

# **OUR FAILINGS**

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Our failings by Sebastian von Oer

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**SEBASTIAN VON OER**

# **OUR FAILINGS**



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BY

FATHER SEBASTIAN VON OER O. S. B.  
(BEURON CONGREGATION)

TRANSLATED FROM THE TENTH EDITION  
BY THE  
COUNTESS ALFRED VON BOTHMER

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## INTRODUCTION.

FROM what source did you obtain the materials for your book? Such was the question put to me by an old friend and well-wisher, when I gave him some of the following essays. Well, where does one get such pictures of the soul? As far as I can remember, my answer was: «Most of it has been learnt from self-criticism and self-examination.» That is, however, not quite correct. I have also observed others.

But nothing is so deceptive or so dangerous as the critical observation of the failings of our fellow-creatures. Yet if it be done with good intentions, coupled with self-criticism, it will lead to self-knowledge, a thing as difficult as it is important to acquire. In order to ascertain the height at which we ourselves stand, it is good to compare it with neighbouring altitudes. In the same way, by examining others, we shall be able to get a measure of ourselves.

To put it in another way: if we would gain a comprehensive view of the valleys, hollows and

gorges of a district, we must climb a height from which we can view the whole stretch of country beneath us.

It is only from the height of Christian morality that we can rightly judge of the small faults and failings which are common to almost all of us; «For in many things we all offend.»<sup>1</sup>

What is here offered consists merely of sketches, simple talks, but perhaps they may prove an incentive to self-criticism, may supplement and correct our ideas, and — by God's grace — may help us to get rid of our small faults and to judge the failings of others leniently. Such is the heartfelt wish of the author.

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<sup>1</sup> James iii. 2.



# I.

•The more we deny ourselves, the more  
we grow in virtue.•

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL.