by the divine assistance one day obtain the palm of victory prepared for those who conquer, and that crown of heavenly glory which fadeth not away.

Authorisation of the copies.

§ 19. In order that time may never obliterate the memory of so happy an event, we have consigned it to perpetuity by this present, and confirmed it by these apostolical letters, ordaining that copies shall be taken, bearing the signature of a public notary, and the seal of some

from the time of the first vespers, or on any one of the seven days following, (the day being at the choice of each person,) a plenary indulgence and remission of all sin once every year, which shall be applicable to the souls in purgatory; provided they pray for unity amongst Christian princes, for the extirpation of heresy, and the exaltation of their Mother the Holy Church. The present concession is made in perpetuity, notwithstanding all obstacles.

“Given at St. Peter’s at Rome, under the seal of the fisherman, on the 10th of January, 1840, in the ninth year of our pontificate.

“A. LAMBRUSCHINI.

“This is a faithful copy of the original.

“JOHN CAMILLUS RIPOLI,

“Rector-major of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

“We have seen it, and allow it to be published. Given at Liege, on the 7th of April, 1840.

“CORNELIUS,

“Bishop of Liege.

“By the order of E. BREMAN, Secretary.”

dignitary in the Church, and that such copies shall be of equal authority as these present letters themselves.

Penal Sanction.

§ 20. Let no one therefore have the temerity to contradict nor to gainsay the judgment here notified, and should any one have the presumption to endeavour to do so, let him know that he will incur the indignation of Almighty God, and that of the Blessed Apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul.

Given at St. Peter's at Rome, in the year of the Incarnation of our Lord, 1839, on the 7th of the calends of June, in the ninth year of our pontificate.

CHAPTER LIII.

ETERNAL Providence orders all things in a wonderful manner, so as to confound the pride of man, and always provides a remedy for every disease; and when error and vice have become excessive, God is able to cast them down by methods which appear to be powerless. It was to the sling of the humble David, that the overthrow of the proud Goliath was reserved. And so in like manner that humble servant of God, Alphonso Maria Liguori, appeared in the eighteenth century as an invincible champion of

the faith, raised up to make the cause of God triumph against the attacks of the most eloquent impiety, by the simplicity of the evangelical word; and not content with his own success in order that he might oppose a vigilant legion of sacred militia to the proselytes of error, he instituted the congregation of priests of the Most Sacred Redeemer, who were destined to preach with the same simplicity as he himself did, and by this means to lead those who were wandering in error, and whose hearts were evil, to tread in the neglected paths of truth and of grace. His great zeal, the noble sacrifice he made of all human greatness, his numerous labours, the charitable solicitude he showed towards his flock at St. Agatha, and the works he published for the good of souls and the glory of God, caused him to merit from the Supreme Giver of all good that rare gift of miracles, of which he made such frequent use in providing for the necessities of the Neapolitans, and for those of his fellow-citizens.

Is there therefore cause for astonishment that the decree which issued from the Vatican, solemnly declaring and publishing the sanctity of the servant of God, was gratefully welcome to the hearts of the inhabitants of this kingdom, and specially to those of this capital, which was his natal place and the scene of his charity? From hence therefore arose the lively desire which the inhabitants of Naples entertained of testifying their deep satisfaction on this occasion, and of numbering this new hero, who had

arisen from amongst them, as one of their saintly patrons.

This two-fold wish coincided completely with that of the reverend fathers of his congregation, and they were most laudably solicitous to do all they could to facilitate its accomplishment. They were seconded by the pious liberality of his Majesty the king of the Two Sicilies, and by the zeal of his confessor, Mgr. Celestine Cocla, the archbishop of Patras, and the superior-general of the same congregation, whose elevation has not prevented his always remaining with his brothers, and who spared nothing which could contribute to the glory of their common father and founder in this conjuncture. The most interesting of the works which he undertook in order to honour the feast of the saint, was the assistance he afforded to the orphans of the victims of the cholera, whom he collected together in three different asylums by the assistance of Divine Providence.

The Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer presented a request to the municipal body of this town on the 25th of June, 1839, to solicit that St. Alphonso de Liguori might be declared patron of the said city, grounding the petition on the miracles wrought through his intercession in favour of the inhabitants, and offering a silver statue containing a relic of the saint. On the 4th of the following month the authorities accepted the offer, and granted what had been asked for, in conformity to the deliberations which had previously taken place. The matter

received the sanction of the sovereign with the consent of the ecclesiastical authorities, and the syndic was authorised to make the needful arrangements.

In consequence of this the artist of Crescence made the model of the promised statue, first in clay and then in plaster, according to the design of Anthony Niccolini; and then the famous Januarius Rossi modelled and chiselled with his own hands that remarkable production, which may be shown with pride, and of which it may be said without exaggeration, that although the material is so costly, it is inferior to the value of the workmanship. After that, according to the decrees of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, it was decided that a fête should take place in the church of the Congregation of St. Anthony, (at Tarsia,) as well as a solemn procession in honour of the saint and of his image. It was decreed that the first ceremonies should be gone through on the 15th instant of the month of August, that the fête of the saint was to commence on the following day, that it should last for eight days and finish on the 23rd, and that on the ninth day the statue should be carried in procession to the Dome, where the three last public acts should be solemnly drawn up. All this was published beforehand by a programme, and few announcements were ever received by our population with equal enthusiasm. The solemnities fully answered the general expectations. Faustus Niccolini, the son of the above-mentioned artist, was commissioned to embellish the church. The

walls of the interior were agreeably ornamented with stuffs of divers colours tastefully arranged in the Egyptian style. The magnificence, elegance, and simplicity of these decorations were much to be admired, as well as the art and originality which were also displayed in them. The cupola excited general attention ; it was adorned with draperies tastefully blended together, and large festoons of flowers were gracefully suspended from it so as to cover the altar and the tribune. Behind this beautiful decoration a very well executed transparency was placed, representing the saint in glory. Ten other pictures ornamented the interior of the church, representing the memorable actions of the Neapolitan hero, or the miracles which he wrought.

At the exterior a superb vestibule was arranged, adorned with beautiful hangings ; and there were three transparencies there, in one of which our Thaumaturgus was represented as ascending from earth to heaven surrounded by the spirits of the blest ; in another he was to be seen stretched out on the bed of death ; and in the last he was depicted as giving that touching benediction to his country of which mention is made in his Life. It was a beautiful sight by day, but it was far more so when lighted up at night, and if anything could add to the brilliant effect of the number of candles lighted on this occasion, it was the elegant way in which they were arranged. Torches were placed along the whole of the passage called Kartia, to show the eager multitude who assembled from all

parts the spot where the fête was being held. On the 15th the first contract by which the town of Naples received the patronage of the saint was solemnly entered into between the municipal body of the city, and the fathers of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer whilst vespers were sung in this church; the fathers on their part gave the capital the silver statue to be added to the forty-one others of the saintly patrons of the town which are kept in the chapel-royal of the treasury of St. Januarius, where the syndic engaged to have that of Alphonso also preserved. This deed was signed by the syndic, the duke of Bagnuolo, and by the rector-major of the Congregation, John Camillus Rupoli.

The fête of the saint commenced on the following morning, and its solemnity was greatly increased by the pontifical masses which were celebrated by divers prelates in the following order, viz. his Eminence, the cardinal archbishop of Naples; his Lordship, the bishop of Ascalon and vicar of Naples; Mgr. Pascal Justi, the archbishop of Amida; Mgr. Gaetan Guinta, the bishop of Jonopolis; Mgr. Ferdinand Corbi, the dean of the chapel-royal of the palatine; the archbishop of Seleucia; Mgr. Joseph Marretti, consulter of the kingdom, and president of public instruction; his Eminence, the most reverend archbishop of Leocaria; Mgr. Peter Naselli, prince of Arragon, and his Majesty's head chaplain; the bishop of Carianopolis; Mgr. Raphael Serena, canon of the cathedral; his

Eminence the right reverend archbishop of Beritus; and Mgr. Camillus of Peter, apostolical nuncio at Naples. Distinguished orators also pronounced panegyrics on the glorious St. Alphonso in the following order: the Reverend Fathers Peter Desnoyers, clerk-regular, Theatine, and lecturer to the pupils of his order, delivered the first; and the rest were pronounced by Charles Maria Curci of the Company of Jesus; Agele Gille, a Benedictine; Michael Salsan, doctor of theology, professor of the same, and prior of the monastery of St. Dominic Major; Joseph Anthony Borghe, a Minor Conventual, and apostolical missionary; Gaetan of Naples, ex-provincial of the Minors of the Observance and ex-lecturer in theology; Hilary of the Cross, a discalceated Carmelite, prior of the monastery of St. Theresa; and Mgr. Angelo Anthony Scotti.

Vespers and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament were sung by the following persons, namely, by Vincent Apicelle, of the Order of Preachers, and one of the canons of the Cathedral; by Mgr. Nicholas Landisius, of the Most Holy Redeemer, and bishop of Policastro; Joshua Celestine Capo, canon of the cathedral of the Order of Priests; Mgr. Ignatius Marolda, the bishop of Puzzolo, and also of the Most Holy Redeemer; Joseph Dentice, a canon of the cathedral, chief of the Order of Deacons; his Eminence Mgr. Cocle; Francis Xavier Gargiulo, canon of the cathedral, head of the Order of Subdeacons, and by his Eminence Mgr. de Pierre.

A select orchestra, composed of the best musicians in the town, was in perfect keeping with the other parts of this pompous ceremony. The music was partly composed by their leader, Jules Sarment, master of the chapel royal, and partly by James Cordella, the master-assistant of the same chapel and of the Grand Society, as well as by Vincent Fodo and Augustine Fontane, who alternately presided over their labours.

On the last day, after vespers, a solemn *Te Deum*, which merited general approbation, was sung in style by a choir of eight young men, who were all pupils of the Royal Hospital of the Poor, under the direction of Alexander Campieri, master of the chapel. The concourse of the faithful was truly prodigious, and the body of the church was literally too small to contain the immense crowd who desired to enter it. Every religious heart and lover of the place of his birth, felt a sort of irresistible desire to contribute by his homage to the glory of a saint who belonged wholly to us, who was born amongst us, who lived amongst us, and who has left us such striking proofs of his great affection for us. A precedent was given for the zeal which was manifested on this occasion by his majesty himself. His eminently religious and national spirit led him to the foot of the altar of St. Alphonso: he went privately thither on the first day of the feast, accompanied by his august spouse, who shared in his sentiments, and he heard two masses there to the great edification of all present; he returned again on

the last evening, accompanied by the queen and his royal highness the Count of Aquila, and he even had the extreme kindness to deign twice to visit the neighbouring college of the reverend fathers, who were the children of the saintly founder. Her majesty the queen's mother also visited the church to honour in person the hero whose triumph was being celebrated: she went there on the 17th, 19th, and 22nd, and on the last occasion she was accompanied by the princess royal. On the same day their royal highnesses the Prince and Princess of Salerno and their august daughter came to crown this religious homage with their presence.

The grandest day of all was the 24th, when the fête was terminated by a solemn procession; it issued out of the church at about three o'clock in the afternoon, and repaired to the Dome, passing by the piazza of the Little Market, by that of Toledo, and of the palace, as well as by that of the castle, and by the streets of Medina, Mont Olives, Trinity Major, St. Clare, St. Sebastian, St. Pierre de Majella, as well as by the tribunals and the archbishop's palace. The huzzars and the royal guards went first in full uniform, then came the standard of the nobility, a great number of whose members contributed greatly to the glory of their saintly fellow-citizen, who, like them, belonged to one of the most ancient Neapolitan families. The numerous relations of the saint were ranged beneath his standard, amongst whom was included the son

of his own brother ; then came the standard of the army, at the head of the generals and officers of the garrison, followed by the excellent military band of the horse patrols, which preceded the congregation erected under the name of the saint for the Redemption of Captives. It was followed by the Reverend Fathers of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, the most ancient of whom bore the standard of the canonization ; after these fathers came the military band of the royal guard, accompanied by a choir of seventy little children in uniform, who sang the praises of the saint. They walked before the beautiful statue, which was placed on the summit of a rich pyramid under a magnificent canopy which was supported by four generals of the royal army, and carried by eight officers of the body-guard. Thirteen prelates and the rector-major of the congregation surrounded this much venerated image. Amongst these latter were to be noticed their eminences the apostolical nuncio, the head chaplain, and his majesty's confessor, two bishops of the same congregation, and the president of public instruction. The most respected municipal body of the town closed the procession, followed by a detachment of infantry.

When the statue of the saint reached the square before the archbishop's palace, it was thence taken to the spot which contains the sacred head of St. Januarius, who is the principal patron of the town. This statue was placed under a canopy supported by the chaplains of the royal treasury, and followed by two canons,

by his Eminence the cardinal archbishop, and by a deputation from the treasury; the image of St. Alphonso was then put under the same canopy, on the right of that of St. Januarius; the first was followed by the municipal officers, the second by the deputies of the king; his Lordship was accompanied by his canons, and walked between the two colleges.

The statue of St. Alphonso being thus surrounded, it was taken to the Dome, where it was first placed on the Gospel side, and that of St. Januarius was deposited on the other; his Eminence then ascended his archiepiscopal throne, the municipal authorities entered into a tribune which had been prepared for them. After this, the second public act concerning the acknowledgement of the patronage of the saint was passed between his Lordship and the syndic of the capital with the requisite formalities.

The two statues were then carried in procession and placed on the altar of the chapel of the treasury, and the treasurer intoned the hymns of the two saints successively. After the prayers were terminated, the municipal authorities and the members of the deputation signed the two last contracts in the sacristy, by which the statue was consigned to the care of the deputation, who on their side authorised the Rev. Father of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, to come in procession for the statue of the saintly founder on his feast day, after obtaining an assurance that they would bring it back again in the same manner. These last formalities

terminated the ceremonies of this memorable day.*

All the population of this vast metropolis strove to witness this religious pomp, and we know not in what words to describe the concourse of people who were assembled together on this occasion ; they filled the streets, the public squares, all the balconies, and even the roofs of the houses. Our august monarch and his spouse, the queen mother and all the royal family, saw the progress of the procession from the heights of the balconies of the royal palace with most religious attention. Nothing occurred to disturb this touching ceremony ; the hearts of all were affected at so moving a sight, and the perfect recollection which was to be seen on all sides gently led the spirits of all present to prayer.

It was thus that the monarch and the subjects unanimously concurred in honouring a fellow citizen whose glory sheds brightness on that of the church of his country, and gives the catholic world a most edifying lesson of true piety.

* A still greater honour was in store for the founder of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. It is well known that the statues of all the founders of orders receive a distinguished place in the church of St. Peter's after their canonization. There was one niche there remaining unoccupied, and the Redemptorist Fathers lost no time in erecting there a gigantic white marble statue of their saintly founder. The workmanship was perfect, and by the hand of one of the first artists. It is so colossal that a man of seven feet can scarcely reach the knees. It is a perfect likeness of the saintly bishop, whose cross and mitre are held by a cherub.

CHAPTER LIV.

LIST OF THE PRINCIPAL WORKS OF ST. ALPHONSO, AND
THE DATES OF THE YEARS WHEN THEY WERE PUBLISHED.

ASCETICAL WORKS.

1747.

Visits to the Blessed Sacrament.

Aspirations of Love towards Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, &c.

1750.

The Glories of Mary. 1st part. On the Salve Regina.

The Glories of Mary. 2nd part. On her feasts, her sorrows, her virtues.

The Glories of Mary. 3rd part. Examples, discourses, prayers, meditations, and divers devotions. Discourse on St. Joseph. Reply to the anonymous Lamindo Brittanico (Muratori.) Reply to the Abbé Rolli.

Advice on a Religious Vocation.

Necessary Counsels to all classes of persons.

Advice to a Young Man on the choice of a State of Life.

Advice to a Young Lady on the choice of a State of Life.

1758.

Preparation for Death, or Meditations on Eternal Truths.

1759.

On Prayer, that great means of grace. 1st part.

Sermons for all the Sundays in the year, two vols.

Nine Discourses for Times of Calamity.

Nine Discourses on the Birth of our Blessed Lord.

1760.

Reflections and Affections, Meditations, and several practical Devotions on the Passion of Jesus Christ; two vols., of which the first is divided into three, and the second into four parts.

Selva, or a Collection of Passages for the aid of those who give the Exercises to Priests; two parts.

Practical Instructions for the Exercises of the Missions. Instructions to Priests; or, the True manner of preaching with Gospel simplicity; two Apologetical Letters on the great Utility of Missions.

Treatise on Meditation and Contemplation.

1768.

Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ.

Rule of Life for a Christian. Rule for a Father of a Family, &c.

Maxims on Eternal Truths.

Meditations for a Private Retreat of Eight Days.

On Mass and Office ill said.

On the Sacrifice of the Mass.

Preparations for Mass, and Thanksgivings for the use of Priests.

Rule of Life for a Priest. Advice to a Priest who aims at Perfection.

The True Spouse of Jesus Christ; two vols.

Darts of Fire; or, Reasons for Loving Jesus Christ.

Seven Treatises concerning Nuns; two vols.

Discourse for a Clothing.

Several Novenas and Meditations on the Mysteries of the Infancy of Jesus.

Novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Novena to the Holy Ghost.

Novena preparatory to the Feasts of the Blessed Virgin; or, an Explanation of her Litanies.

Octave of Corpus Christi.

Novena to St. Joseph.

Novena to St. Theresa.

Way of the Cross—Divers Prayers.

1772.

Reflections on Divers Spiritual Subjects, in four parts.

Manner of Conversing continually with God.

Treatise on Conformity to the Will of God.

Advice to Scrupulous Souls—Encouragement to a Soul in Desolation.

1774.

A Translation of the Psalms and Hymns contained in the Divine Office; two vols.

1775.

Triumphs of the Martyrs, or a History of the most Celebrated Martyrs; two parts.

Account of a great Miracle in regard to the Blessed Sacrament.

Life of Reverend Father Paul Cafaro, of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

Life of the Reverend Father Januarius Sarnelli, of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

Life of the Brother Vitus Curzius, of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

Life of Sister Mary Theresa de Liguori.

Letters and Regulations for the Government of his Bishopric.

Letters on Divers Subjects, especially on Spirituality.

Spiritual Letters to Nuns and Postulants.

Letters and Instructions to the Redemptorists.

1777.

The Fidelity of Subjects towards God is a sure Guarantee for their Fidelity to their Sovereigns.

Useful Reflections for Bishops.

Rules for Seminaries.

Advice to young Students.

Seven Treatises on the Religious State.

On the great Utility of the Spiritual Exercises.

Advice on Religious Vocation. Meditations on the same Subject.

Advice to Novices to encourage them to Perseverance.

On Divine Love.

Octave for the Dead.

Instructions to Priests as to how to assist the Dying properly.

Instructions to Priests as to how to assist those who are Condemned to Death.

Rules of the Congregation of the Redemptorists.

Rules of the Nuns of the Most Holy Redeemer.

WORKS ON MORALITY.

1755 and 1758.

Theologia Moralis, dedicated to Benedict XIV. twelve vols.

Dissertatio de usu decretorum S.S. Pontificum in Theologia morali.

Dissertatio de usu moderato opinionis probabilis.

— de potestate summi Pontificis.

— de justa prohibitione librorum, &c.

— de absolute neganda clerico habituato.

Epitome doctrinæ moralis et canonicæ ex operibus Benedicti XIV.

1756.

Homo Apostolicus; or, Abridgement of the Large Theology. Published in Latin and in Italian; three vols.

Dissertatio de maledictione Mortuorum.

Of the Way to Direct Souls.

Elenchus quæstionum quas Auctor Reformavit.

Praxis Confessario. Aid for Confessors, in Latin and in Italian.

Examen Ordinandorum breviter concinnatum.

Dissertationes quatuor pro usu Moderato opinionis Probabilis.

Short Dissertation on the Moderate Use of Probabilism.

Apology in Defence of the Dissertation on the Moderate Use of Probablism against the objections of the Rev. Father Adelphus Darithee (Patuzzi.)

Four Apologies for the Moral Theology.

Answer to an Anonymous Censor of the Moral Theology.

Practical Instructions for Confessors, four vols.

"In this work," said the author, "is to be found all that is contained in the large book on Morals, although in an abridged form, as well as a great many other useful things. To instance some of them: a method of treating souls in regard to prayer, mortification, and the frequentation of the sacraments, as well as advice to confessors and priests on mental prayer."

1761.

The Confessor of Country People, one small vol., (wherein is to be found an admirable abridgment of the Morals.)

Advice to young Confessors.

1767.

Instructions for the People on the Precepts of the Decalogue and on the Sacraments, in Latin and in Italian.

1768.

Dissertation on Fees for Masses.

Appendix to his Apology.

Another Apology in Italian.

Explanation of his System in regard to the Rules of Morality.

Abridgment of Christian Doctrine.
 Guide for Souls; or, Instructions for Confes-
 sors.

DOGMATIC AND POLEMICAL WORKS.

1759.

On the Great Means of Prayer: second part,
 wherein he proves that God wills the Salvation
 of all men, and gives to all the grace of prayer.
 Immunity of the Church.

1762.

The Truths of the Faith made manifest by
 the Motives of Credibility.

(We here find the refutation of the work en-
 titled, "Of the Spirit," and of another entitled,
 "On Preaching," by the author of the Philoso-
 phical Dictionary.)

Short Dissertations against the Errors of Ma-
 terialists and Deists.

Apology for Frequent Communion, (written
 at Rome.)

1767.

The Truths of the Faith against Materialists,
 Deists, and Sectarians, two volumes.

Dogmatic Works against Heretics, dedicated to
 Clement XIV.; two volumes.

(The author here treats, 1st, of the justifica-
 tion of the Sinner; 2nd, of the obedience due
 to the decisions of the Church.)

1772.

History of Heresies ; or, The Triumph of the Church ; four volumes. We here find the refutation of Baius, Jansenius, Molinos, and Berruyer.

Dissertations on Points of Moral Theology, (viz., On the Particular Judgment, Purgatory, Antichrist, The Signs of the End of the World, The Resurrection, The Universal Judgment, The State of the World after the Judgment, The State of the Damned and that of the Blessed.)

Dissertation on the Immaculate Conception of the Most Holy Virgin Mary.

Vindiciæ pro suprema Pontificis potestate adversus Justinum Febronium. Reflections on the Declarations of the Clergy of France on the Infallibility of the Pope.

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The Index of the First Volume will be found printed at the end of the Second.

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OBSERVATIONS.

Having now brought this work to a close, it may not be deemed out of place to append a few remarks to this Prospectus.

Firstly.—Being obliged to wade my way through this work, I make bold to say, having experienced the difficulties that encounter all beginners, I have explained many things, hitherto obscurely expressed in authors, in a clear and definite manner.

Secondly.—As the following two facts will scarcely be disputed by any body, namely, that the majority of mankind never have been wealthy, and most likely never will be ; and as the majority of mankind never have acquired much worldly learning, and most likely never will,—though divine knowledge is accessible to all,—a third fact appeared to me equally as certain : namely, that the majority of mankind will remain ignorant of Modern music, owing to its cumbrous machinery. But as mankind have got almost universally the faculty of singing, primarily, it will be admitted, to praise the Giver of every good gift ; it appears to follow, that should this faculty be ever called into general use, for the glory of God, it must be through the medium of Plain Chant, owing to its great simplicity, and the sanction given to it for so many ages by the Church.

Thirdly.—Though I am not one of those who would totally exclude good and religious Modern music from choirs, provided it were sung in a religious manner, and by humble and religious-minded persons ; still, as only a very small portion of the service is set to this music, and as the majority will remain ignorant of it for the reasons stated above, every priest who wishes to have his church *permanently filled* on Sunday evenings, with *true adorers*, must set about having his congregation instructed in Plain Chant music. The task is easy and practicable ; he will have the support of the Church, and the majority of every congregation, and will only meet with opposition from a few well-meaning theorists, and some careless adorers ; but the triumph of religion, even in this particular, will console him, and the peace of God will gladden his latter days.

Fourthly.—For the use of my own organist, I am now transposing into Modern music the whole of the *Vesperale Romanum*, and having an organ accompaniment added. This, supposed by some very difficult, is after all a very easy matter. Should there be hereafter any general wish for such a publication, I shall have it printed.

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