

This legend of St. Dominic was compiled by Br. Gerard de Frechet at the request of the fifth Master of the Order, Bl. Humbert of Romans. It dates from 1255-1257.

CHAPTER I

THE HOLINESS OF HIS FAMILY

IT will not appear idle or unprofitable for us to glean as ears of corn that have escaped the reaper's hands what has been omitted by those who up to the present have written the story of his life.

In the first place, then, as a sign of his holiness and a token of his truly perfect life, we mention that he had not only most virtuous and devout parents, but two right perfect brothers besides. One of them became a priest, and gave himself up entirely to the service of the poor by works of mercy in a hospital, thereby earning for himself the reverence of all his countrymen as a man truly beloved of God. The other, whose name was Marines, a holy man of contemplative mind, served God during many years in the Order of Preachers, and after a happy passage entered into his rest. He died in Spain, where he shone with the lustre of virtues and miracles, and there, in the Cistercian abbey at Clalaroga, his blessed remains rest, and his venerated tomb may yet be seen beside the high altar. Furthermore, two of St. Dominic's nephews led holy and praiseworthy lives in the Order.

CHAPTER II

CONVERSION OF A HERETIC BY HIS JOYFUL PATIENCE

A GENERAL debate with the heretics being agreed upon, the bishop of the place wanted to attend in state with a pompous retinue, but St. Dominic addressing him, said: 'It is not in this fashion that we ought to meet them, but we should rather strive to win them over by our humility and virtuous example, than by mere show and display or by contentious words: and since the present meeting is not without its fears, let us arm ourselves with humility and go thither barefooted.' On the way they began to have misgivings as to the road, for the place of meeting was some miles off; so they made enquiries of a man whom they met, believing him to be a Catholic, whereas in reality he was a heretic. The man said that he would not merely show them the way, but would himself conduct them to the spot. Then leading them to a wood he spitefully set them astray, dragging them through thorns and brambles so that their feet and ankles became covered with blood. All this the servant of God bore with unruffled patience, breaking forth joyfully at times into the divine praises, and exhorting the others to do the same. 'Be of good cheer, dearest brethren,' he would say, 'put all your trust in God, for our sins have now been all wiped out in our blood, and the victory will surely be ours.' The heretic, seeing his marvellous endurance, and the joyful forbearance of the whole company, and feeling touched by his words, became changed in heart, confessed his cruel deceit, and abjured his errors before them.

CHAPTER III

HE RAISES THE DROWNED TO LIFE

AN aged and respected citizen of Cahors, called Peter de Salvagnac, told us the following incident, professing his readiness to swear to the fact. When he was present with Count Simon de Montfort at the siege of Toulouse, a band of English pilgrims on their way to St James's shrine turned aside from Toulouse on account of the interdict under which it lay, and entered a light craft for the purpose of being ferried over the river. The overcrowded ferry capsized, for they were nearly forty in number, and all sank. Hearing their drowning cries and the shouts of the soldiers standing by, St. Dominic, who had been praying in a church close by, came out, and seeing the accident, threw himself on the ground, then with outstretched arms and bitter tears he besought God in heart and with words of mouth, nay, as it were with holy boldness, commanded him to save the pilgrims from death. In the sight of the crusaders and others who were witnesses of the mishap, straightway they all appeared on the level of the water as if they were quietly sitting on dry land, each in the place where he had gone down: then the bystanders stretching out their spears and lances, drew them all out of the water unharmed.

CHAPTER IV

HOW HIS BOOKS WERE FOUND UNINJURED IN THE WATER

WHEN St Dominic was crossing the river Ariège on one of his apostolic journeys in the country round Toulouse, he let his books fall in mid-stream. He was so entirely rapt in the thought of God at the time that he was not aware of his loss until he got to the house of a kindly disposed woman who used to lodge him out of reverence for his great merits. On telling her of the loss of his books the good woman began to fret, but the gracious father comforted her by saying: 'Grieve not, good mother, for we ought to bear cheerfully every cross it pleases God to send us.' Three days later a fisherman coming to the spot where they had fallen in, cast in his line, and soon after, thinking he had hooked a prize, landed the books, which were as thoroughly preserved and uninjured as if they had been kept in some library. This was all the more astounding as they were not covered with wax-cloth nor any kind of wrapper which might have saved them. The good woman getting possession of them dispatched them to our holy father at Toulouse.

CHAPTER V

MIRACULOUS INCREASE OF WINE

WHILE travelling in that same country with some of his brethren it chanced one day that they had only one small cup of wine for their repast. Now amongst those present that day there were some who had come from a delicate life in the world, and who found it very hard to swallow dry bread. This true servant of God feeling for their want bade them put the little they had into a larger vessel, the bottom of which it barely covered, and then to fill it up with water. This done through holy obedience, he had the wine drawn and set before them, and all vowed that they had never tasted better in their lives before. Those that partook of it were eight in number, yet they had more than enough. Brother William of Pelisso vouches for the truth of these miracles.

CHAPTER VI

RAIN FORETOLD AND OBTAINED

DURING his stay at Segovia he happened to be addressing a very great throng of people outside the walls of the town. Now it had not escaped his notice that the country was suffering from drought, for Christmas was coming on, yet from the want of rain the farmers had not even begun to sow the seed. In his sermon he was moved to cry aloud: 'Fear nothing, my good friends, but trust in God's mercy, for this very day our sorrow will be turned into joy on account of the plentiful rain which the Lord will send us presently.' There was not the slightest sign of rain at the time, for the whole sky was radiant with sunshine, and not a cloud could be spied anywhere. As he held on with his discourse rain suddenly began to fall, and so heavily that the people had a difficulty in getting home because of the torrents. The whole city gave thanks to God, 'who alone worketh wonders,' and was pleased thus speedily to redeem the promise made by His servant Dominic.

CHAPTER VII

HE FORTELLS THE DEATH OF A BRAWLER

ABOUT this very time the servant of God felt moved to preach the divine word one holiday in the council chamber of the same city. When the royal letter had been read publicly, he began to address the assembly somewhat after this fashion: 'My friends, you have just heard the message of an earthly mortal sovereign, listen now to the behests of a heavenly and immortal King.' On hearing this a nobleman present not only would not listen to what he had to say, but broke out in tones of anger: 'It is too bad of this speechifier to keep us all day from our dinner with his talk.' As he said this he went out, leaped into his saddle, and rode off chafing loudly. But before he had time to leave, St. Dominic warned him: 'You are free to go away now, but mind you well the year will not be out before your horse shall be without his rider, and your murderer overtake you ere you reach the safety of your tower.' That he said this by design of God's providence was clearly seen from what happened, for the nobleman was slain by his enemies on that very spot, and his son and kinsman fell with him, as they were flying for protection to the stronghold he had built close by.

CHAPTER VIII

HE OBTAINS BREAD FROM HEAVEN

AFTER this the glorious father returned to Italy in company with a lay brother named John. This brother became so reduced from hunger in the Lombard Alps that he could not move a step further, nor even rise to his feet. 'What ails you, my son?' enquired the gentle father. 'Why do you not keep up with me!' 'Father, I am truly dying of hunger,' cried the weary brother. 'Take courage then, my son, let us go just a little further and we shall get all we want for recruiting our strength.' But as the brother still held out, avowing he could not drag himself a step farther, the saint, with that kindness and sweet pity for which he was ever remarkable, had recourse to his usual refuge of fervent prayer. For a brief space he communed with God, and then addressed the brother once more: 'Rise up, son, go straight before you to yonder spot, and bring back what you find there.' The brother got up with difficulty, and dragging himself to the spot indicated — which was about a stone's throw off — saw there an exceedingly white

loaf wrapt in a snowwhite cloth, which he brought back with him; then after eating until his strength revived he continued his journey.

Now when they had gone some way on, the brother began to think the matter over, and in his amazement cried out: 'My God, who put the bread in that lonely spot? Where can it have come from? Surely I must have parted with my wits not to have made further enquiries about it?' Then addressing St. Dominic he said: 'Father, where did yon bread come from? Whoever put it there?' Upon which this true lover and observer of humility rejoined: 'My son, have you not had as much as you wanted?' 'Yes, father,' said the other. 'Very well then, since you have had as much as pleased you, thank God for it, and trouble yourself no more about it.' The brother acquainted the brethren with all this on his return to Spain. He was afterwards sent in company with those brethren of ours who went by the Pope's command to Africa to spread the Catholic faith, and after happily finishing his course at Morocco he departed to the Lord.

CHAPTER IX

HOW HIS TUNIC WARDED OFF FIRE

THERE was a devout woman of Segovia at whose house St. Dominic used occasionally to lodge, and in which he once left behind a tunic of sackcloth which he had worn till a short time before this, when he had changed it for a very painful hair shirt. The good woman finding this tunic put it in a box among her other valuables, and guarded it more carefully than if it had been of imperial purple. One day it chanced that after shutting up her house she went out hurriedly on business, leaving a large fire burning on the hearth, and this falling forward burnt the house down with the exception of the wooden chest in which she kept the tunic; the box was not so much as charred or scorched, though standing in the midst of the flames. The good woman was astonished on her return at beholding such a miracle, and gave hearty thanks to God and her guest St. Dominic, whose tunic had saved from destruction the whole of her property which she kept in that very chest. After detaching the sleeves she gave the remaining portion to our brethren to be kept reverently, and to this day it is laid away among the conventual relics of that place.

CHAPTER X

HIS GIFT OF TONGUES

WHILE travelling from Toulouse to Paris in company with Brother Bertrand de Garrigue, who was the first Provincial of Provence, our holy father spent the night in watching and prayer in the church of our Lady at Roc-Amadour. Next day they came up with a band of pilgrims from Germany, who, hearing them reciting the Psalms and Litanies, joined company with them, and on coming to the next town hospitably entertained them during three days. One morning St. Dominic addressed Brother Bertrand after this fashion: 'Good brother, I am much troubled in conscience seeing that we are reaping the material good things of these pilgrims without sowing spiritual ones in return, so, if it please you, let us kneel down and ask God to enable us to understand their tongue, that we may preach Jesus Christ to them.' This they did, and to the bewilderment of the pilgrims they began to speak fluently in German, and as they

trudged along together during the next four days, they continued conversing about our Lord Jesus Christ until they came to Orleans. There the Germans, who were on their way to Chartres, parted company with them on the road which led to Paris, after humbly commending themselves to their prayers. Some time after this our holy father said to Brother Bertrand: 'Brother, we are now going to enter Paris, and if our brethren here only knew of that miracle which God wrought in us they would repute us to be saints, whereas we are but sinners, and if it got rumoured abroad we should be liable to vanity: wherefore, in virtue of holy obedience I forbid you to mention it to a soul until after my death.' Nor was it divulged to our brethren until after his death.

CHAPTER XI

HE COMPELS A RUNAWAY TO RETURN

HE took into the Order a young man from Apulia, named Thomas de Smicella, whom he so cherished for his innocence and candour that many styled him St. Dominic's brother, whilst others called him his son. Now, one day some former companions, emissaries of Satan, watching their opportunity, brought him partly by deceit and partly by violence to a vineyard close by, where after stripping him of his religious habit, they put on him a secular dress provided for the purpose. While this was going on some of the brethren ran to St. Dominic crying out 'Alas, even now your brother is being forced back into the world.' At such news he at once put aside all human aid, and without further ado, or even bidding them hurry after him, he quietly went to the choir, and there lying before the altar besought God's pity. Nor did he pray in vain, as the event proved, for directly the youth put on the garments he began to cry out, 'Oh, I am all on fire! I am all on fire!' Nor could he find any relief until he had laid them aside, put on his habit, and returned again to his cloister.

CHAPTER XII

HE RAISES A DEAD CHILD, AND HEALS ITS MOTHER

COMING once to Chatillon on one of his many journeys through France, it chanced that the infant son of his hostess (the sister of the parish priest of the town) had but a little while before fallen from a terrace, and his parents were lamenting his death. Moved with pity at the sight of their grief, St. Dominic prostrated himself for a short space in prayer, shedding many tears; then, feeling his prayer heard, he rose and gave back the boy alive and well to his mother. The sorrow-stricken home was filled with joy; the child's uncle, the parish priest, got ready a great supper and invited many honest folk to rejoice with him. But the child's mother being unable to partake of an eel which was served up, because of an ague with which she was afflicted, the saint after making over it the sign of the cross gave it her to eat, saying: 'Take and eat it in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.' The woman ate some of it and was cured.

CHAPTER XIII

HE PASSES THROUGH CLOSED DOORS

HAPPENING to come to a certain convent door long after the inmates had retired to rest, and not wishing to disturb them, he and his companion prostrated themselves in prayer before the porch, and

asked of God that he would provide for their wants without disturbing those within. Wonderful to relate, whereas they had been lying outside the gate, they found themselves in a moment transported within. The same thing befell him when returning from a disputation with the heretics accompanied by a Cistercian lay brother, by whom many memorable records as to his sanctity have been related. Coming at a late hour to the church and finding it locked they began to pray outside, and in a short space of time through the divine help unexpectedly found themselves within, where they spent the night in watching.

CHAPTER XIV

HOW THE DEVIL HURLED A GREAT STONE AT HIM

As the holy father was praying very fervently one night, lying prostrate on the pavement of the church, the devil, who has been envious from the beginning, hurled a great stone at him from the roof, being unable to stand the earnestness and fervour of his prayer. The stone fell with such violence that the building echoed again, and the devil did this in the hope of distracting him. It grazed his forehead and partly touched his habit, but he himself moved no more than if a straw had fallen. Unable to withstand this heroic endurance of the servant of God, the devil went off crestfallen, crying out and howling terribly.

CHAPTER XV

HOW THE DEVIL TRIED TO MAKE HIM BREAK THE SILENCE

IT was his custom to keep nightly watch in the church and once while praying after the brothers had retired to rest, the devil showed himself under the guise of a Friar praying before one of the altars. The blessed Dominic wondered at seeing him remain behind after the signal had been given, so he motioned with his hand for the brother to retire to rest, and the man bowed in return and withdrew. When matins were over he cautioned the brethren not to remain in the church when once the signal had been given for retiring; nevertheless the pretended Friar did the same thing a second and even a third time. On the third night St. Dominic went up to him and rebuked him sharply: 'What is the meaning of this disobedience, and that, too, after I have repeatedly said that no one was to stay behind after the signal? This is the third time I have found you loitering here.' At this the devil cried out with great glee: 'At last I have made you break the Silence.' But the servant of God, seeing how he had been tricked, boldly replied: 'Save your mirth for some better occasion, wretch, when it can perhaps profit you; and learn moreover that I am master of this silence and can speak when I think fit to do so. You cannot hoodwink me on this score.' Then the devil slunk away abashed at this scathing rebuke.

CHAPTER XVI

HOW HE MET THE DEVIL PROWLING ROUND THE CONVENT

MANY of our first brethren and others worthy of belief aver that on one occasion while he was making the rounds of the convent like a watchful sentinel, he met the devil prowling like a beast of prey, and bidding him stand still, the holy father accosted him thus: 'Why are you prowling in this fashion?' 'I do so,' said the other, 'on account of the profits I reap hereby.' 'And what do you gain in the dormitory, may

I ask?’ said St. Dominic. ‘I keep the brethren from enjoying their rest, and then tempt them not to rise for matins, and when this does not work, I send them foul dreams and illusions.’ Then taking him to the choir, the holy father continued: ‘And what do you gain in this holy place?’ ‘I make them come late and retire soon, and busy them with distractions.’ On questioning him about the refectory, he made answer, ‘Who is there who does not either eat more or less than he should?’ When brought to the parlour he chuckled with glee: ‘Ho, ho! this is my spot, this is the place for laughter, and folly, and idle talk.’ But when they came to the chapter house the devil tried to make off: ‘I loathe this place, for I lose here whatever I may have gained elsewhere, since the brethren are here told of their faults, correct one another, do penance, and are absolved.’

CHAPTER XVII

HE SNATCHES A PAPER FROM THE DEVIL

ON another occasion he spied the devil in the church at midnight, holding a slip of paper in his horny and crooked claws, and trying to read it by the light of one of the lamps. Going up to him, he asked Satan what he was peeping at, and got for reply: ‘I am reading over your brethren’s sins.’ Now St. Dominic being minded to get it, seized hold of one end of the paper, while the devil held tight to the other. Bidding him finally, in God’s name, to give it up, he found written down some faults of the brethren, whom he corrected accordingly.

CHAPTER XVIII

HIS MANNER AND FERVOUR IN PRAYER

BROTHER JOHN of Bologna, a discreet and fervent religious, tells us how he once kept diligent watch for seven succeeding nights, in order to see for himself in what manner our holy father used to spend his night watches. This is how he describes it. ‘Standing at one time and groaning heavily, or with his face down upon the church pavement, he prolonged his prayer until sleep overcame him. Then starting up he would visit each altar in turn, and so kept on until midnight, when he would softly visit the sleeping brethren and cover them up when he saw fit.’ This same brother tells how when serving his mass he often saw the tears trickle from his eyes down his checks as he turned to take the ablutions after receiving the Body of Christ.

CHAPTER XIX

HIS POWER IN WORD AND WORK

HAVING often observed Brother Bertrand to grieve bitterly at the remembrance of his sins, he forbade him to weep so much for his own transgressions, but would have him to grieve over the unrepented sins of others. So efficacious were his words, that from that hour the brother wept copiously for others, but could no longer do so for himself even when he wished it.

A greedy usurer feigning to be just, begged the holy communion at his hands. On his so doing, the sacred particle seemed to burn the communicant’s palate like a hot coal, just as the fire of old cooled

the three children, yet burnt the impious Chaldeans. Deeply moved by this prodigy, the man repented, and restored all his ill-gotten gains.

CHAPTER XX

HE MULTIPLIES BREAD

BROTHER REGINALD, a deeply religious man, who was once a papal penitentiary and afterwards became archbishop of Armagh, tells us that he was present on one occasion at Bologna when the procurator went to our holy father complaining that he had only two loaves to set before a large community. Whereupon this faithful imitator of his Lord, taking the two loaves, broke them into fragments, and then full of trust in God, 'who is gracious to all that call upon him, and filleth every living creature with his blessing,' he made over them the sign of our redemption, and told the server to go round and put two or three pieces upon each table. When the brother had gone once round the refectory and there was still some bread to spare, he went round it a second and a third time, and yet out of a small quantity in the beginning there was plenty left. What need for further words! The brother continued to supply the tables until all the brethren were satisfied, and more bread was supplied from on high than mail was able to consume.

CHAPTER XXI

HE BEHOLDS ANGELS GUARDING HIS BRETHERN

A CITIZEN of Bologna, who was a lawyer by profession, joined the Order, but his friends and kinsfolk in the world were bent on having him out again by force. The terrified brothers wanted to call in men-at-arms to guard the enclosure, but the blessed Dominic eased their minds with these words: 'We require no such protection, for at this very moment I see more than two hundred angels ranked round the church and convent who have been sent to guard us.' At the same moment their assailants fled panic-stricken and in confusion, and the novice plucking up heart persevered in the Order.

CHAPTER XXII

HE DELIVERS A GLUTTON POSSESSED BY THE DEVIL

ONE of the brothers at Bologna, who had care of the sick, used sometimes, without permission, to eat some of the food which was left. While thus busied one evening, the devil entered into him, and he began to bellow horribly. The holy father came to the spot with the rest of the brethren who were hurrying to the brother's assistance, and pitying his condition bade the devil speak up and say Why he had gone into him. Then the demon answered him: 'I hold possession of him since he richly deserves it, for contrary to the letter of your constitutions, and without leave, he has been in the habit of eating the meat left by the sick.' On hearing this the tender father replied: 'And I, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, do absolve him from his sin, and command you in the name of the same Jesus, that you go out of him and vex him no longer'; and at once the brother was freed from his tormentor.

CHAPTER XXIII

HIS COMPASSION FOR SINNERS

So wonderfully tender-hearted was he touching the sins and miseries of men, that when he came near any city or town from where he could overlook it, he would burst into tears at the thought of the miseries of mankind, of the sins committed therein, and of the numbers who were going down into hell. If it chanced that after the fatigues of a long journey he had to lodge with secular persons, he would first quench his thirst at some handy spring, fearing to draw attention to any excess in drinking from his intense thirst, due to his wearisome travelling on foot. This he was always most careful to avoid, not only in drinking, but in everything else besides.

CHAPTER XXIV

HIS SPIRIT OF DETACHMENT

His heart was so centred in God that in the things of this world he kept himself detached not only from everything that was in any sense of the word precious, but even from things that were poor or of less consequence, as was apparent in his books, his clothes, belt, shoes, knife (a thing he seldom carried), and the like, which were all of the poorer sort, shunning everything that was either becoming or curious.

CHAPTER XXV

HIS STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF CHARITY

A PRIEST after hearing him preach right eloquently and talk most learnedly upon the sacred Scriptures, made bold to ask him what books he studied most. The man of God gave him this answer, that he studied more in the book of charity than in any other: and this choice of his was most wisely made, for it is indeed an all-instructive book.

CHAPTER XXVI

LUST QUELLED BY THE FRAGRANCE OF HIS HAND

A STUDENT of Bologna was addicted to sins of the flesh, and although he used constantly to confess the same, yet he as often relapsed, until at last he declared it was a hopeless task trying to check his passions. While St. Dominic was saying mass in our conventual church this student came in, intending to hear the mass and sermon. He went up with the rest of the people at the offertory, and while presenting his offering, kissed the saint's hand. This done, he became aware of a fragrance exhaling from it such as he had never felt before. It was indeed a truly marvellous perfume, but still more marvellous were its effects, for from that moment he felt all the strife in his members cease, and continency was suddenly bestowed upon him, so that what heretofore seemed impossible became for the future easy and natural; and right fitting it was that the fragrance of a virginal hand should expel the foul odour of lust.

CHAPTER XXVII

HE FORETELLS HIS OWN DEATH

SHORTLY before our holy father's death, a student of Bologna, named Alfred, heard this prophecy of his departure from his own lips. The blessed Dominic had been paying a visit to some secular persons who were his intimate friends, with whom this student was staying at the time, and as he rose up to go, among other things that he said at the moment, he foretold his own death while trying to lead them to a contempt for the world and a remembrance of death. These were his very words : 'You now see me alive, and well in body, yet before our Lady's Assumption I shall be taken away from this present life.' The event confirmed the conviction, for he departed to God shortly before the Assumption of the blessed Virgin Mary, as the students all remarked and told our brethren after his death.

CHAPTER XXVIII

HE SUMMONS HIS COMPANION AFTER DEATH

WHEN his body was laid out in the church and the brethren were making tearful lamentations over his loss, Brother Albert of happy memory, who was the prior of St. Catherine's in Bologna and had been one of our holy father's closest friends, seeing his beloved father thus mourned for, gave over weeping and became very glad. Then again pitying his own lot he drew near the body and overwhelmed it with kisses, nor did he tear himself away until he had obtained an answer from the dead. Then rising up he joyfully addressed the prior of our brethren: 'Glad tidings, father prior, Master Dominic has returned my embrace, and tells me that within the year I shall follow him to Christ.' The after event bore out the truth of his assertion, for he died that very year.

CHAPTER XXIX

HOW HE WAS SEEN IN GLORY

IT chanced that a pious scholar who had heard of his death was out of town on the day of St. Dominic's burial. The next night he saw him in a dream enthroned in St. Nicholas' church and clad with surpassing glory-and majesty. Then the scholar asked: 'Are you not the same Master Dominic who died only the other day?' 'Son,' replied the saint, 'I am not dead, for I possess a good Master with whom I live.' The young man came next morning to our church, and found that he had been buried under the very spot where in his dream he had witnessed him enthroned, a fact he was not aware of at the time.

CHAPTER XXX

HOW THE POSSESSED WERE DELIVERED AT HIS GRAVE

BROTHER CHABERT Of Savoy, a stirring and graceful preacher, and famed for many miracles after death, was a student in Bologna at the time, and on the day after St. Dominic's burial was present with many more spectators while a possessed man was being led to the saint's grave. No sooner had he entered the church than the devil began to cry out: 'What is it that you want with me, Dominic?' and repeatedly howled out the name of Dominic. Those present brought the man over to the tomb and the devil went out of him.

CHAPTER XXXI

HOW THE SICK WERE HEALED BY INVOKING HIM

A BROTHER Of over sixty years of age whom St. Dominic had long before received into the Order in the convent of Limoges, after suffering from a painful eruption for some years, came to hear of the miracles which were wrought at the tomb of the saint previous to his canonisation. Throwing himself down humbly at the foot of the altar, he cried out: 'O Lord Jesus Christ, who didst call me to this Order through Master Dominic, if what I hear be true, that our father is all-powerful with thee, as I truly believe, I entreat thee by his merits to heal me of this shameful complaint.' He was straightway cured, and returned thanks to God, nor did he ever suffer the like again during the remaining seven years of his life.

The same brother, when in the convent of Cahors, in which he eventually died, while joining in the Te Deum with his brethren for St. Dominic's canonisation, was suddenly and perfectly cured of a rupture of many years' standing by using this simple ejaculation: 'O holy father, St. Dominic, who didst heal me of my former complaint, deliver my old age from this infirmity also.'

While the prior of Cahors was telling the people in church of the miracles of St. Dominic, a nun who had been stone deaf for years recovered her hearing by simply invoking him.

CHAPTER XXXII

MIRACULOUS PRESERVATION OF THE LETTERS OF HIS CANONISATION

THE archdeacon of Masticon, Master Bartholomew, a man of high standing, tells this incident concerning St. Dominic. When he was on the point of taking ship abroad, the brethren entrusted to his care copies of the bull of St. Dominic's canonisation. The vessel was wrecked on the coast and all belonging to him either spoilt or destroyed utterly by the waves, with the sole exception of the letters, which were not injured in the slightest degree. This was all the more remarkable as nothing else escaped destruction, and writing is so easily injured by water: and this is believed to have been the result of a miracle, lest God's honour should be lessened in that of his saint among the people of Syria, for two years at least must have elapsed before other copies could have been procured.

CHAPTER XXXIII

HE HELPS THE TEMPEST-TOST

A VESSEL on her way from Trapani (which is one of the Sicilian ports) to Genoa was overtaken by a violent storm from sea and sky which threatened her and all on board with speedy destruction. Already had the masts and sails been swept away, and the doomed craft was drifting at the mercy of the wind and waves. While some were vainly endeavouring to ease her by throwing the cargo overboard, others were down on their knees making what they believed to be their last confession in momentary expectation of death. In such dire straits every man began for himself to invoke his patron saint, or in fact any saint at all, or such as were deemed to be the patrons of distressed mariners.

There happened to be also on board one of our brethren, William of Valencia, a very devout man who always put his whole trust in God, and who hearing no mention of St. Dominic's name, earnestly besought them to have recourse to him. But some cried out that they had never heard of such a saint before, upon which the brother replied with all confidence: 'Nay, nay, call upon him from your hearts, vow to reverence him henceforth, and for a certainty you will experience his help.' At this, every soul present pledged himself that if St. Dominic stood by them they would go barefoot to his church carrying lighted tapers directly they touched land. Their vows made, and while they were all yet crying out at the top of their voices, 'O St. Dominic, do come to our assistance!' the sky suddenly brightened, the storm hushed, the sea grew calm, and the whole face of the deep lay rippling in the sunbeams. Joy took the place of despair, moanings became shouts of joy, hearty thanks were poured out, and the name of Dominic extolled. Nor were they slow in redeeming their promise on reaching Genoa, but straightway all walked in procession behind our brethren, in the way they had promised, until they came to our church, and there devoutly prostrated themselves before his altar.

CHAPTER XXXIV

HOW HE HEALED A NUN

IN the monastery of St. Mary Magdalen at Tripoli, in Syria, there was a young nun of high birth, called Maria de Beaumont, a woman of great purity of soul and very simple character. After suffering severely from various disorders, she was at length seized with such acute pains in her right side that for five months she could neither stir nor bear being touched by others, but lay on her back during all that time. Her clothes caused her much agony from clinging to her flesh, which was open and decaying in parts. During the first three of those five months so sharp were the pains in her limbs that the other religious shuddered to hear her moaning. To such a pass of suffering had she come, that for seven days at a stretch from sheer exhaustion she neither ate nor drank. Every moment seemed likely to be her last, especially since nearly every token of life had gone from her; her countenance had paled, and she lay senseless and still. After those seven days she began to breathe very softly once more, but one side had become entirely paralysed, and during the next two months she lay almost senseless, and motionless as a block of marble.

By the doctor's advice her mother thought of taking her home that she might have better attention and medical treatment, so the requisite leave was obtained from the proper visitor of the monastery. But when the sick sister heard of it she utterly refused to live among people of the world against the rules and customs of her Order, or to be carried through towns and hamlets to baths, lest any peril might beset her virginity. For this she was very roughly chidden by her relatives, her sister, moreover, adding this sarcasm: 'Since you have become so very holy, no doubt God will heal you all at once without any human aid.' In the like strain her mother vowed that the good old times were past and gone when God used to work signs and wonders: in fact, so put out were they at her refusal that they all went away that same night leaving her to her fate. Fearing lest they might return and take her away as they at first proposed, the sister gave herself up entirely to prayer, beseeching the Lord with great fervour of spirit and many tears, and saying very humbly and simply: 'O Lord my God, I am unfit to beg any favour of you, and unworthy of being heard, but I ask St. Dominic, who is my father and your servant, to become a

mediator between us, and by his prayers and merits to get me the boon of health.' With such prayerful earnestness and tears did she assail St. Dominic, to whom she had always been very devout, for her father in his lifetime had dedicated his family and all that he had to St. Dominic, that in the end she felt an internal assurance of receiving the wished-for cure.

Waking after a short sleep she began to complain of having experienced no change in her condition, and to upbraid him with having turned a deaf ear to her prayers. Once more she plied her entreaties, and besought him with no less earnestness and instance than before. Then falling into a kind of ecstasy, she saw St. Dominic enter with two companions, and at once most earnestly begged of him to restore her to health. On his asking why she was so eager, she told him she wished it most earnestly only that she might be able to serve God more perfectly for the time to come, providing always that it was for her soul's welfare. Then drawing out a phial of rare and fragrant ointment from beneath his cloak St. Dominic anointed her, and at once her flesh became sound again. 'This ointment,' said the saint, 'is priceless, and fragrant, and very hard to keep. It is priceless, for it is a sign and figure of God's holy love, to which no earthly riches can be compared, and greater than which does not exist among all his gifts; it is fragrant, for nothing is more sweet-smelling and attractive than love; lastly it is kept with difficulty, for nothing is more easily lost if it be not well guarded.' Then charging her to be ever true to her love of God and in devotion towards himself, he next enquired how she meant to publish the fact of her cure, whereat she with all humility begged him to tell her sister herself. At that very same hour her sister dreamt that she was inside a particular church wherein the first object which met her gaze was a picture of St. Dominic painted on the wall, but the figure seemed to detach itself, and step forward like a living being, and beckoned to her to approach. She went up, and casting herself at his feet, began to entreat his loving aid on behalf of her suffering sister. 'I have already healed your sister,' replied he, and the vision ended. She woke, and discrediting the dream, visited her sister, whom she found well and happy. Their mother was sent for, and after comparing what each had witnessed and heard, they all returned hearty thanks to God and St. Dominic.

No sooner had the religious woman regained consciousness after the vision than she felt by the simple touch of the hand that she had been truly anointed with tangible ointment, some of which she wiped off with a cloth and carefully hid away lest vain-glory might assail her, or marks of respect be paid her by others. Motives of reverence at last prevailing, she showed it to her mother, and by her advice to her confessor, Brother Gregory of Hungary, one of our brethren, that he might advise her regarding the disposal of the sacred ointment she had thus reverently preserved. It was produced and, although it was by then dry, all became sensible at once of a fragrance exhaling from it to which no earthly perfume could be compared. The truth of this narrative is vouched for by these four trustworthy eye-witnesses, and as the good sister recovered by the touch of this ointment, so too from its delightful odour she conceived fresh sentiments of divine charity, of which our holy father had declared it to be the type and figure. This miracle was most carefully gone into by the same Brother Gregory, who afterwards committed it to writing. It happened during the season of Lent, in the year of grace 1254.

CHAPTER XXXV

HE HEALS THE DROPSICAL

SOME of the brethren while travelling through Piedmont took occasion to speak of the miracles wrought by St. Dominic's relics and intercession. Amongst those present at their discourses there was a man whose brother was very much troubled with dropsy, and he returning home told his brother of the miracles and wonders recorded of the saint, and advised him to put himself at once under his patronage so as to get cured. The sick man did this from his heart, and strange to tell, our glorious father St. Dominic appeared to him in a dream, and seemed to take all the diseased matter from his stomach without inflicting the least injury or pain. On waking the man found himself perfectly well. He then published an account of the vision on all sides, gave hearty thanks to God and St. Dominic his preserver, and in spite of all the doctors' fears kept well and slender for very many years.

Another young man of the same country likewise was afflicted terribly with dropsy; his stomach became so big and his legs so weak that he expected to die very soon, yet he had to drag himself every day out into the country to gather firewood for a livelihood. As he lay one day in the fields bewailing his wretched state, and crying very bitterly, he called to mind how St. Dominic had frequently bestowed the boon of health upon his clients, so he made a vow that if he got better by his intercession he would serve in the convent at Placia, for nothing, for a whole year. The promise was hardly out of his mouth before he observed a religious standing by his side, who looking on him kindly asked if he really wanted to be cured. On his saying that such was the case, and renewing his vow, the saint pointed to an elder-tree growing close by and said: 'Gather the leaves of yonder elder-tree, bruise them well together, swallow the juice, and you will get well,' and so saying he vanished. The youth got up with difficulty, and after gathering the leaves ground them with stones there and then; he next squeezed them in the palms of his hands, sucked the juice, and felt himself cured. The swelling on his stomach went down instantly, his former strength returned, and hoisting a huge bundle of faggots on his back he trudged home, telling the fact to everybody on the road. After this he left his mother and went to our convent in Placia, where he worked as a servant most devoutly for a whole year as he had vowed.

CHAPTER XXXVI

HOW WINE WAS INCREASED BY INVOKING HIM

IN that same town of Placia there dwelt a pious lady, a benefactress of our brethren, whose kindly deeds were in no small degree checked and opposed by her husband. One summer's day the wine ran out in the convent, and this coming to her ears she resolved on providing for our brethren's wants without informing her husband. Accordingly she did so, sending them all that they needed day after day. But when from the number of religious and the wants of her own household her own wine had run short, it happened that her husband called for some, and the cask held nothing but the dregs. When the frightened servant told her mistress of this, she was sent back to see if something had not accidentally blocked the mouth of the cask; again, how ever, nothing but sediment came. Fearing lest her husband might raise a scene and put a stop to her charities on this plea, the good woman went down on her knees and most earnestly implored St. Dominic's help; then full of confidence in his merits she sent the servant a third time to try the cask. The maid went very reluctantly indeed, but found it brimful as if never a drop had been drawn. And now, clearer than daylight, another wonder occurred, wrought by the hand of the most High, for the wine which would have sufficed for her own family only for a month

and a half, or at most two months, now supplied a whole convent of friars as well for four months. Her husband could not account for its long continuance, but hearing it told in a sermon he came home and repeated it to his wife, making light of the whole story. Then the good woman scolded him for his obduracy, and showed him how it could only have been the result of a miracle. He was touched, and from thenceforth let his wife frequent the church and give alms to our brethren to her heart's content. Her son joined the Order later, and used often to tell how he had been a witness of the miracle, the report of which was widely circulated.

CHAPTER XXXVII

HE CURES A BOY OF THE KING'S EVIL

THERE was in this town of Placia, already spoken of, a youth who was a potter by trade, who was so afflicted with the evil that he was past swallowing, from the diseased state of his throat. His mother, seeing that his end could not be far off, entreated St. Dominic by his merits and advocacy to save her son, whom neither nature nor medical skill could now help. That very night he appeared to her in sleep, and asked her if she were truly desirous of her son's recovery. On her replying that such was her heart's fondest wish, he told her to get up and prepare a plaster of certain plants and leaves which he named, and then to apply them to the diseased part for nine days, and that her boy would recover. On awaking she carried out his instructions to the letter, and within the nine days the boy was cured.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

PEOPLE CURED BY THE TOUCH OF HIS RELICS

A CITIZEN of Liège who was suffering from a painful disease in the neck, and who had been to many shrines of saints to obtain a cure, but in vain, finally begged the prior of the Friars Preachers of that town privately to lay a relic of St. Dominic on the diseased part. This was done, and he was instantly cured.

Another wealthy citizen of the same town was so smitten with horrible ulcers and a great tumour that he was given up by the doctors, since he could no longer endure the very slightest touch. Brother Lambert seeing him in such pain advised him to address himself devoutly to Master Dominic, since our Lord had already wrought so many wonders through him. The sick man at once begged that some water in which his holy remains had been washed might be brought to him, and on sprinkling the diseased parts his pains ceased, the tumours subsided, and he was thoroughly cured.

A brother of the convent of Metz who suffered much pain from the protrusion of a bone at the joint of the wrist and arm was afraid he would lose his entire limb. On consulting the doctors they told him his only chance lay in having the hand amputated, a very dangerous operation to sever the junction of so many veins and arteries. Now it chanced that afternoon on St. Mary Magdalen's day two of our brethren arrived there from a distant part of Germany. Leaving the altar which was being got ready for the evening service, the sacristan and the brother with the sore hand came down to the choir to meet them, and gave them the customary blessing. After receiving it they rose and said: 'We have brought with us

some of the bones of our holy father, St. Dominic.' Now when the afflicted brother heard this, he began with joy and devotion to cry out: 'Father, father, your arrival is indeed a most joyful one for us'; and so he kept on exclaiming as he followed the other brethren. Then going up to the high altar and taking the relics in his hands, he kissed them devoutly, and his maimed hand was at once healed. Observing some dust on one of the lamps which hung in the choir, it chanced that in handling it he soiled his hands slightly, and going afterwards to wash them, saw for the first time that he was cured. He ran off at once to the prior with his hands all wet, and showed him how he had been cured by the newly arrived relics. The report of this miracle spreading over the convent, another brother, who was lying in the infirmary with severe pains in the stomach, begged that the relics might be brought to him likewise, and on applying them he declared that he was at that moment freed from all pain and perfectly well.

CHAPTER XXXIX

A QUARTAN AGUE CURED BY INVOKING HIM

THERE was a lay brother in the same convent laid prostrate by a quartan ague, whose head had become very much swollen in consequence. As he lay expecting another attack, the prior coming to visit him, said: 'How do you find yourself now, brother?' 'I fear another attack is coming on, father,' was his answer. 'Yet, brother,' pursued the prior, 'Our Lord is able through St. Dominic's merits to deliver you mercifully from this and the like relapses.' 'Yes, father,' said the brother. 'I firmly believe that if you were to bid this fever to depart in the name of God and St. Dominic our father, it would vex me no longer, and I should get well.' Then with full confidence in God's mercy and St. Dominic's merits the prior commanded the fever to quit the brother and trouble him no further, and at once it departed and never returned after. In the same way he got better of the swelling in his head. This was told the Master of the Order by Brother James, the prior, who was besides a man of great piety and credit.