

# **THE LAST DAYS OF PÈRE GRATRY**

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The Last Days of Père Gratry by Père Adolphe Perraud

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**PÈRE ADOLPHE PERRAUD**

**THE LAST DAYS  
OF PÈRE GRATRY**



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The Last Days of  
PÈRE GRATRY

BY

PÈRE ADOLPHE PERRAUD  
OF THE ORATORY, AND PROFESSOR OF LA SORBONNE

*TRANSLATED BY SPECIAL PERMISSION*

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"A DOMINICAN ARTIST," "LIFE OF S. FRANCIS DE SALES," ETC. ETC.

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## The Last Days and Words of Père Gratry

“Testor Jesum et sanctos ejus, me nihil in gratiam, nihil more blandientium loqui, sed quid dicturus sum, pro testimonio dicere.”—S. JEROME, *Ep.* 108, *No.* 2.

PÈRE GRATRY'S many friends know that I had the mournful happiness of being with him during the last nine days of his life, of giving him the Church's last blessings in his mortal agony, of receiving his last sigh, of closing his eyes. Many among them know likewise what Père Gratry had been to me from my youth upwards; and, therefore, I have been appealed to on all sides with earnest entreaties to put together, and share with others,



the precious recollections of my intimate intercourse with that great soul. Moreover, the Archbishop of Paris (who made me the bearer of his kindly greetings to our sick friend when I departed for Montreux) has requested me to record what I can of those last days. In compliance therefore with the claims of authority and friendship, as well as for my own consolation and encouragement, I undertake the task. In death as in life, Père Gratry must still be the Apostle of Hope, and as I recall these precious recollections I would fain endeavour to win for myself, and impart to others, that fresh impulse of courageous hope which it was so peculiarly his gift to kindle, and which made all intercourse with him a perpetual *Sursum Corda!*

It is scarce needful to say that I am not pretending now to write Père Gratry's Life,

or to enter upon a literary and philosophical examination of his works or their influence upon the intellectual movement of his times. This is a task to be more deliberately performed hereafter. At this moment, having just laid him in his grave, I can only put forth my tribute of gratitude and filial affection to the venerable Priest who was used as God's instrument for influencing my early days, and leading me to the sacred calling of the Priesthood. I can only gather together some memories which may tend to make him better known, and, remembering what was his constant aim in all he undertook, pray that by God's Grace such memories may be profitable and helpful to some of the souls he loved.

## I

I first knew Père Gratry in the year 1847, after his appointment to the chaplaincy of the *École Normale*, into which I was just entering myself.<sup>1</sup> He had recently given up the direction of the *Collège Stanislas*, in which he had succeeded Monseigneur Buquet, who but three weeks since we laid in his grave. One could almost fancy that the first of the two friends, called hence to rest for ever in the Bosom of his Lord, had beckoned to his brother, and fondly drawn him after himself.

They were indeed, close friends, and those who knew Monseigneur Buquet will appreciate the unchangeable affection which, after he became Vicar-General of Paris, and later on

<sup>1</sup> Section des Lettres.