

"I can't believe, I don't believe it," Mrs. Acland said. "And if it be so, why do you tell me now?"

The woman smiled. "It is you who forget now. I tell you now that you may help to bring about that marriage I spoke of."

"Never. Let Frances be who she may, she shall never marry a son of yours."

"Gently, Mrs. Acland, and think of the consequences. I tell this now. Will any one disbelieve me when I say that you knew that the baby I brought you was not your granddaughter? Every one knows that Hugh Brentwood was no friend of yours. Will his son be credulous enough to suppose that you did not know who kept him out of his inheritance?"

"But you have no proof of this?"

"But I have. On Frances' shoulder there is a birth-mark, a red star. Mrs. Nolan will recognise this mark. The nurse who attended Mrs. Brentwood will swear there was no such mark on her child."

Mrs. Acland rose again, white and trembling.

"You are a bad woman, Mrs. Harper, but give me a few days time."

"A dozen if you like, but remember the loss to Frances if this becomes known, and remember it rests with you for all things to remain as they are. And I ask nothing difficult, only that you ask my son—no one need know of me—bare, and let him win Frances, if he can."

"If he can?"

"Yes; at least let him try. He has many things in his favour, and he has seen your—Frances, I mean, at church, and in the village, and is half in love already. You are to meet him to-night I understand."

Mrs. Acland looking up inquiringly.

"At Sir Charles Darce's."

"Oh! at dinner, but I cannot go; I am not able."

"Oh! yes you are. Frances would suspect something, and she must know nothing."

"Oh! no, no. She must not know," Mrs. Acland moaned.

"And now, good-by. You shall hear from me in a few days," and in a few moments Mrs. Harper was away from Brentwood.

(To be concluded.)

FROM MOUNT MELLERAY TO MOUNT ST. JOSEPH.

(Continued.)

(From the Irish Catholic.)

The interval of these three years was employed in internal arrangements, erecting altars, fitting up a stair, etc., and in remodelling the tumble-down out-offices into a temporary monastery to admit of easy access to the church in the small hours of the morning, when the community assemble there for the Divine Office. The tottering walls of the stables were repaired, and in some cases raised a storey. The western walk of the cloisters was built from the foundations, and formed the connecting link between the church and the rest of the monastery. The old out-offices formed a sort of courtyard, a perfect square, the northern side of which was removed to make room for the church which encroached on it. Two sides of this square having been roofed, the lofts were used as a dormitory, and the ground-floor as dairy, bake-house, laundry, etc., while the old barn, then roofless, was covered in and made to pass muster as a refectory. On St. Patrick's Day, 1881, the community moved into their new quarters, and the old mansion was given over exclusively to the use of guests who wished to make a Retreat at the monastery. In the same year a diocesan subscription was authorised by the late Dr. Ryan, the most faithful friend of the monastery, and nearly every parish in the large diocese contributed most generously. With this the loan that was raised for the completion of the new church was nearly cleared off.

Hitherto ladies who wished to pass a few days on retreat at the monastery were prevented from availing themselves of so precious an advantage by want of accommodation in its vicinity; so, at the urgent request of many who eagerly wished for it, a handsome building, with comfortable rooms for their special use, was erected just outside the avenue gate. A very facile lady writer thus dilates on the interior, no doubt as an encouragement to visitors to go and see for themselves:—"Two exquisitely-furnished reception rooms open off a tiled hall—the one dining-room style, ruby carpet and morocco chairs, the other an æsthetic study in olive green. The bedrooms, seventeen in number, open off two corridors running parallel to one another, and in truth they are very great contrasts to anchorites' cells." Though the Irish Trappists resemble very much the old Columbian monks in their manner of life, yet when there is question of receiving the "devout sex" at their monasteries they widely differ. St. Columba would admit no black cattle into his island home in Iona, "for," said the saint, "wherever there is a cow there must be a woman to milk her, and wherever there is a woman

there is mischief." Not so the Trappists at Mount St. Joseph; they are welcomed there quite cordially, and waited on by devoted Brothers, who look to their creature comforts during their stay. Special rooms are prepared for their use during the day, and in the evening they retire to the ladies' retreat described above. A line is drawn, beyond which ladies are not permitted to enter, but the day runs pleasantly between attendance at the Masses and offices in the church, a turn on the "Mound," a pretty knoll, crowned with evergreens and intersected by gravel walks through fragrant shrubs, and provided with rustic seats, whereon to rest and listen to the myriad songsters of the grove. Some more adventurous souls set out in company with a lady companion for a quiet stroll through the hedgerows, or to climb the hills at the rear of the house, and from their summit to catch delightful views of the distant Devil's Bit Mountains on one side, or Slieve Bloom on the other. Many are the regrets uttered at departure that their sojourn in this quiet resting-place for body and soul should necessarily be so short.

After the consecration of the church in '84, the Most Rev. Dr. Ryan, late Coadjutor Bishop of Killaloe, in his paternal solicitude for the promotion of the welfare of Mount St. Joseph, expressed his desire to have it canonically erected into an abbey, and in the following year signified his wish to that effect by letter to the Lord Abbot of Mount Melleray, who presented it to the General Chapter of the Order, when the application was sanctioned and submitted to Rome for approval. His Holiness was graciously pleased to order a brief to be expedited raising the monastery into an abbey, and conferring on it all the honours, rights, and privileges of abbeys of the Cistercian Order. Accordingly in August, 1887, the community of Mount St. Joseph proceeded to elect an abbot, and their choice fell on the Right Rev. J. C. Beardwood, who was solemnly consecrated on the 30th October following in the abbey church by Monsignor Persico, the Papal Envoy, in the presence of a vast assemblage, who thronged to witness so novel a spectacle, the like of which had not been performed in public since the days of Queen Mary. Since the accession of the new abbot very material progress has been made, and a fresh impulse given to the whole system under his immediate inspection. Gifted as he is with rare powers of organisation, his professional knowledge of building enhances considerably his natural talents, and eminently fits him for a position where they can have full scope, and can impress themselves on the works that are yet to spring up. His attention was arrested at the outset by the want of suitable farm offices; the old ones, being crowded round the monastery proper, and occupying the site of a portion of it, they should of necessity be removed. So he drew up a plan of a few plain buildings as a beginning, and, limiting the outlay to his means, he employed a few men, who constructed a barn, a stable, and byres for cattle at a convenient distance from the main buildings. Next a large reservoir for damming up a plentiful supply of water was erected, and machinery of divers kinds procured and set in motion by a turbine wheel. The concern which contains all of these may well be termed a hive of industry, for thence issue the hum and whirl of many monsters that crash and labour each at its respective work. Within a very limited compass, yet so as to give ample space to each, I have been collected a saw-bench, a mortar mill, threshing and winnowing machines, and grain elevator, these three latter working in harmony and simultaneously; a crushing mill, a general joiner for planing, moulding, etc., lathes, chaff-cutter, and turnip-pulper. On the arrival of the new abbot, the church only and a portion of one walk of the cloister were built, and, as already stated, the community were temporarily housed in the remodelled out-offices; but their numbers increasing, fresh space was demanded, and could only be provided by a new building. Where were the funds? "God knows my wants, I shall go ahead trusting in the Lord. He will furnish the means." Such are the thoughts that stimulate every religious superior who essays an important undertaking demanding an outlay which his financial condition does not in human prudence warrant him to make. Therefore, in April of last year the abbot laid the foundation stone of a new refectory after the style of the old Cistercian buildings, and which he imitated in the plan, with one single exception, that whereas the old refectories had rows of columns supporting the floor of the dormitory in the upper storey, he dispensed with these columns, using the modern rolled girders for that purpose. It is a plain building with high pitched gables and pointed mullioned windows, in keeping with the design of the church with which it runs parallel. The work is far from completion, but depending on Providence and the aims of the devout clients of Mary and St. Joseph, he hopes to be enabled to carry it on without accumulating fresh debts. It is often said, and truly, that the work of God progresses slowly, and that every religious undertaking of magnitude must strike root under the shadow of the Cross. That twenty years hence Mount St. Joseph's Abbey will be a flourishing institution is even now predicted by those who visit and observe the peculiar advantages it possesses. Now the traveller who has not seen this house of God during the intervening years since its foundation, and since the spot was known as Mount Heaton, will pause with wonder when at the bend in the