Every Catholic manual on the subject makes it clear that 'no indulgence can be obtained when there is sin unforgiven in the soul'; that 'to gain an indulgence we must not only have the intention of doing so, either actually at the moment, or virtually by reason of an intention previously fixed upon, but we must be in a state of grace at least when carrying out the ultimate condition to which the indulgence is attached, and fully discharge all the other conditions prescribed'; and that 'to gain a plenary indulgence it is further necessary to be *exempt from deliberate affection even for venial sin.*' Mark now how plain a tale puts down the *Nineteenth Century's* repetition of the musty fiction that indulgences are a 'pardon for sins past, present, and future.'

A GREAT ORDER OF MONKS.

The consecration of the great Benedictine church of St. Anselmo in Rome gives a European contemporary occasion to publish the following interesting figures regarding the present condition of the Benedictine Order:—'At present there are between 5000 and 6000 Benedictine monks, who are divided into thirteen "congregations," including the Cassinese, the Subiaco, the Anglo-Benedictine, Swiss, Bavarian, Beuron, French, two Austrian, Hungarian, two American, and Australian Congregations. Besides the "Black Monks," the Order has thrown off in its history many branches, such as the Cistercian Order, or "White Monks" (1000 members), the Trappists, or Reformed Cistercians (between 3000 and 4000), the Camaldulese Monks, etc. Altogether these form a body of about 12,000 religious. Finally, it is calculated that during the thirteen ccenturies of its existence this ancient Order has produced 24 popes, 200 cardinals, 1600 archbishops, 4000 bishops, besides 15,700 writers; also 1560 of its religious have been canonised, and 5000 have received minor honors in the Church. No less than 43 imperial personages and 44 royal ones have been members of the Order.'

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The foundations of this remarkable Order were laid by St. Benedict at Subiaco in the year 529. His rule has been aptly described as 'a masterpiece of enlightened Christian wisdom and prudence.' For many long centuries the Benedictine monks were the chief agriculturists, engineers, physicians, educators, and civilisers of Western Europe. A Protestant writer has truly said that 'the world has never been indebted to any body of men as to the illustrious Order of Benedictine monks.' 'The pages of history,' says Feasy, in his *Monasticism*, 'literally blaze with the great names of the mighty ones of this celebrated Order.' In one of his *Historical Sketches* Cardinal Newman tells us how St. Benedict 'found the world, physical and social, in ruins, and his mission was to restore it in the way, not of science, but of nature; not as if setting about to do it, not professing to do it by any set time, or by any series of strokes, but so quietly, patiently, gradually, that often till the work was done, it was not known to be doing. It was a restoration rather than a visitation, correction, or conversion. The new world he helped to create was a growth rather than a structure. Silent men were observed about the country, or in the forest digging, cleaning, and building; and other silent men, not seen, were sitting in the cold cloister, tiring their eyes, and keeping their attention on the stretch, while they painfully deciphered, then copied and re-copied the manuscripts which they had saved. There was no one that contended or cried out, or drew attention to what was going on, but by degrees the woody swamp became a hermitage, a religious house, a farm, an abbey, a village, a seminary, a school of learning, and a city. Roads and villages connected it with other abbeys and cities which had similarly grown up, and what the haughty Alaric or fierce Attila had broken to pieces, these patient, meditative men have brought together and made live again. And then, when they had in the course of many years gained their peaceful victories, perhaps some new invaders came, and with fire and sword undid their slow and persevering toil in an hour. . . . Down in the dust lay the labor and civilisation of centuries—churches, colleges, cloisters, libraries—and nothing was left to them but to begin all over again; but this they did without grudging, so promptly, cheerfully, and tranquilly, as if it were by some law of nature that the restoration came, and they were like the flowers and shrubs and great trees which they reared, and which when ill-treated do not take vengeance or remember evil, but give forth fresh branches, leaves, and blossoms, perhaps in greater profusion, or with richer quality, for the very reason that the old were rudely broken off.'

To the Benedictine monks learning and civilisation owe a debt of gratitude which they can never repay. In one of his *Essays* (p. 371) Sir James Stephens sums up as follows the claims of that illustrious Order to the gratitude of succeeding times:—'The greatness of the Benedictines did not, however, consist either in their agricultural skill, their prodigies of architecture, or their priceless libraries, but in the parentage of countless men and women illustrious for active piety, for wisdom in the government of mankind, for profound learning, and for that contemplative spirit which discovers within the soul itself things beyond the limits of the perceptible creation.'

IN THE WAKE OF THE RISING SUN.

TUNIS AND CARTHAGE.

By 'VIATOR.'

S.S. Syrian Prince, November 26, 1900.

WE are *three*—our purpose to visit Palestine and kneel on the sacred soil of the Holy Land, to kiss the places made sacred beyond expression by the life and labors and teachings and suffering of Him Who by His name fills all time, past, present, and to come. No other name than that of JESUS fills all space, covers all time, in reproach, in warning, in white robed hope, in salvation, through joy and tears and blood and victory to the ends of the earth. The privilege of a lifetime, if so it be that our hopes and purpose meet reality, this pilgrimage to the cradle of Christianity, to the soil moistened by the tears, dyed by the blood of God Incarnate. In the true spirit of Catholic pilgrims, bent on kneeling at the shrines that mark the Gospel scenes, we turn our backs on the old country on November 11. In the Syrian Prince along the gloomy banks of the Manchester ship canal, out into the Mersey and down channel we steam, away past the big ships, the Campania of pleasant memories, the giant Oceanic, and smaller craft in numbers, out, out to sea past the Scilly Isles till we toss to heart's content on the merry breakers of the Bay of Biscay. And now while our good ship the Syrian Prince is scudding along dancing betimes to the weird music of the sea, I will go back to our starting point and bring your readers with us from the Salford Docks. It will be a gratification for us who are much to New Zealand to make your readers, if they do us the favor of reading these notes, share in the delights of a visit to the Eastern lands, and to give at first hand to the TABLET the impressions made as we visit in turn places familiar in name from childhood, and written down deep in the folds of memory.

LONDON TO GIBRALTAR.

The run down from London to Manchester was a pleasure in the forenoon of the 10th November and a visit to Liverpool filled in the evening before taking up our quarters on board. The 'Syrian Prince' is a steamer of the 'Prince Line,' trading to the East. We are 14 saloon passengers, variously assorted, but all courteously bent with the gentle civility of the old world on making the time we pass together—casual meeting as it is on the highway of the seas—as easy and pleasant as may be. And be it added, it is a pleasant time and a trip so far full to the brim and pressed down and flowing over with peace and ease and interest and solace while we skim over the multitudinous seas about 11 knots to the hour. The Provincial of the Marist Fathers—Very Rev. Michael J. Watters, S.M.—was at St Pancras Station on the morning of Saturday, the 10th November to bid us farewell, and shed a parting benediction on our pilgrimage. The weather clear and cold. There is a medical officer on board in tasteful uniform, charged with the health of the ship's company. It will be of interest to readers of the TABLET that said officer is none other than Dr. Patrick Mackin, of Wellington, who, with his amiable wife and your correspondent complete the 'three' who on pilgrimage bent are following 'in the wake of the Rising Sun.'

But now we are across the Bay of Biscay, and here for the first time and the last the sea-god exacted tribute from the weak and haunted them for hours with contending feelings and some *malaise*, the fear of death in sickness, the hope that sickness would give some ease and resolve itself into 'eternal rest.' But they were the weaker vessels, the finer clay not seasoned by travel. Sturdy and robust and much travelled, we smile at the foibles of those who are pale and prostrate at the first uplifting of Neptune's trident. Skirting close the coast of Spain and Portugal, and running under the lee of the shore, we could discern the slopes and heights and fields and rivers of these lands of the evening while we make for the golden lands of the rising sun. At Gibraltar and Ceuta—opposing ports of the Straits—we had a good view of both coasts, and then by the courtesy of the skipper we ran in under the frowning, rugged rock of Gibraltar towards the afternoon of Saturday, 17th November, and from the deck easily scanned this jealous outpost of Home. Barren it looks, and 'horrid' with bristling ports and lowering guns and menacing cannon, and turrets, and sentries, and barracks—all redolent of warlike man. But this is the iron key of the Mediterranean and the East, watched from the land of Spain and jealously held as chief outpost of the Empire. My host and companion reminds me that watch and ward is held over the rock by one of our countrymen from the 'Black North'—Sir George White—one of the builders of the Empire.

IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

So far we have covered 1,300 miles of water, and now, smart and taut, we steam gallantly into the blue waves of the Mediterranean. Steamers from east and south and an occasional man-of-war passed freely, and often on port and starboard, proving that we are, indeed, on the highway of the mercantile marine, on the hunting-grounds of the merchantman service. In the golden sunshine, drinking deep of the glorious breeze, bounding over a sapphire sea, we exult in being alive, and thank God for a freshening of vigour, and an exhilaration not to be found amid the giddiest delights of the land.

Now we are hugging the coast of Algiers, and from the bridge—to which the captain gives 'white card' without form or ceremony—we note the fertile coast where French muscles and industry have delved out a foreign France. Red-tiled houses, and farm yards, and cattle plains, and vineyards, and cornfields, and orchards chase one another up from the foreshore to the hills—a flourishing settlement or colony, it seems—and ever and always tapers aloft in the villages the church steeple, pointing aloft and soaring with the hopes of the people to fairer regions beyond the land-mark of time. A railroad,