HENRY BESTE

FOUR YEARS IN FRANCE

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Four Years in France

Beste H.

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Содержание

Henry Digby Beste
Four Years in France / or, Narrative of an English Family's Residence there during that Period; Preceded by some Account of the Conversion of the Author to the Catholic Faith

SOME ACCOUNT, &c. &c

Eight and twenty years ago, when I became a catholic, I was told that I owed it, both to those whom I had joined, and to those whom I had quitted, to publish something in defence of the step I had taken. I answered, that the former had better apologists, and the latter better instructors than myself. My advisers were protestants, who, having thus defied any arguments I might by possibility adduce against them, were contented with my refusal of the challenge.

Even at this day I consider as utterly superfluous a serious refutation of protestantism, or a laboured vindication of the catholic faith, and, by consequence, of my conversion to it. Some account of this change in my opinions is prefixed to the book now offered to the public, in the hope of removing the prejudices with which the book may be read, or, what would be still worse, through which it may not be read at all. It is not my intention to enter into controversy, but merely to state how the thing happened that I *turned papist* at the moment when the pope was a prisoner at Valence, when Rome was in possession of the French armies, and all around me cried out "Babylon is fallen."

I must first ask pardon of the Anglican clergy, for having engaged in the service of their church so lightly and unadvisedly. If I am blamed only by those who have taken, on this matter, better pains than myself to be well informed, I shall not be overwhelmed by the number of my censurers; for the solidity of the ground of the Reformation is usually taken for granted: *popery* is exploded.

Indeed, I have found the clergy of the establishment to be the most tolerant and moderate of my opponents. Some of them expressed their regret, some smiled, but most of them respected my motives, and none were angry. The Bishop, now of Winchester, approved of my acting according to the dictates of my conscience; said that my conduct was evidently disinterested; expressing only his surprise, that a man of sense, as he was pleased to say he understood me to be, should be so convinced. Such was the purport of his lordship's observations, which was, as probably it was intended, repeated to me. His brother, Precentor of Lincoln, continued still to be my very good friend and neighbour.

A few years later, the ex-governor of – said, in speaking of me, – "I knew his father well; a very worthy man: but this young man, they tell me, has taken an odd turn; but I will return his visit when I get out again." He did not, however, get out again: he had been ill for some days; feeling himself dying, he called for a glass of wine and water, drank it off, returned the glass to his servant, shook the man by the hand, and saying kindly, "Good b'ye, John!" threw himself back in his bed and expired, at the age of more than fourscore years. Here was no *odd turn*; the coolness with which his excellency met the grim king, was generally admired. But I am making a long Preface to a short Work; I must begin with my infancy, for reasons which the story of that infancy will explain.

I was born on the 21st October, 1768. My father was prebendary of the cathedral church of Lincoln, as his father had been before him. My grandfather's prebend was a very good, or, as they say, a very fat one; my father's prebend was but a lean one, but he had sense enough to be a doctor in divinity, whereas my grandfather had sense enough not to be a doctor in divinity. They both rest behind the high altar of the cathedral with their wives.

So accustomed are we to a married clergy, that we are not at all surprised to see them, during life, with their wives and children; and in death it is perfectly decent that the husband and wife should repose together. All this is natural and in order, to those who are used to it. But the feeling of catholics on this subject is very different. The story of the poor seminarist of Douay, in the 17th century, is an instance: he went to England on a visit to his friends; on his return to the seminary, he was asked "Quid vidisti?" He mentioned what had most excited his astonishment: "Vidi episcopos, et episcopas, et episcopatulos." A French emigrant priest entered my house one day, bursting with laughter: "Why do you laugh, M. l'Abbé?" said I. – "I have just met the Rev. Mr. – with the first volume of his theological works in his arms." – "What is there to laugh at in that?" – "He was carrying the eldest of his children," – "La coutume fait tout," said I: "you see the Rev. Mr. – is not ashamed." Marriage is allowed to the priests, though not to the bishops of the Greek church. I think the catholic discipline is the best. The merriment of M. l'Abbé was excited, I am inclined to believe, not so much by a sense of the incongruous and ridiculous in the very natural scene he had just before witnessed, as by his own joke – "le premier tome de ses œuvres théologiques."

My father's house, in which I was born, was so near the cathedral, that my grandmother, good woman! when confined to her chamber by illness, was wont, with her Anglican translation of the Bible, and Book of Common Prayer on the table, before her, to go through the service along with the choir, by the help of the chant and of the organ, which she heard very plainly. From my earliest years, my mother took me regularly every Sunday to the cathedral service, in which there is some degree of pomp and solemnity. The table at the east end of the church is covered with a cloth of red velvet: on it are placed two large candlesticks, the candles in which are lighted at *even-song* from Martinmas to Candlemas, and the choir is illumined by a sufficient number of wax tapers. The litanies are not said by the minister in his desk, but chanted in the middle of the choir, from what I have since learned to call a *prie-Dieu*. The prebendary in residence walks from his seat, preceded by beadles, and followed by a vicar or minor canon, and proceeds to the altar; the choir, during this sort of processional march, chanting the *Sanctus*. This being finished, and the prebendary arrived at the altar, he reads the first part of the Communion Service, including the Ten Commandments, with the humble responses of the choir; he then intones the Nicene Creed, during the music of which he returns to his seat with the same state as before. Here are *disjectæ membra ecclesiæ*: no wonder that the puritans of Charles the First's time called for a "godly, thorough reformation." At *even-song*, instead of the Antiphon to the Blessed Virgin, which is, of course, rejected, though the Magnificat is retained, with its astonishingly-fulfilled prophecy of the carpenter's wife, "all generations shall call me blessed;" at vespers was sung an anthem, generally of the composition of Purcell, Aldrich, Arne, or of some of the composers of the best school of English music.

Removed afterwards to St. Mary Magdalen College, Oxford, I found, in a smaller space, the same ceremonial; nay, the president even bowed to the altar on leaving the chapel, without any dread lest the picture of Christ bearing the Cross, by Ludovico Caracci, should convict him of idolatry. Here we all turned towards the altar during the recital of the Creed; at Lincoln this point of etiquette was rather disputed among the congregation: my mother always insisted on my complying with it; I learned to have a great respect for the altar. Whence this tendency of my mother's religious opinions or feelings was derived, is now to be told.

She was daughter of Kenelm Digby, Esq. of North Luffenham, in the county of Rutland. A younger brother of this ancient family, in the reign of Edward IV. became the progenitor of this branch, which, illustrated by the names and the fame of Sir Everard and Sir Kenelm Digby, adhered to the religion of our forefathers down to the time of my maternal grandfather: he was the first protestant of his family: he had married a protestant: he died while my mother was very young, but she was able to remember his leading her one day to the private burial vault, which had been, at the Reformation, consecrated for the use of the family in a retired part of the garden, and in which he was soon after deposited himself. His abjuration does not seem to have carried with it that of all his relations, at least

not immediately or notoriously; for, on the approach of Prince Charles Edward, in 1745, when my mother was about twelve years old, the horses and arms of the family were provisionally taken from them, as being suspected papists: a precaution not unreasonable if their wishes were considered; for the children, as my mother told me, ran about the house, singing Jacobite songs, among which the following may vie, in poetical merit, though not in political effect, with the memorable Lilleburlero:

As I was a walking through James's Park,
I met an old man in a turnip cart;
I took up a turnip, and knocked him down,
And bid him surrender King James's crown.

It is eighty years since: twenty years since the publication of Waverly. The cultivation of turnips, by which our agriculture has been so much improved, was introduced from Hanover.

I am much inclined to doubt the fact of my grandfather's having renounced the *errors of popery*: his interment in the sepulchre of his ancestors, the suspicion attached to his family, as above stated, the advantage from the supposition of the fact to those who wished to educate his children in protestantism, – these are my reasons for doubting its truth. However this be, many catholic families fell away from their religion after the battle of Culloden: at this time the whole Digby family was decidedly protestant, excepting three respectable virgins, aunts of my grandfather; and my mother, under the care of an uncle, became, at the age of twenty-two, the meet and willing bride of a young Anglican divine.

Nevertheless, some "rags of popery" hung about her; she was very devout, and made long prayers: she had not her breviary indeed, but the psalms and chapters of the day served equally well: she doubted whether the gunpowder treason was a popish or a ministerial plot: the R. R. Dr. Milner had not yet written the dissertation, in his "Letters to a Prebendary," which proves that it was the latter. For want of this well-argued and convincing statement, I was called on to read, on the 5th of November, while squibs and crackers sounded in my ears, and Guy Faux, suspended over the Castle Hill, was waiting his fate, – to read, I say, the life of Sir Everard Digby in the Biographia Britannica, where his character is treated with some kindness and respect. Sir Kenelm Digby is, of course, the next article in the "Biography: " all this while I was detained from the dangerous explosions of the fire-works, which was in part my mother's purpose, though she had, no doubt, her gratification in the lecture.

The youth of the present day are quite indifferent to the celebration of the 5th of November; they have not the grace to thank God for delivering them from "the hellish malice of popish conspirators;" few of them even know that this delicate phrase is to be found in their Book of Common Prayer. But five and forty or fifty years ago, before the repeal of the penal laws against catholics, when not a chapel was permitted to them, but by connivance, those of catholic ambassadors alone excepted; before the French Revolution had driven a catholic priest into almost every town in England, – the case was widely different: let the riots of 1780 bespeak the popular feeling of the people towards the religion of their forefathers. Here then, while they sung,

O then the wicked papishes ungodly did conspire
To blow up king and parliament with gun-pow-dire, —

I was taking a febrifuge draught, prepared by maternal caution and family pride.

I went every day to learn Greek and Latin at the school founded for the use of the city out of the spoils of some monastery abolished at the time of Henry the Eighth's schism. The sons of citizens are here taught gratis; others give a small honorarium to the master. The school was held in the very chapel of the old religious house; the windows looked into a place called the Friars or Freres, and over

the east window stood, and still stands, the *cross*, "la trionfante croie." But this was not all. Opposite to the door of the school-yard lived three elderly ladies, catholics, of small fortunes, who had united their incomes and dwelt here, not far from their chapel, in peace and piety. One of these ladies was Miss, or, as she chose to call herself, Mrs. Ravenscroft. Now my great grandfather, James Digby had married a lady of that family: it followed therefore that my mother and Mrs. Ravenscroft were cousins. My father's house was about a third of a mile from the school: Mrs. Ravenscroft obtained leave for me, whenever it should rain between nine and ten in the morning, the hour at which the school-boys went to breakfast, that I might call and take my bread and milk at her house. Some condition, I suppose, was made, that I should not be allowed to have tea: but they put sugar in my milk, and all the old ladies and their servants were very kind, and, as I observed, very cheerful; so that I was well pleased when it rained at nine o'clock.

One day it chanced to rain all the morning, an occurrence so common in England, that I wonder it only happened once. I staid to dine with Mrs. Ravenscroft and the other ladies. It was a day of abstinence. My father, to do him justice as a true protestant, "an honest man who eat no fish," had not accustomed me to days of abstinence; but, as I had had no play all the morning, I found the boiled eggs and hot cockles very satisfactory, as well as amusing by their novelty. The priest came in after dinner, and Mrs. Ravenscroft telling him that I was her little cousin, Master – , he spoke to me with great civility. At that time catholic priests did not dare to risk making themselves known as such, by wearing black coats. Mr. Knight was dressed in a grave suit of snuff-colour, with a close neat wig of dark brown hair, a cocked hat, almost an equilateral triangle, worsted stockings, and little silver buckles. By this detail may be inferred the impression that was made on my mind and fancy. I believe I was the only protestant lad in England, of my age, at that time, who had made an abstinence dinner, and shaken hands with a jesuit.

When the rain gave over, I returned home, and related to my father all the history of the day. This I did with so much apparent pleasure, that he said, in great good-nature, "These old women will make a papist of you, Harry." He sent them occasionally presents of game in return for their attentions to me.

The wife of the Earl of Traquair was also of the family of Ravenscroft, and Lord and Lady Traquair, in coming from or returning to Scotland, passed part of a day with my father and mother. Dr. Geddes, since so well known, accompanied his patron. I remember going with the party to see the ruins of the bishop's palace. Dr. Geddes's conversation was lively and pleasing. He was sure, he said, that my sister, some years older than myself, was a judge of poetry, since she read it so well: and he requested her acceptance of a copy of a satire of Horace which he had lately translated and printed. I know not if he ever pursued this work.

Catholic gentry, every now and then, made visits to my mother; I suppose, for the sake of "auld lang-syne." Amongst these, Mr. and Mrs. Arundel, afterwards Lord and Lady Arundel, called on her so soon after the death of my father, that she could not go with them to the cathedral where he had been but lately interred. I accompanied them, and, on entering the south door, pointed out the pedestal on which, and the canopy under which stood, in catholic times, an image of the Blessed Virgin, under whose invocation the church is dedicated.

Comparing the behaviour of these gentry to my mother with the conduct of all of the same class, with three or four exceptions only, towards me, – I infer that the best way to be treated by them with common civility is, to be, not a convert, but a renegado.

My father died while I was yet in the fourteenth year of my age: in less than three years after this event, when I was not quite sixteen years and a half old, I became a commoner of University College, Oxford; and, having kept there three terms, was nominated, at the election held immediately after the feast of the Patroness Saint; a Demy of St. Mary Magdalen College. I passed the long or summer vacations at my mother's house. During the second of these vacations, when rummaging among my father's books, I found, thrown aside among waste papers in a neglected closet, an old copy

of the Rheims or Douay translation of the New Testament. The preface to this work is admirable, and might be read by managers of Bible Societies, if not to their advantage, at least to their confusion.

By what chance the book came there, how long it had lain there, whether my father had even ever known of its existence, I cannot tell. The notes are equal in bulk to the text: they attracted my attention, and I read them greedily.

It will be observed, from the account given of my infancy, that I had been from the first familiarized with popery; that I had been brought up without any horror of it. This was much: but this was all. I knew nothing of the doctrines of the catholic church, but what I had learned from the lies in Guthrie's Geographical Grammar, and from the witticisms in the "Tale of a Tub," – a book, the whole argument of which may be refuted by a few dates added in the margin. My English reading had filled my head with the usual prejudices on these topics. Of popes I had conceived an idea that they were a succession of ferocious, insolent, and ambitious despots, always foaming with rage, and bellowing forth anathemas.

I now perceived that there was some ground in Scripture for believing that St. Peter was superior to the other apostles, ("Simon Peter, lovest thou me more than these?" "A greater charge required a greater love," argues one of the Fathers;) and that, by the consent of all antiquity, the Bishops of Rome were the successors of St. Peter. Of other doctrines I found rational, and what appeared to me plausible explanations. Transubstantiation was still a stumbling-block.

I talked without reserve to my mother of my book, and of the impression it had made on me. She had no theological knowledge, but she had a great deal of religious feeling, and this feeling was all on the side of catholicism. Had she consulted an able catholic priest, perhaps had she consulted no one, I had at this time become a catholic: she would have been well pleased with my conversion, and her own would have followed. For her sake, as well as for many other reasons, I most sincerely regret that it did not at this time take place. Not that I doubt of the mercy of God towards innocent, involuntary error, but because, when we want to go to a place, it is better to be in the right road.

She consulted my old schoolmaster, a wise and prudent man, as well acquainted with the question as the Anglican clergy in general are. As my mother was perfectly free from poperyphobia, she proposed the matter at once: "Henry has been reading this book, and has a great mind to be a catholic: you know all my family were catholics." My counsellor, without looking even at the outside of the book, put on a grave face, – a tremendously grave face: "I had rather give five hundred pounds than that such a thing should come to pass." I well knew the value he set on five hundred pounds, and conceived an analogous idea of his repugnance. Nevertheless, I pressed the book on his notice. "All this has been said a thousand times over;" meaning, and I so understood him, that it ought to have no more weight with me than with others; though the argument proved nothing but the usual obstinacy of those to whom arguments are addressed.

My old master was too wise a man to argue even with a woman and a boy. "What would the world think of such a step? What would your father say if he could come to life again? What will become of your education and future prospects?" My mother was alarmed at her own responsibility in the passive encouragement she had given. I was but seventeen years old. I did not, however, quite give up the point. "These people have a great deal to say for themselves." – "You think so? There's Christianity enough in the church of England." A few years later I found he thought there was too much.

I had subsequent conversations with him: I indirectly consulted others: I still read my book; but a book of notes has not the effect of a dissertation, well followed up, and leading to a conclusion. I found some insurmountable difficulties, and for the rest I said, "Le roi s'avisera." I had no other catholic work, and no catholic adviser. I went back to my college, where other studies occupied me; yet I may say, I never lost sight of the subject.

Gibbon, who was a gentleman-commoner of Magdalen College, a few years before my time, declared himself a catholic before his twentieth year. He was still remembered in college as a young

man who seldom or never associated with other young men, who always dressed in black, and always came into the hall or refectory too late at dinner time. He found catholics to help him in the work of his conversion. His father put him *en pension* with a Calvinist minister, to be re-made a protestant, no matter of what sort. He saw, and throughout his great work shows that he continued to see, that the truth of the Christian religion rests on the authority of the catholic church. "The predictions of the catholics are accomplished: the web of mystery has been unravelled by Arminians, Arians, and Socinians, whose numbers must be no longer counted from their separate congregations; and the pillars of revelation are shaken by men who profess the name without the substance of religion, who assume the licence without the temper of philosophy." Pity that such a man should have been led away by the spirit of the age, so as not to perceive that true philosophy is the good and natural ally of the catholic faith.

If any grave doctor of the Anglican church had, at this time, attempted to lay the foundations of my belief in his own form of religion, he would probably have failed in his work; partly, because the respect due to such a personage from a youth like me would have hindered that freedom of question, reply, and rejoinder, by which satisfactory conviction is at length produced; partly, because I should have considered him as bound in honour and interest to maintain his own opinions, and require implicit submission; and because also I should probably have found, as I have since found, the arguments, which such an one would have adduced, to proceed on misrepresentation, and to be logically absurd.

There are two methods of defending the reformed church of England; one is, by asserting the right of private judgment; but this method is inconsistent with the authority of Scripture, and with the truth of the promises of Christ; – with the authority of Scripture, because it is absurd to allow to any body of men the right or power to say, "this book is Scripture, and this book is not Scripture," and to refuse to the same body the right of deciding on its sense in case of dispute. Had this body the privilege of infallibility while deciding on the canon, and were they immediately deprived of it? Infallibility – I dispute not about words: were they providentially preserved from error during this important operation, and ever afterwards abandoned to error? Common sense and the rules of criticism may enable us to decide on the historical credit due to any work laid before us; but *Scripture, the word of God*, – something more is necessary to men who are thus to arbitrate between mankind and their faith; and it is absurd to suppose that this *something more* was taken from them when called on to determine matters of faith, by the help of this same Scripture, united to the tradition of the church. I might make my argument stronger, by remarking on the length of time which elapsed before the canon of Scripture was settled: was the church infallible during all that time, or only at intervals, by fits and starts? I will quote the words of St. Augustin, a Father often cited by the Anglican church: "Thou believest Scripture; thou doest well: ego vero Scripturæ non crederem nisi me ecclesiæ catholicæ urgeret auctoritas."

Indeed, so difficult is it to reconcile the more than human authority of the Bible with the right of private judgment, that I believe the historical Christians, as they may be called, to be very numerous, and daily increasing in number.

This right of private judgment is also inconsistent with the truth of the promises of Christ. He sent his apostles to teach all nations, promising to be with them, – it must be presumed, in their teaching, – to the consummation of the age. In the exercise then of that private judgment, which the reformers of the sixteenth century asserted, all the Christian world fell into error: yes, all of them; for Luther says, "in principio solus eram." The clergy, it may be said, pretended to authority, and even persecuted to the death those who differed from them. Persecution is no theological argument, though it is one which Calvin and Cranmer and other reformers did not object to resort to. But the clergy merely pretended to authority: by the supposed case, each man's particular opinion is his rule of faith, and therefore the Church of England is justified in its reformation. But, by following this rule, all the

Christian world, according to the reformers, had fallen into error. Jesus Christ therefore, though he promised to be with his disciples to the end of the world, was unable or unwilling to keep his promise.

The other method of defending the reformation of the Church of England, is by admitting, that the Church of Rome, as the Anglicans call it, has been, and is, a true church, teaching with authority all doctrines necessary to salvation; that the Church of England, having purified itself from errors and abuses, is also a true church, an integral portion of the catholic or universal church, with all the authority to such a body ecclesiastical, of due right, appertaining.

This statement compels the Church of England to assert for itself something like infallibility; for, as Voltaire expresses it, "L'église catholique est infaillible, et l'église Anglicane n'a jamais tort." This must be so; for the authority of a church which may be in the wrong, must be always questioned.

This statement also deprives the Church of England of all advantage in arms (theological arms I mean,) against the dissenters and other reformers: they turn upon her, and ask how she is more infallible, or even more in the right, than the Church of Rome. The Kirk of Scotland will no more allow itself to be in the wrong than the Church of England. Thus disputes are endless; appeals to remote antiquity, instead of uninterrupted tradition, involve the matter in hopeless intricacy; and the private judgment of nations has no more weight than the private judgment of individuals.

Such are the two modes of defending England's reformation adopted by the low and the high church parties, which once declaredly and still insensibly divide its clergy. I have explained both methods, as they are better understood by being contrasted: I have noted the vice of each, that I may give in part my reasons for rejecting both in due time. Till this due time arrived, I was induced to embrace, and, for the time, conscientiously embraced, the opinions of a high churchman; and I was induced to this by the arguments and example of my friend Richard Paget.

At the time when I became a member of Magdalen College, he had just taken the degree of Bachelor of Arts. A young under-graduate cannot help regarding with some deference one already in possession of the first of those academical honours to which himself aspires. Paget was besides three or four years older than me. This advantage of degree and age was not so great as to cause any subjection on my part; I looked up to him, but, if the pun may be allowed, did not suspect him. He, on his part, treated me with the greatest kindness and familiarity. He was, as he said, the second son of a second son of a second son of a younger branch of a noble family. He had not much given himself to classical studies, but he was well skilled in antiquities, including heraldry; witness the exactitude of his own pedigree: he was well read in English history, particularly that of the time of Charles I. with every personage of which he might be said to be intimately acquainted. He had a great love and good taste for the fine arts and for music. His conversation was, in the highest degree, pleasing; it was lively, allusive, full of anecdote: his manner of expressing himself was at once forcible and easy; his judgment was discriminating, his temper gentle and equal. I never think of him without regretting his loss; and he is often recalled to my memory by the benefit and instruction which I have derived from his friendship.

We used to sit together hour after hour, cozing: I believe I must thus spell the word we have derived from the French *causer*; no other word has the same meaning. He would take up scraps of paper, and draw admirable caricature likenesses of the members of the college, not sparing the person before him; then a stroll round the walks; and then, as we passed by the door of my rooms on our return, "come in again," and so, another hour's coze. Soon after the commencement of our acquaintance, he began the studies which he thought requisite as a preparation for being ordained a minister of the Church of England. I had the result of these studies, which he pursued according to his own taste, for there is or was no rule in this matter: great admiration of the character of Archbishop Laud; lamentation of the want of splendor and ceremonial in the Anglican service; blame of those clergy who allowed church authority to slip from their hands, lowering themselves into teachers of mere morality. He gave himself very little trouble about the opinions of the dissenters, condemning them all in a lump by a sort of ecclesiastical and political anathema; but he took great pains to convince

himself that the Church of England was in the right in its polemical dispute with the Church of Rome. He was willing to allow to the bishop of that city a préséance above all other bishops, not merely on account of the former imperial dignity of the city, but also on account of his succession to St. Peter, who had the same precedence among the apostles, though the privileges of the apostles were equal, as those of bishops ought to be. He saved the indefectibility of the church, by declaring that the Church of Rome was a true church, though not a pure church; that papists might be saved, since what they believed amiss did not destroy the effect of what they believed aright. He affirmed, that the separation of the Church of England from the Church of Rome was the pope's fault; that England had not separated from Rome, but had exercised its right of reforming errors in faith, and abuses in discipline, and approached nearer to the primitive model; that the pope, in excommunicating England for having done thus, had in fact, excommunicated himself. On several points he showed the practice of Rome to be right; on others, to regard things indifferent.

Many other matters relating to this subject were discussed in our conversations, occasionally resumed during the continuance of my friend's residence in college. He was ordained deacon, and some two years after died.

In the year 1791 I took my Master of Arts' degree in Act term, that is, in the beginning of summer, and went to Lincoln to pass some time with my mother, before I should put into execution a project which I had long meditated of a journey to France and Italy. Between my Bachelor's and Master's degrees, as I had no excuse for non-residence in college, I had been obliged to reside: indeed I was sufficiently fond of the literary leisure which this mode of life secured to me. I had always considered myself as destined to Anglican orders; it was the profession which my father had chosen for me, and I had, in some sort, prepared for it: I had confirmed myself in high church principles, and read a little Hebrew; but I had also studied the French and Italian languages for the use and service of my foreign travels, as also because it was rather my wish and ambition to enter on the diplomatic career, if I should find occasion and protection. But how could any one propose to himself to pass any length of time on the continent, agitated, as it now was, by the beginnings of the French revolution? Many ventured to go abroad; but I was alarmed: the unsuccessful attempt of the king and queen of France to escape to Montmedi had thrown France into confusion: it was evident that a crisis was at hand.

I waited. During this time a violent inflammation in my eyes (a complaint to which I had been often subject, and which will, I fear, in its consequences, finally deprive me of sight,) confined me to the house, and prevented me from reading for some weeks. Deprived of the use of books, at all times my chief employment and consolation, and compelled to occupy myself with my own thoughts, I passed in review the topics by which men are usually induced to devote themselves to the more immediate service of God. My education, whatever may have been its influence on my virtue, had been regular, monkish even, if any one please to call it so: the feeling of piety had never been entirely renounced by me; and I now easily brought myself to entertain the hope that, by entering into the ecclesiastical state, I might be of some use to the cause of religion. The first day that my eye-sight was restored to me, I wrote to the president of Magdalen College, then bishop of Norwich, requesting to be admitted as a candidate for deacon's orders at the next ordination in September.

The same motives which influenced me to this step, induced me also, three months afterwards, to take the curacy of a large parish in Lincoln; to engage, that is, to do the duties of him *qui curat*, as far as my inferior degree of deacon permitted. The stipend, about one fifth of the wages of an able mechanic, was known to be no object with me: I had an income more than sufficient for my wants as a single man, and, besides, lived in the house of my mother. As usual, in similar cases, some applauded my zeal, while others laughed at it.

Within a few months, a fellowship became vacant on my county. I went up to college to pronounce my probationary oration. In this discourse, enumerating the former worthies of the house, I commended our predecessors at the time of the Reformation for having been of the number of

those who did not wish that reformation to be excessive —*nimia* was the word; and of those who did not think, "the further from Rome, the nearer to truth." The orator, on this occasion, is introduced between the first and second course of the grand dinner of the 22d of July; his voice may be clear as his stomach is empty: his task completed, he is placed at the right hand of him who presides at the "strangers' table," ranged down the middle of the hall, and is served with the first slice of the haunch of venison. I took the place reserved for me; and not perceiving that my high church sentiments had displeased any of my auditors, found the second course of a public dinner, under such glorious and hopeful circumstances, an ample amends for being excluded from the first.

I was so much pleased with a college life, that I determined to return to my abode in college, on my admission as *actual* fellow. I thought I had done enough to testify my devotion to the church by one year's volunteer service of the parish of St. Martin; for volunteer it was in the spirit, and almost in the letter. "Let all those who look for high preferment in the church, do as much," said I. My mother, who seemed quite to have forgotten the Rheims Translation of the New Testament, of which I was too besotted to remind her, received my promise to pass two or three months of every year with her. I soon found myself settled in a handsome apartment of the new building of Magdalen College.

It is the usage to require of every one, to be admitted actual fellow of Magdalen College, what is called a probationary exercise. On this occasion I composed a treatise, bearing for title, "The Christian Religion briefly defended against the Republicans and Levellers of France." There was no especial reason for levelling this treatise against the French levellers; but the French republic was, at this time, in England, the *black dog* upon every occasion: my work was a defence of general Christianity, upon a plan suggested by the *pensées de Pascal*. I had, however, my quarrel with the French legislators for making marriage a municipal ceremony and permitting divorce. I had not a sense of justice clear enough to blame the English law, for insisting that the marriages of catholics and dissenters shall be celebrated according to the rite of the English church. I did not bring forward the remark, that divorce is permitted in England; nor did I observe, that by the French law on the subject, no yoke was imposed on the conscience, since no married persons were required to divorce themselves, but only allowed to do so. I am entirely of opinion that such a law is highly to be reprobated in a civil point of view; but in what concerns religion, let each man's conscience take care of itself.

But my main grief against the French legislators was the plunder and degradation of their church. In treating this matter, I as much forgot, as if I had never heard or read, that, not much more than two centuries before this period, all the bishops of England, (excepting only him of Llandaff,) and about ten thousand clergy, were deprived of their benefices, and sent to beg their bread all over Europe; and this, not because they would not accept a civil constitution, but because they would not accede to a new religion; and this, not in a time of civil tumult, and under the pressure of foreign invasion; but at the bidding of a young woman of five and twenty. But "tua res agitur paries cum proximus ardet," was a sentiment pretty generally felt at this time in England: to this sentiment, more than to any love of their religion, the French clergy may attribute the hospitable reception they met with in England. The deed was benevolent whatever its motive, and in the deed I had more than my share.

In writing this essay, I struggled, and, as Longinus says, lashed my sides through two or three pages of introduction, and immediately afterwards found my composition to flow from me with tolerable ease: I wrote with less difficulty than I now experience, and am surprised that I so soon acquired a style by no means faulty. I do not say this for my *petite gloriole*, but because it seems a part of my story to give the reader a measure of my juvenile ability. I consulted two friends on the question of publication: they advised against it, told me I could do better, and pointed to the first part. Richard Paget also desired me to write the introduction over again, but did not, as my other better-judging friends had done, counsel the suppression. I went to London to find a printer: it was impossible here to sit down to correct; and I made a book of it as it was. Valenciennes was, at that time, besieged by the Duke of York, and it was generally supposed that the allied armies were a better

bulwark of Christianity than a shilling pamphlet. The printer told me that Christianity was a very good thing, and that nobody doubted it.

In November following I preached before the university, at St. Mary's church, a sermon on the text, "Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained." I asserted, that the power of absolving sin neither had been, nor could have been, abandoned by our reformers; defended the power against all impugners and repugners; and indicated the evil consequences resulting from allowing it to lie in abeyance. After some declamation respecting the horrors then perpetrated in a neighbouring nation, and some fears respecting the removal of our candlestick, – I concluded by trusting, that all whom it might concern would acquit themselves as faithful stewards of the mysteries of God. The leading members of the university were prodigal in praise of this discourse. One of them, afterwards a bishop, preached the Sunday following at St. Mary's, to assure the university that I was in the right; a confirmation which, considering my youth and inexperience, he justly deemed by no means superfluous. Another, whom I should be proud to name were there no indiscretion in doing so, bought the sermon when published; a compliment which, my printer told me, he had not paid to any of those published for many years past. He might do this, it may be said, as finding the sermon supremely ridiculous; but this supposition is negatived by the gracious manner in which, from this time, though I had not yet the honour of his acquaintance, he always saluted me in passing; his high station and character permitted to him this mode of signifying his approbation to one unknown, and rendered it peculiarly gratifying to me.

Some, however, cried out "flat popery;" but the words in which the priest is directed to give absolution in the "Order for the Visitation of the Sick," are so precise; the assertion of the right in all cases is here so formal; (for it is not supposed that a physician is to be sent for to determine whether the penitent patient is sick enough to be absolved) the practice, in respect to penance, of those early ages to which the church of England appeals, is so well known; – that the cry of "flat popery" could not be sustained. Indeed, the sermon bears on the face of it some very outrageous abuse of the Romish church; but this abuse is so much a matter of course, that it would hardly have served as a justification, had one been wanted. I professed myself contented to be as popish as the church of England.

One of the heads of the university said to me: "The doctrine of your excellent discourse is clearly the doctrine of the church of England: she asserts the right of absolution to be inherent in her clergy, but the people will not submit to the exercise of the power." This is true; it is true also, that the clergy very prudently abstain, in general, from sounding the inclinations of the people on the subject. My attempt must rather be considered, from the place in which the discourse was delivered, as a sort of *concio ad clerum*.

I have heard of one clergyman who made the attempt; he preached to his people of the power belonging to him, as a priest, of absolving them from their sins, and of the benefit which they would derive, if truly penitent, from confession and absolution; concluding by fixing a time, at which he would be at home, to hear all those who should have any communications to make to him with such intention. This discourse caused a mighty hubbub in the parish; people did not know what to make of it; some doubted if their clergyman could seriously mean what he had said: one old woman did not hesitate to declare "she would be d – d if she would tell him all she knew." The confusion ceased in due time; but the people neglected to avail themselves of the offer of their pastor.

Some time before, a book had been recommended to me, which I found great difficulty in procuring; at last I found it in the very centre of the fashionable world. I went into Faulder's shop, in Bond Street. "Have you *Pluralities Indefensible*, by Dr. Newton, founder of Hertford College?" – "It is a book which I always take care to have by me, for the best of all possible reasons, – I am always sure of selling it." – "I should not have supposed that. Who buy it? Any clergymen?" – "Yes." – "What use do they make of it?" Mr. Faulder understood my question. I have forgotten his answer, but it was discreet.

Non-residence on benefices with cure of souls, was one of those abuses in catholic discipline, which, more than any other, tended to bring on the Reformation; it is an abuse which that Reformation has not yet reformed.

I read my book on Pluralities, and was convinced that they were indefensible. Having not yet learned, – perhaps having yet to learn, that "the better part of valour is discretion," – soon after my sermon on absolution, I preached in the same church as before, to a congregation composed as before, a discourse, in which I detailed the evils of pluralities, as necessitating non-residence, and the appointment of "hired substitutes, improperly called curates," to perform those duties, which the principal has engaged to perform, and which, unless disabled, he is in conscience bound to perform personally. This discourse was not heard with the same approbation as the former.

"Religious persuasion" is a phrase bandied about by men who have no very accurate notion of the sense in which they employ the words. One cannot be persuaded of a truth: he may believe that to be true which is not so; but then he judges it to be true, – he is not persuaded; one cannot even be persuaded of a fact; the judgment and the senses are not to be persuaded. In religion, a man either believes, or doubts, or rejects: if he believe, his belief, on account of the supernatural authority to which he submits himself, is called faith. But, if in religion there be sects and parties, he may be persuaded by circumstances to choose one party rather than another; but this is a persuasion that respects the accessaries to religion, not the religion itself. If he adopt or profess the religion, without believing it, he is a hypocrite. I have laid down these principles by which to try my own conduct during my stay in Magdalen College.

If I were conscious of any insincerity in my adherence to the church of England, during this period, I would now declare it; I hold myself bound to tell the truth, and not intentionally to lead the reader into any misapprehension. I had certainly committed a great fault in not prosecuting the inquiry begun by the reading of the Rheims Translation of the New Testament: it was the fault of my boyhood, – a fault of which, on human grounds even, I have but too much cause to repent. By not bringing this inquiry, at that time, to the point to which I afterwards brought it, I lost twelve years of my life, dating from seventeen years old, – a time which might have been employed in diverting my education to other purposes, in adopting and following another profession, and in forming other connexions and friendships, than those which I have, of course, forfeited by my conversion. But, during these twelve years, excepting the last year only, passed in doubt and research, I firmly believed that "the church of Rome had erred, not only in matters of discipline, but also in matters of faith." Transubstantiation was the great stumbling-block; and a church which had erred in so grave a matter was not a teacher to be implicitly confided in. I thought catholics were, not intentionally, but in fact, guilty of idolatry; and I thought the sin pardonable in them on account of the intention. Having once set myself at liberty to reject the authority of the church in communion with the bishop of Rome, I followed, among the various interpretations of which Scripture is capable, that given by the church of England, judging it to be most reasonable. Not sufficiently instructed in the distinction between matters of faith and questions of discipline, I believed the differences and points in dispute between these two portions of the catholic church, to be more numerous than they really are.

Archimedes said, "Give me where to stand, and I will move the earth." At Oxford I was on the peculiar ground, the *terra firma*, if firm it be, of the church of England: there I could not move or weigh it, or see it at a due distance, to judge of its form or proportion. Indifference was hardly to be obtained amidst so many sympathies. An event however occurred, which removed me to a distance from this scene, leaving my mind free for an investigation which, with the opinions and feelings which my friend, Richard Paget, had taught and infused, and Oxford had confirmed, was soon brought to a fair conclusion.

On the 10th of April, 1797, I received, by an express at ten o'clock in the evening, a letter from a physician at Lincoln, acquainting me with the dangerous state of my mother's health, informing me, that it was hardly probable that on my arrival at her house, I should find her living. In an hour's

time I was in a post chaise, and hastened by the shortest road through Northamptonshire. Though obliged to wait at every inn during the night time for fresh horses, and delayed two hours by being overturned, I got to Lincoln, a distance of a hundred and thirty miles, by seven the next evening. My mother had died at the hour at which the express had reached Oxford.

The estate which devolved to me by her death being freehold, my fellowship was not tenable with it. I quitted Magdalen College within three months, sent my books to Lincoln, and established myself there in a mode of life very much according with my former collegiate habits. Before I left Oxford, I acquainted the president of my college with my wish to be appointed to preach the Bampton lecture; he acquiesced, and desired me to write him word when I should be prepared, that he might propose me to the heads of houses, with whom rests the nomination of the lecturer. This institution is so well known, that no account of it here is necessary. The subject of my lecture, as I mentioned to the president, was to be, Christianity proved against the objections of the Jews. Dr. Routh, with that amenity of manners, which distinguishes him as much as his great learning, gave me the titles of several books that might be useful to me.

While meditating the conversion of the Jews, I received one day at dinner a French emigrant priest and an Anglican clergyman. The *esprit de son état* in the former, and the total absence of it in the latter, were equally remarkable. However, we talked *about* religion. My Anglican attacked the catholic on account of certain practices which this one easily proved to be common to both communions, the only difference being that the church of England does not observe its own ordinances. The clergyman would not take refuge in the "slow and silent reformation," by which such deviations are usually excused: he knew he should not have me for an auxiliary; he retreated to transubstantiation. Here the Frenchman, who talked English well but not currently, was soon overpowered by two opponents; and the Anglican, his retreat thus covered by me, carried off with him the honour of the day.

The emigrant was M. l'Abbé Beaumont, who had formerly been rector of the university of Caën, and appointed canon of the cathedral of Rouen: he was about to take possession of his stall, when the order was issued, on account of the approach of the Duke of Brunswick, that every priest who should still refuse to take the oath prescribed by the civil constitution of the clergy, should be banished from France within fifteen days. He had been brought to Lincoln by a gentleman of the neighbourhood, who had retained him for some time in his family to teach French to his children. On the death of Mr. Knight, whom I have mentioned above, he was appointed to the care of the little catholic congregation of Lincoln. When visiting at my mother's house, I had formerly known him; and, on this occasion, renewed my acquaintance with him.

After the Anglican had taken his leave, he talked for some time on indifferent topics, but at length renewed the former conversation with an air, as if he had recollected something, though I rather suspect he had prepared himself. "Pray, at what time did the change take place from your doctrine, respecting the Eucharist, to that professed by all Christians three hundred years ago?" I begged of him to put his question more clearly. "If your doctrine on this point be the true one, it was taught by the apostles, and received by the first Christians; then, our interpretation must have been introduced at some subsequent period: I ask you to fix that period." There were better reasons than I at the time supposed for my inability to give a precise answer. "It was introduced gradually during the dark ages." – "In the first place, *gradually*– that is impossible: the question is, whether the body of Christ is really or figuratively present: the people must have known in which sense they believed it to be present, and would have resisted innovation. Do you think it would be easy at this day to make the people of England believe in the real presence?" – "No; because they have already rejected it." – "I admit the difference; but at any time it must have been impossible to change the faith of the people without their perceiving it; and the controversy, which the attempt must have excited, would have come down to our days in works written on both sides: the memory of the Arian controversy is not lost." I was struck by the argument and the parallel. He pressed me. "What do you call the dark ages?" – "The tenth century is called by Cave, a learned English divine, *seculum tenebrosum*."

– "Berenger of Angers, in the eleventh century, who first taught the figurative sense, found all the world in the belief of the real presence." – "First? you forget the apostles." – "It is for you to prove that they taught the figurative sense. St. John Chrysostom, who lived in the fourth age, preached on this subject like a catholic doctor of the present day." – "Really? I have his works; I will refer to the passages." – "Will you give me leave to send you a treatise on this subject, entitled *La perpétuité de la foi de l'église touchant l'eucharistie*?" As I was going to convert the Jews by a Bampton lecture, I said I did not wish to engage in reading a great work in old French: I inferred that it was old French from the word *touchant*. Mr. Beaumont assured me that it was written in very good French of the present time, as also in a very agreeable style: he told me, that at any rate I should have time to read the tract of Nicole, of a few pages only, stating the argument; that if I did not approve of it, I need not read the *Perpétuité* by Arnaud, which was the development of Nicole's text. I assented, and he wished me a good evening.

I immediately referred to my edition of Chrysostom, by Sir Henry Savile, in eight volumes folio, – a master-piece of Greek typography, which I had bought for three shillings a volume. I had read at hazard some of the homilies. As these are in the form of a running commentary on the gospels and epistles, it was easy for me to turn to the texts in which the institution of the Lord's Supper is narrated, and to the Epistle to the Corinthians in which it is spoken of. I have no means at present of making quotations; those who are so inclined may refer as I did. I showed these passages afterwards to two protestant friends, who affirmed, "they must be figurative, because they were so strong for the literal meaning." Sacramentarians are obliged to treat in this way the words of Christ himself: this mode of begging the question (for it is nothing else) showed me the advantage of another sort of argument, which I found in Nicole and Arnaud.

They take it for granted that if it were certain Christ meant the words, "this is my body," in the literal sense, protestants would give up the cause. In the time of these writers it might be so: I would not be too sure of that in the present day: I think many would reject, perhaps have already rejected, the divinity of Christ, and his authority to teach such a doctrine, rather than admit the doctrine itself. I, however, was not thus daring: I was prepared to admit the conclusion, if the premises were proved. Unbelievers and catholics are consistent: protestants are philosophers by halves.

The apostles then, according to Nicole, understood in what sense Christ spoke the words, "this is my body," &c. and taught that sense to the first Christians, and the same sense was delivered to succeeding ages. But, if this were the figurative sense, all the Christian world must, at some time, have gone to sleep in the belief of the figurative sense, and awaked in the belief of the literal. The change, if there was one, was effected without the least disturbance, nobody knows how; and this, not in a question of abstract doctrine, but in one which included the adoration of *latria*, or the divine honour paid to the consecrated elements, in which worship every individual Christian was interested.

Arnaud, in the *Perpétuité*, proves, century by century, that the real presence and transubstantiation were believed, not only by the catholic church, but by the Greeks, after their schism as well as before, and by other communions separated from Catholic unity. At this distance of time I cannot do justice, nor could I at any time have done justice, by any summary of mine, to the force and ability with which these two authors conduct the argument. To them I must refer the well-disposed, the impartial, the disinterested, the honest inquirer.

The French theologians justly hold the first rank amongst all those of the Christian world. I was now to become acquainted with him who may take his place among the Fathers of the church, – the great Bossuet.

The church now re-entered on that claim to infallibility which it had lost with me by the supposed mistake touching the Eucharist. The book of "Les Variations des Églises Protestantes" showed that the protestants, by their own admission, had no claim to this privilege, since they were continually changing and contradicting themselves; asserting, however, the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in the enunciation of dogmas and formulas, which subsequent inspirations correct and amend.

"La réforme n'a jamais raison la première fois." How sharp, how cutting, how penetrating, how conclusive is this sarcasm!

That book or section of the "Variations" which treats of "the church," ought to be published as a separate tract. I recommend a translation of it to the pious and zealous catholic clergy of England; it would be a *good work*: no men know better than they in what sense I use the words.

"Quærimus ecclesiam ubi sit," says St. Augustin; and from the words "The gospel shall be preached in all nations, beginning at Jerusalem," he infers, that the church is that body which began to teach at Jerusalem.

Of the four marks of the church, set down in the Nicene creed, "one, holy, catholic, apostolic," – the first mark is exclusive and indisputable. Any church may say of itself that it is holy, and every good Christian will wish that it may be so. The church of England calls itself apostolic, because, as it affirms, its doctrine is apostolical; it also calls itself catholic, or a portion of the catholic church: but then it is apostolical in one sense, and catholic in another; apostolical by doctrine, and catholic by unity: then has the catholic church failed, since its doctrine was lost for so many ages: then may there be union without communion.

It is curious to observe with what facility the English church can distinguish between itself and the catholic in a question of persecution or civil exclusion, and how readily its portion of catholicity, when pressed by the argument of unity, is re-asserted and resumed.

A protestant Anglican friend said to me, one day, "We are all catholics; you are a Roman catholic, and I am – ." He hesitated. "What?" said I; "an English catholic?"

No Christian community, separated from the church, can claim to be the church; the date of its separation precludes the claim. "Prior venio," says Tertullian. Neither can it be a portion of the church; community in things sacred being essential to unity. A mark is also given by Christ himself, by which his one church may be known: "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my church." All antiquity has recognised the pope of Rome as successor of Peter.

Having obtained this view of the subject, from reading several works of the Fathers, I gave up the absurd notion of a true church teaching a false doctrine, and only wondered how I could have retained it so long. A church is essentially a teaching society, and, if it teach falsely, it has failed in the very end and purpose of its existence. There is another mode by which it is attempted to save the indefectibility of the church, namely, by supposing that, as there were seven thousand in Israel, known only to God, who had not bowed the knee to Baal, so there always existed somewhere some protestants. This fancy I had never adopted. The church is a city on a hill, not a candle under a bushel. Having recognised the church by these marks, which are found united in it alone, I admired that Providence which supplied to the unlearned Christian or convert sufficient motives for submitting his judgment to the doctrine of the church, instead of laying him under the necessity of judging of the church by the doctrine: which, enabling him to verify the credentials of the ambassador, makes him confidently and joyfully receive the embassy of grace and peace.

In this disposition of mind not much road remained for me to travel, and I followed henceforward the guidance of the church; studying for instruction, not for dispute; to remove prejudices, and correct misapprehension.

Communion under one kind, as at present practised in the catholic church, is ridiculed by Swift, who tells how my lord Peter locked up his cellars. Swift might have added to his buffoonery, by telling how the same lord Peter, many hundred years before John or Martin were born or thought of, served no mutton to his wine. In the early ages, it was the use to give the blessed Eucharist, under the species of wine only, to sick persons and to children. While inquiring on this subject, an ingenious mistake of the Anglican translation of the Bible was pointed out to me: the Apostle says, "he that eateth this bread *or* drinketh this cup of the Lord unworthily, is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord: " *or* being altered into *and*, this text can no longer be quoted to justify communion under one kind: it still remains, however, a strong argument for the real presence, since it would be impossible to be guilty

of the body and blood of the Lord, if they were there only in figure. He who stabs the portrait of the prince commits an insolent outrage, but the prince is safe.

Ward's "Errata to the Protestant Translation of the Bible" is a book that will set many matters right in the minds of those who are not averse from conviction. The author was obliged to fly his country on the publication of his work; as was Bishop Challoner, on account of "Memoirs of Missionary Priests."

Of the seven sacraments, two are retained under that name by the Anglican church: I had already proclaimed myself the advocate of what is, to all intents and purposes, the sacrament of penance. Confirmation is administered by a bishop, as among catholics. The form of giving benediction by the imposition of hands is as ancient as the patriarch Jacob, who thus blessed his grandsons, the sons of Joseph. Does any spiritual grace follow the blessing of the bishop? If so, it is a sacrament. The ordering of priests, in the church of England, is evidently sacramental; for the bishop, laying his hands on the person to be ordained, bids him "receive the Holy Ghost." Matrimony is called by the apostle "a great mystery;" mystery is the Greek word for sacrament: grace is required to sanctify so important a contract. The church of England celebrates it as a religious rite.

Thus far the dispute about the number of the sacraments seems to be a "question of words and names." Extreme unction is totally rejected by the church of England, because miraculous effects no longer follow the administration of it. It is not very clear that restoration to bodily health is promised by the apostle, St. James, c. 5. v. 14.; but "the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up," may mean this, or may mean spiritual help; doubtless, however, the promise, "if he be in sins they shall be forgiven him," authorises the continuance of this rite. I have also heard it observed, that it fails in that condition annexed to the definition of a sacrament in the Anglican catechism; it is not "ordained by Christ himself." But, if it was attended with miraculous effects, it is satisfactorily proved that the apostle was sufficiently authorised in its institution.

If the church of England will believe purgatory to be "a fond thing," far from recommending the book of the Macchabees as good for an example of life, it ought not to allow it to be read in churches at all; for there it is related that, after a victory, part of the spoil was sent to Jerusalem that prayer might be offered for the dead, "seeing it is a good and wholesome thing to pray for the dead." This was a downright popish practice, justified by a popish reason. Thus All Souls College was founded to pray for the souls of those slain at the battle of Agincourt. Of this ancient, this almost universal, this consolatory practice of praying for the dead, I shall say no more, than that it may be inferred from the words of Christ, that sins are forgiven after death; since he says, "all sins and blasphemies shall be forgiven to man," that is, are pardonable on repentance; "but the sin against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come." There are then sins that are forgiven in the world to come: but when? immediately on the entrance of the soul into its future state of existence? This would be equivalent to forgiveness in this world. After a delay then? this delay is itself a purgatory.

On this head, the catholic church has defined simply that there is a purgatory, and that souls, therein detained, receive help from the suffrages of the faithful: that this belief may be abused, does not prove it to be unfounded, or vain, or "fond."

Men abuse every thing, even the goodness and long-suffering of God. They rely on a death-bed repentance: they rely on purgatory. It is to be feared that many, by the hope of heaven after purgatory, have been betrayed into a state of final reprobation. On a death-bed repentance St. Austin remarks, that there is but one instance of its assured success, – that of the penitent thief; and he adds, very beautifully, "unus erat, ne desperes; unus tantum, ne præsumas."

The Reverend Father O'Leary replied to an Irish bishop of the establishment, who said to him, "Mr. O'Leary, I do not like your doctrine of purgatory," – "My lord, you may go further, and fare worse."

Amongst its thirty-nine articles, the Anglican church has one against works of supererogation, for the purpose of casting a censure on certain popish practices. The article bears a plausible show both of argument and humility; but the humility, taken as argument, proves too much, since it proves that our good works are useless to ourselves as well as to others. I will give the reader an instance of a work of supererogation, in which he will at least be at a loss to discover any "impiety." My mother wrote to me at Oxford, – "I went into a shop the other day to order some Gloucester cheese; a poor man was there, buying a cheese for his family; I paid for it for him: for this, I hope, God will bless *you*." My mother was no theologian, and suspected no more harm in giving an alms for me than in praying for me.

Every protestant, who thinks much about the matter, dresses up a certain bugbear in his own imagination, calls it popery, and holds it in horror. I had done thus, although my high-church principles had hindered me from surcharging the phantom with the usual quantity of deformity. "The Exposition of the Catholic Faith," by Bossuet, is well adapted to show the religion of our forefathers in its due proportions and real lineaments. I will own I was somewhat shocked at first to hear him talk of "Messieurs de la prétendue réforme: " I had not been used to be treated so unceremoniously: but he could not help it; the reform was either pretended or real.

The council of Trent, – those decrees of the council of Trent which relate to matters of faith, and which are very few in number, at least comprised in few words; together with the catechism of the council of Trent, composed under the auspices of our countryman cardinal Pole, – are also excellent works for setting such matters in a right point of view.

I know many protestants who, if they would read these books, would be astonished at their own ignorance, which they have as yet neither discovered nor exposed, because they have talked only with each other, and have read books calculated rather to excite their passions than dispel their ignorance. Such a book is Chillingworth's.

I had formerly been scandalized by the non-observance of the days of fasting and abstinence appointed by the church of England: I once got myself laughed at for talking about it. Example and roast beef are powerful persuasives, and I continued to do as others did. While M. Beaumont was carrying on with me conversations tending to my conversion, he called one morning at a house where, the breakfast not being removed, he was civilly invited to eat something. He excused himself because it was the season of Lent. The lady of the house said, "We have no superstitious way of keeping Lent." – "You keep it in your book, Madam." When M. Beaumont reported this to me, I observed, "That pun would not do in French." He agreed, adding, "They do not know what is fast; they know what is breakfast."

Another superstitious practice is the use of images: to set the people against this practice, and against those who practise it, the word "image" is lugged in at the beginning of the second commandment: in the original, the word is the participle passive of the verb, and ought to have been translated "graven thing," or "any thing graven;" but "image" was good for the iconoclasti.

But I cannot pursue any further the railing and raillery continually poured forth in England against the religion which all England professed for eight centuries; which those who converted our Saxon ancestors found to be the same as that professed by the ancient Britons in all points, except the time of the celebration of Easter; a conformity, which proves the faith of the church to have been, through the early ages, perpetual, not in respect to the Eucharist only, but in the whole body of its doctrine. Let this argument be well weighed; it weighed much with me; and I think I shall be allowed to have made out a case, though I say nothing of indulgences, or celibacy, the invocation of the blessed Virgin and other saints, relics, or monastic vows, pilgrimages, ceremonies, or holy water.

I told M. Beaumont that, as he was subjected to the alien act, I would not draw on him the responsibility of receiving my abjuration; that I would go to town for the purpose of making it. Subsequent machinations against him proved my apprehensions to have been well-founded. He asked what I meant by my abjuration: "You will abjure nothing; you will continue to believe all that you

believe at present: but you can go to London, if you think right, and the bishop will appoint a priest to reconcile you to the church." On the 17th of May, 1798, I was present at high mass in St. Patrick's chapel: it was the feast of the Ascension. My emotion betrayed itself in tears which, in a man of my age, might be regarded as rather a violent symptom; but it called forth no indecorous signs of surprise or curiosity in those near me. I forgot to inquire at the sacristy the address of the bishop, and next morning found myself walking in Hyde Park, alarmed at the step I was about to take, and almost undecided. A friend, who was in my confidence, met me by chance, and, out of regard for my tranquillity, though a protestant, encouraged me to persevere. We turned into Grosvenor Square, and up Duke Street: old Mr. Keating informed us that the bishop lived at No. 4, Castle Street, Holborn. "We please ourselves by calling it the Castle." I parted from my friend, and proceeded to the Castle alone. An elderly, rather pompous, duenna-looking woman, opened the door of the house, for such it was; not the gate of a castle: his lordship was engaged, but I was desired to walk into the dining-room, which, no doubt, served as an anti-room for want of any other. While I waited here, a French priest came in, who, evidently alarmed at his approaching interview with the bishop, from whom probably he had "something to ask or something to fear," inquired of me, "Faut-il faire une génuflexion à Monseigneur?"[1] I answered, that I was unacquainted with the ceremonial expected by Monseigneur; but that he, M. l'Abbé, had better do as he would on being presented to his own bishop. He took me for a countryman, but "my speech betrayed me." He was called for before me; this I thought unjust; but in a few minutes after the bishop came in, and addressed me with, "Qu'est-ce que vous demandez, Monsieur?"[2] Again, thought I, my country is about to be lost to me; but let us hope for a better. I told Dr. Douglass the purport of my visit: he, seeing the affair was one not quickly to be dispatched, requested me to walk up stairs. We seated ourselves on each side of the fire in an old-fashioned wainscotted room with corresponding furniture, the floor half covered by a well-worn Turkey carpet. On the walls, yellow with smoke, hung portraits, which, through the soot that incrusted them, I hardly discerned to be ecclesiastical worthies; Cardinal Allen, perhaps, founder of the college of Douay; a Campion, or Arrowsmith, or other martyrs of the Reformation. A crucifix was set in a conspicuous place: over the chimney a little engraving of Pius VI, then a prisoner. The bishop was a tall thin man, between sixty and seventy, of a healthy look, with a lively and good-natured countenance: he wore a suit of black, not very fresh, with a little, close, white wig. Martinus Scriblerus was proud of being able to form an abstract idea of a Lord Mayor without his gold chain, or red gown, or any other *accidents*. I had no difficulty in detecting the bishop in the plain man before me; for, being in his own house, he showed without reserve his pectoral cross, and I saw on his finger a ring in which was set an amethyst.

"This is a very important step, sir; no doubt you have given it due consideration." I gave a succinct account of my studies and motives. "May I ask, have you consulted your family and friends?" – "My parents are not living: I am their only surviving child. For my friends, I know beforehand what they would say." – "Are you aware of all the *civil* consequences? The penal laws are repealed; but you will lose your *état civil*." I bowed my head. "As you are in orders of the church of England, your conversion will excite more than ordinary surprise, and (I say it only to warn you,) ill-will against you." – "I trust not; people are sufficiently indifferent about such matters." – "Perhaps you will lose some ecclesiastical benefice?" – "I have proceeded no further than deacon's orders, and therefore have no preferment." – "But your expectations?" – "I must live without them."

After a little more probing of this sort, and a short pause, – "There is a business which is very distressing to those who are not used to it, as it is very consoling to those who are; I mean confession: we all go to confession; I, who am bishop, – the pope himself. You know, I presume, that you must begin by that?" – "I come to beg of your lordship to appoint me a priest." After a little

[1] Is it necessary to bend the knee before his Lordship?

[2] What is your pleasure, Sir?

consideration, "Would you wish your priest to be an old man or a young one?" – "My lord, you know your subjects better than I do: I leave the choice to you: his age is to me a matter of indifference." – "Many people think otherwise: however, if you will be pleased to call here to-morrow at this hour, I will introduce him to you." I took my leave without a genuflexion, but with a strong sentiment of respect and kindness for this worthy, amiable, old man.

The next day I found, in Castle Street, the Reverend Mr. Hodgson, one of the priests of the chapel in St. George's Fields. Of him, as I do not know but that he is still living, I shall only say, that I had every reason to be pleased and satisfied with his conduct and his counsels, and that I think of him with gratitude. I passed with him a part of every morning of the following week, except Sunday and Thursday, at his house near the chapel; and in this chapel of St. George, on the 26th of May, the feast of St. Augustin, apostle of England, was admitted into the one fold, under the protection, as I humbly hope, of the one Shepherd.

Before Mr. Hodgson took me to the altar, where I was to read, for this purpose, the creed of Pope Pius V, he inquired how baptism was administered in the Church of England. I told him, by aspersion. He said, "We have reason to believe that baptism is given with you sometimes very carelessly, and it is a rule to baptise conditionally every convert under fifty years of age." – "How do *you* administer it?" – "By affusion; and the rule is, that there be so much water ut gutta guttam sequatur." – "That was very probably not the case in my baptism." – "There are other ceremonies, not of the essence of the sacrament, which I shall omit." He added, "Do not suppose that I question the validity of your baptism, if it were duly performed. Had you been a Quaker – " Even the grave circumstances in which I found myself did not repress a slight movement of offended pride, at its being supposed possible that I could have been a Quaker. "Had you been a Quaker, I should have been sure that you were not baptized, and should not even have received your confession." – "But you do not allow the orders of the Anglican church?" – "True: but even lay persons are not only permitted, but enjoined to administer baptism, as an act of Christian charity, in case of necessity." Another distraction, as the French call it. Not having been used to belong to a tolerated and despised sect, I had felt my bile rise at the word Quaker; and now memory recalled the interesting scene in the "Gerusalemme Liberata," the helmet, the fountain, Tancred baptizing the dying Clorinda. I kneeled down, however, and the priest poured water on my head, repeating at the same time, "Si non es baptizatus, Henrice, ego te baptizo in nomine," &c. I then made my profession of catholic faith, and was thus reconciled to the church. The next morning I received the blessed Eucharist from the hands of the same priest.

It was Whitsunday: Bishop Douglass was to give confirmation in the chapel of Virginia Street. It was plain, for a reason above-stated, that I had not been confirmed. After breakfast, I walked with Mr. Hodgson over London Bridge, towards Ratcliffe Highway. It is usual for the person confirmed, to be addressed by the bishop, either by his name of baptism, or any other at his choice: I took the name of John, in honour of John, surnamed Chrysostom, to whom, as having removed the great obstacle *in limine*, I owed the beginning of my conversion. May the good work be aided by his prayers!

I have made my apology to the protestants of England, especially to those with whom I was engaged, whose reform was conducted by the civil power, who are the national church. But, that a church is national is inconclusive in argument: a nation may be in possession of truth, but truth is not national; and civil power enters for nothing into a question of religious truth. But justice is civil truth, the genuine attribute, the appropriate ornament, the best defence of civil power. Let the civil power cease to deprive of their civil rights those who adhere to that religion which the same civil power protected, encouraged, and maintained, from the time of Ethelbert of Kent, down to the reign of the boy king, Edward the Sixth.

The religion of the people of Scotland is the established religion of Scotland: a great principle is here recognised: truth is out of the question; for more than one religion cannot be true. Let the principle be applied to Ireland: the people of that country still adhere to the ancient faith; let it be

established there for them: to make them good subjects it is only necessary to treat them as such. Men quarrel not about religion; there is nothing about which they are more indifferent, when the state does not quarrel with them about it; and every statesman, every reader of history, knows that, for the uses of the state, the catholic religion is at least as good as any other.

Extravagant as this project of establishing the catholic religion in Ireland will seem to those who "like to hear reason when they are determined, because then reason can do no harm;" – ridiculous, and even insolent as it will appear to the maintainers of protestant ascendency, – it is not my project, nor will I take on myself the undivided responsibility of it. It is the proposition of a much wiser man.

When I lived at Lincoln, after the death of my mother, the celebrated William Paley was sub-dean of the cathedral: I was in the habit of daily and familiar intercourse with him. One day, before one of those dinners which are given to the residentiary in a course as regular as that of the dinners of the cabinet-ministers, the company was standing in a circle round the fire; I stood next to Paley. He, almost pushing me out of the circle by a certain turn of his shoulder, to signify that what he was about to say would not be said out of complaisance to me as a catholic, while, at the same time he looked over his other shoulder to assure himself that I was listening, – Paley, I say, began to assert the justice, the expediency, and the utility of establishing by law in Ireland the catholic worship, defending the measure by the arguments, and almost in the words set down by me; ending, by declaring himself persuaded that the catholic clergy of Ireland would be well contented when they were well paid, and the catholic population would, in that supposed case, be as good subjects as they are every where else under the same circumstances.

The greater part of Poland is subject to a schismatic; Silesia to a Lutheran; the Low Countries, formerly Austrian, to a Calvinist: the sovereigns of those several countries have not yet taken away the ecclesiastical revenues from the catholic clergy, nor their civil rights from the catholic people.

Having made out a case, as I express myself above, I mention several topics on which, for brevity's sake, I forbear to enlarge. I beg to be understood as having a due sense of the importance of these objects, of each in its kind, and as entertaining in regard to them the opinion held by the catholic church. I say this the rather, because many protestants, after talking with me on religion, have found me, as they said, so reasonable, that they would not believe that I was really and truly a papist. The unreasonableness of the catholic faith exists only in the imagination of the protestants, who, in general, know nothing about it. One of them asked me why the prayers were translated into Latin: I answered, that the pope had ordered them to be subtracted in this manner from the curiosity of the good people of – , naming the town nearest the country residence of my interrogator. Another, a little perplexed on the subject of unity, asked, "What is the catholic church?" as an answer, I asked, "What is the church of England?" An Anglican clergyman put the question, "What is the mass?" I told him it was what he had engaged to oppose. He was a worthy, quiet man, and did not want to oppose any thing.

In short, it is only from political causes that opposition, alienation, or dispute about this matter arise. Foreigners are astonished that a nation, so wise, so just, so tolerant as the English, should disqualify one-third of its people from serving the state, and perpetuate animosities which are laid at rest in every other country in Europe. The Baron – was the only man in France who saw through the whole matter at once: "You have your interests of the Reformation, as we have ours of the revolution."

It is a matter in which I have no interest but that of truth. I have given not as a polemic, but as a humble narrator, an account of my motives and reasons for adopting as truth that which has been believed as such by the bulk and great majority of the Christian world in all nations and in all ages, from the foundation of Christianity. I have done this in the hope of removing prepossessions, and to persuade the reader that he may accompany me abroad without any apprehension that I shall enter into controversy. Some extraordinary events are related in my narrative, which a regard for truth has alone induced me to set down, at the risk of being considered as enthusiastic or superstitious. Against

such an interpretation, formed on a view of part only of this work, I am not afraid to appeal to the judgment of those who will take the pains to read and consider the whole.

Ad Clari Montem.
Clermont, en Auvergne. Clermont-Ferrand, Puy de Dôme.
21st March, 1826.

CHAP. I

The English are assuredly a most enterprising and restless people: they form establishments at the Antipodes, and plant colonies on the banks of the Loire, in an enemy's country, after a war of twenty years: their merchant-vessels cover the seas, and their opulent and unoccupied gentry inundate the continent of Europe: their hardy mariners search out the north-west passage, and the idle and curious among them strive, with no less difficulty, to discover lakes, mountains, and cascades, unvisited by former adventurers,

> – qua nulla priorum
> orbita. – —

English reading-rooms are set up at Tours and in other great towns; English seminaries of education are founded in France, Switzerland, and Italy; and English horse-races are exhibited at Naples. Fox-hunters and fox-hounds penetrate to covers where even the foxes never saw them before; where, coming from their holes, they gaze quietly upon them; where there is no sport, because no pursuit; no pursuit, because no flight; no flight, because no fear; no fear, because no experience of former enmity.

The French calculated, with some degree of satisfaction, that, during the occupation of their frontier by the army of observation, the English spent as much money at Paris as was contributed by themselves to the support of that army. At Florence, towards the end of the year 1822, I was informed by good authority, that there were twelve thousand foreigners in the city, of whom seven thousand were English.

By a migration, very much resembling the flight of birds of passage, they usually leave their country in the spring, and after a few weeks at Paris, set off to pass the summer in Switzerland, arrive in Italy in the autumn, cross the Apennines before the winter; the beginning of which season they spend at Florence: they go to Rome for the Carnival, to Naples for a month or five weeks of Lent, return to Rome for the holy week, and then, much edified and instructed, they find their way home, during the ensuing summer, through France or Germany. I asked Lady A. at Rome, when she went to Naples: "I don't know; – when the others go: " so much is this route recognised as a matter of course.

The route is in truth admirably well traced, and eighteen months might thus be passed to great advantage by a well-prepared and impartial traveller. Rarely however are these English sufficiently acquainted with the languages of the countries through which they pass, to be able to sustain a conversation: they carry with them their insular prejudices, their pride of wealth, their unpliant manners, their attachment to their own customs, amusements, and cookery: though treated with indulgence and even civil attentions by the governments of the continent, they are suffered, rather than received by the inhabitants. For their choice of the objects of curiosity they visit, and the opinion to be formed upon them, they are at the mercy of guides and ciceroni: for society, they are guided by instinct, and reduced by necessity, to herd together. An Italian lady at Florence opened her salon for the reception of a mixed company of Florentines and English: the English occupied, first one corner, and then a whole side, of the salon, their numbers increasing, but the chasm between them and the natives still remaining. The lady, fatigued with doing the honours of her house to two separate companies on the same evenings, and disgusted with these appearances of distrust and resiliency, invented some decent pretext for receiving no more.

Observing this propensity in the English to associate with each other, foreigners seem persuaded that Yorick alone did not quit England to seek Englishmen. I was asked if I had been at Tours, because there were so many of my countrymen there. "My countrymen," said I, "choose well; Touraine is said to be the garden of France." My interlocutor recurred to the idea with which he had first proposed

the question. "Il y a là tant de vos compatriotes." – "Il y en a encore plus en Angleterre:"[3] and Sterne's argument prevailed.

Many persons of small incomes; many who wish to retrench their expenses, but are ashamed of doing so at home; some for the purpose of having wine and fruit at a cheaper rate; and some for the sake of a better climate, – pass several years abroad, fixed at the place of their first choice, or travelling but little, and at great intervals of time. The economical residents abroad seldom proceed further from home than to the towns near the southern shore of the channel, and to those on the banks of the Loire. Some parents take their children abroad to enable them to acquire the use of those living languages, which, though very generally taught, are very rarely learned in England. Excluded from the greater part of the continent of Europe during twenty years of revolution and of war, English travellers had been obliged to waste their activity in voyages to the western isles of Scotland, or in picturesque tours to the Giant's Causeway, or the Lake of Killarney: some cooled their ardour amid the snows of Scandinavia, and others roused their classical enthusiasm by the view of Salamis and Thermopylæ: some measured the Pyramids of Egypt, others performed pilgrimages to the Holy Land. The peace of Amiens opened to them, though but for a few short months, the road to Paris, and the gallery of the Louvre, enriched with the spoils of nations.

It is not forgotten how, on the rupture of that peace, they were arrested, throughout the whole extent of the French republic and its dependencies, and detained as prisoners of war, in reprisal of the seizure of French ships and citizens throughout the maritime empire of England: succeeding English travellers, twelve years later, remembered it well: the crowds, again attracted to Paris on the restoration of the king, fled in all directions on the landing of Napoleon from Elba. "Pourquoi me fuient-ils?" said he: "je ne me répète pas."[4]

Perhaps the outlawry fulminated against him by the congress of Vienna would have been as good a reason for doing again what he had done before, as the sweeping the seas without declaration of war was alleged to be on the former occasion: perhaps he regretted the failure of a second opportunity of retorting on England, in this way, the hatred and insult with which he had ever been treated by its government. At any rate, the distrust of the English travellers was founded on experience, and the reproach conveyed in this manifestation of it was answered by an ingenious, spirited, and in some sort conciliatory pleasantry.

After the battle of Waterloo, the travellers, some of whom had retired no further than to the Low Countries, followed in the train of the victorious, and invading armies: all were impatient to return to Paris; in truth their impatience was not without good cause. All the monuments of the fine arts were now to be dispersed: the *fruits of victory* deposited at Paris were soon to be restored to their former owners.

It was evidently the interest of England, that this superb collection should remain within three days journey of London; but the principle "suum cuique" forbad it. Yet the republic of Genoa had the same right to its ancient constitution as to the far-famed emerald dish, which I saw in the Hotel de Ville at Genoa, with a piece broken out of it. The union of the littoral to the dominion of Sardinia is an advantage to both parties: but then what becomes of the principle which dictated the restitution of the emerald dish?

Notwithstanding the necessity thus imposed on our travellers of wandering all over Europe in search of objects once assembled near their own doors, – the nations of the continent are not too much inclined to believe in the *bonhommie* of English politicians; nor indeed can it be certainly known how far their good will was an ingredient in this, so called, act of justice.

Since the second restoration of the King of France, peace, and the visits of the English to the countries to which ingress is no longer prohibited, have continued without interruption: residence

[3] "There are so many of your countrymen there." – "There are still more of them in England."

[4] "Why do they run away from me? I do not do the same thing twice over."

abroad has assumed an appearance of stability and design. An outcry has been raised in England against these emigrations, and it has been proposed to tax absentees; a measure which, in its application to those who take a journey for a few months, would be at once vexatious and ridiculous, and in its operation on those who retire abroad on account of contracted income, would be severe and unproductive; and which could, in neither case, be effected without a partial income-tax. The number of travellers and residents abroad, though great, has been much exaggerated: wherever exact inquiry has been made, it has turned out to be less than was reported. I could not hear of more than six or eight English families resident by the year in each of the three great towns of Italy, Florence, Rome, and Naples.

The French, persuaded that society can no where else be so well enjoyed as in France, feel little inclination to travel. The Italians, satisfied that all that is best worth beholding both in art and nature is to be found on their side of the Alps, seldom take the trouble of passing that barrier. I speak of the same class of persons, in both nations, as that in which the English traveller is to be found, – the rich and idle; for the poorer French and Italians are more adventurous, and more frequently leave their own country to gain their living abroad, than those of the lower condition of life in our sea-girt isle. I have therefore frequently been called upon to explain the phenomenon of the British spirit of excursion. My friends at Avignon could hardly believe that curiosity, the desire of instruction, the purpose of employing usefully a portion of time which would otherwise be employed in the ordinary routine of life, were motives sufficient for incurring the expense, trouble, and risk of long journeys: the expense, they allowed, might be a consideration of no importance to a people so rich as the English; besides, they travelled cheaper in France than in England; yet it would cost still less to stay at home: the defiance of fatigue and danger were very gravely accounted for by the supposition of something peculiar to the English character, a certain restlessness and locomotive propensity, which dislodged them from the centre of repose, and impelled them to wander in wide and extravagant orbits. The astonishment of the Avignonais was excessive, when a lady, who intended to pass some years in the south of France, coming to visit my family, and changing her purpose, returned to Paris within a fortnight. "Les Anglois font tout ce qu'ils veulent: un voyage de trois cents lieues pour une visite de quinze jours."[5] Like the rustic in the fable, they waited to see the end of this current of travellers; and I could hardly obtain credit when I assured them that, though some extraordinary degree of expansion was to be expected after twenty years compression, yet when the present generation should cease, the succeeding one would still supply the stream.

May this stream still hold on in an equal and uninterrupted course; may no wars arrest it; no jealousies divert it; no disgusts dry up its source! The division of mankind into nations is the great calamity of the human race. War, with all its horrors, and all its crimes, (for crimes there must be; since no war can be just on both sides, and may on both sides be unjust,) war, with all its inflictions, is the first great evil arising from this separation of those who ought, as creatures and sons of the same Creator and Father, to be "a band of brothers." From war results that other great evil, seen in the administration of the internal concerns of each country; the government being of necessity entrusted, for the defence of the people, with the power of the sword, the people are governed by the sword of power. Hostile prejudices, the strife of interests ill understood, false judgments, and the jargon of languages mutually unintelligible, fears, suspicions, and precautions perpetuate the evil of disunion when the work of havoc and desolation is suspended. Short and feverish are the periods of suspension: they are put out to inestimable profit when the means are employed of making the several peoples of the earth better known to each other, of softening asperities, removing misunderstandings, and conciliating mutual good-will.

Such ought to be, over and above the peculiar advantage and pleasure of each individual traveller, the object of foreign travel. To the furtherance of this object it is hoped that this account

[5] "The English do whatever they have a mind to: a journey of three hundred leagues for a visit of a fortnight!"

of a long residence in France and Italy may in some slight degree contribute: it is written without prepossession, in good-will towards the people I have visited, in the conviction that human nature, though not virtuous, is in all countries capable of, and inclined to virtue. For variety of usages, which makes men appear more alien from each other than they really are, – either it regards things indifferent, or there exists a good reason for it, which observation enables us to discover. To me in truth this difference in European customs appears so slight, that, were it not for the language, I could easily forget that I was abroad. "Omne solum forti patria: " but it requires still more fortitude to have no *patria* at all, as is the case of an English catholic: for political rights are included in the idea of *patria*.

Having lived between three and four months in Paris, and between three and four years in the south of France with my family, I have made observations, which I hope may be useful to those who have the same plan of foreign residence or travel, and not less interesting, both to them, and to those who are content with their English home, than the remarks of a more hasty tourist. The care of a household and of the education of children brings the head of a family to the knowledge of many circumstances and combinations which escape the notice of the single traveller; and intercourse with the society of a place during a sojourn gives some insight into the character, some perception of the manners and opinions of a people.

I have also lived three years and a half in Italy, of which country I seem to myself to have much to say; but for reasons that may be conjectured by the reader of this book, I defer my Italian narrative till the present work shall have undergone the judgment of the public. Meantime, this is a separate composition, and independent of any thing I may hereafter write on Italy.

I have lived so long in the world, that, although, from motives of charity, I wish to have the good report of all, few remain for whose commendation I am anxious, even as an author. I think it right however, to request the reader's indulgence for a style of writing by no means current or easy, – a fault owing to the habitual, daily use of two, or even three languages: often does the foreign phrase present itself, and then the English one is to be sought for. I have besides, for these last eight years, had but a very sparing intercourse with English literature.

For the sake of obviating misconstruction of my occasional remarks on political subjects, I think it right, in this introductory chapter, to make a few general observations on the French revolution. I detest, or obtest, against all revolutions, for two reasons: change of forms and names, and, generally speaking, of persons even, does not always produce a change of principles or of conduct; tyrannical democracies and benevolent despotisms are no new things in the history of the world: secondly, revolutions cannot change the condition of the great bulk of mankind, of persons without property, of the poor: poor they must be; for property is necessary to the existence of society; work they must, because they are poor. A man of this class at Paris, whom I wanted to engage to talk on the late revolution, cut short the matter by saying, "pour nous autres, on ne demande à nous qu'à travailler."[6] That some of them may benefit by a political change, proves nothing against the uselessness of such a change to them, considered as, what they are in effect, the mass of mankind, and in reference to the continued duration of the social state.

On the 23d of June, 1789, Louis XVI offered to the states-general a constitution very much resembling the charter since given by Louis XVIII. What has the French nation gained by the refusal of the Etats Généraux, to accede to the project of this *séance royale*? Their church is impoverished; they are endeavouring to form an aristocracy, of which destruction has hardly left them the elements; and the number of electors, – of persons represented, – is now much smaller than it would have been in the Etats Généraux. Since that day, little permanent advantage has been obtained, except the abolition of feudal rights; but of these, exemption from taxation had been abandoned; all that was unjust or grievous besides, would soon have followed. A deficit of fifty millions of francs caused the

[6] As for us, nothing is required of us but that we should work.

revolution; and in its consequence it has trebled the taxes: it rejected titles and ribands as unworthy of the dignity of man, and it has produced a second set of nobles, and a new order of knighthood.

True liberal principles cannot be disgraced; like religion, they may be the pretext, but are not the cause of excesses and of crimes; but the conduct of the revolution has retarded their spread and influence, by making every wise and prudent man afraid to trust to the professors of them. After the perpetration of horrors, on which the human mind cannot bear to look fixedly, a military despotism is quietly submitted to, as if nothing but, "res novæ," new wealth, new power, had been sought for.

– "Ubi nunc facundus Ulysses?"

The leaders of the revolution and of the republic did not recognise the true limit of civil authority: it has nothing to do but to defend the state against foreign enemies, and the citizens against each other: whatever government attempts to do more, only supplies means of vexation to subordinate agents. They tyrannised over the religious and political conscience of the people by the civil constitution of the clergy, who, when their property was taken away, ought to have been let alone; by persecutions which belied the tolerance of philosophy; by oaths of hatred of royalty, which kept up the memory of the cowardly murder of the king, – that aping of the English under circumstances totally different. War, after the promulgation of perpetual peace, seemed interminable; and the offer to assist all nations in the recovery of liberty, was seen to be a scheme for domineering in all nations by means of civil dissension.

These things prepared the way for Napoleon Bonaparte, whose elevation was, at first, by no means unpopular in Europe. He must be admired by the present age, and by posterity, as a great man: he offered himself as pacificator, and in a few years subjected a hundred millions of Europeans: such a force as this, – the arts, the knowledge, and by consequence, the power of those whom he commanded taken into the account, – no man ever yet had wielded. "He gave not God the glory: " in this he was not alone; such was, such is, the spirit of the age: his fall was caused by the coming on of the snow and frost in Russia a week or fortnight sooner than usual. History records nothing equal to his elevation and his fall. That fall must be dated at the retreat from Moscow; the rest was but the struggle of the dying lion. The French revolution seems like a bloody tragedy, after the representation of which, the actors put on their every-day clothes, and resume their ordinary occupations: it has disappointed the hopes of the philanthropist, and delayed the effect of the moral revolution, prepared long before, and working in the minds of enlightened men. This sort of revolution is the only one that can be permanent or beneficial to mankind. Christianity itself is, in its influence on civil society, a revolution of this sort, and, in respect to this life only, has done incalculable good.

The great results of the French revolution are to be looked for beyond the Atlantic. Owing to the distracted state of Europe, a continent, more abounding than the old world in the means of prosperity and power, is become independent: the slaves of Hayti have broken their chains, and may carry civilization and freedom to the country of their origin. Yet another century, and Europe itself may sink into comparative insignificance. But let the wise and virtuous unite in opinion; and Europe, though no longer the proprietor, may still be the teacher of the new world, and in the old may aid suffering humanity.

CHAP. II

On the 23d of April, which the English now know to be the feast of St. George, though, before the accession of King George IV. who observes that day as his birth-day, few of them knew the name of their patron or the day of his feast; "such honour have the saints" in England; – on that day, in the year 1818, I arrived with my two sons at Southampton, on the shore of that sea, which on the morrow was to separate me from my native country.

The son of the captain (for by courtesy he is called captain,) of the Chesterfield packet came to us at the Dolphin Inn, and informed us that the tide would serve at two o'clock the next afternoon. We had hastened through rain and darkness, during the last stage, with a grumbling postilion; for, though we knew the day, we knew not the hour of embarkation. The time we had to spare we might have passed more agreeably at Winchester. Southampton, a very pretty town, is so regularly built, that we had time more than enough to see it, and not enough to go to enjoy the beautiful view from the heights which command the bay, the channel between Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, and the isle itself. All this, however, we saw from the deck of our vessel, more advantageously than in what is called a bird's-eye view, which is only useful when necessary for peeping into the inside of amphitheatres, and the hollows of ravines and craters.

Our travelling trunks were sent to the custom-house. A year before, owing to a discussion concerning cotton yarn, which Mr. Brougham may perhaps remember, an old lady, of seventy years of age, had been despoiled of a pound of cotton thread which she was taking with her to amuse herself with knitting: the stockings or garters thus fabricated she would have brought back to England, without the least injury to its manufacturing interests. But, on such important occasions, how can discretionary powers be entrusted to custom-house officers? We, being not knitters of stockings, on this occasion, had the good fortune to excite very little of their curiosity. They did not even wish us a good voyage.

A boat conveyed us to the packet: we set sail, if setting sail it might be called, when there was hardly wind to swell the canvass. The air was sultry, the sky was cloudy; and when we had cleared the Isle of Wight, and night was coming on, there was every appearance of an approaching storm: Captain Wood even allowed that there might be "a puff." I admired the self-possession he maintained, notwithstanding the troublesome questions put to him, and expressions of fear and anxiety from the passengers: answering every one with the greatest civility, he yet never turned aside from the conduct of the vessel. "It is silly in us, captain, to disturb you thus: we might trust to you." – "Sir, my son and I are on board: the vessel cost me three thousand pounds." I drew the inference desired, and left him.

With every inclination, after the event, to begin my book with a description of a storm at sea, as Virgil begins his Æneid, I forego this attempt at amusing my reader, for two reasons: without the machinery of Juno, Æolus, and Neptune, the storm even of Virgil would hardly be raised in dignity above a common occurrence; and next, because *my storm* was really a very moderate one, hardly sufficient to excite that degree of terror in me, and of pity in others, which is necessary to sublimity. In sober guise then, I have to relate that it rained, lightened, and thundered; but thunder at sea, I remarked, is not so loud as thunder heard on land, re-echoed by houses and buildings: and lightning in that vast space does not seem so directly aimed at one, as when flashed into one's face through the narrow boundary of a window. The rolling of the sea was not very violent; but the wind drove us out of our course, and we found ourselves, in the morning, to the eastward of Fécamp. We could with the greatest ease have entered the port of Dieppe: I proposed to the captain to do so; but his affairs and his port papers, which this little stress of weather was not a sufficient excuse for contravening, recalled him to Havre. The other passengers also were desirous of landing at Dieppe; but rules and regulations, – a phrase which I translated into English for the benefit of a certain provincial book

club, which had thus entitled its by-laws, rules, and *rulations*, – at every step vexatiously and uselessly embarrass the intercourse of mankind.

In the present case we had to employ sixteen hours in working our way back again towards Havre. The voyage was, however, pleasant. We were, all the while, almost within a stone's throw of the French coast: we talked with several fishermen: we seemed to be all but landed. The clouds, which had so thickly covered the sky, and poured down so much rain the preceding night, had passed away to the eastward. In the afternoon, a brilliant rainbow was stretched across the channel, and seemed to unite, by an aërial arch, the countries of France and England. Our impatience was put to the proof by a calm, which arrested our progress for two hours: the elements seemed to have conspired to treat us with a specimen of every sort of weather that can be experienced at sea. At last a breeze sprung up; slowly we crept along towards the mouth of the Seine; and a quarter of an hour before midnight entered the port of Havre, after a voyage of thirty-two hours, the latter half of which was useless to my purpose of coming to France, and would have been dangerous had the storm come on again, as we were close on the rocks, and had very little sea-room.

The passage by Dover takes the traveller from London to Paris about a hundred miles out of his way. Brighton is the point of the English coast nearest to Paris; but, though the opposite harbour of Dieppe is good, the embarkation and disembarkation at Brighton is exposed to all the violence of the winds and waves. The passage from Southampton may be performed in ten hours, and Havre is very little further than Dieppe from the capital of France.

Before we entered the harbour, our steward descended to extinguish a large lamp that burnt in the cabin: he gave us (that is, to me and my sons) our choice of going on deck, or staying below in the dark: we loitered, and were punished afterwards for our delay by breaking our shins against the cabin stairs. The vessel was not allowed to enter the port with a light on board; a lantern is hung out on the prow. The use of the lantern is evident: it is not quite so clear why our lights were to be put out: against an accidental fire this was no sufficient precaution; had we wished to set our vessel in a state of conflagration, and run her amongst the French shipping, nothing was requisite but a tinder-box, or a gallipot of phosphorus. Regulations seem to be made sometimes, in order that those who are in employment may have something to do: work is invented for places, instead of places being created on account of work.

We waited some little time for the officer of the port, who was to receive our passports. I stood on the deck, and looked around on the light-house, the shipping, and the lights from the windows; heard the mixture of French and English bandied in talk between us on board and those on shore, and was delighted with these assurances that we were restored to human life and society, and no longer tossed on the sea, where, as Homer says, there are no vintages. I quote this expression, not because I am insensible to the beauty of a poetical amplification, but for three reasons: first, to show my learning, – a motive which I by no means approve, but leave it to be appreciated by other authors: secondly, because this epithet conveys precisely the reason of my dislike of sea voyages: Edie Ochiltre says, "the worst of a prison is, that one can't get out of it;" and I say, the worst of the sea is, that it is not dry land; an objection in both cases essential and fatal: thirdly, I wish to make a remark, which has, I believe, escaped all former commentators, – that Homer had probably no more notion of lands in which there were no grapes, than the African prince of walking on the surface of a river.

The tide had raised our deck to the level of the quay: the clock struck twelve; it was now the anniversary of the birth of my younger son, and we set our feet on the soil of France. The other passengers had announced their intention of going, in a mass, to the English inn, where a part of my family, three months later, found, what was to be expected, high charges; and, what was not to be expected, plenty of bugs. Fearing a contest for beds amongst such a number, (for there were ten or twelve of us,) and the delay of getting them ready for so many, I went to the Hôtel de la Ville du Havre, recommended by Captain Wood, who conducted us thither, roused the sleeping family, introduced, and left us! M. and Madame Marre appeared in night-cap and dressing-gown, very much resembling

(I say it with all due respect for very worthy persons,) the caricatures of French physiognomy exhibited in our print-shops. Madame Marre told the chamber-maid to show me the beds: I went up stairs, and on my return was asked if I was contented with what the "bonne" had shown me. I have heard of an old lady who was very much offended by being called good woman; and the expression "la bonne" appeared to me a contemptuous one: such a novice was I, that I looked at the girl to see whether she took it as an affront or a compliment; she was quite unmoved. I told the mistress that the three beds were very good, and desired to see the sheets: they were more than damp; they might be said to be wet: to have them aired at one in the morning was out of the question; our resource was to do without them for that night. I know an English family who, arriving early in the evening at an inn in France, and, as a matter of course, ordering the sheets to be aired, were charged, the next morning, five francs for fire-wood. Our sheets were aired, on the next day, without any instructions on our part to that effect, according to the custom of the country, *au soleil*.

This sun enabled us to sit at an open window during our breakfast: for this meal we had French rolls, excellent Norman butter, and café au lait. The coffee usually served in England is considered by the French as no better than coffee and water; what was now furnished to us was so strong, that, though mixed with an equal quantity of boiling milk, it had more of the taste of coffee than I have found in what was called very good coffee at those splendid and fatiguing assemblies, which the ladies call routs, at Bath and other towns, – where, in order that four persons may amuse themselves at whist in a creditable way, forty others are crowded together for the same laudable purpose.

It was Sunday: we went to mass: the church was crowded to excess: so many churches have been confiscated to the use of the nation, that, in the great towns, not enough of them remain for the use of the people. We went to the port to inquire after our trunks: it was low water; and our packet-boat, which rode so high in the night, was now hardly afloat: we went down into it by a ladder, and found that our goods had been sent to the custom-house: thither we bent our steps: the officer attended, a smart young man in a military dress: he ascertained the nature of the contents of my boxes, and the object of my journey, and gave no unnecessary trouble: he talked much of English commerce, and did not affect to conceal his satisfaction that it was "écrasé par les impôts."[7] I ought therefore to believe in the sincerity of his wishes, that my journey in France might be as agreeable and advantageous as I myself desired. I now had to disengage myself from three out of five stout porters, who stood in readiness to bear away my two hair trunks and writing-desk: I told them, two men could carry the whole: they assured me it was impossible. I then endeavoured to get rid of one at least of the five, by placing the writing-desk on one of the trunks, making a civil leave-taking sign, at the same time, to the man who seemed to consider the desk as his share in this weighty matter: the man answered me by a low reverence, and by taking the desk under his arm; the other four seized each the ring of a trunk, and all set off at full speed to the inn. Nothing remained but to follow, and pay them according to their number.

Our passport, granted by the Marquis d'Osmond, the French ambassador at the English court, allowing us to circulate freely within the kingdom of France, had been forwarded to Paris, and we were to receive another for the limited purpose of following our passport. I had not found the Bureau open: this was no inconvenience, as I intended to rest this day at Havre. M. Marre gave us a very good dinner, at three francs a head, and claret at the same price a bottle: he sat down with us, and did the honours, and animated the conversation, "like any other gentleman." Among the company was a priest, who showed at once his gratitude and his discontent, by telling me that the English government, which had taken nothing from him, allowed him, during his emigration, a larger pension than the French government now paid him, though it was in possession of the property of which he had been deprived: he forgot that the spoliators and those who compensated were different parties; that in 1818, nothing was left of the *biens nationaux* of 1789.

[7] Overwhelmed by duties.

We viewed the town and the port, and saw nothing particularly remarkable, but the great number of parrots hung at doors and windows, and crying out – "damn" and "damn your eyes." Their voyage from the tropics had been performed under English auspices. Havre is a great depôt of colonial produce; and this bird may probably be in great demand in a nation, so loquacious as we, in our vulgar prejudices, suppose the French to be. The commerce of the place assumed at this time a great degree of activity in objects of more importance than parrots, however accomplished. But the day was a day of rest.

The next morning I went to the Bureau de Police for my passport: the Commissaire, for reasons or from feelings best known to himself, desired me to call again in two hours. I have seen many instances of the hatred of the French towards the English, which the imperial government had excited to the utmost degree of intensity, and which did not begin to subside till the removal of the army of observation. M. le Commissaire, I suspect, indulged in a little ebullition of this unamiable sentiment: in vain I represented that my passport had been in his office the whole of the preceding day, during which I had called there three times: this seemed to increase his triumph; and he coolly, though very civilly, repeated his request that I would call again in two hours.

He procured for us a very pleasant walk on the hills, which command a view of the town, the mouth of the Seine, and the channel. The trees, in this land of cyder, were in full blossom; the rye was in ear; all seemed to be a month earlier than in the northern region we had left a week before, when we quitted our home. We entered the church; the parish is called St. Vic: I was surprised to see the exact resemblance of this church to those edifices, the remains of former times, which, in our villages, are opened once a week for divine worship: the altar and images excepted, it was the same sort of interior: there was indeed the holy water pot, but of that the trace at least is to be found in almost all our old churches: but the images; ay, there was St. Denis, with his head, not under his arm, but held between his hands. On this I shall only remark, that he who, on account of the legend of St. Denis, believes the catholic religion to be false, may deceive himself in a matter of the greatest moment; whereas he who believes the legend to be true, may be deceived, but in a matter of no moment at all.

A farmer's lad, of about fourteen, came up to us in the church-yard, and entered into a conversation, which he conducted without bashfulness, and with the greatest propriety. He told us, that mass was said every morning at break of day, and that the peasantry attended it before going to their labour. He talked of the principal tombs before us, and of the families in two or three large houses within our view: he asked questions respecting England, where, he supposed, there were no poor, because he had never seen any: undeceived on this point, he inquired after the state of these poor, with marks of fellow-feeling; what wages they gained: and when I, in my turn, was informed of the wages and price of bread in his country, and showed him, that though the Englishman gained more sous, the Frenchman gained more bread, he clearly apprehended the nature of the case, pitying at the same time those who had less bread to eat than he had himself. He took leave of us, and certainly had not the least expectation of a present to make him drink: that we were strangers, – that we talked his language with difficulty, – all that would have repelled an English peasant, – excited his curiosity, and even his good-will.

We returned to the town, found a commis who expedited our passport in five minutes, and went to take our places in the Paris diligence. A woman gave me a receipt for my *arrhes*. I told her it would save trouble to include my luggage in the same receipt. "When you shall have sent it, sir," was the answer. A distinguishing character of the French is exactness; in criticism, in style of writing, in calculation, in affairs, they are exact. I give my own opinion, not perhaps that of others.

It was the first of the Rogation days, which an Anglican may see, in his book of common-prayer, noted as days of abstinence. M. Marre, profiting by the neighbourhood of the sea, gave us a very fine turbot, part of a good dinner, at which appeared some dishes of meat. I paid my bill, (about fifty francs for three persons during two days,) and took my departure, but was arrested, in my way to the diligence, in a curious manner. I had given a franc to a boy for taking my two trunks in a wheel-

barrow a short distance to the coach-office; *Boots*, at an inn in England, would have been contented with a sixpence; but the *porte-faix* of the *douane* had admonished me of the high expectations from English wealth and generosity. The father of this boy stopped me in the street; charged me with having robbed his son by paying only one franc instead of three, to which he had a right; threatening to take me before the commissary of police, "who," said he, "will put you in prison." He acted his part very well; he could not have been more angry, had I in reality committed an act of injustice towards so dear a part of his family as this son, dressed, like himself, in a stout jacket of English fustian, and the heir apparent of all his impudence, who took his share in the scene by barring the passage to my elder son, not so stout, though rather taller than himself. I dreaded some act of vivacity on the part of my son, and called out to him at all events to be quiet. The boy of the inn, who carried my writing-desk and great coats, had no need of such a caution. My younger son, now in the first day of his thirteenth year, though alarmed by the hubbub, had the sense to see that the only way to get out of the affray was to pay the man, and begged me to do so. The clock struck five, the hour of the departure of the diligence, – a circumstance which made compliance with this sage counsel no longer a matter of choice, and on which the man had calculated with more reason than on the assistance of the police. After all, the lad was not much better paid than the *porte-faix* of the *douane*, who had attacked me only with the smell of garlic and tobacco, issuing from their mouths together with bad French. So much for Havre, *ci-devant, de Grâce*.

We found the diligence to be a convenient and even handsome public carriage, made to hold six persons within, and three in the cabriolet or covered seat attached to it in front: at first, we had all this space to ourselves. After about an hour's ride, we got out of the coach to walk up a steep hill, and took our last leave of the semblance of English landscape. France and Italy offer no views of luxuriant pastures, with herds and flocks grazing in them, of trees irregularly planted, of enclosures unequally distributed, of fine swelling clouds hanging in the horizon, – themselves a beautiful object, and adding variety of light and shade to the picture. These we were to exchange for vines, like bushes, planted in rows, or trained in festoons from one pollard elm to another; for the pale leaf of the olive, for skies almost always cloudless, for fields abundant in produce, but without any thing living or moving in them. But we were as yet unable to make the comparison. As night came on, we took up other passengers who were going to a short distance: they were Normans; at least such I judged them to be from the great breadth of their bases, which took up a considerable space on the seats of the coach: in manners as well as in form they were different from Frenchmen; they were not indeed reserved, they had no *mauvaise honte*

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.