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THE
APPARITIONS AND MIRACLES
AT
KNOCK.

ALSO,
The Official Depositions of the Eye-Witnesses.

PREPARED AND EDITED
BY
JOHN MacPHILPIN,
NEPHEW OF THE ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.



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By P. J. KENEDY.



P R E F A C E .

THE desire to possess a permanent and reliable record of the wonderful events connected with Knock church, in the county Mayo, has been growing in the minds of all who have paid a visit to the venerated spot, or who have read the accounts regarding it published in the journals of the day. This desire is not special to Irishmen ; it has extended to England, Scotland, to America, and, we can add, to Australia—to every part of the globe in which the English language is spoken.

The Editor wishes to satisfy this laudable desire, and therefore he has prepared this volume. His recompense will be the good wishes of his readers, and of those devout souls who come to

Knock, or who hold the name and dignity of Our Blessed Lady in veneration.

The official testimony of those who witnessed the first apparition is here given, in order to give the reader the best reliable and authentic evidence. Other visions have been witnessed, and lights of a supernatural kind, since the first day of the present year, but of these there is no official testimony yet given.

TUAM, LADY DAY, 25th March, 1880.





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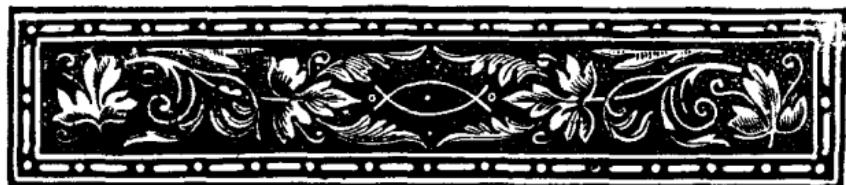
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APPARITIONS AT KNOCK.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

WITH feelings and views of a character quite opposite in their kind, Catholics and non-Catholics will peruse the following pages. The work will, no doubt, be sought after with equal avidity by persons of every class and of every shade of religious belief. By many the record of facts will be scanned with a scrutinizing eye, and with views and wishes different entirely from those by which the masses of the simple yet intelligent people are usually influenced. It will, however, be a source of great satisfaction to most people to learn the truth—regard it as they will—concern-

ing the events which have occurred at Knock, a spot now suddenly become famous.

What People Think.

Many religious-minded persons doubt the reality of this, let us suppose, supernatural manifestation ; the learned dismiss the subject with a smile ; some nod the head at the credulity and simplicity of certain people ; physicists and men who make science the only criterion of truth, and its evidence the only motive of arriving at certainty in matters supernatural as well as in things natural, will pronounce, in a semi-dogmatic tone, that the apparition has been the effect of some natural cause unknown to man, or that all the witnesses who bear testimony to what they assert they saw have in some way or other been themselves deceived. On the other hand, thousands of people, at home and abroad, will be convinced—as most persons who have visited the site have been convinced—that the apparition was, in its appearance, a reality, objectively present to the gaze of the different persons who beheld it; and that it could not, by any possibility, have been produced by human agency.

Opinions do not undo Facts.

Whatever the views may be of those who read these pages, they in no way concern the editor of this pamphlet, which is simply a reproduction, in book form, of the facts that he has already published. One need not conceal the fact that the Tuam *News* was the *medium* through which the public learned, for the first time, the story now so well known regarding the apparition seen at Knock on the 21st of August last. The correspondent of the *Daily News*, London, puts this point prominently forward in the issue of that journal, Saturday, 28th of February, just passed. "Publicity," says he, "was first given to the alleged occurrence in the Tuam *News* of the 9th of January, and then in a cautious, hesitating manner, accompanied by an intimation that the ecclesiastical authorities had up to that time pronounced no final opinion." Every child of Mother Church knows full well that she has been always, and at all times, cautious in giving her sanction to any new apparition or vision, or to any new devotion. She knows, in the words of Gamaliel, the Jewish doctor of the law, "that if this design or

work be of men, it will fall to nothing ; but if it be of God, you are not able to destroy it" ; and time only will more strongly confirm its truth.

The Editor's Duty.

As the proprietor of the Tuam *News* was the first to present an account of the apparition, it is only carrying out his views more fully to be the first also to reissue all that he has hitherto published, and to put the whole record of the varied events in a permanent form into the reader's hands.

It is well always to avoid the expression of any personal opinions, and accordingly the writer will follow the prudent course adopted by the learned correspondent of the London *Daily Telegraph*, who, in his essay, "A Mayo Lourdes," published March 1, 1880, says: "It will be my care to express no opinion on the matter in hand, nor even to suggest that I have formed one, the more because, from the very nature of the case, what any one thinks about it is neither proof nor disproof. I shall narrate a plain, unvarnished tale, and for the rest disclaim responsibility."

And, indeed, the mere narration of the facts is quite sufficient. There is already a great religious excitement created in this country and in England, and beyond the Atlantic, too, as is evident from the tone of the journals published in these countries; Irish men and women, from London and from New York, manifest in their letters the highest degree of religious warmth on the subject, and appear full of enthusiasm.

The Apparition Congruous.

A respected and intelligent correspondent, writing from the south of London, expresses his conviction, apart from the actual proofs now furnished, that the vision has been seen at Knock. "For," says he, "it was only congruous that Our Blessed Lady should manifest her presence in some remarkable way to her devout and devoted children in Ireland."

France has been doubly honored by her presence. Lourdes, a town in the Upper Pyrenees, has been rendered blessed and famous by her appearing at the Grotto de Massabielle to a poor peasant child, Bernadette Soubirous, daughter of a poor miller of that remote little town.

Previously La Salette was favored in a remarkable manner by her coming. The Poles and the Germans have had supernatural manifestations vouchsafed to them at Marpingen and Dittrichswalde. The religious fervor of Belgium is ever in a glow by the living presence amongst them of one whose daily life is a continuous miracle — Louise Lateau. Why, then, should not faithful Ireland, so devoted to the Saviour of mankind and to his holy Mother, be similarly favored by her heavenly presence?





CHAPTER II.

THE VILLAGE AND CHURCH OF KNOCK—THE APPARITION—THE VILLAGE.

THE church of Knock, the scene of the apparition of the Blessed Virgin, of St. Joseph, and, as the witnesses believe, of St. John the Evangelist, is adjacent to a village of the same name, situate in the diocese of Tuam, in the southeast of the county Mayo, and in the baronial district known as Costello. This barony borders on the county Roscommon, along a line of some twenty-five miles, embracing within its extent the rising towns of Ballaghaderin and Ballyhaunis. Knock lies on the western boundary of the barony of Costello, adjoining that of Clanmorris and Gallen. To those who feel an interest in poor-law unions or territorial divisions it may be interesting to state that the village lies within the Claremorris Union. Knock-druim-Calry, as the spot was once

called, is said by Lewis, the writer of the "Topographical Dictionary of Ireland," to be five miles northeast from Clare, as Claremorris had been called some forty-five years ago. Standing on the line of railway that extends from Claremorris to Ballyhaunis, and looking northwards, Knock stands at the vertex of an irregular triangle, the base of which is the longest side, and that drawn from Claremorris to Knock the shortest—namely, five miles—while the third side to the right, from Ballyhaunis to Knock, is six miles and a half.

In Gaelic the name "Knock" signifies a hill. The village is surrounded by elevated knolls, which are known by the term "knock," or "druim," or "sliabh," in the language of the Irish people. If one stands on the tower of the small church, and views the country around, he will see these elevations rise around him like huge billows in a deep and boisterous sea. Looking, for instance, to the southwest, he beholds Cnoc-ban, or fair hill; and to the north, "druim," —i.e., a ridge, an elevated slope; and to the southeast the wild and bleak mountain-land called "sliabh na mbreitheamh," or the mountain district of the judges. The village, which

rests embosomed amidst these elevations, is very appropriately called "Knock," because, like Hebron, it is in the heart of a hilly country. The view of the region surrounding Knock is not at all inviting; the country district is bare of trees. To strangers coming from England or France the region is like one through which a desolating army has passed. No sign of trees or of comfortable farmsteads is to be seen; no rich cultivated meadows or fertile agricultural or even well-tilled tracts. The view to the east and west, as one approaches the village from the south, is bleak and uninviting in the extreme, presenting here and there patches of cultivated farms, and for the rest nothing but bog-land, marshes, or badly-tilled upland potato or corn fields.

A second Lourdes.

A wonderful centre of religious excitement, and a great incentive to faith, has suddenly started into form and favor in South Mayo. For the past twelve months the west of Ireland has been the trysting-place of all who have labored for the improvement of the condition of the small farmers living on Irish soil. The eyes of all in England,

and of friends and foes to the cause of the people at home and abroad, have been turned to the west of Ireland. It is there a flame of political and social excitement has been fanned which is spreading at present all over the entire land, embracing, it may be said, the four provinces. The west at the present moment presents an extraordinary attraction of a higher kind to not alone natives in Ireland, but to all Catholics in these kingdoms, as well as to their brethren on the continents of Europe and America. The Catholic world has heard of the name and fame of Lourdes, once a wild spot, but now frequented by all the world, far away in the mountainous region to the south of France. A second Lourdes has arisen at Knock, a small village surrounded by little hills, from which, as expressive of the natural character of the locality, it is known to the natives as the "village of the hills." It is distant about five miles from Claremorris, which is favorably situate on the Great Northwestern Railway. All this it is useful to state for the sake of those who are now coming in numbers to visit at Knock the scene of the various apparitions of the Blessed Virgin, and of St. Joseph and the Re-

deemer, which have been seen by the natives of that unpretending Nazareth. The multitudes who flock to the chapel or Catholic church at Knock from the surrounding districts are quite as numerous as those that formed the monster meetings which for the past nine months have been held in the counties Mayo, Galway, and Sligo. As the people of the neighboring towns, and of districts and counties more remote, aye, and the Catholics of England and America, take a great interest in the events that have lately transpired, and which at present are spoken of by everybody in this country—Protestant as well as Catholic—relative to the supernatural apparitions seen at the chapel of Knock, it is right to tell the public all the well-authenticated facts regarding the multitudes, the miracles, and the many and repeated manifestations that appear now to be seen each successive week.

The Multitudes who came to visit Knock.

And first as to the multitudes. A vast gathering of people from all the border towns within a circuit of twenty miles assembled those few weeks past at this unpretending little village ; some of

the pilgrim travellers started before day, guided by the light of the stars alone, and urged onward by the fervor of their own faith. Some were seen wending their way on foot, others on horseback, while whole families of peasants proceeded on their pilgrimage, journeying on the ordinary country vehicle known as a cart; the better class indulged in the luxury of side-cars, or, as they are known in Dublin by the name, "outsiders"; not a few families from the different towns cut a dash by a tandem drive with the highest available vehicle in these parts, known by the unpretending and not agreeably-sounding name of "drag"—a "hansom" would be quite a novel vehicle in that district. The gathering had certainly been enormous, exhibiting, at the same time, an agreeable diversity in the mixed character of the crowd assembled.

The Diversity and Variety of the Multitudes.

The variety of individual character was co-extensive with the greatness of the numbers that composed the gathering. There one could behold the blind, the lame, the crippled, the deformed, the deaf, the paralytic—all seeking to be

cured, like those whom the Redeemer found at the pool of Bethsaida, in Jerusalem. Accounts without number have come to our ears of cures effected before Christmas last, and, above all, since that period ; and on last Thursday week it is stated that two remarkable miracles were performed on two persons who for years had, from the result of accidental causes, been unable to walk. The man found himself so greatly cured that he left, it is said, his crutches, and bounded home like the lame man cured before the Golden Gate of the Temple of Jerusalem by St. Peter and St. John the Evangelists—" walking and bounding along, and all the while giving thanks to God and blessing God's holy name." Thursday and Monday are the days now set apart for visiting this place. This conclusion has been arrived at because the Blessed Mother of our Lord appeared first on a Thursday, and again on the first day of the New Year—a Thursday ; and on Mondays not a few miracles have been performed on devotees who came to manifest their devotion for Our Blessed Lady.

The Miracles.

The fame of these miracles, and the story of the various apparitions, too, have gone abroad, and have created an immense amount of conjecture and discussion amongst the people relative to the natural and supernatural world.

What the Children of the Faith think.

The children of the faith see nothing wonderful at all in these manifestations. It is to them something that they expected, or, if they did not actually expect their coming at this time and place, they see nothing incongruous in the fact that they have occurred. The spiritual world is to them like a land with which they are familiar from that knowledge which their holy faith supplies, pretty much as they are not put out of sorts with anything they hear or see from America (a far-off land); because in this instance American life and habits are something with which they are familiar, owing to the fact that their relatives in that country commune with their friends in Ireland, and tell them all regarding themselves and American life and manners

in that great Republic to the west of the Atlantic. In this way our Catholic people are not at all put about by the narration of miracles or of miraculous apparitions at Knock. They are, by faith, aware beforehand that such things happened before, happen now, and will take place as long as the Church of God is on earth. The angels appeared to Abraham, and walked with him, and talked to him, and directed "him in all his ways." They appeared, and spoke to, and brought to a foreign country and back the grandson of Abraham—Isaac, the father of all the Israelites. The same is true of Tobias and Daniel, the prophets; and of St. Peter, the head of the Apostles; and of numerous saints in the Catholic Church in Africa, in Rome, and in this island during the golden age of sanctity in Ireland. What happened once, why not happen again? It is the same God who ruled and governed mankind then as now; it is the same Church that points out to her children the way to heaven; the Irish faithful, like those in the time of St. Columkille, or at a later period, are the brothers of the Redeemer, purchased by his sacred Blood. He loves us as he loved them,

and sends his angels to take charge of us, as they took charge of them in days past. These points have been spoken of and canvassed in conversation amongst laity and amongst religious for the past six months. It was only when the matter was described in a former issue of the Tuam *News* that the faithful began to attach any degree of credibility to the facts before that time incorrectly narrated. The Tuam *News* gave a summary of the events that had occurred up to that time, stamped with the appearance of the supernatural. The apparition of the 21st of August last cannot well be understood without having some notion of the position and form of the little Catholic church in the village of Knock.

The Church of Knock.

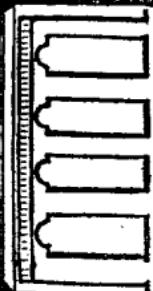
The building has no pretension to architectural elegance of any kind nor to the internal beauty such as one would wish to witness in God's house. The plan of the building, if plan it can be called, is in the shape of the letter T, the long limb being about sixty feet, and the cross-limbs in breadth about fifty feet. The chancel and altar

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO



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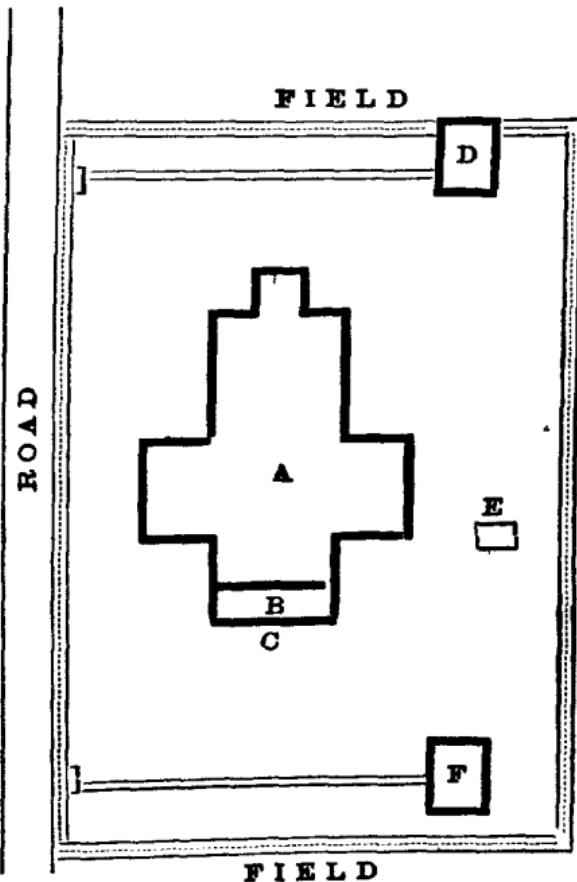
are grouped at the head, where the arms project to the right and left. Standing at the altar and looking down the nave, one beholds at the end a loft or entrance that leads to a tower with belfry, both of which are of modern construction and date. The gold-colored pinnacle of this tower is the first part of the building that comes in view as one, from a southerly direction, approaches the village in which the church stands. To the rear of the chancel, and attached to the gable of the altar, a house, less elevated than the walls of the church proper, has been erected; this additional building, which is entered by a door from the chancel, is known as the sacristy—a house in which the sacred ornaments of the church, and the sacred vessels and every requisite for the altar, are kept in safety by the priests or by their attendants. The gable of this sacristy, in a line parallel to the gable of the church, is the second stone erection between the chancel and the outside world, towards or at the southeastern gable. It is well, too, to point out the direction to which this plain wall faces: its front looks straight into the approaching meridian sun at eleven o'clock A.M.; its right wing points to the

southwest; its left wing or branch to the east by north.

Objections answered.

This is the gable hard by which the first miraculous apparition was beheld on the evening and night of the 21st of August last. It is thus seen that there are two gables between the altar of the church and the gable fronting the southeast, and that, consequently, if lights appeared in the church, the reflection from them could never beam on the outside at the foot of the wall of the second gable; above all, direct light could never convey, by any law of optics, images when radiating from a centre, and not passing through any other translucent medium, from which the rays of light might, at a certain fixed and measured distance, carry the image of the object or pellucid picture. The time at which the apparition appeared was some twenty minutes after sunset, so that by no law of radiation from reflected light could the images be thrown naturally or artificially from the clouds. Add to that the great fact that at the time the Blessed Virgin appeared it was pouring rain in torrents, and the drizzling fall contin-

ued the whole time and late onwards through the night. The whole of that day had been one



In the foregoing diagram A represents the church ; B the sacristy ; C the gable against which the apparition was seen ; D the boys' school ; E the grave of Mr. O'Grady, the father of the parish priest who built the church ; F the girls' school.

dreary, dismal downpour from early dawn to the dusky hours of sundown. We give the follow-

ing quotation from what we have already written on the subject :

First Account of the Apparition from Tuam "News"
January 9.

" All that may be said in the following lines is an expression of the feelings of the people, and does not pretend to anticipate the judgment which the ecclesiastical superiors may express upon the facts of which they are already cognizant. The chapel of Knock, at which the apparitions have occurred, is about five miles from Claremorris, and its gilt cross which surmounts the lofty tower can be seen for miles around. The priest who so worthily presides over the parish is the venerable archdeacon of the diocese, the Very Rev. Bartholomew Cavanagh. The chapel is of cruciform shape. The sacristy occupies the upper and smaller shaft, and is immediately behind the high altar. In the gable of the sacristy there is a Gothic window about five feet by two broad; its lowest part is about twelve feet from the ground. The remainder of the gable is plain, and covered outside by a good, substantial coating of cement to protect the wall

from the rains, which beat with great violence, especially upon that side. On this gable wall of the sacristy were seen the extraordinary lights in the midst of which the Blessed Virgin, accompanied by St. Joseph and St. John the Evangelist, appeared. Thursday, the 21st of August last, the eve of the Octave day of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, was accompanied by a blinding drizzle of rain, which continued till the next day. As some persons were hurriedly going along the road which leads to the chapel, at about half-past seven P.M., they perceived the wall beautifully illuminated by a soft, white, flickering light, through which could be perceived brilliant stars twinkling as on a fine frosty night. The first person who saw it passed on, but others soon came and remained, and these saw, covering a large portion of the gable end of the sacristy, an altar, and to its Gospel side the figures of St. John the Evangelist, the Blessed Virgin, and St. Joseph. On the altar, which stood about eight feet from the ground, and immediately under the window, a Lamb stood, and rising up behind the Lamb was a crucifix with the figure of our Lord upon it. The altar was surrounded by a brilliant

golden light, through which up and down angels seemed to be flitting. Near the altar, and immediately to its Gospel side, but nearer to the ground, was St. John, having a mitre on his head, and holding the book of the Gospels open in his left hand as if reading from it. He held his right hand raised and in the act of blessing, the index and middle fingers being extended after the manner adopted by bishops. To St. John's right stood the Blessed Virgin, having her hands extended and raised towards her shoulders, the palms of her hands turned towards the people, and her eyes raised up towards heaven. To the Blessed Virgin's right was St. Joseph, turned towards her, and in an inclining posture. These figures remained visible from half-past seven to ten o'clock P.M., witnessed during that time by about twenty persons, who forgot all about the heavy rain that was then falling and drenched them through. The light at the chapel was seen by people who lived near the place. On Monday evening, the eve of the Epiphany, a bright light was again visible, and from eleven P.M. until two o'clock A.M. was seen by a very large number, of whom two were members of the Royal Irish Constabulary, who



VERY REV. BARTHOLOMEW A. CAVANAGH,
*Archdeacon of the Diocese, and Parish Priest
of Knock Chapel, Co. Mayo,
Ireland.*

were on their patrol duty that evening. One of them said that up to that time he did not believe in it, but he was really startled by the brightness of the light which he saw.

“ Many cures have been worked through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and by the application of the cement taken from the chapel wall. We have heard from the mouths of most trustworthy witnesses an account of nearly a dozen cures, of which the narrators themselves were eye-witnesses. In addition to what we have already written regarding the visions seen at the chapel of Knock, two remarkable miracles, witnessed by hundreds of persons, were performed yesterday—namely, sight restored to two young girls, one of whom had, on the testimony of her mother, not seen from her birth. She had been several times with physicians in Dublin, but all to no purpose. Yesterday, in the presence of hundreds, she received the use of sight, having visited three times the spot where the Blessed Virgin Mary is said to have appeared, and after praying three times in honor of the Mother of God.”

Even since these words just quoted have been written, other miracles, as we have stated in the first part of this article, have come under the testimony and cognizance of numbers who have frequented the hallowed spot. His Grace the Archbishop of Tuam ordered the depositions of the several witnesses to be taken by a commission of learned priests and dignitaries deputed for that purpose; and they have reported officially that the testimony of all, taken as a whole, is trustworthy and satisfactory.





CHAPTER III.

CLAREMORRIS.

TOURISTS or travellers coming to Knock must pass through either of the two towns, Claremorris or Ballyhaunis, which are points at the extreme ends of the base of the irregular triangle of which the village of Knock forms the vertex. The chapel of the apparition must be reached by car either from Claremorris or Ballyhaunis—the former is five miles distant, the latter six and a half. In excursion trips the fare, either from Dublin or Athlone, to these towns is the same, and at Claremorris a number of cars are usually at call, ready for all new-comers. The accommodation, too, is fair, considering the extent of the town and the means of the inhabitants. The people have been by strangers pronounced civil and obliging. There are in the town two hotels, in which good accommodation can be had, be-

sides private apartments where families can find themselves at home. All visitors from Waterford, Wexford, Cork, Limerick, and the extreme west and south of Ireland, come to Claremorris, *per* the Waterford and Limerick Railway, through Athenry and Tuam, in the county Galway. Cars are to be had at Tuam, from which the journey of fourteen miles can be made in two hours. The fare by public car is two-and-sixpence. What the town of Clare, as it was called in times past, had been forty-five years ago is thus described by Lewis in his "Topographical Dictionary": "A market and post-town in the parish of Kilcolman, barony of Clanmorris, county Mayo, and province of Connacht, fourteen miles southeast by south from Castlebar, and one hundred and seventeen miles from Dublin." And Kilcolman parish, of which Clare is the capital, he states, contained, in 1837, 8,400 souls, or nearly 1,700 (seventeen hundred) families. At present it contains only 1,300 families. The parish contains 22,886 statute acres. The remains of an old Carmelite convent are found here at Ballinsmala, within one mile and a half of Claremorris. According to Ware, by Harris,

vol. ii. 283, the friary was founded in the thirteenth century by the Prendergasts—then owners of the lands in that district. According to an inquisition held May 12, 1608, the community possessed twelve acres of land. At the period of the dissolution of monasteries this establishment and the lands annexed were granted to Sir John King. The friars were banished. They managed, however, to live as best they could amongst the native Catholics, to whom they were devoted, and who, in turn, held the friars in great veneration. Some thirty-five years ago the friars celebrated Mass within those walls that are now in ruins at Ballinsmala.

Regarding the parish of Kilcolman, or Claremorris, one-third of the land is arable, one-fourth pasture; the remainder, over one-third, is waste or a bog. The boundaries of Catholic and Protestant parishes are the same. The tenants have never been rich. The wealthiest is only so far above want that one year or two of adverse times, like the present, are sufficient to induce all the privations that come in the train of poverty.

Ballyhaunis.

Ballyhaunis, as well as Claremorris, is favorably situated on the line of the Northwestern Railway. It is a rising town. It has two hotels. A growing rivalry exists at present between its inhabitants and those of Claremorris in the marked attention which they pay to visitors going to Knock, and to all tourists and strangers that pass by that way. According to Lewis, it is a market town, situate in the parish of Annagh, diocese of Tuam, barony of Costello. Mayo is divided into nine baronial districts, two of which—Clanmorris and Costello—lie at the southeastern boundary bordering on Roscommon County. A monastery of Augustinian Friars was founded here in the year 1312, and largely endowed by the family of Nagle, who took the name of Costello, or MacCostello. It flourished till the reign of James I. In the year 1641 the friars gained possession of their old home, and rebuilt portions of the ruined edifice. Again, after a score of years, they were obliged to fly. They continued to dwell amongst the people, for priests in Ireland at that period were obliged to hide from the

view of any Government official, and to abide for three months or twelve months in one house, and then to seek a change of habitation, lest their presence in a town or village should become publicly known. The friars administered to the spiritual wants of the faithful, celebrating Mass, whenever possible, in the ruined cloisters of their monastery. Some fifty-five years ago they began again to rebuild the broken walls of their church and convent. They possessed by right over one hundred and fifty acres of land, bestowed by the Barons MacCostellos, in times past, on the community. This property the grandfather of the present Viscount Dillon took to himself at the end of the century just passed, and with much seeming kindness gave the friars, with a lease for ever at a shilling an acre, twelve acres of their own land, keeping in his own right, as lord of the territory around, the rest of the fee-farm, which really belonged to the good religious, but to which the English law gave them no title, or rather to which it disentitled them. At the present time the prior and his brethren in religion are in possession of a neat church and of a very substantial establishment suited to a small

community. As the Augustinians form one of the mendicant orders, the friars derive their support from the alms and offerings of the faithful, together with the proceeds of the small farm.

What is that?

This passing notice of the monastery has been given to please the legitimate curiosity of the many visitors who make Ballyhaunis their way in going to visit Knock. The first thing that strikes a stranger's eye on entering the town from the railway station is the venerable pile of massive but ancient-looking buildings erected on the hill. He naturally asks: What is that? The site is certainly attractive, and the most commanding in Ballyhaunis. It could be rendered still more striking. The town and convent are entwined in historic social and religious relations. With the foundation of the monastery for the hermits of St. Augustine, in the fourteenth century, Ballyhaunis grew into existence as a town. Its religious life was supported in days of persecution by the friars, and the names of Jordan, Waldron, Bourke, Fitzgerald, Egan,

O'Neil, Dowling, Finn, and O'Hara, to be met with amongst the best-to-do of the inhabitants, show that the priors and friars who bore those names were, like most of the Irish priesthood, the sons of the people.

Knock—The Parish Priest—His Dwelling.

A visitor taking car at this town, or at Claremorris, will reach Knock after an hour's drive. The parish is at the head of a union of two, for Aughamór and Knock are united, and both are at present under the pastoral charge of the Very Rev. Bartholomew A. Cavanagh, archdeacon of the diocese. In each of the parishes there is a church. The Archdeacon confines his ministrations and personal care chiefly to the parish of Knock, looking after the wants, spiritual and temporal, of the people, and relieving them in their hours of trial and attending to all sick-calls. In this way the good pastor's time is fully occupied, especially in this year of general want, when the time and patience and power of endurance of every Irish priest in the west of Ireland are fully put to the tightest test. Archdeacon Cavanagh receives some ninety letters

each day. It is evident that he cannot attend to the demands of all his present correspondents, and if some of them are disappointed it is not owing to indifference or negligence on the part of the pious pastor. The residence of the venerable Archdeacon is quite near the chapel —say about two minutes' walk. It is a plain thatched cottage, consisting of three rooms and a kitchen. It is in shape and size like the dwelling of some of his humbler parishioners, and is distinguished from the common class of cottages by a flower-garden in front of the leading entrance. He receives all those who come to him with great courtesy and kindness, having a friendly word for every one. Strangers of note and clerical visitors are usually treated by him with much attention and marked respect.

Pious Peasants.

Qualis pater, talis filius—like father, like son—is an old adage, and may be turned a little into the following: *Qualis pastor, talis grex*—like pastor, like flock. The pastor of Knock and Aughamóir is zealous, devoted to his sacred calling, an humble client of Mary, the Mother of God; and so

the people, at least many of them, are simple in their habits of life, and imbued with a deep-seated love of their holy religion. Like the priest who teaches them, they have great faith in our blessed Lord and the fullest hope in his saving merits ; they are imbued with a deep, devotional attachment to the blessed Mother of the Redeemer. All the peasant Catholics of the west of Ireland regard Our Blessed Lady pretty much as they do a respected and honored member of the household to which each respectively belongs. Christ is their Brother, the Eternal Son of our common Heavenly Father ; but Holy Mary, his Mother, is their Mother, and for her their love and veneration is childlike and elevated—childlike in its trust and natural simplicity, elevated in the knowledge they possess of her transcendent perfections, her sanctity, grace, and the marvellous share that was hers in the divine economy of Redemption, and consequently her mighty influence and all-saving power with her Divine Son.



CHAPTER IV.

ARE WE SURE OF THE APPARITION?

THE village of Knock is now spoken of not only in Ireland, in England, in Scotland, but in America. Letters from the most distant districts in the far-off United States of the American continent have been received, in which detailed questions have been put respecting the "apparitions and the miracles" at Knock. It is quite impossible to answer all the enquiries made on the several points proposed, regarding the general subject and the detailed events that have been narrated, and which, it is stated, have actually taken place. The events can well be grouped under two headings—namely, those respecting the apparition seen on August 21, 1879, the eve of the octave of the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and those that tell of the "miracles" that have been

wrought since Christmas last. It is easy enough to deal with the question of the first apparition, because the proofs regarding it rest on the evidence of the witnesses who assert, and even swear, that they beheld it. These are at least fifteen in number.

Reasoning on this Point.

How it could happen that fifteen persons of different ages, and of different ways of thinking and of living—persons differing in age, in condition, in place and position—could, without any apparent reason, conspire to say they all saw a certain thing which, in the opinions of those who do not credit their narration, they did *not* see, and that they were under that delusion (not one, but all of them) that they saw it, some for one hour, some for an hour and a half, some for two hours, is a thing quite impossible to comprehend. A person can understand how one could be deceived even with his or her eyes open, and the senses quite alive to all things else around and about; but how fifteen could be deceived or could conspire, differing, as they did, in age, state, and condition, is something as marvellous

in the moral world as the apparition itself is in the order of material events. One of three conclusions must be come to by any sensible and rational being who weighs the evidence: Either the apparition was a reality or it never took place; and all the fifteen witnesses have conspired without cause, and have been deceivers; or they all of one accord innocently imagined they beheld what they never saw. Which of the three is the easier to credit: (1) that they saw it, or (2) imagined they saw it, or (3) concocted the whole thing and were deceivers? The non-Catholic affirms "there was no such thing as an apparition"; "it is all a hoax." So, too, says the incredulous Catholic; and, mind you, very few learned Catholics yet give any credit to the events that have been narrated. This is fair. It is natural that the people should doubt. It is even right that they should doubt, for every story that one hears ought not to be readily credited. And it always happens that those who doubt longest, like St. Thomas the Apostle, are those who are, in matters of truth, the firmest supporters afterwards of that which they are certain is true. Well, then, in respect to the non-Catholic

section of the community and of the Catholics who do not give credit to the story or narration of the first apparition, one could say: You must (*a*) either believe that the apparition did *de facto* take place, account for its appearance as you will; or (*b*) that fifteen quiet, rational people, while in their senses and while awake, were deceived; or that, worse still, (*c*) they were rogues and cheats prepared quite well enough to combine. The reply given is: "I do not believe they saw the apparition." Very well. They were all deceived, then, without any fault on their part, or they conspired without cause. If deceived, there have been fifteen miracles instead of one wrought, for it is a wonderful and, indeed, a miraculous thing to make a person seriously believe he saw what he did not see, and to hold him to it for one hour, or two, or longer. No rational being could by human possibility be so deceived, and, above all, convinced *rationally* that the events occurred which, in point of fact (if he were deceived), never had occurred. And then you must multiply that deception by fifteen, for that number of rational, sensible men and women declare that they beheld the apparition, not for a

moment, not in a loose, transient way, but in a settled manner for hours, so that they had time to come and go, to think and examine, to see the hands, eyes, and the minutest outline of the beings who stood before them. They endured cold, and rain, and wet while looking at the vision they declare they saw, but which the man who does not credit the story says they did not see. His alternative is a far greater miracle in itself than that of the believer, for, in his case, it is simply one apparition ; in the other it was fifteen apparitions deceiving each of the rational beings who stood on looking at what had, according to their theory, no reality. If they conspired without cause, there was an additional miracle ; for, in matters of lying and deception, it is seldom or never all can be at one in narrating the same events. Witness the two judges or elders whom the Prophet Daniel examined. Each told a different story when examined separately and apart, simply because each of the two was telling an untruth. Now, in the case of these fifteen witnesses, it is amazing that all of them and each of them tell in substance the same event. How, supposing they were deceivers

and that they conspired, did each hit exactly on the same story when singly examined regarding the vision, the time, place, and circumstances? They differ, it is true, in minor and special outlines, as all men will in giving an account of the same event; but they tell in substance and in integrity of detail the same story. No other conclusion can, therefore, be arrived at regarding the first apparition than that it actually has occurred. Let men of learning account for it as they like.

Other Conjectures groundless.

The non-believing individuals describe the appearance either as (1) a miracle; or (2) the effect of reflected light; or (3) some kind of magic-lantern proceeding; or (4) the effect of phosphorus, or of (5) electric or magnetic currents; or (6) natural miasmatic gustations from the earth below, arising, perhaps, from a stratification of coal or of petroleum some thirty or fifty feet under the surface. The vision, or the luminous appearances, could not come from reflected lights; for, as a rule, and as a matter of science, mirages are seen in the clouds, and not at the gables of a

house, and they never continue longer than a few moments, like a rainbow, just only while the sun is shining on a certain point. Now, in the first vision at Knock the apparitions continued for hours, and were seen both before the sun had fully gone down and after it had set, in daytime and in night-time, and that for a lengthened period. What regarding the effects of a magic lantern? Any one who has seen the place can behold at a glance that to produce images on the wall at Knock chapel by magic lanterns is simply impossible. The nearest point at which a performer could stand is distant thirty yards from the gable, and no lens and no electric light known to scientists at the present day can cast fully-defined likenesses the size of a man on four hundred square feet of surface for some hours in the light of day and the darkness of night, and that with pencils of rays of light invisible from artificial sources of illumination. Neither is the phosphorus theory of any avail. One would require an immense amount of phosphorus to daub the whole gable of a church with it. The phosphorus would ignite in the daytime in the hands of any unskilled, nay, the most cautious

artist. Then, again, the light of phosphorus could not be seen distinctly thirty yards off; especially it could not be seen at daytime. Again, it could not present, with its ever-fitful flame, accurately and minutely defined features. Some of the witnesses testify that they beheld the very eye-balls of the figures, which, as Patrick Hill testifies, appeared to him to be those of living beings; he saw, he says, not only the eyes, but the iris and the pupil. Although some of the witnesses have described the figures as statues, yet they assert that those they saw were like living beings, as their eyes and the brightness of their eyes ever showed. They were statue-like only in this respect, that the figures did not speak. It is in that respect the witnesses bear testimony to their statue or ghost-like appearance. Phosphoric light is ever fitful and fluctuating, like the light of a reflected moon on the disturbed surface of a rippling lake. It is never even nor at rest. But in the apparition there was no rippling or ever and constant changing of light. The figures and likenesses that were seen were settled; they presented an accurate outline, and were constant and continuous in their pose for

two hours and a half. Add to all this that the lights were beheld at a distance of over half a mile; phosphoric lights cannot be seen thirty yards off—above all, they cannot be seen in daylight. But this is certain: that while water is being poured on a surface on which phosphorus is being rubbed, no light from it is seen. Now, according to the testimony of the witnesses, it was, during the whole period, pouring torrents of rain on the gable end of the church, so much so that all of them say what they wondered at most, like Moses looking at the bush burning and yet not consumed, was that the "bodies" before them were deluged with rain, and all the while they were not wet, nor the silvery glow that surrounded them in any way lessened. The glowing light of phosphor is yellowish; this seen on the night of the apparition was white.

The objection that the appearances have been produced by electric lights is too fanciful. Electric lights do not become manifest in one part of the earth without being seen or made manifest under the same circumstances in other parts. If electric lights arise and are diffused around one gable of a church at a certain time and in certain

circumstances, what prevents the electric lights from being seen under similar and the like circumstances in other places? Hence it is in itself a kind of miracle to make the electric current, everywhere existing in the earth, tell without special cause in one place and not in another in like situation. Lastly, about the stratifications under the earth. That is merely fanciful or hypothetic. But suppose there are bituminous substances lying under the church, fifty or sixty feet down under the surface, why do exhalations arise at the gable rather than in any other part? Why do the lights, seen almost each night, increase in bulk as they ascend around the gable and the wall each side? How, too, could well-defined figures be fashioned from any such exhalations? Why does not curling smoke make images continuously for hours?

All that has been said or written has no positive sanction from the Church or from the Church rulers and ecclesiastical guides; that which has been just stated has only the same amount of authority that is usually given to any public event witnessed by many, but with this exception: that much greater care has been taken to

be accurate and rigidly truthful in the accounts now given than if they were the ordinary events of the day. If they are supernatural, as they appear to be, there is much more to be said regarding them ; if, after all, they are in any way unreal, as some think, then very soon that want of reality must come to light. Meantime, till the Church speaks authoritatively on the subject, one has fair grounds for believing the whole account of the apparition to be true, and that some, at least, of the miracles are a reality.





CHAPTER V.

WHAT THE EYE-WITNESSES SAY.

DEPOSITIONS taken in the presence of the Very Rev. Archdeacon Bartholomew A. Cavanagh, P.P.; of Rev. James Canon Waldron, P.P., Ballyhaunis; and Rev. U. J. Canon Bourke, P.P. of Kilcolman, Claremorris, County Mayo, deputed by his Grace the Archbishop of Tuam to see into the truth of the vision alleged to have appeared at the Catholic church of Knock on the evening of the 21st of August, the octave of the Assumption of the B.V.M., 1879.

In presenting the testimony of the different witnesses who beheld the apparitions on the evening of the 21st of August last, the first place is rightly due to the evidence of Patrick Hill, of Claremorris, a young, frank, intelligent boy of about thirteen years of age. His account of the apparition

is the fullest and most satisfactory. It extends to even the minutest details. To all who question him he replies with an open, childlike simplicity of manner, and with the readiness of one who knows and who feels that he is certain of what he tells. He states some points to which other eye-witnesses do not even allude; for instance, that on the forehead of the figure representing the Blessed Virgin he saw, just under the circlet of the crown, and where, on the human head, the hair grows, a full-blown rose. The other witnesses do not even allude to this remarkable fact. The palms of the hands were not turned outwards, but slightly diverging from a parallel position, one palm fronting the other, with a gentle convergency towards the face of the figure. He observed the feet, and remarked that the right foot was in advance of the left, like one going to move forward; and that, in fact, the figures did move forward at times, and backwards towards the gable whenever the people drew nearer to them. He saw angels, having their faces veiled, fluttering around the Lamb. Other witnesses say they saw only glittering lights around the Lamb, but that they were not angels.

Master Hill declares that they appeared to him to move, and as it were on wing, but that he could not see their faces. The cross, he says, was behind the Lamb, and erect on the altar, and not on the Lamb, as is represented. The other witnesses used the words behind the Lamb, on the Lamb; he states with a certain conviction the cross was behind the Lamb, but inward, erect, or perpendicular to the altar, and in no way touching the Lamb. Again, he states that although a luminous whiteness covered the whole gable, or the greater portion of it, yet a dark border-line out a little from each of the forms gave the beholders a clear and distinct view of each of the figures that stood before them; for instance, between St. John and the figure of the Blessed Virgin a dark or less bright border-line showed how far the bright rays that encircled the Virgin extended, and how far those radiating from St. John extended, and the meeting of the two was less bright than the lustrous whiteness that was seen around.

Then, again, he saw, he states, not only the eyes of the Immaculate Lady, but the iris and the pupil in each; that after being a while looking

on and gazing at the figures, he went up towards St. John, and could distinctly see the lettering in the book which St. John appeared to be reading.

These are points that are worth noting in the evidence of Master Patrick Hill, on account of their special character and the minuteness of outline, and the simple certainty with which he tells one out straight what he saw.

No phosphoric or electric action could bring out the distinct brightness in the pupil of the eye, or the minute distinctness in the lettering of the Book of Gospels.

His Testimony.

I am Patrick Hill; I live in Claremorris; my aunt lives at Knock; I remember the 21st of August last; on that day I was drawing home turf, or peat, from the bog, on an ass. While at my aunt's, at about eight o'clock in the evening, Dominick Beirne came into the house; he cried out: "Come up to the chapel and see the miraculous lights and the beautiful visions that are to be seen there." I followed him; another man, by name Dominick Beirne, and John Durkan, and a small boy named John Curry, came with me; we

were all together; we ran over towards the chapel. When we, running southwest, came so far from the village that on our turning the gable came in view, we immediately beheld the lights, a clear, white light covering most of the gable, from the ground up to the window and higher. It was a kind of changing bright light, going sometimes up high, and again not so high. We saw the figures—the Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph, and St. John—and an altar, with the Lamb on the altar, and a cross behind the Lamb. At this time we reached as far as the wall fronting the gable; there were other people there before me; some of them were praying, some not; all were looking at the vision; they were leaning over the wall or ditch, with their arms resting on the top. I saw the figures and brightness; the boy, John Curry, from behind the wall, could not see them, but I did; and he asked me to lift him up till he could see the grand babies, as he called the figures; it was raining; some—amongst them Mary McLoughlin—who beheld what I now saw, had gone away; others were coming. After we prayed awhile I thought it right to go across the wall and into the chapel yard. I brought little Curry with

me ; I went then up closer ; I saw everything distinctly. The figures were full and round, as if they had a body and life ; they said nothing, but as we approached they seemed to go back a little towards the gable. I distinctly beheld the Blessed Virgin Mary, life-size, standing about two feet or so above the ground, clothed in white robes, which were fastened at the neck ; her hands were raised to the height of the shoulders, as if in prayer, with the palms facing one another, but slanting inwards towards the face ; the palms were not turned towards the people, but facing each other as I have described ; she appeared to be praying ; her eyes were turned, as I saw, towards heaven ; she wore a brilliant crown on her head, and over the forehead, where the crown fitted the brow, a beautiful rose ; the crown appeared brilliant and of a golden brightness, of a deeper hue, inclined to a mellow yellow, than the striking whiteness of the robes she wore ; the upper parts of the crown appeared to be a series of sparkles or glittering crosses. I saw her eyes, the balls, the pupils, and the iris of each [the boy did not know those special names of those parts of the eye, but he pointed to them, and

described them in his own way]. I noticed her hands especially, and face; her appearance; the robes came only as far as the ankles; I saw the feet and the ankles; one foot, the right, was slightly in advance of the other; at times she appeared, and all the figures appeared, to move out and again to go backwards; I saw them move; she did not speak; I went up very near; one old woman went up and embraced the Virgin's feet, and she found nothing in her arms or hands; they receded, she said, from her; I saw St. Joseph to the Blessed Virgin's right hand; his head was bent, from the shoulders, forward; he appeared to be paying his respects; I noticed his whiskers; they appeared slightly gray; there was a line or dark mearing between the figure of the Blessed Virgin and that of St. Joseph, so that one could know St. Joseph and the place where his figure appeared distinctly from that of the Blessed Virgin and the spot where she stood. I saw the feet of St. Joseph, too; his hands were joined like a person at prayer.

The third figure that stood before me was that of St. John the Evangelist; he stood erect to the

Gospel side of the altar, and at an angle with the figure of the Blessed Virgin, so that his back was not turned to the altar nor to the Mother of God; his right arm was at an angle with a line drawn across from St. Joseph to where Our Blessed Lady appeared to be standing; St. John was dressed like a bishop preaching; he wore a small mitre on his head; he held a Mass Book, or a Book of the Gospels, in the left hand; the right hand was raised to the elevation of the head; while he kept the index finger and the middle finger of the right hand raised, the other three fingers of the same hand were shut; he appeared as if he were preaching, but I heard no voice; I came so near that I looked into the book; I saw the lines and the letters. St. John wore no sandals; his left hand was turned towards the altar that was behind him; the altar was a plain one, like any ordinary altar, without any ornaments. On the altar stood a Lamb—the size of a lamb eight weeks old; the face of the Lamb was fronting the west, and looking in the direction of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph; behind the Lamb a large cross was placed erect or perpendicular on the altar; around the Lamb I saw angels hov-

ering during the whole time for the space of one hour and a half or longer ; I saw their wings fluttering, but I did not perceive their heads or faces, which were not turned to me. For the space of one hour and a half we were under the pouring rain ; at this time I was very wet ; I noticed that the rain did not wet the figures which appeared before me, although I was wet myself ; I went away then.

(Signed) PATRICK HILL.

Witness present : U. J. Canon Bourke.

October 8, 1879.

Second Witness.

I, Mary McLoughlin, live in Knock ; I am housekeeper to the Rev. Archdeacon Cavanagh ; I remember the evening of the 21st of August ; at the hour of seven or so, or a little later, while it was yet bright day, I passed from the Rev. the Archdeacon's house on by the chapel towards the house of a Mrs. Beirne, widow. On passing by the chapel, and at a little distance from it, I saw a wonderful number of strange figures or appearances at the gable, one like the B. V. Mary, and one like St. Joseph, another a bishop ; I saw

an altar; I was wondering to see there such an extraordinary group; yet I passed on and said nothing, thinking that possibly the Archdeacon had been supplied with these beautiful figures from Dublin or somewhere else, and that he said nothing about them, but had left them in the open air; I saw a white light about them; I thought the whole thing strange; after looking at them I passed on to the house of Mrs. Beirne's in the village; after reaching Widow Beirne's house I stayed there half an hour at least; I returned then homewards to the Archdeacon's house, accompanied by Miss Mary Beirne, and as we approached the chapel she cried out, "Look at the beautiful figures." We gazed on them for a little, and then I told her to go for her mother, Widow Beirne, and her brother, and her sister, and her niece, who were still in the house which she and I had left. I remained looking at the sight before me until the mother, sister, and brother of Miss Mary Beirne came; at the time I was outside the ditch and to the southwest of the school-house near the road, about thirty yards or so from the church; I leaned across the wall in order to see, as well as I could, the whole scene.

I remained now for the space of at least a quarter of an hour, perhaps longer ; I told Miss Beirne then to go for her uncle, Bryan Beirne, and her aunt, Mrs. Bryan Beirne, or any of the neighbors whom she should see, in order that they might witness the sight that they were then enjoying. It was now about a quarter past eight o'clock, and beginning to be quite dark. The sun had set ; it was raining at the time. I beheld, on this occasion, not only the three figures, but an altar further on to the left of the figure of the B. V. M., and to the left of the bishop and above the altar a Lamb about the size of that which is five weeks old. Behind the Lamb appeared the cross ; it was away a bit from the Lamb, while the latter stood in front from it, and not resting on the wood of the cross. Around the Lamb a number of gold-like stars appeared in the form of a halo. This altar was placed right under the window of the gable and more to the east of the figures, all, of course, outside the church at Knock. I parted from the company or gathering at eight and a half o'clock. I went to the priest's house and told what I had beheld, and spoke of the beautiful things that were to be seen at the

gable of the chapel; I asked him, or said, rather, it would be worth his while to go to witness them. He appeared to make nothing of what I said, and consequently he did not go. Although it was pouring rain, the wall had a bright, dry appearance, while the rest of the building appeared to be dark. I did not return to behold the visions again after that, remaining at my house. I saw the sight for fully an hour. Very Rev. B. Cavanagh heard the next day all about the apparition from the others who had beheld it; and then it came to his recollection that I had told him the previous evening about it, and asked him to see it.

NOTE.—Mary McLoughlin had gone away before Patrick Hill came. Their testimony relates to two distinct and separate times while the apparition was present. She saw it like one who did not care to see it, and in a transverse direction, not straight; he saw it directly and fully, and, like a confiding child, went up calmly to where the Blessed Virgin stood.

*Third Witness.**Testimony of Mary Beirne, aged about Twenty-six Years.*

I live in the village of Knock, to the east side of the chapel; Mary McLoughlin came on the even-

ing of the 21st of August to my house at about half-past seven o'clock; she remained some little time; I came back with her as she was returning homewards; it was either eight o'clock or a quarter to eight at the time. It was still bright; I had never heard from Miss McLoughlin about the vision which she had seen just before that. The first I learned of it was on coming at the time just named from my mother's house in company with Miss Mary McLoughlin, and at the distance of three hundred yards or so from the church I beheld, all at once, standing out from the gable, and rather to the west of it, three figures which, on more attentive inspection, appeared to be that of the Blessed Virgin, of St. Joseph, and St. John. That of the Blessed Virgin was life-size, the others apparently either not so big or not so high as her figure; they stood a little distance out from the gable wall, and, as well as I could judge, a foot and a half or two feet from the ground. The Virgin stood erect, with eyes raised to heaven, her hands elevated to the shoulders or a little higher, the palms inclined slightly towards the shoulders or bosom; she wore a large cloak of a white color, hanging

in full folds and somewhat loosely around her shoulders, and fastened to the neck; she wore a crown on the head—rather a large crown—and it appeared to me somewhat yellower than the dress or robes worn by Our Blessed Lady. In the figure of St. Joseph the head was slightly bent, and inclined towards the Blessed Virgin, as if paying her respect; it represented the saint as somewhat aged, with gray whiskers and grayish hair.

The third figure appeared to be that of St. John the Evangelist; I do not know, only I thought so, except the fact that at one time I saw a statue at the chapel of Lekanvey, near Westport, county Mayo, very much resembling the figure which stood now before me in group with St. Joseph and Our Blessed Lady, which I beheld on this occasion. He held the Book of Gospels, or the Mass Book, open in his left hand, while he stood slightly turned on the left side towards the altar, that was over a little from him. I must remark that the statue which I had formerly seen at Lekanvey chapel had no mitre on its head, while the figure which I now beheld had one—not a high mitre, but a short-set kind of one.

The statue at Lekanvey had a book in the left hand, and the fingers of the right hand raised. The figure before me on this present occasion of which I am speaking had a book in the left hand, as I have stated, and the index finger and the middle finger of the right hand raised, as if he were speaking and impressing some point forcibly on an audience. It was this coincidence of figure and *pose* that made me surmise—for it is only an opinion—that the third figure was that of St. John, the beloved disciple of our Lord. But I am not in any way sure what saint or character the figure represented. I said, as I now expressed, that it was St. John the Evangelist, and then all the others present said the same—said what I stated. The altar was under the window, which is the gable, and a little to the west near the centre, or a little beyond it. Towards this altar St. John—as I shall call the figure—was looking, while he stood at the Gospel side of the said altar, with his right arm inclined at an angle outwardly towards the Blessed Virgin. The altar appeared to me to be like the altars in use in the Catholic Church—large and full-sized. It had no linens, no candles, nor any special ornamentations; it was only

a plain altar. Above the altar, and resting on it, was a Lamb, standing with the face towards St. John, thus fronting the western sky. I saw no cross nor crucifix. On the body of the Lamb, and around it, I saw golden stars, or small brilliant lights, glittering like jets or glass balls, reflecting the light of some luminous body. I remained from a quarter past eight to half-past nine o'clock. At the time it was raining.

*Fourth Witness.**Testimony of Patrick Walsh, aged Sixty-five Years.*

My name is Patrick Walsh ; I live at Ballinderig, an English mile from the chapel of Knock. I remember well the 21st of August, 1879. It was a very dark night. It was raining heavily. About nine o'clock on that night I was going on some business through my land, and, standing a distance of about half a mile from the chapel, I saw a very bright light on the southern gable end of the chapel ; it appeared to be a large globe of golden light ; I never saw, I thought, so brilliant a light before ; it appeared high up in the air

above and around the chapel gable, and it was circular in its appearance; it was quite stationary, and it seemed to retain the same brilliancy all through. The following day I made enquiries in order to learn if there were any lights seen in the place that night; it was only then I heard of the vision or apparition that the people had seen.

Fifth Witness.

Testimony of Patrick Beirne, son of the elder Patrick Beirne, of Knock.

I am sixteen years of age; I live quite near the chapel; I remember well the evening of the 21st of August; it was Thursday, the evening before the Octave day. Dominick Beirne, Jun., a namesake of mine, came to my house, and said that he had seen the biggest sight that ever he witnessed in his life. It was then after eight o'clock. I came by the road on the west side of the church. I saw the figures clearly, fully, and distinctly—the Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph, and that of a bishop, said to be St. John the Evangelist. Young Beirne then told what

he saw regarding the vision, just as it has been described already by several persons who were present. The young fellow showed by his hands and position how the image or apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary and that of St. Joseph and St. John stood.

I remained only ten minutes, and then I went away. All this happened between a quarter or so past eight o'clock and half-past nine.

Sixth Witness.

Testimony of Margaret Beirne, widow of Dominick Beirne, of Knock.

I, Margaret Beirne, *née* Bourke, widow of Dominick Beirne, deceased, live near the chapel at Knock. I remember the evening of the 21st of August. I was called out at about a quarter past eight o'clock by my daughter Margaret to see the vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of the saints who appeared at the end of the little church; it was getting dark; it was raining. I came with others to the wall opposite the gable; I saw then and there distinctly the three images—one of the Blessed Virgin Mary, one of

St. Joseph, and the third, as I learned, that of St. John the Evangelist. I saw an altar, too, and a Lamb on it, somewhat whiter than the altar; I did not see the cross on the altar. The Blessed Virgin Mary appeared in the attitude of prayer, with her eyes turned up towards heaven, a crown on her head, and an outer garment thrown round her shoulders. I saw her feet. St. Joseph appeared turned towards the Blessed Virgin, with head inclined. I remained looking on for fully fifteen or twenty minutes; then I left, and returned to my own house.

*Seventh Witness.**The Testimony of Dominick Beirne.*

I am brother of Mary Beirne, who has given her evidence already; I live near the chapel of Knock; my age is twenty years. On the occasion when my sister came at about eight o'clock on the evening of the 21st of August into our house, she exclaimed: "Come, Dominick, and see the image of the Blessed Virgin, as she has appeared to us down at the chapel." I said, "What image?" And then she told me, as she

has already described it for your reverence in her testimony; she told me all she was after seeing; I then went with her, and by this time some ten or twelve people had been collected around the place, namely, around the ditch or wall fronting the gable where the vision was being seen, and to the south of the schoolhouse; then I beheld the three likenesses or figures that have been already described—the Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph, St. John, as my sister called the bishop, who was like one preaching, with his hands raised towards the shoulder, and the forefinger and middle finger pointedly set; the other two fingers compressed by the thumb; in his left he held a book; he was so turned that he looked half towards the altar and half towards the people; the eyes of the images could be seen; they were like figures, inasmuch as they did not speak. I was filled with wonder at the sight I saw; I was so affected that I shed tears; I continued looking on for fully an hour, and then I went away to visit Mrs. Campbell, who was in a dying state; when we returned the vision had disappeared.

Eighth Witness.

Mrs. Hugh Flatley, widow of Hugh Flatley, states:

I was passing by the chapel of Knock on the evening of the 21st of August, about eight o'clock, and I beheld most clearly and distinctly the figures of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Joseph, and that of St. John the Evangelist standing erect at the gable end of the chapel, towards the south side; I thought that the parish priest had been ornamenting the church, and got some beautiful likenesses removed outside.

Ninth Witness.

The Testimony of Bridget French, aged 75 (threescore and fifteen) years.

The testimony of this witness was given in the Irish language. Her words were translated by Father Corbett into English while she spoke. The following is the version of what she said:

My name is Bridget French; I live near the chapel of Knock. About half-past seven o'clock on the night of the 21st of August I was in the house of Mrs. Campbell, which is quite near to

the chapel; while I was there Mary Beirne came in and said there was a sight to be seen at the chapel such as we never before beheld, and she told us all to come and see it; I asked her what it was, and she said that the Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph, and St. John were to be seen there. I went out immediately and came to the spot indicated. When I arrived there I saw distinctly the three figures. I threw myself on my knees and exclaimed: "A hundred thousand thanks to God and to the glorious Virgin that has given us this manifestation." I went in immediately to kiss, as I thought, the feet of the Blessed Virgin; but I felt nothing in the embrace but the wall, and I wondered why I could not feel with my hands the figures which I had so plainly and so distinctly seen. The three figures appeared motionless, statue-like; they were standing by the gable of the church in the background, and seemed raised about two feet above the ground. The Blessed Virgin was in the centre; she was clothed in white, and covered with what appeared one white garment; her hands were raised to the same position as that in which a priest holds his hands when praying at holy Mass. I remarked

distinctly the lower portions of her feet, and kissed them three times; she had on her head something resembling a crown, and her eyes were turned up heavenwards. I was so taken with the Blessed Virgin that I did not pay much attention to any other; yet I saw also the two other figures —St. Joseph standing to the right of the Blessed Virgin, or to the left as I looked at him, his head bent towards her, and his hands joined; and the other figure, which I took to be St. John the Evangelist, was standing at her left. I heard those around me say that the image was St. John. It was raining very heavily at the time, but no rain fell where the figures were. I felt the ground carefully with my hands, and it was perfectly dry. The wind was blowing from the south, right against the gable of the chapel, but no rain fell on that portion of the gable or chapel in which the figures were. There was no movement or active sign of life about the figures, and I could not say whether they were what living beings would in their place appear to be or not; but they appeared to me so full and so life-like and so life-size that I could not understand why I could not feel them with my hands

such as I beheld them with my eyes. There was an extraordinary brightness about the whole gable of the chapel, and it was observed by several who were passing along the road at the time. I remained there altogether about an hour, and when I came there first I thought I would never leave it. I would not have gone so soon as I did, but that I considered that the figures and that brightness would continue there always, and that on coming back I would again behold them. I continued to repeat the rosary on my beads while there, and I felt great delight and pleasure in looking at the Blessed Virgin. I could think of nothing else while there but giving thanks to God and repeating my prayers.

Tenth Witness.

Testimony of Catherine Murray, a girl of about eight years and six months, grand-daughter of Mrs. Beirne.

I am living at Knock; I was staying at my grandmother's. I followed my aunt and uncle to the chapel; I then saw the likeness of the Blessed Virgin Mary and that of St. Joseph and St. John,

as I learned from those that were around about where I was; I saw them all for fully twenty minutes or thirty minutes.

Eleventh Witness.

Testimony of John Curry, a young boy, about six years old.

The child says he saw the images—beautiful images—the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph. He could state no more than that he saw the fine images and the light, and heard the people talk of them, and went up on the wall to see the nice things and the lights.

Twelfth Witness.

Testimony of Judith Campbell, of Knock.

I live at Knock; I remember the evening and night of the 21st of August last. Mary Beirne called at my house about eight o'clock on that evening, and asked me to come to see the great sight at the chapel; I ran up with her to the place, and I saw outside the chapel, at the gable of the sacristy facing the south, three figures rep-

resenting St. Joseph, St. John, and the Blessed Virgin Mary; also an altar, and the likeness of a Lamb on it, with a cross at the back of the Lamb. I saw a most beautiful crown on the brow or head of the Blessed Virgin. Our Lady was in the centre of the group, a small height above the other two; St. Joseph to her right, and bent towards the Virgin; St. John, as we were led to call the third figure, was to the left of the Virgin, and in his left hand he held a book; his right was raised, with the first and second fingers closed, and the forefinger and the middle finger extended as if he were teaching. The night came on, and it was very wet and dark; there was a very beautiful light shining around the figures or likenesses that we saw. I went within a foot of them; none of us spoke to them; we believed they were St. Joseph and St. John the Evangelist, because some years ago statues of St. Joseph and of the Evangelist were in the chapel at Knock. All the figures were in white, or in a robe of silver-like whiteness; St. John wore a small mitre. Though it was raining, the place in which the figures appeared was quite dry.

*Thirteenth Witness.**Testimony of Margaret Beirne.*

I, Margaret Beirne, live near Knock chapel; I am sister to Mary Beirne, who has seen the vision; I remember the night of the 21st of August; I left my own house at half-past seven o'clock, and went to the chapel and locked it; I came out to return home; I saw something luminous or bright at the south gable, but it never entered my head that it was necessary to see or enquire what it was; I passed by and went home. Shortly after, about eight o'clock, my niece, Catherine Murray, called me out to see the Blessed Virgin and the other saints that were standing at the south gable of the chapel. I went out then, and ran up to see what was to be seen. I there beheld the Blessed Virgin with a bright crown on her head, and St. Joseph to her right, his head inclined a little towards Our Blessed Lady, and St. John the Evangelist to her left, eastward, holding in his left hand a book of the Gospels, and his right hand raised the while, as if in the attitude of preaching to the people who stood before him at the ditch. The Virgin appeared with hands

uplifted as if in prayer, with eyes turned towards heaven, and wearing a lustrous crown. I saw an altar there; it was surrounded with a bright light, nay, with a light at times sparkling, and so, too, were the other figures, which were similarly surrounded.

*Fourteenth Witness.**Testimony of Dominick Beirne (senior).*

I live at Knock; I remember the evening of the 21st of August; my cousin, Dominick Beirne, came to see us at about eight o'clock P.M., and called me to see the vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary and other saints at the south gable of the chapel. I went with him. When I reached the south side of the chapel, we saw the image of the Blessed Virgin Mary, having her hands uplifted and her eyes turned up towards heaven, as if in prayer, and she was dressed in a white cloak. To her right I saw St. Joseph, and on her left St. John, just as the other persons had told me before I came. I saw an altar there, and figures representing saints and angels traced or carved on the lower part of it. The night was

dark and raining, and yet these images, in the dark night, appeared with bright lights as plain as under the noon-day sun. At the time it was pitch-dark and raining heavily, and yet there was not one drop of rain near the images. There was a mitre on St. John's head, nearly like to that which a bishop wears. I was there only for one-quarter of an hour; at the time I was there five other persons were in it with me, looking on at the apparition. All the figures appeared clothed in white; the whiskers on St. Joseph were an iron gray; the Blessed Virgin had on a white cloak. The reason I had for calling the third figure St. John is because some saw his statue or his likeness at Lekanvey parish chapel.

The fifteenth witness is John Durkan, one of the three who accompanied young Hill. His testimony is the same as that given by each of the Beirnes.

NOTE.—The Beirne family spell their name Beirn, or Beirne; correspondents spell the name "Byrne," which is in sound the same.



CHAPTER VI.

APPARITIONS IN OTHER COUNTRIES CONTRASTED WITH THAT AT KNOCK.

By many who do not believe in the supernatural, nay, by many who do not care to think that there is really another and a nobler life hereafter, these pages will be read.

Apparitions, such as those at Knock, those seen at Härtelwood, close to Marpingen, near the town of St. Wendel, in Bavaria, the apparitions so well known of La Salette and of Lourdes, are strong reminders that there is a pure spirit-world, a kingdom "to come," in which Jesus Christ reigns as King, and Mary, his Mother, as Queen.

In all these supernatural manifestations there are features which mark them with a special character. Yet there are other features common

to those revealed glimpses from spirit-land, no matter whether they have been seen in times past or present, beheld in Ireland, or France, or Germany, or Italy, or Judea, or Egypt.

Characteristics of Supernatural Apparitions.

First, an apparition of an angel, or beatified soul, is always seen accompanied by light.

Secondly, the light appears first, and the supernatural being, or voice from amidst the light, next.

Thirdly, the heavenly messenger or spirit disappears first, when the apparition ceases, and then immediately afterwards the light. These are a few of the objective features.

Instances compared with the Apparitions at Knock.

These three characteristics are found to mark the apparitions that have been seen at Knock, at Marpingen, at Lourdes, at La Salette; in every one of the spirit manifestations recorded in the "Lives of the Saints," and they are numerous, or in those we read of in the records of the Catholic Church—as, for instance, in the "Life of St.

Columba, or Columkille," the apostle of Scotland. He, like Abraham, walked continuously with angels, and talked with his spirit-guardians day after day. Whenever he was in his room alone, rays of light, although he had no lamp or source of material flame within, appeared to shine through the chinks of his cell.

The Burning Bush seen by Moses is an instance ; and the Angel Gabriel, whom Daniel beheld in the land of captivity ; the angelic choirs descending from heaven on the morning of the Nativity, and the bright light that shone around the shepherds ; and the light on Thabor at the Transfiguration—these are proofs that the presence of angels and beatified souls is accompanied by light. Light, also, like the aurora before sunrise, is the herald of their coming ; and as at sundown the parting rays of day still illumine the earth yet a little longer, so the departing messenger come from the world of beatified souls leaves for a time a bright line of radiance in his wake. This subject is very interesting, but just at present one can only touch the matter. It is singular, too, that it was on a Thursday that Our Blessed Lady appeared at the Grotto of Massa-

bielle, near Lourdes, to the young peasant girl, Bernadette Soubirous. February 11, 1858, was the day that the Virgin conceived without sin—"Immaculate Conception"—first appeared at Lourdes, and that day was Thursday. It is not much, but the coincidence is remarkable that it was on a Thursday she appeared at Knock, 21st of August, 1879.

The Apparition in Bavaria.

The same day, July 3, 1876, that the image of the Immaculate Conception was crowned at Lourdes, at Marpingen, in Bavaria, the Blessed Virgin—"conceived without spot"—was pleased to manifest her presence to the three young Catholic girls—Margaret Kunz, Susan Leist, and Catherine Hubertus.

Not to the Priest?

It is worthy of notice that not to the priest at Lourdes, or at Marpingen, or at La Salette, or at Knock has the Blessed Virgin been pleased to manifest her presence. People in this country have been expressing their surprise that, if the apparition is true, "why did not the priest see

it?" It has happened that Our Blessed Lady on each occasion has been pleased to appear to the simple people alone. On July 5, 1876, the three young girls at Härtelwood asked the Blessed Virgin, who appeared to them that evening: "How long will you remain with us?" "Till ten o'clock." She remained at Knock on the 21st of August till ten o'clock. Again they asked: "Shall our parish priest come?" "No." "Shall the priest of Hensweiler come?" "No." "Why are we alone able to see you?" "Because you are innocent children."

On July 11 the Blessed Virgin appeared again, and told the children that the sick were to take water from the upper well of the two wells in Härtelwood.

Some of the adult witnesses gave the following description of the apparition with which they were favored at Marpingen: "The figure was that of a majestic woman clothed in blue; it floated from the wood, and posed in an upright posture on the bush where the children had before seen her."



CHAPTER VII.

MANIFESTATIONS ON THE 6TH OF JANUARY AND 9TH OF FEBRUARY.

LIGHTS of a supernatural kind were beheld on the night of the 5th, or rather on the morning of the 6th, the Feast of the Epiphany, January 6, 1880. They were seen by several, and especially by the police, who live convenient to the little church. Those guardians of the peace went out at twelve o'clock at night on patrol through the country to see that all was quiet, and came as far as Knock church, where they heard the hum of prayer arising from those who, at that midnight hour, had been assembled there in the hope of seeing the apparition. The testimony of these sensible men, who took every precaution not to be deceived, who looked around the church and school, and hill and vale, mound and mearing, and saw no light or reflection of

light anywhere, but these extraordinary stars and globes of flame on the church gable before them, ought not readily to be discredited. The names of these servants of the Government are Collins and Fraher, one a native of Galway, the other of Tipperary.

Another remarkable apparition appeared on the morning of the 10th of February. It was seen by several, especially by three young men from Claremorris, namely, John P. MacCloskey, Simon Conway, and Thomas MacGeoghegan, and by Martin Hession, of Tuam, an intelligent assistant at Mrs. Murphy's establishment.

Young MacCloskey and the other two gave their spoken evidence in the presence of Joseph Bennett, Esq., special correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, London. The annexed is the written testimony of John P. MacCloskey, penned by himself, to which he signed his name. Young MacCloskey has been remarkable from his childhood for his guileless, honest, and pious course of life. He is now about eighteen years. His testimony is confirmed by the separate attestation of the other two, MacGeoghegan and Conway:

I, John P. MacCloskey, a native of Claremorris,

remember the night of the 9th of February and the morning of the 10th. Simon Conway, Mac-Geoghegan, and I left Claremorris at 100 o'clock P.M. We arrived at Knock some time after midnight ; our desire was to behold the apparition. After we had arrived we continued to pray for some time. At about three and a half o'clock on the morning of the 10th of February, while I was praying before the gable of the Knock chapel, I saw a light, like a white, silvery cloud, move in a slanting direction over from where the cross stands on the apex, and overspread the gable. In this bright cloud I saw distinctly the figure and form of the Blessed Virgin Mary, so clearly and fully that I perceived the fleshy color of the feet. Her dress resembled that made of white satin, and it contained numerous folds. The light had hardly settled on the gable when it began to grow less bright, and to seem to fade or darken in color, leaving a wreath of its own brightness still around the head of the Blessed Virgin, while the rest of the gable became the color of white paper stained with pencil-strokes. Every now and then a red tongue of flame used to shoot down from the heavens and cross the gable. During the mo-

mentary brightness resulting from these flashes the figure of the Blessed Virgin was each time fully seen. In the absence of such flashes she was seen too, but not so distinctly, only in subdued tones of color. What attracted my attention to the gable at first was small stars of an emerald clear greenish color, that appeared to go in and out through the gable and at different parts of it. A star continued at intervals to twinkle right over the region of the Blessed Virgin's heart, and a little group of four or five stars were seen on the left side of the head. At no time did I see the countenance of Our Blessed Lady so clearly and distinctly as to be able to describe accurately the feature or the expression of the face. It was usually shrouded in light, and only at certain moments did I get a glimpse of full features.

The same evidence is given by Simon Conway, Thomas MacGeoghegan, Claremorris, and by several others.

Another Witness, Mr. Martin Hession, Tuam.

I arrived about six o'clock P.M. on Monday, the 9th of February, at Knock chapel. There was a large number of persons present. The evening

was very wet and cold. I remained in the chapel for a considerable time. At eight o'clock on that evening at the south gable of the chapel I saw beautiful lights of many colors. They were at times exceedingly bright. Stars appeared both inside and outside the chapel. The lights continued coming and going until about half-past six o'clock next morning. At a quarter past twelve that night I saw a silvery cloud all over the gable of the chapel. After about five minutes it cleared off, and then immediately appeared three dark arches, and in the central one was the figure of a lady which I took to be the Blessed Virgin. The figure was very beautiful. A mantle covered the figure all over; the mantle was white like satin, not a brilliant white. I saw two other figures, one on each side of the Blessed Virgin, but they were not quite distinct. A star of three different colors appeared under one of the figures; it was green, red, and white. The gable was, in fact, covered with stars. These appearances continued until about half-past six in the morning. I remained up all night looking at the figures and lights. I went in three times to the chapel to tell the people there to come out and see the

lights. At about five o'clock in the morning three circles of stars appeared, as I thought, a half a mile over the top of the chapel. The circles of stars swayed to and fro in the air. There appeared at the same time over the cross on the gable of the chapel a row of stars, which moved to the east of the gable and reached one of the figures, which was said to be St. John. At about half-past six in the morning a shower of hail and rain came, and all who had been outside with myself went into the chapel, and at seven o'clock, when I went out again, there was nothing to be seen of the beautiful lights.

I visited Knock again on the following Thursday, 12th of February. It was dark when I reached there, and at about a quarter past eight o'clock went out from the chapel and looked at the gable. I was there but about ten minutes when I saw three figures of the shape of, but much larger than, those which I had seen on Monday night. The central figure was considered to be that of the Blessed Virgin. It was very brilliant. The other figures were not quite visible. After about five minutes they all disappeared. I went to the Archdeacon, met him on the road, and

spoke to him about what I had just seen, and what I had seen on Monday night. Whilst speaking to him there appeared a beautiful star, which illuminated the whole place. The Archdeacon saw it, and he took off his hat, and asked me and a few others if we saw the light.

A Mayo Lourdes.

From the London "Daily Telegraph."

Some time ago a rumor began to prevail in Ireland that supernatural manifestations took place at or near the Catholic chapel of Knock, in the county Mayo. It was stated that an apparition of the Virgin Mary, attended by celestial personages, supposed to represent St. Joseph and St. John, had appeared to several persons on a certain night in August; subsequently to others on New-Year's Eve; and a third time, to yet others, on the eve of Epiphany and on the 9th of February. But this was not all. A further rumor stated that miracles of healing were frequently wrought upon sick persons who made pilgrimages and performed devotions at the favored shrine, that miraculous virtues were pos-

sessed by the very plaster from the walls of the church, and that the faithful were crowding in ever-increasing numbers to the place thus suddenly dragged from obscurity into fame. So matters stood when, in the discharge of a mission connected with the Irish distress, I found myself at Claremorris, a little town about six miles from the much-talked-of village. It became my duty there to seek an interview with the parish priest, the Very Rev. Ulick J. Bourke, Canon of Tuam, and late president of St. Jarlath's College, a gentleman well known to philologists as the author of a learned work on the Aryan origin of the Gaelic race. Canon Bourke, having acted on a commission appointed by the Archbishop of Tuam to take the evidence of those who asserted that they had seen the apparitions, was well able to put me in the way of ascertaining particulars for myself, and, within an hour of my introduction to him, I was face to face with one of the persons who deposed to the August vision.

One of the Witnesses.

This was a boy of about fourteen years of age,

named Patrick Hill—a bright, intelligent little fellow, who told his tale clearly and simply. I shall put Hill's statement in the first person, without pledging myself, however, to literal exactness, and premising that the narrative was not continuous, but frequently interrupted by questions needless to repeat here: "I sometimes go out to the bog for turf, and did so on the day of the August apparition, taking my little brother with me. When night came on I went into the house of a relative, not far from Knock chapel. It was raining hard and very dark. While there some one [naming him] ran in and said: 'Oh, come up to the chapel and see the Blessed Virgin against the wall!' We all ran up, and saw the end of the chapel covered with light. At first we stood against the wall of the yard, but presently we got over and went up close to the gable. Then we saw the Blessed Virgin standing like a statue, so [lifting his hands and eyes]; on her right was St. Joseph, bending towards her, and on her left St. John, dressed like a bishop, his left hand holding a book, his right raised, with two fingers pointing upwards. Above, and to the left of St. John, was an altar with a Lamb on

it, round which moved what seemed to be the wings of angels, whose heads and bodies I could not see. We stood and looked at the figures a long time, and my little brother cried out that he wanted to take them home. They did not move, but lights kept playing about the wall. Presently there were ten or eleven of us looking, and we all knelt down and said 'Our Father' and 'Hail Mary'; then, as the rain kept on, and we were very wet, we went away. I did not look behind me when standing in front of the figures, and cannot say whether any light was to be seen except on the wall." Having told this story in the manner already described, Hill departed, and presently a lad was brought in who witnessed the appearance in his company. The new-comer's statement did not agree in every detail with that of his predecessor, but substantially both were in accord. He, for example, saw no "angels' wings" fluttering round the Lamb, but only lights twinkling like stars. It was also stated that, though the rain beat against the chapel, the wall on which the light shone remained dry. To the question: "Did the figures look as though they were part of a picture?" this witness replied:

"No; they stood out from the wall like statues, and we seemed to see round them." To the further question: "Was the light on the gable a circle?" he answered: "No; it covered the wall."

Journeying to Knock.

On the morning after my interview with these early witnesses of the alleged marvel, I accepted Canon Bourke's invitation to drive over to Knock and see the place for myself. The five miles of road leading thither were not lonely. It was market-day in Claremorris, and the small farmers who abound in that part of Mayo were hastening townward with a multitude of asses bearing oats or potatoes or hay for sale at the advanced rates now "ruling." But all the travellers we met or passed were not on marketing thoughts intent. Some had an "up-all-night" appearance, and, indeed, had been keeping vigil in the chapel to which we were hastening; while others, going the same way as ourselves, moved haltingly on foot, or swiftly on cars, in search of miraculous deliverance from the ills they suffered. The country thereabouts is uninteresting. It

stretches west and east, in long undulations, without variety or charm. On reaching the summit of one of the gentle rises, a tall, square tower appeared above the next eminence, and signalized our approach to Knock. The modest cottage of the parish priest, Archdeacon Cavanagh, lies in the intervening hollow; but before reaching it the traveller passes a thatched and whitewashed dwelling-house bearing the distinguishing mark of a police-barrack. One of the stalwart members of the "Royal Irish" chanced to be standing in the road as we drove up, and him Canon Bourke introduced as a witness worth hearing.

The Policeman's Story.

The policeman cheerfully came round to my side of the car and told his story, in effect as follows: "On a certain night (5th January, or morning of 6th—Epiphany), about twelve o'clock, I and a comrade set out on patrol, our road taking us past the chapel. When opposite the building we saw people and heard the sound of praying, so we went in to look around and ascertain that all was right. Down to that time, though others professed to have witnessed the

apparitions, we had not. On going round to the east gable some one cried, 'There's the light,' and then both I and my comrade saw the end of the church covered with a rosy sort of brightness, through which what seemed to be stars appeared. I saw no figures, nor did my comrade ; but some women, who were praying there, declared that they beheld the Blessed Virgin, and one went nearly frantic in consequence. We stood and watched the light for some time before starting again on our rounds." "How do you explain the light?" "I can't explain it." "Did you look around to see where it came from?" "I did ; but everything was dark. There was no light anywhere, except on the gable." Thus the policeman, who offered to produce his comrade in corroboration.

The Parish Priest.

Leaving him, we drove to the cottage of the parish priest, and found him in his garden, whither he had gone, perhaps, for relaxation after getting through the multitude of letters that reach him by every post. Archdeacon Cavanagh is reputed along all the country-side

as a man of simple piety, gentle manners, and a modest and retiring disposition. This character is justified by his appearance; he at once makes a favorable impression, and is about the last man in the world whom a stranger would look upon and suspect of anything but straightforward, honest conduct. The very reverend gentleman gave his visitors a cordial welcome, and soon, in the little parlor of the cottage, I heard all that he could tell about the visions and miracles, in which he believes with unquestioning and reverent faith. As to the visions, the Archdeacon said in effect: "On the night of the first apparition my housekeeper asked leave to visit a friend, and remained out unusually late. While wondering what had become of her, she made her appearance in a very excited state, exclaiming: 'O your reverence, the wonderful and beautiful sight! The Blessed Virgin has appeared up at the chapel, with St. Joseph and St. John, and we have stood looking at them this long time. O the wonderful sight!' Inferring that the vision had disappeared, and omitting to question my housekeeper on that point, I did not go up, and I have regretted ever since that I omitted to

do so. On another occasion a messenger was sent down to fetch me; I was in bed after a fatiguing day, and, having a prospect of hard work on the morrow, did not rise." (This manifestly appears as a triumph of the flesh over the spirit.) "I shall ever feel sorry that a sight of the apparitions has been denied me, but God may will that the testimony to his Blessed Mother's presence should come from the simple faithful and not through the priests. Though I have not witnessed the divine manifestation, I have seen the light, and once, when standing at some distance from the chapel, in company with others, a most brilliant star flashed along the gable, leaving a train of radiance."

Miraculous Cures.

Questioned as to miracles, the Archdeacon said: "I will show you a long list of cures effected by the divine interposition, and can tell you of one in which I was an agent. Some little while ago I received a 'sick-call' late at night to a man who was said to be vomiting blood and in extreme danger. Hastening to the house, attended by a boy with a lantern, I met the father

of the patient coming to hurry me, in distress lest I should be too late. On reaching the cottage I found the young man covered, so to speak, with blood, and apparently very near death, but conscious. After ministering to him I called for a glass of water, sprinkled on it a few particles of the mortar from the gable wall of the chapel, and bade him drink. He did so; at once he began to recover, and is now well. I can speak of other cases, but especially of a man who came from Cork afflicted with a polypus, which extended into his windpipe, and so, said the surgeons, required a dangerous operation. He was here performing his devotions for several days, and then, to his astonishment and joy, expelled the abnormal growth—I saw it—and he returned cured." The Archdeacon next showed me his list of "miracles," from which I quote a few special cases: Bridget Nearney, of Strokestown, blind for seventeen years, can see; Maria Conolly, a cripple for thirteen years, is now able to walk; John O'Brien, who was born blind, has the use of his eyes; Belinda Mash, of Ballina, dumb for six years, has recovered the power of speech; Patrick Boyle, of Glasgow, came to Knock afflicted

with heart disease, and returned cured; Michael Marin, of Lisakullen, subject to epileptic fits, visited the shrine, and is now free from their attacks; the daughter of R. Walsh, of Clifden, regained sight after bathing her eyes in water containing a piece of plaster from the chapel wall; John Roache, of Roosky, Roscommon, stone-blind for seventeen years, went away able to see; John O'Connor, of Ardagh, came to Knock with a bent leg, supported by an iron crutch, and returned home, leaving the crutch as a memorial of cure; Owen Halpen, of Meg, Drogheda, troubled with deafness, placed a bit of the mortar in his ears, and had the sense fully restored to him. I might continue these extracts from the Archdeacon's records, but space would fail for a complete setting forth of the alleged cases of miraculous hearing.

Magic-Lantern Light not possible in the Situation.

Leaving the priest's cottage to view the chapel, and meeting at the door a man whose sight, long lost, was said to be returning, the two priests and myself went up the road towards the chapel, having the famous gable before us the whole way.

I saw that, for full half its height, it had been boarded over—a measure necessary, the Archdeacon told me, to protect the wall, since the people, after having removed the covering of plaster, began to pick the mortar from between the stones, as, indeed, they are now doing round the corners, where nothing prevents. My first business was, of course, to take, as Jack Bunsby would say, “the bearings” of the place. The chapel is a plain cruciform building, having a tall, square tower at its west end, and at the opposite extremity a sacristy. It is on the gable of the sacristy, at the far east of the building, that the figures are said to have appeared. The chapel stands in a rather extensive yard, which is bounded, opposite the gable, and distant from it some twenty-five paces, by a dilapidated wall about four feet high. Beyond this is a large field and the open country. Within the yard, a little to the north of a line drawn from the north angle of the gable to the low wall, stands a school-house, its gable directly facing towards the east. Obviously, therefore, if the appearances alleged to have been seen on the chapel wall were due to a magic lantern, the operator, supposing he

could have focussed his picture at such a distance, must have taken post behind the low wall ; or, if stationed in the school, must have thrown the image on the "screen" at a very considerable angle. The wall theory may be dismissed, because over its tumbled stones the first witnesses passed to get a nearer view, and the glare of the lantern would at once have been detected by the observant policemen. There remains the notion of a manipulator stationed in the school-house. I gave my best attention to the windowless gable of that building, and could find no sign of hole or crack from chimney to foundation. Going inside among the children, to look at the wall from that point of view, the plaster appeared untouched, and the roof too much open to admit of a man working between its apex and what there was of ceiling. In the result, and despite a wish to explain the wonder naturally, I was obliged to conclude that the reported apparitions, however caused, could not have been, and, therefore, were not, due to a magic lantern. With any theory not determinable by a reference to considerations absolutely positive, such as those just touched upon, I have nothing now to do.

Scenes at the Church.

Mondays and Thursdays are the times when Knock is overwhelmed with pilgrims, many thousands being frequently present at once; but on no day of the week is the place deserted, and it assuredly afforded an extraordinary spectacle last Wednesday. About ten paces from the gable stands a small, roughly-constructed pen, wherein pilgrims who no longer require the aid of sticks and crutches deposit them before leaving. Scores of these discarded props to tottering feet were lying there; and a few others, besides two very battered umbrellas, were suspended from the boards that protect the sacred wall. It is needless to say that the wall itself, boarded though it be, excites the utmost reverence. I saw a score of people kneeling before it, repeating prayers, some of them knowing the spot on which they believe the Virgin appeared; while others had brought sick children, upon whom they lavished attention in the intervals of devotion. Others, again, wandered round and round the chapel, telling their beads as they went—an act of faith, so I was assured, altogether

self-imposed. Yet others, mostly afflicted with diseases, stood about in the road or enclosure, waiting, like some at the Pool of Bethesda long ago, "for the moving of the waters." Night and day they wait, filling the chapel during the dark hours, and praying there so as that the sound of their voices can be heard far down the road. At least two hundred persons were in the sacred edifice when I entered. The interior is poor of aspect. Beyond the unpretending altar, and two or three small windows filled with stained glass, there are no attempts at decorations, and very ineffective ones at convenience, since all the benches in the place would not seat more than thirty people. The floor is roughly flagged, and full of holes made by devotees who, in their eagerness to possess some blessed substance, have dug beneath the level of the stones. But, holes or no holes, the pilgrims covered almost the entire area, from the altar rails to the western door and from side to side of the transept, their muttered petitions making a continuous and solemn hum. Many sick have been brought there, and some professed to have gained much benefit. A poor paralytic, seated in a wheeled chair, re-

joiced at a feeling of warmth in his lower limbs; a woman who had crawled for years on her hands and knees was found sitting upright, and delightedly showing how she could use her feet a very little. Such sights were visible more or less on every hand, and as the Archdeacon went about among the people one and another would go to him and tell of the benefits received by themselves or their friends, and get for answer: "Thank God and his Blessed Mother!"

My story is told, and I have nothing more to say. The conclusion to be drawn from it one way or another is the business of the reader.





CHAPTER VIII.

MIRACLES.

IN a *brochure* the size of the present issue no explanation of miracles can be expected; yet it is well to state for the general reader that the definition of miracles, as understood by Catholics, requires that it be an extraordinary work or operation opposed to the normal laws of nature, and performed either directly or indirectly by God. The work must be unusual, for, if usual, although the effect of great power, it is not considered a miracle. The movements of the planets and of the earth, with their amazing velocities, are not miracles, although they are a prodigious work. But to carry a man in the air from this to New York in a minute would be a miracle. The work must be opposed to the laws of nature, either contrary to them or above their influence. It is natural for fire to burn, for a body heavier

than water to sink in it. If a body be not burned in the fire, like the three companions of Daniel in the fiery furnace; and our blessed Lord walking on the waters of the sea of Gennesareth—that is a miracle; and it must be done by God's power either directly, as the miracles performed by Christ; or indirectly, as those performed by Moses and the prophets in the name of God, and by the apostles and their successors in the name of Jesus. This definition excludes all works done by the agency of the devil or his agents, all necromancers, sorcerers, enchanters who invoke his name. It is not necessary here to tell what the laws of nature are; it is quite enough to know that it is a law in fire to burn; in water to quench fire and to wet the surface on which it is placed, unless some other natural cause is in the way to prevent the effect; in a heavy, sluggish body not to move quickly; in a sickly body not to assume strength suddenly, and by means not proportionate to the effect. Any effect contrary to these, or superseding these laws, is said, as far as relates to man, to be supernatural. An effect of this kind would not for a spirit be supernatural, because it is just

suited to his nature; but, in regard to man, effects like these are supernatural. From all that has been said it is plain that a cure brought about by a strong imagination is not a miracle, for it is only a natural effect; neither is a cure arising from a sudden start or excitement—as, for instance, if a dumb person, from fright or from a sudden impulse, spoke—that is not a miracle, because it is the natural result of great physical excitement. If, too, owing to some cause, either the hearing, or the eyesight, or the voice was partially lost by any nervous derangement, as often happens, if that derangement be set right, and that the hearing is restored, the eye has obtained its usual power of seeing, and the tongue its speech from a strengthened glottis, that is not a miracle. If the effect has been produced by a natural cause, adequate in the circumstances to achieve the result, or if it is a work from the demon, it cannot be pronounced a miracle. But if it is from God or his agents, and done in the name of God, and for a good purpose, even by a natural cause, but a natural cause inadequate of itself to the end, then it is a miracle; as, for instance, the case of the blind man who

was desired by the Redeemer to go to the pool of Siloe and to wash; and he went, he washed, and he saw; or the miraculous effects of St. Peter's shadow or St. Paul's handkerchief.

Of course many people do not believe in spirit or angel, or in God's power, or in the power abiding in his Church; to them miracles are shams, or they are put by them in the category of spirit-rapping and of jugglery. But Christians know that there is a spirit-world, happy souls and angels, that there is a God who guides and directs everything, who seeks the love and devotion as well as the happiness of his intelligent creatures—all mankind. We are the principal object of the care and loving attention of God, and for our sakes, and to excite our faith and love, he performs miracles. His children regard them—miracles—as the seal and language of God speaking to the heart of man. Is there a miracle there? Then, if so, it is God's voice, at least to those who believe in him; it is a light from heaven, and the pure-eyed soul sees that light and believes it as the expression of God to him. But all do not believe in miracles with equal readiness. Christ performed them, and the Pharisees attri-

buted their performance to the power of the prince of devils. Moses performed them, and Pharao resisted him the more determinedly. It is so to-day. It does not follow that if some people believe not in miracles they have not really been performed.

The question now is, Has any real miracle been performed at Knock?

We answer that in our opinion there have been many. A great many cures will, or perhaps can, be traced to nervous excitement and to the desire for improvement; but making all due allowances for physical agencies and natural causes, still over one-third of those recorded will, it is likely, be considered, in the opinion of honest men, miraculous.

The diary which is kept by Archdeacon Cavanagh contains a record of nigh three hundred; ten select miracles out of this number would plainly prove the miraculous character of the apparitions witnessed on the several occasions recorded in the pages of the Very Rev. Archdeacon Cavanagh's diary.

Cases of Cure, from Archdeacon Cavanagh's Diary.

1. On Thursday, 11th March, the writer saw at

Knock a young man named Anthony Cavanagh, from 15 Brabazon Street, Dublin—who declared, in the presence of clergymen and gentlemen of the highest position and literary standing, that for eleven years he could not stir one foot without the aid of crutches—walk as well as any one can walk, except that the right leg was still short, although it had regained its natural strength.

2. Pat Scott, of Ballymoe, has made the following declaration: “I, Pat Scott, parish of Ballintubber, county Roscommon, do hereby solemnly declare that it is at Knock I received power in my leg, which was not of the least use to me for upwards of eight and a half years, being entirely powerless. I could not move or walk without a crutch. I can now walk firmly on it, but it is still short.—Ballintubber, 31st January, 1880.” The following is an extract from a letter lately written by Pat Scott to the Ven. Archdeacon Cavanagh:

“DEAR FATHER CAVANAGH:

“It is with great pleasure I write an answer to yours, which I received a few days ago, but must make an apology for delaying so long referring to the particulars you require to know from me.

The facts are simply these: Nine years ago I was attacked with a pain in my groin, and for five months no one could tell whether I would live or die. The summer after I was enabled to move very slowly by means of a crutch, which I continually carried for the last successive eight years to the day in question. During that time my leg, down from my hip, was quite powerless, but had feeling. I could not go to my bedside without the aid of the crutch. I never walked on the heel, but simply tipping the ground with the top of my toe, in consequence of a contraction of the sinews.

“Mrs. — induced my mother to send me to Knock, that holy place, and on entering the chapel the second time on the same day I discovered the leg gaining strength. I was so much rejoiced that I determined to leave the crutch after me, as I did, and for the first time out of nine years made the effort of walking, independent of the crutch, with both heel and toe, to the astonishment of all the neighbors here, who looked upon me as a very great miracle and curiosity. I forgot to say I carried a stick, and still do. I find I am every day improving, but I do not feel so

well satisfied till I pay one or two visits more to Knock. There is no doubt but I derived this great blessing from our Immaculate and Heavenly Queen.

“I am, reverend sir,

“Very respectfully yours,

“PAT SCOTT.”

3. Delia Gordon, daughter of Mr. P. J. Gordon, of Claremorris, was deaf and had great pain in the left ear. This cure was instantaneous.

4. John Kilgallen, formerly of Coogue, had acute pain, the result of a broken arm; instantly relieved.

5. The mother-in-law of the last named had violent pains, the effect of a fall; relieved by applying the cement of Knock.

6. A cripple, name unknown. He rode on an ass to the church, and was able to walk away without assistance.

7. Ellen O'Donnell, of the county Longford, cured of nearsightedness.

8. Mary Forestal, Cahir, twelve years old, was unable to use one of her feet; cured at Knock, and returned home quite well.

9. On the same day the writer, and the witnesses with him, saw at Knock chapel a woman, aged about twenty-eight, who had been deaf since she was six years old, receive the power of hearing. The writer spoke to her, and she heard as well as any one gifted with the faculty of hearing.

10. A woman, name unknown, living at Carramore, near Knock. She had been afflicted with a sore on the hand for some time without relief. The pain ceased instantly.

11. Maria Tully, daughter of Michael Tully, of Churchfield, was afflicted with sore eyes for over a year; bathed her eyes in water containing a portion of the cement; cured.

12. A daughter of Mr. Mark O'Brien, of Cloonahulty, was afflicted with very violent pains in her head, so that her life was feared to be in danger; she was completely cured by drinking some water in which was put a piece of the cement of Knock.

13. Patrick Fogarty, parish of Crusheen; weakness of the left foot; considerably improved.

14. Sarah Pierse, Meath Street, Dublin, suffered from paralysis for fourteen years, being propped up by chairs and unable to help herself;

she had constant excruciating pains, which have left her, and she is steadily improving.

15. Patrick Nixon, of the parish of Cappa; swelled knee, caused by a heavy fall some time ago, which caused him great pain; he experienced much relief at Knock, and left one of his sticks there.

16. Miss Glynn, Kilkerrin, housekeeper to Rev. John McGreal, C.C., Lavallyroe, Ballyhaunis; pains and general debility.

17. Mrs. Doble, Claremorris.

18. Michael Moran, Tullarahen, was cured of deafness by one visit.

19. Martin Rorke was afflicted with a sore foot, which he could not touch to the ground for several years.

20. Daniel McCarty, Ryden, near Oldham, England; paralysis of the leg; much improved.

21. Mary Grady; partial blindness.

22. Denis Connor, St. John's parish, Limerick; paralysis of the left hand, and lameness caused by a dislocated ankle; he left his crutch at Knock.

23. Sarah Morrisroe, of Woods, parish of Ballaghy; paralysis. Mr. Ignatius O'Donel, of Swinford, bears testimony to her case in the following

terms: "I saw her myself on or about the 22d December, when she had not the use of her limbs, and on seeing her yesterday, after she had walked seven miles, she did not seem to be a bit tired.—Ignatius O'Donel, Swinford, February 5, 1880."

24. Frank Conway, Eden; arm powerless.
25. Thady Connor, a herd, of the parish of Killbridge, was afflicted with lameness; he experienced much relief since his visit to Knock.
26. Joseph Toole, of Innisturk, received a compound fracture of the right foot, which weakened it so that he could hardly walk; he is now completely recovered.
27. John Carney, of Eden, was cured of a very sore foot by applying the cement to the part affected.
28. Michael Ansborough, Carramore, cured of blindness.
29. John McKenna, Monaghan; partial blindness.
30. Mrs. Noon, Glasgow; partial blindness.
31. Peter Murphy, Newtown, near Claremorris; cured of lameness.
32. Brigid Duffy, Tounane, parish of Kilmovee, cured of an evil of long standing.

33. John McKenna was blind for ten years; completely recovered.

34. James Connor, parish of Strokestown; dislocation of the hip, caused by an accident twelve years ago; much improved.

35. John Finneran, Kilmovée; pains and stiffness in the joints. Was a patient for three months in the infirmary of the Swinford Workhouse, without any improvement; he visited Knock at the rate of a quarter of a mile a day; completely cured.

36. William Carty had a very sore finger, which pained him intensely. By touching the wall with the finger the pain ceased entirely.

37. Honora Cussane, parish of Kiltullagh, cured of blindness; doctors could not benefit her.

38. Mrs. Fitzgerald, Swinford; general debility.

39. Jeremiah Sullivan, parish of Rathharry, Clonakilty, county Cork; polypus, or flesh growth in the windpipe. He came to Knock with his father on Sunday, the 1st of February, and got rid of his disease on the 4th. The following is his statement to Archdeacon Cavanagh: "I have been suffering from a hoarseness for the last eighteen months. I consulted four of the

neighboring doctors, one after the other, and to no avail, as none of them were able to ascertain the nature of the disease. Finding myself daily getting worse, I came to the city of Cork, and consulted the most eminent doctor there. On the third day he found my ailment proceeded from a flesh growth or polypus in the windpipe. The conclusion the doctor came to was that there should be an operation, either externally or internally, either of which would be very dangerous. Hearing of the apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Knock, I decided on visiting the place. I arrived on Sunday morning, February 1. Thanks be to God and to the Blessed Virgin Mary, I coughed off the polypus on the morning of the 4th of February, after my third day's visit here."

40. George Fullane, of the parish of Cappa; sore knee; he left his stick at Knock.

41. James Moran, of Kincuin, had a chronic pain in the side which afflicted him for several years; entirely cured.

42. Thomas Moran, of Castles, parish of Kiltulagh, county Roscommon, cured of palsy of the head.

43. Bridget Mary McNerny, Cloonfree, county

Roscommon ; blindness of right eye for many years.

44. Mary Anne Nolan, Cole Street, Dublin ; paralysis of many years' standing ; has dispensed with the use of crutch or stick, and is much improved.

45. Pat Boyle, of Garlagh, parish of Crossboyne ; epilepsy.

46. A herdsman named Shallagh, in the employ of Lord Oranmore.

47. Ellen Halligan, of Kilkelly, cured of an evil.

48. Thomas Cummins, of Strokestown ; sores on one of his hands and feet, and weakness of one arm ; the sores have been cured, and the arm much strengthened and grown fuller.

49. Mrs. Flatly, of Cloonlea, had a great pain in her arm and shoulder ; after three visits to the church a perfect cure was effected.

50. Anne O'Donnell, parish of Carracastle, suffered excruciating agony from a disease of the eyes ; perfectly cured.

51. Margaret O'Neill, Dublin ; hip disease.

52. Belinda Marsh, Ballina, was dumb for six years past ; she is now restored to her speech.

53. Mary Devine, Ballyhaunis, a girl of eleven; lameness and an evil.

54. John Farrell, Castlerea; constant pain and stiffness in the knee.

55. Honora Horan, of the parish of Kilmovée, county Mayo. She had been for some time previous unable to speak or swallow food.

56. Pat Prendergast, Clarefield, parish of Knock, cured of an evil.

57. Patrick Bourke, of Loughrea, county Galway, afflicted with paralysis for five years. He left his crutch at Knock.

58. Thomas Conlon, of Shanvaghera, had hemorrhage, and was given up for death. After swallowing some water containing cement from Knock he was instantly cured.

59. Michael McNichols, of Coogue, parish of Knock, cured of blindness.

60. Mrs. Connolly, parish of Castlerea; complete paralysis of many years' standing; much improved.

61. Maggie Morley, Lisnaskea, cured of an evil.

62. Miss Mannion, of the parish of Roscommon; sight improved by a visit to the church.

63. William Conway, King's County ; pain in the heart and stomach, from which he had been suffering for years.
64. Mrs. (Martin) Busty, Knock, cured of sore eyes of long standing.
65. Pat Boyle, Island, was unable to walk without a stick and a crutch ; was cured on his first visit to Knock, and left his crutch behind him.
66. Michael Corcoran, Meath, was afflicted with a cancer, which is entirely cured.
67. Michael Rogan, of Brackloon, Bekan ; partial blindness ; perfectly cured by one visit.
68. Michael Shaughnessy, parish of Kiltullagh, cured of general debility.
69. Thady Kelly, of Banoconlan ; paralysis.
70. John McMahon, Glasgow, was afflicted with lameness and several evils in his leg, which he had been unable to use for several years ; much improved ; left his crutch behind him.
71. Michael Langan, a man in the employment of Mr. Little ; chronic pain in the foot.
72. Daniel Ren, Queen's County ; sore in the leg ; had suffered from it for fourteen years.
73. Mary McLaughlin, of Knock, had been suffering from pain and stiffness of the knee for a very

long time, and also had a constant pain in the right side. She drank some of the water taken from the ground at the church gable, and was cured of the pains, and has not been troubled since.

74. Michael MacHale, of Killala; nearly blind; power of seeing much better.

75. Marie Shields, Loughrea; defective sight.

76. A boy named Kelly, from Ballyhaunis, was afflicted with lameness of the right foot; could not walk without a crutch; cured at Knock.

77. Lucy Hegarty, of Meath; pain in the left side, and stiffness of the little finger of the left hand, which was doubled in against the palm; completely cured.

78. Anne Lavin, Castlerogan, parish of Swinford; running evil; doctors could do no good; cured at Knock.

79. Bridget Concannon, of the parish of Glan-right; paralysis; cured by one visit to Knock.

80. Bridget Matilda Dillon; affection of the heart; completely cured at Knock.

81. Patrick Boyle, Glasgow; heart disease; much improved.

82. Pat Ryder, of Craughwell; epilepsy.

83. John Shanahan, parish of Adare, county Limerick ; swelling in the right knee.

84. A girl from Claremorris. Her hand had been broken so badly as to become useless. Now she can use it with ease.

85. Ellen Morris, Tarnan, in the parish of Castlerea, could not walk for over two years ; completely cured at Knock on the 15th of January.

86. Patrick Donnelly, of 55 Piccadilly Street, Anderston, Glasgow ; running evil in the leg.

87. Maria Crean ; evil ; cured.

88. Patrick Fallon, Mourneen, Curraleigh, for years had to use a crutch, which he left at Knock.

89. James Carney, Poulbeg, Coogue, had been suffering for years from a very sore foot.

90. John Fox had been five years suffering from a very sore leg ; cured.

91. John Fogarty, of Crusheen ; weakness of the left foot.

92. Mrs. Curry, Knock, cured of a sore knee.

93. Mrs. Grealy, Ballindreagad, was afflicted with a running evil ; cured at Knock.

94. Thomas Harvey, of Moville ; an evil in the neck.

95. Mary Healy, Backs ; scrofula.

96. Mary Connor, Cloonlea; very sore and enlarged knee; cured.
97. Patrick Browne, Brownstown, aged fifteen years, cured of lameness; left his crutch at Knock.
98. John Cawley, five years old, cured of lameness; left his stick at Knock.
99. Edward Scully, Meath Street, Dublin; partial blindness and weakness. He has recovered both his sight and the use of his limbs.
100. Michael Brennan, Ballyhaunis; palsy of the head.
101. Mrs. Curry's niece. She had been nearly blind—could not recognize anybody. She visited the church at Knock, and after praying there some time her sight was so much improved that she can see perfectly well.
102. Mr. Conway, brother of Mrs. Curry, cured of blindness after bathing his eyes in water containing some of the cement.
103. Mrs. Cassidy had been seriously ill; she drank some water in which was placed some of the cement of Knock, and was completely cured.
104. Mary Prendergast, Lessusker. Being unable to walk, she rode to the church, but walked home without any trouble.

105. Laurence Madden, of the parish of Clonkeen, afflicted with lameness ; greatly relieved at Knock.

106. John O'Connor, of Ardagh, near Rathkeale, for nine years had to use an iron leg, being unable to put his right foot on the ground ; he experienced a complete cure, and left his iron leg behind him at Knock.

107. Martin Curry, Cloonduce ; sore foot ; cured by applying to the sore a piece of clay from the church.

108. Mrs. Regan, Carracastle, cured of chronic pains and general debility.

109. Mrs. P. Carney, Tounaparka, Coogue ; suffered excruciating pain in one of her fingers ; cured by bathing it in water containing some cement of Knock.

110. John Mooney, parish of Drumlish ; chronic nervousness and tremor ; cured.

111. Michael Ansbro, Carramore ; restored to sight.

112. Patrick Curry was cured of a dangerous hurt in the arm, caused by falling from a horse.

113. Richard Kane, of Liscal ; general debility ; cured.

114. Joseph Barry, Sheriff Street, Dublin, was troubled with stammering, and is now much improved.

115. A man from Barnacarroll was troubled with deafness for several years; completely cured at Knock.

116. A man, name unknown, cured of blindness.

117. Brigid Ryan; had pains in all her joints for many years, and was helpless until she was brought to Knock; she is much improved.

118. Anne Keenahan, Moate; sores on the leg.

119. Mrs. Kelly, Claremorris; cured of a constant pain in the side.

120. Lawrence Condron, Jones's Road, Dublin, was afflicted with violent retching. The doctors could not help him, but he experienced immediate relief on taking a drink of water in which was placed some of the mortar from the church of Knock.

121. William Heneran, Lakehill, cured of great pain in his foot occasioned by a stone falling on it.

122. Margaret Hecuson; weakness and pain in the chest; has experienced much improvement.

123. Miss Stuart, Dublin; a nervous affection.

124. Mary Connell, Wingfield, was afflicted with an eruptive swelling in the head; cured by praying to Blessed Virgin at Knock.

125. Martin Noone, cured of paralysis of long standing.

126. John McDermott, parish of Fuerty; running sores on the leg; had been a year under doctor's care without being benefited.

127. Kate Rodgers; consumption; used to faint every day for a considerable time; is quite restored to health.

128. Martin Concannon, of Kerrane, cured of vertigo.

129. Mary McLoughlin, Curragh, cured of sore eyes of several years' standing.

130. A girl named Staunton, of Killucan; afflicted with lameness; she came to Knock with a crutch, and left without any assistance.

131. Brigid Curry, daughter of Mr. William Curry, of Lecarrow, had chronic pains in the head; cured.

132. Brigid Mary Galvin, Cork; hip disease; had been under medical care for nearly a year; cured.

133. Mrs. Feeny, hotel-keeper, Swinford; vio-

lent toothache; cured by an application of the cement.

134. Valentine Gillic, Virginia, county Cavan; partial blindness of the left eye.

135. Michael Nertney, Tulsk, county Roscommon, cured of blindness.

136. Margaret Nee, of Moyrus; paralysis; was afflicted so badly as to be compelled for the past twenty years to move on her hands and knees; she has experienced considerable improvement, being able to stretch out and move freely one leg, and hopes for a perfect cure.

137. Mr. Joseph Kelly, of Kinclare; constant headache and dizziness of long standing; cured.

138. John Reilly, parish of Kilbride, county Roscommon; paralysis of the right side: cured.

139. Pat McCormack; partial blindness; could not recognize his most intimate friends. After visiting Knock he was able to walk about without assistance, considerably improved.

140. Mrs. (Martin) Fleming, of Tubber, Ballina; sore leg.

141. Thomas Killeen, of Roslea, parish of Mayo; partial blindness for many years; cured at Knock.

142. Mary Quinn, of Mullingar; blindness.

143. Michael Cull, Bird Hill, county Tipperary; blindness, total blindness; had been a patient in four of the Dublin hospitals; had to be led about; came to Knock, and could walk alone, and sight much improved.

144. Mary Gallagher, Charleston, county Mayo, blindness. After visiting Knock she was restored to sight.

145. Catherine Casey, Derroughal, parish of Aughamore; weakness and partial blindness; completely cured.

146. Joseph Morris, of Castletown-Geoghegan; sore on the leg. Completely recovered.

147. Alice Dwyer, Killenaule, county Tipperary; was blind of the right eye all her life; cured at Knock.

148. Kate Barrett, Prisen, had a very distressing cough for several years; cured after three visits.

149. Owen Halpin, Mell, Drogheda; deafness for ten years. On the 18th of February, the first day he visited Knock, he was completely cured by putting a piece of the cement into his ear.

150. A young man from Charleston, county Mayo, cured of an evil by a visit to Knock, after doctors had entirely failed to help him.

151. John Keogh, Loughrea; pearl on the right eye; cured at Knock.
152. Martin Corcoran, Bushfield, Roscommon; paralysis; cured.
153. Michael Martin, of Lissacullen, county Monaghan; epilepsy.
154. Honoria Magrath; sore knees; was unable to kneel down; perfectly cured.
155. Mrs. Kilkenny, of Woodfield, was mentally deranged, and had also another ailment which doctors could not remedy; cured at Knock.
156. Teresa Mary Martin (a young girl), Castleblayney, Monaghan; sore knee, caused by a fall a year ago; cured.
157. Laurence Fleming, parish of Dunmore; cured of deafness.
158. Mrs. Hurley, Roscommon; lameness; experienced much improvement.
159. Dominick Rogers, of Ballaghaderren; lameness; always carried two sticks, both of which he left at Knock.
160. Sarah Graham, Ballymote; general debility; cured.
161. James Burke, Coogue, Poulbeg; excruciating pains in the back and hips; cured.

162. Rose Anne Ward, ten years old ; lump in the neck.
163. John Kelly, of Ballina ; chronic pain in the right side.
164. Mary Collins, of Clonbern ; blindness.
165. Mary Ryan, of Thurles ; for ten years she was unable to get on her knees, or to move without the aid of a crutch. She left her crutch at Knock, being completely recovered.
166. Ellen Reay, Limerick ; rheumatic gout.
167. Mrs. (Patrick) O'Brien, of Shanvaghera, sick for a long time ; cured.
168. John Brennan, parish of Kiltimagh ; a swelling, caused by a fall from a horse, which laid him up for a long time ; he is now entirely cured and able to work as before his fall.
169. A young man named Hopkins, second assistant in the National School, Claremorris ; cured of epilepsy.
170. John Flynn, of Cloonmanagh, parish of Kilmoeve, cured of an evil ; had been doctoring without relief.
171. Miss Smith, Limerick ; a running sore on the face.
172. A daughter of Richard Walsh, of New-

port, was cured of blindness by bathing her eyes in water containing a piece of the cement.

173. Mary Kate Ryan; fainting spells and involuntary twitching of the eyes.

174. Mrs. P. Healy, indisposed for a long time; cured.

175. John Roache, parish of Rooskey, county Roscommon; total blindness for seventeen years. He recovered his sight at Knock, Feb. 22.

176. John Smith, parish of Virginia (Rev. John O'Reilly, P.P.), county Cavan; general weakness of constitution, loss of appetite, and want of sleep.

177. Michael McNulty, Kilgariff, parish of Ballaghaderren; partial paralysis; much improved.

178. Miss Finegan, of Clifden; sickness of long duration.

179. Mary Phillips, Kiltulla, parish of Bunanadden; paralysis; cured, and left her crutch at Knock.

180. Owen Mullarkey; ulcer on the face for thirty years; cured.

181. Bridget Glynn, county Clare; lameness of the right foot; much relieved.

182. John Coan, Plougena, county Mayo; paralysis.

183. Martin Murphy, Ballinafad, parish of Balla; hip disease.
184. Mrs. Healy, of county Cork; dropsy.
185. John Noonan, parish of Clonmish, county Fermanagh; was afflicted with a running sore on the face for many years; cured.
186. Mr. Kennedy (father of Miss Kennedy, assistant teacher of the Female National School at Knock) was deaf for a long time; cured.
187. John Brennan, parish of Curry, county Sligo; afflicted with hip disease over a year; doctors could give him no relief; cured at Knock.
188. John Meckin; blindness. He was not entirely blind before his visit to Knock, but his power of vision was very feeble.
189. Mary Byrne, Kilmore, parish of Kilmoevee, had a large lump which grew under the tongue; completely cured at Knock.
190. Mary O'Dea, parish of Kilmacduagh; blindness of the right eye.
191. Pat Mulloy, of Curry; blindness; cured.
192. Patrick Kelly, Shammer, Kilmoevee, suffered from violent epilepsy; cured by one visit.
193. Thomas Hare, Tuam; paralysis.

194. Thomas Doherty ; pains in the back and limbs and general debility for over twelve years ; had doctor's attendance, without receiving any apparent benefit.

195. James Acton, Tuam ; partial blindness.

196. Edward Farrell, parish of Rathlin ; blindness of the right eye.

197. Mrs. Madden, of Prospect ; suffered for years from retching ; cured.

198. Ellen McLaughlin, Killabeghagh, was afflicted for three years past with lameness in her right foot. She underwent several surgical operations, and had a number of bones taken from her foot at different times. She was unable to walk to Knock, but experienced a complete cure there, and walked home.

199. Pat Ryan, Edward Street, Limerick ; defective sight.

200. Martin Doherty, Ballaghaderren ; cured of lameness.

201. Pat Flanagan, Cloontuskert ; a heart affection.

202. A gentleman, name unknown, suffered very much from a cold in his right eye, caught about a year ago. He suffered excruciating

agony, having been under the care of several physicians, who proved of no good to him. After bathing his eye with water containing some of the cement from Knock he experienced immediate relief, and is now perfectly cured.

203. Miss Hughes, daughter of Andrew Hughes, of Gurtnarah, parish of Claremorris, had a pearl on one of her eyes; cured by applying some of the cement of Knock.

204. Henry Bolton, Ennis; troubled with stiffness and weakness in the left arm; laid up in a hospital for three years.

205. Thomas Cochran, Belfast; blind of the right eye. His sight has been entirely recovered.

206. Francis Cassidy, Maguire's Bridge; paralysis of the left hand.

207. Edward Gibbons, Meelick, parish of Claremorris; mental derangement; cured.

208. Lizzie Bryan, Drumtraff, county Cork; evil and swelling in the jaw.

209. Patrick Alcock, of Kilfree, parish of Gurtnin; partial blindness.

210. Andrew Bourke, Kilrush, cured of lameness.

211. Mrs. Healy, Drumtraff; an evil.

212. Mrs. Armstrong, Claremorris; general debility; cured.

213. George Culhane, Rathkeale, county Limerick; stiff and inflamed knee, caused by a dislocation some months ago; had consulted doctors without any benefit; completely cured.

214. Pat Conway, Limerick; was lame, and used a stick for over six years, which he left at Knock, being able to walk without it after.

215. Miss Coleman, of Claremorris, cured of sore gums by washing the parts with water containing a portion of the cement.

216. Thomas Dooner, of Rooskey, county Roscommon, cured of an evil.

217. Mary Vesey, Betley, England; lameness. She left her crutch at Knock.

218. Owen Cribin, Bunaconlon, cured of an evil.

219. Michael Prendergast, a child two years old, the son of James Prendergast, of Cloonlara, parish of Bekan, fell and fractured his skull; cured.

220. Charles O'Donel, Donegal; chronic ache and pain in the shoulder.

221. James O'Connell, parish of Drumlish; blindness.

222. Thomas Crogan; sore foot.
223. John McCormick; partial blindness; cured.
224. Mrs. Waldron Louralia, cured of violent retching of more than thirty years' standing.
225. Pat Connor; hip disease; cured, and left his stick at Knock.
226. Catherine Frehilly, of Island, was afflicted with mental derangement; cured.

A Connecticut Girl who was Cured by a Piece of Cement from Knock Chapel.

Mary Ellen McNamara, daughter of a respectable laborer of Norwich, Conn., had been for five years afflicted with epileptic fits, which had completely paralyzed her lower limbs. She is twelve years old, and her limbs are not larger than those of a child of seven or eight. The bones show through the skin, and are like pipe-stems. She is not larger than a girl of six years. For four years she had not left her bed upstairs, except when removed by an assistant. Each morning her father was wont to take her downstairs in his arms to

the breakfast-table. She was troubled with almost unintermittent spasms, that left her at length in a cataleptic state. She had not walked a step in five years. Her father has cousins in Ireland, in the county in which is located the famous Knock parish, the scene of recent luminous apparitions of the Blessed Virgin and the saints. They wrote to him, telling of the wondrous cures that were being effected in that county, and Mr. McNamara asked them to send him some of the cement from the Knock chapel. A short time ago the cement came, with directions for its application. The cement was applied to the back of the girl's neck. The effect was thus told by the child :

“First I felt a pain in the back of the neck, and it kept growing worse, until finally it all left me, and I felt better. Then my folks took me up and put me on my feet, and I found that I could walk.”

“Did you take any other medicine?” she was asked, and the child replied :

“Oh! no; none at all.”

The miracle was effected in a few hours. On Thursday last (May 13, 1880), she walked down

into the city, with a companion, without aid, and on Friday she walked over to the circus-grounds, and, after the exhibition, back home. She seems to be fully recovered, although her gait is unsteady, owing to the extreme fragility of her legs, and has a peculiar sliding style. A friend of the family, an Irishman, who is bedridden, is to be sent to the old country for relief at the Knock church.



THREE VISITS TO KNOCK.

WITH THE

MEDICAL CERTIFICATES OF CURES

AND

AUTHENTIC ACCOUNTS OF DIFFERENT APPARITIONS.

BY
Mary Frances Cusack,
SISTER MARY FRANCOIS CLARK.

NEW YORK:
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THE VOICE OF THE HOLY FATHER.

"Providence seems to have given in our day a great mission to the Catholic Press. It is for it to preserve the principles of order and faith where they prevail; and to propagate them where impiety and cold indifference have caused them to be forgotten."—*Letter from Pope Pius IX.* in 1855.

"We urgently beseech of you to assist, with all good will and favour, those men who, animated with a Catholic spirit, and possessed with sufficient learning, are labouring in writing and publishing books and journals for the defence and propagation of Catholic doctrine."—*Encyclical Letter of Pope Pius IX.* in 1862.

In placing this account of some of the apparitions and miraculous cures which have taken place at Knock, before the public, I desire to express beforehand my entire submission to whatever may be the future decision on this subject of the Holy Catholic Church.

**KNOCK, BALLYHAUNIS,
Co. MAYO.**

June of the Visitation, B.V.M., 1888.

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INTRODUCTION.

WHAT ARE WE TO BELIEVE ABOUT KNOCK?

IT will be three years on the 22nd of August next, 1882, since the first apparitions were seen at Knock. If there had been any attempt at imposture of any kind whatsoever, there can be little doubt it would long since have been discovered. Since that ever memorable day thousands of persons of all classes, rich and poor, educated and uneducated, priests and seculars, have visited Knock, and not one word has been written or said against the testimony of those who saw the apparitions. On the contrary, a very considerable number of those who have visited Knock had themselves seen apparitions, and have gone from thence filled with holy awe and joy. We have been allowed to publish the testimony of many of those visitors; and this at once places the fact, that numerous apparitions have been seen, beyond all dispute. Next, since that day hundreds of devout Catholics, and even

some Protestants, have visited this place so favoured by heaven, and have obtained cures there, not only of bodily but even of spiritual maladies. We give here the medical certificates given of some of these cures, but may we not suggest that the fact of a cure is the best certificate. Day after day the faithful are flowing to this shrine for healing and relief, and day after day they are obtaining it. The last cure known to the writer, and which occurred in May, 1882, was that of a boy of seven, who was *born paralysed from the waist down to the toes*. His mother, a Protestant, wrote to me from Yorkshire, asking my advice as to whether she should bring him, saying all her family were Protestants. She had, however, received some instruction herself with a view to becoming a Catholic. The advice given her was to come, but to remember that we could not understand or fathom the designs of God, and that it might not be His holy will to grant her the favour she asked. Mrs. Robinson did come, and God did give her the favour she asked. Archdeacon Cavanagh gave the little lad conditional baptism, and no sooner had the holy waters of regeneration touched him, than the paralysed limbs moved, and he leaped and walked. I saw the child, a very bright intelligent boy, running and leaping till I was almost

frightened, lest one who had never even stood alone for an instant from his birth, might meet an accident which would be serious.

There remains then two facts: that a considerable number of persons have seen apparitions at Knock; that some hundreds of persons have been cured either at Knock or in other places by the invocation of the Mother of God as "the Blessed Virgin of Knock," and the use of the cement or water from the church. It only remains to be said that the Church has not yet pronounced for this devotion. But those who wish to make this a ground for opposing the devotion, are probably persons who will oppose the devotion after the Church has pronounced in favour of it, or who will, at best, treat the matter with curt indifference, priding themselves on having minds too elevated for such things.

There are a certain class of persons who put evidence from them which they ought carefully to weigh and consider, because they say they will wait until the Church decides the question. But the Church decides on evidence—the Church decides on facts. Take the case of Lourdes. If every one said, "We will not believe the testimony of Bernadette, she is only a poor ignorant girl," the miracles of Lourdes would have been lost to

the Church, and to the world, because no one would have gone to Lourdes to pray for cures.

Those who, whenever they hear on reasonable evidence that a supernatural manifestation has occurred, hear the message and visit the place, are actually helping the Church. It is quite certain that miraculous cures are rarely obtained unless they are asked for, and that the asking for and obtaining of miraculous cures must precede the decision of the Church. It should also be noted that the most marvellous of the miracles obtained at any shrine or sanctuary, have been those first obtained, as if God would specially reward the faith of those who came first to the place He had so honoured.

A VISIT TO KNOCK;

BY

SISTER MARY FRANCIS CLARE.

WHEN I wrote a previous work on Knock, I had not visited it, and I was necessarily obliged to describe both the place and the apparitions which had then occurred from the reports of others.

I have now had the great happiness of visiting this locality three times. I have passed through the surrounding districts, all hallowed by association with the travels of St. Patrick, and sanctified, perhaps, scarcely less by the sufferings of a faithful people, hunted thither, because they would not deny their faith, by a cruel edict, which should have excited the indignation of any civilised people—a people who are still suffering, as even a passing visit would show, from the temporal privations then inflicted. It is to this people, and in this place, that this most extraordinary grace has been granted. God's ways are not ours. The world cried out, "What good can come out of Nazareth?" Yet from

Nazareth came the Eternal good. The world—those who were its representatives—scorned the Mother of God, and in scorning her, scorned our Divine Lord. For Mary there was no room; the inn was occupied by the rich, and the great and fashionable men and women of the same class as those who, to-day, despise God's holy ones; the stable is the only place left for the Mother of God, whom angels consider themselves honoured to serve, and for the foster-father of Jesus, the patron of the universal Church. Ah! do not let the rich and the great think when they honour Mary and Joseph now that they would have honoured them in the stable. No; it is easy to honour the saints when they are dead, when devotion to them is not altogether a reproach. To honour the saints while they live is to have faith, to have that delicate discernment of divine things, that light of the Holy Ghost which belongs only to the saintly. To recognise the gifts of the Holy Ghost in the souls of others, we must have some of these gifts in our own souls; for spiritual things are discerned only by the spiritual.

The poor and humble parish of Knock lies in the very heart of Connaught, and in the very poorest part of that poor district. From the very

site where the apparition of the Mother of God was seen by its people, you may see, in the distance, Croagh Patrick, the hill famed in Irish ecclesiastical history, where St. Patrick blessed the whole island.

I was informed by some persons during my second visit to Knock (I have now been there three times) that when the late Archbishop of Tuam, the Most Rev. Dr. MacHale, visited Knock some years ago, and, of course, long before it became a place of pilgrimage, he told the people from the altar that St. Patrick had specially blessed the site, and had predicted that it would one day become a famous place of devotion. I asked the Venerable Archdeacon Cavanagh was this statement correct, and he assured me that it was, and that he was himself present on the occasion.*

Almost every town and village in the whole district is associated in some way with well authenticated records of the sojournings of St. Patrick.

* I have not been able to find any trace of this tradition in any *Life of St. Patrick*, but there can be little doubt the Archbishop had some good authority for the statement. I would ask Celtic scholars who may read this to communicate to me any information they have had on this subject.

Knock is indeed the very centre of the most interesting of the apostolic labours and evangelisings of St. Patrick. In the north we have Killalla, the see founded by St. Patrick himself; in the west we have Croagh Patrick, the mountain already mentioned; in the east, Boyle and Elphin, where he founded churches; in the south we have the grand old episcopal see of Tuam, now governed by one of the most learned and gifted of the prelates who have wielded the crozier of St. Jarlath for centuries.

Mayo also possesses several holy wells, the sites of which have been identified beyond dispute by the late Celtic scholar, Dr. O'Donovan. Strange and mysterious is the history of the past and present—one Lord ruling over the Church, one Baptism nourishing it, one Faith teaching it. If to-day we may hope that the Church will approve the devotion which has commenced at Knock, we know from the annals of the earliest and most authentic ecclesiastical history of Ireland, that it was from this same part of Ireland, from Mayo, from a site not far distant from Knock, that the voices of the unborn children are said to have reached St. Patrick, on the distant shores of France, and called him to come and teach them the one true faith.

How steadfast Ireland has been to that teaching, let all her history tell; what she has suffered for her fidelity, God and His angels will one day reveal. May it not be that God, once again, sends a message to Ireland—a message of love, a message of mercy; yes, a message even of pity, and that Mary pleads for her, and with her, lest her faith should fail her in, perhaps, the darkest hour of her history. *Ave Maria, gratia plena.* May she who is full of grace pour forth upon Ireland the gifts of grace from the fountains of her Divine Son. If love of Mary is a sign of predilection, where has there been such love of Mary as in her own faithful Ireland?

As we have elsewhere written fully of the authenticity and value of the ancient Life of St. Patrick, known as the *Tripartite*, we will not here give any proofs, but will simply quote from it with reference to the journeyings of the Saint in the district around Knock,* Co. Mayo.

Snamh-da-en, which means the swimming or passage of the two birds, was the ancient name of

* The *Trias Thaumaturgus*, or three wonder-working saints of Ireland, St. Patrick, St. Bridget, and St. Columba. London and Dublin: *Murdoch & Son, Farringdon Street.* This large and valuable work can be procured on easy terms of payment, by writing to the above address.

that part of the Shannon which lies between Clonmacnoise and Clonburren, and here it was that St. Patrick crossed into what is now the province of Connaught. How little the traveller who passes over the noble bridge of Athlone thinks of the grand old historical recollections associated with this part of Ireland. Having passed the Shannon, St. Patrick proceeded to Cruachan, the ancient palace of the Kings of Connaught. To reach this place he passed through the plain of *Magh-nai*, which was situated between the present towns of Roscommon, Elphin, Castlerea, and Strokestown. Here it is recorded that the Saint met some of the Druids, so famous in Celtic Pagan history. By their magical arts they, like the magicians of whom record is made in holy Scripture, were able to do many wonderful things. For three days they brought darkness over the place, but the prayers of Patrick dispelled it, and he obtained that there should be light for the people of God, while the servants of the demon remained in darkness. Afterwards Patrick met two other Druids, and one of them asked the Saint to buy his land, inquiring what he would give him for it. Patrick replied, "Eternity," still teaching the lesson of the Gospel, that the things of time may be used to obtain the things which are eternal.

He next passed through the vast wild plains of Connaught (and probably through Knock) to Killala.

One of the most interesting incidents in the life of the Saint happened, as is related, at the great fort or rath of *Cruachan*. There was a well or fountain near the royal residence where the women were accustomed to bathe at sunrise. When Ethna and Fethlema arrived at this place one morning, they found the Saint there with a "synod of clerics, with white garments, and their books before them." The maidens were amazed at what they deemed a heavenly apparition ; and one more courageous than the rest, began to question : "Whence," she asked, "had they come ? Were they Sidhes, or gods of the earth, or a phantasm ?" Then they inquired where the God of these strange men lived ? was He beautiful ? was He rich ? And then they asked whether he was in the elements which they worshipped, in the sea, or in rivers, in mountains, or in valleys. But last of all, they asked, how is He to be loved, and how is He to be found ?

The Saint was not slow to reply to their eager questioning. He told of the one true God, more powerful than all, more beautiful than all. He it was who had created these elements, who was the

God of heaven and earth, and seas and rivers, the Life of all things—the Light of all things—the ever blessed Three in One. And then having instructed them as fully as might be in the Church's Creed, he added with that inimitable grace in which saintly souls so often excel : “ But I desire to unite you to the heavenly King, inasmuch as you are the daughters of an earthly king.”

Then the virgins implored the Saint to teach them how to believe in this Heavenly King, that they “ might see Him face to face.”

And Patrick said, “ Believe ye, that by Baptism you put off the sins of your father and your mother ? ”—They answered, “ We believe.”

“ Believe ye in life after death ? Believe ye the Resurrection at the day of Judgment ? ”—“ We believe.”

“ Believe ye the unity of the Church ? ”—“ We believe.”

Then, writes the ancient chronicler, Patrick baptized them, and put a white garment upon their heads, and then asked they to see the face of Christ.

So great was the fervour of those young and noble converts, that nothing but the beautiful vision could satisfy them.

Most blessed ones, pray for us, that we too, with you, may see the face of Christ.

But Patrick told them they must pass through the dark portals of death before they entered the gates of life, and that they must also "receive the Sacrifice if they would see their Lord."

And they said "Give us the Sacrifice, that we may behold the face of our Spouse."

How many holy virgins have asked and obtained this same grace, both before and since! And though it has not been granted to many to pass, as those noble ladies did, from earth to heaven the moment after receiving the Sacrament of Love, yet such instances are known and recorded in ecclesiastical history.

Then the holy maidens were laid to rest together, as was indeed most fitting, in one bed, and covered with one garment. And their friends wept for them, even while they rejoiced, because the virgins were following the virgin Lamb in white raiment in the heavenly kingdom. When the days of mourning [tribulation] for the king's daughters were accomplished, they were buried near the well Cleboch, where they had first seen the Saint. The grave was made according to the Pagan custom like a Ferta, but, adds Tirechan, "with us it is called Reliquiae, that is, the remains of the

virgins." Nor can we doubt that the ground was consecrated wherein those holy relics were placed, for the writer states expressly that the Ferta, with the bones of the holy virgins, was granted to Patrick and to his heirs for ever, and that he built a church of earth near the place. In doing this, indeed, he would only follow the usual custom of the Holy Catholic Church, which ever loved to offer the Adorable Sacrifice in or near the place where the saints reposed.

How few ever give a thought to the memory of these virgins as they pass the old rath of the Heremonian chieftains! Yet, there is scarcely a spot throughout the whole of Ireland which is not consecrated by some saintly memorial. Here some great miracle was performed—there some church was founded by Patrick himself; in this place he preached to thousands, in that river he baptised thousands. Why do not our people treasure up these holy memories? Why are they not taught them and reminded of them? Better the memory of holy deeds and saintly lives than the angry memories, too long cherished, of oppression and wrong.

As Saint Patrick, according to the *Tripartite*, the most ancient and authentic account of his journeyings, passed from the plains of Roscommon

to Killala, it is little short of certainty that he passed through Knock. The wood of Foclut is near Killala, and is also in the Co. Mayo. This was the place from which he is said to have heard the voices of the Irish children calling on him to come over and help them. Here the Saint founded the episcopal see of Killala and left a bishop there. After this he baptized the maidens who as little unborn infants are said to have given him the mystical call to come and baptize and teach our people; after this the Saint passed to the mountain of *Cruachan Aighle*, now known as Croagh Patrick, which, as we have said, can be seen from the present Church of Knock.

It is probable the *Tripartite* gives the most correct account of the time during which Saint Patrick kept his forty days and nights of fasting and vigil upon this mountain. If he visited Tirawley during the second Easter after his arrival in Ireland, as we gather from the Book of Armagh, he would have been occupied until Pentecost with his mission there. He may then well have desired some weeks of retirement for prayer and special penitential exercises, which, after the sacraments, are the great source of strength for the Catholic Missionary. His humility, also, may have made him wish to retire for a time from

those who had witnessed his wonderful miracles, and who might ignorantly refer them to his power, instead of to the power of God.

Alone upon the mountains, the Saint watched and prayed and wept for forty days and forty nights. How many graces and blessings may we owe even now to the intercession of our great apostle during that period of penance and intercession ! At its close, the demons came to torment him, in the shape of birds, whose black forms kept from him the light of heaven and the sight of earth. He prayed, saying the Psalms of holy David, in which the maledictions of heaven were invoked upon the powers of darkness. Then he rang his bell, which he appears to have carried with him everywhere, and which, no doubt, was specially blessed

“To drive all demons from the upper air.”

Then he threw the bell amongst them in holy anger, so that a piece was broken from it. But God, for His own wise purposes, permitted all these things to fail, perhaps, to show the Saint that no efforts, however holy, could avail against the powers of darkness, as long as God was pleased to permit that he should be tried by them. Patrick now began to weep so abundantly that the front

of his *casula* was wet, and then his angel came to him. Thus also do the angels come to us—not, indeed, always in visible form as they appeared to our great apostle and father, but not less surely and truly when God's providence rescues us from the danger which has caused us so many fears and so many anxious hours.

The angel was probably Victor, who so constantly attended the Saint, and appeared to him on so many occasions. He cleansed the *casula*, and brought white birds from the mountain, and they sang "sweet melodies" for the apostle, now free from the attacks of the powers of darkness. The trial had been borne, the victory was attained, the reward was about to follow. In the Lives of the Saints we find many similar circumstances, after a period of prayer and penance, in which the body has suffered, spiritual favours follow, and the soul, the true life, gains a thousand-fold, even in this world, of nearness to God, and of special tokens of His divine approbation. How could it be otherwise, when such persons have but followed the example of the Son in whom He was well pleased?

A conversation between St. Patrick and the angel is recorded in the *Tripartite*, which reminds us of Jacob's declaration to the angel : "I will not let thee go unless thou bless me," and of the con-

versation between St. Francis of Assisi and his guardian angel, as recorded in the annals of the order. St. Patrick, like St. Francis, asked for souls, and so great, so ardent, so consuming was his desire for the salvation of his adopted country, that he could not easily be satisfied. It was on this occasion that he obtained for his faithful ones the privilege of releasing “seven every Thursday, and twelve every Saturday, from pains;” and that Erinn should be covered by the sea seven years before the Day of Judgment. Then he was promised special graces for all those who should recite his hymn daily, and that he should, at the Day of Judgment, save “seven persons for every hair in his casula;” and that on the “day when the twelve royal seats shall be on Mount Sion, and the four rivers of fire shall be about the mount, and when the three peoples shall be there, namely, people of heaven, and the people of earth, and the people of hell, that he should be judge over the men of Erinn on that day.” When St. Patrick made this request the angel went to heaven until the evening, and then he returned to the Saint to tell him that his prayer was granted, and to command him to ring his sweet-sounding bell, and kneel down and bless the people of Erinn.

After St. Patrick descended from the mountain,

he visited the country of the *Torco-Themme*, where he founded four churches, and baptized many thousand persons. He also visited a well called *Tobar-Finn-Maighi*, where the Pagans believed that a god had his residence. This well was covered with an immense stone, which the Saint removed, and thus destroyed the devotion which the people had for it.

The veneration which the Saint had, and always manifested for the cross, is specially dwelt upon by his early biographers. It was his custom, as it was also the custom of the early Christians, to sign himself frequently with that sacred symbol; and we are told, "he placed the Cross of Christ over him one hundred times each day and night." It is more than probable that the special faith in, and veneration for this pious custom which the Irish Celt has ever manifested, is inherited from our great apostle. So exact was the Saint in the practice of exterior reverence to the Cross, that whenever he passed a way-side cross, even if it were at some considerable distance, he at once dismounted from his horse or chariot, in order to pay due respect to the symbol of our salvation.

St. Patrick remained seven years in Connaught, and then, having established Christianity in that remote region, returned, through the North of

Ireland, to his old converts in Meath. The *Tripartite* thus concludes the narrative of his labors in that part of Ireland :

“ Thrice Patrick went across the Shannon into the land of Connaught. Fifty bells and fifty altar chalices and fifty altar cloths he left in the land of Connaught, each of them in his church. Seven years was he preaching to the men of Connaught, and he left them a blessing, and bade them farewell.”

It was from Connaught that St. Patrick blessed Ireland. It is from Knock, in Connaught, also, that the blessing of the Mother of God came to Ireland.

The blessing of St. Patrick was a deliverance from the darkness of paganism. The blessing of the Mother of God is a call to united prayer, and to a new fervour in the service of God. A call to sanctify our own souls by bearing suffering patiently, and to help our patient suffering brethren in Purgatory.

CHAPTER I.

KNOCK.

IT is now rather more than two years since it began to be reported that some extraordinary and heavenly manifestations had been seen by people in humble circumstances at the Church of Knock. It is a common charge against Catholics that they are credulous in such matters, and above all, priests are especially charged with this. Yet, as in every accusation made against the Church by her enemies, the very reverse of the charge is the truth. This is no matter of assertion or conjecture; the life of every canonized saint proves it; the history of every supernatural providence proves it. The saints have been insulted and ridiculed, not only by those who are not of our Faith, but even by those who are. Look, for example, at the life of the Cure of Ars, who was often a subject of good-natured ridicule to many of his clerical friends. God may permit this without sin on the one side, to test and strengthen virtue on the other side. But, all the same, it proves our point. So in the case of the

apparitions of the Mother of God in France, and other like marvellous, and, must we not add, infinitely merciful interpositions of the Providence of God. Those to whom these favours have been granted were doubted, mistrusted, and, unhappily, even sometimes cruelly persecuted by those who should have been the very first to have received their message, and to have honoured the messenger.

It happens too often that this want of faith is excused and defended, on the ground of supposed prudence. What, then ; is it prudent to resist the call of God ? is it prudent to refuse to believe when He speaks ? is it prudent to reject an extraordinary grace ? What is gained by this prudence ? Alas ! may we not rather ask, what is not lost by it ?

Had France accepted with generous love, and with humble penitence, the message of La Salette, would she be as she is to-day ? If her priests and people had, as one body, listened to the merciful voice of Mary, and seconded the designs of God in that call to penance, would her religious houses to-day be desolate and her altars forsaken ?

Do not let us blame the princes of the world for the afflictions of the Church ; rather let us blame the children of the Church.

Is it a light matter to pass by a Divine call? If the Eternal Majesty of Heaven condescends, in His infinite wisdom, to warn men of approaching danger and to call them to repentance, how fearful is our guilt if we make light of such a grace? Are we to affront His messengers, or dictate to Him the form in which the message shall be given? Is Ireland to share the fate of France? What will these very prudent people say who refused to hear the call of God, which might have saved France, now that their prudence has proved ruin? But, it will be said, how could they be sure that this call was from God until the Church decided it? This is a most specious argument, because it looks so like true wisdom. Let one single fact be remembered and noted carefully. The Church is very slow to decide, not always because there is grave doubt on a subject, but because a decision, being responsible and final, must have time given to prepare it. But, in the meantime, the voice of God speaks in the hearts of His faithful, and calls them to listen and to believe. Let us pray for the instinct of Faith. Those who turn from the voice of God, warning or instructing His Church by extraordinary Providences, havent got the instinct of Faith. What a loss to their own souls! what

a loss to the souls of others ! The wise sheep know the voice of the Shepherd, and are warned of the danger in time. The wolf imitates the voice of the Shepherd, and the foolish sheep follow him, confident in their own wisdom, and fall, through pride, into the very snare from which they had been warned to escape.

But there is another point which should be considered. One of the tests of the truth or falsehood of these manifestations of Divine mercy is the miraculous cures obtained by prayer at or in connection with those places. The Church accepts, and, in fact, requires those tests. But if everyone was "prudent" with this worldly prudence, and wise with this false wisdom, which will accept nothing till it is made respectable or safe by ecclesiastical authority, how would the truth of such cases ever be proved ?

If there had not been souls gifted with the divine instinct of faith, who, through that instinct, believed in the message of La Salette and Lourdes, how could the truth of La Salette and Lourdes have been proved by miraculous cures ?

We should remember that these manifestations are intended for every one. It is not for us to say, unless some special indication of God's will is given in the matter, that these warnings or invi-

tations are intended for the poor, or for the rich, for the learned or for the unlearned. The warning which Noah was desired to give of the coming flood was intended for the whole world. How unhappy were they who despised it ! Let us, then, beware how we put these things from us. The warnings of La Salette, the call to penance and pilgrimage at Lourdes, were intended by an all-merciful God for every soul in France. Alas ! how few were there, comparatively, who listened to it. What advantage to them now is the wisdom of those who rejected it or despised it ? How unhappy are those who, perhaps, were too indifferent either to despise or reject it, and yet failed to avail themselves of the grace ! How terrible is their loss ! How sad it is, how grievous it will be, for all eternity, for any human being who refuses a special grace offered him by God Himself ! How great will be the responsibility of a soul who, when God calls on it out of the ordinary way, and therefore offers it an extraordinary grace, if that grace is refused ! May God in His mercy grant that such may not be the case with any of us ! Whether we are of the Church, or of the many sects, separate from the Church, the voice of God is, perhaps, calling us even now. To Catholics who ought to believe in

all that the Church teaches, and who know the history of God's dealings with His faithful, there is a plain call of God, not indeed, to believe rashly in, but to enquire carefully, lest if these things should be true, we should turn from the merciful call of God. To those who are not Catholics, the call of God is equally plain. They should enquire also, if haply there is not some truth which they have not yet learned.

We read in the history of the Jewish nation that in times of great peril or suffering, God often showed some extraordinary manifestation of His power and goodness, and we find the same munificent providence continued in the Christian Church. There is no fact in history better authenticated than the vision which Constantine saw of the holy Cross shining in the heavens at midday.*

It certainly does seem strange that those who profess to believe in the Bible, and take their

* As the Emperor was marching with his troops into Italy, on a certain day, in the afternoon, he saw in the sky, just over the sun, the figure of a luminous cross, with the following inscription:—"In hoc signo vinces," (In this sign you shall conquer). His army, as well as himself, saw the splendid prodigy, which struck all the beholders with astonishment. Constantine was inspired to make a representation of that cross, and to use it as a standard in battle. He accordingly

religious opinions from it exclusively, should be so unwilling to believe in miracles or miraculous appearances. It is true, indeed, that God reserves such favours for His Church and that they are not known amongst those who are outside the pale of the Church, but this very fact should only serve to make them inquire all the more carefully what is truth.

The New Testament is as full of miracles and apparitions as the Old Testament; nor did those miracles and apparitions cease when our Divine Lord ascended into Heaven, so that no one can say that they could not happen now because our Divine Lord is not on earth.

The promise of Christ is plain, and is not limited to Apostolic times: "And these signs shall follow them that believe. In my name they shall cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues,

made the famous banner called Laburum, and being thus encouraged by evident marks of the Divine protection, confidently commenced the war against Maxentius, a prince sullied with every vice.

The miraculous apparition of the Cross to Constantine, is placed beyond the reach of reasonable doubt, by the concurring testimonies of Socrates, the historian, Sozomen, Philostorgus, &c., but especially of Eusebius, who expressly declares that he had learned it from the mouth of Constantine himself, who confirmed the assertion with his oath.

they shall take up serpents, and if they shall drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay their hands upon the sick and they shall recover." Hence, in the Catholic Church we find these "signs" at all times, in all ages and in various states and conditions of life. But the promise of being able to show such signs was specially intended as a proof of the Divine origin of the Catholic faith, therefore these gifts are bestowed most abundantly on those who were called to teach this faith to heathen nations. After our Lord's ascension the Apostles "preached everywhere," and we are expressly told that their words were confirmed with signs that followed.

The "sign of being able to speak in unknown tongues" was given after our Lord's ascension to all the Apostles in common. The sign of being able to heal the sick was manifested by Peter and John at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple, when the lame man leaped and walked. Then handkerchiefs and aprons which had touched St. Paul's body were brought to the sick, who were instantly healed, and the inspired writer of the *Acts of the Apostles* declared that "more than common miracles were wrought by the hand of Paul." Perhaps no Catholic practice has been

so bitterly scorned as the custom of preserving relics of the garments which the saints have worn, or any object which they have touched, yet here we find this very thing done in the earliest ages of the Church, from whence it has been continued down to the present day. Then, as now, God has been pleased to honour the relics of His saints, the "handkerchiefs and aprons," the poor rags they have worn while waiting for the wedding garment; and then, as now, the miracles have been wrought by the mighty power of God, without whose aid the saint would be as powerless to heal as the sinner.

Furthermore, we find that the very "shadow of Peter" cured those on whom it fell, and that many were placed on their couches in the street so that this healing shadow might reach them. An angel opened the prison gates and released St. Peter from prison, even as an angel called St. Patrick to leave the place of his captivity, that he might prepare for his mission in Ireland. The magician, Simon Magus, was converted by the miracles of St. Philip, and was "astonished and wondered" to see the sights and exceeding great miracles which he did. Yet, although he remained with Philip and received holy baptism,

he relapsed again into his old paganism, and was declared by the Apostle to be "in the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity." Even thus did some of St. Patrick's early converts return to their former superstitions, casting discredit on his preaching to those who were so ignorant or so prejudiced as to attribute to his teaching what they should have attributed to the frailty of his disciples.

Many and wonderful as are the miracles recorded in the "Lives of the Saints," there is not one for which we may not find a parallel in the *Acts of the Apostles*. How, then, can the Protestant, who professes to believe the Bible, hold them up as subjects of ridicule? St. Peter raised the dead, and soon after was wrapt in ecstacy; and if a similar account had been recorded in the life of a saint, it would undoubtedly be scoffed at for its simplicity. An angel appears to a devout soldier and desires him to send for St. Peter, and St. Peter is told by the spirit to go and meet the messenger. Cornelius relates his vision to St. Peter, and tells in simple words, of the "man in white raiment" who appeared to him. A prophet named Agabus announces a famine, and his prediction is fulfilled; Elymas, the sorcerer, is struck blind instantaneously by St. Paul for

trying to turn away the Pro-Consul from the faith, even as the magician, Lochru, was miraculously dashed to the ground and killed, at the prayer of St. Patrick, for blaspheming the Catholic faith.

As Paul and Silas prayed at midnight a miraculous light filled their prison, and there was a great earthquake which shook the building to its very foundation, opened all the doors, and unloosed the chains with which the prisoners were bound. The books of the Ephesian sorcerers are brought to St. Paul, who burns them all in public, as St. Patrick burned the books of the Irish Druids. St. Paul is shipwrecked, and saves all the souls on board, who escape on planks safe to land. When landed another miracle occurs, and the saint is seized by a viper whose bite to others would have been fatal, but he escapes unharmed. An angel directs St. Philip to undertake a special mission, and when it is accomplished, the Spirit of the Lord catches him up into the air, and he disappears from the wondering gaze of the eunuch whom he has just baptized, and is carried to Azotus.

While such "signs" are recorded in the Holy Gospels, how can anyone bearing the name of Christian presume to scorn or despise the miracles

recorded in the “Lives of the Saints?” If we are Christians at all we must believe that all the marvellous records of healing, raising from the dead, punishment by sudden death, ecstacy—whether by being rapt into heaven, by suspension of the ordinary faculties while in prayer, or by mystic journeys through space—are all literally and verbally true. To Protestants, who unhappily talk so much about the Bible, and criticise and question its every detail, there is, perhaps, some excuse for doubt, though, on their own principles, they are self-condemned. But with Catholics the case is entirely different; and yet, it must be feared that Catholics are by no means as firm in their faith on such subjects as they should be.

It must not be thought, however, that Catholics are obliged to believe blindly all miraculous occurrences; but theologians generally teach, that where miracles have been formally sanctioned by the process of canonization, and are accepted by the Church, for that purpose, they ought to be believed by the faithful. Indeed, it would seem more rash to deny such miracles than to believe them, for they are proved with a care far beyond what is given to criminal causes in ordinary Courts of Justice. A good Catholic will not doubt rashly or easily question the miracles which

the Church has accepted as proved, neither will he believe rashly every account of a miracle until it has been thoroughly investigated. It should be remembered that even the miracles of Christ were disbelieved by some of those who actually witnessed them. How, then, can the disciple expect more consideration than the Master? The Master has Himself told the disciple, "The servant is not greater than his master; if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my word, they will also keep yours."

Two important facts seem to have been entirely overlooked by those who refuse to believe the miracles recorded in the "Lives of the Saints." First, they forget that the mere fact of witnessing a miracle does not necessitate belief in it as a supernatural occurrence; and secondly, they forget that the very same kind of objections were made to our Divine Lord's miracles which they make to the miracles of His disciples. Our Divine Lord's miracles were witnessed by hundreds who were perfectly cognizant of all the facts, and perfectly capable of detecting any imposture. In some cases—as in the miracle of restoring the withered hand—they accused Jesus of committing a sin in the very act of healing. On another occasion

when the lame and blind were healed, the Scribes and Pharisees were moved with indignation. When the unclean spirits were driven out of the man, and permitted to enter into the swine, the people implored Jesus to depart out of their coasts, preferring their goods to their God. The Pharisees were continually asking "a sign from heaven," and, when the sign was given, refusing to believe it. And thus do men say now, they would believe if they saw a real miracle, and yet they refuse to believe when they do see one. In many instances, they admitted that miracles had been worked, yet it only seemed to increase their anger and hatred towards Jesus. The history of the blind man, whose cure is related in detail in the ninth chapter of St. John's Gospel, is one of singular instruction and interest. No modern sceptic could have questioned more closely and more rudely than the Pharisees. First, the "neighbours" began to talk about the miracles, and disputed with each other whether the man cured was really the well-known blind beggar. He himself said that he was; but, in such a case, it was not only pardonable, but justifiable, to make sure of his identity. But when this identity was established on competent testimony, it was neither pardonable nor justifiable to deny it; and yet many

of the inquirers would only admit that he was "like him." The next step, after disputing the man's identity, was to dispute the miracle point by point. They overwhelm the man with inquiries; they wish to know every detail. Here, again, there was both a justifiable and an unjustifiable curiosity. The Church examines and tests every alleged miracle with a scrupulous exactness, and does not admit many, even when proved by evidence which would be accepted without hesitation by any court of law. But there was something more here than a wish to ascertain truth. First, the Pharisees accused the Divine Healer of sin, because the workers of miracles had been accused again and again of committing some sin in performing them. Then the climax of indignation was reached when the miracle was proved beyond question. No doubt, had there been a possibility of accusing the man of "imagining" himself cured, when he really was not, this convenient charge would have been brought forward, but the facts were patent to all—the man had been blind from his birth; he now saw.

Again, he was cross-questioned rudely, and almost the very words in which Protestantism rejects Catholic miracles are used: "Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner." Oh,

wisdom of the wise! Oh, penetration of the learned! Oh, profoundness of philosophers! Miracles could not be true; and if by chance an undeniable supernatural occurrence comes across their path, they suddenly become pious, they suddenly profess a wonderful veneration for the Almighty, while denying His power to do almighty works; and they discover that the sinless One is a sinner, that He who has come to deliver them from sin is Himself guilty of it.

And thus the wise ones of the world have ever reviled the friends of God. This man they say is a sinner. This person of whom we hear so much, and who is said to be so famed, is but a poor creature like themselves, probably, in their opinion, far inferior to themselves. Give God the glory. This man of himself can do nothing. He has not the Divine power of Jesus, who worked miracles by inherent omnipotence. But what if this man should be a friend of the Great Master's, and one of those to whom He gave the power to work miracles in His name? Thus, when men dare to compliment God at the expense of His saints, they profess to give Him glory by denying His power and His word. Thus did the Pharisees deny the power and the miracles of Jesus.

But these philosophers had another arrow to

launch—once more they wearied the man with inquiries, the answers to which they were beforehand determined not to believe. He had lost patience, as well he might; and asked if they, too, wished to become disciples of Jesus. Alas! this was not their object—they wished to dispute, not to believe. They inquired, not that they might get information, and by getting information know the truth, but that they might scoff at truth. And then, when argument failed, they took to the last resource of a bad cause, “they reviled him.”

The man bore their personalities in silence; but when they reviled Jesus, he could no longer restrain himself. Well, indeed, might he say it was a “wonderful thing” that they should not know whence Jesus came from, when He had performed so great a miracle. Who could perform such a wonder as to give sight to one born blind, save only He who had given man his power of vision? But, again, reviling took the place of argument, and violence was substituted for inquiry. They cast him out.

The man went and told Jesus; and for his reward obtained the gift of Faith—the Faith which enabled him to believe in the Son of God. The Pharisees appeared to have heard all that passed, and they are not content now without reviling

Jesus. His answer is calm and sorrowful. If they had declared themselves blind, if they had been willing to admit it possible that they might be wrong, there would have been some excuse for them. But they were hardened in unbelief, they were satisfied that they "saw," and that all who differed from them were blind. Hence their condemnation.

There are three classes of persons who refuse to believe the miracles which are recorded in the "Lives of the Saints," and who would, therefore, object to almost every event in the life of the great Apostle of Ireland. These classes are, first, Protestants who believe, as they say, in the miracles of the Bible, but in no others; yet, if they believe in the Bible at all, as an inspired book, they cannot deny that our Divine Lord declared that His disciples should be able to perform the very miracles which they refuse to believe. To doubt, therefore, that miracles are performed, is simply to disbelieve the solemn assertions of our Lord.

All these writers, whether they deny the miracles in Scripture, or accept them, and deny the miracles recorded in the "Lives of the Saints," argue in the same way. Once admit that our Lord and His Apostles performed miracles, and you must admit that what was done by the power

of God once, can be done by the power of God again. Once deny the miracles recorded in Scripture, or refer them to any natural cause, or to any unknown "law," apart from the Divine will, and you destroy the whole credibility of the Christian Faith.

There are several points of consideration in regard to miracles which do not appear to have entered into the calculations of these objectors. In the first place, and most important of all, it does not follow, because a man witnesses the performance of a miracle, that he should be thereby converted to a belief in revelation. This was abundantly proved in the life of Christ, and in the lives of the Apostles. The result of our Divine Lord's miracles, on many occasions, was simply to exasperate the people. What could have been more wonderful than the raising of Lazarus from the dead? Here, unquestionably, there could have been no room for the exercise of that "imagination" to which Dr. Todd attributed the visions of St. Patrick; yet the only effect it had upon the Pharisees, the learned men of that day, was to make them plot more eagerly than ever to kill Jesus, and to kill Lazarus also. It would not have answered their purpose to kill Jesus only, they wished also to get rid of Lazarus, for while

he lived he was the continual proof of the reality of the miracle.

Why was not such a miracle believed? Our Divine Lord Himself has told us many of the witnesses of His miracles had not Faith, and of some it is said that they would not believe. The mere fact of seeing a miracle in itself has no power whatsoever. In the Gospel of St. John xii. 37, we read: "And whereas he had done so many miracles before them they believed not him." And then, the disciple whom Jesus loved, tells us why they did not believe. It was because God Himself had "blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts," as a judgment for their sins. Again and again our Divine Lord insisted on the necessity of Faith in His preaching; and, when about to perform the miracle for the centurion, He said, "Go, and as thou hast believed, be it done unto thee."—St. Matt. viii. 13.

When asked to give sight to the two blind men, He inquired, before performing the miracle, "Do you believe that I can do this unto you?" When His disciples asked why they could not cast out the devil from the possessed child, Jesus replied, "Because of your unbelief."—Matt. xvii. 19. When his disciples were amazed at the withering of the fig-tree, He told them if they had Faith,

they could perform not only similar miracles, but even greater ones.

It would be useless to multiply instances—they may be found almost in every page of Holy Writ; and they prove that without Faith we cannot please God, but that we may reject that gift and refuse to believe if we choose to do so. Faith is the gift of God—a gift to be prayed for humbly and earnestly ; and it is a gift which may be lost at any time by our own fault. It is, therefore, no matter of surprise that the miracles of the Saints are not credited, when the miracles of Jesus were disbelieved.

CHAPTER II.

THE PEOPLE OF KNOCK.

I THINK every visitor to Knock has been struck with the character of the people. It is not one of the least misfortunes or peculiarities of our fallen race, that we are all, more or less, prone to distrust each other. This unhappy failing of humanity goes so far that we find it constantly made a reproach to the saints that they are too charitable; and, as might be expected, on the other hand, we find that even Christian men and women pride themselves on their distrustfulness, as if this were something of which they should be proud; as if, indeed, this distrust were not only right, but absolutely praiseworthy.

Certainly, we are not to believe every wonderful story we hear; but it is to be feared, that in an age when scepticism obtains the palm of honour to a certain extent, even amongst a certain class of Catholics, truth needs more than ever that its defender should be firm and earnest.*

* It was stated recently in an English paper, the *Weekly Register*, which is believed to be under Catholic manage-

It is scarcely possible, encompassed as we are by the open infidelity of the present day, to be sufficiently vigorous in our stand for God and His Church. We should remember that the world does not, and will not, change. We must remember that there is not a canonised saint in heaven to-day who was not persecuted and hated, not only by the world, but by those of his own faith, and equally even by those of his own household. Take every page of hagiography, from the earliest to the latest, and you will find the same unhappy story repeated. The saints were not, and could not be, in harmony with the modern thought of their time, whatever that time may have been. They made no secret of their hatred of the world, and of their contempt for its opinions, and the world made no secret of its hatred of them.

Their idea of evangelising the world was to tell

ment, that when any two opinions might be held on a subject not actually defined by the Church, "the opinion most in harmony with modern thought should be preferred." Certainly this was not the teaching of the saints, and certainly it is the teaching which will give most gratification to the fashionable world, to the world which despises and hates Christ and His disciples, as it would have hated the modern thought of the fashionable world, yet which, as soon as Christianity is fashionable in higher places, gives a condescending patronage.

it the plain, honest truth ; they would not stop to qualify their condemnation of evil to suit the opinions of those whom they sought to convert ; hence the marked difference between the results of the lives of the saints and the results or non-results of the lives of those who are less saintly. The saints stood for the poor and for God's truth ; they were persecuted cruelly sometimes by their own brethren, but their work was crowned with success, even during their lifetime, and their memories were honoured by their very persecutors, after their death. But the unhappy men who are so anxious to conciliate the wealthy and the great, who are fain to persuade themselves that they do God service when they obtain for themselves, by their cowardice or sacrifice of principle, the doubtful appreciation of the noble or the learned—what do they gain ? Nothing, alas ! either for this world or the next. The toleration of their opinions, and the place in society which they gain, is no honour to them, nor to the faith which they profess with so many qualifications and cautions. They will not bear the reproach of Christ, because they will not live the lives of those who bear it. For a time they may fancy they do great things for God, because they do a little for themselves, but it is not for

long. The world is very keen on the point of honour, little as it may practise its own opinions. The world may condemn practices of piety, but it secretly honours the saint. The world may appear to honour the worldly Catholic whose one idea is to stand well with the great, and the learned, and the fashionable. But the world, sooner or later, treats such inconsistency as it deserves.

Persons of this class can never understand those simple and humble souls whom our dear Lord delights to honour.

The first thought of the worldly Catholic is—what will the world think of this? The world does not believe in miracles, in supernatural communications, in the interference of God by His Providence with His creatures; we, therefore, must not even appear to believe such things possible. And it should be remembered that there are degrees of disbelief. There are few, indeed, who would say out boldly, as was said by the Catholic writer above quoted, that modern opinions should be preferred on Divine subjects; but are there not thousands of even well-disposed Catholics who would shrink from an open assertion of preference for the opinions of the world on such matters, who are, nevertheless, secretly guided by them. May God give us grace, each to examine

our hearts, lest they may become cold and chilled by the spirit of the world, and incapable of understanding spiritual things.

Now, the fact that any supernatural communication had been made to humble and simple people would at once prejudice the world and worldly Catholics against it. Such persons would honour the shepherds after Christianity had been established, but if they had been called to the stable of Bethlehem by such humble messengers, they would have treated them and their message with contempt. Yet, throughout the whole history of the Church, we find that the most sublime communications of heaven were made to the humble; hence, even as a matter of probability we ought to be more inclined to credit a supernatural communication made to poor and humble people than one made to the great. And, may we not add, what a lesson this should be to our pride! He who is honoured by God is indeed honoured. Happy will it be for us, whether we are rich or poor, gentle or simple, learned or unlearned, if our opinions and our conduct are like unto the opinions and the conduct of those who are selected by God Himself for the special honour of a special work for Him.

But, it will be said, by persons of this class, that

we must be prudent. Certainly, we must be prudent, but credulity is not prudence, and to condemn a case unheard, or to hear it with such prejudice as will prevent our receiving plain evidence, is not prudence. Too often we find even good, practical Catholics who are led away by worldly ideas of prudence, and who fancy they do God service by rejecting the very graces which He in His mercy has offered them.

Have not such apparitions taken place, from time to time, in the history of God's Church. Even in our own time we have had the apparitions of La Salette and Lourdes. Which were happiest, which were wisest, which were most prudent—those who inquired carefully, and without prejudice, into those graces granted by an all-loving God, and therefore to be received with infinite love and thankfulness by us, or those who, with worldly prudence, turned from them with indifference or ill-concealed contempt, or refused to accept the plain evidence now accepted by the Church?

Oh, for the divine and unerring instinct of faith, which gives the highest wisdom to the unlearned, and the most sublime prudence to the simple.

The children favoured with the visions of La Salette were simply what would be called

grossly ignorant. The gentle Bernadette, of Lourdes, belonged just to that humble, simple class who have little indeed of the world's wisdom or advantages. Some of those to whom the Mother of God came with the grace of her presence, with St. Joseph, the Protector of the Church, and John the Divine, the beloved of the old Celtic race, were of the same humble origin. Some of those thus favoured were more educated, and, indeed, though their position in life is not above the respectable middle class, they are not without natural personal advantages, which might be envied by their superiors.

As I have now spent some time at Knock, and have had what I consider the great honour of being under the same roof with one family of those thus favoured, I have had, and have now, ample opportunities for studying the habits and character of the people.

Mayo is, it is well known, the poorest county in all Ireland. Its landlords are for the most part absentees, and this, not in consequence of the present public agitation, but from preference, and as the custom of years. As a necessary consequence, the money which is collected from the people in rent does not benefit the county. No country, in fact, could be prosperous when every-

thing is taken from it, and nothing is returned to it. So wretched is the land, that by far the larger number of the small farmers could never, even in the best seasons, pay their rents, if they did not earn the money year after year by almost incredible toil in England.*

Yet, notwithstanding the hardships of their lives, there is a spirit of cheerfulness and uncomplaining submission to the will of God which cannot fail to impress the least observant. The characteristics of the people, and especially of the families of those who were favoured with the apparition, is a cheerful, simple piety, infinitely touching and attractive. To be with them, to be in this favoured place, is to have a little foretaste of the coming peace of heaven. All around one

* These are simple and indisputable facts. As I was coming to Knock by train, just before Christmas, 1881, I saw a very large number of men getting out of the train at different stations, who had come home from England for Christmas, and who were welcomed with true Irish warmth by their friends. Most of them were very poorly dressed. The landlord who owns all the property here has never even seen Ireland. These are facts which speak for themselves, and those who are so eager to condemn Ireland should remember that God knows the truth, and that the world will know it, and be compelled to admit it at the last great day.

hears of the reports of disturbance and distraction, here there is a singular, and it seems to me, an indescribable peace. May not this place be destined, in the providence of God, as a port of safety, as a harbour of refuge in these troubled times. May it not be His design that souls should come here to find healing of soul as well as healing of body. May it not become a sanctuary for the troubled in mind as well as for the afflicted in body. Already we know of many who have come here, not for health of body, but to find comfort in terrible mental sufferings from her who is the comforter of the afflicted, and who have indeed found peace and strength. I have spoken to pilgrims who have come here several times for health, who have not obtained what they asked, but who have told me that they did obtain a peace of mind, and a grace for which they had never hoped, and for which they thanked God as earnestly as for any bodily cure.

I think most of those who have visited Knock must have observed the indifference of the people to visitors. I am convinced, from careful observation, that if the number of visitors who come to Knock, now few, now in thousands, suddenly and completely ceased, it would not make the slightest difference to a single native of the place, or for

that part of the matter, to anyone else. I think, too, it has been generally remarked, that there is a singular absence of curiosity amongst the people. I know, of my own personal knowledge, that numbers of ladies have stopped at the house of the Byrnes, whose names are so well known as being the first who saw the apparition, and that they never knew who they were, or whence they came. I asked Mary Byrne on one occasion the name of a visitor, and on my expressing surprise that she could not give me a satisfactory answer, she replied, "Why would I be asking their names, Sister, unless they told me?" I know also that this family have been put to the most serious and most distressing inconvenience to accommodate pilgrims when the crowds have been enormous, and that they bear it all patiently and uncomplaining for the love of God and His Blessed Mother; that for many nights consecutively the family only got rest by sitting on chairs, as even standing room was scarcely to be had under shelter.

It is not known generally, and indeed I only heard it accidentally, that the family of the Byrnes have produced many ministers at God's holy altar. If Ireland has evangelised the world and produced a race of saintly Levites for the altar,

these priests of God were for the most part of humble origin like the apostles, and have been also members of families always remarkable for devotion to the service of God.

Mrs. Byrne's three uncles were priests ; one, the Rev. Henry Burke, was the parish priest of Knock ; he was succeeded by Father O'Grady, the predecessor of Archdeacon Cavanagh. From what I have gathered incidentally, Father Burke, the maternal uncle of the three young people who beheld the apparition, was a man of most saintly life. His piety and love of God are still spoken of by the aged, and it is said he used to shed tears himself, and make his audience, by his soul-stirring sermons, join in holy grief when he preached on the Passion of our Lord. His body rests in Knock grave-yard, an humble spot indeed, on the slope of a sunny hill, almost facing the gable of the apparitions, about a quarter of a mile distant. The inscription on his tomb runs thus :—



I. B. S.

"Lord have mercy on the soul of the Rev. Henry Burke, Parish Priest of Knock and Aughamore, who departed this life on the 10th day of January. Aged 69 years."

Near him lies the humble and unmarked grave

of Maggie Byrne, who died on the Trinity Sunday after the apparition. From that night she simply faded away ; she wanted to go home to see the Queen in Heaven, whose beauty she had gazed on for a few brief moments on earth. May she, and saintly souls like her, intercede for us with God and His most blessed Mother. She died on the 23rd May, 1880. The great feast of Trinity Sunday fell on that day, and while we in the Church's office were singing, *O lux beata Trinitas*, she beheld the vision of eternal beauty. Her young life was one of singular piety, simplicity, and devotion. From her very childhood she had been, as the poor express it, marked with grace. Perhaps few could have been more fit for the favour granted her of being the first to see the apparition.

Father Burke was succeeded by Father O'Grady. He rests in the present Church of Knock which he built, and a most remarkable inscription which he put up over the western door may still be seen. It certainly reads like a prophecy of the future.*

* 'Matt. 11 capt.—My House shall be called the House of Prayer to all Nations. Ps. 117.—This is the gate of the Lord ; the just shall enter it. Erected by Rev. P. O'Grady, P.P., 1828.'

As to the family of the Byrnes, I do not like to write all I think and feel about them. Perhaps some of the readers of this book have visited the lowly cottage where Louise Lateau suffers the mystic crucifixion, where her sisters and her mother do their daily humble toil, and where they are rich not from temporal gain, but from the wealth which she has brought to the Church by the merit of her sufferings, and the lesson which they teach. I must say that I felt in passing a night under the roof of the family, so favoured by the vision of the Mother of God, as one might feel if permitted to rest under the same roof with this humble Belgium maiden. Some score of persons occupy this small farmhouse. There are constantly pilgrims, perhaps twenty or more, coming and going, and yet no Convent was ever quieter, more peaceful, or more regular. And all this is simply the ordinary habit of the family ; the young men live the pastoral life of the shepherd, the only daughter looks after the business with the assistance of her mother and a servant. A little niece, one of those who saw the apparitions, completes the family group. I may add in passing, that Archdeacon Cavanagh has established National Schools all over the parish. There are no less than eleven in

all ; ten of these he has established and looks after himself. The schools are admirably conducted, and I was greatly struck with the quiet manner of the children, the orderly, careful training and general arrangement.

I mention these things because it is too common to hear a certain class of persons who pride themselves on what they think superior judgment and common sense, speaking of Archdeacon Cavanagh as if he were a mere visionary and utterly unfit to be entrusted with the ordinary affairs of life ; and, therefore, not at all to be relied on. He certainly believes what he has witnessed with his own eyes, and he certainly believes the people whom he has lived amongst and taught for years. One day it will be known for all eternity past dispute on which side the delusion lies. The Curé of Ars was distrusted and suspected while he lived, even by those who should have trusted and revered him more than others. But though this opposition had power to injure their own souls, and perhaps, to do harm to the souls of others by discouraging a good work, yet the good work went on all the same.

I think no one, or at least no unprejudiced person, could listen to one of Archdeacon Cavanagh's sermons without understanding better

the character of the people, and the source of their great piety and simplicity. He talks to his people as a father would talk to his dear children. His sermon on the Feast of the Circumcision may be taken as a fair sample; no doubt it would not satisfy those great minds who judge everything by the light of the world's opinions. Such men would have turned away with utter contempt, or the condescending patronage of a very qualified approbation, from the simple teaching of Jesus of Nazareth. They could not, they would not, remain for almost an entire day uttering the words, "make me, I beseech thee, one of the little children"—words uttered not as they are written, but even as they would have been pronounced by a babe just beginning to speak, by one who had beheld a vision of the Infant Christ, and from that hour knew no cessation of desire to become like Him in His holy Infancy.

I can but imperfectly remember the sermon I heard to-day, and there is a grace in the every utterance of a holy and earnest soul, which no mere repetition of the words can convey.

The Archdeacon commenced his sermon, or, I should rather say, prefaced it, by announcing the Feast of the Epiphany, and explaining to the people

that there was no fast on the vigil. It will, perhaps, be remembered that it was on this feast some of the most remarkable of the heavenly manifestations were seen ; but there was not, in his sermon, even the most distant allusion to this circumstance—no word, even suggesting, that there should be any special devotions made on that day by the people, on that account. Having announced the holyday of obligation, the Arch-deacon proceeded with his sermon. I do not propose to give a verbal production of it. I have not a good verbal memory, and it was only after hearing a few sentences that the idea occurred to me of reproducing it for this little book, but I think the substance is accurate.

My beloved brethren, he said, let us thank God for sparing us to see another year. How many have passed into eternity since the last year began, but we are spared for another year. Let us use it to repent of our sins, and to begin to live a new life. Then, in words which I would give much to recall, he spoke of the terrible, the awful danger of sin, of how dreadful it is to be the enemy of God ! Oh ! how terrible it is, he cried out in burning words. How terrible it is to be the enemy of God ! We felt that only one who loved God much could have such fear, not of His anger,

but of not loving Him. To be the enemy of God, of God so good, so merciful, so loving, this was the one thing he told his listening people to fear. He spoke of the pains of hell, briefly, indeed, but sternly ; he, at least, would have no trifling with God's truth, to please modern ideas or modern sentiment.

Let them remember that thousands and thousands and thousands are burning in hell fire, and thank God that they yet lived to escape it, if they pleased. And then he told them how they might escape that place of torment, and how they might secure for themselves the happiness of being the friends of God. He dwelt especially on the necessity of making their morning devotions well. Let each one of you, he said, never neglect to make the sign of the cross the moment you awake from sleep. Remember that there stands at your bedside, watching you, the demon who wants to drag you down to hell by tempting you to sin, the good angel who watches you to help you to heaven. You must choose for the day which you will follow. If you make the sign of the cross at once, you place yourselves on the side of God, you choose His standard, and the devil will flee from you. When rising, you must praise and adore God for His goodness in sparing you to see another

day. Never, never leave the room where you have slept, no matter what the hurry of your business may be, without saying, at least, three Our Fathers and Hail Marys, in honor of the Ever-Blessed Trinity, to place yourself under God's protection for the day. This will only take you a few moments. Then you must offer to God all your actions for the day, that they may belong to Him. Oh ! what merit you will have for any action thus offered up to Him ! It will not take you very long to say—"I offer you all my thoughts, words, and actions to the honour and glory of God, into the hands of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in union with the Adorable Heart of Jesus, and the sufferings of my Divine Lord, for the souls in Purgatory."

All our actions are thus consecrated to God, and offered to His honour and glory, and we leave all our actions at the disposal of the Blessed Virgin for those holy souls who, when released from Purgatory, will never forget us. They will pray constantly for us at the throne of God.

One soul released from Purgatory gives more glory to God than the entire universe.

Such is a brief account of a sermon which will never be forgotton by the writer. It lasted just twenty minutes, and was heard by the people

with rapt attention. Whether it is that the climate of Knock affords a happy exception from colds and coughs or not, I cannot tell, but I never, I was about to say, "heard" a congregation so quiet; there was absolute silence during the whole sermon. The recollected demeanour of the people when there are great crowds or strangers in the place has been noticed before by those who have written about Knock. I was greatly struck with this on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, when I had the happiness to attend Mass. Eight hundred people received Holy Communion at the first Mass, and six hundred at the second Mass. There was, as might be expected, great struggling the day before to get to confession, and on the Feast to get a place at the altar rails. But though each penitent strove with commendable eagerness for a place, as far as I could perceive, there was not a word uttered either of complaint or anger.

CHAPTER III.

THE HISTORY OF THE APPARITIONS.

THE principal facts of the apparitions at Knock have been published and republished so frequently that they are tolerably well known to the public. We shall here enter into the principal difficulties and objections which have been made to them.

After conversation with nearly all those who saw the apparition, I found the simplest account was given by Mary Byrne. I do not think it would be possible for even the most hardened sceptic to doubt that she had seen the vision of which she talks so simply, and with such gentle love of the Immaculate Mother of God. I know indeed, myself, of one case, where a gentleman of education and a great traveller, who was thus convinced; not, indeed, that such visions were Divine, but that the narrator was truthful. His words to me were, "That Miss Byrne saw what she described, I am perfectly certain; but you cannot expect me to believe in such things." These were the very words of the gentleman in

question to myself. "You cannot expect me to believe in such things." Just so. It is the wisdom of the world against the simplicity of the dove. The wisdom of the wise against the wisdom of God.

Mary Byrne was the first person who saw the actual apparition. On the evening of the 21st, of August, 1879, the eve of the Octave of the Assumption, Mary undertook the duty of locking up the church for her brother Dominick. Archdeacon Cavanagh's housekeeper, Mary M'Laughlin had come down to the Byrnes' house for the purpose of seeing Maggie Byrne, who had been on a visit with some friends at the sea. In passing the gable, she had noticed some light or luminous appearance, but the matter made so little impression on her that she did not even speak of it when she came down to the Byrnes' house. It is, however, to be noticed that about an hour previous to this time Maggie Byrne had gone down to Archdeacon Cavanagh's humble cottage, and that she too had noticed some light about the gable, but, on returning to her work at home, she had not made any remark about it. Mary Byrne was accompanied by Mary M'Laughlin, who, of necessity, had to pass the church on her way home. As they passed the

gable of the church at about ten yards distance from it, at a spot which Mary has herself shown me, she looked towards the gable, scarcely knowing why, and at once this vision of beauty was disclosed to her sight. It should be observed that as the two women came up to the church from the Byrnes' house, the gable was not in sight. The two Marys remained for some time lost in awe and wonder, for they soon perceived that what they beheld was not, as they at first supposed, mere earthly carvings, but that it was, indeed, a heavenly vision. Mary flew home to call her brother Dominick and the rest of the family. Dominick at first only laughed, and, I think, anyone who has heard his clear, pleasant laugh, day after day, would know that he was indeed one of those in whom there is no guile. He had thrown himself on the bed, very tired after a hard day's work, for the Byrne family are poor, though respectable, and work as only poor Irish farmers work for a scanty living. Mary did not delay for an instant, and her brother seeing her flying up the road to the church, began to think something had happened to her, and flew after her. He was soon satisfied that he had not been summoned in vain. To him also it was granted to see this vision of beauty, which none who have seen it can

ever forget. Again, I repeat, let anyone, be he ever such a sceptic, visit Knock and spend a week there, and take a quiet opportunity of asking any of those who saw that vision a few incidental questions, and they will be satisfied. The good will thank God and take courage, the sceptic, unless he be indeed hardened in the mortal sin of unbelief, will understand that the narrators are, at least, truthful. Alas! that too many Catholics who would have for themselves a horror of the mortal sin of unbelief, should so often regulate their conduct and model their opinions after the ideas of those who are the enemies of God, and their own enemies, because of their unbelief.*

A little crowd had now assembled, and all who were present saw the same vision plainly. This, in itself, is an extraordinary confirmation of the truth of what has been reported. It is noteworthy that most of the men of the little

* As this class of worldly Catholics are always ready to cavil at a word, we must add here, though it should not be necessary to do so, we do not for a moment infer that Catholics are not perfectly free to believe or disbelieve these apparitions. We speak here only of the spirit in which the consideration of such subjects is approached by different classes of Catholics.

village were then working hard to earn what would make up their rent in England. The eldest of the Byrne family, Bryan, was away, but an uncle of the Byrnes, Dominick Byrne, was at home, and was one of those summoned to the Church. He was considered by his neighbours as rather a hard headed character, and by no means likely to be carried away by a vision. Some time later in the evening, when the apparition had passed away, he lifted his hat reverently and said, "Well, I never knew how good I was till now." One cannot but smile at the simplicity of the remark, but there lay underneath a deep reverence. I have noticed here that the men who pass the scene of the apparitions lift their hats as they go by with great respect, if they have not time to kneel and say a prayer.

I asked Mary Byrne if the people spoke to each other while they were looking at the apparition, but she tells me they did not. Everyone was awe-struck and silent. Except a whispered word to run for the rest of the people—for the inhabitants of this little village are as one family—there was not a word said. Amongst those who were suddenly called to see this marvellous sight was a young girl named Campbell, who was watching by her dying mother; Mrs. Campbell

lived for three weeks longer, but she was to all appearance at this moment in her last agony. Those who know the great affection of the Irish people for the dead and dying will easily understand how difficult it would be to induce a child to leave her mother under such circumstances. But when the news came, it was at least natural that all who surrounded the poor woman should run without a thought to the scene of the apparition, as it was within calling distance of the poor woman's house. To leave such a sight when it was seen must indeed have been difficult; but it must also be remembered that the woman was left absolutely alone; that she was believed to be actually in her agony; that when her daughter, after a few moments' contemplation of the heavenly vision ran back to her mother with a filial piety worthy of a true child of Mary, and exclaimed, "My mother is dying; I must go back to her;" the rest followed as people in a crowd would naturally do; and when all has been said on this point, may not our good God Himself, have ordained that it should be so? Are people in the world ever satisfied in such cases? Whatever is done is sure to be wrong; if the poor soul had been left to die alone and unattended, what exclamations there would have been about want of

Christian charity ; no one, it would have been said, could believe in a vision seen by those who had been so inhuman. One of the principal witnesses to the truth of the fact of the frequent supernatural manifestations at Knock is a person whose evidence could not, and would not, we had almost said, be discredited in any court of justice in the world. Why, then, should it be questioned in this case ? If plain and honest evidence is recklessly discredited in a court of justice, we look at once to find the nature of such conduct. Are we then to refuse to things Divine the justice we give to things human ? What folly ! and where does our injustice recoil. Not on the eternal and ever-living God, whose truth is unchangeable, but on the puny and short sighted mortals, who think themselves wiser than their Maker, who refuse to do His truth the justice which they give so freely to their own interests.

I give the following account of what was seen on the nights of the 5th and 6th of January, 1880, by Sub-Constable Collins, as I received the narrative from his own lips. I may add, once more, for the matter is of grave importance, that if these police constables, and fifteen or twenty respectable men and women stated that they had

seen a house in flames at any time or place, anyone who refused to credit their united or even their individual testimony would be considered a fool. But if one could suppose that their testimony came before a savage, or the inhabitant of a country who had never seen a fire, and therefore did not believe such a thing could be, then, we should pity his ignorance while it would certainly not affect our faith.

Now, we know that from time to time, in the history of the Church, God has been pleased to manifest Himself to His people through exterior signs. Moses, for example, was attracted by a light kindled by God Himself. He goes to see "this great light, why the bush is not burned;" Exodus iii. 3; and then he hears the voice of God, who tells him that He has seen the affliction of His people and has come to help them. Let us suppose that Moses had learned from the philosophy of the Egyptians to despise, or discredit such signs, and that he had turned away with incredulous contempt, how he would have frustrated the Divine designs of God in his regard. If this manifestation at Knock of supernatural light was altogether new in the history of the Church, we might discredit it. But we find, both from Scripture history, and the Lives of

the Saints, that this is not so ; and it is not for us to say why God's designs are what they are, but to accept them with reverent love. We read in the Acts of the Apostles, again, of the sign given to Moses, and that the people of God were brought out of Egypt by "wonders and signs," (Acts vii. 36).

Again, we find (Acts xii. 7,) that a supernatural light shines in the prison of St. Peter. Again, we find St. Paul describing to King Agrippa how he saw "at midday a light from heaven above the brightness of the sun, shining round about him and them that were in company with him." (Acts xxvi. 13.)

In each case, the extraordinary sign appears to have been given to call the attention and to excite the mind, as a preparation for what was to be communicated. But to return to our narrative. Mr. Collins has now been years in the police force. He has been in Knock for the last eleven years, and bears the highest character from his superiors. On this night he was coming on his beat, accompanied by Sub-Constable Froher ; as they passed near the Church, at eleven o'clock on the night of the 5th of January, 1880, they heard people about, and a low murmur of voices. It being their duty to see

after anything unusual, they followed the direction of the voices, and there found fifteen or twenty people praying at the gable of the Church of the Apparition, as we may, perhaps, be permitted to call it. For that there have been apparitions seen at that place there can be no doubt, so universal and so respectable is the testimony to that effect. The two policemen saw the lights exactly as they were seen by the people on that night. I give the description from the account as I noted it down from Constable Collins's own lips an hour ago. At first they saw simply flashes of lights at each side of the gable, and stars moving hither and thither. After a short time a marvellous sight.

Right across the gable, about half-way up from the ground, brilliant lights appeared at intervals of about a yard or a yard and a half from each other. I asked Constable Collins what size the lights were, and how he could best describe their nature. He lifted his hat from the table beside him ; he a homely policeman, and about the last person in the world to "imagine a vision." He said the lights were the size of the crown of his hat, and they appeared like very brilliant lamps. I asked, "Did every one see them ?" "Yes," he replied, "we all saw them." There was also a

“luminous cloud,” or bright white lights, seen where the figure of the Blessed Virgin is said to have appeared.

Father Cavanagh was sent for, as he had retired to his cottage and to rest after a weary day in the Confessional, but when he arrived the heavenly vision had almost disappeared ; still, he told me he saw enough to satisfy his mind that what had been stated, as having been seen before he came, was correct.

I have now to speak of what Father Cavanagh has seen himself. I have his permission to do so, but for reasons which many of my readers will understand, it is not easy to say all that might be said.

But, first, I have to give the testimony of a lady who lives close to Knock, and this is all the testimony I propose to give, for two reasons—one is, that if the testimony of fifteen persons of honour, credibility and respectability, though of an humble class, the testimony of two policemen, the testimony of a lady living within sight of the church, and the testimony of Archdeacon Cavanagh, are all to be discredited, it useless to give further testimony. Next, if I give further evidence it would occupy too much space, for I have spoken to several persons, two or three

of them ladies and one gentleman, the latter a personal friend, who have seen supernatural manifestations both inside and outside the church. The lady, whose testimony I now give, with her permission, is Mrs. Kelly, of Churchfield House. Mr. Kelly is a gentleman of very large property, and lives occasionally at one of his houses, which is close to Knock, and named as above. The house is about half a mile from the church by the road, but it is only about five minutes' walk across the fields. It is situated on a rising ground, and looks down on the church.

On the evening of November 8th, 1879, Mr. Kelly went to dine at Archdeacon Cavanagh's cottage, to meet the priests who formed the Commission, appointed by ecclesiastical authority, to examine into the occurrences at Knock. These priests are the Very Rev. Canon O'Brien, P.P., the Very Rev. Canon Waldron, P.P., the Very Rev. Canon Ronayne, P.P., the Very Rev. Canon Burke, P.P., and the Venerable Archdeacon Cavanagh, P.P. After dark, Mrs. Kelly heard some knocking in a room above stairs. A lady was staying on a visit with her, who was lame, and she feared some accident had happened to her. She ran upstairs, out of breath, and found this lady, sitting in the dark, on the side of her bed,

where she had been saying her beads. She simply asked Mrs. Kelly to look out of the window towards the church. That lady at once complied, and saw what Miss Clifford saw, a bright light all over the roof of the church. So anxious were both ladies not to be deceived, they looked carefully and steadily before calling any one, lest there should be any deception. The servants were then called, and they also saw the lights; and a little lad, of some seven years' old, came running into the room at the same time, to tell his mother he had been looking at the beautiful lights on the church for the last half hour.

When Mrs. Kelly mentioned the subject, next morning, to Archdeacon Cavanagh, he told her that a respectable man, named Walsh, who lives a little distance from the church, had told him that he had seen the light on the church at the same time. We have thus perfectly independent and unimpeachable testimony for this occurrence, as none of Mrs. Kelly's family had spoken of what they had seen until it was mentioned by Mrs. Kelly to Father Cavanagh, and the distance was too great for any communication on the subject to have passed from the servants.

I have now to speak of Archdeacon Cavanagh's testimony, which is a matter of very serious im-

portance. If the subject were not one of such gravity it would be amusing to note the different remarks that are made on this point. First, people will discredit the whole thing, because they say he has not "seen anything." These good people have not waited to enquire whether he has, or has not, seen these supernatural manifestations. Perhaps they do not think the subject of much importance. The last sensational event of the day is more to them; that is for time, the other only concerns eternity. Others, who know that Archdeacon Cavanagh has seen, not only what his faithful and pious flock have seen, dismiss the matter with the remark, that he is "too visionary," or "too good." But all those saints who have seen visions were "visionary" in that sense of the word, and would certainly not have been credited with being very sensible, according to the world's idea of sense. The cause must be either natural, diabolic, or divine. Holy Scripture gives us an unfailing test by which to discriminate human actions "By their fruits ye shall know them." "By the fruit the tree is known" (St. Matt. xii. 33). The occasion on which our Divine Lord spoke these words was an occasion in point. His disciples had performed an action of which the self-righteous Pharisees disapproved. They knew

not what it was to have mercy, either in their own actions or in their judgment of others, and yet they were so sure that they were right! All the miracles that were performed before their eyes, went for nothing, because they were blinded by their pride. What a lesson for us! Are we safe, because we are equally sure that we are right, when we are so unhappy as to condemn or even to persecute God's chosen ones. An act of mercy was condemned by them, because of their narrow ideas of right and wrong. A man with a withered hand is restored, and one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb, is healed, so that he spoke and saw (St. Matt. xii. 22). Stupendous miracles, indeed, but the Pharisees attributed them to the power of the devil, even as modern Pharisees attribute to natural causes—since they too often believe neither in God or devil—what are plainly the results of prayer and faith. But they cannot bear that others should reverence the all Holy One, and as they cannot control the multitude, they seek to destroy their God. "The Pharisees going out made a consultation against him, how they might destroy him" (St Matt. xii. 14). To-day, in countries once Catholic, and the homes of Saints, the very same "consultations" are being made, and by whom? Do not let us forget the

awful fact that the men who have overturned the altars of God, and desolated religious houses in France and Italy, were born and baptized Catholics. Do not let us forget that even as the Jews, God's own people, crucified their Lord when He came to save them; how those who are the children of His one Holy Catholic Church have destroyed as far as they could the souls of millions. Do not let us blame, exclusively, the princes or the statesmen who have led on their people to commit these crimes; rather let us remember that those crimes would never have been committed if the people had not been first corrupted.

May we not fear lest these evils had their beginnings in the human respect which condones the vices of the rich and the great, in thinking little of the sufferings and necessities of God's poor, in offering homage to the opinions of the world, and being guided by these opinions? What could the end be but ruin—even temporal as well as eternal ruin?

But our Divine Lord marked as plainly the tests by which we may discriminate between good and evil. "By the fruit the tree is known" (St. Matt. xii. 33) Let this test be applied to what has occurred at Knock to the priest, to the people, and to those who have visited, and still visit that place.

God's Holy Catholic Church abounds in exemplary and devoted priests. One of the great blessings that has already come out of the recent terrible trial of famine through which Ireland has gone, has been that a very considerable number of Protestants and journalists have borne no light testimony to the virtues and character of the Irish Catholic Clergy. They have recognized in them a spirit of self-sacrifice, of devotion, and of unwordliness, which honest men of the world are not slow to admire. To say that such is the parish priest of Knock, is but to say that he is as faithful and devoted to his flock as are all his brethren in the sacred ministry who surround him. His ecclesiastical superiors have shown their opinion of his merits long since by appointing him to the highest dignity in the diocese under that of Bishop, yet his surroundings are of the very humblest, and there are probably few Archdeacons in the Holy Catholic Church whose habitations consist of only three little rooms, for this is literally all the accommodation the poor cabin he lives in can afford. In one little room he sleeps. It is scarcely large enough to hold a bed and a table. In one little room he lives; it is parlour and study, all in one; and one little place, almost too small to call a room, the only other portion of his dwelling, is used as a kitchen.

We have never heard one word of blame or disapproval uttered against this priest, except that he is supposed to be too devout to the Blessed Mother of God, and that he is supposed to live very much in contemplation, and not to be so practical in matters of worldly business as he might be. Well, if this is a fault, it is one he shares with a great many of the Saints, and with some of the faithful. Putting aside the fact that he has always had an extraordinary devotion to the Mother of God, it would be impossible for any priest to see what he sees day after day, and to know what he knows, and not to thrill with devotion and love to her of whom St. Elizabeth said, "*Whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me*" (St. Luke i. 43.)

As to the people of Knock, I think all those who have been there are devoted to the Mother of God. If this had been some sudden, new born zeal, consequent on the events which have occurred recently, it might be questioned, though we believe many would agree with us in thinking it should not be blamed. But it is not so. From the very dawn of reason, this devoted Child of Mary loved her and served her, and we have heard on good authority, that while studying in

Maynooth, the alma mater of so many saintly souls, he was in the habit of practising not only special devotions, but even special acts of mortification and penance daily in honour of her whom God Himself has honoured above all creatures. This priest has also a great devotion to the souls in Purgatory. It would seem, indeed, as if this devotion, and devotion to the holy Mother of God, were inseparable. She is the Mother of her children, above all of her suffering children, and she is the Refuge of sinners on earth, because her arms and her heart are ever open to those who suffer. She is, also, for the same reason, the Helper of the souls in Pain. How can a mother rest content while her children suffer. On earth we know that sin is our one great source of suffering, hence she uses that plenitude of grace which God has given her to help the sinner to become a saint. But for her dear children who suffer in Purgatory, she longs as only her maternal heart can long. They are safe. So far, they are no cause of anxiety to her. But what mother is satisfied, even when she knows her son has escaped from a terrible danger, until she has clasped him in her arms. And so it is with holy Mary, the faultless Mother of God, the God-given Mother of men. Hence, she loves and rewards

most abundantly those who assist her to obtain the company of her children in Heaven. Hence, the extraordinary graces granted to those who assist and pray for the souls in Purgatory.

To do this, we have said, is one of this priest's great devotions. If he were not living, we could say more. It is only from the necessity of the case that I feel I can be pardoned by him for saying so much. Nor would it be said at all, were it not that the matter has such an important bearing on the subject of the apparitions at Knock. The secrets of this priest are his own ; with his interior life the world has no business, and would have little sympathy. Does not all the history of the Church teach us how even some of the children of the Church turn with contempt or incredulity from that which they should honour. Something or other in the instrument employed by Divine Providence does not please them ; they would have acted quite differently in their choice. Alas ! why do these people not see that they want to put themselves in the place of God, and to dictate to His infinite wisdom how His infinite love should manifest itself. If they do not like the instrument used by God, let them pass it by. He will not complain ; but let us take care how we reject such a grace as has been offered us because

we do not like the manner in which it is sent. But, as we have said, this matter of devotion to the souls in Purgatory has a very important bearing on the apparitions at Knock. Several months before the apparitions, Archdeacon Cavanagh found that he could gratify his holy desire of saying one hundred masses for the souls in Purgatory whom our Blessed Mother most wished released. If the great poverty of his people deprived him of the temporal help which other priests have from the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice for the intentions of the people, he was rejoiced, as he has himself told the present writer, to find that he was free to follow his desire and to offer the adorable Sacrifice for the souls in Purgatory whom the Blessed Virgin most desired to release.

It was immediately after, in fact, I believe within a week or so after the last of the hundred masses had been said, that the apparitions took place.

We do not, of course, pretend that there was any immediate connection between the two events. No doubt many have said mass there for the souls in Purgatory, but the coincidence is remarkable.

A great deal has been said, and not very wisely, about the Archdeacon's action when he heard of

the first apparition. If he had hastened off, people would have said he was too credulous; he was ready to imagine everything, and then to believe it. But he did not hasten; he was perhaps a little incredulous; and so people say he did not believe it; and I have myself heard this absurd assertion made. So impossible is it to satisfy everyone.

Now, once for all, I must state, and I do so on the express authority of Archdeacon Cavanagh himself, that he has no doubt whatever either as to the apparitions which have been seen or the cures which have been obtained through the intercession of the Mother of God at Knock. I have already written what he has said of the first apparition. But many extraordinary favours have been granted to him. The following was written by him at our urgent request, so that the facts might be given in his own words:—

“In the month of August, 1882, I was washing corporals and purifiers in my parlour. I had given them the second wash, and called one of my servants, Sarah Moran, to remove the basin wherein I was washing them, and though I called her twice, I got no reply. She was feeding fowl in the yard; she did not hear me. As I was standing, with my hands raised over the basin

the small gong which rests on my mantelpiece struck so loud that she heard it distinctly, though in the yard at the time, and came in and removed the basin.

"There was not one person in my house at the time but myself, and I declare I did not leave the place where I was standing until the servant came up. This took place at about one o'clock at noon. I heard the Blessed Virgin speaking on two occasions, and saw her more than once. Frequently I saw heavenly lights, in company with others, at the gable of the church, and a beautiful star on one occasion. I saw columns distinctly on the gable of the church at twelve o'clock at noon. My attention was directed towards them by two men, who saw them at a considerable distance. There were four columns. The one next the corner of the gable where the apparition was seen had a figure placed on the top of it. There was a representation of an altar to the east of the columns, with stations grouped on it, and the rest of the gable was scrolled. I see heavenly lights in my room very often, both at night and in the morning. I saw these lights distinctly for the first time on the Feast of St. Francis Xavier, A.D. 1880, and on the Feast of St. John the Evangelist, on the Epiphany, and during the octave.

I very frequently saw these lights this year, and last year oftener than I would relate. I called my niece and my servants on two or three occasions to witness these lights, and they saw them for nearly an hour each time, as they can testify. A great many other manifestations took place, which I would not wish to speak of.

“BARTHOLOMEW CAVANAGH,
“P.P., and Archdeacon.”

With regard to the cures and apparitions at Knock, we append here only a few, as it would make the present work far too large for the purpose for which it is intended to give more. But more will be found in a companion volume, which we are now publishing.

Besides the following, I have in my possession at present several hundred letters from persons of all ranks of life, and from all parts of the world, who have been cured either by a visit to Knock, or by the use of the Knock cement.

It is not as widely known as it should be, that the whole subject is before an Ecclesiastical Commission, appointed by the Archbishop of Tuam. As in the case of Lourdes, so in the case of Knock, some considerable time will probably be allowed to elapse before the Church will place the devotion

on the same basis as the devotions of other shrines of the Ever Blessed Mother of God. In the meantime, the faithful can avail themselves of the many and great graces which are being obtained every day at this favoured shrine.

SISTER MARY FRANCIS CLARE,
Knock, Ballyhaunis, Co. Mayo.

FEAST OF THE PATRONAGE OF
ST. JOSEPH, 1882.

***MEDICAL CERTIFICATES OF CURES
AT KNOCK.***

No I.

BELFAST, 3rd August, 1880.

Some months ago my attention was first called to the case of Elizabeth Duffy, No. — Leeson Street, Belfast, aged sixteen, a pale, fair, anemic girl, hardly able to walk, and suffering almost incessantly from pain. On examination I found a large lump in the groin, and three unhealthy openings in the outer side of the thigh. I expressed my opinion very strongly that nothing but a surgical examination, and, most likely, operation, could be of use. I gave her a little carbolic oil and morphia to allay pain. The morphia sickened her, as indeed I feared it would, owing to constitutional and stomach irritability. I did not see Miss Duffy again till nearly three

weeks ago, on her return from Knock. The change in her condition was surprising. I had seen the girl occasionally, but not as her doctor, on my professional visits to her mother's house, while attending a younger child ; but declined to interfere unless the surgical examination were undergone. She had then become healthy and pleasing-looking, with red lips and full pulse ; and the runnings healed.

I have seen her three or four times since, and each time her condition is better. The lump in the groin is gone, and only the cicatrices of the three ulcers remain. During the entire time she did not take a particle of medicine, the carbolic oil having been used only at first, and the morphia but a few times. To-day I pronounce her well and fit for work. I learn from her mother that the runnings had never ceased since she was a mere child. To sum up, then, I regret that there was not a surgical examination of the limb made. Believing, as I did, that necrosis of the bone undoubtedly existed, I am confident that no medical treatment, change of air, or good food, could have brought about a cure so rapidly, or indeed at all ; and I am forced to the conclusion, though sceptical about miracles, that the all-powerful intercession of the Blessed Virgin has

operated upon Elizabeth Duffy, in a wondrous cure, while at Knock.

JOHN CAMPBELL QUINN, M.D., L.A.

No. II.

KENMARE, 1st August, 1880.

I certify that I have known John Fitzgerald, of Sneem, to be a cripple of four years at least. He went to Knock, and returned in a few days able to walk without the aid of crutches, the leg being about one inch and a half short. This must have been a miracle, as it could not have occurred so suddenly, or at all, without the aid of a surgical operation.

GEOFFREY MCCARTHY, L.R.C.S.I.,
L.K. & Q.C.P.I.

No. III.

KILKELLY, July 25th, 1881.

I certify that I have recently attended Ellen Waldron, Aughamore, aged 14 years, during an attack of chronic peritonitis, with symptoms of formation of matter in subjacent cellular tissue, and tumours in right and left lumbar regions; and that these tumours, and all other signs and

symptoms of disease, suddenly disappeared on the 6th July, at a time when I had her life nigh well despaired of; and that in my opinion this instantaneous recovery is due to a miracle, as is stated by the father of the girl, who applied to her body on this 6th July, sacred substance from the Chapel at Knock.

This opinion is, I consider, borne out by the fact that Dr. Blake attended her during a similar attack in 1877, which attack *did actually* end in the formation of matter, and was discharged through the umbilicus during a period of three months.

JOHN CONROY, L.R.C.S.I.

With regard to Mr. Fitzgerald's cure, the case is within my own knowledge, and is perhaps one of the most remarkable of the Knock cures.

I have at present a certificate of the cure of a woman born deaf and dumb.

As many questions have been asked in regard to my own cure, I can only say that my case was a most complicated one, as I suffered from both rheumatism and an internal disease. The medical certificates of my cure are placed before the Ecclesiastical Commission. For obvious reasons, I can only give a short extract from one of them.

CORK, November 8th, 1881.

"Your case was an extremely bad one, and if ever a human being deserved a miraculous interposition, your virtues and labours in the cause of creed and humanity are paramount. When I last saw you at Kenmare, you certainly were in a most crippled condition, from which I despaired of any relief from medical art. Your cure is outside our experience,

"I am,

"DEAR SISTER M. FRANCIS CLARE,

"Yours very sincerely,

"M. O'KEEFE, M.A., M.D., D.S.C.

Professor of Materia Medica and
Lecturer on Medical Jurisprudence in the late Queen's University, Ireland; Examiner in same University."

The following letter, which is addressed to me, cannot fail to interest the reader:—

ST. STEPHEN'S, SPENCER SQUARE,
RAMSGATE.

DEAR REV'D. MOTHER—Mr. Murphy will be pleased to have his name put in your book, and so shall I, and now I must tell you of another incident respecting Knock. About last November I was awoke in the night with severe neuralgia in my face. It was so bad that I cried with the

pain. I thought of the Knock water, but it was a very cold night and I did not care for some time to get out of bed ; when I did so I did not light a candle, as I could see a very little. My blinds and curtains were drawn, and it was raining fast. I used some of the water to the inside of my mouth and the side of my face, and the pain abated. I prayed earnestly for the pain to be removed, and as I looked at the bottle it seemed as if it was light all down one side, the cement was at one side of the bottom of the bottle, and as I looked it all at once seemed to concentrate itself at this particular place like a star. You may imagine the feeling of devotion it inspired. I prayed for some time, and then, feeling cold, got into bed, praying that if it were not a delusion I might see it again from my bed. I thought that was presumptuous on my part, so after some time, as the pain was not quite gone, I got up again, and as it stood on my dressing table a light like a phosphorescent one shone on each side of the bottom of the bottle for the distance of half an inch, making quite a light upon the toilet cover. I felt the greatest awe and devotion ; it remained some time, no light could possibly have fallen on it, as I had no light. I removed it to my altar, but did not see it again, though I remained in

prayer some time, and it seemed as if light flitted about above me, though I could not distinguish anything not even my crucifix. I only put something light on my shoulders, so was obliged to get into bed. I remained in prayer till I dropped off asleep, and slept soundly till morning, and had no recurrence of the pain, and though naturally susceptible of cold I did not take any harm, though I must have been up nearly an hour with very little on but my nightdress. Some people think it was fancy, but I don't think for a moment that it was, as I am not given to fancies. You may make what use you please of this. Mr. Murphy was also relieved of an unpleasant sensation in the hands by its use. I have great faith in it, and keep it always by me. Wishing you every success, dear and Rev. Mother, and hoping I may succeed, also that I may be able to send my mite with very kind regards, in which Mr. Murphy joins, begging your prayers for both

I am,

Yours very sincerely,

M. MARLOW

To Sister Mary Francis Clare.

The following correspondence has been placed in my hands by the Very Rev. Canon Walker, of Kenilworth, England, for publication. Thank God that there are some souls so truly humble that they do not fear the captious and silly criticisms which will be made if they have the courage to tell what God has done for them :—

9 NORTHUMBERLAND ST., NOTTINGHAM,
March 22nd, 1882.

MY DEAR FATHER WALKER,—Most unreservedly do I leave my letter (the subject of your communication, just to hand) to the good Nun of Kenmare, to be used by her as she may see fit.

The account I sent you of the miraculous movement in the eyes of the little statue of our Lady of Lourdes at Knock, written, as it was, when all the circumstances were quite fresh upon my mind, is sure to be more accurate and complete than any history of the event I might now give; and I do not think I would be at all justified in letting any consideration of a personal nature prevent me giving my humble testimony to the reality of the favour our most beloved Lady bestowed upon so many devout souls, as a reward of their piety, and upon me, her most unworthy servant, probably because, being really sceptical, I was, on that account, a better witness to the wonderful

fact. So far, therefore, as the honour and veneration of our Immaculate Lady may be promoted thereby, let Sister Mary Francis Clare have the unrestricted use of my communication to you, which, but for you, would never have been written, as far as I can see or judge. May I ask you to make a special memento in the Holy Mass for Mary's help in the work of building a church to her holy spouse, St. Joseph, which I have just undertaken? With kindest regards, believe me, dear Rev. Father—I remain, very faithfully yours in Christ,

L. MONAHAN.

39 HESKETH STREET, NOTTINGHAM,

September 24th, 1880.

DEAR REV. FATHER,—I have great pleasure in answering your letter in reference to the statue of our Lady of Knock, and in telling you all the circumstances that led up to my being convinced that the movement observed by so many in the eyes of the statue was no illusion resulting from excitement or highly-wrought devotion, but really a consoling fact.

First, I must tell you that I began my investigation of the alleged miraculous movement with a firm belief that the people were deceived. I

placed myself quite in front of the statue, and within six feet of it, and whilst the crowd around me were greatly moved, I was there in a strictly critical spirit. Of course, I felt that I could not, without disrespect, be out of harmony with the prayerful people around me, and so I repeated to myself "Hail Marys" whilst looking, but I was perfectly calm and unmoved, and, indeed, I may add, incredulous. However, again and again I observed the eye-balls to slightly swell and take a luminous appearance, and the balls of her eyes would ascend so as to be almost covered by the upper eyelid. Occasionally the movement was a transverse one, from right to left, or rather, I should say, *vice versa*, as regards the statue itself.

Although all this became visible to me, time after time, to my amazement and awe, yet did I several times act the part of a Didymus, and persuaded myself that, after all, it must have been a mistake, and so I returned to the testing scrutiny; and perhaps this would have been the final conclusion I should have come to, were it not that I observed, and was greatly struck with the fact, that the exclamations of the crowd, as they observed the eyes to move, to the very instant coincided with the time when I myself saw the phenomenon. This corroborative evidence I could

not resist, and I believed that the miraculous movement took place.

My belief was strengthened when, on at least two subsequent occasions, I sought to refresh myself with observing the consoling prodigy, but could detect no movement; and my conclusion is, that our Blessed Lady vouchsafed this miracle to reward the overflowing piety of the people, whose fervour and confidence was displayed on September 9th in an eloquence and affection of prayer such as I can never forget.

I have now given you all the details I can remember in connection with one of the happiest events of my life. As to the use you may make of this narration, dear Rev. Father, I have written and give it to your Reverence for the same object which you had in seeking it—viz., the honour of the beloved Mother of God. When her glory can be promoted, use it at will. For the rest, we will do well to imitate her own way of dealing with favours—“Et mater ejus conservabat omnia haec in corde suo.”—Believe me, dear Rev. Father, yours sincerely in Christ,

L. CANON MONAHAN.

The Rev. H. W. Walker.

P.S.—I forgot to state that, on September 8th, as I joined the devotions before the statue, I

thought I observed the eyes moving ; but it was evening, and I thought the reflections of the lighted candles on the statue might account for it, so I resolved to examine it carefully in the broad daylight next day. This led to the investigation, the account of which I have given.

L. M.

The number of persons who have seen apparitions in the Church at Knock I believe are far larger than is generally supposed. I have myself been visited by the very persons who have seen these apparitions—persons of all classes and of all degrees of intellectual culture. To accuse all these people of wilful deception is simply absurd ; to accuse them all of self-deception is contrary to common sense. No doubt, there have been some cases of “cures” reported at Knock which never happened. I know of one case in which a man who feigned epilepsy for the purpose of exciting the sympathy of pilgrims, was very expeditiously hunted out of Knock. No doubt some persons—but I am convinced their number must be very limited—may have reported themselves cured, who were not, in order to gain a little pecuniary assistance ; but granted this to be so, it is only to

say that human nature is everywhere and in all ages the same. The Catholic Church is not less holy because too many of its members are very much the reverse. I have myself heard persons of education and culture who did not wish to believe in the apparitions at Knock, it is to be feared, because if such persons believed they would feel themselves obliged to make sacrifices for which they are not prepared, saying flippantly, "The people go to Knock fasting, and then stay up in the church all night fasting, and then, of course, they 'see visions.'" From careful inquiry, I am satisfied that there are not three persons who remained up in the church all night after fasting all day. In fact, very few persons are allowed to remain in the church all night, and only under very special circumstances and with the personal knowledge and permission of Archdeacon Cavenagh. The keys of the church are taken every evening, at eight o'clock, to the Archdeacon's house, and it is not opened until the Angelus is rung in the morning at six o'clock. This duty is generally performed by Archdeacon Cavenagh himself.

I could not but feel grieved when I heard this flippant answer, and saw that there was a preference for believing what was not true, because it

discredited the marvellous graces granted to our poor country, and because there evidently was no desire even to inquire what was true.

I shall merely mention the case of one lady by whom apparitions were seen, as I have the account from her own lips.

Mrs. M—— is a Cork lady, a widow, and manages her large business well and successfully since her husband's death. She suffers severely from pains in the feet and from swollen feet—in fact, much in the same way in which I suffered myself before my cure. She has visited Knock several times to pray for a cure, but the prayer has not been granted. Never shall I forget the tears and smiles on her patient face as she was leaving the last time. Her perfect resignation to the holy will of God in great suffering was, indeed, edifying. But I found it was one of “the graces of Knock” that those who were not cured invariably obtained a gift of grace and spiritual joy which they esteemed well worth their pilgrimage. I observed also in those who were cured an extraordinary spirit of thanksgiving. For example, a respectable mechanic from Glasgow was at Knock during the three or four days of the Christmas holidays. He came to spend his brief holiday there in thanksgiving for his cure, a favour which he

obtained some time previously. Mr. Clarke had suffered from a terrible accident. The sight of the eye was quite destroyed ; the other eye was almost sightless. He was given up as incurable by the faculty, after spending many months in hospital. He came to Knock, received his sight there, and, with the true spirit of Christian thankfulness, he came to spend his Christmas holidays with the Mother of Jesus in quiet, happy thanksgiving.

But to return to Mrs. M—. This lady, on her first visit, was accompanied by her sister, Miss C—, a very young lady, who went more for amusement than devotion, and who had persistently ridiculed the whole thing. As to visions, that idea was too absurd. Mrs. M— only wanted a cure of what was both very painful and a serious hindrance to her business.

On the 27th July Mrs. M— saw the statue of the Blessed Virgin move repeatedly, inclining towards the people as they recited the Rosary. She informed me also that she observed the eyes, a beautiful hazel colour (the statue is not coloured, and that they appeared to glow with light ; and even Miss C—, who had so openly expressed her utter disbelief in any supernatural appearances at Knock, having remained praying in the

church one evening, saw one of the most remarkable of the apparitions. This young lady was so deeply affected by the vision that she has never visited Knock since, feeling that her emotions were too great to be borne.

To tell persons of education and intelligence that they have not seen these apparitions, or that they have not been cured, is simply to waste one's breath. Neither men nor women, of whatever class in society or degree of intelligence, who came to Knock to return thanks for favours granted to them there, can be suspected of delusion or imposture. Yet such visits of thanksgiving are of comparatively frequent occurrence.

There is one point with regard to miraculous cures, or cures reported to be such, which, we venture to suggest, has hardly been considered fairly. Without in any way undervaluing the importance of medical science or medical opinion, it should be noted that, in the first place, medical opinion is not infallible; and, in the second place, that medical opinion as to the treatment of disease, in as far as it is diagnostic, has always been subject to great fluctuation. To take a simple example. At one time, bleeding was the perpetual remedy for almost every form of disease, and even when the system was reduced by

haemorrhage, from whatever cause, it was considered an indication that more blood-letting was necessary. Nor does it always follow that modern ideas are the more correct. In most cases, no doubt, the great advance of knowledge and of scientific research has advanced social and physiological interests. But to commit ourselves blindly to any new theory is to act unwisely, since we are, it would appear, continually on the eve of the discovery of new and almost startling facts, which disturb much of our preconceived theories or experiences.

When a man of science discovers a new source of thought, or finds a clue to a new explanation of old facts, he is naturally enthusiastic, and as naturally positive that he is right.

Notwithstanding the present is an age of rapid discovery, scientific theories are not always reliable because they are new, nor, for the same reason, are they to be discredited. But miracles are as old as pre-Christian ages; and if we believe the words of our Divine Lord to His disciples, we should expect them reverently and hopefully, instead of doubting, when we have reasonable evidence that such graces have been granted.

His Grace the Most Rev. Dr. Lynch, Archbishop of Toronto, has addressed the following letter to one of the Bishops of Canada:—

“ THE PALACE,
SLIGO, June, 1882.

“ MY DEAR LORD,—On Friday morning, the 9th inst., I left Dublin for Claremorris. I was met at the station and most hospitably entertained by the Very Reverend Canon Bourke, parish priest of that place. As I was somewhat discouraged to go to Knock by some people who never saw the place, I determined to interrogate sharply the good Canon before I would proceed further on my journey, or, rather, pilgrimage. The Very Rev. Canon was Secretary to the Ecclesiastical Commission of Investigation appointed by the late illustrious Archbishop of Tuam, to inquire into the reported apparitions and miracles of Knock. The present Archbishop, Most Rev. Dr. M'Evilly, the worthy successor of the late Archbishop M'Hale, assured me lately at Maynooth College that Canon Bourke was a gentleman of very great ability, piety, prudence, and learning, so I was prepared to abide a good deal by the information which I should receive from him. He assured me that fifteen witnesses of different ages and sexes,

and quite worthy of belief, were interrogated apart from one another, all giving the same testimony as to the apparitions, none in any essential particular differing from the rest, so that as far as human testimony could go it was conclusive. On earth we need not expect any other than human testimony, as the angelic is seldom vouchsafed. It cannot be supposed that all these persons either combined together to invent a falsehood and stick to it, or that all were under the same hallucination, and conceived that they saw at different times what did not exist.

“Then, as regards the miracles, many were fully proved. I did not care to interrogate about the miracles, as we had many of them in Toronto ourselves. After dinner we took a carriage with the Very Reverend Canon, and two lay gentlemen, friends of mine, and drove to Knock, about six miles and-a-half distant. Alas! on the road I was saddened to death at seeing a number of cabins deserted, with the doors roughly walled-up with cobble stones. The land around appeared to be of the worst kind, and was left untilled. Eighteen poor families were recently evicted from these miserable cabins and bad land. The scene of desolation was most oppressing, and the mere so when we considered the sufferings of the poor

former inhabitants of these cabins. I visited a neat wooden cottage such as you would see in America built on a safe piece of ground for a poor evicted family, by the charity of the people through the Ladies' Land League, without whose help thousands would have perished of cold and starvation. The children were some of the most graceful and beautiful I ever saw. They were evicted from the place of their birth and childish happiness. I thought that it was a most merciful condescension on the part of our Immaculate Mother to appear in the neighbourhood of such a place, and to give the patience and courage of saints and martyrs to these poor people who had to bear a cross—one of the heaviest that could be imposed on a father, mother, and children—to be driven from their homes by no fault of theirs, but because in the mysterious ways of Providence, three bad harvests had deprived them of the means of paying their rents. I have been told by their parish priest that these poor people left their homes as quietly as saints, resigned to the will of God, but praying to the Holy Mother for patience and another home.

“With a heart depressed by the thought of human depravity, and consoled in turns by the thought of human virtue, and praying that these poor people might be comforted by the Almighty

God in their affliction, we approached the Church of Knock. We came first in sight of the gable upon which the apparitions appeared. A vast number of crutches and sticks lined the walls, and another lot stood in a sort of a pen in the chapel yard. We felt greatly moved at that venerable place. There is a marble statue of the Blessed Virgin in the attitude and in the place where she was seen by the crowd of people, old and young, on the 21st of August, 1879. This statue was presented by a pious lady of Dublin, and statues of St. Joseph and St. John are expected to be presented by some devout clients. There is a very fine iron railing around the ends of the church to prevent the pilgrims from again removing the plaster from the gable; the old plaster was taken down and preserved, and also given to pilgrims from all parts of the world, and like the water of Lourdes, performs wonderful cures, according to the faith and fervour of the people who use it. The things that are not, God makes use of to confound the wise of this world. The surroundings of the church have been so often described that I need not say anything about them. We entered the venerable church, which is large and imposing, with a magnificent marble altar, the gift of another servant of God.

After adoring the Most Blessed Sacrament, and invoking the intercession of the Holy Mother of God, St. Joseph and St. John, we took another view of the church. The venerable Archdeacon Cavanagh, who had been hearing confessions, came to salute us. He is a quiet, unassuming priest of middle age, tall and thin, and ascetic-looking, and well calculated to make a favourable impression on all who approach him. This is another stroke of the holy providence of God to have such a priest in so celebrated a place that the pilgrims may carry away besides other gifts a great reverence for the priesthood of Ireland.

"We returned to Claremorris the same evening, calling at the Presentation Convent, near Claremorris, to see the good nuns of the Presentation Order, and Sister Mary Francis Clare, formerly the "Nun of Kenmare," who resides with the nuns till she can build a convent of her order at Knock. A convent there is much needed for the reception and instruction of the female pilgrims, and I hope there will be also a monastery with an hospice or lodging-house for the men, for in the neighbourhood there are but few hotels, and the crowds of pilgrims betimes is very great. There are such establishments at Lourdes, at Lough Derg,

and other places of pilgrimage. The Convent of the Presentation is situated delightfully in the midst of an ancient forest, with a wide road leading to it through overtopping trees. The house appears about 200 years old, large, and commodious. I had the curiosity to inquire who built it or lived in it. One of the last occupants was called the priest-killer, from the number of priests that he hunted down or killed in the old penal times. Time has his revenges, and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is now offered up, where a priest would be killed by English law for doing so, and especially if the former owner of that house caught him. Sister Mary Francis Clare is collecting funds for her future convent, and is awaiting the orders of her ecclesiastical superiors to commence the work. We have sent our little contributions towards the good work to the Archbishop of Tuam, that we may have a share in the graces that our good God and our Blessed Mother are giving to that holy place of Knock. Next morning at half-past six o'clock we again left Claremorris for Knock, and at eight o'clock we commenced Mass, offering the Holy Sacrifice for ourselves, clergy, religious, and people committed to our care, for we seldom offer the Holy Sacrifice for ourselves alone. There were a few hundred

people at Mass, the pilgrims as well as the people from the neighbourhood. I gave the Communion to about thirty. The fervour which appeared on the countenance of the people and their attention at prayer were very edifying. I said a few words to them exhorting those who lived in the neighbourhood to honesty, sobriety, and holiness, so as to leave no bad impressions on the pious pilgrims who come to visit the holy shrine which is in the midst of them. I spoke to only one witness of the apparition. The young man made a good impression on me. I did not come to investigate, but to pray. I was satisfied with the account of the investigation already made, which is published in a small volume, and sold at Gill and Sons, Sackville Street, Dublin. About the same number of cures and improvements are recorded here as at Lourdes, about 10 per cent., but it is to be hoped that all go away to bear the cross which our Lord refuses to take from them. A few imaginary cures have been related, and some relapses also, and on that account the real cures are denied by the incredulous. All this, of course, is not surprising, nor should we be surprised if some of the nine lepers who were restored to their health by our Lord got again a touch of the leprosy for their ingratitude. St. Peter, also, began to sink

in the waves for either too much or too little confidence. The followers of Thomas before he was truly converted by the descent of the Holy Spirit, are, of course, to be met with everywhere. They are now our would-be scientists, who explain away every miracle—that Lazarus was only in a trance, that the cure of those that were thrown into the probatic pond was effected by the sudden dash into cold water, &c. Our Lord said, ‘Though you do not believe Me believe My works, so I would say that the works performed at Knock speak enough for those who are prone to believe. The most extraordinary objection was, I presume, said in a joke, that Archdeacon Cavanagh’s piety and fervour in the cause rather hinder than hasten the recognition of the wonders of Knock. Yet the testimony and fervour and enthusiasm of our little girl at Lourdes, in France, did not hinder the recognition of the apparition of the Blessed Virgin. The testimony of a crowd of witnesses, and the piety and enthusiasm of the Archdeacon of Knock supported by many well-authenticated miracles, should be at least on an equal footing with those of Lourdes.

“The ecclesiastical authorities will, of course, imitate Rome in its slowness in giving its solemn

decision on the wonders of Knock, but that slowness is not intended to disprove the apparition or to operate against the devotion of the people or the power of the Blessed Virgin. We recollect how much discussion and divergence of opinion there were about the apparition of La Salette and of Lourdes, but time cured all these, and will, I hope, act in the same manner with respect to Knock.

I am, &c., &c.,
✠ JOHN JOSEPH LYNCH,
Arbp. of Toronto."

WASBY'S PICTURE OF AN IRISH PRIEST.

Mr D. R. Locke, an American Protestant journalist, bears the following tribute to the priesthood of Ireland :—

As to the priests, there never was a wilder delusion than exists in the minds of the American people concerning him. I was at the houses, or rather lodgings, of a great many of them, but one example will suffice.

Half-way between Kenmare and Killarney, in a wild, desolate country, lives one of these parish priests, who are supposed to inhabit luxurious

houses, and to live gorgeously, and to be perpetually singing "The Cruiskeen Lawn," with a pipe in one hand and a glass of poteen in the other.

He is a magnificent man. In face and figure he is the exact picture of the lamented Salmon P. Chase, one of the greatest of Americans; and I venture the assertion that had he adopted any other profession and come to America, where genius and intellect mean something, and where great ability finds great rewards, he would have been one of the most eminent of men. A man of great learning, of wonderful intuitions, of cool, clear judgment, of great nerve and unbounded heart, he would, were he to come to America and drop his priestly robes, be President of a great railroad corporation, or a Senator, or anything else he chose to be. But what is he in Ireland? His apartments comprise a bed-room just large enough to hold a very poor bed, and a study, in a better-class farm house, for which he pays rent the same as everybody else does. His floor is uncarpeted, and the entire furniture of his rooms, leaving out his library, would not invoice 10 dols. His parish is one of the widest and bleakest in Ireland, and is twenty-five miles long and eighteen wide.

Now, understand that this man is the lawyer, the friend, the guide and director in temporal as well as spiritual matters, of the entire population of this district. If a husband and wife quarrel, it is his duty to hear and decide. If a tenant gets into trouble with his landlord, he is to go-between to arrange it. In short, every trouble, great and small, in the parish is referred to him, and he must act. He is their lawyer as well as their priest. He is their everything. He supplies to them the intelligence that the most infernal Government on earth has denied them.

But this is a small part of his duties. He has to conduct services at all the chapels in this stretch of country. He has to watch over the morals of all the people. But this is not all. No matter at what hour of night, no matter what the condition of the weather, the summons to the bedside of a dying man to administer the last Sacraments of the Church must be obeyed. It may be that to do this requires a ride on horseback of twenty miles in blinding storm; but it must be done. Every child must be christened, every death-bed must be soothed, every sorrow mitigated by the only comfort suffering people have—the faith in their Church.

What do you suppose this magnificent man gets

for all this? The largest income he ever received in his life was £100, which, reduced to American money, amounts to exactly 484 dols. And out of this he has to pay his rent, his food, his clothing, the keeping of his horse; and what remains goes in charity to the suffering sick—every cent of it.

When the Father dies, his nephews and nieces will not find very good picking from what is left, I assure you.

“Why do you,” I asked, “a man capable of doing so much in the world, stay and do this enormous work for nothing?”

“I was called to it,” was the answer; “what would these poor people do without me?”

I am a vigorous Protestant, and have no especial love for the Catholic Church; but I shall esteem myself especially fortunate if I can make a record in this world that will give me a place in the next within gun-shot of where this man will be placed. I am not capable of making the sacrifices for my fellows that he is doing—I wish to Heaven I was. I found by actual demonstration why the Irish so love their priests. They would be in a still worse way, if possible, without them.

NOTES.

ON DEVOTION TO THE SOULS IN PURGATORY.

As this little work may fall into the hands of those who are not Catholics, a word of explanation may be necessary. The holy custom of praying for the dead is, I had almost said, as old as the world. The action of offering sacrifice is, we know from Holy Scripture, the earliest and divinely instituted form of worship. We read in the Holy Bible (2 Mach. xii. 43) "that it is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from sins." It is true that Protestants, unhappily for themselves, have rejected a considerable part of Holy Scripture, and even at the present day this form of unbelief appears to increase, as these very Protestants are denying the truth of what they once admitted to be the divinely inspired word of God. But they cannot, and do not, deny that the Machabees which the Catholic Church receives as part of the canon of Holy Scripture, is a most ancient and valuable book, written long before the time of our divine Lord, and perfectly authentic. Further, it cannot be denied that it was always the custom of the Jews to pray for the dead as they do at this very day. In the part of Holy Scripture which we have just quoted from, we read that Judas Machabees, the great general and deliverer of the Jews, "sent twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead." We are told that he did this because he believed in the resurrection, and "because he considered that those who had fallen asleep with godliness had great grace laid up for them" (2 Machabees xii. 45). This explains exactly the Catholic doctrine of prayers for the dead. Catholics pray and offer sacrifice for the good and holy dead.

This at once disposes of the wicked idea which has been circulated by the father of lies that Catholics believe that they can alter the eternal destination of the soul. Every Catholic believes, as well as Protestants, that as the tree falls so it lies. At the awful moment of death every human being is judged by God Himself. Some are eternally condemned to hell, others are for ever and for ever permitted to enjoy Heaven. But these last souls may not always enter Heaven at once. Our Blessed Lord Himself tells us about these souls in one of His parables. In St. John xii. 47, 48, we are told that there shall be different degrees of punishment appointed by God Himself. And here I would say one word to those who are not Catholics who may read this book. There is no advantage in believing what is false. In questions of Science or History people take great pains to know the exact truth. But is it not plainly of far greater importance to know what is true in matters of Faith, in matters which affect our eternal interests? The great enemy of souls does his evil best to deceive mankind, but we must remember that he cannot deceive us unless we wish to be deceived ourselves. We have every opportunity of knowing the truth. How unhappy will it be for us for all eternity if we do not avail ourselves of this opportunity, and we must remember that if we wish to know what Catholics really believe, we should ask those who are instructed in the Faith of Catholics, and not take information from books or from persons who, either from ignorance or from malice, make utterly false representations. We shall be held accountable hereafter if we do not seek for information from the right source. Above all, we should implore God, our Heavenly Father, who cannot deceive us, to give us light and grace to know and to believe what is true.

The first apparition was seen on the night or evening of the 21st August, 1879, the eve of the octave of the Assumption. The apparition was first seen by two women, both "Marys," and so little were they prepared to see anything supernatural, and so "real" did the vision appear, that both thought at first they were looking at some statues which they supposed had been brought down from Dublin by the good priest for his Church. It was no statue fashioned by human hands they saw, but a vision from Heaven itself.

Mary McLoughlin is an elderly woman, and housekeeper to Archdeacon Cavanagh, the parish priest. On this evening, Thursday, August 21st, she passed from the priest's house to the house of a Mrs. Byrne, a widow, who lives in the little village of Knock. As Mary McLoughlin passed the gable of the chapel, she observed some figures and a white light about them. She thought this strange, but appears to have had so little idea of anything extraordinary that she went on at once to Mrs. Byrne's house, and concluded that these figures were statues which the priest had got for his church. Mary Byrne returned with Mary McLoughlin, and as they passed the gable of the chapel the two women saw the apparition. It was still bright daylight, but a light brighter than that of any earthly sun shone on the wall of that humble sanctuary.

At first, Mary Byrne also thought she was looking at statues which had been got for the church. But in a few moments both women were undeceived, and they knew that God had granted them the amazing favour of being the first to behold a heavenly vision. Both of these women saw the same vision, and both gave the same description of what they saw. St. Joseph was at the end of the gable near the west, and he appeared to incline towards our Blessed Lady so that his side face was towards the awe-struck women. They remarked even, so plain was the vision, that he appeared aged, and that his hair and beard were grey. The Mother of God stood next, her hands were raised and her eyes, and the whole

figure, as described by the woman, is strikingly like the representation of the Mother of God as seen in the Catacombs, and as drawn by the early Christian artists. This we think is not a little noteworthy, as these good women could never have seen or heard of such representations. The next figure was St. John. Some doubt has been expressed, or rather it has been suggested as possible, that this might have been St. Patrick. But while it is quite evident that had it been the national Apostle some distinctive characteristic would have appeared, we may also take it for granted that God would, by a special providence, give those who saw this vision first, light to know what it meant. The devotion of the early Irish Church to St. John also is well known to those who have studied early Irish annals, and in the beautiful language of a people at once spiritual and poetical, he was styled "John of the Bosom"—John who first lay upon that adorable Heart, and drank of its fountains of love and consolation.

It is also remarkable that several of those who saw the vision, when describing it, remarked that the mitre was small, and not like the large high mitres worn now by bishops. An altar also formed part of this remarkable vision, and above it there was a lamb about the size of "what is three weeks' old," and this lamb was surrounded with "gold-like stars" in the form of a halo. A crucifix was behind and above the altar.

By this time it was quite dark, and the sun had set, though it must be added that it had been raining nearly the whole day, and there had not been even one gleam of sunshine. It was remarked by all who saw this vision that though it was raining heavily all the evening the wall remained quite dry where the vision appeared, and that the bright light illuminated the whole gable when the darkness had set in. It was remarked also that the vision appeared to recede according as people approached to it. It should be said also that the feet of the figures appeared to rest on the tall grass

which then grew close up to the church gable. Mary McLoughlin returned to the priest's house in about an hour and told him what she had seen ; but Archdeacon Cavanagh did not pay much attention to her words, and it would seem also that he was under the impression that the vision had disappeared. He has left on record how deeply he deplored not having gone at once to witness the heavenly wonder, but he adds that God's providence may have permitted that it should be so.

In an age of scepticism and incredulity, when the cry of "priest craft" is not yet dead, it was better that the people, the poor and lowly, should be the ones to testify to this marvel rather than the pastor ; that the sheep should tell of the visit of her, who in the early ages of the Church, was so often pictured as a good shepherdess gathering in the lambs to God's fold, than that the shepherd should be the first to proclaim the wondrous story. Mary Byrne, who it will be remembered had accompanied Mary McLoughlin to the church, has also made a deposition before the authorised ecclesiastical authorities. She described the vision almost in the same words as her companion, but she adds that Miss McLoughlin had not mentioned the subject to her before she saw the apparition ; we have, therefore, two perfectly independent witnesses of the same occurrence. She described the low mitre on the head of St. John, and how he appeared to be reading from a book, and as it were impressing a lesson on an audience or preaching to them. She did not see the crucifix, but described the altar, and the lamb, and the brilliant light around the lamb.

Mary Byrne now ran to call her brother Dominick. He was lying down weary from a day's work, mowing, and at first was disinclined to believe his sister or to move, but seeing how thoroughly she was in earnest, he soon followed her. About twelve others were soon assembled, and all saw the marvellous light and vision. Mrs. Byrne, her daughter Mar-

garet, a little girl named Catherine Manning, and others, are witnesses to what they beheld while they gazed with awe and wonder.

The second of these marvellous apparitions took place on Friday, January 2nd, 1880, and was witnessed by the Venerable Archdeacon Cavanagh and two other persons.

The third was on the night of Monday, January 5th, the eve of the Epiphany, and, like the first, was seen by a number of people, amongst whom were two members of the Royal Irish Constabulary.

There was a considerable difference in these apparitions, but those who saw them have all described them in the same way, with some very trifling difference.

Archdeacon Cavanagh thus describes it:—On the 2nd of January, between eleven and twelve o'clock in the day, as I was going up towards the church, I saw lights upon the gable, and on the outer side of it a pillar—pedestal, column, cap, and all parts perfect. The pillar supported a figure. What the figure represented I was not able to distinguish. Other pillars, decreasing in size, stood along towards the centre of the gable. The smallest was next the centre. On the inner side of the gable wall I saw exquisite luminous scrolls extended.

The third apparition was seen by a considerable number of persons and by two policemen, who, as they declared afterwards, gave little credit to the accounts they had heard until they themselves were eye-witnesses of the marvel. As they passed the church on their round of duty, near midnight, they saw the brightness and light shining upon the gable of the church, and they gave their testimony boldly when questioned by an English correspondent. It is said also that lights are seen frequently at this place, both inside and outside the Church, and that a star of great magnitude and surpassing brightness and beauty has been seen many times, and that lights, which are not of earth, glance around the humble chapel.

Wonderful manifestations have also taken place quite recently, namely, on the night of February 12th, the latter event is thus described by the Venerable Archdeacon Cavanagh, the respected pastor of Knock, who was himself a witness of the fact. Speaking on February 13th, he said :—

“Last night about half-past nine o'clock, I, and several others, saw a most brilliant star outside the gable. It lit up the whole place. It came and struck against the spot where the apparition of the Blessed Virgin was seen, and flashed with the quickness of lightning. I have frequently of late, about eight or nine at night, seen a golden light floating about the gable, with stars and brilliant lights flashing through it, but I never saw anything so dazzling as that one star last night. Inside the church also appearances have been seen. I have seen them myself ; both last night and the night before I saw stars above the altar, on both sides of the little stained glass window representing the Crucifixion of our Lord. Three of them were very plainly visible, one, large, on the right hand side of the window, and two of a smaller size, on the left. I thought I also saw a number of small stars shining much more faintly than those three principal ones scattered about the space on either side of the window. The altar lamp was lighting at the time, and also a small lamp before the Blessed Virgin's Altar, and there were a few candles lighting through the church. The stars were also visible to a number of people, who were in the church at the time.”

The number of letters now before me, addressed to Archdeacon Cavanagh and to myself, containing accounts of cures at Knock, or of miraculous manifestations, are so numerous, that the insertion of them here would occupy too much space. They will be published later in another work.

We close this little work with two remarkable cases, one of cure the other of a miraculous manifestation, written by those who were thus favoured.

The following letter is from the Very Rev. Canon Moynahan of Nottingham, who not only witnessed the movements of the eyes of the Statue of the Blessed Mother of God, as previously related, but who was also an eye witness of one of the most remarkable cures.

In a letter to me dated March 22nd, 1882, he says:—

MY DEAR SISTER IN JESUS CHRIST,—This morning I received a letter from Father Walker of Kenilworth, informing me that you wished to have my testimony as to the moving of the eyes of the little Statue of our Lady of Lourdes at Knock, which took place whilst I was making a Novena at the shrine during the octave of the Nativity of our Lady in 1880. I have written to Father Walker requesting him to put my account, written to and for himself alone, at your disposal without reserve. As I understand you are examining into the miraculous cures, it may be useful to know that I was at the shrine when the young man who came there from one of the mining districts in the North of England, got miraculously cured of spinal disease. I have a very bad memory for names, and cannot recall either the name of the young man or of the town from which he came, but you will have little difficulty in identifying the case. He wore a large artificial body support like a large stays, made of swathings of linen and Plaster-of-Paris. I was present when this surgical appliance was taken from him, and hung up among the votive offerings at the gable of the Church. I was one of three priests whose masses this young man served in succession, kneeling on the ground without a cushion or support of any kind. I who enjoy good health would have been painfully fatigued in my back, if I had to occupy the same position for one-third of the time, and this was done by a person who a week previously could not move without help, and had been pronounced by the doctors to be incurable. May I beg a prayer at our Lady's shrine for a very particular intention. I pray our most dear Lady of Knock to

bless every line you write in her honour.—I remain, very faithfully yours in Christ,

C. L. MOYKANAN.

To Sister M. Francis Clare.

The person referred to in this letter is Mr. Holland. The case in which he was bandaged up is hung on the gable at Knock, amongst the many trophies placed there in honour of the Mother of God.

As I have desired to be most careful in regard to *every case* of cure which I have reported, I have written to each person to ask from themselves particulars of their present state.

Mr. Holland, whose marvellous cure is above related, has joined the Redemptorist Fathers. In reply to my letter, inquiring as to his present state of health, he says:—

St. MARY'S, KINWALL HILL, PRINCE, N.B.,
SCOTLAND, April 2nd, 1828.

DEAR SISTER CLARE,—I received this morning your letter, containing inquiries regarding my health, which, I am happy to say, is perfect (thanks to our Lady of Knock).

I could not desire to be stronger or happier than I now am. Please give my respects to Fathers Cavanagh and Caveny.

Begging that you may very often recommend me to our Lady on the spot where she bestows so many favours on her beloved children, I remain, yours, very sincerely,

Br. URBAN HOLLAND, Postulant.

Sister Mary Francis Clare,
Knock, Ballyhannie, Ireland.

The next case is scarcely less remarkable. The name of Hornold is well known in England. I wrote to Mrs. Hornold a few weeks since, and obtained her permission to publish the following correspondence, which was placed in my hands

by Archdeacon Cavanagh, and also an assurance that her health still continues perfect:—

BLACKHORN PARK,

UPTON-ON-SEVERN,

Friday, March 6th, 1880.

DEAR VERY REV. SIR,—I venture to recommend to your pious prayers, and should she require it in any way as a stranger, to your kind assistance, my wife, Mrs. Gandolfi Hornyold. Having been for two years in a very weak, and indeed serious state of health, and the first medical men of this country and the Continent being unable to do her any good or to understand the cause of her great weakness and pain, we have thought it best to now place the matter in God's hands, that if He so wills it, and it seems to Him good He will restore her to health, through the intercession of our Blessed Lady and Saints Joseph and John at Knock, for the greater glory of His name, and the good of the Catholic faith in these unbelieving days. In order that this may be so, Mrs. Gandolfi Hornyold has obtained the prayers of very many pious friends and religious, and the Novena concludes next Saturday. As important business detained me here, she is accompanied by her maid, who is an excellent Catholic, and of your country. I have great confidence that through the intercession of our Lady of Knock, and of Saints Joseph and John, my wife's health may be restored, for while I can have no merit of my own, my family always remained true to the faith, and continued steadfast in spite of all persecutions. Mrs. Gandolfi Hornyold belongs also to the country which is still wholly Catholic, being daughter of the late Marshal Cabrera, Count de Morella, of Spain; as I have said I recommend her to your prayers and kindness, and we both resign ourselves to the will of God, that if it seems good to Him to cure her by the inter-

cession of our Lady of Knock, He will do so, for His glory alone.—I remain, dear Very Rev. Sir,

CHARLES GLANDOLFI HORNYOLD,

D.L. & J.P.

BLACKMORE PARK,

UPTON-ON-SEVERN,

March, 17th.

DEAR VERY REV. SIR.—I have great happiness of being able to inform you that my wife Mrs. Glandolfi Hornyold returned here in good health from Knock this day-week. She has since enjoyed the same, and is simply not the same person I have known since my marriage two years ago. I quite expected that she would die at Knock or on the road; it was very hard for me to allow her to leave in such a state. She has suffered dreadfully, and nearly incessantly for two to three years from a wound in the chest and a dreadful coughing and retching; all is now gone—she is a new woman, and Almighty God has worked a marvellous miracle through the most powerful intercession of Our Lady of Knock, and the glorious Saints Joseph and John the Evangelist. We feel truly humble and full of gratitude, that He should so have blessed us, and will ever be as grateful for His mercy as in us lies. Mrs. Glandolfi Hornyold will order a new statue of St. John, three feet high, to be made in Munich by Messrs. Mayer as soon as possible, and it will be sent to you when finished. The statue will take some time to make, as it will be copied from the sketch of the Saint as he appeared, and with mitre and book. I am far from rich now, as I am only an eldest son; but if I live to succeed to the family estate, and at that time my wife Mrs. Glandolfi Hornyold is still well, promise to our Lady and Saints John and Joseph to give not less than £300 to improve the Church of Knock, as soon after

succeeding as I am able to command the money. I am most obliged to you for your kindness to Mrs. Glandolfi Hornyold, and begging you to some time remember us in your prayers, I remain, my dear Very Rev, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

CHARLES GLANDOLFI HORNYOLD,

D.L. & J.P.

MALVERN WELLS,

April 27th, 1880.

DEAR VERY REV. SIR.—I enclose a letter received from Mrs. Glandolfi Hornyold's regular medical attendant, Dr. Mortimer Rowland. You cannot expect that a Protestant who does not believe in the supernatural can say that a recovery is miraculous. He can only say that he does not understand what has happened. Mrs. Glandolfi Hornyold continues to enjoy good health. Her cure was entire, and she is simply a different person to what I have ever in the past known her to be.—I remain, very faithfully yours,

CHARLES GLANDOLFI HORNYOLD.

April 16th, 1880.

MY DEAR MR. HORNYOLD,—Thank you for your kind letter of the 8th, and this morning's note and enclosure. It is a great pleasure to be able to congratulate you on Mrs. Hornyold's wonderful recovery of health.—Believe me to be, yours very faithfully,

H. MORTIMER ROWLAND.

April 28th, 1880.

MY DEAR ARCHDEACON,— I take this opportunity of telling you what I have been reproaching myself very much, indeed, for having been silent about at the

time—viz., that, to the best of my belief, I distinctly saw what appeared to be a figure of St. John in the Church at Knock, on Tuesday afternoon, March 9th, between four and five in the afternoon, and a circle of stars above; also, on Friday night, March 12th, about 9.30, I saw a star sweep across the top of the High Altar, with a trail of light behind it. It did so twice; and the light was so vivid I covered my eyes for I could not bear it. I only say this, because it is matter of scruple and anxiety to me, having withheld it.—I remain, yours very respectfully,

LOUISA GLANDOLPH HORNTOLD.

With regard to the case of Mr. Fitzgerald, mentioned at p. 83, I first heard of it from his parish priest, the Rev. Father Davis. I have inquired by letter, within the last few days, and have been assured, in reply, that his cure continues as perfect as when he left Knock.

With one other letter I conclude for the present. The writer of this letter, Mr. Monaghan, holds a Government official appointment in Canada. He came to Ireland to pray for the recovery of a member of his family at Knock. As I had the pleasure of a personal interview with him, I can only say that he seemed a gentleman of sound and mature judgment, and certainly very unlike one who would "imagine" anything supernatural. I begged him to write for me what he had seen, as I was sure his own words would be the most convincing and satisfactory:—

COOTERHILL, July 3rd, 1882.

REV. SISTER MARY FRANCIS CLARE CURRAGH.—You wished me to say something of our Lady of Knock. I must be careful what I commit to paper in reference to this question, as I fear I am unworthy to speak of it at all.

However, our senses teach us to believe what we see. In

any case, I am convinced that I did see the statue of the Blessed Virgin on the altar move the eyes, first downwards, as if looking on the people, then to the side, as if looking at the picture of the Sacred Heart on the left, and then upwards, as if raising her eyes to heaven.

I am convinced in my mind of this, as I had no thought of ever seeing anything of the sort. My mind was rather prejudiced, as I felt myself not worthy to see so wonderful a miracle. However, these are the plain simple facts.

With best respects, hoping you will pray for my safe return home, and at the same time wishing you every prosperity in your laudable undertaking, I remain, your very obedient and humble servant,

T. MONAGHAN.

WHAT WE PROPOSE TO DO AT KNOCK.

THE work which we propose to do at Knock is one which is entirely apart from the important question as to what may be the future decision of the Church as to the devotion. It seems scarcely necessary to point out the importance of carrying out any feasible project for giving employment in a country where there is so much suffering from want of employment. And if I am importunate in urging this matter, I can only plead the words of our Divine Lord, who makes our duty to Him, in the persons of His poor, the one great test by which He will Himself decide our future state, and who condemns in such awful words of denunciation those who pass by their sufferings with coldness and indifference. Besides, as a nun, it is the work to which my life is vowed. No doubt, there are some who do not wish to hear of suffering, because they do not wish to relieve it, and who will, as far as they can, make those who plead for the poor the objects of their ill-will.

The saints of God's Church, who were persecuted for their devotion to the poor and their condemnation of their oppressors, are our examples ; and if we hope to imitate them, even at a distance, we must expect to suffer.

The approbation and encouragement of our superiors will enable us to persevere, and, with the blessing of God, to succeed. In a letter now before me, from the late holy Bishop of Kerry, Most Rev. Dr. MacCarthy, dated December 27, 1880, encouraging me to persevere, in spite of all opposition, in my efforts for our poor, he says :—“ It is hard for a nun to witness distress unmoved, and even those that feel little for distress will not dare to blame her if she is pressing and importunate in her demands.”

With regard to the work which I propose to do at Knock, my present ecclesiastical superior, the Most Rev. Dr. M'Evilly, writes to me :—

“ TUAM, Nov. 18th, 1881.

“ The idea you have in your mind, and wish to carry out, is admirable, and worthy of a religious soul, and I am sure it is one that must commend itself to every one that has the salvation of souls at heart. If it had the effect of encouraging emigration, I could not for a moment have any-

thing to say to it. There is plenty of room and to spare for all our people at home if things were well managed. No people feel more keenly than do our Irish Catholics the force of the Psalmist's words : "Better is a little to the just than the great riches of the wicked" (Ps. xxxvi. 16). Nor is there any part of what I conceive to be a good Bill, taken all in all—a Bill which, in my mind, is entitled to a fair trial, the late Tenant Bill—so objectionable as the portion of it that has reference to emigration. Still, regarded from your point of view, considering that people *will* emigrate, I think your scheme entitled to every consideration and practical encouragement. It has for its object to mitigate a necessary evil and save souls that might otherwise have been lost for ever. As such, I cannot but encourage it.—Very faithfully yours,

“ JOHN M'EVILLY.”

With such encouragement from a prelate who holds so exalted a position in God's Church and who is my ecclesiastical superior, I could not doubt that God's blessing would be on my work.

My object is simple. It is to found an Industrial Training House, where girls of all ages would be received, whether orphans or otherwise, with the principal object of training them for useful and

practical home duties, for good domestic servants, or for situations or employments suitable to their various stations, either in Ireland, or, if they must emigrate, in America. Until now we have not been able to carry out this long planned, and long hoped for project. To make it a success will require no ordinary care, and no ordinary effort. But with the blessing of our ecclesiastical superiors, and the cordial co-operation of friends, we hope to see the work begun ere long. A New York priest, the Rev. Father Droomgoole, has already established a magnificent house in New York for training boys for their future life in such a way as will make them useful and practical members of society, and Lord A. Douglas has done the same in London. Is it too much for us to hope to do the same for the Irish girls? Are girls to be exported like cattle to America at the caprice, or so-called benevolence, of a few gentlemen, who can see no other way for benefiting Ireland but to depopulate her? Is bleeding to death the way to render the body physical or political prosperous? If even English people could only be led to see their true interest they would stop emigration as a crying evil, or a time will come when they will look in vain for stalwart men to fight their foreign foes, for strong arms to reap their harvests, for toilers in their

mines and factories, and even for men to cultivate Ireland. That some emigration may be necessary, or rather that it may be unavoidable, we do not doubt, but is Ireland to be devastated by both emigration and famine ; and if it is, where are our rights as a nation, and where will the Church find her best priests, her best nuns, her most devoted and faithful children ? Already we know too well that vocations are becoming more scarce, and that the demand for Irish ladies to enter convents in foreign lands is becoming daily more urgent, while the supply of labourers is fewer.

But all are not called to the altar or the cloister, and our work at Knock in the Industrial Training House will be for those who will be the future wives and mothers of Ireland. To teach girls how to avail themselves of the great benefits, social, and, we may even say, religious, which will certainly follow the practice of practical home industry, is our great ambition. To teach them to occupy every moment in some way that will be both useful and remunerative ; to teach each what each has most aptitude for doing, whether as teacher, or lace worker, or knitter, or domestic servant ; to teach all and everyone how to make their poor homes more comfortable for their fathers and their brothers, by practising simple industries, by

rearing fowl, by keeping bees, by saving their eggs properly, by making their butter so that it will command a higher price, by knitting stockings in odd spare moments ; to teach them to win their households—for these girls will (most of them) be one day wives and mothers—from drunkenness ; for though it is said that drunkenness is the cause of poverty, I believe the reverse is rather the true state of the case, and that poverty is the cause of at least a great deal of the drunkenness. This is what we hope to accomplish, and for this object we ask the prayers and the practical help of your readers.

From his Grace the Most Rev. Dr. MacEvilly.

TUAM, November 23rd, 1881.

DEAR MOTHER MARY CLARE,—It gives us great pleasure to accede to your request to be permitted to build a Convent of your Order in Knock, in this diocese of Tuam. This permission is merely *conditional* at present. We grant it on condition that before the foundation stone of the projected Convent is laid, ample funds are provided for bringing the building to a successful conclusion, and security given for ample pre-existing funds for the permanent support of the Sisters who may be located there to do the work of God. We would, moreover, have it distinctly understood that in thus acceding to your pious request, it is by no means to be inferred that we sanction or approve of the alleged apparitions or miracles said to have occurred at Knock.

As at present disposed, we neither approve nor disapprove of such. We reserve our judgment till the time comes, if ever, for canonically and judicially investigating the whole matter. But

at present we neither admit or reject the alleged occurrences. So that we are in a position to approach the consideration of the subject with a perfectly unbiased mind.

Commending your pious undertaking to the mercy of God, to the intercession of His ever glorious and immaculate Mother, and her chaste spouse, St. Joseph, the foster-father of the Son of God and patron of the universal Church.—Very faithfully yours,

⊕ JOHN ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

From the Ven. Archdeacon Cavanagh, P.P., V.G.

KNOCK, November 16th, 1881.

DEAR SISTER MARY FRANCIS CLARE,—It is my highest ambition and most ardent desire to see a Convent established at Knock, as I am convinced that it would prove productive of incalculable good, and the source of numberless blessings to the people, not only of the locality, but to the many pious pilgrims who resort here from America, and so many other countries.

I trust that you will, in the merciful designs of

God, become the founder of the religious community so earnestly longed for, as I am satisfied that under your benign care the good work would prosper and succeed.

I trust that nothing will deter you from complying with my request.—I remain, dear Sister Clare, yours faithfully in Jesus Christ,

B. CAVANAGH, P.P., *Archd.*

The New Convent at Knock.

HELP FOR THE HOLY SOULS IN PURGATORY.

THE close connection between the Apparitions at Knock and devotion to the holy Souls in Purgatory is not generally known. A few days before the first Apparition, Archdeacon Cavanagh had just finished saying 100 Masses for the holy Souls in Purgatory. The first large sum of money offered for the Building of the New Convent has been made by a young widow lady, who is desirous of having perpetual prayers there for the repose of her husband's soul and a memorial of him. This unexpected offering, coming in this particular form, has led us to suggest that those who wish to have special and perpetual prayers offered for deceased relatives or for themselves, both during life and after death, should undertake to build particular portions of the Convent, where a Memorial would be placed of those relations for whom they wish prayers to be offered perpetually. Any person collecting or giving a donation of £33, in honour of the thirty-three years of our Divine Lord's life on earth, will have the name of any relative for

whom he wishes prayers or his own name placed as a Founder on a tablet in the corridor of the Convent, where the Sisters will pray perpetually for him, and will have the benefit of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, which will be offered once every week, and Office for the Dead, which will be said once a week, for this intention. Those who wish to share in this great grace should communicate at once with SISTER MARY FRANCIS CLARE, in order to secure it, as the number of those who can do so will necessarily be limited.

One of the great objects of the Sisters of this Convent will be Devotion to the holy Souls in Purgatory. The beads used by the Sisters will be specially blessed and indulgenced for this purpose. All deceased benefactors will be constantly prayed for.

A MORNING OFFERING.

MASS is said every Wednesday Morning at eight o'clock, in the Church of Knock, by the VEN. ARCHDEACON CAVANAGH, P.P., for all who contribute to the Knock Convent Building Fund. All who wish to share in this great grace should make their intention each Wednesday morning, or on the previous evening, and say some short prayers for the intentions for which they wish to have the Holy Sacrifice offered. Thus there will be a holy union of prayer for all. Let us also pray for all who are uniting with us for the same purpose, so that by our prayers we may help each other's intention. Let us also pray for peace, and for brighter days for our dear country.

Those who wish a share in the Wednesday Mass, and in the prayers offered three times each day at Knock, should send their names and full address to SISTER MARY FRANCIS CLARE, Knock, Ballyhaunis, Co. Mayo.

A MORNING OFFERING.

My God, I offer Thee this day
All I shall do or think or say ;
Uniting it with what was done
On earth, by Jesus Christ, Thy Son.
I make this offering for the souls
Whom God's own Mother would release,
That she may place them near her Son,
In everlasting rest and peace.
Oh, Mary, bless thy child to-day,
And guide me on my heavenly way.

Saint Joseph pray for me.