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THE LIFE

OF

GREGORY LOPEZ,

A HERMIT IN AMERICA.

Francisco de Loya

“For many years I despaired of finding any inhabitant of Great Britain,
that could stand in any degree of comparison with Gregory Lopez.

Rev. John Wesley.

NEW-YORK.

PUBLISHED BY JOHN EYRE,

AND SOLD AT

FALSOM'S BOOK STORE, 40 FULTON ST.

1841

BX4705

L73L63

1841

copy 2

PIERCY & REED, PRINTERS.

84243

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LC Control Number



tmp96 027335

Recat long May 11/28
Recat H.R. 29227

P R E F A C E .

THE Life of Gregory Lopez was reprinted in England about sixty years ago, and as there is no subject in literature more interesting than narratives of this kind, or more profitable to the pious reader than religious biography ; and as the subject of it lived the greatest part of his days in America, (though well nigh forgotten at the present period) the publisher hopes that no apology is necessary for giving it to the public.

The language of the pious character is, "Who will shew me any good? How shall I obtain a greater conformity to the life of my Saviour—or what shall I do that I may be more devoted to God?" Hence, to have the lives of the most devoted characters minutely depicted, their actions exhibited in the clearest manner, and their conversation, in a written document,

laid before them, is no small gratification—nay, it is a considerable motive to stimulate them in many particulars to follow, step by step, such worthy examples. Nor can we speak lightly of the motive when followed with a single eye to God's glory, seeing the Scriptures set before us such examples, and exhort us to follow them. Our blessed Saviour has said, "Go and do thou likewise." And an apostle has also said, "Be ye followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." But how could this have been done had no record been left as a memorial of them ?

This narrative, however, is not intended to excite any one to follow him to the desert, nor turn hermit; for, whatever reasons some people may have had, in times past, for secluding themselves—or, however God may have blest them in that situation—yet this, without the authority of his word of command, is not a sufficient reason for others to follow them. Some people, probably, have said that the life of a hermit is not the life of a Christian; but it may not be amiss to suggest to the reader, that

the ways of Providence to many have been diversified and mysterious—that many things are permitted for a trial of faith under this disordered state of the world, and many difficulties encountered by necessity which finally prove a blessing to mankind, though not primarily according to the will of God. Thus, the apostle was banished to the Isle of Patmos, where he wrote the Revelation, and the author of the Pilgrim's Progress was cast into prison, where he studied that book which has been so blest to mankind. And while some, from necessity, have sought a place of safety in mountains, in dens and caves of the earth, some others, probably from mistaken notions, have voluntarily retired to the woods, the most effectually to mortify themselves, or as the best method of devoting themselves perfectly to God, who, notwithstanding an error, have given us worthy examples. Thus, in both instances, good has been brought out of evil.

Hence, considering this holy man independent of error and one of the purest of characters,

or exhibiting him to the world in an age of dissipation like this, his example, in many instances, notwithstanding such circumstances, may be studied to great advantage. At a time when thousands are striving to excite each other's vanity, by adding superficial embellishments to natural beauty; at a period when many others are trying to outlive their fellows in broadcloths and velvets, their silks and satins, or in some splendid piece of furniture, which no person in the neighborhood can equal; it may not be altogether in vain to show them "a more excellent way," by setting before them a character who renounced such vanities; not unseasonable to remind them that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance which he possesseth;" to convince them, that, while some people possess every thing, and enjoy nothing, there is a possibility, to use the apostle's words, of "having nothing, and yet possessing all things;" that there is a degree of faithfulness, which, after having forsaken all, is graciously rewarded with a hundred-fold in this life; that such people invariably obtain a peace that is

more permanent than the foundations of the earth, and which they cannot lose though the earth be removed, and the mountains carried into the midst of the sea—in a word, to assure them that

“Nothing have the just to lose,
By worlds on world’s destroy’d.”

Or, finally, to set before them the beauties of self-denial, which leads to lasting enjoyment, and to convince them that Christianity in its maturity always proves an antidote to the most fatal sickness, and gives a perfect meetness for the kingdom of heaven. But, say some people, “We must live and act according to times and circumstances—this and that are only indifferent things, according to the customs of the day—there is nothing wrong in conforming to the refinements of the age,” &c. Nay, let us reflect for a moment! Can any length of time add wisdom to Him who was from everlasting to everlasting? Shall we presume to say that any future period can alter the character of His law, or that any refinements in a fallen people can tolerate pride, or make it less sinful

than it was a hundred or a thousand years ago? Is not every man, though born and educated in a Christian land, an heathen and an idolater, only as he embraces Christianity by faith in Christ Jesus, and by virtue of that faith takes up his cross to follow him? And is it not written, that "the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?" Wherefore, if such is universally our condition, and we are all equally involved in the common ruin, let us lay aside the gaudy robes of the effeminate, to obtain the spotless raiment of Christ's righteousness, that, being clad in the wedding garment of God's people, we may be admitted with them into everlasting habitations.

"For many years (said the Rev. John Wesley) I despaired of finding any inhabitant of Great Britain that could stand in any degree of comparison with Gregory Lopez," &c., which was saying a great deal of him. Nay, could he have said any thing more? Hence, if his life was read to such advantage at that day, why not now? Nevertheless, this eminent man did

not approve of following him to the desert. This would be a step absolutely impracticable to thousands, and followed by death to many others: yet, all might follow him in some particulars, or read his life to their mutual advantage. Let us, therefore, put on the whole armor of God, and practice his virtues at home, without retiring to the desert—follow his example in renouncing the love of this present evil world, and all sinful pleasures—imitate him in plainness of speech, avoiding evil speaking and useless ceremonies—his abstinence—his fervent prayer—his striving seventy times seven to enter in at the strait gate of perfect love to God—perfect resignation to his will—perfect charity towards all men—and his earnest and perpetual desire to do the will of God on earth as it is done in heaven.

JOHN EYRE.

NEW YORK, January 2, 1841.

THE LIFE OF GREGORY LOPEZ.

CHAPTER I.

His birth and employment till he was twenty years of age.

GREGORY LOPEZ was born at Madrid ; he seemed to be one without father, without mother. For no one ever heard him mention his family, or knew him write to his relations or enquire concerning them. This made many believe that he was the son of some persons of great quality. What confirmed them in that opinion was the manner of his behavior ; genteel, noble, and full of humble gravity ; particularly, when he had to do with men of rank, or eminence. For they admired the freedom and firmness with which he spoke to them, yet without violating the respect which he owed them.

One having pressed him to tell of what family he was, and what was the name of his

father, he appeared somewhat moved, and replied with a countenance full of gravity, quite extraordinary, "My country is Heaven, and my father is God." Father Juan Ozorio, having asked, of what country he was? he replied only, "of the same country with your reverence." A few days before his death, when I was resolved to know the name of his parents, in order to send them an account of his life and death, he told me, "ever since I left all to evil wholly to God, I have considered God alone as my Father. As to my brothers, I do not doubt but they are dead, for I was the youngest of all." Behold, how this servant of God had forgotten the advantages of his birth; he considered the nobleness of his family as baseness; he esteemed only the honor God had done him.

He was born the fourth of July, 1542, in the reign of the Emperor Charles the fifth. At his baptism he was named Gregory; as to the surname of Lopez, I do not believe it was the name of his family; but rather that he endeavored to conceal himself under that borrowed name.

God favored him with uncommon grace, even from his tender years. Having once asked him, whether he had begun to serve God as soon as

he had the use of his reason ? He replied, “ he was not sure, whether he had begun then or a little after ; but it is true God had blest him very early with different sentiments from those which children use to have.” And he was accustomed to say, as from happy experience, “ Happy is he who bears the yoke of the Lord from his youth.”

With a wonderful facility he learned to read, and to read so well that he surpassed his masters ; as one may still judge from the things written by him, with such elegance, such strength, and in so beautiful a character, that one cannot look upon them without admiration.

It is certain, and he owned it freely, that he never learned, either Latin, or any of the liberal arts or sciences, so that there is no room to doubt, but it was God who was his master in several things, and who taught him many truths, divine and human, which others hardly attain by much labor.

Being as yet very young, he went without saying any thing to his parents, into the kingdom of Navarre, where he remained in a religious retirement, upwards of six years ; it was here that his soul as a fruitful soil watered

with the dew of heaven, received the seeds of that holiness which afterwards produced excellent fruit in great abundance.

His father having carefully sought, at length found him there. He brought him to Valladolid, where the court then was, and by a surprising change he was made page to the emperor ; God ordering thus, that even in the retinue of a prince, there should be one that was a saint.

The fear of God was so rooted in the heart of young Lopez, that even a court-life, and all its various agitations, which like impetuous winds are apt to ruffle the calmest souls, that he was always recollected ; and he has told me, that when his master sent him with any message, he had such an attention to God, that neither persons of the highest quality with whom he had to do, nor all the other occasions of distracting the mind, which are found in the courts of princes, interrupted his thinking of God. And by this means he preserved the same peace and devotion, as if he had still been in the desert of Navarre.

Thus, even in the heat of youth, and in the dangerous snares of a court, he passed two or

three years with a mind as unmoved, and a judgment as solid, as if he had been ever so far advanced in years.

Being one day in prayer in a church at Toledo, God gave him a fuller and stronger resolution, than he had ever yet had of executing his design to live wholly to Him. But as resolutions of importance ought not to be made, but in consequence of much prayer, he passed several days in prayer and watching in the church of Guadaloupe, to obtain light, how to proceed in what he purposed ; and hereby he was more and more determined, to quit both the court, and his friends, and native country ; that there might be no obstruction to the entire devotion of himself to God, which his soul continually panted after.

CHAPTER II.

His voyage to New Spain.

He arrived at New Spain in the year 1562, and landed at Vera Cruz, being then just twenty years of age. He distributed among the poor, the stuffs which he brought with him, to the value of eight thousand four hundred reals, shewing how little he esteemed the riches of this new world; while instead of seeking them there he gave away what he had brought thither, without reserving any thing for himself.

From Vera Cruz he went to Mexico, where he stayed some days at a notary's, named St. Romain, to earn, by writing, as much as would carry him to Zacaticas, where he hoped fully to execute his design.

Coming thither, he changed his dress to one suitable for his design, and went eight leagues thence to the valley of Amagac, inhabited by Chichinque Indians, who for their cruelty and fierceness, were then terrible to the Spaniards.

But this servant of God not having been afraid to declare war against all the invisible powers of hell, was under no apprehension from visible enemies: nothing doubting, with the assistance of God, to conquer their savageness and fierceness, by his patience, sweetness and humanity. The effect answered his expectation; for, after he had spent but a few days in the valley, and conversed with the Indians, their fierceness was gone, and he had gained the affection of all that were near him.

Seeking for a place proper for his design, he found, several leagues from Zacaticas, a farm called Temaxeco, belonging to Captain Pedro Carrillo de Avila; this captain, seeing him so young, so well made, and of so fine a carriage, barefooted, without shirt or hat, clothed only in a coat of coarse cloth, which reached down to his heels, and was girt round with a rope, asked him, whither he was going, and what it was that had brought him to that country? He answered, "that he was come from Castile with the last flota, and that he was seeking an hermitage,* to pass his life there in the service

* This step does not accord with God's design towards his rational creatures, and, therefore, cannot be

of God ; but that he had not till now found a proper place." He then gave him the reasons which induced him to retire from the world, with which he was entirely satisfied. Carrillo offered him men to build him a little house in the place which he had chosen : he thanked him, but without accepting his offer, only desiring leave to work himself. He then, with his own hands, built a little cell, only the Indians assisting him therein.

He entered into the twenty-first year of his age when he entered on his solitary life ; and seeing himself engaged in a war, wherein he had so powerful enemies to combat, the first thing which he did, was to throw himself wholly into the hands of God, and to implore his succor in these words—" Lord, I here engage myself altogether in thy service. If I perish, it will not be my business, but thine to answer for it." Words that expressed the absolute confidence he had in the power and mercy of

recommended to any one. In the beginning, God our Creator said, " It is not good that the man should be alone," &c. And Christ our Redeemer commanded, " Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

God, and his full assurance that God would not suffer him to perish, whilst he cast himself wholly upon him.

From the moment that Lopez had thus abandoned himself in fervent love to whatever it should please God to order concerning him, he felt the sensible effects of his assistance, and began to walk valiantly and with a great pace in the narrow way of penitence ; without ever looking back, without ever stopping, without ever losing sight of that light by which it pleased God to guide him. He lay upon the ground ; and, to keep him from the cold, he had but one quilt, and a stone for his pillow. These were all the moveables of his cell ; and all the ornaments of it, were sentences he had wrote upon the walls, exhorting to go on to perfection. His abstinence was not only great, but continual ; he eat only once a day, and then very little, and of the coarsest food ; for, generally, it was nothing but parched corn. And this he so rigorously observed, that he could not be persuaded to dispense with himself, even when in violent sickness. He never tasted flesh ; and when any happened to be given

him, he received it with thanks, but touched it not.

Captain Carrillo had two sons, Sebastian and Pedro. The latter has often mentioned, that Lopez living near them, his father used to send them to him, to learn to read and write; and that he often found him on his knees, in deep prayer, with his arms extended, and his eyes fixed on the earth. The two brothers, in return for the pains he took with them, brought him cakes made of Indian corn, the only thing (as we observed) on which he lived, unless he sometimes ate a raw lettuce or turnip. And if they happened to bring him two or three cakes at once, it gave him dissatisfaction. He told them, one served him for eight days, and he ate them hard and dry as they were. If their father and mother sent him any thing else, he sent it back again. They sometimes found in his cell rabbits, quails, and figs, which in this country were accounted delicious food. These (after telling them they were the presents of his good friends the Chichinques) he gave them to carry to their mother.

He never made use of any candle, saying he had no business which required it. As the

nights were exceeding cold, the Captain offered him a better quilt; but he did not accept of it.

When there came any minister, who performed divine service at the Captain's, he sent word to Lopez, who came to hear it with the greatest devotion, and immediately after returned home, without staying to eat, however pressed thereto, or speaking to any person whatever. He never went out of his cell to divert himself, or even to entertain himself with a good neighbor. Thus it was that this holy giant went on amain, in the way wherein the love of God had constrained him to enter.

CHAPTER III.

The conflicts he sustained, and the assistance he received, whereby he was more than conqueror.

Those uncommon temptations of the devil, which God permits to come upon his saints in their solitude, arise from the shame of that proud spirit, when he sees himself vanquished by them.* Accordingly, though the extreme austerity of his life, and his want of almost all necessaries, occasioned Lopez to suffer so much, yet these sufferings appeared inconsiderable to him, compared to the inward pains which he endured.

In one rencounter (he owned to a friend) he

* Perhaps it is more proper to say, that his uncommon temptations arose in a great measure from his peculiar situation. If the husbandman were to leave the labors of the field for a life of retiremet, he would enter upon a new course of life, must feel the effects of it, and treat himself accordingly. Nevertheless, we may admit, that if a person engages to serve God in the most perfect manner, either in solitude or more public life, the Devil will use all his power to oppose and afflict him.

had such a conflict with the grand enemy, and was obliged to use so violent efforts in resisting him, that the blood gushed out of his nose and ears. He was experienced in all sorts of spiritual weapons, long before his combat; such a symptom, therefore, in one that was accustomed to conquer, shewed how obstinate that fight must have been.

Once the devil attacked him in a visible shape.* Being asked what he had done to defend himself, he replied, "Believing I could not do better than continue in the design God had put into my heart, I resolved to labor therein with all my strength; on which Satan disappeared, and never tempted me again in that manner."

It is certain, that during the whole time of his solitude, the devil strove to affright him by

* Many people speak as if this age is too much enlightened to admit of this assertion; but, how can we absolutely deny it, without equally invalidating the testimony of scripture? St. Matthew and St. Luke assure us, that the Devil appeared to Jesus Christ, &c.; that, after his departure, angels came and ministered unto him. Matt. iv. 3—11; Luke iv. 3—13. Was all this in imagination only? If not, is it altogether incredible that he should be permitted to appear on any occasion to one of his faithful followers? If so, how can we understand that scripture, viz. "He that is perfect, shall be as his master?"

all means possible ; sometimes by the roaring and rushing of wild beasts, sometimes by the cruelty wherewith he saw the Indians massacre the Spaniards, at a small distance from him ; sometimes by various inward temptations, and by the artifices he used to deceive him. Continual prayer, both day and night, was the remedy used in these encounters ; in which, that he might not faint, there was no kind of effort which he was not obliged to use.

Among the sentiments from which he drew the most strength and the greatest consolations, were these words : “ Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven ; amen, Jesus ! ” For the space of three years, he repeated them without ceasing, so that he scarce ever took his breath, without saying them mentally, while he was eating or drinking, or speaking to any one person whatever. I asked, if it was possible, at every time that he awaked out of his sleep, they should be present to his mind ? He answered, “ It is ; I never breathe twice, after waking, before they are brought to my remembrance.” This application to conform himself to the will of God, was so necessary to him, in order to resist these temptations, that although

How poor soever he was at that time, he never asked alms of any one; but entirely abandoned himself to the providence of God, having nothing to live upon, but what was given him without asking. And if nothing of this was left, he labored with his hands till he had gained more.

For a long time (as we observed,) he lived wholly on parched corn, and during Lent, upon herbs. But, hence, he contracted such a weakness of stomach, as continued all the rest of his life. He often worked in his little garden, but what grew there, he gave in charity to those that passed by. Sometime, every day he spent in reading the holy scriptures, and particularly the epistles of St. Paul.

During all the years he spent in solitude, the aforementioned assaults and temptations of the devil continued. But these in a great measure ceased when he quitted his retirement, yet others arose in their place. Many highly condemned his manner of living; others, raised numberless calumnies against him; so that he did not want enemies in the world, any more than in solitude; but in all these things he was more than conqueror.

CHAPTER V.

He goes to Mexico ; thence to Guasteca, and falls sick.

Coming to Mexico, he was informed that Father Dominie de Salazar, was not yet returned ; after waiting for him some time, he believed the providence of God, called him to resume his solitary life ; for which purpose he went into the country of Guasteca ; which, he, judging to be most proper for his design, as being wide and thinly inhabited, and abounding with wild fruits. Here he fixed his abode, resolving not to remove, till the providence of God should plainly call him to it. He fed on fruits, roots, and herbs, which the earth brought forth of itself, and valiantly fought the battles of the Lord, continuing his exercises of the love of God and his neighbor.

He had from his early youth an ardent desire of reading the holy scriptures ; and, he now, more frequently than ever, besought God to enlighten his understanding, and to nourish

his soul with the important truths which are contained therein. That he might neglect nothing in his power, in order thereto, he resolved to learn the bible by heart ; and he had so happy a memory, that he never forgot anything which he once knew. In this he spent four hours a day for four years. And, during this time, God gave him the understanding thereof.

At the same time, and all his life after, he read several books, both of ecclesiastical and profane history. Many were glad to lend him them, and he read entire volumes in three or four days. His manner of reading was so extraordinary, that it might be thought even supernatural ; for, he frequently read over in ten hours, a book, which another would scarce read over in a month. In twenty hours he read the works of Teresa, and that, so effectually, that hardly could any one give a better account of all that is contained therein.

But he did not give himself the trouble of reading anything but spiritual books. With regard to others, his manner was, to read the contents of the chapters. And such as contained anything which he did not know, he read through ; the rest he entirely passed over.

He would have spent the rest of his life at Guasteca, had he believed it to be the will of God. But God showed him, that this was not his will, by sending him a violent bloody flux. He bore it for several days, in the midst of all inconveniences imaginable, through the want of things necessary for a sick man, and even of food. While he was in this condition, the providence of God, which is never wanting to them that fear him, sent to his relief, a priest, named Juan de Mesa, minister of a town in Guasteca, a man of an exemplary life, who, merely out of charity instructed the people of that country, and assisted them with his substance. He no sooner learned the extremity to which Lopez was reduced than he sent to seek him, and entertained him at his house with all possible care. As he past several days without any sustenance, after the disorder ceased, he was extremely weak. But he received his appetite in a short time, and then by degrees, his strength. As soon as he found this, he would have returned to his solitude, if his host had not hindered him ; but he kept him in his house for near four years, to the unspeakable comfort and edification of all round about him.

Mesa provided him a chamber, where he spent all his time, except when he was at church. He was commonly in an upright posture, or leaning against the wall with his eyes fixed. In this retreat, he continued day and night, never going out, but when he took his sober repast, with his host, whom he abundantly paid for his hospitality, by the inestimable blessing of his conversation. All the furniture of his chamber, was a bible, a terrestrial globe, and a pair of compasses.

During his stay here, one who came from those parts to Mexico, was saying, "there was a man at Guasteca, who was suspected to be a heretic, because he used no beads, nor gave any of those marks by which good christians are wont to be known." I asked, whether he spoke well on the matters of faith? and if his life was unblameable? He said, "As to his faith, there is no fault to be found; he has all the bible off by heart; and his manners are un-reprovable; he is almost always alone; he spends much time in the church; and no one can learn who were his parents, what is his country, nor hear him speak about anything in this world." I replied, mildly, "I am sorry

that in this he resembled Eli, who seeing Hannah move her lips only in prayer, concluded she was drunk." I added, "why should you so hastily conclude, that such a person as this is a heretic, one so knowing in the scripture, so holy in his carriage, who spends his life in conversing with God?" He was so moved by what I spoke, that he thought no more of putting him in the Inquisition.

Till this time, I had never heard of Gregory Lopez, nor did I know what was his name. But from this very relation, I conceived such an esteem for him, that nothing could ever efface.

CHAPTER VI.

He goes to Atrisco, and thence to Mexico.

The design of not being known and esteemed of men, occasioned Lopez to change his abode. Accordingly, perceiving that, after he had been here four years, he was much known and honored by the Spaniards and Indians, he set out for Atrisco. When he was within a league of it, he met a gentleman named Juan Perez Romero, who gave him a room in his house, and all that he wanted. His habit being worn out, his charitable host gave him another, made of coarse brown cloth, in the form of a cassock, with breeches and stockings of the same—he wore the same sort all the rest of his life. He was situated much to his satisfaction here; his host living truly a Christian life, and profiting both by his advice and example, the only recompense he had to make him. But God did not permit him to remain here any more than two years. Some who lived near Romero,

seeing in so young a man, and one who was of no religious order, so great mortification and such admirable wisdom and knowledge, even without a learned education, were afraid where no fear was, and accused him with so much warmth before the Archbishop of Mexico, that he believed a judicial information ought to be taken concerning him. This information was taken in due form of law, and the sentence which the Archbishop gave thereupon, made not only the innocence of Lopez appear, but likewise his eminent virtue and piety.

He then took his leave of Romero, leaving both him, his family, and his neighbors swallowed up in sorrow. Being in the way to Mexico, he observed a church near Testuco, where he imagined he might find some small lodging fit for a religious retreat. And so he did in his return from Mexico. During the first seven months of his abode there, none knew what he was, nor took any notice of him. As he appeared like a simple man of little spirit and understanding, no one was forward to accost him, nor did any one perceive the immense treasure which God had hid in his soul.

By this means he was in so great necessity (as was afterwards known) that sometimes he passed several days without eating any thing but wild quinces. But afterwards, the people began to observe him more, and devout persons invited him to eat with them. His very uncommon abstinence and manner of life was then matter of edification to some; others suspected all was not well; and others concluded he was a secret heretic.

These could not be at rest, till they had applied again to the Archbishop, Don Pedro Moya de Conturas, who then determined to be more exactly informed of the life, manners, and sentiments of Lopez. To this end I went to Testuco; where, after I had conversed with him for a long time, I was thoroughly satisfied. Of this I gave an account to the Archbishop, who, in order to remove all future objections, commissioned Father Alphonso Sanchez, a person of eminent piety and knowledge, to enquire more fully into his employments, exercises, and sentiments. He accordingly went, and asked him many questions, which he answered with much modesty and humility, but exceedingly briefly, till Sanchez said, "I will

declare to you frankly, it is my Lord Archbishop has sent me ; and therefore, as you are one of his sheep, you are obliged to answer me with all plainness." He then began to interrogate anew, and to ask the most difficult questions concerning faith. Lopez answered him with the utmost clearness, and supported all his answers with scripture, recounted all the heresies which had arisen against the truth, marking all the times and authors of them, and also the fathers and doctors that opposed them either viva voce or by writing ; and all his answers were so judicious and solid, that the Father stood in admiration of him—and much more at the manner wherein he answered all objections, either to his inward or outward conduct, which convinced him he acted with a prudence that was rather divine than human.

He gave an account of all that had passed to the Archbishop in a manner so advantageous to Lopez, that this good Bishop testified much satisfaction at having a man of so great virtue joined to his flock.

The first time I spoke to his Grace after this, he said, Father Sanchez, in giving him an account of Lopez, had used these very

words, "In truth, my Lord, I am obliged to acknowledge, that in comparison of this man, I have not yet begun to learn my spiritual A, B, C."

While he was at Testuco, several persons of all ranks, coming from Mexico to consult him touching their spiritual distresses, they all returned much enlightened and comforted. All the people then began to take knowledge that he had a peculiar gift from God of easing and comforting the afflicted.

CHAPTER VII.

He goes to the Hospital of Guastepea : his inward and outward exercises there.

After this servant of God had spent two years at Testuco, he fell into so severe an illness, being attacked by so violent cholics and pains in the stomach, that he was constrained to remove from thence. He then went to the Hospital of Guastepea, twelve leagues from Mexico, in the year 1580.

He was received there by brother Stephano de Herrera in the best manner he was able, considering the poor condition the hospital was then in, being newly founded. He lodged him in his own chamber, and treated him with abundance of tenderness. The same he used towards all the poor that came to the hospital, although he had not then a revenue to feed them, or a building to lodge them in. Indeed, it appeared impossible that he should, if things were but humanly considered. But the zeal of

Bernardin Alvarez, the founder, and the blessing of God, conquered all things. I remember, that when I asked Alvarez, whether he was willing to receive Lopez into his hospital, he replied: "Would to God there were room in my hospital to lodge all the poor in the world. For I have such a confidence in the goodness of Jesus Christ, that I cannot doubt but he would provide for them all." And how pleasing to God this his faith was, soon appeared. For in less than two years after the hospital was founded, they gave away there every day sixty-five measures of bread. Neither did they refuse to entertain any poor of any sort, men or women, Spaniards or Indians; not only those that came from New Spain, but from Guatimala and Peru. And they were so well received, so well attended, and treated with so much care and love, that almost all these patients were in a short time restored to perfect health.

As Lopez was discharged from all outward care, he employed himself wholly in contemplation, in order to confirm himself still more in the love of God, and of his neighbor; of which he had so long before begun to lay the

foundation. But although this was only the continuation of the same spiritual exercise, yet the growth which he received day by day was such, that it appeared entirely new.

He used to spend all the morning alone in his chamber. At noon, when the clock struck, he went to the refectory, having always his head bare, with an admirable modesty and gravity. He brought his pot of water, covered with a little napkin, and ate his portion as the rest of the patients, but did not speak at all, while he was eating, although others were talking round about him. After his meat, he drank the water, which he had set to warm in the sun, because of the extreme weakness of his stomach: when grace was said, he remained some time, talking of spiritual things with the brothers of the hospital. But when any men of learning, or of a religious order, were there, he conversed with them on things of the most elevated nature; and that with so much moderation and wisdom, that one would rather have taken him for an angel than a man. No sooner was the conversation ended, than he retired with a cheerful countenance, with much civility, and a remarkable humility, carrying his pot

and his napkin into his chamber, where he remained in his ordinary recollection of mind till noon the next day.

Father Hermando de Ribera relates, that being then very young, and Father Herrera sending him to call Lopez to dinner, he sometimes found him in a kind of trance, so that he did not answer when he was called. But when he continued to call, he answered, at length—"What do you want, my son?" "I come to call you to dinner," replied the child; on which he followed him, saying, "Praised be God." He went on Sundays and holy days, and some other days, with a mantle of the same cloth as his habit, to the public service of the hospital chapel; or if there was none there, to a neighboring monastery.

Those who were sick of any contagious distempers he could not visit, his own extreme weakness not allowing of it. He therefore the more earnestly exhorted the brothers to supply his lack of service—on which he spoke to them with such force as redoubled their fervor in that holy exercise.

Thus he performed by them what he could not do in person, and seconded his advice by his

continual prayers. As to the other sick, he comforted and encouraged them, in so touching and affectionate a manner, that they were unspeakably edified, and knew not how to praise God enough for his mercies. He was particularly assisted to calm the spirits of those, whom either their own natural impatience, or the greatness of their pains rendered so fretful and outrageous, that none else were able to bear them.

As much as he loved solitude, he never shut his door against any who came for spiritual relief or comfort. And many declared their troubles to him, and opened their whole hearts. He administered comfort and counsel to them all, without ever refusing it to any ; and, indeed, he did it in so persuasive a manner, that few went from him without much joy and satisfaction. Many persons of learning also went on purpose to confer with him, concerning several passages of scripture, and were as much amazed at his knowledge of divine things, as his sanctity of manners.

About this time, Father Pedro de Pravia, first professor of divinity at Mexico, who had refused a bishopric, and was equally eminent

for his humility, piety and knowledge, went privately to Guastepea, talked with Lopez a whole evening, and said, at parting, "You will come to me to-morrow morning." Lopez went to him in the morning, conversed with him till noon, and, after dinner, continued the conversation till night. Father Pravia afterwards said, "I had heard great things of Lopez; but I have found far more than ever I heard."

While I was in the hospital, he compiled, for the sake of the sick, a book of receipts, containing simple remedies for most diseases. He wrote it all with his own hand, and so well that it looked as if it was printed. With these remedies, almost incredible cures were wrought; so that one would have thought the author of that treatise had made physic his study for several years; but indeed he had not studied it at all; nor had ever learned that science but in one book, that of the love of God, and of his neighbor.

He sometimes employed himself in mending his poor habit, which he did with great address: and he made himself a little brown cloak to cover him. As for a hat, he did not make use of any, unless he was abroad, when the

sun shone very hot. He was not skilled in making of shoes; but he mended his own so dexterously, that one pair served him more than three years.

CHAPTER VIII.

A severe illness obliges him to return to Mexico ; whence he retires to St. Foy.

God, whose will it was that the light of his servant should now shine in other places also, sent him a disease which was not known at first, which proved to be a purple fever. His great courage, his mortification and patience, made him pass thirteen days without taking his bed. But then the violence of his distemper constrained him to suffer himself to be treated like a sick man. Being so weak as he was, he being blooded fourteen times, must needs have cost him his life, had not God preserved it for his own glory, and the profit of many souls.

He recovered from that extremity, but there still remained an inflammation of the liver, attended with a slow fever ; so that he was constrained to change the air for that of St. Augustine, a village three leagues off from

Mexico. He no sooner came hither, than he sent me word, just as I was taking horse to go and see him at Guastepea. I went to St. Augustine, but found him so weak, that it was absolutely necessary he should have more help than could be had there. So I removed him to Mexico, to my own lodging. He remained there some months; and several persons, during that time, coming to consult him in points of the highest concern, were so profited thereby, that it clearly appeared God had brought him thither for that very purpose.

All the time he stayed here, he never went abroad, but to hear divine service. And though the Marchioness de Villa Manrico sent three times, desiring me to bring him to her, he excused himself by saying, "I have no need of seeing her," nor she of seeing me ;' which was the more remarkable, because the Viceroy, her husband, was greatly feared, and she had an absolute power over him. But some years after, hearing the Marquiss was deeply afflicted at the coming of a Commissary from Spain, to take information of his actions, he told me, "If the Marchioness desires to see me, I will go to her now."

But to return. He did not recover his health at Mexico. His fever continued. He had no appetite, and was as weak as ever: so I sought for some country-place near Mexico, which might be better for his health than we found the city to be.

With this design we went together to St. Foy, a town two leagues from the city. We judged it to be an extremely proper place, and we pitched upon a little house separate from the town. He settled at St. Foy on the 22d of May, 1589, and passed the rest of his life there in contemplation and prayer, without ever going out of it but twice, to a church which is at a small half league from St. Foy. Before he communicated there, he fell on his knees before Father Vincent Calba, and, striking his breast, said, "Through the mercy of God, I do not remember to have offended him in any thing. Give me, if you please, the most holy sacrament." Which Father Calba repeating with amazement, said, "Is it possible that a man should have attained so high a degree of virtue, as not to be conscious to himself of even an idle word."

In his little lodging here, he employed himself in the same spiritual exercises as before ; having for several months scarce any company at all ; only I visited him, as often as I was able, in doing which, I observed continually more and more, so great a depth of piety in him, that my affection for him, and my desire of living wholly with him, increased in the same proportion.

I recommended this to God in fervent prayer, and desired several persons of piety to do the same, begging that he would be pleased to show me clearly, what was his will concerning me—for I had had the care of the great church at Mexico for more than twenty years. And some judged, that I had done some good in my charge, were it only with regard to the poor who were ashamed to beg relief : for whom I had provided above ten years, by means of the alms which I procured for them. At length, I was convinced it was my duty to retire. My superiors consented to it. So I went to Lopez on Christmas day, the same year, and stayed with him till his death.

I then observed, both day and night, all his actions and words with all possible attention,

to see if I could discover any thing contrary to the high opinion which I had of his virtue. But far from this, his behavior appeared every day more admirable than before, his virtues more sublime, and his whole conversation rather divine than human.

His life was so uniform, that by one day you may judge how he employed whole months and years. As soon as the day began to dawn, he opened the window of his chamber, washed his hands and face, and spent a quarter of an hour, or a little more, in reading the Bible, in consideration of its being the word of God, who ordered him to read it; likewise to the end, that what he did not understand at one time, he might understand at another; but chiefly because he had such a reverence for the Holy Scriptures, that he took it for the rule of his conduct every day.

After this reading, he entered into so deep a recollection, that one could not judge by any outward mark, whether he was speaking to God, or God was speaking to him. All one could conjecture from the tranquillity and devotion which appeared in his countenance, was, that he was in the continual presence of God.

But that presence of God wherein he lived was not barren or unfruitful, seeing it daily produced more and more acts of love to God and his neighbor—the love which is the end of the commandment, and the sum of all perfection.

Behold how this servant of God passed all the morning, all the evening, and great part of the night. Behold the bread with which he nourished his soul every day! But, although this was in his mind continually, yet I have observed, it was in the morning chiefly, that he was, as it were, transported out of himself. He had not herein any determinate place, nor any fixed posture of body: but commonly he was standing or sitting; sometimes walking in his chamber; and sometimes he went for a few moments into the sunshine, in a little gallery, which was near it. As for kneeling, he could not, during the last years of his life, by reason of his extreme weakness.

At eleven he quitted his posture of recollection, took his cup of water and his little napkin, and we two dined by ourselves, unless it fell out that any stranger came in; for he never sent any away, much less any person of piety. While we were at dinner, we talked on reli-

gious subjects; and sometimes of natural things, and even from these he would take occasion to speak truths of the sublimest nature.

After dinner, we continued for a while to entertain each other in the same manner; and if any person of a religious order came, it was a pleasure to hear Lopez talk with him; but it was only by answering questions, or when occasions were given, for he never began the discourse. At other times I read to him, at this hour, the Lives of the Saints, the Spiritual Combat, or some such book. After this reading, which was a kind of recreation to us, he entered into his chamber, where he continued in union with God, which neither eating, nor conversation, nor business, nor any thing whatever, could interrupt. And as he never slept in the day, he had a great deal of time to converse with God: he had seldom any visitant in the morning; but, in the afternoon, his gate was open to all the world—he advised them, comforted them, and promised to pray to God for them. Accordingly, in the last years of his life, he was perpetually visited not only by people of common rank, but by ecclesiastics, by men of learning and of authority, by gentle-

men and noblemen, who either came to see him themselves or wrote to him, to desire his advice, and to recommend themselves to his prayers.

Among these, Don Lewis de Velasco, Marquis of Salines, who had been twice Viceroy of New Spain, then Viceroy of Peru, and afterwards President of the Royal Council of the Indies, had such an esteem and affection for him, that he came several times to see him, and remained shut up with him for two or three hours—such a capacity did he find in him, not only for things relating to conscience, but also to secular affairs, even those which concerned the government of a kingdom.

Thus did he employ the afternoon. Before sunset he returned to his chamber, whence he went out no more till morning. He never used any candle; upon which several inquiring, what he could be doing all that time he spent without light? I replied only, “They do not comprehend that his employ being wholly interior he had no need of a material light, but only that of a spiritual one, which enlightened the eyes of his understanding, no less by night than by day.”

As he never eat in the evening, he remained alone till half an hour after nine o'clock, and then wrapt himself in his bed-quilt, which was the most delicate bed he had from his youth. For many years he lay on the bare ground ; afterwards on some sheepskins. But a few years before his death, I constrained him to have a thin quilt, besides his coverlet. I do not think he slept in the whole night above two or three hours : the rest he spent in contemplation till break of day ; this he continued till God called him to an eternal repose.

Before I speak of the time which he spent at St. Foy, it may be proper to give a more particular account, both of the graces and supernatural gifts, with which it pleased God to enrich his soul.

CHAPTER IX.

The knowledge which God infused into his mind.

He has sometimes owned, that God himself had given him to understand the Scriptures. And so it appeared; for, though he never learned Latin, he translated the Scriptures from Latin into Spanish, in terms so proper, as if he had been equally acquainted with that and with his native tongue. It seemed, that the whole Bible was continually before him. When men of learning asked him where such and such texts were, he not only told them without hesitation, but shewed the sense of them with such clearness, however obscure they were, that there remained no difficulty or obscurity in them.

Twenty years before his death, Father Dominic de Salazar, afterwards Archbishop of the Philippines, said before several persons of learning, "What is this, my Fathers, that after we have studied so closely all our lives, we

know nothing near so much of divine things, as this young layman?"

Many persons of eminent knowledge came to him to resolve their doubts concerning passages of scripture; and they all returned, not barely satisfied, but amazed at the understanding which God had given him.

Indeed, he had a vast, comprehensive knowledge of things, even of the speculative sciences. And what he knew so well, that he spoke on any of these subjects, with as great clearness and accuracy, as any of those who had made it their particular study. When he was at Guastepea, Father Jean Cobus, an eminent divine, was astonished in conversing with him on the Revelations, at the admirable observations which he made. The Father prayed him to give them in writing. He did so in less than eight hours, and sent them immediately to him at Mexico, without any rasure in them—who was no less surprised at his diligence, than he had been at his knowledge and piety. This tract has been admired by all the learned who have seen it, as the most excellent that was ever wrote upon the subject.

Yet he was exceeding far from taking any superiority upon him, from needlessly engaging in any dispute, and from setting himself up as a judge over others, or desiring that they should follow his sentiments.

Father Antonio Arias and some others, disputing one day concerning these words in the Revelation, (chap. 21, ver. 1,) "I saw a new heaven and a new earth," whether they were to be taken literally or not? When all had spoken, Lopez only said, "When we are there, we shall see what will be there."

He knew with all the clearness which could be drawn from the scripture and other histories, all that passed from the creation to Noah; and he recited all the generations, their degrees of kindred to each other, their several ages, and the times when they lived, with as much exactness, as if he had the Bible before him, and was reading them out of the book.

Nor was he ignorant of the history of other people; but if occasion offered, could tell with the utmost accuracy (so far as any records remain,) what were their manners, their customs, and the arts which they had invented.

The same knowledge he had of what passed from Noah to Christ, and spake of those times as if they had been present to him. He referred all profane histories to the sacred ; knew the wars and events which had occurred in any nation, to the birth of Jesus Christ, and spoke of them as clearly as he could have done of the things of his own times.

He was a thorough master of all ecclesiastical history, since the birth of Christ ; as likewise of all the Emperors, to Philip II., in whose reign he died.

He was equally skilled in profane history, ancient as well as modern. He drew up a chronology from the creation of the world, to the pontificate of Clement VIII., so exact, though short, that all remarkable incidents, whether ecclesiastical or secular, were set down therein.

But this knowledge was not limited to history. He was so knowing in astronomy, cosmography, and geography, that it seemed as if he had himself measured the heavens, the earth, and the sea. He had a globe and a general map of the world, made by his own hand ; so just, that I have seen it admired by

persons deeply skilled in the science ; and he was so ready herein, that the Marquis of Salinas having sent him a very large one, he observed in it several mistakes, corrected them, and gave his reasons for it, and sent it back.

He had so particular a knowledge of nations, provinces, and the customs of them, that he could tell punctually where every country was, and in what degree of latitude ; their cities, their rivers, their isles ; the plants and animals which were peculiar to them—of all which he spoke as knowing what he said, yet without that arrogance which usually attends knowledge ; because his, coming from heaven, was not sullied with the defects of that which is acquired in the world.

He was well acquainted with anatomy, and several times made many curious remarks in that kind, which gave me reason to admire the wisdom of God, in the human frame, and to own that we are fearfully and wonderfully made.

He was no less acquainted with the art of medicine ; insomuch that he wrote (as was mentioned before) a book of excellent recipes,

cheap and easy to be procured ; and God blessed them with remarkable success.

He was an excellent botanist ; he not only knew the quality of plants, and for what diseases they were proper, but likewise how those qualities might be altered, by mixing or infusing them with various liquors. I have seen and proved that he hath by this means made them quite different from what they were before. He told me, if he knew any good and skilful man, he would willingly give him these recipes—but that otherwise they must die with him, lest they should be applied to a bad use.

He wrote several hands perfectly well, as may still be seen, particularly in the map of the world ; all the writing whereof one would imagine to be print, the strokes are so elegant, bold and strong.

But all this knowledge did not for a moment divert his mind from the one thing needful. When I asked him, one day, whether none of these things ever gave him any distraction ? He replied, “ I find God alike in little things and in great.” God being the continual object of his attention, he saw all things only in God.

CHAPTER X.

His skill in directing others.

As God had given Lopez peculiar knowledge in the Holy Scripture, so he instructed him likewise in an admirable manner, both to walk in the strait path to heaven himself, and to guide others.

He saw spiritual things with the eyes of his soul as clearly as outward things with those of his body, and had an amazing accuracy in distinguishing what was of grace from what was of nature; and that not only with regard to himself, but those also who consulted him in their doubts and difficulties. Several persons speaking before him, of helps to prayer, one said, "That the best help of all was music, and that he had never found so much sweetness and peace in prayer, as in the cathedral service at Mexico."

Another said, "It is much better to pray with others, and much easier than to pray alone," to which Lopez said not one word. When they were gone, I asked, why he said nothing to them? He answered, "I would not condemn that conduct of theirs, which serves them as a staff to walk a little; if you was to take it away, they would not walk at all."

God had given him so clear a discernment of words and thoughts, that he readily distinguished those that were useful and those that were not; such as came from God, and those that came from nature—upon which he was accustomed to say, "It was not the love of God, but the love of themselves, which made them speak of God." He said also, "As the love of God is all action, it talks little, and often not at all." It was from this light and quick discernment, his extreme circumspection in all his words proceeded.

The same light freed him from all scruple, and kept his soul in admirable tranquillity; so that whatsoever attempts Satan made upon his soul, he never had any doubts of any kind.

Many knowing and spiritual men came to

St. Foy, to consult him touching their inward conduct ; and he cleared all their doubts with so much ease, that they returned entirely satisfied. That which I admired, was the incredible brevity with which he answered them ; and that those few words were sufficient to remove so great difficulties, so that they seemed to be, as it were, rays of light, which penetrated and enlightened their spirit ; sparks which, proceeding from the love that burned in his heart, inflamed their hearts with the same love of God.

One consulting him, who was in great trouble of mind, was eased at once by his speaking those words—“ I counsel thee to buy gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich.” Another, under strong temptation, was delivered by his uttering only that text, “ The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.”

To many, who inquired what they should do to please God, he gave only this answer, “ Do what you do now, out of love to God, and it will be sufficient.”

To persons of letters, judges and men of business, he often said, “ Change your intention,

and you will do well enough." One desiring of him a rule for prayer, he gave him this answer in writing: "Jesus Christ our Lord, is an admirable master, who can instruct you how to pray; and all prayer is included in his prayer; but that you may not complain that I refuse your request, I will tell you, you need only say these few words—'O Lord, my God, enlighten my soul, that I may know thee, and that I may love thee with my whole heart.'"

But when persons came to him out of curiosity, not a real desire to serve God, he gave them no other answer than this: "There are teachers in the church." And Antonio de Avila coming out of curiosity, and with a design to dispute with him, Lopez, as if seeing his heart, answered him at the first word, "I do not dispute; neither do I know any thing but what God teaches me. Therefore, you are come hither in vain."

After that, it pleased our Lord to make known the graces which he had given his servant—men saw clearly what gift he had received for guiding those who came to him in their doubts and troubles. They were ravished to see the light which he had received from

God ; they were charmed with the sweetness of his carriage ; they respected him as a divine spirit, inclosed in a mortal body ; they were persuaded that God himself instructed him, in all his actions, and all his answers he gave. They came to consult him as an oracle from heaven, as a prodigy of holiness. He fully satisfied all the doubts that were proposed to him ; he instructed every one in the manner wherein he should behave in his profession. None were so afflicted but he comforted them ; imprinted on the spirit of all to whom he spake, an ardent desire of holiness. His words were all words of fire, and inflamed the heart with the love of God. None went from him without feeling himself comforted and strengthened.

In the year 1579, Father Francis Losa, (who wrote the preceding and following parts of his life) being then Rector of the largest parish of Mexico, asked Lopez whether he should not retire from the city, and live in some solitude as a hermit ? He answered, "Remain this year a hermit at Mexico." Losa returned thither, and his whole manner of life was entirely changed. Whenever he went through the city, whether to collect or distribute charity, he felt

an inward recollection and prayer, which not all the noise and hurry of the city could interrupt. As if he had been fifty years in that holy exercise, he found himself a new man. Having lost, in a moment, all thoughts of earth, and being filled with heaven alone, he renounced all compliments, visits of form, and needless conversation; and his only joy was, to retire into himself, and treat with God upon the affairs of salvation. He began to walk alone, unless he was obliged to go with any one on a work of charity; and the multitude of people whom he met, no more disturbed his attention to God, than if they had been rocks and trees. He immediately gave to the poor all his goods; he renounced all the pleasures of life; he dismissed all his servants, and employed all the rest of his days in serving God and his neighbor. He gave away upwards of six thousand ducats, and resolved to give up two thousand of his yearly income. He entered upon a course of rigorous fasting; meantime he was exercised with more violent temptations, both inward and outward, than ever he had had; but in all this he was more than conqueror.

At the end of the year, he went to Lopez again ; and, after having given him an account of all his life, he said, the year is expired ; what shall I do now ? Lopez replied, “ Love God and your neighbor.”

In return to Mexico, Losa began to think on these words ; but he thought he had thoroughly practiced them already, and accordingly found some repugnance in himself to the advice which Lopez had now given him. But, remembering what advantage he had reaped from his first advice, he presently humbled himself, believing these words contained much more than he had at first imagined. He besought God to shew him the full meaning of them, and to pardon his pride. Immediately he heard a voice in his inmost soul, “ Before thou canst love God, thou must renounce thyself, and die to all the things in the world.” He offered himself to God for this with all his heart, and prayed the divine majesty to work this in him ; and in the instant he found it in himself, and was so penetrated with his love, that, his understanding not being able to comprehend, nor his heart to contain so great a favor, he felt his bodily strength taken away, and thought

that he should have fallen from his horse. Thus he found the excellence of the advice Lopez had given him, and the efficacy of his prayer.

So great a favor produced great effects. For he continued six years in the same fervor of love, experiencing all the Christian graces, and enjoying all the fruits of the spirit. And these were his support for forty years after, in all the labor and pains which he had to suffer ; so that nothing could move him from his resolution, in following, in all things, the will and guidance of God."

It was in pursuance of this that he quitted Mexico, and came to live wholly with Lopez. The first night he spent there, he was in violent temptations, which he mentioned to Lopez in the morning, who replied, " I forgot you last night ; it shall be so no more." And, in fact, the following nights he had no such trouble, but found his heart calmly staid on God.

He remained with Lopez seven years in the little house at St. Foy, whom he eased of all care concerning temporals, having a small salary for taking care of a chapel in the hospital, which was sufficient for them both. After his death, he continued there twenty years, em-

ployed in the same private exercises, and in assisting the poor Indians, who had received the faith, in all things pertaining to conscience.

In the year 1612, sixteen years after the death of Lopez, he wrote his life, and dedicated it to the Marquis of Salinas, being himself at that time eighty-four years old, as appears by the deposition which he made in 1620.

CHAPTER XI.

His government of his tongue, and his prudence.

If any man offend not in word, saith St. James, the same is a perfect man. We may then pronounce Lopez a perfect man; for all the eighteen years that I lived in the strictest intimacy with him, though I narrowly observed him, I never heard him speak one single word that could be reproved.

He never spoke evil of any man—no, not of a heretic or a pagan. He was occasionally speaking one day of an Emperor, who would “eat meat fresh killed when he was in the midst of the sea, and fishes which had been alive just before, when he was in the most inland country.” I said, “That was Heliogabalus.” He replied, “It is enough to condemn the action, without naming him that did it.”

When he was told that certain persons spoke evil of him, he heard it without emotion, and said, first, “We ought to believe they had a

good intention :” and, after a while, “ according to what they have heard said of me, they have reason to judge of me as they do.” He strove not only to excuse the persons, but likewise (as far as truth would bear) the action, without ever attempting to justify himself. And when he could not excuse them, he readily shifted the discourse to another subject.

His conversation was always of things useful and spiritual, meet to minister grace to the hearers. His manner of speaking was sweet, civil, and invariably serious and equal. The tone of his voice was not high, but agreeable ; he was a perfect master of pronunciation ; his discourses continually gained the hearts of those that heard them, and were delivered with such modesty as well as majesty, as made him appear a kind of heavenly man.

I never observed, that either the beauty of heaven, the stars, or of the most green or flowery fields, or of the clearest fountains or streams, or the visits of any person whatever, whether at table or after, occasioned his speaking one idle word : I do not mean, a light or trifling word ; this would have been an utter contradiction to his whole manner of life ; but

even an unnecessary word : for he measured his words so well, that he spoke no more than was needful to make himself understood, and he never exaggerated any thing.

As excellently skilled as he was in all the arts and sciences, yet even when he was among men of learning, and they were talking on those heads, he never opened his mouth, unless the discourse was addressed to him. And even when he spoke of the things of God, as deep as his answers were, they were expressed in the most simple terms ; because he retrenched whatever would have been superfluous in them, and was content with satisfying the demands and needs of his neighbors.

One day, standing at the window, I said to him, " See how hard it rains !" Instantly a flash of lightning struck my hand, and made it smart exceedingly : I told him of it, and he replied, " You are paid as you deserve for your idle words ; did I not see myself how hard it rained ?"

Upon his telling me, one day, a thing of great importance, I asked, " If you knew this, why did you not tell it me before ?" He an-

swered, "I do not speak all that I know; but only all that is necessary."

He was as sparing of words in writing as in speaking. He never wrote first to any one, nor did he answer others, but when either necessity or charity obliged him to it; and then so precisely, and in so few words, that nothing could be retrenched. I have several of his letters in my hands, of five or six lines each, or less; some of them were wrote to Don Lewis de Valesco, our Viceroy, in answer to those he had received from him; one of them contained only these words, "I will do what you command me." And although this manner of writing might seem disrespectful to persons of so high a quality, yet it gave no offence from one who was so far from all compliment, and who never spoke any thing superfluous.

But when the honor of God was concerned, the truth of the scripture, or the good of his neighbor, if others did not, he spoke without asking, and that largely, if the cause so required. For example—if any one in temptation, or great affliction, began to complain of God, it was amazing to hear with what strength of piety he spoke to convince them of their mis-

take, ignorance and weakness : of the depth of the wisdom and mercy of God, hid from the eyes of men in their afflictions, and of their obligations to abandon themselves to his conduct, and to throw themselves wholly into his hands.

He heard, at all times, with attention, whatever questions were proposed to him ; and he either answered them or not, as he judged it his duty. One of a religious order came to see him, and desired me to bring it about, that he might talk of God. I did ; and he began a large, pompous discourse. Observing Lopez to make no answer, I desired him, by a private sign, to say something on the head. He answered me softly, that the doctor might not hear, "My silence will edify more than my words. When he went away, I asked him what he thought of Lopez ? He answered, "I esteem his silence much." Lopez said to me after, "I see that many talk well ; but let us live well."

He was used with much earnestness to plead the cause of princes, governors, and magistrates. To those who found fault with them, he often said, "If you were in their

place, perhaps you would not do as well as they; and who gave you authority to judge them?" If they still insisted, "They were to blame;" he answered, "Then you ought to speak it to them; it is useless to speak of it here."

If persons who passed for religious, spoke evil of any one, he told them, "I cannot believe that any can be truly religious, who set themselves up for judges of the actions of others, and who speak to their disadvantage." On these occasions, his usual words were, "This is not the place to remedy this; it is not the business here."

A person of authority speaking of the king's manner of governing, he said, "There is not a man in Spain of more ability than the king: and are you more able than he?" He stood reprov'd, and spoke no more.

CHAPTER XII.

His patience and humility.

He never mentioned to any one the pains he endured, nor sought consolation of any creature—only, sometimes, when he thought it might be of use to his neighbor, to tell what had befallen himself: but nothing that befel him could ever disturb his recollection of mind. And that equality of spirit which he continually preserved, plainly shewed that he was raised above all human things, and entirely possessed with the thought of things above, without ever losing sight of them.

Although he frequently suffered great pain at his stomach, and violent cholics, he never made any complaint, nor indeed any shew of them: I found it out only by his unusual weakness, and not being able to eat. Observing this one day in particular, I asked him, "What is the matter?" He answered, "I have had

a violent cholic for fifteen days, without intermission.”

He had a fever often ; and he cured it by fasting, three, four, or five days. But how ill soever he was of any of these disorders, he never would keep his bed.

While he was at St. Foy, he had the toothache for almost a year together ; but I did not perceive it by any outward sign, only that twice he used some herbs, which he knew to be good for it, and that sometimes it was so violent that he could not eat.

He was accustomed to say on this occasion, “ We ought not to desire sufferings, but to endure them valiantly when they come.” And this he so steadily practiced, that one might have imagined he did not feel them—as I remarked from the very day that I saw him first.

Men naturally desire to be thought better than they are ; but Lopez was so far from this, that he always esteemed himself less than others, and I have heard him say more than once, “ For many years I have judged no man ; I have believed all to be wiser and better than me. I have not pretended to set myself up above others, or to assume any authority

over others." And hence he easily excused them who judged ill of himself. When I told him, one day, that many had spoken evil of him, he answered, "I excuse them not only with my lips, but with all my heart."

Hence, also, it was, that he did not desire that others should embrace his sentiments, and that he did not study to express them in such a manner as might recommend them to others. On which he told me, one day, "I knew a man once, who diligently studied what he had to say, and he had no opportunity of saying it at all; which taught him not to spend time so uselessly, but to trust in God, who will not fail to give help in time of need."

He was also far from those inquietudes which arise from the uncertainty of success in our undertakings; insomuch as seeking only to please God, he considered those cares as obstacles to his design. Accordingly, he was never in pain for the event of things; nor did he ever lay great designs beforehand, even touching the service of God and his neighbor. He looked upon this as a useless way of spending time, and was always for employing the present moment. As he was always on his

guard, if a thought of this kind came at any time into his mind, he checked it immediately by saying, "I am nothing, I am good for nothing." He was content to observe the law of God, without thinking himself worthy to see into futurity, although he was always prepared to do whatever the Divine Majesty should call him to.

He was so far from all desire, that he has sometimes said to me, "Ever since I came to New Spain, I have never desired to see any thing in this world, not even my relations, friends, or country." He never desired to see angels or visions. "I only desire," said he, "to see God." And even in this, he was wholly resigned to his will, as to the time and manner of it. To which he added, that the raptures and extasies which he had in this life, were only to unite him to God, and to comfort him, and to conform him more and more to his holy will, that he might obey him in all things.

The moment he came to the Valley of Amajac, he kneeled down upon the ground, and taking his discipline, began to chastise his body ; but his Divine Captain, whose wisdom

is infinite, suffered him not to go on—he spoke these words to his heart: “Another shall gird thee and carry thee where thou wōuldst not”—giving him to understand that he was not to choose for himself, but God would discipline him according to his own good pleasure.

He began by exercising him with inward trials, and those so painful, that he had need of all patience to suffer them. He has told me he could not think of them without trembling; but that he had never told the particulars to any one. Yet it was easy to judge from his advice to others in their trials, that he had experienced the same himself; he answered them so exactly, as he could not have done, if he had not spoken by experience.

Other sufferings he had from the prince of darkness—who, knowing faith to be the foundation of all good graces, was continually striving to throw doubts or blasphemous thoughts into his soul; but his lowliness and firm confidence in God, as often as they returned, put them to flight.

And he was no less eminent in denying himself, than in taking up and bearing his cross. From his first retiring, he resolved to eat noth-

ing to please his taste, but only to sustain life. And this he observed very religiously, even to his death, that when he was pressed to eat even some melow, or raisins, or figs, he only smelt the melow, and said, "This is enough for this year."

On my telling him once, "You take no rest, and you can take none in the way you go," he replied, with a calm and cheerful countenance, "It is true, I cannot take any rest, while my brethren are engaged in so many labors and dangers; because it is not just, that I should think of rest, as long as they are exposed to those hazards. God keep me from giving way to such sloth! If but one of them is in danger, that is enough for me to continue to pray without ceasing for him."

But what cost him the most pains of any thing in his whole life, was, always to follow the grace of God, as none can follow this without renouncing himself, grace so often demanding just the contrary to nature. Accordingly, it was his continual endeavor to die to all created things, and to combat nature, which loves to enjoy them, to live in pleasure, and ease, and honor. He desired to be despised like his

Master. He studied to forget all temporal things, and thought only of seeking God, and serving him. He received, with constant patience, all that could befall him, without seeking any satisfaction, or finding any, even in his virtues, but as they contributed to the glory of God, to whom alone his heart was attached, forgetting all things else. He had so great a hunger and thirst for God, that no creature could satisfy him. After this sovereign good he ran without ceasing, in spite of all his inclinations ; and this agonizing after God, is a greater cross, and a heavier self-denial, than any who have not felt it can conceive.

CHAPTER XIII.

His Prayer.

Several things give me reason to believe, that Lopez began to pray from the time he began to reason; he has occasionally told me, "that he had never been a child; and that he had never cast one look backward:" whence one may easily infer, he had never been without prayer, even from his tender years. I have likewise heard him say, "that from the time he came to Court, he prayed continually; and went through his business with the same inward peace, as he could have done twenty years after: and that neither the Noblemen he met in the way, nor the noise and distractions of the Court any more interrupted his prayer, than if he had been in a cavern." And to this he was brought at first, not by the fear of hell, but God always led him by love. The foundation of all his devotion was Jesus Christ, the only door whereby we can come to God. This

he has often told us, while he has spoke in so affecting a manner of the life and death of our Redeemer, as made it clearly appear how well he was exercised in this kind of meditation.

The first prayer wherein he was employed in his little cell, (as was observed before) was contained in these words : “ Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven :” words that contained the most sublime and the most difficult doctrine in the whole spiritual life ; for they contain a fixed resolution to do all that God requires, whether temporal or spiritual things, and an entire submission to his orders, by receiving at his hand, with tranquillity of spirit, whatever he pleases, how rough soever it might be ; because the will of God being our sanctification, we ought to embrace whatever conduces to it ; and to this end obey him without recompence, and the creatures for his sake.

This is the way to be always in the presence of God, and to show our love to him by our obedience.

This includes all true mortification in all our works, all our affections, all our desires ; for it is to make a continual sacrifice to God of our

own will, and to have no end but to fulfill his in all our actions.

By this exercise, one arrives at a state of uniformity, that is, so strict an union of our will with that of God, that ours disappearing, we have no will but his, which actuates, guides and governs us.

Lopez has told me, that after the first year, he had no need to put himself in remembrance of his prayer, because his very drawing his breath reminded him of it every moment. The effect of which was, that he was continually raised above himself, without ever having a thought about worldly things; and that his understanding, memory, and will, were also taken up with this divine exercise; that great as his temptations were, they were no sooner past than he had forgotten them.

After three years, God led him to practice another lesson, viz: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength; and thy neighbor as thyself." And he now employed himself with the same application, in those acts of love, as he had done before in those of resignation: insomuch that I have heard him say, it

would be very difficult for him to discontinue this exercise for a moment, even in eating, in talking, or in any other employment, whether of body or mind.

His soul being in this situation, he applied himself to the Holy Scriptures with more application than ever; in this he spent three or four hours every day; and the love which filled his heart, gave him understanding therein. By this means also, he acquired that wonderful discretion in his words, that prudence and wisdom in his answers and counsels, and that evenness wherewith he loved his neighbor as himself, and sought his happiness no less than his own.

Hence likewise proceeded that great purity of heart, that readiness in all kind of prayer, that entire mortification of all senses, and that constant power over all the powers of darkness.

I have talked with Lopez (says a person of eminent piety) sometimes for four hours together, upon spiritual things, and from what I saw and remarked in him, I judged him to be a man highly favored. His soul appeared to be disengaged from all things else, by a pure

union with God. Him he always enjoyed in the essence of his soul, where the Supreme Majesty delights to dwell. This I could easily learn during an acquaintance of seven years, from many things which he communicated to me. Hence I found that he was in a continual act of love with God; in which his soul, freed from all created things, was intimately united to God; that from this fountain flowed all the graces which it pleased our Lord to bestow upon him. For at the same time that he received this pure, uninterrupted love, he made an admirable use of it on all occasions, as knowing that love is the source, the origin and mother of all other virtues; which God continually communicated to him, that he might communicate them to others, and enrich their poverty with his abundance. I asked him once "if he had any particular hours wherein he prayed more than at other times? And if he did not abate something of his prayer in his employments and conversations with his neighbors?" He answered, "that he had no particular hours, and that he had no necessity for them, since no created thing was capable either of interrupting or abating his contin-

ual love to God and his neighbor. That so far from ever drawing back in this union with God, he advanced in it continually, referring to God by this simple act of pure love, all the graces which he was pleased to give him, without assuming any thing to himself: that this union was the source of all his knowledge; and that accordingly God himself was his teacher, and not his books, through which indeed he was sometimes taught."

He told me likewise, "God had shown him there was then the greatest union between God and the soul, when it was such that nothing interposed between them; and that he had given him to comprehend what sort of union this was, from that which is between the light and the air: for these, being two distinct things, and which have each its separate subsistence, are nevertheless united, that God alone is able to divide them. How much closer is this union between the pure essence of the soul, and him who is an infinitely pure spirit?"

Asking him one day, "What would you have done, if you had been a priest?" He replied, "What I do now." "And how," said I, "would you have prepared yourself to celebrate the bles-

sed sacrament?" He answered, "As I now prepare myself to receive it. And if I were sure of dying in a few hours, I would do no other thing than I do now ; for I do actually offer up to God all that is in my power, by a continual act of love. And can do nothing more till he shall enable me himself."

He told me farther, "Perfection does not consist in visions, revelations, ravishments, and extasies ; although God often favors his servants therewith, because he acts towards every one, according to his capacity, his need, and the disposition wherein he is. But souls accustomed to acts of pure love, do not need the suspension of their senses, in order to have deep communion with God, because these do not hinder them therein." He added, "that he had never had any revelations, extasies, or ravishments, which had deprived him of his senses ; nor had his senses ever occasioned in him any distraction of mind, because they were perfectly spiritualized, entirely subject to his reason, and conformable to the will of God."

Continuing the discourse, "I knew a man," said he, (by whom I was assured he meant himself,) "who for six and thirty years never

discontinued, for one single moment, to make with all his strength, an act of pure love to God."

At another time I spake of some who acquired great inward peace by a passive union with God, and by a love which made them continually taste the grace which God communicated to them. He answered, "Such souls are happy and walk in a good path. But yet the perfection is not so great in this state wherein one enjoys these sweetnesses, as in that wherein we labor with all our might, to love God in the most perfect manner we can possibly; because in the latter state, we act, rather than enjoy; whereas in the former, we rather enjoy than act. For a soul that perfectly loves God, can only give him what he gives first. And he requires no more; inasmuch as this is all the law and the prophets."

CHAPTER XIV.

His Union with God, and the Fruits thereof.

I asked him one day, whether his not using a hat, was because he was always in the presence of God? He answered "No: my union with God being in my inmost soul, does not require me either to be covered or uncovered; but it is, that I may want as few things as possible, and that I may not make my body delicate."

Hence proceeded that humility which he possessed in so eminent a degree; being always so intimately united with God, he had a full knowledge of God's infinity, and his own nothingness; and earnestly desired that every one should consider him as nothing, and God as all.

Hence also it was, that he received whatever befell him from men with such patience and tranquillity of spirit, that he readily excused

those who despised or spoke evil of him, and that he never complained of any one.

From the same fountain proceeded the perfect purity both of his body and soul. For the rays of divinity fell continually upon his soul, as those of the sun on a crystal mirror. By this act of pure love, his soul was transformed into the same image. And what purity was thereby communicated even to the body, can hardly be conceived in this life.

Hence sprung that purity of conscience also, which astonished the most spiritual; as one sees by his own words, "through the mercy of God, I do not know that I have sinned in any thing." And upon my asking, "Is it possible for any one to remain for any time without committing sin?"* He answered, "When those whom God has enabled to love

*Not without having been first made deeply conscious of its universal defilement—deep repentance under that conviction—faith to believe that God hath taken away thine iniquity—and profound seriousness, perpetual watchfulness, humility, and faithfully using the grace given as the fruits of it. Hence those people who talk about sanctification, or being saved from sin, and bring not forth the fruits of it, we do not believe them. "He that saith he (thus) abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." 1 John, ii. 6.

him with all their soul, do, with his assistance, all that is in their power, and that with deep humility, it is possible for them to remain without committing sin; as clearly appears, in that our Lord, who commanded nothing which was impossible to be performed, commanded this, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, mind, soul, and strength. But he who does this, not only does not sin, but grows daily in all holiness." I replied, "But how can this be, when the Scripture says, 'The just man sins seven times a day'?"* He answered, "This could not be taken literally; since

* The gospel does not say that a man cannot live without sin: on the contrary, St. John positively declares—"Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin." 1 John iii. 9. Christ speaks of the pure in heart; the good tree which cannot bring forth evil fruit; and the same Apostle, of being cleansed from all unrighteousness. And can that heart be pure where sin still abides? Is not sin evil fruit? And can any sin remain in the heart which is cleansed from all unrighteousness? Again Christ declares that he who is perfect shall be as his Master. And St. John says, "as He is, so are we in this world." John iv. 17. Finally, St. Paul saith that "love is the fulfilling of the law." If, then, a man is cleansed from all unrighteousness, and filled with the pure love of God—if in this state of fellowship with God he uses the strength he has as a faithful steward thereof, is there a greater contradiction in the world, than to affirm that he must daily and hourly commit it, when thus free from it?

we see some who spend not only one day, but many, in uninterrupted prayer, and in one continued act of love to God.”

But although this servant of God was continually employed in this act of love to God and his neighbor, yet he had likewise other ways of praying, which did not hinder, but increase his union with God.

When he had any great conflicts, he rejoiced to sustain them for love to God ; and after he had conquered, he offered all that he had suffered, as a sacrifice to him. He offered him not only all the spoils won from his enemies, but the gifts and graces which he had given him, joined with fervent prayer, and an unspeakable sense of his obligations to the giver of every good gift : so that when he received any new grace or gift, his understanding being more enlightened, and his heart still more inflamed with love, instead of resting on those gifts and graces, he offered them to God, for whom alone he loved all that he received from him.

He was likewise accustomed to offer to God the life, passion, and death, of our Lord, sometimes in behalf of all the world ; sometimes of particular persons. He told me one day, that

“ he frequently practised two sorts of spiritual communion ; the one, by an ardent desire of receiving Jesus Christ in the Lord’s supper ; the other by receiving into his soul the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit ; thus becoming a living, pure temple of the ever-blessed Trinity, actually giving them an abode in his heart, to dwell and rest there forever.”

He prayed earnestly for the church—for its increase, and for the propagation of the true faith through all nations ; and for all sinners, that they might offend God no more, but might all love him and keep his commandments. What he asked for his neighbors with the greatest fervor, was, that they might do the will of God as it is in heaven. And this he did on all occasions. So that when he heard one say, “ The king was extremely revered because of his power and justice, and that he possessed his realms in peace ;” he immediately broke out, “ Lord, thou hast all justice, and all power ; let all men reverence thee ; and possess thou thy kingdom over all the earth in peace, throughout all ages !” If he heard of a father whom his children loved for his goodness, he would presently say to God,

“Eternal Father, thou art the source of all good ; let thy children love thee.” When one mentioned a gardener, who took great care to make his trees bear good fruit, he said, “Suffer not, Lord, any of thy creatures to perish, but make them all bring forth good fruit.” If he heard of great wars, and many deaths, he lifted up his heart to God, saying, “See, Lord, the miserable state of thy children, and my brethren, whom thou commandest me to love as my own soul.” In a word, there was nothing, either good or evil, which did not furnish him with matter for prayer. He told me sometimes, that at one glance, he saw in God all that was in the world. Hence one may judge how sublime his prayer was, and how great a resemblance he bore to God ; seeing all the world was present, as it were, in epitome, and in his understanding ; and by so peculiar a gift he reduced all to one point, to offer it to God.

He was extremely desirous that every christian should continue to pray, even in outward works. And this he practised, not only in all he did, but likewise in all he spoke. For whenever he spoke, either in asking or answering any thing, he lifted up his heart to God,

and prayed for his assistance and blessing. Particularly, whenever he had a desire to assist any one that was in distress, he had recourse to God by prayer. By this it was that he did so many surprising things ; saying, often, “it was much better to treat with God than with man.”

By this means he could say, with the strictest truth, “I live not, but Christ liveth in me.” For he appeared to all who observed him with attention, to be a real portraiture of Jesus Christ, truly crucified in him, and having no affection but for a life wholly divine. Being in a manner transformed into the image of Christ, he had an ardent desire to follow him, in his life, in his labors, and in his sufferings, as the most perfect pattern that can ever be set before us. Therefore he had no rest during his whole life, but was laboring and suffering incessantly.

He could continually testify, “To live is Christ, and to die is gain.” For it was his chief joy to suffer with Jesus Christ. In this he gloried, and in this alone ; saying with the Apostle, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Him

he regarded in all things, as the only model by which he was to form himself. He said with David, "My eyes are always lifted up unto thee, O Lord." He was accustomed to say, "The eyes of a wise man always are fixed on Christ, who is his head; and the soul that is touched with the love of God, is like a needle that is touched with the load-stone, which always points to the North. Thus, in whatever place a truly spiritual man is, and in whatever he is employed, his eyes and his heart are always fixed on Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER XV.

His last sickness and death.

In May, 1596, he began to find himself out of order. He lost his appetite entirely; nor could he swallow any thing but liquids, and that not without much difficulty. A few days after, he fell into a bloody flux, which was the more dangerous, because he was so extremely weak. Seeing the concern I was under, he said, "My Father, now is God's time"—meaning the time of shewing by facts his resignation and conformity to the divine will, according to his common saying, "True resignation consists wholly in doing, and not in talking."

As soon as his sickness was known at the Hospital in Mexico, the Superior of the Hospital came to visit him; and believing he might want one to attend him, he brought with him brother Pedro de Sarmiento. When he was

come, he could not but admire his patience and tranquillity of spirit. He asked, "If he should not leave his brother to attend him?" He replied, with his usual gravity and sweetness, "He was not willing to deprive the hospital of any help, which perhaps they could not spare;" but being assured they could spare him, he willingly accepted his service. He bore his illness many days with his accustomed courage and patience, never complaining, were his pains ever so great.

On the 24th of June, I thought it would be well to give him the Sacrament. I asked him if he was willing to receive it. He answered, "Yes, and particularly on St. John the Baptist's Day, for whom he had always had a peculiar veneration." I then gave it him without delay, fearing lest death should prevent, as he was exceeding weak, and received scarce any nourishment; besides that, he had an extremely troublesome hiccup, and his pulse began to intermit.

His hiccup continuing, he said to brother Pedro, "My brother, you know what this hiccup means;" intimating thereby that his death was near.

This day, and the following days, his illness increased continually—notwithstanding which, he would rise, even to the day of his death, and dress himself as oft as his distemper required; although he might have avoided that extreme fatigue by accepting the services of others.

He grew weaker and weaker every day, and was not able to eat any thing, unless some sweetmeats, which certain persons of quality sent him from Mexico—upon which he said, “Thou art wonderful, my God, in that a man who possesses nothing in the world, having need of such food as belongs to noblemen, has it provided for him.”

I never perceived in him, during his whole illness, any repugnance to the order of God, but an admirable peace and tranquillity, with an entire conformity to his will. All his virtues shone marvellously in his sickness, and particularly his humility. A few days before his death, an Indian of St. Foy came to see him; and, as he did not understand the Indian tongue, he said to me, “If you please, my Father, hear him; perhaps he would give me some advice.” Such was his spirit—to believe

he might learn from an Indian, in the state wherein he then was!

All this time his pains of body were so great, that, when I asked him how he found himself, and in what part his sharpest pain lay, he answered, "From my head to my foot." It was then that a lady of quality came from Mexico to visit him; but as she had not profited by his former advices, but still continued passionately fond of dress and gaming, I sent her word, "She might go back, for she could not see him. Three or four hours passed in messages to and fro. At length, hoping it might have a good effect, I consented. She was admitted. She kneeled down by his bed, served him herself, and prepared his food with her own hands, with the utmost tenderness and humility. She was then dressed plain, without any ornaments at all. During the time she stayed at St. Foy, she had much conversation with him every morning and evening, and with many tears recommended herself to his prayers.

From that time she felt an entire change in her heart, abhorring the things of which she was fond before. And, some days before she returned to Mexico, she told me with great

joy, "My Father, you shall be witness that Gregory Lopez has taken charge of my soul." He replied, "I have so." Immediately his pains redoubled, and she on her part felt herself struck with the same illness which he had. Nevertheless, she continued two days serving him on her knees, and shedding abundance of tears. But her illness increasing daily, she was constrained to return to Mexico. Lopez said to her, at parting, "Madam, farewell : we shall see each other no more."

As her illness increased, in the same proportion increased her shame and sorrow for her sins : and so did his pains. When she was in extremity, one came from her, to beg he would remember her, he answered to my astonishment, "Yes, I do ; and I carry this weight on my shoulders." In fine, the lady died, giving all the proof that was possible of a saving change. I heard of it a few hours after. When I mentioned it to Lopez, he expressed his joy in these few words, "God has all power."

I have related this to shew how deeply the love of his neighbor was rooted in his heart, and with what ardor he assisted, even in his utmost weakness, the souls that were in danger,

and even taking as it were to himself the punishment of their sins, as he seems to have done on this occasion. Seeing, besides the excessive pains of body which he felt, the inward cross which he bore from the time that he charged himself with this soul, was so extremely heavy, that he was astonished at himself; and not knowing before what it was to complain, he then cried out, with the strongest emotion, "Jesus, assist me! my God, how severe is this refining fire!" And one time, when I was going out, he stopt me, saying, "My Father, do not leave me. Alas! it was not without great reason, that Christ bade his apostles stay and watch with him." Such a word as never fell from him before in the severest trials, either of body or soul.

Yet, in the midst of all his inward pains, his courage and faith were unshaken. I frequently asked, during all those storms, "Do you continue that act of pure love?" He answered, "That is always the same." To set which in the clearest light, I will repeat the several questions which I proposed, when I saw him at the lowest ebb, and his answers.

One time, I asked if so great pain did not a little divert him from thinking on God? He answered, "Not in the least." Another time, seeing him suffer extremely, I said, now is the time to think upon God. "And of whom should I ever think," was his reply. When he was in the very pangs of death, I said, are you thoroughly united to God? He answered, "Yes, thoroughly."

Another time he turned to me, and said, "Perseverance, joined with peace, is of great price." And when I comforted him by saying God led him in the way of the cross, as he had done his own Son, he replied, "I cannot be too thankful for it, nor rejoice in it too much. His holy will be accomplished in me." In fine, when it appeared to me time to give him the blessing, I said, behold the time of going to see the secret of the Lord—he answered, "All is clear, there is no longer any thing hid—it is full noon with me." Plainly declaring, that the light which then shone upon his soul far surpassed that of the noon-day sun. And in this marvellous confidence, full of faith, hope, and love, he gave up his spirit to God.

This was on Saturday noon, on the 20th of July. He lived fifty-four years, thirty-four of them in America. His face appeared as if he had been still alive. His flesh, all over his body, was as soft as that of a little child; and many who touched him, even for twenty-four hours after, found all the parts of his body full as flexible as those of a living man. His corpse was carried into the church, where it remained all the night. The Indians covered it with roses, and abundance of other flowers, as a testimony of their love.

As soon as his death was known at Mexico, many persons of quality, as well as people of all ranks, ran to St. Foy, that they might be present at his funeral. All appeared full of joy and consolation, believing there was no occasion for tears here, as at the death of other persons, but rejoicing with him who was now triumphing in his own country.

His body was interred near the high altar, the Dean of Mexico performing the office, and brother Hernando Horte, one of the canons, preached his funeral sermon.

He was of a middle size, and so exactly proportioned, that no blemish could be found in

him. But his constitution was tender ; his hair was chesnut ; he had a large and high forehead : his eye-brows were arched, his ears small, his eyes black, and his sight so strong that he read the smallest print or writing without spectacles. His nose was inclining to large ; his lips small, though the under lip somewhat thicker than the other. His teeth were even and white ; his face and hands of a dead, wan color, through his extreme abstinence. But the beauty of his soul shone through his face, and wrought such a reverence in all who beheld him, that they considered him rather as one just come down from heaven, than a mortal creature.

THE
HERMIT.

THE HERMIT.*

—
BY DR. T. PARNELL.
—

Far in a wild, unknown to public view,
From youth to age a reverend HERMIT grew ;
The moss his bed, the cave his humble cell,
His food the fruits, his drink the crystal well :
Remote from man, with God he passed the days,
Prayer all his bus'ness, all his pleasure praise.

A life so sacred, such serene repose,
Seem'd Heav'n itself, till one suggestion rose ;
That vice should triumph, virtue vice obey,
This sprung some doubt of Providence's sway ;

* It is impossible (says a writer) for any one who has a taste for poetry to read this poem without pleasure and profit. A late celebrated writer justly observes, that this poem "is conspicuous, throughout the whole of it, for beautiful descriptive narration. The manner of the Hermit's setting forth to visit the world ; his meeting with a companion, and the houses in which they are successively entertained, of the vain man, the covetous man, and the good man, are pieces of very fine painting, touched with a light and delicate pencil, overcharged with no superfluous coloring, and conveying to us a lively idea of the objects."—*Dr. Blair's Lectures on Rhetoric, vol. iii. page 163.*

His hopes no more a certain prospect boast,
And all the tenor of his soul is lost—
So when a smooth expanse receives imprest
Calm nature's image on its watery breast,
Down bend the banks, the trees depending grow,
And skies beneath with ans'ring colors glow :
But if a stone the gentle sea divide,
Swift ruffling circles curl on every side,
And glimmering fragments of a broken sun,
Banks, trees, and skies, in thick disorder run.

To clear this doubt, to know the world by sight,
To find if books, or swains, report it right ;
(For yet by swains alone the world he knew,
Whose feet came wandering o'er the nightly dew)
He quits his cell ;—the pilgrim-staff he bore,
And fix'd the scallop in his hat before ;
Then with the sun a rising journey went,
Sedate to think, and watching each event.

The morn was wasted in the pathless grass,
And long and lonesome was the wild to pass ;
But when the *Southern* sun had warm'd the day,
A youth came posting o'er a crossing way ;
His raiment decent, his complexion fair,
And soft in graceful ringlets wav'd his hair.
Then near approaching, "Father, hail !" he cried ;
And "Hail, my son !" the rev'rend sire replied.

Words follow'd words, from question answer flow'd,
 And talk of various kind deceiv'd the road ;
 'Till each with other pleas'd, and loth to part,
 While in their age they differ'd, join in heart :
 Thus stands an aged elm in ivy bound,
 Thus youthful ivy clasps an elm around.

Now sunk the sun ; the closing hour of day
 Came onward, mantled o'er with sober grey ;
 Nature in silence bid the world repose :
 When near the road a stately palace rose :
 There, by the moon, through ranks of trees they pass,
 Whose verdure crown'd their sloping sides of grass.
 It chanc'd the noble master of the dome
 Still made his house the wandering stranger's home :
 Yet still the kindness, from a thirst of praise,
 Prov'd the vain flourish of expensive ease.
 The pair arrive : the liv'ried servants wait ;
 Their lord receives them at the pompous gate.
 The table groans with costly piles of food,
 And all is more than hospitably good.
 Then led to rest, the day's long toil they drown,
 Deep sunk in sleep, and silk, and heaps of down.

At length 'tis morn, and at the dawn of day
 Along the wide canals the zephyrs play ;
 Fresh o'er the gay parterres the breezes creep,
 And shake the neighboring wood to banish sleep.

Up rise the guests, obedient to the call,
An early banquet deck'd the splendid hall ;
Rich luscious wine a golden goblet grac'd,
Which the kind master forc'd the guests to taste.
Then pleas'd and thankful, from the porch they go ;
And, but the landlord, none had cause of woe ;
His cup was vanished ; for in secret guise
The younger guest purloin'd the glittering prize !

As one who spies a serpent in his way,
Glist'ning and basking in the summer ray,
Disorder'd stops to shun the danger near,
Then walks with faintness on, and looks with fear ;
So seem'd the sire ; when far upon the road,
The shining spoil his wily partner show'd.
He stopp'd with silence, walk'd with trembling heart,
And much he wish'd, but durst not ask to part ;
Murmuring he lifts his eyes, and thinks it hard,
That generous actions meet a base reward.

While thus they pass, the sun his glory shrouds,
The changing skies hang out their sable clouds ;
A sound in air presag'd approaching rain,
And beasts to covert scud across the plain.
Warn'd by the signs, the wandering pair retreat,
To seek for shelter at a neighboring seat.
'Twas built with turrets, on a rising ground,
And strong, and large, and unimprov'd around ;

Its owner's temper, tim'rous and severe,
 Unkind and griping, caus'd a desert there.
 As near the MISER's heavy doors they drew,
 Fierce rising gusts with sudden fury blew ;
 The nimble light'ning mix'd with showers began,
 And o'er their heads loud-rolling thunder ran.
 Here long they knock, but knock or call in vain,
 Driven by the wind, and batter'd by the rain.
 At length some pity warm'd the master's breast,
 ('Twas then his threshold first received a guest)
 Slow creaking turns the door with jealous care,
 And half he welcomes in the shiv'ring pair ;
 One frugal fagot lights the naked walls,
 And nature's fervor through their limbs recalls :
 Bread of the coarsest sort, with eager wine,
 (Each hardly granted) serv'd them both to dine ;
 And when the tempest first appeared to cease,
 A ready warning bid them part in peace.

With still remark the pondering Hermit vie v'd
 In one so rich, a life so poor and rude ;
 And why should such (within himself he cried)
 Lock the lost wealth a thousand want beside ?
 But what new marks of wonder soon took place,
 In every settling feature of his face !
 When from his vest the young companion bore
 That cup, the gen'rous landlord own'd before,
 And paid profusely with the precious bowl
 The stinted kindness of this churlish soul.

But now the clouds in airy tumult fly ;
The sun emerging opes an azuresky ;
A fresher green the smelling leaves display,
And glittering as they tremble, cheer the day ;
The weather courts them from the poor retreat,
And the glad master bolts the wary gate.

While hence they walk, the pilgrim's bosom wrought
With all the travel of uncertain thought ;
His partner's acts without their cause appear,
'Twas there a vice, and seem'd a madness here :
Detesting that, and pitying this, he goes,
Lost and confounded with the various shows.
Now night's dim shades again involve the sky ;
Again the wanderers want a place to lie,
Again they search, and find a lodging nigh.
The soil improv'd around, the mansion neat,
And neither poorly low, nor idly great :
It seem'd to speak its master's turn of mind,
Content, and not for praise, but virtue kind.

Hither the walkers turn with weary feet,
Then bless the mansion, and the master greet :
Their greeting fair, bestowed with modest guise,
The courteous master hears, and thus replies :

“ Without a vain, without a grudging heart,
To him who gives us all, I yield a part ;

From him you come, for him accept it here,
A frank and sober, more than costly cheer."
He spoke, and bid the welcome table spread,
Then talk'd of virtue till the time of bed,
When the grave household round his hall repair,
Warn'd by a bell, and close the hours with prayer.

At length the world, renewed by calm repose,
Was strong for toil, the dappled morn arose ;
Before the pilgrims part, the younger crept
Near the clos'd cradle where an infant slept,
And writh'd his neck : the landlord's little pride,
O strange return ! grew black, and gasp'd, and died.
Horror of horrors ! what ! his only son !
How look'd our Hermit when the fact was done ?
Not hell, though hell's black jaws in sunder part,
And breathe blue fire, could more assault his heart.

Confus'd, and struck with silence at the deed,
He flies, but trembling fails to fly with speed.
His steps the youth pursues ; the country lay
Perplex'd with roads, a servant shew'd the way :
A river cross'd the path ; the passage o'er
Was nice to find ; the servant trod before ;
Long arms of oaks an open bridge supplied,
And deep the waves beneath the bending glide.
The youth, who seem'd to watch a time to sin,
Approach'd the careless guide, and thrust him in :

Plunging he falls, and rising lifts his head ;
Then flashing turns, and sinks among the dead !

Wild, sparkling rage inflames the Father's eyes,
He bursts the bands of fear, and madly cries,
'Detested wretch !'—But scarce his speech began,
When the strange partner seem'd no longer man :
His youthful face grew more serenely sweet ;
His robe turn'd white, and flow'd upon his feet ;
Fair rounds of radiant points invest his hair ;
Celestial odors breathe through purpled air ;
And wings, whose colors glittered on the day,
Wide at his back their gradual plumes display.
The form ethereal bursts upon his sight,
And moves in all the majesty of light.

Though loud at first the pilgrim's passion grew,
Sudden he gaz'd and wist not what to do,
Surprise in secret chains his words suspends,
And in a calm his settling temper ends.
But silence here the beauteous angel broke,
(The voice of music ravish'd as he spoke.)

“ Thy pray'r, thy praise, thy life to vice unknown,
In sweet memorial rise before the throne :
These charms, success in our bright region find,
And force an angel down to calm thy mind ;
For this commission'd, I forsook the sky :
Nay, cease to kneel—thy fellow servant I.

“ Then know the truth of government divine,
And let these scruples be no longer thine.

“ The Maker justly claims that world he made.
In this the right of Providence is laid ;
Its sacred majesty through all depends
On using second means to work his ends :
'Tis thus, withdrawn in state from human eye
The power exerts his attributes on high,
Your actions uses, nor controls your will,
And bids the doubting sons of men be still.

“ What strange events can strike with more surprise
Than those which lately struck thy wond'ring eyes !
Yet taught by these, confess the Almighty just,
And where you can't unriddle, learn to trust.

“ The great, vain man, who far'd on costly food,
Whose life was too luxurious to be good ;
Who made his ivory stands with goblets shine,
And forc'd his guests to morning draughts of wine,
Has, with the cup, the graceless custom lost,
And still he welcomes, but with less of cost.

“ The mean, suspicious wretch, whose bolted door,
Ne'er mov'd in duty to the wandering poor ;
With him I left the cup, to teach his mind
That Heav'n can bless, if mortals will be kind.
Conscious of wanting worth, he views the bowl,
And feels compassion touch his grateful soul.

Thus artists melt the sullen oar of lead,
With heaping coals of fire upon its head ;
In the kind warmth the metal learns to glow,
And, loose from dross, the silver runs below.

“ Long had our pious friend in virtue trod,
But now the child half-wean'd his heart from God ;
(Child of his age) for him he liv'd in pain,
And measur'd back his steps to earth again.
To what excesses had his dotage run ?
But God, to save the father, took the son.
To all but thee, in fits he seem'd to go,
(And 'twas my ministry to deal the blow.)
The poor fond parent, humbled in the dust,
Now owns in tears the punishment was just.

“ But how had all his fortune felt a wrack,
Had that false servant sped in safety back ?
This night his treasur'd heaps he meant to steal,
And what a fund of charity would fail !

“ Thus heav'n instructs thy mind : this trial o'er,
Depart in peace, resign, and sin no more.”

On sounding pinions here the youth withdrew,
The sage stood wond'ring as the seraph flew.
Thus look'd Elisha, when to mount on high
His Master took the chariot of the sky ;

The fiery pomp ascending left the view ;
The prophet gaz'd, and wish'd to follow too.

The bending Hermit here a pray'r begun,
“ *Lord, as in heaven, on earth thy will be done.*”
Then gladly turning, sought his ancient place,
And pass'd a life of piety and peace.

LATELY PUBLISHED,

BY JOHN EYRE,

And Sold at 40 Fulton Street.

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Treatment Date: March 2006

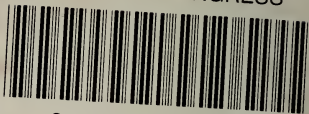
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