

and result of a close union with God, of a perfect regularity, and a complete fulfilment of duty. In vain would we expect any share in it unless our passions be in perfect subjection, and a lively faith animates all our life. We must be persons of good will, otherwise there will be no peace for us. And what is it to be persons of good will in a Community? It is to be persons of *devotedness*, accompanied with true *humility*, and a great *zeal* to progress in virtue. If you are possessed of these dispositions, doubtless you may apply to yourselves the declaration of the Saviour, on the mount: "Blessed are the peace-makers, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." Would to God that these sacred words would find in each of you their full application! What an edification for the Community, and what a source of sweet consolation for all its members! But how can this blessed spirit of peace be obtained and maintained? The best means are: to keep silence whenever and wherever required by the Rule; to avoid contesting, quarrelling, carrying reports, and indulging in angry words; to work in God's holy presence, and to bear in mind that peaceful persons are usually noiseless persons, modest in their deportment, humble, charitable, and of uniform and amiable temper. Alas! when a Religious allows herself to be cheated of this precious boon, she scarcely permits others around her to enjoy it. May the peace of our Lord be with you forever!

The future is indeed gloomy, both in Europe and in our own dear land of adoption; more so here, I fear, than with you. But our trust is in God; there can be finally no deception. Let us pray, and remain undisturbed. The best men I have seen are looking, with our common Father, for miracles. While writing this, I receive your mail of the 15th ult., for which I am very thankful. I cannot say yet on what day I may start. Every day here is precious for me and for you.

His Reverence is quite well, and speaks often and most affectionately of you all. May God keep you, my dear Daughters, in His holy peace and love!

E. SORIN, S. S. C.

No. V.

ST. MARY'S OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION,

October 22, 1861.

MY DEAR DAUGHTERS IN JESUS CHRIST:

Among the distressing features of the times, I am glad to convey you some consoling news; for, however much we deplore the distracted state of our country, we find a gratification in being able to assuage some of its sorrows. Indeed, simple as it is to us Religious, I hail it as an event which I chronicle with pleasure, knowing in advance that you will learn it with delight.

A most honorable call has been made on your Community by the first Magistrate in our State, asking for twelve Sisters to go and attend the sick, the wounded and dying soldiers. An admirable opportunity has thus been offered to show our love of the country, to gain new claims upon the esteem—nay, the gratitude of our people; and such claims as no one would reject. The call has been unhesitatingly responded to, and this afternoon six Sisters of Holy Cross started for Paducah, Kentucky; namely, Sister M. of St. Angela, Sr. M. of St. Magdalene, Sr. M. of St. Winifred, Sr. M. of St. Adèle, Sr. M. of St. Veronica, and Sr. M. of St. Anne. Six more are preparing to start for Missouri within a week—Sr. M. of St. Angeline, Sr. M. of St. Fidelis, Sr. M. of St. Francis de Paul, Sr. M. of St. Gregory, Sr. M. of St. Felicity, and Sister M. of St. Josephine.

They were all chosen from a large number of volunteers; and if we judge of their sentiments by the joy with which they have received their selection, we have reason to believe that they duly appreciate the honor and favor bestowed on them. It is in this light we should view the event; for were it possible that the Community should ever forget such an act of devotedness, Heaven will not let it go unrewarded.

It is well known that in the late Crimean war the Sisters of Charity literally covered themselves with glory before men, and, doubtless, with merits before God. When the record of our present struggles will be handed down to posterity, will it not be a source of joy for the Church to be able to show, in every rank of society, many a glorious name generously sacrificed for the rescue of the country?

But why should we be left out of the list? Are we not members of the holy band of the Cross—a company recently formed to meet the chief needs of our time? If the Standard of the Cross, under which we have enlisted, knows of no enemies among men—if our object, on the contrary, is to rally them all under the precious emblem of our salvation—our little army stands arrayed against the enemy of mankind, the spirit of darkness, and all the evils and the wounds which he has inflicted on humanity. Hence wherever there is a pain to soothe, a pang to relieve, a bleeding heart, or limb, to treat or dress, there is a field for us to enter, under pain of deserting our noble banner.

Such is the field now opened by the calamity of our land. Four of our Fathers have already entered it; and in a few days a dozen Sisters of the same family will have gone, with no other arms but their Cross and their Beads; bringing with them in the devotedness of their hearts a pledge of efficient helps, and in the modesty of their countenances edification and influence for good.

If man, in the discharge of duty, is always entitled to some share

of sympathy, this is especially true when a generous obedience to the voice of his country has brought him to sufferings and all sorts of perils; this cannot be denied. Nor is it idle to show that our Institutions are not useless or totally dead to the vital interests of the land; for thus, and thus only, the eyes of many will be opened to the real spirit of religious communities. A little band of devoted Sisters, ministering like angels amidst the soldiery, will do away with prejudices, and show the beauty and resources of the Catholic faith to support man in all possible trials much more forcibly than volumes of arguments and evidences.

At a time and in a country when and where the Catholic Church is yet so little known and so much misrepresented, which of us would not gladly seize upon an opportunity so favorable and so inviting to exhibit the true spirit of her children where it cannot be mistaken? Whilst so many generous and patriotic souls are rushing to the defence of their country, should we imagine having done our duty by reading or listening to the daily recital of their trials, when we could have found means to afford them the relief and comfort they so well deserve?

But, laying aside all terrestrial considerations, there are souls to be saved—souls redeemed by Jesus Christ, and more exposed there to their eternal ruin. Who knows if, after receiving the kind ministrations of these angels of the earth, those poor sufferers will not be willing to listen to the words of salvation; and if thus made to feel the benefit of their devotedness, they will not permit them to prepare their souls for baptism and heaven? If a simple soul could thus be gained to God, would it not more than justify the trial? But who could tell how many may thus be sent to heaven? What a joy would it not bring to the apostolic heart of our venerated Founder to hear of this heroic act of charity undertaken by this little vanguard of his company in the New World! It seems I hear his voice from beyond the waters cheering the privileged twelve on their noble errand of charity. It is in his name I have blessed them; and they may rest assured that while they follow the fortunes of the battle-fields of the nation, he, like Moses, will be praying for them on the mountain-top; we, too, will persevere with him in prayer in their behalf. In all our Houses there shall be offered for them a general Communion every Saturday, that they may fully discharge the important trust they have received.

Our Blessed Mother has seen the little band on their knees, in her own House of Loreto, and again, at the Portiuncula, among the angels; doubtless she has blessed them, and taken each of them in her peculiar custody. To these beloved sanctuaries they will often return in spirit; there also we shall meet them to entreat the august Mother of God to grant success to their noble mission.

E. SORIN.