

**WILFULNESS AND ITS
CONSEQUENCES. A TALE
EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY
OF A SISTER OF MERCY**

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Wilfulness and its consequences. A Tale extracted from the diary of a sister of Mercy by
Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

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WILFULNESS.
AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

I Tale

*EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF A SISTER OF
MERCY BY*

LADY HERBERT.

And Jesus went down with His parents, and came to Nazareth, and was
subject to them. St. Luke ii. 51.

LONDON: BURNS AND OATES,

17, 18 Portman Street and 63 Paternoster Row.

1872.

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ROBSON AND SOXS, PRINTERS, FANCY ROAD, E.W.

TO
THE REVEREND MOTHER SUPERIOR

OF THE

Convent of Our Lady of Mercy,

CALLED 'ST. EDWARD'S,' IN BLANDFORD SQUARE,

ON THE OCCASION OF HER HALF JUBILEE AS SUPERIOR (ON THE
25TH OF NOVEMBER 1872), THIS SIMPLE RECORD OF ONE
OF THE MANY DEEDS OF CHARITY PERFORMED BY TWO OF
THE SISTERS OF HER COMMUNITY, IS AFFECTIONATELY DE-
DICATED BY

MARY ELIZABETH HERBERT.

Wilfulness and its Consequences.

To love God without at the same time loving our neighbour is impossible.

'This commandment we have from God; that he who loveth God, love also his brother' (1 John iv. 21).

But holy Charity,—'the beautiful daughter of God'—being banished from the world by the greater part of mankind, seeks an asylum in the hearts of those who have voluntarily relinquished the world, with all its joys and pleasures, to devote themselves to the care of the sick, the suffering, the poor, and the little ones of Christ's flock. Almost innumerable are the Orders of Charity which have emanated from the bosom of our holy Mother, the Church. But at this moment we will speak only of one,

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—that of the Sisters of Mercy, whose religious houses are scattered broadcast over England and Ireland, and whose foundress has only a few years ago passed away from among us to receive her eternal reward. Before relating the simple story which will form the subject of this little book, I will give a rapid sketch of the life of this holy servant of God, mainly drawn from a pamphlet published by Messrs. Burns & Oates in 1866, entitled *The First Sister of Mercy*.

Catharine M'Auley, the foundress of this Order, was born in 1778. She was the daughter of a most excellent father—a man given with all his heart to charity and piety; one of a class of laymen to be found here and there in those days in Ireland, who were the providential instruments of keeping alive the faith in many souls besides their own. Notwithstanding the social disadvantages which then, to a far greater extent than at present, weighed upon all Catholic gentlemen who openly and zealously exerted themselves for religion, he was not only remarkable for his charities, but also for his endeavours to supply to some extent the dearth of priests in his part of the country, by assembling the poor of his neighbourhood from time to time, and giving them the best instruction he could. This excellent man, whose spirit was inherited by his daughter Catharine, died while she was quite a child, *leaving two other children—another daughter and an infant son—to the care of his widow, a person by no*

means equal to him in her devotion to her religion. She removed to Dublin, and allowed Protestant influences to be brought to bear on the children, which ended in the disturbance of the faith of the two younger. Catharine, however, persevered; and she used to attribute the grace which enabled her to do so to the Sacrament of Confirmation, for which she made a devout and fervent preparation. Her own life was afterwards continually coming back to her in the needs of those who were the objects of her work of mercy; and she has left her own diligent care in preparing children for Confirmation as a special legacy to the sisters of her Order. She grew up a bright, affectionate, winning girl; with a special gift of comforting and cheering others, strong impulses to piety, a love of reading, and a great dislike for the usual amusements and enjoyments of young people like herself. She was about half-way through her teens when her mother died. The children fell into the hands of a Protestant friend, who brought them up well in other respects, but without the slightest attention to the religion to which they belonged. Those were days too in which Protestant families spent their conversation in nothing more commonly than in abuse of the Catholic Church. The boy—Catharine's brother—became a Protestant; her sister afterwards married a Protestant, and conformed to his religion. Catharine herself, unable to answer the statements and objections urged upon her without mercy, was in great trouble of mind; but she fell in the way of a man of much eminence in those days—Dr. Beytagh—who instructed and consoled her, lent her good books, and thus helped her to surmount the trial. She