

SHCJ ARCHIVES - ROME [copied from Original]
(written in pencil) *To her sister-in-law*

Rome "66 Via Ara Coeli"
March 30th 1854

My dear Sister

Though I have not the pleasure of having seen you the name of Sister brings you very near and dear to me; the more so from the circumstances of past years, united to those of the present. I regret not having yet seen the likeness of little Mary which my brother tells me he has sent, but as I hope to return to England towards the last of May it will not be sent here. It was very kind of him to send it and I should like to have one of the whole family circle, as there is little chance of my seeing you in this world. You perhaps know but little of Convents or of our life in general; but as I am interested in hearing from you all that you can tell me, so I have no doubt you are interested in the same way in hearing all that I can tell you about ourselves. As an individual my brother can tell you more than I can relate, but that you may tell me how you pass your time and what you do all the day long I shall first tell you what we do. We get up at 5½ in the morning and make the Sign of the Cross and give our whole hearts to the God who created us and loved us from all eternity, and we tell Him as it were leaning on His Heart that we wish to love Him for all Eternity, and then we love, while we dress ourselves in the presence of the Angels and with them offer our acts of love, and our desires to make all love Him with pure hearts & especially to lead little children to His love. When we are dressed

[Continued below]

we go to our Meditation & then we say the Office of our Blessed Mother which consists chiefly of the Psalms of David, the Antiphons & Hymns to honour her as the chosen Creature of God, chosen from among all others to be His Mother – that is the Mother of His son, - the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity! After the Office we follow the Holy Mass and go to Holy Communion as often as we have leave to go, then we make our thanksgiving and at 9 go to breakfast then to our Schools or other occupations in the house until 12½ then Office, Examen of Conscience and at 1 o'clock Dinner – At 1½ Recreation, either walking or sewing etc etc At 2½ we say our Rosary and to the Schools: at 6 Spiritual Reading 6½ Office of our Lady - 7½ Supper ¼8 Recreation ¼9 Litanies of the Saints Night Prayers and Repose –

I have given you all our day – I shall not be able to enter into the course of our Schools but I can explain our method. We teach our children in each branch vocally before giving them the books and this makes them understand without getting into a puzzle. In Grammar we begin by explaining everything, letters, parts of speech, and making sentences, with writing on a black board and they are very much amused by this & learn how to parse before learning a single lesson in the Grammar. When they can do this we give them the first Grammar & make them parse daily – In the same way we teach Arithmetic with the black board & slates – al by explaining a very little with the books. All our children go through the Arithmetic gradually in this way quite understanding fractions & cube root which is generally thought too difficult for girls. We teach Latin French & Italian in the same easy way and it succeeds so well that we had one of Racines Plays, "Esther", and one of Metastasio's Sacred Dramas for the Xmas

[continued below]

holidays. We had also a pretty little Theatre with 8 side scenes and three black curtains which I painted with water colours and honey. We are not painting in oils, while we[re] stopping here for the Rules – Tell Ralph that I remember his priming [pinning?] the canvas for me to try oil colors when I was about thirteen years old. I wonder if her recollects it! God bless you and your little ones & I hope you pray for me in my heavy troubles while I am your affectionate Sister in J.C.

Cornelia

P.S. I hope to return to England very soon. Write to me there as usual

“All Souls

St Leonards

Sussex

I must not forget to say that tho' you laugh at my note paper for letters, it is the usual paper in England for ladies letters, and I had not observed using it to you because I use it daily in writing to everybody. I have taken letter paper this time without and envelope to please you – but it is according to common sense to conform to the customs of the Country we live in.