

THE
AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF
ST. TERESA OF AVILA

THE LIFE OF ST. TERESA OF JESUS
WRITTEN BY HERSELF

Including
THE RELATIONS
OR MANIFESTATIONS OF HER SPIRITUAL STATE WHICH
ST. TERESA SUBMITTED TO HER CONFESSOR

Translated from the Spanish by
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Misericordias Domini in aeternum cantabo.
“The mercies of the Lord I will sing forever.”

—Motto of St. Teresa of Avila
(*Psalm 88:2*)

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INTRODUCTION.

ST. TERESA was born at Avila on Wednesday, March 28, 1515,¹ and baptized on April 4, in the parish church of San Juan, the very day on which the first Mass was celebrated in the new church of the convent of the Incarnation.² Her god-father was Vela Nuñez, and the god-mother Doña Maria del Aguila. The name she received in baptism, Teresa, of frequent occurrence in Spain in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, was common to the families of both her father and mother; for her great-grandmother on the father's side was Teresa Sanchez, and her grandmother on her mother's side was Teresa de las Cuevas.

Her father, Don Alonso Sanchez de Cepeda, son of Don Juan Sanchez de Toledo, had been married twice, first in 1504, to Doña Catalina del Peso, by whom he had three children—Don Juan Vasquez de Cepeda, Don Pedro de Cepeda, and a daughter, Doña Maria de Cepeda, who married Don Martin de Guzman, and is frequently mentioned in the writings of her saintly half-sister. Don Alonso having become a widower in 1507, married secondly Doña Beatriz Davila y Ahumada, who was in the fourth degree related to his first wife, so that a dispensation became necessary, which was granted October 17, 1509. This second marriage was blessed with nine children, who, according to the custom of those days, took the name either of the father or the mother, as it pleased them. They were: Don Fernando de Ahumada, Don Rodrigo de Cepeda, our saint, whose full name was Doña Teresa Sanchez Cepeda Davila y Ahumada, Don Lorenzo de Cepeda, Don Antonio and Don Pedro de Ahumada, Don Jeronimo de Cepeda, Don Agustin and Doña Juana de Ahumada.

Don Alonso, the father, was pious, stern, and austere; if not exactly rich, at least so far well-to-do that he was able to provide liberally for each of his twelve children, as may be seen from his testament and the two inventories of his property, the first of which was drawn up after the death of his first wife and the other after

¹ Don Vicente de la Fuente, *Obras de Santa Teresa de Jesús*, vol. vi, p. 1 (Madrid, 1881).

² *Ibid.*, vol. vi, 1.

his own death.³ St. Teresa, who has left a beautiful character sketch of him, delighted in speaking of him, and always did so in terms of the highest veneration. He was fond of good books, of which he collected a considerable number, so that his children might read them too. Some of these books are enumerated in the inventory of 1508; they were: *Portrait of the Life of Christ*, Cicero *de officiis*, Guzman's *Treatise on the Mass*, *On the seven sins*, *The Conquest of America*, Boethius's *Consolation*, *Proverbs of Seneca*, Virgil, Juan de Mena's *Trecientas* and *Coronación*, and a Calendar. During the following thirty years he must have enlarged his library, but in the inventory made after his death only two books are mentioned, the Gospels and a volume of sermons.

Doña Beatriz died young, and the eldest daughter, Maria de Cepeda, took charge of her younger sisters, and was as a second mother to them till her marriage, which took place in 1531, when the Saint was in her sixteenth year. But as she was too young to be left in charge of her father's house, and as her education was not finished, she was sent to the Augustinian monastery, the nuns of which received young girls, and brought them up in the fear of God.⁴ The Saint's own account is that she was too giddy and careless to be trusted at home, and that it was necessary to put her under the care of those who would watch over her and correct her ways. She remained a year and a half with the Augustinian nuns, and all the while God was calling her to Himself. She was not willing to listen to His voice; she would ask the nuns to pray for her that she might have light to see her way; "but for all this," she writes, "I wished not to be a nun."⁵ By degrees her will yielded, and she had some inclination to become a religious at the end of the eighteen months of her stay, but that was all. She became ill; her father removed her, and the struggle within herself continued,—on the one hand, the voice of God calling her; on the other, herself labouring to escape from her vocation.

At last, after a struggle which lasted three months, she made up her mind, and against her inclination, to give up the world. She asked her father's leave, and was refused. She besought him through her friends, but to no purpose. "The utmost I could get from him," she says, "was that I might do as I pleased after his death."⁶ How long this contest with her father lasted is not known, but it is probable that it lasted many months, for the Saint was always most careful of the feelings of others, and would certainly

³ Manuel Serrano y Sanz, *Apuntes para una biblioteca de Escritoras Españolas*, vol. ii. pp. 479-542 (Madrid, 1905).

⁴ *Reforma de los Descalços*, lib. i, chap. vii. 3

⁵ Ch. iii. 2.

⁶ Ch. iii. 9.

have endured much rather than displease a father whom she loved so much, and who also loved her more than his other children.⁷

But she had to forsake her father, and so she left her father's house by stealth, taking with her one of her brothers, whom she had persuaded to give himself to God in religion. The brother and sister set out early in the morning, the former for the monastery of the Dominicans, and the latter for the convent of the Incarnation, in Avila. The nuns received her into the house, but sent word to her father of his child's escape. Don Alonso, however, yielded at once, and consented to the sacrifice which he was compelled to make.

The Carmelite Order, to which the convent of the Incarnation belongs, had come from Palestine to Europe in the middle of the thirteenth century. The Rule, originally intended for hermits, was then slightly altered, but remained so strict that its observance became more and more difficult. It was mitigated in 1432, whereupon the Order began to flourish anew until, towards the end of the fifteenth century, a period of decadence set in, owing to the almost universal disinclination to religious life, which lasted until the Council of Trent infused new vigour into ecclesiastical institutions. In the year 1452 a community of Beguines near Guelders petitioned the General, Blessed John Soreth, for incorporation into his Order, which was readily granted and confirmed by the Apostolic See. Soreth gave them some regulations—still unpublished—but for the rest referred them to the Constitutions of the Friars. There being an essential difference between the vocation of one destined to the priesthood, who has to frequent university lectures, or move about in the exercise of his sacred ministry, and that of a nun, it follows that the Constitutions of the friars left the nuns rather more freedom in the matter of enclosure than is generally thought compatible with the aims of a strict Order. Convents of Carmelite nuns were founded in various countries; Spain at the time of St. Teresa must have had six or eight, but unfortunately very little is known of their origin and history; the only one of which we possess reliable information being that of Avila.⁸ It was not an offshoot of some other foundation, but was of indigenous growth, if this expression may be used.

In the year 1467 some pious ladies of Avila determined to found a Beguinage, or, as it was called, a *Beaterio*, the number of Beatas being limited to fourteen, in honour of our Lord, our Lady, and the twelve apostles. On June 25, 1479, they went to live in

⁷ Ch. i. 3.

⁸ Don Enrique Ballesteros, *Estudio histórico de Avila* (Avila, 1896), supplemented by researches made by the present writer in the National Archives at Madrid. See also in the *Œuvres complètes de Sainte Térèse* (by the French Carmelite nuns), vol. i. p. 65; iii. pp. 290, 572 sqq. (Paris 1907, sqq.).

a house in the Calle del Lomo, near the Puerta San Vicente, close to an ancient synagogue which the bishop, Don Alonso de Fonseca, had converted into a church and placed at their disposal. There were two parties among the Beatas: some with the Prioress, Doña Elvira Gonzalez de Medina, were in favour of continuing the somewhat free life of Beatas or Beguines, while others, led by Doña Beatriz Higuera, would have preferred real religious life with the three vows. Consequently they left Avila and went to Alba de Tormes, returning only at the death of Doña Elvira in 1486, when Doña Beatriz was elected Prioress. A Papal Brief having left the community the choice between the adoption of the Rule of St. Dominic or that of the Carmelites, they decided in favour of the latter, probably because the friars of that Order had acted as their confessors and directors, the two religious houses being in proximity. Thus the convent was founded, and took for its title the "Incarnation," or, as we should say, the Annunciation, a title borne also by the Carmelite convents of Antiquera, Sevilla, and Valencia. Doña Beatriz remained at the head of the community forty years, during which it increased so rapidly that the building in the Calle del Lomo soon proved inadequate. In 1510 permission was obtained in Rome for the acquisition of a new and more spacious site, but before any further steps could be taken the convent became involved in a long lawsuit with Don Nuño Gonzalez who, probably as founder or benefactor of the original Beaterio, claimed the right of patronage. The convent was successful in every instance, but was nearly crushed by the costs, and the expense of the building operations, so that it had to alienate considerable property. The revenues were totally insufficient for the ever-increasing number of nuns. About the time of St. Teresa's entrance there were 140. When the General, John Baptist Rubeo, made a canonical visitation at Avila, April 1567, he forbade the reception of novices until the number of the nuns should have been reduced by death and translation, so as to restore the balance between income and expenditure.

The date of St. Teresa's entrance has long been under dispute. Some of her biographers and editors, notably P. Marcel Bouix, S.J., relying upon the passage in her *Life*,⁹ where she says that she was not yet twenty years old when she had her first spiritual experience some months after her profession, concluded that the profession must have taken place in 1534, and the entrance into the convent on November 2, 1533. But there is evidence that St. Teresa's calculation of years is often at fault, as when she affirms¹⁰ that she was less than twelve years old at the death of her mother, whereas we gather, from the date of the testament of

⁹ Ch. iv. 9.

¹⁰ Ch. i. 7.

the latter, that she was not far from fourteen. Another opinion is that she took the habit in 1535 and the vows in 1536 (during the priorship of Doña María de Luna), and this is borne out by evidence so overwhelming that it seems indisputable; we therefore have adopted it in this edition, and have corrected some other dates, dependent on that of the profession, where Mr. Lewis had followed the chronology of P. Bouix. To begin with, we have the positive statement of her most intimate friends, Julian d'Avila, Fr. Ribera, S. J., and Fr. Jerome Gratian. Likewise, Doña María Pinel, nun of the Incarnation, says: "She took the habit on November 2, 1535," and elsewhere refutes a contrary opinion. This is corroborated by various passages in St. Teresa's own writings. Thus, in *Rel.* vii., composed in 1575, she says: "This nun took the habit forty years ago"; again in the passage of the *Life*, written about the end of 1564 or the beginning of the following year,¹¹ she refers to her having been a nun for twenty-eight years, which points to her profession in 1536.

A third opinion, placing her entrance into the convent in the year 1536 and the profession in 1537, has been propounded by the author of the *Reforma de los Descalços* on the strength of two documents bearing the date of October 31, 1536; one is St. Teresa's renunciation of her right to paternal inheritance, and the other the deed of dowry drawn up before a public notary. But neither of these documents is necessarily connected with the entrance into the convent, so long as it was completed before profession. For the Constitutions, then in vigour, say: "We advise that a person about to be received into the convent settle everything he (or she) may have had in the world before taking the habit, unless for some reasonable cause the General or the Provincial should ordain differently." There was indeed good reason, in the case of St. Teresa, to postpone these legal matters. Her father was much opposed to her becoming a nun; but, in view of his well-known piety, it might have been expected that before the end of the year of probation he would grant his consent (which in the event he did the very day she took the habit), and make arrangements for the dowry. We therefore refer these two documents, not to the date of her entrance, but to that of her profession.

One little detail concerning her haste in entering the convent has been preserved by the *Reforma* and the Bollandists,¹² though neither seem to have understood its meaning. On leaving the convent of the Incarnation for that of St. Joseph in 1563, St. Teresa handed the Prioress of the former a receipt for her bedding, habit, and discipline. This almost ludicrous scrupulosity was in conformity with a decision of the general chapter of 1342, which said,

¹¹ Ch. xxxvi. 10.

¹² *Reforma*, lib. i. cap. xlvii. *Bollandists*, No. 366.

"*Ingrediens ad sui ipsius instantiam habeat lectisternia pro se ipso, sin autem, recipiens solvat lectum illum.*"¹³ As St. Teresa entered the convent without the knowledge of her father, she did not bring this insignificant trousseau with her; accordingly the Prioress became responsible for it, and obtained a receipt when St. Teresa went to the new convent. The dowry granted by Don Alonso to his daughter consisted of twenty-five measures, partly wheat, partly barley, or, in lieu thereof, two hundred ducats per annum. Few of the nuns of the Incarnation could have brought a better, or even an equal, dowry.

A little incident is related concerning the beginning of her religious life. She was told that a *zahori*, an old man credited with the knowledge of the future, had prophesied that the convent of the Incarnation was to give to the Church a "Saint Teresa." There lived in the convent a very old nun, Teresa Alvarez, whose name appears in documents of 1498, 1521, and 1538. A friendly dispute arose between the two as to who was the future Saint, each claiming the honour for herself. Doña Maria Espinel relates a similar anecdote with regard to another nun, Teresa de Quesada, much younger than her saintly namesake. If she did not attain sanctity she at least strove hard in its pursuit. During some years she embraced the Reform, became even Prioress of Medina del Campo, but ultimately returned to the Incarnation, where she died in the odour of sanctity.¹⁴

Unfortunately, very little is known about the life St. Teresa led at the Incarnation. From what she says in her book one would think that her time—when she was not ill—was almost entirely taken up by worldly conversation with friends and relatives, and, after she had come to a more serious frame of mind, by prayer. Beyond a few anecdotes about her relations with the other nuns, no account of her daily life has come down to us. But we are entitled to supplement so incomplete a picture. A person endowed with her gifts, her admirable qualities, of ceaseless activity, marvellously fit to organise and administrate as we know her to have been from 1560 to the last day, cannot have led an aimless life from 1536 to 1560. True, she says that she had never accepted any office,¹⁵ and among the papers once belonging to the convent of the Incarnation and now preserved at the National Archives at Madrid, there is not one bearing her name¹⁶; but even without

¹³ B. Zimmerman, *Monumenta historica Carmelitana*, vol. i. p. 141 (Lerini 1907).

¹⁴ *Relaciones Históricas de los Siglos XVI, y XVII.* (Sociedad de los bibliófilos españoles) vol. xxxii. p. 327.

¹⁵ Ch. xxxv. 8.

¹⁶ It is, of course, possible that at the time of her beatification the documents relating to her may have been collected, and may even now be preserved elsewhere, e.g. in the archives of the Sacred Congregation of Rites in Rome.

occupying an official position she must have utilised her time to the last minute. She was skilled in every branch of housework, knew the details of kitchen and household, was an expert in cutting, and indefatigable with the distaff and the needle; her embroideries still command the admiration of the connoisseur; she was well read, had a talent for poetry, an eye for painting, and an ear for music. And above all—as she says herself—she never dispensed herself without urgent need from any of the numerous monastic duties and observances. Moreover, she exercised a powerful influence over all those who came into contact with her, guiding and directing many nuns in their spiritual life, and tendering advice and consolation to whoever approached her, while some of the junior sisters, and also some pensioners, were placed under her personal supervision and care. Such a life cannot be termed idle or dreamy.

In the monastery of the Incarnation the Saint was led on, without her own knowledge, to states of prayer so high that she became alarmed about herself. In the purity and simplicity of her soul, she feared that the supernatural visitations of God might, after all, be nothing else but delusions of Satan.¹⁷ She was so humble that she could not believe graces so great could be given to a sinner like herself. The first person she consulted in her trouble seems to have been a layman, related to her family, Don Francisco de Salcedo. He was a married man, given to prayer, and a diligent frequenter of the theological lectures in the monastery of the Dominicans. Through him she obtained the help of a holy priest, Gaspar Daza, to whom she made known the state of her soul. The priest, hindered by his other labours, declined to be her director, and the Saint admits that she could have made no progress under his guidance.¹⁸ She now placed herself in the hands of Don Francis, who encouraged her in every way, and, for the purpose of helping her onwards in the way of perfection, told her of the difficulties he himself had met with, and how by the grace of God he had overcome them.

But when the Saint told him of the great graces which God bestowed upon her, Don Francis became alarmed; he could not reconcile them with the life the Saint was living, according to her own account. He never thought of doubting the Saint's account, and did not suspect her of exaggerating her imperfections in the depths of her humility: "he thought the evil spirit might have something to do" with her,¹⁹ and advised her to consider carefully her way of prayer.

Don Francis now applied again to Gaspar Daza, and the two friends consulted together; but, after much prayer on their part

¹⁷ Ch. xxiii. 2.

¹⁸ Ch. xxiii. 8.

¹⁹ *Ibidem* § 12.

and on that of the Saint, they came to the conclusion that she "was deluded by an evil spirit," and recommended her to have recourse to the fathers of the Society of Jesus, lately settled in Avila.

The Saint, now in great fear, but still hoping and trusting that God would not suffer her to be deceived, made preparations for a general confession, and committed to writing the whole story of her life, and made known the state of her soul to F. Juan de Padranos, one of the fathers of the Society. F. Juan understood it all, and comforted her by telling her that her way of prayer was sound and the work of God. Under his direction she made great progress, and for the further satisfaction of her confessor, and of Don Francis, who seems to have still retained some of his doubts, she told everything to St. Francis de Borja, who on one point changed the method of direction observed by F. Juan. That father recommended her to resist the supernatural visitations of the spirit as much as she could, but she was not able, and the resistance pained her²⁰; St. Francis told her she had done enough, and that it was not right to prolong that resistance.²¹

The account of her life which she wrote before she applied to the Jesuits for direction has not been preserved; but it is possible that it was made more for her own security than for the purpose of being shown to her confessor.

The next account is *Relation* i., made for St. Peter of Alcantara, and was probably seen by many; for that Saint had to defend her, and maintain that the state of her soul was the work of God, against those who thought that she was deluded by Satan. Her own confessor was occasionally alarmed, and had to consult others, and thus, by degrees, her state became known to many; and there were some who were so persuaded of her delusions, that they wished her to be exorcised as one possessed of an evil spirit,²² and at a later time her friends were afraid that she might be denounced to the Inquisitors.²³

During the troubles that arose when it became known that the Saint was about to found the monastery of St. Joseph, and therein establish the original rule of her Order in its primitive simplicity and austerity, she went for counsel to the Father Pedro Ibañez, the Dominican, a most holy and learned priest. That father not only encouraged her, and commended her work, but also ordered her to give him in writing the story of her spiritual life. The Saint readily obeyed, and began *Relation* ii. in the monastery of the Incarnation, and finished it in the house of Doña Luisa de la Cerda, in Toledo, in the month of June 1562.

But as the Saint carried a heavy burden laid on her by God, a

²⁰ Ch. xxiv. 1.

²² Ch. xxix. 4.

²¹ *Ibidem* § 4.

²³ Ch. xxxiii. 6.

constant fear of delusion, she had recourse, shortly after the foundation of St. Joseph's convent,²⁴ to the Inquisitor Soto, who advised her to write a history of her life, send it to Juan of Avila, the "Apostle of Andaluca," and abide by his counsel. About the same time her confessor, Fray Garcia de Toledo, charged her to write the history of the foundation of her little convent, together with many other things.²⁵ She therefore set to work to write the book now before the reader, beginning probably in spring 1563, and completing it in the course of 1565.

But here we find ourselves in presence of a difficult and complicated question: How many versions of her *Life* did she write? At the end of the volume she says, "This book was finished in June, in the year MDLXII." Bañes wrote underneath: "This date refers to the first account which the holy Mother Teresa wrote of her life; it was not then divided into chapters. Afterwards she made this copy, and inserted in it many things which had taken place subsequent to this date, such as the foundation of the monastery of St. Joseph of Avila." The letter with which the book concludes, and which bears neither the name of the addressee nor a date, has been assigned to the year 1562, and supposed to be addressed to Father Ibañez. This, in consequence of another remark of Bañes who, in the deposition for the process of canonisation, written in 1591, says: "Of one of her books, namely, the one in which she recorded her life and the kind of prayer whereby God had led her, I can say that she composed it to the end that her confessors might know her better and instruct her, and also that it might encourage and animate those who learn from it the great mercy God had shown her, a great sinner, as she humbly acknowledged herself to be. This book was already written when I made her acquaintance, her previous confessors having given her permission to that effect. Among these was a Licentiate of the Dominican Order, the Rev. Father Pedro Ibañez, reader of Divinity at Avila. She afterwards completed and recast this book."²⁶ These two notes of Bañes have led the biographers of the Saint to think that she wrote her *Life* twice: first in 1561 and the following year, completing it during her sojourn at Toledo in June 1562; and secondly between 1563 and 1565 at St. Joseph's convent, Avila. But there are serious objections to such a conclusion. To begin with, the letter at the end of the *Life* cannot have been written in 1562, but only in 1565, and consequently after the death of Ibañez. It must therefore have been addressed to somebody else, probably to Fray Garcia de Toledo. The reason why it cannot have been written in 1562 is that in it the Saint requests the addressee to forward the book to Father Juan d'Avila,

²⁴ *Relation* vii, 8-10.

²⁵ Fuente, vol. vi, p. 174.

²⁶ *Foundations*, Prologue.

but it was only in spring, 1563, that she was advised by Soto to seek advice from the "Apostle of Andaluçia." Again, if as early as 1562 the Saint had requested some one to forward her *Life* to him it would be astonishing that she allowed six years to pass before she took any further steps to see her request carried out; for, in 1568, she wrote twice to Doña Luisa de la Cerda,²⁷ urging her to send it on; this was done at last, and in September of the same year Juan d'Avila gave his opinion, as we shall see later on.

Bañez does not say whether he ever saw the alleged first version of the *Life*, though he gives some particulars, viz. that it was not divided into chapters, and did not contain many matters which are fully treated in the second *Life*.

But whether it was really a first attempt at a *Life* or a mere Relation, perhaps of considerably greater bulk than any of those printed at the end of this volume—there can be no dispute about its purpose.²⁸ St. Teresa speaks of it in the following terms: "I had recourse to my Dominican father (Ibañez); I told him all about my visions, my way of prayer, the great graces our Lord had given me, as clearly as I could, and begged him to consider the matter well, and tell me if there was anything therein at variance with the Holy Writings, and give me his opinion on the whole matter."²⁹ The account thus rendered had the object of enabling Father Ibañez to give her light upon the state of her soul. But while she was drawing it up, a great change came over her. During St. Teresa's sojourn at Toledo she became from a pupil an experienced master in mystical knowledge. "When I was there a religious" (probably Father Garcia de Toledo) "with whom I had conversed occasionally some years ago, happened to arrive. When I was at Mass in a monastery of his Order, I felt a longing to know the state of his soul."³⁰ Three times the Saint rose from her seat, three times she sat down again, but at last she went to see him in a confessional, not to ask for any light for herself, but to give him what light she could, for she wished to induce him to surrender himself more perfectly to God, and this she accomplished by telling him how she had fared since their last meeting. No one who reads this remarkable chapter can help being struck by the change that has come over Teresa: the period of her schooling is at an end, and she is now the great teacher of mystical theology. Her humility

²⁷ Letters of May 18 and 27, 1568.

²⁸ If the former, it must have been very much shorter than the second edition, and can scarcely have contained more than the first nine chapters (perhaps verbatim) and an account of the visions, locutions, etc., contained in chapters xxiii.-xxxi., without comment.

²⁹ Ch. xxxiii. § 7.

³⁰ Ch. xxxiv. § 8.

does not allow her to speak with the same degree of openness upon her achievements as she did when making known her failings, yet she cannot conceal the gift of Wisdom she had received and the use she made of it.

St. Teresa's development, if extraordinary considering the degree of spirituality she reached, was nevertheless gradual and regular. With her wonderful power of analysis, she has given us not only a clear insight into her interior progress, but also a sketch of the development of her understanding of supernatural things. "It is now (*i.e.* about the end of 1563) some five or six years, I believe, since our Lord raised me to this state of prayer, in its fulness, and that more than once,—and I never understood it, and never could explain it; and so I was resolved, when I should come thus far in my story, to say very little or nothing at all."³¹ In the following chapter she adds: "You, my father, will be delighted greatly to find an account of the matter in writing, and to understand it; for it is one grace that our Lord gives grace; and it is another grace to understand what grace and what gift it is; and it is another and further grace to have the power to describe and explain it to others. Though it does not seem that more than the first of these—the giving of grace—is necessary, it is a great advantage and a great grace to understand it."³² These words contain the clue to much that otherwise would be obscure in the life of our Saint: great graces were bestowed upon her, but at first she neither understood them herself nor was she able to describe them. Hence the inability of her confessors and spiritual advisers to guide her. Her natural gifts, great though they were, did not help her much. "Though you, my father, may think that I have a quick understanding, it is not so; for I have found out in many ways that my understanding can take in only, as they say, what is given it to eat. Sometimes my confessor used to be amazed at my ignorance: and he never explained to me—nor, indeed, did I desire to understand—how God did this, nor how it could be. Nor did I ever ask."³³ At first she was simply bewildered by the favours shown her, and afterwards she could not help knowing, despite the fears of her over-anxious friends, that they did come from God, and so far from imperilling her soul made a different woman of her, but even then she was not able to explain to others what she experienced in herself. But shortly before the foundation of St. Joseph's convent she received the last of the three graces mentioned above, the Gift of Wisdom, and the scene at Toledo is the first manifestation of it.

This explains the difference of the *Life* such as we know it from the first version or the *Relation* preceding it. Whatever this writing was, it still belonged to the period of her spiritual

³¹ Ch. xvi. § 2.

³² Ch. xvii. § 7.

³³ Ch. xxviii. § 10.

education, whereas the volume before us is the first-fruit of her spiritual Mastership. The new light that had come to her induced her confessors to demand a detailed work embodying everything she had learned from her heavenly Teacher.³⁴ The treatise on mystical theology contained in Chapters X. to XXI., the investigation of divine Locutions, Visions and Revelations in the concluding portion of the work could have had no place in any previous writing. While her experiences before she obtained the Gift of Wisdom influenced but three persons (one of them being her father), a great many profited by her increased knowledge. The earlier writings were but confidential communications to her confessors, and if they became known to larger circles this was due to indiscretion. But her *Life* was written from the beginning with a view to publication. Allusions to this object may be found in various places³⁵ as well as in the letter appended to the book, but the decisive utterances must be sought for elsewhere, namely, in the *Way of Perfection*. This work was written immediately after the *Life*, while the Saint was as yet at the convent of St. Joseph's. It was rewritten later on, and both versions are still preserved, and have been published; the one contained in the MS. of the Escorial leaves no doubt as to the intentions of St. Teresa in writing her *Life*. "I have written a few days ago a certain Relation of my Life. But since it might happen that my confessor may not permit you [the Sisters of St. Joseph's] to read it, I will put here some things concerning prayer which are conformable to what I have said there, as well as some other things which appear to me to be necessary."³⁶ Again: "As all this is better explained in the book which I say I have written, there is no need for me to speak of it with so much detail. I have said there all I know. Those of you who have been led by God to this degree of contemplation (and I say that some have been led so far), should procure the book because it is important for you, after I am dead."³⁷ At the end she writes: "Since the Lord has taught you the way and has inspired me as to what I should put in the book which I say has been written, how they should behave who have arrived at this fountain of living water and what the soul feels there, and how God satiates her and makes her lose the thirst for things of this world and causes her to grow in things pertaining to the service of God; that book, therefore, will be of great help for those who have arrived at this state, and will give them much light. Procure it. For Father Domingo Bañez, presentado of the Order of St. Dominic who, as I say, is my confessor, and to whom I shall give this, has it: if he judges that you

³⁴ Ch. xviii. § 11.

³⁵ Ch. x. §§ 11 and 12.

³⁶ *Way of Perfection*, at the end of the Introduction.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, ch. xxv. 3.

should see this, and gives it to you, he will also give you the other.”³⁸ While the first and second of these quotations may be found, somewhat weakened, in the final version of the *Way of Perfection*, the last one is entirely omitted. Nor need this surprise us, for Father Bañez had his own ideas about the advisability of the publication of the *Life*.

St. Teresa wrote her *Life* slowly. It was begun in spring, 1563³⁹, and completed in May or June 1565. She complains that she can only work at it by stealth on account of her duties at the distaff⁴⁰; but the book is written with so much order and method, the manuscript is so free from mistakes, corrections, and erasures, that we may conclude that, while spinning, she worked it out in her mind, so that the apparent delay proved most advantageous.

The book being at length completed, St. Teresa gave it to the addressee of the letter appended to it—whoever that was—with a request to forward it to the Venerable Juan d’Avila. She did not know him personally, and therefore had recourse to her friends, Gaspar Daza and Don Francis de Salcedo, who obtained the consent of the “Apostle of Andalusia” to undertake the revision.⁴¹ Accordingly the Saint sent the work to Doña Luisa de la Cerda, who was living at no great distance from that remarkable man. But there followed a considerable delay, perhaps because Doña Luisa was reading the book herself, and it required two urgent letters of the Saint before she could be persuaded to part with it; in the meantime St. Teresa was in fears Father Juan might die before he could give his decision. However, his answer arrived in due time, and cannot but have greatly comforted the Saint. It was as follows⁴²:

“The grace and peace of Jesus Christ be with you always.

“I. When I undertook to read the book sent me, it was not so much because I thought myself able to judge of it, as because I thought I might, by the grace of our Lord, learn something from the teachings it contains: and praised be Christ; for, though I have not been able to read it with the leisure it requires, I have been comforted by it, and might have been edified by it, if the

³⁸ *Ibid.*, ch. lxxiii. (Escorial). The English version [ch. xlii. 8] follows here the edition of Valladolid.

³⁹ In the Prologue to the *Foundations* St. Teresa says that Father Garcia de Toledo ordered her to rewrite the book the same year in which St. Joseph’s Convent was founded, *i.e.* 1562, but seeing that she only spent a few hours there and that the principal difficulties only arose after her return to the Incarnation, it appears more probable that Father Garcia’s command was not made until the spring of the following year, when she went to live at St. Joseph’s.

⁴⁰ Ch. x. § 11.

⁴¹ *Œuvres complètes*, vol. i. p. 437.

⁴² *Letters of Blessed John of Avila*, translated by the Benedictines of Stanbrook, 1904, p. 17 sqq.

fault had not been mine. And although, indeed, I may have been comforted by it, without saying more, yet the respect due to the subject and to the person who has sent it will not allow me, I think, to let it go back without giving my opinion on it, at least in general.

" 2. The book is not fit to be in the hands of everybody, for it is necessary to correct the language in some places, and explain it in others ; and there are some things in it useful for your spiritual life, and not so for others who might adopt them, for the special ways by which God leads some souls are not meant for others. These points, or the greater number of them, I have marked for the purpose of arranging them when I shall be able to do so, and I shall not fail to send them to you ; for if you are aware of my infirmities and necessary occupations, I believe they would make you pity me rather than blame me for the omission.

" 3. The doctrine of prayer is for the most part sound, and you may rely on it, and observe it ; and the raptures I find to possess the tests of those which are true. What you say of God's way of teaching the soul, without respect to the imagination and without interior locutions, is safe, and I find nothing to object to it. St. Augustine speaks well of it.

" 4. Interior locutions in these days have been a delusion of many, and exterior locutions are the least safe. It is easy enough to see when they proceed from ourselves, but to distinguish between those of a good and those of an evil spirit is more difficult. There are many rules given for finding out whether they come from our Lord or not, and one of them is, that they should be sent us in a time of need, or for some good end, as for the comforting a man under temptation or in doubt, or as a warning of coming danger. As a good man will not speak unadvisedly, neither will God ; so, considering this, and that the locutions are agreeable to the holy writings and the teaching of the Church, my opinion is that the locutions mentioned in the book came from God.

" 5. Imaginary or bodily visions are those which are most doubtful, and should in no wise be desired, and if they come undesired still they should be shunned as much as possible, yet not by treating them with contempt, unless it be certain that they come from an evil spirit ; indeed, I was filled with horror, and greatly distressed, when I read of the gestures of contempt that were made.⁴³ People ought to entreat our Lord not to lead them by the way of visions, but to reserve for them in heaven the blessed vision of Himself and the saints, and to guide them here along the beaten path as He guides His faithful servants, and they must take other good measures for avoiding these visions.

" 6. But if the visions continue after all this is done, and if the soul derives good from them, and if they do not lead to vanity,

⁴³ See *Life*, ch. xxix. 6.

but to deeper humility, and if the locutions be at one with the teaching of the Church, and if they continue for any time, and that with inward satisfaction—better felt than described—there is no reason then for avoiding them. But no one ought to rely on his own judgment herein; he should make everything known to him who can give him light. That is the universal remedy to be had recourse to in such matters, together with hope in God, Who will not let a soul that wishes to be safe lie under a delusion, if it be humble enough to yield obedience to the opinion of others.

“7. Nor should any one cause alarm by condemning them forthwith, because he sees that the person to whom they are granted is not perfect, for it is nothing new that our Lord in His goodness makes wicked people just, yea, even grievous sinners, by giving them to taste most deeply of His sweetness. I have seen it so myself. Who will set bounds to the goodness of our Lord?—especially when these graces are given, not for merit, nor because one is stronger; on the contrary, they are given to one because he is weaker; and as they do not make one more holy, they are not always given to the most holy.

“8. They are unreasonable who disbelieve these things merely because they are most high things, and because it seems to them incredible that infinite Majesty humbles Himself to these loving relations with one of His creatures. It is written, God is love, and if He is love, then infinite love and infinite goodness, and we must not be surprised if such a love and such a goodness breaks out into such excesses of love as disturb those who know nothing of it. And though many know of it by faith, still, as to that special experience of the loving, and more than loving, converse of God with whom He will, if not had, how deep it reaches can never be known; and so I have seen many persons scandalised at hearing of what God in His love does for His creatures. As they are themselves very far away from it, they cannot think that God will do for others what He is not doing for them. As this is an effect of love, and that a love which causes wonder, reason requires we should look upon it as a sign of its being from God, seeing that He is wonderful in His works, and most especially in those of His compassion; but they take occasion from this to be distrustful, which should have been a ground of confidence, when other circumstances combine as evidences of these visitations being good.

“9. It seems from the book, I think, that you have resisted, and even longer than was right. I think, too, that these locutions have done your soul good, and in particular that they have made you see your own wretchedness and your faults more clearly, and amend them. They have lasted long, and always with spiritual profit. They move you to love God, and to despise yourself, and to do penance. I see no reasons for condemning them, I incline

rather to regard them as good, provided you are careful not to rely altogether on them, especially if they are unusual, or bid you do something out of the way, or are not very plain. In all these and the like cases you must withhold your belief in them, and at once seek for direction.

" 10. Also it should be considered that, even if they do come from God, Satan may mix with them suggestions of his own ; you should therefore be always suspicious of them. Also, when they are known to be from God, men must not rest much on them, seeing that holiness does not lie in them, but in a humble love of God and our neighbour ; everything else, however good, must be feared, and our efforts directed to the gaining of humility, goodness, and the love of our Lord. It is seemly, also, not to worship what is seen in these visions, but only Jesus Christ, either as in heaven or in the Sacrament, or, if it be in a vision of the saints, then to lift up the heart to the Holy One in heaven, and not to that which is presented to the imagination : let it suffice that the imagination may be made use of for the purpose of raising me up to that which it makes me see.

" 11. I say, too, that the things mentioned in this book befall other persons even in this our day, and that there is a great certainty that they come from God, Whose arm is not shortened that He cannot do now what He did in times past, and that in weak vessels, for His own glory.

" 12. Go on your road, but always suspecting robbers, and asking for the right way ; give thanks to our Lord, Who has given you His love, the knowledge of yourself, and a love of penance and the cross, making no account of these other things. However, do not despise them either, for there are signs that most of them come from our Lord, and those that do not come from Him will not hurt you if you ask for direction.

" 13. I cannot believe that I have written this in my own strength, for I have none, but it is the effect of your prayers. I beg of you, for the love of Jesus Christ our Lord, to burden yourself with a prayer for me ; He knows that I am asking this in great need, and I think that is enough to make you grant my request. I ask your permission to stop now, for I am bound to write another letter. May Jesus be glorified in all and by all ! Amen.

" Your servant for Christ's sake.

" JUAN DE AVILA.

" MONTILLA, *Sep.* 12, 1568."

Her confessors, having seen the book, "commanded her to make copies of it,"⁴⁴ one of which has been traced into the possession of the Duke and Duchess of Alva.

⁴⁴ *Rel.* vii, 9.

The Princess of Eboli, in 1569, obtained a copy from the Saint herself, after much importunity; but it was more out of vanity or curiosity, it is to be feared, than from any real desire to learn the story of the Saint's spiritual life, that the Princess desired the boon. She and her husband promised to keep it from the knowledge of others, but the promise given was not kept. The Saint heard within a few days later that the book was in the hands of the servants of the Princess, who was angry with the Saint because she had refused to admit, at the request of the Princess, an Augustinian nun into the Order of Carmel in the new foundation of Pastrana. The contents of the book were bruited abroad, and the visions and revelations of the Saint were said to be of a like nature with those of Magdalen of the Cross, a deluded and deluding nun. The gossip in the house of the Princess was carried to Madrid, and the result was that the Inquisition began to make a search for the book.⁴⁵ It is not quite clear, however, that it was seized at this time.

The Princess became a widow in July 1573, and insisted on becoming a Carmelite nun in the house she and her husband, Ruy Gomez, had founded in Pastrana. When the news of her resolve reached the monastery, the mother-prioress, Isabel of St. Dominic, exclaimed, "The Princess a nun! I look on the house as ruined." The Princess came, and insisted on her right as foundress; she had compelled a friar to give her the habit before her husband was buried, and when she came to Pastrana she began her religious life by the most complete disobedience and disregard of common propriety. Don Vicente's description of her is almost literally correct, though intended only for a general summary of her most childish conduct:

"On the death of the Prince of Eboli, the Princess would become a nun in her monastery of Pastrana. The first day she had a fit of violent fervour; on the next she relaxed the rule; on the third she broke it, and conversed with secular people within the cloisters. She was also so humble that she required the nuns to speak to her on their knees, and insisted upon their receiving into the house as religious whomsoever she pleased. Hereupon complaints were made to St. Teresa, who remonstrated with the Princess, and showed her how much she was in the wrong, whereupon she replied that the monastery was hers; but the Saint proved to her that the nuns were not, and had them removed to Segovia."

The nuns were withdrawn from Pastrana in April 1574, and then the anger of the Princess prevailed; she sent the *Life* of the Saint, which she had still in her possession, to the Inquisition, and denounced it as a book containing visions, revelations, and dangerous doctrines, which the Inquisitors should look into and examine.

⁴⁵ *Reforma de los Descalços*, lib. ii. cap. xxviii. 6.

The book was forthwith given to theologians for examination, and two Dominican friars, of whom Bañes was one, were delegated censors of it by the Inquisition.⁴⁶

Fr. Bañes did not know the Saint when he undertook her defence in Avila against the authorities of the city, eager to destroy the monastery of St. Joseph⁴⁷; but from that time forth he was one of her most faithful friends, strict and even severe, as became a wise director who had a great Saint for his penitent. He testifies in the process of her beatification that he was firm and sharp with her; while she herself was the more desirous of his counsel, the more he humbled her, and the less he appeared to esteem her.⁴⁸ When he found that copies of her *Life* were in the hands of secular people,—he had probably also heard of the misconduct of the Princess of Eboli,—he showed his displeasure to the Saint, and told her he would burn the book, it being unseemly that the writings of women should be made public. The Saint left it in his hands, but Fr. Bañes, struck with her humility, had not the courage to burn it; he sent it to the Holy Office in Madrid.⁴⁹ Thus the book was in a sense denounced twice,—once by an enemy, the second time by a friend, to save it. Both the Saint and her confessor, Fr. Bañes, state that the copy given up by the latter was sent to the Inquisition in Madrid, and Fr. Bañes says so twice in his deposition. The Inquisitor Soto returned the copy to Fr. Bañes, desiring him to read it, and give his opinion thereon. Fr. Bañes did so, and wrote his "censure" of the book on the blank leaves at the end. That censure still remains, and is one of the most important, because given during the lifetime of the Saint, and while many persons were crying out against her. Bañes wished it had been published when the Saint's *Life* was given to the world by Fr. Luis de Leon; but notwithstanding its value, and its being preserved in the book which is in the handwriting of the Saint, no one before Don Vicente made it known. It was easy enough to praise the writings of St. Teresa, and to admit her sanctity, after her death. Fr. Bañes had no external help in the applause of the many, and he had to judge the book as a theologian, and the Saint as one of his ordinary penitents. When he wrote, he wrote like a man whose whole life was spent, as he tells us himself, "in lecturing and disputing."⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Jerome Gratian, *Lucidario*, ch. iv.

⁴⁷ *Life*, ch. xxxvi. 15.

⁴⁸ The Saint says of herself, *Rel.* vii. 18, that "she took the greatest pains not to submit the state of her soul to any one who she thought would believe that these things came from God, for she was instantly afraid that the devil would deceive them both."

⁴⁹ *Rel.* vii. 16.

⁵⁰ "Como hombre criado toda mi vida en leer y disputar" (*Fuente*, vol. vi. 171, Deposition in view of the beatification).

That censure is as follows :

" 1. This book, wherein Teresa of Jesus, Carmelite nun, and foundress of the Barefooted Carmelites, gives a plain account of the state of her soul, in order to be taught and directed by her confessors, has been examined by me, and with much attention, and I have not found anywhere in it anything which, in my opinion, is erroneous in doctrine. On the contrary, there are many things in it highly edifying and instructive for those who give themselves to prayer. The great experience of this religious, her discretion also and her humility, which made her always seek for light and learning in her confessors, enabled her to speak with an accuracy on the subject of prayer that the most learned men, through their want of experience, have not always attained to. One thing only there is about the book that may reasonably cause any hesitation till it shall be very carefully examined: it contains many visions and revelations, matters always to be afraid of, especially in women, who are very ready to believe of them that they come from God, and to look on them as proofs of sanctity, though sanctity does not lie in them. On the contrary, they should be regarded as dangerous trials for those who are aiming at perfection, because Satan is wont to transform himself into an angel of light,⁵¹ and to deceive souls which are curious and of scant humility, as we have seen in our day: nevertheless, we must not therefore lay down a general rule that all revelations and visions come from the devil. If it were so, St. Paul could not have said that Satan transforms himself into an angel of light, if the angel of light did not sometimes enlighten us.

" 2. Saints, both men and women, have had revelations, not only in ancient, but also in modern times; such were St. Dominic, St. Francis, St. Vincent Ferrer, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Gertrude, and many others that might be named; and as the Church of God is, and is to be, always holy to the end, not only because her profession is holiness, but because there are in her just persons and perfect in holiness, it is unreasonable to despise visions and revelations, and condemn them in one sweep, seeing they are ordinarily accompanied with much goodness and a Christian life. On the contrary, we should follow the saying of the Apostle in 1 Thess. v. 19-22: ' Spiritum nolite extinguere. Prophetias nolite spernere. Omnia [autem] probate: quod bonum est tenete. Ab omni specie mala abstinete vos.' He who will read St. Thomas on that passage will see how carefully they are to be examined who, in the Church of God, manifest any particular gift that may be profitable or hurtful to our neighbour, and how watchful the examiners ought to be lest the fire of the Spirit of God should be quenched in the

⁵¹ 2 Cor. xi. 14: " Ipse enim Satanias transfiguratur se in angelum lucis."

good, and others cowed in the practices of the perfect Christian life.

“ 3. Judging by the revelations made to her, this woman, even though she may be deceived in something, is at least not herself a deceiver, because she tells all the good and the bad so simply and with so great a wish to be correct, that no doubt can be made as to her good intention ; and the greater the reason for trying spirits of this kind, because there are persons in our day who are deceivers with the appearance of piety, the more necessary it is to defend those who, with the appearance, have also the reality of piety. For it is a strange thing to see how lax and worldly people delight in seeing those discredited who have an appearance of goodness. God complained of old, by the Prophet Ezekiel, ch. xiii., of those false prophets who made the just to mourn and who flattered sinners, saying : ‘ Mœrere fecistis cor justi mendaciter, quem Ego non contristavi : et confortastis manus impii.’ In a certain sense this may be said of those who are going on by the way of prayer and perfection, telling them that this way is singular and full of danger, that many who went by it have fallen into delusions, and that the safest way is that which is plain and common, travelled by all.

“ 4. Words of this kind, clearly, sadden the hearts of those who would observe the counsels of perfection in continual prayer, so far as it is possible for them, and in much fasting, watching, and disciplines ; and, on the other hand, the lax and the wicked take courage and lose the fear of God, because they consider the way on which they are travelling as the safer : and this is their delusion,—they call that a plain and safe road which is the absence of the knowledge and consideration of the dangers and precipices amidst which we are all of us journeying in this world. Nevertheless, there is no other security than that which lies in our knowing our daily enemies, and in humbly imploring the compassion of God, if we would not be their prisoners. Besides, there are souls whom God, in a way, constrains to enter on the way of perfection, and who, if they relaxed in their fervour, could not keep a middle course, but would immediately fall into the other extreme of sins, and for souls of this kind it is of the utmost necessity that they should watch and pray without ceasing ; and, in short, there is nobody whom lukewarmness does not injure. Let every man examine his own conscience, and he will find this to be the truth.

“ 5. I firmly believe that if God for a time bears with the lukewarm, it is owing to the prayers of the fervent, who are continually crying, ‘ et ne nos inducas in tentationem.’ I have said this, not for the purpose of honouring those whom we see walking in the way of contemplation ; for it is another extreme into which the world falls, and a covert persecution of goodness, to pronounce

those holy forthwith who have the appearance of it. For that would be to furnish them with motives for vainglory, and would do little honour to goodness; on the contrary, it would expose it to great risks, because, when they fall who have been objects of praise, the honour of goodness suffers more than if those people had not been so esteemed. And so I look upon this exaggeration of their holiness who are still living in the world to be a temptation of Satan. That we should have a good opinion of the servants of God is most just, but let us consider them always as people in danger, however good they may be, and that their goodness is not so evident that we can be sure of it even now.

"6. Considering myself that what I have said is true, I have always proceeded cautiously in the examination of this account of the prayer and life of this nun, and no one has been more incredulous than myself as to her visions and revelations,—not so, however, as to her goodness and her good desires, for herein I have had great experience of her truthfulness, her obedience, mortification, patience, and charity towards her persecutors, and of her other virtues, which any one who will converse with her will discern; and this is what may be regarded as a more certain proof of her real love of God than these visions and revelations. I do not, however, undervalue her visions, revelations, and ecstasies; on the contrary, I suspect them to be the work of God, as they have been in others who were Saints. But in this case it is always safer to be afraid and wary; for if she is confident about them, Satan will take occasion to interfere, and that which was once, perhaps, the work of God, may be changed into something else, and that will be the devil's.

"7. I am of opinion that this book is not to be shown to every one, but only to men of learning, experience, and Christian discretion. It perfectly answers the purpose for which it was written, namely, that the nun should give an account of the state of her soul to those who had the charge of it, in order that she might not fall into delusions. Of one thing I am very sure, so far as it is possible for a man to be,—she is not a deceiver; she deserves, therefore, for her sincerity, that all should be favourable to her in her good purposes and good works. For within the last thirteen years she has, I believe, founded a dozen monasteries of Barefooted Carmelite nuns, the austerity and perfection of which are exceeded by none other; of which they who have been visitors of them, as the Dominican Provincial, master in theology,⁵² Fray Pedro Fernandez, the master Fray Hernando del Castillo, and many others, speak highly. This is what I think at present concerning the

⁵² The other theologian appointed by the Inquisition, with Fray Bañes, to examine the *Life*.

censure of this book, submitting my judgment herein to that of Holy Church our mother, and her ministers.

“ Given in the College of St. Gregory, Valladolid, on the sixth day of July, 1575.

“ FRAY DOMINGO BAÑES.”

The book remained in the keeping of the Inquisition, and the Saint never saw it again. But she heard of it from the Archbishop of Toledo, Cardinal Quiroga, President of the Supreme Court of the Inquisition, when she applied to him for licence to found a monastery in Madrid. Jerome Gratian was with her, and heard the Cardinal's reply. His Eminence said he was glad to see her; that a book of hers had been in the Holy Office for some years, and had been rigorously examined; that he had read it himself, and regarded it as containing sound and wholesome doctrine. He would grant the licence, and do whatever he could for the Saint. When she heard this, she wished to present a petition to the Inquisition for the restitution of her book; but Gratian thought it better to apply to the Duke of Alva for the copy which he had, and which the Inquisitors had allowed him to retain and read. The Duke gave his book to Fray Jerome, who had copies of it made for the use of the monasteries both of men and women.

Anne of Jesus, in 1586, founding a monastery of her Order in Madrid,—the Saint had died in 1582,—made inquiries about the original, and applied to the Inquisition for it, for she was resolved to publish the writings of her spiritual mother. The Inquisitors made no difficulty, and consented to the publication. In this she was seconded by the Empress Maria, daughter of Charles V., and widow of Maximilian II., who had obtained one of the copies which Jerome Gratian had ordered to be made. Fray Nicholas Doria, then Provincial, asked Fray Luis de Leon, the Augustinian, to edit the book, who consented. He was allowed to compare the copy furnished him with the original, which was afterwards presented to the king; but his edition has not been considered accurate, notwithstanding the facilities given him, and his great reverence for the Saint. It was published in Salamanca, A.D. 1588.

With the *Life* of the Saint Fray Luis de Leon received certain papers in the handwriting of the Saint, which he published as an additional chapter. Whether he printed all he received, or merely made extracts, may be doubtful, but anyhow that chapter is singularly incomplete. Don Vicente de la Fuente omitted the additional chapter of Fray Luis de Leon, contrary to the practice of his predecessors. But he has done more, for he has traced the paragraphs of that chapter to their sources, and has given us now a collection of papers which form almost another *Life* of the Saint,

to which he has given their old name of *Relations*,⁵³ the name which the Saint herself had given them.⁵⁴ Some of them are usually printed among the Saint's letters, and portions of some of the others are found in the *Lives* of the Saint written by Ribera and Yepes, and in the Chronicle of the Order; the rest was published for the first time by Don Vicente: the arrangement of the whole is due to him.

The *Relations* are ten in the Spanish edition, and eleven in the translation. The last, the eleventh, has hitherto been left among the letters, and Don Vicente, seemingly not without some hesitation, so left it; but as it is of the like nature with the *Relations*, it has now been added to them.

St. Teresa's canonisation took place before the stringent laws of Urban VIII. came into force. Consequently, the writings of the Saint were not then inquired into, the Holy See contenting itself with the approbations granted by the Spanish Inquisition, and by the congregation of the Rota in Rome. A certain number of passages selected from various works having been denounced by some Roman theologians as being contrary to the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas and other authorities, Diego Alvarez, a Dominican, and John Rada, a Franciscan, were commissioned to examine the matter and report on it. The twelve censures with the answers of the two theologians and the final judgment of the Rota seem to have remained unknown to the Bollandists.⁵⁵ The "heavenly doctrine" of St. Teresa is alluded to not only in the Bull of canonisation, but even in the Collect of the Mass of the Saint.

The original text, in the handwriting of the Saint, is preserved in the Escorial, not in the library but in a room set apart for the most precious relics. In 1873 the Sociedad Foto-Tipográfica-Católica of Madrid published a photographic reproduction of it in 412 pages in folio, which establishes the true text once for all. Don Vicente de la Fuente prepared a transcript of this, which, however, is far from accurate, even allowing for the adoption, on principle, of the modern form of spelling. A minute comparison of the autograph with the transcript reveals the startling fact that nearly a thousand inaccuracies have been allowed to creep in. Most of these variants are immaterial, but there are some which ought not to have been overlooked. Mr. Lewis possessed a copy of the facsimile, but his translation having been made from Fuente's edition of 1861-2, some passages misread or misunderstood by

⁵³ *Reforma de los Descalços*, lib. v. cap. xxxiv. 4: "Relaciones de su espíritu."

⁵⁴ *Rel.* ii. 18.

⁵⁵ See *Historia Generalis Fratrum Discalceatorum Ordinis B. Virginis Mariæ de Monte Carmelo Congregationis S. Eliæ*, vol. i. pp. 340-358 ad ann. 1604 (Romæ, 1668).

him have been corrected in the present reprint. The heading of the chapters, St. Teresa's own work, have been inserted in the proper places. In some instances, where she says "this is most admirable" or something to the same effect, Bañez, before handing the manuscript to the Inquisition, appears to have exercised editorial privileges.

The *Life* of St. Teresa has been frequently translated into English :

1. "The Lyf of the Mother Teresa of Jesus, Foundresse of the Monasteries of the Discalced or Bare-footed Carmelite Nunnes and Fryers of the First Rule.

"Written by herself at the commaundement of her ghostly father, and now translated into English out of Spanish. By W. M. [William Malone ?] of the Society of Jesus.

"Imprinted in Antwerp by Henry Jaye. Anno MDCXI., small quarto."

Some thirty years afterwards Sir Tobias Matthew, dissatisfied, as he says, with the former translation, published another, with the following title ; the volume is a small octavo in form :

"2. The Flaming Hart, or the Life of the glorious St. Teresa, Foundresse of the Reformation of the Order of the All-Immaculate Virgin Mother, our B. Lady of Mount Carmel.

"This History of her Life was written by the Saint in Spanish, and is newly translated into English in the year of our Lord God 1642.

'Aut mori aut pati :

Either to dye or else to suffer.'—*Chap. xl.*

"Antwerpe, printed by Joannes Meursius. Anno MDCXLII."

The next translation was published in 1671, without the name of the translator, or of the printer, or of the place of publication. It is in quarto, and bears the following title :

"The Life of the Holy Mother St. Teresa, Foundress of the Reformation of the Discalced Carmelites according to the Primitive Rule. Printed in the year MDCLXXI."

This translation, commonly ascribed to Abraham Woodhead, is only partly his work. Father Bede of St. Simon Stock (Walter Joseph Travers), a Discalced Carmelite, labouring on the English mission from 1660 till 1692, was anxious to complete the translation of St. Teresa's works into English. He had not proceeded very far when he learnt that "others were engaged in the same task." On inquiry he found that "a new translation was contemplated by two graduates of the University of Cambridge, converts to the Faith, most learned and pious men, who were leading a solitary life, spending their time and talents in the composition of controversial and devotional works for the good of their neighbour and

the glory of God." One of these two was Woodhead, who, however, was an Oxford man, but the name of the other, who must have been a Cambridge man, is not known. They undertook the translation while Father Bede provided the funds and bore the risks of what was then a dangerous work. As there existed already two English translations of the *Life*, the first volume to appear (1669) contained the *Book of Foundations*, to which was prefixed the history of the foundation of St. Joseph's from the *Life*. When, therefore, the new translation of the latter appeared in 1671, this portion of the book was omitted.⁵⁶ The translation was made direct from the Spanish but "uniformly with the Italian edition."

The fourth translation is that of the Very Reverend John Dalton, Canon of Northampton. The title is :

"The Life of St. Teresa, written by herself, and translated from the Spanish by the Rev. John Dalton. London, MDCCLII."

The present translation, the fifth, is due to David Lewis, M.A. (born November 12, 1814, died January 23, 1895). It appeared in 1870, and was reprinted in 1888 under the supervision of the translator, and in 1904 under that of the present writer. The translation is so excellent that, apart from a few mistakes (which have been corrected) the entire text has been reproduced, not only of the *Life* but also of the *Relations*. These, however, are not quite as complete as the *Life*; of late years many have been discovered which were unknown to Fuente in 1861, and consequently to Mr. Lewis in 1870. The French Carmelite nuns, in their recent edition and translation of the works of St. Teresa,⁵⁷ have adopted an entirely new arrangement of the whole collection of *Relations*, placing every paragraph in strictly chronological order. The light thus thrown on the development of the Saint adds greatly to our knowledge of her life. Much as we should have liked to follow their lead, practical considerations have compelled us to adhere to the established order; the only change we were able to make was the insertion of the exact dates where these could be ascertained.

We enjoyed greater freedom in revising and re-editing the footnotes. Here again Mr. Lewis's work was excellent, but since his time so much has been done towards elucidating the history of St. Teresa and that of her contemporaries that many of the historical notes had become insufficient or unreliable. Critical observations, too, for which Mr. Lewis relied on the labours of the authors of the *Reforma*, on Fuente and Bouix are now based on the autograph and on other authentic documents. In all these points we have freely utilised the most recent works, such as Morel-Fatio's *Essai* on the authors and editions read and quoted by the Saint, the

⁵⁶ See *Carmel in England*, by Rev. B. Zimmerman, pp. 240 sqq. (London, 1899).

⁵⁷ See note 8 supra.

valuable collection of documents published by the French Carmelite nuns, and, if we may be pardoned for mentioning it, our own personal researches in the archives and libraries in Spain and elsewhere. By these means many an obscure question has been solved, but much remains to be done yet. The bulk of Mr. Lewis's masterly Preface has been embodied in this Introduction.

St. Teresa's life and character having always been a favourite study of men and women of various schools of thought, it may be useful to notice here a few recent English and foreign works on the subject :

The Life of Saint Teresa, by the author of *Devotions before and after Holy Communion* (i.e. Miss Maria Trench), London, 1875.

The Life of Saint Teresa of the Order of our Lady of Mount Carmel. Edited with a preface by the Archbishop of Westminster (Cardinal Manning), London, 1865. (By Miss Elizabeth Lockhart, afterwards first abbess of the Franciscan convent, Notting Hill.) Frequently reprinted.

The Life and Letters of St. Teresa, by Henry James Coleridge, S.J. Quarterly Series. 3 vols. (1881, 1887, 1888).

And, from another point of view :

The Life of St. Teresa, by Gabriela Cunninghame-Graham, 2 vols., London, 1894.

Saint Teresa of Spain, by Helen Hester Colvill, London, 1909.

Histoire de Sainte Thérèse d'après les Bollardistes. 2 vols., Nantes, 1882. Frequently reprinted. The author is Mlle Adelaïde Lecornu (born July 5, 1852, died at the Carmelite convent at Caen, December 14, 1901. Her name in religion was Adelaïde-Jéronyme-Zoe-Marie du Sacré-Cœur).

An excellent character sketch of the Saint has appeared in the "Les Saints" series (Paris, Lecoffre, 1901) :

Sainte Thérèse, par Henri Joly.

Although the attempt at explaining the extraordinary phenomena in the life of St. Teresa by animal magnetism and similar theories had already been exploded by the Bollandists, it has lately been revived by Professor Don Arturo Perales Gutierrez of Granada, and Professor Don Fernando Segundo Brieva Salvatierra of Madrid, who considered her a subject of hysterical derangements. The discussion carried on for some time, not only in Spain but also in France, Germany, and other countries, has been ably summed up and disposed of by P. Grégoire de S. Joseph : *La préterdue Hystérie de Sainte Thérèse*. Lyons.

The *Bibliographie Térésienne*, by Henry de Curzon (Paris, 1902) is, unfortunately, too incomplete, not to say slovenly, to be of much use.

Finally, it is necessary to say a word about the spelling of the name Teresa. In Spanish and Italian it should be written without

an *h*, as these languages do not admit the use of *Th*; in English, likewise, where this combination of letters represents a special sound, the name should be spelt with *T* only. But the present fashion of thus writing it in Latin, German, French, and other languages, which generally maintain the etymological spelling, is intolerable. The name is Greek, and was placed on the calendar in honour of a noble Spanish lady, St. Therasia, who became the wife of a Saint, Paulinus of Nola, and a Saint herself. See *Sainte Thérèse, Lettres au R. P. Bouix*, by the Abbé Postel, Paris, 1864. The derivation of the name from the Hebrew Thersa can no longer be defended (Father Jerome-Gratian, in Fuente, *Obras*, vol. vi. pp. 369 sqq.).

BENEDICT ZIMMERMAN,
Prior O.C.D.

ST. LUKE'S PRIORY,
WINCANTON, SOMERSET,
15th October, 1910.

A letter from St. Peter of Alcantara to St. Teresa on founding her houses without revenues. April 14, 1562.—Yepes, bk. ii. ch. vii. See Life, ch. xxxv. 6.

MADAM, may your soul be dilated by the Holy Ghost !

I have received your letter, which was delivered to me by Señor Gonsalvo de Aranda. I most certainly think that you are seeking advice from learned men about a question which it is quite out of their province to answer. If the matter concerned the law, or cases of conscience, it would be well to take the opinion of lawyers, or theologians, but no one should decide about a life of perfection except those who themselves live it, for as a rule people's conscience and opinions are no higher than their actions. As regards the evangelical counsels, we must not question whether it would be well to follow them or no, or whether they are practicable or not; such a doubt contains the germ of infidelity. A counsel given by God cannot but be good nor can it be difficult to practise, save by the faithless and by those who, being ruled solely by human prudence, have little trust in Him. He Who gave the counsel will give the needed help, since He is able to do so. No good man gives counsel that he does not wish to be beneficial, although man's nature is evil. How far more does He, Who is supremely good and powerful, desire and ensure that His counsels should profit those who follow them !

If, then, you wish to practise Christ's counsel of greater perfection, do so, for He gave it not only to men but also to women, and He will see that all prospers with you, as has been the case with all who have observed it. But, if you choose to take the advice of learned but unspiritual persons, and to ensure yourself a good income, see whether either of them benefit you more than dispensing with both, for the sake of following Christ's counsel. If we see a want of necessaries in communities of nuns who practise poverty, it is because they are poor against their will and because they cannot help it, and not because they wish to follow the counsel of our Lord. I do not commend poverty in itself, but the suffering it with patience for the love of Christ, and I praise far more the desiring, seeking, embracing it, out of love. If I held a deliberate opinion to the contrary, I should consider that I was unsound in the faith. On this point, as on all others, I believe what Christ our Lord declared, and I hold firmly that His counsels are wholly right, being the counsels of God, and that, though they do not oblige under pain of sin, yet a man must necessarily be more perfect if he follows them than if he does not:— I mean that, on this point at least, he must be more perfect, holy, and pleasing to God. I believe that, as His Majesty declares, the poor in spirit are blessed, that is, those who are willingly poor: this I have witnessed for myself, yet I believe God's word rather than my own experience. Those who are truly poor at heart are, by the grace of God, blessed in their lives, as are all who love, trust, and hope in God.

Madam, may His Majesty give you light to understand these truths and to act upon them. Give no credence to those who contradict them, either from want of light or faith, or because they have not tasted and seen how sweet the Lord is to them who fear and love Him, and who renounce, for love of Him, all the things of this world, which do not help them to love Him more. Such people are averse to bearing the cross of Christ, nor do they believe in the glory which comes after it. May He Himself enlighten you, that you may not feel dubious about such manifest truths nor take the advice of any one but those who imitate Christ. For although people save their souls by keeping to what is of obligation, yet, as a rule, they understand no more than they practise. Though they may give good counsel, yet Christ our Lord gives better. He knows what He is advocating and when the end comes He repays, although not in this world's coin, those who have trusted in Him.

Your humble chaplain,

FRAY PETER OF ALCANTARA,

ANNALS OF THE SAINT'S LIFE.

1515. St. Teresa is born in Avila, March 28.¹
1522. She desires martyrdom, and leaves her father's house with one of her brothers.
1528. Death of her mother.
1529. Reads romances of chivalry, and is misled by a thoughtless cousin.
1531. Her sister Maria's marriage, and her removal from home to the Augustinian monastery, where she remains till the autumn of next year.
1535. Nov. 2, enters the monastery of the Incarnation.
1536. Makes her profession, probably on Nov. 3.
1537. Goes to Castellanos de la Cañada, to her sister's house, where she remains till the spring of 1538, when she goes to Bezas.
1539. Returns to Avila on Palm Sunday. In July seriously ill, and in a trance for four days, when in her father's house. Paralysed for more than two years.
1542. Is cured of her paralysis by St. Joseph. Begins to grow lukewarm, and gives up mental prayer.

¹ In the same year St. Philip was born in Florence. St. Teresa died in 1582, and St. Philip in 1595; but they were canonised on the same day, with St. Isidore, St. Ignatius, and St. Francis Xavier. The three latter were joined together in the three final consistories held before the solemn proclamation of their sanctity, and St. Teresa and St. Philip were joined together in the same way in the final consistories held specially, as usual, for them.

1544. Feb. 1. Death of her father. She places herself under the direction of Fr. Vicente Barón.
1555. Ceases to converse with secular people, moved thereto by the sight of a picture of our Lord on the cross (ch. ix. 1). The Jesuits come to Avila and the Saint confesses to F. Juan de Padranos.
1556. Beginning of the supernatural visitations.
1557. St. Francis de Borja comes to Avila, and approves of the spirit of the Saint.
1558. First rapture of the Saint (ch. xxiv. 7). The vision of Hell (ch. xxxii. 1). Father Alvarez ordained priest.
1559. She takes F. Alvarez for her confessor. The transpiercing of her heart (ch. xxix. 17). Vision of our Lord risen from the dead (ch. xxvii. 3, ch. xxviii. 2).
1560. The vow of greater perfection. St. Peter of Alcantara approves of her spirit, and St. Luis Beltran encourages her to proceed with her plan of founding a new monastery.
1561. F. Gaspar de Salazar, S.J., comes to Avila; her sister Doña Juana comes to Avila from Alba de Tormes to help the Saint in the new foundation (ch. xxxiii. 13). Restores her nephew to life (ch. xxxv. 14, note). Fray Ibañez bids her write her Life. Receives a sum of money from her brother in Peru, which enables her to go on with the building of the new house.
1562. Goes to Toledo, to the house of Doña Luisa de la Cerda, and finishes the account of her Life. Makes the acquaintance of Fray Garcia of Toledo, Dominican. Receives a visit from Maria of Jesus. Has a revelation that her sister, Doña Maria, will die suddenly (ch. xxxiv. 24). Returns to Avila and takes possession of the new monastery, August 24. Troubles in Avila. The Saint ordered back to the monastery of the Incarnation.
1563. Mid-Lent. Obtains permission to live at St. Joseph's as a Discalced nun. Nominated Prioress. Writes her Life

and the history of the foundation at the bidding of the Inquisitor Soto, Fray Garcia, and Fray Domingo Bañes.

1565. May or June, completes the *Life*, and sends it to her confessor. Begins the *Way of Perfection*.

1568. The *Life* revised and approved by Blessed John of Avila.

Further dates will be found in the *Book of Foundations*.



THE LIFE
OF THE
HOLY MOTHER TERESA OF JESUS.

WRITTEN BY HERSELF.

I H S

PROLOGUE.

As I have been commanded and left at liberty to describe at length my way of prayer, and the workings of the grace of our Lord within me, I could wish that I had been allowed at the same time to speak distinctly and in detail of my grievous sins and wicked life. But it has not been so willed; on the contrary, I am laid herein under great restraint; and therefore, for the love of our Lord, I beg of every one who shall read this story of my life¹ to keep in mind how wicked it has been; and how, among the Saints who were converted to God, I have never found one in whom I can have any comfort. For I see that they, after our Lord had called them, never fell into sin again; I not only became worse, but, as it seems to me, deliberately withstood the graces of His Majesty, because I saw that I was thereby bound to serve Him more earnestly, knowing, at the same time, that of myself I could not pay the least portion of my debt.

¹ The Saint, in a letter written Nov. 19, 1581, to Don Pedro de Castro, then Canon of Avila, speaking of this book, calls it the book "Of the Compassions of God"—*Y ansi intitulé ese libro De las Misericordias de Dios.* "Vitam igitur suam internam et supernaturalem magis pandit quam narrat actiones suas mere humanas" (*Bollandists*, n. 2).

May He be blessed for ever Who waited for me so long ! I implore Him with my whole heart to send me His grace, so that in all clearness and truth I may give this account of myself which my confessors command me to give ; and even our Lord Himself, I know it, has also willed it should be given for some time past, but I had not the courage to attempt it. And I pray it may be to His praise and glory, and a help to my confessors ; who, knowing me better, may succour my weakness, so that I may render to our Lord some portion of the service I owe Him. May all creatures praise Him for ever ! Amen.

I H S

CHAPTER I.

CHILDHOOD AND EARLY IMPRESSIONS. THE BLESSING OF PIOUS PARENTS. DESIRE OF MARTYRDOM. DEATH OF THE SAINT'S MOTHER.

In which she tells how the Lord began to dispose this soul from childhood for virtue, and how she was helped by having virtuous parents.

I. I HAD a father and mother who were devout and feared God. Our Lord also helped me with His grace. All this would have been enough to make me good, if I had not been so wicked. My father was very much given to the reading of good books ; and so he had them in Spanish, that his children might read them. These books, with my mother's carefulness to make us say our prayers, and to bring us up devout to our Lady and to certain Saints, began to make me think seriously when I was, I believe, six or seven years old. It helped me, too, that I never saw my father and mother respect anything but goodness. They were

very good themselves. My father was a man of great charity towards the poor, and compassion for the sick, and also for servants ; so much so, that he never could be persuaded to keep slaves, for he pitied them so much : and a slave belonging to one of his brothers being once in his house, was treated by him with as much tenderness as his own children. He used to say that he could not endure the pain of seeing that she was not free. He was a man of great truthfulness ; nobody ever heard him swear or speak ill of any one ; his life was most pure.

2. My mother also was a woman of great goodness, and her life was spent in great infirmities. She was singularly pure in all her ways. Though possessing great beauty, yet was it never known that she gave reason to suspect that she made any account whatever of it ; for, though she was only three-and-thirty years of age when she died, her apparel was already that of a woman advanced in years. She was very calm, and had great sense. The sufferings she went through during her life were grievous, her death most Christian.¹

3. We were three sisters and nine brothers.² All,

¹ See ch. xxxvii. 1, where the Saint says that she saw them in a vision both in Heaven.

² Don Alonso Sanchez de Cepeda, father of the Saint, married first Doña Catalina del Peso y Henao, and had three children—one daughter, Maria de Cepeda, and two sons. After the death of Catalina, he married Doña Beatriz Davila y Ahumada, by whom he had nine children—seven boys and two girls. The third of these, and the eldest of the daughters, was the Saint, Doña Teresa Sanchez Cepeda Davila y Ahumada. In the Monastery of the Incarnation, where she was a professed nun for twenty-six years, she was known as Doña Teresa ; but in the year 1563, when she left her monastery for the new foundation of St. Joseph, of the Reform of the Carmelites, she took for the first time the name of Teresa of Jesus. The saint was born March 28, 1515, and baptized on the 4th of April, in the Church of San Juan ; on which day Mass was said for the first time in the new Monastery of the Incarnation, where the Saint made her profession. Her godfather was Vela Nuñez, and her godmother Doña Maria del Aguila. The Bollandists and Father Bouix say that she was baptized on the very day of her birth. But the testimony of Doña Maria de Pinel, a nun in the Monastery of the Incarnation, is clear : and Don Vicente de la Fuente, quoting it, vol. vi. p. 4, says that this delay of baptism was nothing singular in those days, provided there was no danger of death.

by the mercy of God, resembled their parents in goodness except myself, though I was the most cherished of my father. And, before I began to offend God, I think he had some reason,—for I am filled with sorrow whenever I think of the good desires with which our Lord inspired me, and what a wretched use I made of them. Besides, my brothers never in any way hindered me in the service of God.

4. One of my brothers was nearly of my own age³; and he it was whom I most loved, though I was very fond of them all, and they of me. He and I used to read Lives of Saints together. When I read of martyrdom undergone by the Saints for the love of God, it struck me that the vision of God was very cheaply purchased; and I had a great desire to die a martyr's death—not out of any love of Him of which I was conscious, but that I might most quickly attain to the fruition of those great joys of which I read that they were reserved in Heaven; and I used to discuss with my brother how we could become martyrs. We settled to go together to the country of the Moors,⁴ begging our way for the love of God, that we might be there beheaded⁵; and our Lord, I believe, had given us courage enough, even at so tender an age, if we could have found the means to proceed; but our greatest difficulty seemed to be our father and mother.

³ Rodrigo de Cepeda, four years older than the Saint, entered the army, and, serving in South America, died in the wilderness of Chaco. St. Teresa always considered him a martyr, because he died in defence of the Catholic faith (*Ribera*, lib. i. cap. iii.). Before he sailed for the Indies, he made his will, and left all his property to the Saint, his sister (*Reforma de los Descalços*, vol. i. lib. i. cap. iii. § 4).

⁴ The Bollandists incline to believe that St. Teresa may not have intended to quit Spain, because all the Moors were not at that time driven out of the country. The Bull of the Saint's canonization, and the Lectons of the Breviary, say that she left her father's house, *ut in Africam trajiceret*.

⁵ The two children set out on their strange journey—one of them seven, the other eleven, years old—through the Adaja Gate; but when they had crossed the bridge, they were met by one of their uncles, Don Francisco Alvarez de Cepeda, who brought them back to their mother, who had already sent through Avila in quest of them. Rodrigo, like Adam, excused himself, and laid the blame on the woman (*Ribera*, lib. i. cap. iv.).

5. It astonished us greatly to find it said in what we were reading that pain and bliss were everlasting. We happened very often to talk about this ; and we had a pleasure in repeating frequently, " For ever, ever, ever." Through the constant uttering of these words, our Lord was pleased that I should receive an abiding impression of the way of truth when I was yet a child.

6. As soon as I saw it was impossible to go to any place where people would put me to death for the sake of God, my brother and I set about becoming hermits ; and in an orchard belonging to the house we contrived, as well as we could, to build hermitages, by piling up small stones one on the other, which fell down immediately ; and so it came to pass that we found no means of accomplishing our wish. Even now I have a feeling of devotion when I consider how God gave me in my early youth what I lost by my own fault. I gave alms as I could—and I could but little. I contrived to be alone, for the sake of saying my prayers⁶—and they were many—especially the Rosary, to which my mother had a great devotion, and had made us also in this like herself. I used to delight exceedingly, when playing with other children, in the building of monasteries, as if we were nuns ; and I think I wished to be a nun, though not so much as I did to be a martyr or a hermit.

7. I remember that, when my mother died,⁷ I was about twelve years old—a little less. When I began to understand my loss, I went in my affliction to an image of our Lady,⁸ and with many tears implored her

⁶ She was also marvellously touched by the story of the Samaritan woman at the well, of whom there was a picture in her room (*Ribera*, lib. i. cap. iv.). She speaks of this repeatedly. (See ch. xxx. 24 ; *Foundations*, xxxi. 42 ; *Int. Castle*, M. vi. ch. xi. 5 ; *Way of Perfection*, xix. 4.)

⁷ The last will and testament of Doña Beatriz de Ahumada was made Nov. 24, 1528 : and she must have died soon after ; the Saint was nearly fourteen years old at that time.

⁸ Our Lady of Charity, in the church of the hospital where the poor and pilgrims were received ; this statue is now in the cathedral of Avila.

to be my mother. I did this in my simplicity, and I believe that it was of service to me; for I have by experience found the royal Virgin help me whenever I recommended myself to her; and at last she has brought me back to herself. It distresses me now, when I think of, and reflect on, that which kept me from being earnest in the good desires with which I began.

8. O my Lord, since Thou art determined to save me—may it be the pleasure of Thy Majesty to effect it!—and to bestow upon me so many graces, why has it not been Thy pleasure also—not for my advantage, but for Thy greater honour—that this habitation, wherein Thou hast continually to dwell, should not have contracted so much defilement? It distresses me even to say this, O my Lord, because I know the fault is all my own, seeing that Thou hast left nothing undone to make me, even from my youth, wholly Thine. When I would complain of my parents, I cannot do it; for I saw nothing in them but all good, and carefulness for my welfare. Then, growing up, I began to discover the natural gifts which our Lord had given me—they were said to be many; and, when I should have given Him thanks for them, I made use of every one of them, as I shall now explain, to offend Him.

CHAPTER II.

EARLY IMPRESSIONS. DANGEROUS BOOKS AND COMPANIONS. THE SAINT IS PLACED IN A CONVENT.

How she lost these virtues and how important it is to deal from childhood with virtuous persons.

1. WHAT I shall now speak of was, I believe, the beginning of great harm to me. I often think how