

J. M. J.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

ST. MARY'S, FEAST OF THE COMPASSION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, April 2, 1887.

MY BELOVED DAUGHTERS IN JESUS CHRIST:

Many among you may feel surprised and pained at my silence; so many beautiful and admirable expressions of cordial condolence and sympathy received from all parts during the past four weeks, and not a line of acknowledgment! To some few it may appear an unlooked-for neglect; but to the majority, it will be a proof of what they had apprehended: the terrible shock that was felt all around, centred upon my poor heart with such a comprehensive effect that I feared I would never recover from it. No death ever affected me as the death of dear Mother Angela. It is now nearly a month since I saw her dying and dead; and every day has intensified my grief. The numerous or rather the numberless letters every mail has brought us since the 4th of March, from so many noble souls and persons high in social ranks, have proved to me that I was not alone in appreciating her merits; public opinion has done her full justice. But what has increased, instead of alleviating my sense of our loss is the universal and deep feeling of the same, especially among the best members of the Community—the most intelligent and devoted, the most religious and edifying, the most regular and exemplary subjects on whom the destinies of the Congregation chiefly depend. Never before did I know so fully to what an extent they appreciated and admired her extraordinary gifts of nature and grace, her real spirit of obedience and devotedness, her love of the rule and self-sacrifice, her zeal for the salvation of souls and the advancement of her Congregation.

I knew from old experience, that every House she visited looked upon her as a messenger God Himself had sent for the benefit and joy of all its inmates. Well, indeed, I may say in perfect truth that from the day she entered the Community until her last, she was above all the life, the encouraging soul, the delight of all she met. To her the Congregation owes a debt that superior minds, true Religious can never forget. To me this is an addition to my grief, every day showing more clearly the immense loss I have sustained—a loss for which I shall be consoled only by the constant and energetic efforts of each and of all to replace in my esteem the dear departed, by the same spirit of unreserved obedience, of self-sacrifice and unbounded zeal, of the love of the rule, and of her Community.

You know now how to console me. May you all carry it into effect, and while praying for her, pray for me that I may meritoriously bear my cross.

E. SORIN, C. S. C.

P. S.—In justice to the memory of the deceased, as also to the honorable expressions of so many beautiful letters of condolence, I have deemed it a duty to yield to many an urgent request and publish those admirable testimonials with an abridgment of Mother Angela's life.

E. S.