

**MEMOIRS OF
FATHER
P. GALLWEY, S.J.**

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Memoirs of Father P. Gallwey, S.J. by M. Gavin

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M. GAVIN

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WITH PORTRAIT

BY
FATHER M. GAVIN, S.J.

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1913

PREFACE.

BEYOND a graceful tribute, entitled *Father Gallwey*, by Mr. Percy Fitzgerald, in memory of his revered master and life-long friend, nothing has been published since Father Gallwey's death to chronicle his work for God in the Society of Jesus during seventy years.

Mr. Percy Fitzgerald's little sketch, as he terms it, contains some description of Stonyhurst in the days of his youth, bears witness to Father Gallwey's untiring energy, his love of literature, his interest in the Stonyhurst stage, and his devotedness to his pupils. It provides us also with some eighteen or twenty letters, written in the early fifties, from St. Beuno's College, North Wales, in the first year of Father Gallwey's priesthood. They are extremely interesting, revealing the warm heart of the writer, and varied by comments on literature and music and the passing events of

the hour. They represent the bright and happy days of his early manhood, and are naturally very different from the grave and measured letters of maturer years, in which he spoke of things divine, and trained souls in the perfection of their state.

This unpretending little volume of memoirs is not meant in any sense to be a Life. Various writers, who knew him as Superior, or served with him in the ranks, have contributed chapters which bring him before us as Novice Master, Giver of Retreats, Preacher and Writer of Books, one of which, the *Watches of the Passion*, has gained the distinction of a sixteenth edition. Thus sidelights are cast by friendly hands on a fervent Religious, while an attempt is made to describe his every-day life of prayer and labour and self-sacrifice as a member of the Mount Street Community.

A Life in the strict sense of the word is an impossibility. His correspondence has been almost entirely destroyed by himself, or by others, in many cases at his special desire. A letter, which quite recently came into my hands, to a Religious of the Sacred Heart, now in Mexico, gives the secret of

his wish to conceal all vestige of his good deeds. To a question asked by the Religious, "What is the quickest way of gaining the personal love of our Lord that you speak of so often?" Father Gallwey answered in a letter dated January 3, 1884:

"My dear Sister in Christ,

"St. John the Baptist's word is a good answer to your question and will do for a motto for the year: 'He must grow great and I must grow less.' Self is anti-Christ: self is the real obstacle to the love of our Lord. Love and selfishness are day and night. One must go before the other can reign."

Father Gallwey practised what he preached. The desire of advertisement is the characteristic of self. It loves to flourish its pious achievements. Hence our Lord selects prayer, fasting, almsdeeds as actions to be specially screened from the gaze of men. If done to be seen of men, the reward is given here, none other can be expected. Father Gallwey had a horror of anything that looked like self-advertisement. He must have known perfectly well that some day an attempt would

be made to publish his *Life*. He was determined to defeat this project, and was most successful in his aim. Of his correspondence with persons of note like Cecil Marchioness of Lothian, Lady Georgiana Fullerton, Archbishop Errington, and hosts of others, through forty years, hardly a vestige remains. Lady Georgiana was his penitent and intimate friend, his letters to her were returned to him after her death. They would naturally have dealt with her literary labours and her many good works, and would have provided instructive reading. Her letters to him and his to her seem to have been destroyed by his own hand.

During the twelve years of his first rectorate in Farm Street, from 1857 to 1869, he was prominent in every good work in London. His influence was greater at that time than any subsequent period. He was in the maturity of his physical and intellectual powers, and much sought after as preacher, confessor, giver of retreats and missions; he assisted and revised the publication of books, he was prominent in all works of charity in the Archdiocese. He never referred to his labours, and has left

no word or solitary letter behind to help his biographer. Few, for instance, know that he was the real founder of *The Month*. Mother Taylor, to whom we owe the Congregation of the Poor Servants of the Mother of God, always gave Father Gallwey the credit of procuring that periodical for the Society. After one year, during which Cardinal Newman gave her for publication the *Dream of Gerontius*, she resigned the Editorship. "I consider," thus wrote Mother Taylor, "the real founder was Father Gallwey. He took the greatest interest in its start. So did Father Coleridge, whom I then knew only by correspondence. . . . Cardinal Newman took it up from the first and called on me that summer about it. Father Gallwey got James Doyle to design the cover, and it was he (J. D.) who suggested the name *Month*."

Though recognized as a master of the spiritual life, little remains in writing of his direction, which would have been highly prized by confessors and penitents. A kind of fatality seems to have followed all his correspondence. Wholesale destruction