MONASTIC LIFE.

A correspondent of the London Spectator writes as follows: -The interesting account, in a recent Spectator, of a visit to the Grande Chartrense has recalled to my mind an incident long past, which made an impression on me that I can never forget. I had the singular good fortune, more especially for a Protestant and a woman, of meeting and conversing with a monk of La Trappe, then out on a mission from his convent, and I could not but speculate on the "inner li'e" of one living under such abnormal conditions, who, nevertheless, appeared to me to be actuated by much the same feelings and motives as ordinary

My host on this occasion was a man of considerable note, the spiritual director of a large reral district in Normandy, and one of those traly sincere and estimable Roman Catholic priests of whom little is known in England. At the time I speak of—thirty years ago—he was a venerable silver-haired oure, nearly eighty years of age, but with all the vivacity of youth; a man of courtly manners, united with the greatest simplicity and kindness. In countenance he strongly resembled the portraits of Fénéron, and there was a resemblance in character also, as regarded fervid piety and unbounded charity. At the time of the French Revolution of 1789 he was private secretary to the Archbishop of Paris, and he steadily resisted all the personal efforts and flatteries of Talleyrand, who wished him to take the oath of allegiance to the Constitution, and was consequently obliged to fly for his life. After many narrow escapes he got safe to Eugland, and, seeing farther than his emigrant companions (who expected but a very brief exile), he no sconer landed than he set to work in earnest to learn English, and established himself as a teacher of languages near Barnet. He was soon on friendly terms with the Pretestant clergyman of the place, with Mr. Byng, the member, and with other neighboring families, and was universally esteemed and beloved. Among his friends was Mr. Salomons, who invited him to dinner, "if he would not object to eat with a Jew, who said a prayer and washed hands before meat." The Abbi replied that he was always glad to wash his hands, and that as to the prayer, he would say his own while they recited theirs; and so the Jew and the Catholic sat down cordially together; but though freely associating with Protestant or Jew, the Abbé held firmly to his own faith. Grantude for kindness received in England during ten years of exile induced him, after his return to France, to seek out the few English who came into his neighborhood, and thus I became acquainted with him. Often had I heard his Hertfordshire friends speak of him with warm regard, and when he sent to offer his services, on hearing that an English family had taken a château near St. Désir (where he had been long curé), great was his delight on fluding amongst them who knew his old friends, were soon on intimate terms. Liberal as he was, he naturally desired that we should embrace what he held to be the true faith, and he exerted himself to show us all that was best and most interesting in the Roman Catholic system. He introduced us to many clever priests and nuns-cloistered as well as hospital sisters-for being archdeacon of the diocese and director of all the convents, he could take us into the interiors, where few Protestants are admitted. (I may add that he was no great advocate for conventual life; its narrowness was displeasing to him—though he honored those who had "a true vocation;" and he once owned to me that nothing was so irksome to him as hearing the confessions of nuns, who had little to confess but petty jealousies.) He once took us to see the ordination of fifty priests in Bayeux Cathedral-a grand spectacle-and I rethe fervor with which he demember scribed that part of the ceremony where the candidates take the one step forward which seals their fate for life. Many have drawn back at that decisive moment, "and those not the worst either," said my good old friend, who deserves ever grateful remembrance from one who, though in his eyes a heretic, was treated by him as a daughter, and honored by his friendship. A few years later, he dictated, on his death-bed, a letter to me which he signed with his own trembling hand, "Ton ami pour la vie et pour Peternite?

To return to the monk of La Trappe. As a special favor, two of our party were invited to meet him at dinner, but the illness of my intended companion obliged me to go alone. I was quite at home at the presbytdre (where my little nephew was boarding), and although the position of one lady at table with twelve priests and a monk of La Trappe was somewhat a novel one, yet such thoroughly Christian gentlemen were my host and his guests that I felt not the slightest embarrassment. As the place of honor, I was seated next the monk, who conversed most agreeably, with a sort of quiet cheerfulness, sometimes directing his conversation to me sometimes to the company generally. language was the most choice and beautiful I ever heard in common discourse, and he was evidently a man of great cultivation and refinement. He was finely formed, in the prime of life, and apparently in perfect health of body and mind; with a noble head and a countenance full of intelligence and feeling. He had been a professor at Bordeaux, and was remarkable for elequence and ability. What induced him to become a Trappist was not known to the cure, who always addressed him with profound respect as "mon père," which sounded rather odd from a man twice his age. He had often been sent out by the superior of his convent on the affairs of the community, as one of it ablest members; and on the present occasions he was returning from Paris, where he had been to solicit funds for rebuilding their church after a fire. While in the world he was not required to keep up the ascetic habits of the order.

He told me that he had known many of my nation at Bordeaux, and that it was pleasant to hear his own language spoken with an English accent. He related with much grace several anecdotes of the treatment which his community had met with during the Revolution, and something having been said of the abundance of game in a place named, he mentioned having been formerly a keen sportman. "Do you not sometimes long for a shot now?" asked one of the young vicaires. "I did for some time after I entered the con-vent," he replied, "but that has long been a thing of the past with me." When asked which he preferred, his life at La Trappe or in the world-"La Trappe, a thousand times," was his answer. A day in the world, he said, was as long as a month at La Trappe, and he longed to get back to his quiet life. I ven-tured to ask if he did not find the monotony irksome? By no means, was the reply; prayer and meditation filled many hours happily, and they had no time to be dull. They were constantly employed, and when not engaged in devotion he had such continual hard labor in the garden and fields that when he laid down his head (on the bare ground) at night he was

asleep directly.

The case of this monk may have been exceptional, and his contentment throws but a faint light upon the ordinary state of monastic | day in gold.

inner life, in which such mental resources as his must be rare. The high estimation in which he was held, both within and beyon I the convent, may also have tended to excite self-complacent feelings. At the request of our host, "mon pere" related how he had been suddenly called upon to preach before a distinguished andience at Paris; he would fain have been excused, saying he feared that without preparation he should not do justice to the cause. "Nay, say rather that you are afraid of not doing justice to your own reputation," was the reply. Before he entered the pulpit, they gave him a cup of strong coffee, and the effect was marvellous; his tongue was loosed, and thoughts and words flowed without difficulty. The audience were more than satisfied, and he evidently enjoyed his success. He was certainly not dead to social feeling, though he had been for years immured in his convent. There was no gloom or formalism about him and no visible appearance of asceticism, but he was evidently possessed with fervid reli-gious feeling. He asked permission of the ouré to present me with a pamphlet entitled "La Trappe Mieux Conua," which contains an account of the monastery, one of the two convents which Napoleon allowed to remain, saying that there were some minds which needed a retreat where they could live alone. This reverend père would have said, live with God. He was regarded with extraordinary reverence by all the guests, who were the working clergy in the small town and neighboring villages, useful men in their generation, but they evidently considered his "vocation" as far superior to their own. In his case there seemed to be no penitence for past crime, no special disgust with the world-but the real love of a contemplative life, coupled with that view of religion which makes a merit of renouncing every indulgence in this world by way of preparation for a better. How far the satisfaction which he derived from monastic life was for his truest spiritual advantage is a problem that must remain unsolved.

The French Prince Imperial. From the Stuttgard Tilustrated Paper. The Prince is neither too tail nor too short for his age, and the sort of embonpoint which he possessed a few years ago disappears more and more, and his figure seems to grow as slender and elegant as was that of the Emperor in his early youth. He looks by far more like his mother than his father, and only those who have opportunities of seeing him every day find gradually that at certain moments he bears an astonishing resemblance to his father, too. When his face is calm, the Prince is strikingly like the Empress; but when he is excited, and even when he merely laughs, his resemblance to the Emperor is undeniable; and he laughs often, the young rogue; he is the merriest child that can be imagined; in all things and persons surrounding him he finds subjects of mirth for his imperturbable good humor. Prominent traits of his characterif we can speak of character at such an early age-are the tollowing: -A kind of haughty modesty, if I may so call it; for example, he never enters into discussion with older persons, while he is passionately addicted to doing so with his playmates, Conneau, Espinasse, etc. A simple "no," without giving any reason for it, is his only opposition to older persons, and no one, neither the Empress nor his tutor, General Frossard, are then able to change his stubborn mind by prayers or threats. In that event, when the case is of come importance, is re-enacted for the hundredth time a scene only too well known at the Tuileries. The Emparor enters, approaches his son kindly, brushes the hair from his forehead, and asks why he does not want to do what he has been ordered to do. The boy makes no reply. The Emperor repeats his question three, nay ten, times. No answer. At last the Emperor says, "I want you to do it," or "You must do it." And, as if the bey had merely been waiting for these words, he jumps up, kisses his father's hand, and rushes from the room. in order to obey. When his play-fellows then tease him for having yielded after all, he replies, proudly, "L'Empereur a ordonne." firmness, or mere petulance? It is difficult to say what it is, but it seems to be the former, for it has been noticed that, after obeying his father in this manner without resistance, he withdrawn into some corner and wept bitterly. Once he had called a femme de chambre of the Empress "une mule entétée," and was compelled to ask her pardon: he did so very gracefully, but cried for half an hour afterward. It must be somewhat singular to the imperial parents that their only child makes such a great distinction between them; toward the Empress he is a son-a naughty son, disobeying her nine times out of ten, and thinking he can easily pacify her by a single kiss; but his father he treats above all as the Emperor, whom he looks upon as the greatest monarch of all times. His former tutor, Menier, said to him one day: "A monarch must, above all, learn the difficult art of forgetting and forgiving; wrongs which he has saffered must at once fade from his memory." "And the wrongs which have been inflicted on his father, too?" asked the boy, who was then only nine years old. The Prince is not very bright, he learns only with considerable difficulty; the more praiseworthy is his application, owing to which he is not behind in any branch of his studies, except, incredible as it may seem, orthography. What trouble orthography has already caused to the heir-apparent of the imperial throne can hardly be imagined. He writes tolerably good compositions; but, despite all the pains he has taken, he has never yet succeeded in writing a quarto page without some orthogra-phical blunders. When the Prince of Hohenzollern, to whom the boy is much attached, asked the Emperor about the progress made by his son in knowledge, the Emperor replied in his characteristic way:- "Satisfactory, but mediocre." It is singular that the Prince excels in no single branch of his studies; he is tolerable in all, and Conneau, his young schoolmate, far outstrips him in every respect. Exercise is his favorite occupation; he is very courageous, knows no danger, and will one day be an excellent horseman and a still better swordsman. As regards his health, it is now again excellent, and, despite the newspaper reports, never was seriously impaired. was a mere fable to say that he behaved with stoical courage at the operation on his leg; on the contrary, he screamed at the top of his lungs. Nothing could have been more ridiculous than to describe a boy's conduct, when undergoing a very painful operation, as that of a Spartan. It burt him fearfully, and he

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screamed duly. When he presented the grand

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to atter. "It is the ribbon worn by the Empe-

ror himself." In short, the Prince Imperial

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