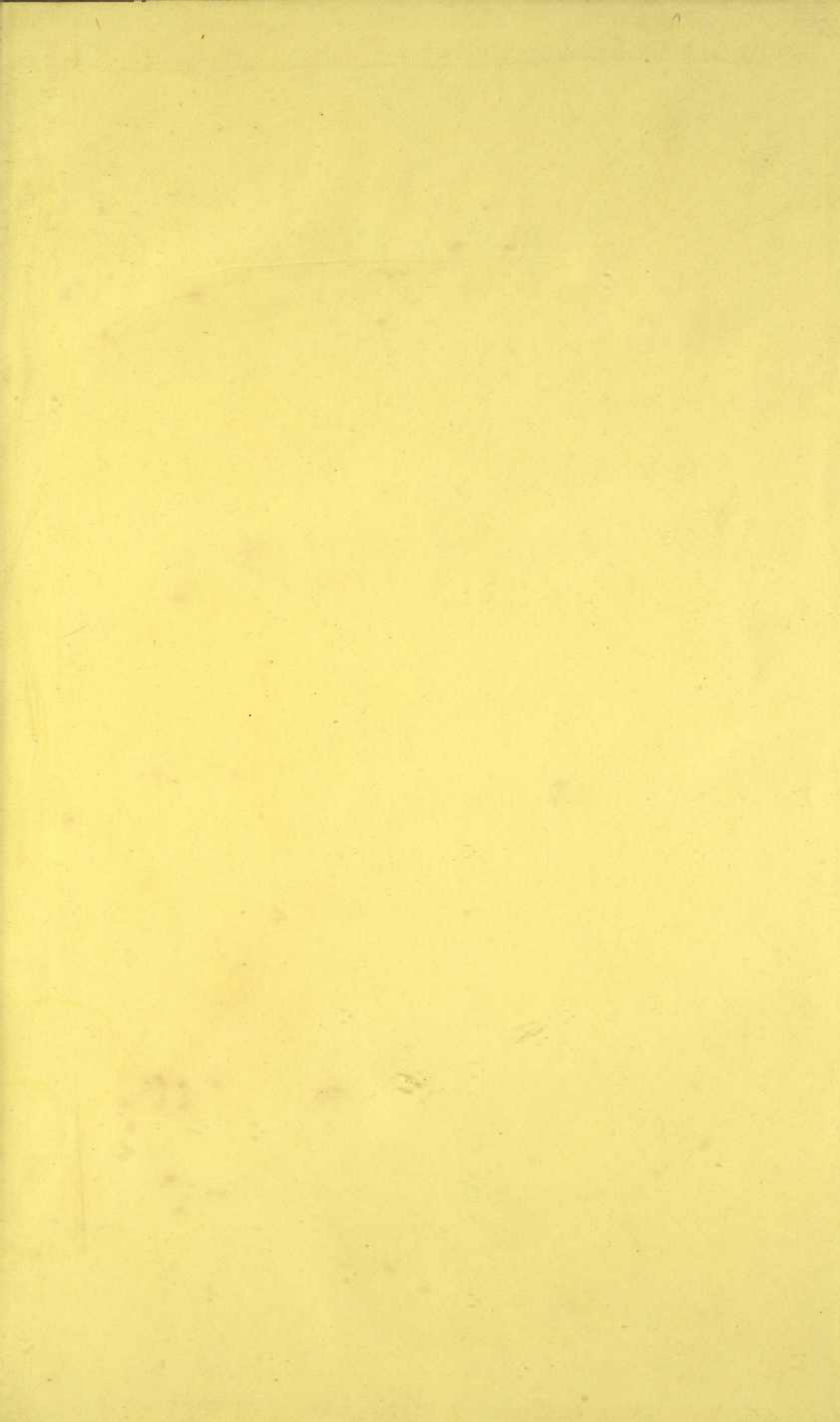


William Gill





ESSAYS

AND

REVIEWS.

BY

R. W. CHURCH, M.A.,

LATE FELLOW OF ORIEL COLLEGE, OXFORD.

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TO  
THE FRIENDS AT WHOSE INSTANCE  
THE FOLLOWING ESSAYS HAVE BEEN REPRINTED  
THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED  
BY THE WRITER,  
IN REMEMBRANCE OF ALL THAT HE HAS OWED,  
IN PAST YEARS OF MUCH ANXIETY BUT MUCH HAPPINESS,  
TO THE INTIMACY OF MANY, AND  
THE KINDNESS OF ALL.





## ADVERTISEMENT.

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OF the following Essays, the two on St. Anselm were contributed to the *British Critic*: the rest have appeared in the *Christian Remembrancer*.

They are republished nearly as they were first printed. I have not leisure to make them what I should wish them to have been; and I have no substantial alterations to introduce in the views and statements contained in them. The colouring of each belongs to the time when it was written. Few men, probably, who try to profit by the multiplied and various lessons which years bring with them, would write on any subject in exactly the same way, if they had to write on it again after a considerable interval; but there is no sufficient reason to change that colouring in some of the earlier Essays, to what it might have been if they had been written later.

November, 1853.



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# ESSAYS.

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## DANTE.\*

[JAN. 1850.]

THE "Divina Commedia" is one of the landmarks of history. More than a magnificent poem, more than the beginning of a language and the opening of a national literature, more than the inspirer of art, and the glory of a great people, it is one of those rare and solemn monuments of the mind's power, which measure and test what it can reach to, which rise up ineffaceably and for ever as time goes on, marking out its advance by grander divisions than its centuries, and adopted as epochs by the consent of all who come after. It stands with the Iliad and Shakspeare's Plays, with the writings of Aristotle and Plato, with the *Novum Organon* and the *Principia*, with Justinian's Code, with the Parthenon and S. Peter's. It is the first Christian poem; and it opens European literature, as the Iliad did that of Greece and Rome. And, like the Iliad, it has never become out of date; it accompanies in undiminished freshness, the literature which it began.

We approach the history of such works, in which genius seems to have pushed its achievements to a new limit, with a kind of awe. The beginnings of all things, their bursting out from nothing, and gradual evolution into substance and shape, cast on the mind a solemn influence. They come too

\* *Dante's Divine Comedy, the Inferno; a literal Prose Translation, with the Text of the Original.* By J. A. CARLYLE, M.D. London: 1849.

near the fount of being to be followed up without our feeling sensible of the shadows which surround it. We cannot but fear, cannot but feel ourselves cut off from this visible and familiar world—as we enter into the cloud. And as with the processes of nature, so is it with those offsprings of man's mind, by which he has added permanently one more great feature to the world, and created a new power which is to act on mankind to the end. The mystery of the inventive and creative faculty, the subtle and incalculable combinations by which it was led to its work, and carried through it, are out of the reach of investigating thought. Often the idea recurs of the precariousness of the result:—by how little the world might have lost one of its ornaments—by one sharp pang, or one chance meeting, or any other among the countless accidents among which man runs his course. And then the solemn recollection supervenes, that powers were formed, and life preserved, and circumstances arranged, and actions controlled, that thus it should be: and the work which man has brooded over, and at last created, is the foster-child too of that “Wisdom which reaches from end to end, strongly and sweetly disposing all things.”

It does not abate these feelings, that we can follow in some cases and to a certain extent, the progress of a work. Indeed, the sight of the particular accidents among which it was developed—which belong, perhaps, to a heterogeneous and widely discordant order of things, which are out of proportion, and out of harmony with it, which do not explain it, which have, as it seems to us, no natural right to be connected with it, to bear on its character, or contribute to its accomplishment,—to which we feel, as it were, ashamed to owe what we can least spare—yet on which its forming mind and purpose were dependent, and with which they had to conspire—affects the imagination even more than cases where we see nothing. We are tempted less to musing and wonder by the *Iliad*, a work without a history, cut off from its past, the sole relic and vestige of its age, unexplained in its origin and perfection, than by the “*Divina Commedia*,” destined for the highest ends, and most universal sympathy,

yet the reflection of a personal history, and issuing seemingly from its chance incidents.

The "Divina Commedia" is singular among the great works with which it ranks, for its strong stamp of personal character and history. We associate in general little more than the name,—not the life,—of a great poet with his works; personal interest belongs more usually to greatness in its active than in its creative forms. But the whole idea and purpose of the Commedia, as well as its filling up and colouring, is determined by Dante's peculiar history. The loftiest, perhaps, in its aim and flight of all poems, it is also the most individual; the writer's own life is chronicled in it, as well as the issues and upshot of all things—it is at once the mirror to all time of the sins and perfections of men, of the judgments and grace of God, and the record, often the only one, of the transient names, and local factions, and obscure ambitions, and forgotten crimes of the poet's own day; and in that awful company to which he leads us, in the most unearthly of his scenes, we never lose sight of himself. And when this peculiarity sends us to history, it seems as if the poem which was to hold such a place in Christian literature, hung upon and grew out of chance events, rather than the deliberate design of its author. History indeed here, as generally, is but a feeble exponent of the course of growth in a great mind and great ideas:—it shows us early a bent and purpose,—the man conscious of power and intending to use it,—and then the accidents among which he worked: but how that current of purpose threaded its way among them, how it was thrown back, deflected, deepened, by them, we cannot learn from history. It presents but a broken and mysterious picture. A boy of quick and enthusiastic temper grows up into youth in a dream of love. The lady of his mystic passion dies early. He dreams of her still, not as a wonder of earth, but as a Saint in Paradise, and relieves his heart in an autobiography, a strange and perplexing work of fiction; quaint and subtle enough for a metaphysical conceit; but, on the other hand, with far too much of genuine and deep feeling. It is a first essay; he closes it abruptly,

as if dissatisfied with his work, but with the resolution of raising at a future day a worthy monument to the memory of her whom he has lost. It is the promise and purpose of a great work. But a prosaic change seems to come over this half-ideal character. The lover becomes the student, the student of the 13th century—struggling painfully against difficulties, eager and hot after knowledge, wasting eye-sight and stinting sleep, subtle, inquisitive, active-minded and sanguine, but omnivorous, overflowing with dialectical forms, loose in premiss and ostentatiously rigid in syllogism, fettered by the refinements of half-awakened taste, and the mannerisms of the Provençals. Boethius and Cicero, and the mass of mixed learning within his reach, are accepted as the consolation of his human griefs: he is filled with the passion of universal knowledge, and the desire to communicate it. Philosophy has become the lady of his soul—to write allegorical poems in her honour, and to comment on them with all the apparatus of his learning in prose, his mode of celebrating her. Further, he marries; it is said, not happily. The antiquaries, too, have disturbed romance by discovering that Beatrice, also, was married some years before her death. He appears, as time goes on, as a burgher of Florence, the father of a family, a politician, an envoy, a magistrate, a partizan, taking his full share in the quarrels of the day. At length we see him, at once an exile, and the poet of the *Commedia*. Beatrice reappears—shadowy, melting at times into symbol and figure—but far too living and real, addressed with too intense and natural feeling, to be the mere personification of anything. The lady of the philosophical *Canzoni* has vanished. The student's dream has been broken, as the boy's had been; and the earnestness of the man, enlightened by sorrow, overleaping the student's formalities and abstractions, reverted in sympathy to the earnestness of the boy, and brooded once more on that Saint in Paradise, whose presence and memory had once been so soothing, and who now seemed a real link between him and that stable country, "where the angels are in peace." Round her image, the reflection of purity and truth, and forbearing love, was grouped



that confused scene of trouble and effort, of failure and success, which the poet saw round him; round her image it arranged itself in awful order—and that image, not a metaphysical abstraction, but the living memory, freshened by sorrow, and seen through the softening and hallowing vista of years, of Beatrice Portinari—no figment of imagination, but God's creature and servant. A childish love, dissipated by study and business, and revived in memory by heavy sorrow—a boyish resolution, made in a moment of feeling—interrupted, though it would be hazardous to say in Dante's case, laid aside, for apparently more manly studies, gave the idea and suggested the form of the "Sacred poem of earth and heaven."

And the occasion of this startling unfolding of the poetic gift, of this passage of a soft and dreamy boy, into the keenest, boldest, sternest of poets, the free and mighty leader of European song, was, what is not ordinarily held to be a source of poetical inspiration,—the political life. The boy had sensibility, high aspirations, and a versatile and passionate nature; the student added to this, energy, various learning, gifts of language, and noble ideas on the capacities and ends of man. But it was the factions of Florence which made Dante a great poet. But for them, he might have been a modern critic and essayist, born before his time, and have held a high place among the writers of fugitive verses; in Italy, a graceful but trifling and idle tribe, often casting a deep and beautiful thought into a mould of expressive diction, but oftener toying with a foolish and glittering conceit, and whose languid genius was exhausted by a sonnet. He might have thrown into the shade the Guidos and Cinos of his day, to be eclipsed by Petrarch. But he learned in the bitter feuds of Italy not to trifle; they opened to his view, and he had an eye to see, the true springs and abysses of this mortal life—motives and passions stronger than lovers' sentiments, evils beyond the consolations of Boethius and Cicero; and from that fiery trial which without searing his heart, annealed his strength and purpose, he drew that great gift and power,

by which he stands pre-eminent even among his high compeers, the gift of being real. And the idea of the *Commedia* took shape, and expanded into its endless forms of terror and beauty, not under the roof-tree of the literary citizen, but when the exile had been driven out to the highways of the world, to study nature on the sea or by the river or on the mountain track; and men, in the courts of Verona and Ravenna, and in the schools of Bologna and Paris—perhaps of Oxford.

The connexion of these feuds with Dante's poem has given to the middle age history of Italy an interest, of which it is not undeserving in itself, as full of curious exhibitions of character and contrivance, but to which politically it cannot lay claim, amidst the social phenomena, so far grander in scale and purpose and more felicitous in issue, of the other western nations. It is remarkable for keeping up an antique phase; which, in spite of modern arrangements, it has not yet lost. It is a history of cities. In ancient history all that is most memorable and instructive gathers round cities; civilisation and empire were concentrated within walls; and it baffled the ancient mind to conceive how power should be possessed and wielded, by numbers larger than might be collected in a single market-place. The Roman Empire indeed aimed at being one in its administration and law; but it was not a nation, nor were its provinces nations. Yet everywhere but in Italy, it prepared them for becoming nations. And while everywhere else, parts were uniting, and union was becoming organisation—and neither geographical remoteness, nor unwieldiness of numbers, nor local interests and differences, were untractable obstacles to that spirit of fusion, which was at once the ambition of the few, and the instinct of the many; and cities, even where most powerful, had become the centres of the attracting and joining forces, knots in the political network—while this was going on more or less happily, throughout the rest of Europe, in Italy the ancient classic idea lingered, in its simplicity, its narrowness and jealousy, wherever there was any political activity. The history of Southern Italy indeed is,

mainly a foreign one; the history of modern Rome merges in that of the Papacy; but Northern Italy has a history of its own, and that is a history of separate and independent cities—points of mutual and indestructible repulsion, and within, theatres of action, where the blind tendencies and traditions of classes and parties weighed little on the freedom of individual character, and citizens could watch and measure and study one another with the minuteness of private life.

Two cities were the centres of ancient history, in its most interesting time. And two cities of modern Italy represent, with entirely undesigned but curiously exact coincidence, the parts of Athens and Rome. Venice, superficially so unlike, is yet in many of its accidental features, and still more in its spirit, the counterpart of Rome; in its obscure and mixed origin, in its steady growth, in its quick sense of order and early settlement of its polity, in its grand and serious public spirit, in its subordination of the individual to the family, and the family to the state, in its combination of remote dominion with the liberty of a solitary and sovereign city. And though the associations, and the scale of the two were so different—though Rome had its hills and its legions, and Venice its lagunes and galleys—the long empire of Venice, the heir of Carthage and predecessor of England on the seas, the great aristocratic republic of 1000 years, is the only empire that has yet matched Rome, in length and steadiness of tenure. Brennus and Hannibal were not resisted with greater constancy than Doria and Louis XII.; and that great aristocracy, long so proud, so high spirited, so intelligent, so practical, who combined the enterprise and wealth of merchants, the self-devotion of soldiers and gravity of senators, with the uniformity and obedience of a religious order, may compare without shame its Giustiniani, and Zenos, and Morosini, with Roman Fabii and Claudii. And Rome could not be more contrasted with Athens, than Venice with Italian and contemporary Florence—stability with fitfulness, independence impregnable and secure, with a short-lived and troubled liberty, empire meditated and achieved, with a course of barren intrigues and quarrels.

Florence, gay, capricious, turbulent, the city of party, the head and busy patroness of democracy in the cities round her—Florence, where popular government was inaugurated with its utmost exclusiveness and most pompous ceremonial; waging her little summer wars against Ghibelline tyrants, revolted democracies, and her own exiles; and further, so rich in intellectual gifts, in variety of individual character, in poets, artists, wits, historians—Florence in its brilliant days recalled the image of ancient Athens, and did not depart from its prototype in the beauty of its natural site, in its noble public buildings, in the size and nature of its territory. And the course of its history is similar, and the result of similar causes—a traditional spirit of freedom, with its accesses of fitful energy, its periods of grand display and moments of glorious achievement, but producing nothing politically great or durable, and sinking at length into a resigned servitude. It had its Pisistratidæ more successful than those of Athens; it had, too, its Harmodius and Aristogeiton; it had its great orator of liberty, as potent, and as unfortunate, as the antagonist of Philip. And finally, like Athens, it became content with the remembrance of its former glory, with being the fashionable and acknowledged seat of refinement and taste, with being a favoured dependency on the modern heir of the Cæsars. But if to Venice belongs a grander public history, Florentine names and works, like Athenian, will be living among men, when the Brenta shall have been left unchecked to turn the Lagunes into ploughland, and when Rome herself may no longer be the seat of the Popes.

The year of Dante's birth was a memorable one in the annals of Florence, of Italy, and of Christendom. The year 1265 was the year of that great victory of Benevento, where Charles of Anjou overthrew Manfred of Naples, and destroyed at one blow the power of the house of Swabia. From that time till the time of Charles V., the emperors had no footing in Italy. Further, that victory set up the French influence in Italy, which, transient in itself, produced such strange and momentous consequences, by the intimate connexion to

which it led between the French kings and the Popes. The protection of France was dearly bought by the captivity of Avignon, the great western schism, and the consequent secularisation of the Papacy, which lasted on uninterrupted, till the Council of Trent. Nearly three centuries of degradation and scandal, unrelieved by one heroic effort among the successors of Gregory VII., connected the Reformation with the triumph of Charles and the Pope at Benevento. Finally, by it the Guelf party was restored for good in Florence; the Guelf democracy, which had been trampled down by the Uberti and Manfred's chivalry at Monteperti, once more raised its head, and fortune, which had long wavered between the rival lilies, finally turned against the white one, till the name of Ghibelline became a proscribed one in Florence, as Jacobite was once in Scotland, or Papist in England, or Royalist in France.

The names of Guelf and Ghibelline were the inheritance of a contest which, in its original meaning, had been long over. The old struggle between the priesthood and the empire was still kept up traditionally, but its ideas and interests were changed: they were still great and important ones, but not those of Gregory VII. It had passed over from the mixed region of the spiritual and temporal, into the purely political. The cause of the popes was that of the independence of Italy—the freedom and alliance of the great cities of the north, and the dependence of the centre and south on the Roman See. To keep the Emperor out of Italy—to create a barrier of powerful cities against him south of the Alps—to form behind themselves a compact territory, rich, removed from the first burst of invasion, and maintaining a strong body of interested feudatories, had now become the great object of the popes. It may have been a wise policy on their part, for the maintenance of their spiritual influence, to attempt to connect their own independence with the political freedom of the Italian communities; but certain it is, that the ideas and the characters, which gave a religious interest and grandeur to the earlier part of the contest, appear but sparingly, if at all, in its later forms.

The two parties did not care to keep in view principles which their chiefs had lost sight of. The Emperor and the Pope were both real powers, able to protect and assist; and they divided between them those who required protection and assistance. Geographical position, the rivalry of neighbourhood, family tradition, private feuds, and above all, private interest, were the main causes which assigned cities, families, and individuals to the Ghibelline or Guelf party. One party called themselves the Emperor's liegemen, and their watchword was authority and law; the other side were the liegemen of Holy Church, and their cry was liberty; and the distinction as a broad one is true. But a democracy would become Ghibelline, without scruple, if its neighbour town was Guelf; and among the Guelf liegemen of the Church and liberty, the pride of blood and love of power were not a whit inferior to that of their opponents. Yet, though the original principle of the contest was lost, and the political distinctions of parties were often interfered with by interest or accident, it is not impossible to trace in the two factions differences of temper, of moral and political inclinations, which though visible only on a large scale, and in the mass, were quite sufficient to give meaning and reality to their mutual opposition. These differences had come down, greatly altered of course, from the quarrel in which the parties took their rise. The Ghibellines, as a body, reflected the worldliness, the licence, the irreligion, the reckless selfishness, the daring insolence, and at the same time the gaiety and pomp, the princely magnificence and generosity and largeness of mind of the house of Swabia; they were the men of the court and camp, imperious and haughty from ancient lineage or the Imperial cause, yet not wanting in the frankness and courtesy of nobility; careless of public opinion and public rights, but not dead to the grandeur of public objects and public services. Among them were found, or to them inclined, all who, whether from a base or a lofty ambition, desired to place their will above law\*—the lord of the

\* "Maghinardo da Susinana (*il Demonio*, Purg. 14.) fu uno grande e savio tiranno . . . gran castellano, e con molti fedeli: savio fu di guerra e bene

feudal castle, the robber-knight of the Apennine pass, the magnificent but terrible tyrants of the cities, the pride and shame of Italy, the Visconti and Scaligers. That renowned Ghibelline chief, whom the poet finds in the fiery sepulchres of the unbelievers with the great Ghibelline emperor and the princely Ghibelline cardinal—the disdainful and bitter, but lofty spirit of Farinata degli Uberti, the conqueror, and then singly and at his own risk, the saviour of his country which had wronged him, represents the good as well as the bad side of his party.

The Guelfs, on the other hand, were the party of the middle classes; they rose out of, and held to, the people; they were strong by their compactness, their organisation in cities, their commercial relations and interests, their command of money. Further, they were professedly the party of strictness and religion,—a profession which fettered them as little, as their opponents were fettered by the respect they claimed for imperial law. But though by personal unscrupulousness and selfishness, and in instances of public vengeance they sinned as deeply as the Ghibellines, they stood far more committed as a party to a public meaning and purpose—to improvement in law and the condition of the poor, to a protest against the insolence of the strong, to the encouragement of industry. The genuine Guelf spirit was austere, frugal, independent, earnest, religious, fond of its home and Church, and of those celebrations which bound together Church and home; but withal, very proud, very intolerant; in its higher form, intolerant of evil, but intolerant always, to whatever displeased it. Yet there was a grave and noble manliness about it, which long kept it alive in Florence. It had not as yet turned itself against the practical corruptions of the Church, which was its ally; but this also it was to do, when the popes had forsaken the cause of

avventuroso in piu battaglie, e al suo tempo fece gran cose. Ghibellino era di sua nazione e in sue opere; ma co' Fiorentini era Guelfo e nimico di tutti i loro nimici, o Guelfi o Ghibellini che fossono.”—G. Vill. vii. 149. A Ghibelline by birth and disposition; yet, from circumstances, a close ally of the Guelfs of Florence.

liberty, and leagued themselves with the brilliant tyranny of the Medici. Then Savonarola invoked, and not in vain, the stern old Guelf spirit of resistance, of domestic purity and severity, and of domestic religion, against unbelief and licentiousness even in the Church; and the Guelf "*Piagnoni*" presented, in a more simple and generous shape, a resemblance to our own Puritans, as the Ghibellines often recal the coarser and worse features of our own Cavaliers.

In Florence, these distinctions had become mere nominal ones, confined to the great families who carried on their private feuds under the old party names, when Frederick II. once more gave them meaning. "Although the accursed Guelf and Ghibelline factions lasted among the nobles of Florence, and they often waged war among themselves out of private grudges, and took sides for the said factions, and held one with another, and those who called themselves Guelfs desired the establishment of the Pope and Holy Church, and those who called themselves Ghibellines favoured the Emperor and his adherents, yet withal the people and commonalty of Florence maintained itself in unity, to the well-being, and honour, and establishment of the commonwealth."\* But the appearance on the scene of an emperor of such talent and bold designs revived the languid contest, and gave to party a cause, and to individual passions and ambition an impulse and pretext. The division between Guelf and Ghibelline again became serious, involved all Florence, armed house against house, and neighbourhood against neighbourhood, issued in merciless and vindictive warfare, grew on into a hopeless and deadly breach, and finally lost to Florence, without remedy or repair, half her noble houses, and the love of the greatest of her sons. The old badge of their common country became to the two factions the sign of their implacable hatred; the white lily of Florence, borne by the Ghibellines, was turned to red by the Guelfs, and the flower of two colours marked a civil strife as cruel and as fatal, if on a smaller scale, as that of the English roses.†

\* G. Villani, vi. 33.

† G. Villani, vi. 33. 43.; Parad. 19.



It was waged with the peculiar characteristics of Italian civil war. There the city itself was the scene of battle. A 13th century city in Italy bore on its face the evidence that it was built and arranged for such emergencies. Its crowded and narrow streets were a collection of rival castles, whose tall towers, rising thick and close over its roofs, or hanging perilously over its close courts, attested the emulous pride and the insecurity of Italian civic life. There, within a separate precinct, flanked and faced by jealous friends or deadly enemies, were clustered together the dwellings of the various members of each great house—their common home and the monument of their magnificence and pride, and capable of being, as was so often necessary, their common refuge. In these fortresses of the leading families, scattered about the city, were the various points of onset and recovery in civic battle: in the streets barricades were raised, mangonels and crossbows were plied from the towers, a series of separate combats raged through the city, till chance at length connected the attacks of one side, or some panic paralysed the resistance of the other, or a conflagration interposed itself between the combatants, burning out at once Guelf and Ghibelline, and laying half Florence in ashes. Each party had their turn of victory; each, when vanquished, went into exile, and carried on the war outside the walls; each had their opportunity of remodelling the orders and framework of government, and each did so relentlessly at the cost of their opponents. They excluded classes, they proscribed families, they confiscated property, they sacked and burned warehouses, they levelled the palaces, and outraged the pride of their antagonists. To destroy was not enough, without adding to it the keenest and newest refinement of insult. Two buildings in Florence were peculiarly dear,—among their "*cari luoghi*"—to the popular feeling and the Guelf party; the Baptistery of S. John, "*il mio bel S. Giovanni*," "to which all the good people resorted on Sundays,"\* where they had all received baptism, where they had been married,

\* G. Villani, vi. 33., iv. 10.; Inf. 19. Parad. 25.

where families were solemnly reconciled; and a tall and beautiful tower close by it, called the "Torre del Guardamorto," where the bodies of the "good people," who of old were all buried at S. Giovanni, rested on their way to the grave. The victorious Ghibellines, when they levelled the Guelf towers, overthrew this one, and endeavoured to make it crush in its fall the sacred church, "which," says the old chronicler, "was prevented by a miracle." The Guelfs, when their day came, built the walls of Florence with the stones of Ghibelline palaces.\* One great family stands out pre-eminent in this fierce conflict as the victim and monument of party war. The head of the Ghibellines was the proud and powerful house of the Uberti, who shared with another great Ghibelline family, the Pazzi, the valley of the upper Arno. They lighted up the war in the Emperor's cause. They supported its weight and guided it. In time of peace, they were foremost and unrestrained in defiance of law and scorn of the people—in war, the people's fiercest and most active enemies. Heavy sufferers, in their property, and by the sword and axe, yet untamed and incorrigible, they led the van in that battle, so long remembered to their cost by the Guelfs, the battle of Monteperti, —

"Lo strazio, e 'l gran scempio  
Che fece l' Arbia colorata in rossa." (Inf. 10.)

That the head of their house, Farinata, saved Florence from the vengeance of his meaner associates, was not enough to atone for the unpardonable wrongs which they had done to the Guelfs and the democracy. When the red lily of the Guelfs finally supplanted the white one as the arms of Florence, and badge of Guelf triumph, they were proscribed for ever, like the Pisistratidæ and the Tarquins. In every amnesty their names were excepted. The site on which their houses had stood was never again to be built upon, and remains the Great Square of Florence; the architect of the Palace of the People was obliged to sacrifice its symmetry, and place it awry, that its walls might not encroach on the

\* G. Villani, vi. 39. 65.

accursed ground.\* “They had been,” says a writer, cotemporary with Dante, speaking of the time when he also became an exile; “they had been for more than forty years outlaws from their country, nor ever found mercy nor pity, remaining always abroad in great state, nor ever abased their honour, seeing that they ever abode with kings and lords, and to great things applied themselves.”† They were loved as they were hated. When under the protection of a cardinal one of them visited the city, and the chequered blue and gold blazon of their house was, after an interval of half a century, again seen in the streets of Florence; “many ancient Ghibelline men and women pressed to kiss the arms,”‡ and even the common people did him honour.

But the fortunes of Florentine factions depended on other causes than merely the address or vigour of their leaders. From the year of Dante’s birth and Charles’s victory, Florence, as far as we shall have to do with it, became irrevocably Guelf. Not that the whole commonalty of Florence formally called itself Guelf, or that the Guelf party was co-extensive with it; but the city was controlled by Guelf councils, devoted to the objects of the great Guelf party, and received in return the support of that party in curbing the pride of the nobles, and maintaining democratic forms. The Guelf party of Florence, though it was the life and soul of the republic, and irresistible in its disposal of the influence and arms of Florence, and though it embraced a large number of the most powerful families, is always spoken of as something distinct from, and external to, the governing powers, and the whole body of the people. It was a body with a separate and self-constituted existence;—in the state, and allied to it, but an independent element, holding on to a large and comprehensive union without the state. Its organisation in Florence is one of the most curious among the many curious combinations which meet us in Italian history. After the final expulsion of the Ghibellines, the Guelf party took form as an institution, with definite powers, and a local existence. It

\* G. Villani, vi. 33. viii. 26.; Vasari, Arnolfo di Lapo, i. 255. (Fir. 1846.)

† Dino Compagni, p. 88.

‡ Ib. p. 107.

appears with as distinct a shape as the Jacobin Club, or the Orange Lodges, side by side with the government. It was a corporate body with a common seal, common property, not only in funds but lands — officers, archives, a common palace \*, a great council, a secret committee, and last of all, a public accuser of the Ghibellines; of the confiscated Ghibelline estates one-third went to the republic, another third to compensate individual Guelfs, the rest was assigned to the Guelf party. † A pope had granted them his own arms ‡; and their device, a red eagle clutching a serpent, may be yet seen, with the red lily, and the party-coloured banner of the commonalty, on the battlements of the Palazzo Vecchio.

But the expulsion of the Ghibellines did but little to restore peace. The great Guelf families, as old as many of the Ghibellines, had as little reverence as they for law or civic rights. Below these, the acknowledged nobility of Florence, were the leading families of the “people,” houses created by successful industry or commerce, and pushing up into that privileged order, which, however ignored and even discredited by the laws, was fully recognised by feeling and opinion in the most democratic times of the republic. Rivalries and feuds, street broils and conspiracies, high-handed insolence from the great men, rough vengeance from the populace, still continued to vex jealous and changeful Florence. The popes sought in vain to keep in order their quarrelsome liegemen; to reconcile Guelf with Guelf, and even Guelf with Ghibelline. Embassies went and came, to ask for mediation and to proffer it; to apply the healing paternal hand; to present an obsequious and ostentatious submission. Cardinal legates came in state, and were received with reverential pomp; they formed private committees, and held assemblies, and made marriages; they harangued in honied words, and gained the largest promises; on one occasion the Great Square was turned into a vast theatre, and on this stage 150 dissidents on each side came forward, and in the presence and with the

\* Giotto painted in it: Vasari, Vit. di Giotto, p. 314.

† G. Villani, 7. 2. 17.

‡ G. Villani, vii. 2.

benediction of the cardinal kissed each other on the mouth.\* And if persuasion failed, the pope's representative hesitated not to excommunicate and interdict the faithful but obdurate city. But whether excommunicated or blessed, Florence could not be at peace; however wise and subtle had been the peace-maker's arrangements, his departing *cortège* was hardly out of sight of the city before they were blown to the winds. Not more successful were the efforts of the sensible and moderate citizens who sighed for tranquillity within its walls. Dino Compagni's interesting, though not very orderly narrative, describes with great frankness, and with the perplexity of a simple-hearted man puzzled by the continual triumph of clever wickedness, the variety and the fruitlessness of the expedients devised by him and other good citizens against the resolute and incorrigible selfishness of the great Guelfs—ever, when checked in one form, breaking out in another; proof against all persuasion, all benefits; not to be bound by law, or compact, or oath; eluding or turning to its own account the deepest and sagest contrivances of constitutional wisdom.

A great battle won against Ghibelline Arezzo †, raised the renown and the military spirit of the Guelf party; for the fame of the battle was great; the hosts contained the choicest chivalry of either side, armed and appointed with emulous splendour. The fighting was hard; there was brilliant and conspicuous gallantry, and the victory was complete. It sealed Guelf ascendancy. The Ghibelline warrior-bishop of Arezzo fell, with three of the Uberti, and other Ghibelline chiefs. It was a day of trial. "Many that day who had been thought of great prowess, were found dastards; and many who had never been spoken of, were held in high esteem." It repaired the honour of Florence, and the citizens showed their feeling of its importance, by mixing up the marvellous with its story. Its tidings came to Florence, so runs the tale in Villani, who declares that he "heard and saw" himself, at the very hour in which it was won. The Priors

\* G. Villani, vii. 56.

† *Campaldino*, in 1289. G. Vill. 7. 131.; Dino Comp. p. 14.

of the republic were resting in their palace during the noon-day heat, suddenly the chamber door was shaken, and the cry heard, "Rise up! the Aretini are defeated." The door was opened, but there was no one; their servants had seen no one enter the palace, and no one came from the army till the hour of vespers, on a long summer's day. In this battle the Guelf leaders had won great glory. The hero of the day was the proudest, handsomest, craftiest, most winning, most ambitious, most unscrupulous Guelf noble in Florence—one of a family who inherited the spirit and recklessness of the proscribed Uberti, and did not refuse the popular epithet of "*Malefami*"—Corso Donati. He did not come back from the field of Campaldino, where he had won the battle by disobeying orders, with any increased disposition to yield to rivals, or court the populace, or respect other men's rights. Those rivals, too,—and they also had fought gallantly in the post of honour at Campaldino,—were such as he hated from his soul—rivals whom he despised, and who yet were too strong for him. His blood was ancient, they were upstarts; he was a soldier, they were traders; he was poor, they the richest men in Florence. They had come to live close to the Donati, they had bought the palace of an old Ghibelline family, they had enlarged, adorned, and fortified it, and kept great state there. They had crossed him in marriages, bargains, inheritances. They had won popularity, honour, influence; and yet they were but men of business, while he had a part in all the political movements of the day. He was the friend and intimate of lords and noblemen, with great connexions and famous through all Italy; they were the favourites of the common people for their kindness and good nature; they even showed consideration for Ghibellines. He was an accomplished man of the world, keen and subtle, "full of malicious thoughts, mischievous and crafty;" they were inexperienced in intrigue, and had the reputation of being clumsy and stupid. He was the most graceful and engaging of courtiers; they were not even gentlemen. Lastly, in the debates of that excitable republic he was the most eloquent speaker, and they were tongue-tied.\*

\* Dino Comp. 32. 75. 94 133.

“There was a family,” writes Dino Compagni, “who called themselves the Cerchi, men of low estate, but good merchants and very rich; and they dressed richly, and maintained many servants and horses, and made a brave show; and some of them bought the palace of the Conti Guidi, which was near the houses of the Pazzi and Donati, who were more ancient of blood but not so rich; therefore, seeing the Cerchi rise to great dignity, and that they had walled and enlarged the palace, and kept great state, the Donati began to have a great hatred against them.” Villani gives the same account of the feud.\* “It began in that quarter of scandal the Sesto of Porta S. Piero, between the Cerchi and Donati, on the one side through jealousy, on the other through churlish unthankfulness. Of the house of the Cerchi was head Messer Vieri de’ Cerchi, and he and those of his house were people of great business, and powerful, and of great relationships, and most wealthy traders, so that their company was one of the greatest in the world; men they were of soft life, and who meant no harm; boorish, and unthankful, like people who had come in a short time to great state and power. The Donati were gentlemen and warriors, and of no excessive wealth. . . . They were neighbours in Florence and in the country, and by the conversation of their jealousy with the ill-tempered boorishness of the others, arose the proud scorn that there was between them.” The glories of Campaldino were not as oil on these troubled waters. The conquerors flouted each other all the more fiercely in the streets on their return, and ill-treated the lower people with less scruple. No gathering for festive or serious purposes could be held without tempting strife. A marriage, a funeral, a ball, a gay procession of cavaliers and ladies,—any meeting, where one stood while another sat, where horse or man might jostle another, where pride might be nettled or temper shown, was in danger of ending in blood. The lesser quarrels meanwhile ranged themselves under the greater ones; and these, especially that between the Cerchi and Donati, took more and more a political character. The

\* G. Vill. viii. 39.

Cerchi inclined more and more to the trading classes and the lower people; they threw themselves on their popularity, and began to hold aloof from the meetings of the "Parte Guelfa," while this organised body became an instrument in the hands of their opponents, a club of the nobles. Corso Donati, besides mischief of a more substantial kind, turned his ridicule on their solemn dulness and awkward speech, and his friends the jesters, one Scampolino in particular, carried his gibes and nicknames all over Florence. The Cerchi received all in sullen and dogged indifference. They were satisfied with repelling attacks, and nursed their hatred.\*

Thus the city was divided, and the attempts to check the factions only exasperated them. It was in vain that, when at times the government or the populace lost patience, severe measures were taken. It was in vain that the reformer, Gian della Bella, carried for a time his harsh "orders of justice" against the nobles, and invested popular vengeance with the solemnity of law and with the pomp and ceremony of a public act — that when a noble had been convicted of killing a citizen, the great officer, "Standard-bearer," as he was called, "of justice," issued forth in state and procession, with the banner of justice borne before him, with all his train, and at the head of the armed citizens, to the house of the criminal, and razed it to the ground. An eye-witness describes the effect of such chastisement: — "I, Dino Compagni, being Gonfalonier of Justice in 1293, went to their houses, and to those of their relations, and these I caused to be pulled down according to the laws. This beginning in the case of the other Gonfaloniers came to an evil effect; because, if they demolished the houses according to the laws, the people said that they were cruel; and if they did not demolish them completely, they said that they were cowards; and many distorted justice for fear of the people." Gian della Bella was overthrown with few regrets even on the part of the people. Equally vain was the attempt to keep the peace by separating the leaders of the disturbances.

\* Dino Compagni, pp. 32. 34. 38.



They were banished by a kind of ostracism; they departed in ostentatious meekness, Corso Donato to plot at Rome, Vieri de' Cerchi to return immediately to Florence. Anarchy had got too fast a hold on the city; and it required a stronger hand than that of the pope, or the signory of the republic to keep it down.

Yet Florence prospered. Every year it grew richer, more intellectual, more refined, more beautiful, more gay. With its anarchy there was no stagnation. Torn and divided as it was, its energy did not slacken, its busy and creative spirit was not deadened, its hopefulness not abated. The factions, fierce and personal as they were, did not hinder that interest in political ideas, that active and subtle study of the questions of civil government, that passion and ingenuity displayed in political contrivance, which now pervaded Northern Italy, everywhere marvellously patient and hopeful, though far from being equally successful. In Venice at the close of the 13th century, that polity was finally settled and consolidated, by which she was great as long as cities could be imperial, and which, even in its decay, survived the monarchy of Louis XIV. and existed within the memory of living men. In Florence, the constructive spirit of law and order only resisted, but never triumphed. Yet it was at this time resolute and sanguine, ready with experiment and change, and not yet dispirited by continual failure. Political interest, however, and party contests were not sufficient to absorb and employ the citizens of Florence. Their genial and versatile spirit, so keen, so inventive, so elastic, which made them such hot and impetuous partisans, kept them from being only this. The time was one of growth; new knowledge, new powers, new tastes were opening to men; new pursuits attracted them. There was commerce, there was the School philosophy, there was the science of nature, there was ancient learning, there was the civil law, there were the arts, there was poetry, all rude as yet, and unformed, but full of hope — the living parents of mightier offspring. Frederick II. had once more opened Aristotle to the Latin world, had given an impulse which was responded to through Italy to

the study of the great monuments of Roman legislation; himself a poet, his example and his splendid court had made poetry fashionable. In the end of the 13th century a great stride was made at Florence. While her great poet was growing up to manhood, as rapid a change went on in her streets, her social customs, the wealth of her citizens, their ideas of magnificence and beauty, their appreciation of literature. It was the age of growing commerce and travel; Franciscan missionaries had reached China, and settled there\*; in 1294, Marco Polo returned to Venice, the first successful explorer of the East. The merchants of Florence lagged not; their field of operation was Italy and the West; they had their correspondents in London, Paris, and Bruges; they were the bankers of popes and kings.† And their city shows to this day the wealth and magnificence of the last years of the thirteenth century. The ancient buildings, consecrated in the memory of the Florentine people, were repaired, enlarged, adorned with marble and bronze — Or San Michele, the Badia, the Baptistery; and new buildings rose on a grander scale. In 1294 was begun the Mausoleum of the great Florentine dead, the Church of S. Croce. In the same year, a few months later, Arnolfo laid the deep foundations which were afterwards to bear up Brunelleschi's dome, and traced the plan of the magnificent cathedral. In 1298, he began to raise a Town-hall worthy of the Republic, and of being the habitation of its magistrates, the frowning mass of the Palazzo Vecchio. In 1299, the third circle of the walls was commenced, with the benediction of bishops, and the concourse of all the "lords and orders" of Florence. And Giotto was now beginning to throw Cimabue into the shade, — Giotto, the shepherd's boy, painter, sculptor, architect, and engineer at once, who a few years later was to complete and crown the architectural glories of Florence by that masterpiece of grace, his marble Campanile.

\* See the curious letters of *John de Monte Corvino*, about his mission in Cathay, 1289—1305, in Wadding, vi. 69.

† E. g. the *Mozzi*, of Greg. X.; *Peruzzi*, of Philip le Bel; *Spini*, of Boniface VIII.; *Cerchi del Garbo*, of Benedict XI. (G. Vill. vii. 42. viii. 63. 71. *Dino Comp.* p. 35.)

Fifty years made then all that striking difference in domestic habits, in the materials of dress, in the value of money, which they have usually made in later centuries. The poet of the fourteenth century describes the proudest nobleman of a hundred years before "with his leathern girdle and clasp of bone;" and in one of the most beautiful of all poetic celebrations of the good old time, draws the domestic life of ancient Florence in the household where his ancestor was born: —

"A così riposato, a così bello  
Viver di cittadini, a così fida  
Cittadinanza, a così dolce ostello  
Maria mi diè, chiamata in alte grida," — *Par.* c. 15.

there high-born dames, he says, still plied the distaff and the loom; still rocked the cradle with the words which their own mothers had used; or working with their maidens, told them old tales of the forefathers of the city, "of the Trojans, of Fiesole, and of Rome." Villani still finds this rudeness within forty years of the end of the century, almost within the limits of his own and Dante's life; and speaks of that "old first people," *il primo Popolo Vecchio*, with their coarse food and expenditure, their leather jerkins, and plain close gowns, their small dowries and late marriages, as if they were the first founders of the city, and not a generation which had lasted on into his own.\* Twenty years later, his story is of the gaiety, the riches, the profuse munificence, the brilliant festivities, the careless and joyous life, which attracted foreigners to Florence as the city of pleasure; of companies of a thousand or more, all clad in white robes, under a lord, styled "of Love," passing their time in sports and dances; of ladies and knights, "going through the city with trumpets and other instruments, with joy and gladness," and meeting together in banquets evening and morning; entertaining illustrious strangers, and honourably escorting them on horseback in their passage through the city; tempting by their liberality, courtiers, and wits, and minstrels,

\* G. Vill. vi. 69. (1259.)

and jesters, to add to the amusements of Florence.\* Nor were these the boisterous triumphs of unrefined and coarse merriment. How variety of character was drawn out, how its more delicate elements were elicited and tempered, how nicely it was observed, and how finely drawn, let the racy and open-eyed story-tellers of Florence testify.

Not perhaps in these troops of revellers, but amid music and song, and in the pleasant places of social and private life, belonging to the Florence of arts and poetry, not to the Florence of factions and strife, should we expect to find the friend of the sweet singer, Casella, and of the reserved and bold speculator, Guido Cavalcanti;—the mystic poet of the *Vita Nuova*, so sensitive and delicate, trembling at a gaze or a touch, recording visions, painting angels, composing Canzoni and commenting on them; finally devoting himself to the austere consolations of deep study. To superadd to such a character that of a democratic politician of the middle ages, seems an incongruous and harsh combination. Yet it was a real one in this instance. The scholar's life is, in our idea of it, far separated from the practical and the political; we have been taught by our experience to disjoin enthusiasm in love, in art, in what is abstract or imaginative, from keen interest and successful interference in the affairs and conflicts of life. The practical man may sometimes be also a *dilettante*; but the dreamer or the thinker, wisely or indolently, keeps out of the rough ways where real passions and characters meet and jostle, or if he ventures, seldom gains honour there. The separation, though a natural one, grows wider as society becomes more vast and manifold, as its ends, functions, and pursuits are disentangled, while they multiply. But in Dante's time, and in an Italian city, it was not such a strange thing that the most refined and tender interpreter of feeling, the popular poet, whose verses touched all hearts and were in every mouth, should be also at once the ardent follower of all abstruse and difficult learning, and a prominent character among those who administered the state. In that narrow

\* G. Vill. vii. 89. (1283.)

sphere of action, in that period of dawning powers and circumscribed knowledge, it seemed no unreasonable hope, or unwise ambition, to attempt the compassing of all science, and to make it subserve and illustrate the praise of active citizenship.\* Dante, like other literary celebrities of the time, was not less from the custom of the day, than from his own purpose, a public man. He took his place among his fellow-citizens; he went out to war with them; he fought, it is said, among the skirmishers at the great Guelf victory of Campaldino; to qualify himself for office in the democracy, he enrolled himself in one of the Guilds of the people, and was matriculated in the "Art" of the Apothecaries; he served the state as its agent abroad; he went on important missions to the cities and courts of Italy—according to a Florentine tradition, which enumerates fourteen distinct embassies, even to Hungary and France. In the memorable year of Jubilee, 1300, he was one of the Priors of the Republic. There is no shrinking from fellowship and cooperation and conflict with the keen or bold men of the market-place and council-hall, in that mind of exquisite and, as drawn by itself, exaggerated sensibility. The doings and characters of men, the workings of society, the fortunes of Italy, were watched and thought of with as deep an interest as the courses of the stars, and read in the real spectacle of life with as profound emotion as in the miraculous page of Virgil; and no scholar ever read Virgil with such feeling—no astronomer ever watched the stars with more eager inquisitiveness. The whole man opens to the world around him; all affections and powers, soul and sense, diligently and thoughtfully directed and trained, with free and concurrent and equal energy, with distinct yet harmonious purposes, seek out their respective and appropriate objects, moral, intellectual, natural, spiritual, in that admirable scene and hard field where man is placed to labour and love, to be exercised, proved, and judged.

In a fresco in the chapel of the old palace of the Podestà †

\* *Vide* the opening of the *De Monarchia*.

† Now a prison, the Bargello. *Vide* Vasari, Vit. di Giotto, p. 311.

at Florence, is a portrait of Dante, said to be by the hand of his cotemporary Giotto. He is represented as he might have been in the year of Campaldino. The countenance is youthful yet manly, more manly than it appears in the engravings of the picture; but it only suggests the strong deep features of the well-known traditional face. He is drawn with much of the softness, and melancholy pensive sweetness, and with something also of the quaint stiffness of the *Vita Nuova*—with his flower and his book. With him is drawn his master, Brunetto Latini\*, and Corso Donati. We do not know what occasion led Giotto thus to associate him with the great “Baron.” Dante was, indeed, closely connected with the Donati. The dwelling of his family was near theirs, in the “Quarter of Scandal,” the Ward of the Porta S. Piero. He married a daughter of their house, Madonna Gemma. None of his friends are commemorated with more affection than the companion of his light and wayward days, remembered not without a shade of anxious sadness, yet with love and hope, Corso’s brother, Forese.† No sweeter spirit sings and smiles in the illumined spheres of Paradise, than she whom Forese remembers as on earth one,

“Che tra bella e buona  
Non so qual fosse più—” ‡

and who, from the depth of her heavenly joy, teaches the poet that in the lowest place among the blessed there can be no envy § — the sister of Forese and Corso, Piccarda. The *Commedia*, though it speaks, as if in prophecy, of Corso’s miserable death, avoids the mention of his name. Its silence is so remarkable as to seem significant. But though history does not group together Corso and Dante, the picture represents the truth—their fortunes were linked together. They were actors in the same scene—at this distance of time two of the most prominent; though a scene very different from that calm and grave assembly, which Giotto’s placid pencil has drawn on the old chapel wall.

\* He died in 1294. G. Vill. viii. 10.

‡ Purgat. c. 24.

† Purgat. c. 23.

§ Parad. c. 3.

The outlines of this part of Dante's history are so well known that it is not necessary to dwell on them; and more than the outlines we know not. The family quarrels came to a head, issued in parties, and the parties took names; they borrowed them from two rival factions in a neighbouring town, whose feud was imported into Florence; and the Guelfs became divided into the Black Guelfs who were led by the Donati, and the White Guelfs who sided with the Cerchi. It still professed to be but a family feud, confined to the great houses; but they were too powerful and Florence too small for it not to affect the whole Republic. The middle classes and the artizans looked on, and for a time not without satisfaction, at the strife of the great men; but it grew evident that one party must crush the other, and become dominant in Florence; and of the two, the Cerchi and their White adherents were less formidable to the democracy than the unscrupulous and overbearing Donati, with their military renown and lordly tastes; proud not merely of being nobles, but Guelf nobles; always loyal champions, once the martyrs, and now the hereditary assertors of the great Guelf cause. The Cerchi with less character and less zeal, but rich, liberal, and showy, and with more of rough kindness and vulgar good-nature for the common people, were more popular in Guelf Florence than the "Parte Guelfa;" and, of course, the Ghibellines wished them well. Both the cotemporary historians of Florence lead us to think that they might have been the governors and guides of the Republic — if they had chosen, and had known how; and both, though condemning the two parties equally, seemed to have thought that this would have been the best result for the State. But the accounts of both, though they are very different writers, agree in their scorn of the leaders of the White Guelfs. They were upstarts, purse-proud, vain, and coarse minded: and they dared to aspire to an ambition which they were too dull and too cowardly to pursue, when the game was in their hands. They wished to rule; but when they might, they were afraid. The commons were on their side, the moderate men, the party of law, the

lovers of republican government, and for the most part the magistrates; but they shrunk from their fortune, "more from cowardice than from goodness, because they exceedingly feared their adversaries."\* Boniface VIII. had no prepossessions in Florence, except for energy and an open hand; the side which was most popular he would have accepted and backed; but "he would not lose," he said, "the men for the women." "*Io non voglio perdere gli uomini per le femmine.*"† If the Black party furnished types for the grosser or fiercer forms of wickedness in the poet's Hell, the White party surely were the originals of that picture of stupid and cowardly selfishness, in the miserable crowd who moan and are buffeted in the vestibule of the Pit, mingled with the angels who dared neither to rebel nor be faithful, but "*were for themselves*;" and whoever it may be who is singled out in the "*setta dei cattivi*," for deeper and special scorn — he,

"Che fece per viltà il gran rifiuto,"—

the idea was derived from the Cerchi in Florence.

A French prince was sent by the Pope to mediate and make peace in Florence. The Black Guelfs and Corso Donati came with him. The magistrates were overawed and perplexed. The White party were, step by step, amused, entrapped, led blindly into false plots, entangled in the elaborate subtleties, and exposed with all the zest and mockery, of Italian intrigue—finally chased out of their houses and from the city, condemned unheard, outlawed, ruined in name and property, by the Pope's French mediator. With them fell many citizens who had tried to hold the balance between the two parties: for the leaders of the Black Guelfs were guilty of no errors of weakness. In two extant lists of the proscribed—condemned by default, for corruption and various crimes, especially for hindering the entrance into Florence of Charles de Valois, to a heavy fine and banishment, then, two months after, for contumacy,

\* Dino Comp. p. 45.

† Dino Comp. p. 62.



to be burned alive if he ever fell into the hands of the Republic, — appears the name of Dante Alighieri; and more than this, concerning the history of his expulsion, we know not.\*

Of his subsequent life, history tells us little more than the general character. He acted for a time in concert with the expelled party, in attempting to force their way back to Florence; and gave them up at last, in scorn and despair: but he never returned to Florence. And he found no new home for the rest of his days. Nineteen years, from his exile to his death, he was a wanderer. The character is stamped on his writings. History, tradition, documents, all scanty or dim, do but disclose him to us at different points, appearing here and there, we are not told how or why. One old record, discovered by antiquarian industry, shows him in a village church near Florence, planning, with the Cerchi and the White party, an attack on the Black Guelfs. In another, he appears in the Val di Magra, making peace between its small potentates: in another, as the inhabitant of a certain street in Padua. The traditions of some remote spots about Italy still connect his name with a ruined tower, a mountain glen, a cell in a convent. In the recollections of the following generation, his solemn and melancholy form mingled reluctantly, and for a while, in the brilliant court of the Scaligers; and scared the women, as a visitant of the other world, as he passed by their doors in the streets of Verona. Rumour brings him to the West—with probability to Paris, more doubtfully to Oxford. But little certain can be made out about the places where he was an honoured and admired, but it may be, not always a welcome guest, till we find him sheltered, cherished, and then laid at last to rest, by the Lords of Ravenna. There he still rests, in a small, solitary chapel, built, not by a Florentine, but a Venetian. Florence, “that mother of little love,” asked for his bones; but rightly asked in vain. His place of repose is better in those remote and

\* Pelli, pp. 105, 106.

forsaken streets "by the shore of the Adrian Sea," hard by the last relics of the Roman Empire, — the mausoleum of the children of Theodosius, and the mosaics of Justinian — than among the assembled dead of S. Croce, or amid the magnificence of S. Maria del Fiore.\*

The *Commedia*, at the first glance, shows the traces of its author's life. It is the work of a wanderer. The very form in which it is cast is that of a journey, difficult, toilsome, perilous, and full of change. It is more than a working out of that touching phraseology of the middle ages, in which "the way" was the technical theological expression for this mortal life; and "*viator*," meant man in his state of trial, as "*comprehensor*," meant man made perfect, having attained to his heavenly country. It is more than merely this. The writer's mind is full of the recollections and definite images of his various journeys. The permanent scenery of the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*, very variously and distinctly marked, is that of travel. The descent down the sides of the Pit, and the ascent of the Sacred Mountain, show one familiar with such scenes—one who had climbed painfully in perilous passes, and grown dizzy on the brink of narrow ledges over sea or torrent. It is scenery from the gorges of the Alps and Apennines, or the terraces and precipices of the Riviera. Local reminiscences abound;—the severed rocks of the Adige valley—the waterfall of S. Benedetto—the crags of Pietra-pana and S. Leo, which overlook the plains of Lucca and Ravenna—the "fair river" that flows among the poplars between Chiaveri and Sestri—the marble quarries of Carrara—the "rough and desert ways between Lerici and Turbia," and those towery cliffs, going sheer into the deep sea at Noli, which travellers on the Corniche road some

\* These notices have been carefully collected by *Pelli*, who seems to have left little to glean (*Memorie*, &c. Ed. 2<sup>da</sup>, 1823). A few additions have been made by *Gerini* (*Mem. Stor. della Lunigiana*), and *Troya* (*Vetro Allegorico*), but they are not of much importance. *Arrivabene* (*Secolo di Dante*), has brought together a mass of illustration which is very useful, and would be more so, if he were more careful, and quoted his authorities. *Balbo*, arranges these materials with sense and good feeling; though, as a writer, he is below his subject. A few traits and anecdotes may be found in the novelists — as *Sacchetti*.

thirty years ago, may yet remember with fear. Mountain experience furnished that picture of the traveller caught in an Alpine mist and gradually climbing above it; seeing the vapours grow thin, and the sun's orb appear faintly through them; and issuing at last into sunshine on the mountain top, while the light of sunset was lost already on the shores below:—

“ Ai raggi, morti già nei bassi lidi:”—*Purg.* 17.

or that image of the cold dull shadow over the torrent, beneath the Alpine fir,—

“ Un' ombra smorta  
Qual sotto foglie verdi e rami nigri  
Sovra suoi freddi rivi, l' Alpe porta:”—*Purg.* 33.\*

or of the large snow-flakes falling without wind, among the mountains,—

“ d' un cader lento  
Piovean di fuoco dilatate falde,  
Come di neve in Alpe senza vento.”—*Inferno*, 14.†

He delights in a local name and local image—the boiling pitch, and the clang of the shipwrights in the arsenal of Venice—the sepulchral fields of Arles and Pola—the hot-spring of Viterbo—the hooded monks of Cologne—the dykes of Flanders and Padua—the Maremma, with its rough brushwood, its wild boars, its snakes and fevers. He had listened to the south wind among the pine-tops, in the forest by the sea, at Ravenna. He had watched under the Carisenda tower at Bologna, and seen the driving clouds “give away their motion” to it, and make it seem to be falling; and had noticed how at Rome the October sun sets between Corsica and Sardinia.‡ His images of the sea

\* “ A death-like shade—  
Like that beneath black boughs and foliage green  
O'er the cool streams in Alpine glens display'd.”—WRIGHT.

† “ O'er all the sandy desert, falling slow,  
Were shower'd dilated flakes of fire, like snow  
On Alpine summits, when the wind is low.”—WRIGHT.

‡ *Inf.* 31. 18.

are numerous and definite — the ship backing out of the tier in harbour, the diver plunging after the fouled anchor, the mast rising, the ship going fast before the wind, the water closing in its wake, the arched backs of the porpoises the forerunners of a gale, the admiral watching everything from poop to prow, the oars stopping altogether at the sound of the whistle, the swelling sails becoming slack when the mast snaps and falls.\* Nowhere could we find so many of the most characteristic and strange sensations of the traveller touched with such truth. Every one knows the lines which speak of the voyager's sinking of heart on the first evening at sea, and of the longings wakened, in the traveller at the beginning of his journey, by the distant evening bell †; the traveller's *morning* feelings are not less delicately noted — the strangeness on first waking in the open air with the sun high; morning thoughts, as day by day he wakes nearer home; the morning sight of the sea-beach quivering in the early light; the tarrying and lingering, before setting out in the morning ‡ —

“Noi eravam lunghesso 'l mare ancora,  
Come gente che pensa al suo cammino,  
Che va col cuore, e col corpo dimora.”

He has recorded equally the anxiety, the curiosity, the suspicion with which, in those times, stranger met and eyed stranger on the road; and a still more characteristic trait is to be found in those lines where he describes the pilgrim's gazing around in the church of his vow, and his thinking how he shall tell of it: —

“E quasi peregrin che si ricrea  
Nel tempio del suo voto riguardando,  
E spera già ri dir com' ello stea :” — *Parad.* 31. ||

\* *Inf.* 17. 16. 31. ; *Purg.* 24. ; *Par.* 2. ; *Inf.* 22. ; *Purg.* 30. ; *Par.* 25. ; *Inf.* 7.

† *Purg.* 8. “Era già l' ora,” &c.

‡ *Purg.* 19. 27. 1. 2.

§ “By ocean's shore we still prolong'd our stay  
Like men, who, thinking of a journey near,  
Advance in thought, while yet their limbs delay.” — WRIGHT.

|| “And like a pilgrim who with fond delight  
Surveys the temple he has vow'd to see,  
And hopes one day its wonders to recite.” — WRIGHT.

or again, in that description, so simple and touching, of his thoughts while waiting to see the relic for which he left his home:—

“ Quale è colui che forse di Croazia  
Viene a veder la Veronica nostra,  
Che per l' antica fama non si sazia,  
Ma dice nel pensier, fin che si mostra ;  
Signor mio Gesu Cristo Dio verace,  
Or fu sì fatta la sembianza vostra ? ” — *Parad.* 31.\*

Of these years then of disappointment and exile the “ *Divina Commedia* ” was the labour and fruit. A story in Boccaccio's life of Dante, told with some detail, implies indeed that it was begun, and some progress made in it, while Dante was yet in Florence—begun in Latin, and he quotes three lines of it—continued afterwards in Italian. This is not impossible ; indeed the germ and presage of it may be traced in the *Vita Nuova*. The idealized saint is there, in all the grace of her pure and noble humbleness, the guide and safeguard of the poet's soul. She is already in glory with Mary the queen of angels. She already beholds the face of the Everblessed. And the *envoye* of the *Vita Nuova* is the promise of the *Commedia*. “ After this sonnet,” (in which he describes how beyond the widest sphere of heaven his love had beheld a lady receiving honour, and dazzling by her glory the unaccustomed spirit)—“ After this sonnet there appeared to me a marvellous vision, in which I saw things which made me resolve not to speak more of this blessed one, until such time as I should be able to indite more worthily of her. And to attain to this, I study to the utmost of my power, as she truly knows. So that, if it shall be the pleasure of Him, by whom all things live, that my life continue for some years, I hope to say of her that which never hath been said of any

\* “ Like one who, from Croatia come to see  
Our Veronica, (image long adored)  
Gazes, as though content he ne'er could be,—  
Thus musing, while the relic is pourtray'd,—  
' Jesus my God, my Saviour, and my Lord,  
O were thy features these I see display'd ? ” — WRIGHT.

woman. And afterwards, may it please Him, who is the Lord of kindness, that my soul may go to behold the glory of her lady, that is, of that blessed Beatrice, who gloriously gazes on the countenance of Him, *qui est per omnia secula benedictus.*”\* It would be wantonly violating probability and the unity of a great life, to suppose that this purpose, though transformed, was ever forgotten or laid aside. The poet knew not indeed what he was promising, what he was pledging himself to—through what years of toil and anguish he would have to seek the light and the power he had asked; in what form his high venture should be realised. But the *Commedia* is the work of no light resolve, and we need not be surprised at finding the resolve and the purpose at the outset of the poet’s life. We may freely accept the key supplied by the words of the *Vita Nuova*. The spell of boyhood is never broken, through the ups and downs of life. His course of thought advances, alters, deepens, but is continuous. From youth to age, from the first glimpse to the perfect work, the same idea abides with him, “even from the flower till the grape was ripe.” It may assume various changes,—an image of beauty, a figure of philosophy, a voice from the other world, a type of heavenly wisdom and joy,—but still it holds, in self-imposed and willing thralldom, that creative and versatile and tenacious spirit. It was the dream and hope of too deep and strong a mind to fade and come to nought—to be other than the seed of the achievement and crown of life. But, with all faith in the star and the freedom of genius, we may doubt whether the prosperous citizen would have done that which was done by the man without a home. Beatrice’s glory might have been sung in grand though barbarous Latin to the literati of the fourteenth century; or a poem of new beauty might have fixed the language and opened the literature of modern Italy; but it could hardly have been the *Commedia*. That belongs, in its date and its greatness, to the time when sorrow had become the poet’s daily portion, and the condition of his life.

\* *Vita Nuova*, last paragraph. See *Purg.* 30.; *Parad.* 30. 6. 28—33.

The *Commedia* is a novel and startling apparition in literature. Probably it has been felt by some, who have approached it with the reverence due to a work of such renown, that the world has been generous in placing it so high. It seems so abnormal, so lawless, so reckless of all ordinary proprieties and canons of feeling, taste, and composition. It is rough and abrupt; obscure in phrase and allusion, doubly obscure in purpose. It is a medley of all subjects usually kept distinct: scandal of the day and transcendental science, politics and confessions, coarse satire and angelic joy, private wrongs, with the mysteries of the faith, local names and habitations of earth, with visions of hell and heaven. It is hard to keep up with the ever changing current of feeling, to pass as the poet passes, without effort or scruple, from tenderness to ridicule, from hope to bitter scorn or querulous complaint, from high-raised devotion to the calmness of prosaic subtleties or grotesque detail. Each separate element and vein of thought has its precedent, but not their amalgamation. Many had written visions of the unseen world, but they had not blended with them their personal fortunes. S. Augustine had taught the soul to contemplate its own history, and had traced its progress from darkness to light\*; but he had not interwoven with it the history of Italy, and the consummation of all earthly destinies. Satire was no new thing; Juvenal had given it a moral, some of the Provençal poets a political, turn; S. Jerome had kindled into it fiercely and bitterly even while expounding the Prophets; but here it streams forth in all its violence, within the precincts of the eternal world, and alternates with the hymns of the blessed. Lucretius had drawn forth the poetry of nature and its laws; Virgil and Livy had unfolded the poetry of the Roman empire; S. Augustine, the still grander poetry of the history of the City of God; but none had yet ventured to weave into one the three wonderful threads. And yet the scope of the Italian poet, vast and comprehensive as the issue of all things, universal as the government which directs

\* See *Convito*, 1, 2.

nature and intelligence, forbids him not to stoop to the lowest caitiff he has ever despised, the minutest fact in nature that has ever struck his eye, the merest personal association which hangs pleasantly in his memory. Writing for all time, he scruples not to mix with all that is august and permanent in history and prophecy, incidents the most transient, and names the most obscure; to waste an immortality of shame or praise on those about whom his own generation were to inquire in vain. Scripture history runs into profane; Pagan legends teach their lesson side by side with Scripture scenes and miracles: heroes and poets of heathenism, separated from their old classic world, have their place in the world of faith, discourse with Christians of Christian dogmas, and even mingle with the Saints; Virgil guides the poet through his fear and his penitence to the gates of Paradise.

This feeling of harsh and extravagant incongruity, of causeless and unpardonable darkness, is perhaps the first impression of many readers of the *Commedia*. But probably, as they read on, there will mingle with this a sense of strange and unusual grandeur, arising not alone from the hardihood of the attempt, and the mystery of the subject, but from the power and the character of the poet. It will strike them that words cut deeper than is their wont; that from that wild uncongenial imagery, thoughts emerge of singular truth and beauty. Their dissatisfaction will be chequered, even disturbed—for we can often bring ourselves to sacrifice much for the sake of a clear and consistent view—by the appearance, amid much that repels them, of proofs undeniable and accumulating of genius as mighty as it is strange. Their perplexity and disappointment may grow into distinct condemnation, or it may pass into admiration and delight; but no one has ever come to the end of the *Commedia* without feeling that if it has given him a new view and specimen of the wildness and unaccountable waywardness of the human mind, it has also added, as few other books have, to his knowledge of its feelings, its capabilities, and its grasp, and suggested larger and more serious thoughts,



for which he may be grateful, concerning that unseen world of which he is even here a member.

Dante would not have thanked his admirers for becoming apologists. Those in whom the sense of imperfection and strangeness overpowers sympathy for grandeur, and enthusiasm for nobleness, and joy in beauty, he certainly would have left to themselves. But neither would he teach any that he was leading them along a smooth and easy road. The *Commedia* will always be a hard and trying book; nor did the writer much care that it should be otherwise. Much of this is no doubt to be set down to its age; much of its roughness and extravagance, as well as of its beauty—its allegorical spirit, its frame and scenery. The idea of a visionary voyage through the worlds of pain and bliss is no invention of the poet—it was one of the commonest and most familiar medieval vehicles of censure or warning; and those who love to trace the growth and often strange fortunes of popular ideas, or whose taste leads them to disbelieve in genius, and track the parentage of great inventions to the foolish and obscure, may find abundant materials in the literature of legends.\* But his own age—the age which received the *Commedia* with mingled enthusiasm and wonder, and called it the Divine, was as much perplexed as we are, though probably rather pleased thereby than offended. That within a century after its composition, in the more famous cities and universities of Italy, Florence, Venice, Bologna, and Pisa, chairs should have been founded, and illustrious men engaged to lecture on it, is a strange homage to its power, even in that time of quick feeling; but as strange and great a proof of its obscurity. What is dark and forbidding in it was scarcely more clear to the poet's contemporaries. And he, whose last object was amusement, invites no audience but a patient and confiding one.

“O voi che siete in piccioletta barca,  
Desiderosi di ascoltar, seguiti  
Dietro al mio legno che cantando varca,

\* *Vide Ozanam, Dante*, pp. 535. *sqq.* Ed. 2<sup>de</sup>.

Tornate a riveder li vostri liti :  
 Non vi mettete in pelago, che forse  
 Perdendo me rimarreste smarriti.

L' acqua ch' io prendo giammai non si corse :  
 Minerva spira, e conduce mi Apollo,  
 E nuove muse mi dimostrar l' Orse.

Voi altri pochi, che drizzaste 'l collo  
 Per tempo al pan degli angeli, del quale  
 Vivesi qui, ma non si vien satollo,

Metter potete ben per l' alto sale  
 Vostro navigio, servando mio solco  
 Dinanzi all' acqua che ritorna eguale.

Que' gloriosi che passaro a Colco,  
 Non s' ammiraron, come voi farete,  
 Quando Jason vider fatto bifolco."—*Parad. 2.\**

The character of the *Commedia* belongs much more, in its excellence and its imperfections, to the poet himself and the nature of his work, than to his age. That cannot screen his faults, nor can it arrogate to itself—it must be content to share, his glory. His leading idea and line of thought was much more novel then than it is now, and belongs much more to the modern than the medieval world. The "Story of a Life," the poetry of man's journey through the wilder-

\* "O ye who fain would listen to my song,  
 Following in little bark full eagerly  
 My venturous ship, that chanting hies along,  
 Turn back unto your native shores again ;  
 Tempt not the deep, lest haply losing me,  
 In unknown paths bewildered ye remain.  
 I am the first this voyage to essay ;  
 Minerva breathes — Apollo is my guide ;  
 And new-born muses do the Bears display.  
 Ye other few, who have look'd up on high  
 For angels' food betimes, e'en here supplied  
 Largely, but not enough to satisfy, —  
 Mid the deep ocean ye your course may take,  
 My track pursuing the pure waters through,  
 Ere reunites the quickly-closing wake.  
 Those glorious ones, who drove of yore their prow  
 To Colchos, wonder'd not as ye will do,  
 When they saw Jason working at the plough."—

WRIGHT'S *Dante*.

ness to his true country, is now in various and very different shapes as hackneyed a form of imagination, as an allegory, an epic, a legend of chivalry were in former times. Not, of course, that any time has been without its poetical feelings and ideas on the subject; and never were they deeper and more diversified, more touching and solemn, than in the ages that passed from S. Augustine and S. Gregory to S. Thomas and S. Bonaventura. But a philosophical poem, where they were not merely the colouring, but the subject, an *epos* of the soul, placed for its trial in a fearful and wonderful world, with relations to time and matter, history and nature, good and evil, the beautiful, the intelligible, and the mysterious, sin and grace, the infinite and the eternal, — and having in the company and under the influences of other intelligences, to make its choice, to struggle, to succeed or fail, to gain the light, or be lost — this was a new and unattempted theme. It has been often tried since, in faith or doubt, in egotism, in sorrow, in murmuring, in affectation, sometimes in joy, — in various forms, in prose and verse, completed or fragmentary, in reality or fiction, in the direct or the shadowed story, in the “Pilgrim’s Progress,” in the “Confessions,” in “Wilhelm Meister” and “Faust,” in the “Excursion.” It is common enough now for the poet, in the faith of human sympathy, and sense of the unexhausted vastness of his mysterious subject, to believe that his fellows will not see without interest and profit, glimpses of his own path and fortunes — hear from his lips the disclosure of his chief delights, his warnings, his fears — follow the many-coloured changes, the impressions and workings of a character at once the contrast and the counterpart to their own. But it was a new path then; and he needed to be, and was, a bold man, who first opened it — a path never trod without peril, usually with loss or failure.

And certainly no great man ever made less secret to himself of his own genius. He is at no pains to rein in or to dissemble his consciousness of power, which he has measured without partiality, and feels sure will not fail him. “Fi-

dandomi di me più che di un altro"\* — is a reason which he assigns without reserve. We look with the distrust and hesitation of modern days, yet, in spite of ourselves, not without admiration and regret, at such frank hardihood. It was more common once than now. When the world was young, it was more natural and allowable — it was often seemly and noble. Men knew not their difficulties as we know them — we, to whom time, which has taught so much wisdom, has brought so many disappointments — we who have seen how often the powerful have fallen short, and the noble gone astray, and the most admirable missed their perfection. It is becoming in us to distrust ourselves — to be shy if we cannot be modest — it is but a respectful tribute to human weakness and our brethren's failures. But there was a time when great men dared to claim their greatness — not in foolish self-complacency, but in unembarrassed and majestic simplicity, in magnanimity and truth, in the consciousness of a serious and noble purpose, and of strength to fulfil it. Without passion, without elation as without shrinking, the poet surveys his superiority and his high position, as something external to him; he has no doubts about it, and affects none. He would be a coward, if he shut his eyes to what he could do; as much a trifler in displaying reserve as ostentation. Nothing is more striking in the *Commedia* than the serene and unhesitating confidence with which he announces himself the heir and reviver of the poetic power so long lost to the world — the heir and reviver of it in all its fulness. He doubts not of the judgment of posterity. One has arisen who shall throw into the shade all modern reputations, who shall bequeath to Christendom the glory of that name of Poet, "che più dura e più onora," hitherto the exclusive boast of heathenism, and claim the rare honours of the laurel: —

" Si rade volte, padre, se ne coglie  
Per trionfare o Cesare o poeta,  
(Colpa e vergogna dell' umane voglie,)

\* Convito, 1. 10.

Che partorir letizia in su la lieta  
 Delfica deità dovria la fronda  
 Peneia quando alcun di sè asseta.”—*Parad.* 1. \*

He has but to follow his star to be sure of the glorious port †: he is the master of language: he can give fame to the dead—no task or enterprise appals him, for whom spirits keep watch in heaven, and angels have visited the shades—“tal si partì dal cantar alleluia:”—who is Virgil’s foster child and familiar friend. Virgil bids him lay aside the last vestige of fear, Virgil is to “crown him king and priest over himself,” ‡ for a higher venture than heathen poetry had dared; in Virgil’s company he takes his place without diffidence, and without vain-glory, among the great poets of old—a sister soul. §

“Poichè la voce fu restata e queta,  
 Vidi quattro grand’ ombre a noi venire:  
 Sembianza avean nè trista nè lieta:

\* \* \* \* \*

Così vidi adunar la bella scuola  
 Di quei signor dell’ altissimo canto

• “For now so rarely Poet gathers these,  
 Or Cæsar, winning an immortal praise,  
 (Shame unto man’s degraded energies)  
 That joy should to the Delphic God arise,  
 When haply any one aspires to gain  
 The high reward of the Peneian prize.”—WRIGHT.

† Brunetto Latini’s Prophecy, *Inf.* 15.

‡ See the grand ending of *Purg.* 27.

“Tratto t’ ho qui con ingegno e con arte:  
 Lo tuo piacere omai prendi per duce:  
 Fuor se’ dell’ erte vie, fuor se’ dell’ arte.

Vedi il sole che ’n fronte ti riluce.  
 Vedi l’ erbetta i fiori e gli arboscelli  
 Che questa terra sol da se produce.

Mentre che vegnon lieti gli occhi belli  
 Che lagrimando a te venir mi fenno,  
 Seder ti puoi e puoi andar tra elli.

Non aspettar mio dir più nè mio cenno:  
 Libero, dritto, sano è tuo arbitrio,  
 E fallo fora non fare a suo senno:

Perch’ io te sopra te coronò e mitriò.”

§ *Purg.* c. 21.

Che sovra gli altri come aquila vola.

Da ch' ebber ragionato insieme alquanto

Volsersi a me con salutevol cenno

E 'l mio maestro sorrise di tanto.

E più d' onore ancora assai mi fenno :

Ch' essi mi fecer della loro schiera,

Si ch' io fui sesto tra cotanto senno." — *Inf.* 4.\*

This sustained magnanimity and lofty self-reliance, which never betrays itself, is one of the main elements of the grandeur of the *Commedia*. It is an imposing spectacle to see such fearlessness, such freedom, and such success in an untried path, amid unprepared materials and rude instruments, models scanty and only half understood, powers of language still doubtful and suspected, the deepest and strongest thought still confined to unbending forms and the harshest phrase; exact and extensive knowledge, as yet far out of reach; with no help from time, which familiarizes all things, and of which, manner, elaboration, judgment, and taste are the gifts and inheritance;—to see the poet, trusting to his eye "which saw everything"† and his searching and creative spirit, venture undauntedly into all regions of thought and feeling, to draw thence a picture of the government of the universe.

But such greatness had to endure its price and its counterpoise. Dante was alone:—except in his visionary world, solitary and companionless. The blind Greek had his throng

\* "Ceased had the voice — when in composed array  
Four mighty shades approaching I survey'd;—  
Nor joy, nor sorrow did their looks betray.

\* \* \* \* \*

Assembled thus, was offered to my sight  
The school of him, the Prince of poetry,  
Who, eagle-like, o'er others takes his flight.  
When they together had conversed awhile,  
They turned to me with salutation bland,  
Which from my master drew a friendly smile :  
And greater glory still they bade me share,  
Making me join their honourable band—  
The sixth united to such genius rare." — WRIGHT.

† "Dante che tutto vedea." — Sacchetti, Nov. 114.

of listeners ; the blind Englishman his home and the voices of his daughters ; Shakspeare had his free associates of the stage ; Goethe, his correspondents, a court, and all Germany to applaud. Not so Dante. The friends of his youth are already in the region of spirits, and meet him there — Casella, Forese ; — Guido Cavalcanti will soon be with them. In this upper world he thinks and writes as a friendless man, — to whom all that he had held dearest was either lost or embittered — for himself.

And so he is his own law ; he owns no tribunal of opinion or standard of taste, except among the great dead. He hears them exhort him to “let the world talk on — to stand like a tower unshaken by the winds.”\* He fears to be “a timid friend to truth,” “— to lose life among those who shall call this present time antiquity.”† He belongs to no party. He is his own arbiter of the beautiful and the becoming ; his own judge over right and injustice, innocence and guilt. He has no followers to secure, no school to humour, no public to satisfy ; nothing to guide him, and nothing to consult, nothing

\* Purg. 5.

† Parad. 17.

“ La luce in che rideva il mio tesoro  
 Ch' io trovai lì, si fe' prima corrusca,  
 Quale a raggio di sole specchio d'oro ;  
 Indi rispose: coscienza fusca  
 O della propria o dell' altrui vergogna  
 Pur sentirà la tua parola brusca ;  
 Ma nondimen, rimossa ogni menzogna,  
 Tutta tua vision fa manifesta,  
 E lascia pur grattar dov' è la rognà :  
 Che se la voce tua sarà molesta  
 Nel primo gusto, vital nutrimento  
 Lascerà poi quando sarà digesta.  
 Questo tuo grido farà come vento  
 Che le più alte cime più percuote:  
 E ciò non fa d' onor poco argomento.  
 Però ti son mostrate, in queste ruote,  
 Nel monte, e nella valle dolorosa,  
 Pur l' anime che son di fama note.  
 Che l' animo di quel ch' ode non posa  
 Nè ferma fede, per esempio ch' aja  
 La sua radice incognita e nascosa,  
 Nè per altro argomento che non paja.”

to bind him, nothing to fear, out of himself. In full trust in heart and will, in his sense of truth, in his teeming brain, he gives himself free course. If men have idolized the worthless, and canonized the base, he reverses their award without mercy, and without apology; if they have forgotten the just because he was obscure, he remembers him: if “*Monna Berta and Ser Martino*,”\* the wimpled and hooded gossips of the day, with their sage company, have settled it to their own satisfaction that Providence cannot swerve from their general rules, cannot save where they have doomed, or reject where they have approved—he both fears more and hopes more. Deeply reverent to the judgment of the ages past, reverent to the persons whom they have immortalised for good and even for evil, in his own day he cares for no man’s person and no man’s judgment. And he shrinks not from the auguries and forecastings of his mind about their career and fate. Men reasoned rapidly in those days on such subjects, and without much scruple; but not with such deliberate and discriminating sternness. The most popular and honoured names in Florence,

“*Farinata e ’l Tegghiaio, che fur sì degni,  
Jacopo Rusticucci, Arrigo, e ’l Mosca,  
E gli altri, ch’ a ben far poser gl’ ingegni ;*”

have yet the damning brand: no reader of the *Inferno* can have forgotten the shock of that terrible reply to the poet’s questionings about their fate:

“*Ei son tra l’ anime piu nere.*” †

If he is partial, it is no vulgar partiality: friendship and old affection do not venture to exempt from its fatal doom the sin of his famous master, Brunetto Latini ‡; nobleness and

\* Parad. 13.

“*Non creda Monna Berta e Ser Martino  
Per veder un furare, altro offerere,  
Vederli dentro al consiglio divino:  
Che quel può surger, e quel può cadere.*”

† Inf. 6.

‡

“*Che in la mente m’ è fitta, ed or m’ accuora,  
La cara buona imagine paterna.*” — *Inf.* 15.



great deeds, a kindred character and common wrongs, are not enough to redeem Farinata; and he who could tell her story bowed to the eternal law, and dared not save Francesca. If he condemns by a severer rule than that of the world, he absolves with fuller faith in the possibilities of grace. Many names of whom history has recorded no good, are marked by him for bliss; yet not without full respect for justice. The penitent of the last hour is saved, but he suffers loss. Manfred's soul is rescued; mercy had accepted his tears, and forgiven his great sins; and the excommunication of his enemy did not bar his salvation:

“Per lor maladizion sì non si perde  
Che non possa tornar l' eterno amore  
Mentre che la speranza ha fior del verde.”—*Purg.* 3.

Yet his sin, though pardoned, was to keep him for long years from the perfection of heaven.\* And with the same independence with which he assigns their fate, he selects his instances—instances which are to be the types of character and its issues. No man ever owned more unreservedly the fascination of greatness, its sway over the imagination and the heart; no one prized more the grand harmony and sense of fitness which there is, when the great man and the great office are joined in one, and reflect each other's greatness. The famous and great of all ages are gathered in the poet's vision; the great names even of fable—Geryon and the giants, the Minotaur and Centaurs, and the heroes of Thebes and Troy. But not the great and famous only: this is too narrow, too conventional a sphere; it is not real enough. He felt, what the modern world feels so keenly, that wonderful histories are latent in the inconspicuous paths of life, in the fugitive incidents of the hour, among the persons whose faces we have seen. The Church had from the first been witness to the deep interest of individual life. The rising taste for novels showed that society at large was beginning to be alive

\* Charles of Anjou, his Guelf conqueror, is placed above him, in the valley of the kings (*Purg.* 7.), “Colui dal maschio naso”—notwithstanding the charges afterwards made against him, *Purg.* 20.

to it. And it is this feeling—that behind the veil there may be grades of greatness but nothing insignificant,—that led Dante to refuse to restrict himself to the characters of fame. He will associate with them the living men who have stood round him; they are part of the same company with the greatest. That they have interested him, touched him, moved his indignation or pity, struck him as examples of great vicissitude or of a perfect life, have pleased him, loved him—this is enough why they should live in his poem as they have lived to him. He chooses at will; history, if it has been negligent at the time about those whom he thought worthy of renown, must be content with its loss. He tells their story, or touches them with a word like the most familiar names, according as he pleases. The obscure highway robber, the obscure betrayer of his sister's honour—Rinier da Corneto and Rinier Pazzo, and Caccianimico—are ranked, not according to their obscurity, but according to the greatness of their crimes, with the famous conquerors, and “scourges of God,” and seducers of the heroic age, Pyrrhus and Attila, and the great Jason of “royal port, who sheds no tear in his torments.”\* He earns as high praise from Virgil, for his curse on the furious wrath of the old frantic Florentine burgher, as if he had cursed the disturber of the world's peace.† And so in the realms of joy, among the faithful accomplishers of the highest trusts, kings and teachers of the nations, founders of orders, sainted empresses, appear those whom, though the world had forgotten or misread them, the poet had enshrined in his familiar thoughts, for their sweetness, their gentle goodness, their nobility of soul; the penitent, the nun, the old crusading ancestor, the pilgrim who had deserted the greatness which he had created, the brave logician, who “syllogised unpalatable truths” in the Quartier Latin of Paris.‡

\* See the magnificent picture Inf. 18.

† Inf. 8.

‡ Cunizza, Piccarda, Cacciaguida, Roméo. (Parad. 9. 3. 15. 6. 10.)

— “La luce eterna di Sigieri  
Che leggendo nel vico degli Strami  
Sillogizzò invidiosi veri —”

There is small resemblance in all this—this arbitrary and imperious tone, this range of ideas, feelings, and images, this unshackled freedom, this harsh reality—to the dreamy gentleness of the *Vita Nuova*, or even the staid argumentation of the more mature *Convito*. The *Vita Nuova* is all self-concentration—a brooding, not unpleased, over the varying tides of feeling, which are little influenced by the world without; where every fancy, every sensation, every superstition of the lover is detailed with the most whimsical subtlety. The *Commedia*, too, has its tenderness—and that more deep, more natural, more true, than the poet had before adapted to the traditionary formulæ of the “Courts of Love,”—the eyes of Beatrice are as bright, and the “conquering light of her smile;” \* they still culminate, but they are not alone, in the poet’s heaven. And the professed subject of the *Commedia* is still Dante’s own story and life; he still makes himself the central point. And steeled as he is by that high and hard experience of which his poem is the projection and type,—“Ben tetragono ai colpi di ventura,”—a stern and brief-spoken man, set on objects, and occupied with a theme, lofty and vast as can occupy man’s thoughts, he still lets escape ever and anon some passing avowal of delicate sensitiveness †, lingers for a moment on some indulged self-consciousness, some recollection of his once quick and change-

in company with S. Thomas Aquinas, in the sphere of the Sun. Ozanam gives a few particulars of this forgotten professor of the “Rue du Fouarre,” pp. 320—323.

\* “Vincendo me col lume d’ un sorriso.”—*Parad.* 18.

† For instance, his feeling of distress at gazing at the blind, who were not aware of his presence—

“A me pareva andando fare oltraggio  
Vedendo altrui, non essendo veduto:”—*Purg.* 13.

and of shame, at being tempted to listen to a quarrel between two lost spirits:—

“Ad ascoltarli er’ io del tutto fisso,  
Quando ’l Maestro mi disse: or pur mira,  
Che per poco è, che teco non mi risso.  
Quando io ’l senti’ a me parlar con ira  
Volsimi verso lui con tal vergogna,  
Ch’ ancor per la memoria mi si gira,” &c.—*Inf.* 30.

and the burst,

“O dignitosa coscienza e netta,  
Come t’ è picciol fallo amaro morso.”—*Purg.* 3.

ful mood—"io che son trasmutabil per tutte guise"\*—or half playfully alludes to the whispered name of a lady†, whose pleasant courtesy has beguiled a few days of exile. But he is no longer spell-bound and entangled in fancies of his own weaving—absorbed in the unprofitable contemplation of his own internal sensations. The man is indeed the same, still a Florentine, still metaphysical, still a lover. He returns to the haunts and images of youth, to take among them his poet's crown; but "with other voice and other garb,"‡ a penitent and a prophet—with larger thoughts, wider sympathies, freer utterance; sterner and fiercer, yet nobler and more genuine in his tenderness—as one whom trial has made serious, and keen, and intolerant of evil, but not sceptical or callous; yet with the impressions and memories of a very different scene from his old day-dreams.

"After that it was the pleasure of the citizens of that fairest and most famous daughter of Rome, Florence, to cast me forth from her most sweet bosom, (wherein I had been nourished up to the maturity of my life, and in which, with all peace to her, I long with all my heart to rest my weary soul, and finish the time which is given me,) I have passed through almost all the regions to which this language reaches, a wanderer, almost a beggar, displaying, against my will, the stroke of fortune, which is oftentimes unjustly wont to be imputed to the person stricken. Truly, I have been a ship without a sail or helm, carried to divers harbours, and gulfs, and shores, by that parching wind which sad poverty breathes; and I have seemed vile in the eyes of many, who perchance, from some fame, had imagined of me in another form; in the sight of whom not only did my presence become nought, but every work of mine less prized, both what had been and what was to be wrought." — *Convito*, Tr. i. c. 3.

Thus proved, and thus furnished, — thus independent and confident, daring to trust his instinct and genius in what was entirely untried and unusual, he entered on his great poem, to shadow forth, under the figure of his own conversion and purification, not merely how a single soul rises to its perfec-

\* Parad. 5.

† Purg. 24.

‡ Parad. 25.

tion, but how this visible world, in all its phases of nature, life, and society, is one with the invisible, which borders on it, actuates, accomplishes, and explains it. It is this vast plan,—to take into his scope, not the soul only in its struggles and triumph, but all that the soul finds itself engaged with in its course; the accidents of the hour, and of ages past; the real persons, great and small, apart from and without whom it cannot think or act; the material world, its theatre and home,—which gives so many various sides to the *Commedia*, which makes it so novel and strange. It is not a mere personal history, or a pouring forth of feeling, like the *Vita Nuova*, though he is himself the mysterious voyager, and he opens without reserve his actual life and his heart; he speaks indeed in the first person, yet he is but a character of the drama, and in great part of it with not more of distinct personality than in that paraphrase of the penitential Psalms, in which he has precluded so much of the *Commedia*. Yet the *Commedia* is not a pure allegory; it admits, and makes use of the allegorical, but the laws of allegory are too narrow for it; the real in it is too impatient of the veil, and breaks through in all its hardness and detail, into what is most shadowy. History is indeed viewed not in its ephemeral look, but under the light of God's final judgments; in its completion, not in its provisional and fragmentary character; viewed therefore but in faith; — but its issues, which in this confused scene we ordinarily contemplate in the gross, the poet brings down to detail and individuals: he faces and grasps the tremendous thought that the very men and women whom we see and speak to, are now the real representatives of sin and goodness, the true actors in that scene which is so familiar to us as a picture — unflinching and terrible heart, he endures to face it in its most harrowing forms. But he wrote not for sport, nor to give poetic pleasure; he wrote to warn; the seed of the *Commedia* was sown in tears, and reaped in misery: and the consolations which it offers are awful as they are real.

Thus, though he throws into symbol and image, what can only be expressed by symbol and image, we can as little

forget in reading him this real world in which we live, as we can in one of Shakspeare's plays. It is not merely that the poem is crowded with real personages, most of them having the single interest to us of being real. But all that is associated with man's history and existence is interwoven with the main course of thought — all that gives character to life, all that gives it form and feature, even to quaintness, all that occupies the mind, or employs the hand — speculation, science, arts, manufactures, monuments, scenes, customs, proverbs, ceremonies, games, punishments, attitudes of men, habits of living creatures. The wildest and most unearthly imaginations, the most abstruse thoughts take up into, and incorporate with themselves the forcible and familiar impressions of our mother earth, and do not refuse the company and aid even of the homeliest.

This is not mere poetic ornament, peculiarly, profusely, or extravagantly employed. It is one of the ways in which his dominant feeling expresses itself—spontaneous and instinctive in each several instance of it, but the kindling and effluence of deliberate thought, and attending on a clear purpose—the feeling of the real and intimate connexion between the objects of sight and faith. It is not that he sees in one the simple counterpart and reverse of the other, or sets himself to trace out universally their mutual correspondences; he has too strong a sense of the reality of this familiar life to reduce it merely to a shadow and type of the unseen. What he struggles to express in countless ways, with all the resources of his strange and gigantic power, is that this world and the next are both equally real, and both one — parts, however different, of one whole. The world to come we know but in “a glass darkly;” man can only think and imagine of it in images, which he knows to be but broken and faint reflections: but this world we know, not in outline, and featureless idea, but by name, and face, and shape, by place and person, by the colours and forms which crowd over its surface, the men who people its habitations, the events which mark its moments. Detail fills the sense here, and is the mark of reality. And thus he seeks to keep alive the

feeling of what that world is which he connects with heaven and hell ; not by abstractions, not much by elaborate and highly-finished pictures, but by names, persons, local features, definite images. Widely and keenly has he ranged over and searched into the world — with a largeness of mind which disdained not to mark and treasure up, along with much unheeded beauty, many a characteristic feature of nature, unnoticed because so common. All his pursuits and interests contribute to the impression, which, often instinctively it may be, he strives to produce, of the manifold variety of our life. As a man of society, his memory is full of its usages, formalities, graces, follies, fashions, — of expressive motions, postures, gestures, looks, — of music, of handicrafts, of the conversation of friends or associates, — of all that passes, so transiently yet so keenly pleasant or distasteful, between man and man. As a traveller, he recals continually the names and scenes of the world ; — as a man of speculation, the secrets of nature — the phenomena of light, the theory of the planets' motions, the idea and laws of physiology. As a man of learning, he is filled with the thoughts and recollections of ancient fable and history ; as a politician, with the thoughts, prognostications, and hopes, of the history of the day ; as a moral philosopher he has watched himself, his external sensations and changes, his inward passions, his mental powers, his ideas, his conscience ; he has far and wide noted character, discriminated motives, classed good and evil deeds. All that the man of society, of travel, of science, of learning, the politician, the moralist, could gather, is used at will in the great poetic structure ; but all converges to the purpose, and is directed by the intense feeling of the theologian, who sees this wonderful and familiar scene melting into, and ending in another yet more wonderful, but which will one day be as familiar,—who sees the difficult but sure progress of the manifold remedies of the Divine government to their predestined issue ; and, over all, God and His saints.

So comprehensive in interest is the *Commedia*. Any attempt to explain it, by narrowing that interest to politics, philosophy, the moral life, or theology itself, must prove

inadequate. Theology strikes the key-note; but history, natural and metaphysical science, poetry, and art, each in their turn join in the harmony, independent, yet ministering to the whole. If from the poem itself we could be for a single moment in doubt of the reality and dominant place of religion in it, the plain spoken prose of the *Convito* would show how he placed "the Divine Science, full of all peace, and allowing no strife of opinions and sophisms, for the excellent certainty of its subject, which is God," in single perfection above all other sciences, "which are, as Solomon speaks, but queens, or concubines, or maidens; but she is the 'Dove,' and the 'perfect one'—'Dove,' because without stain of strife—'perfect,' because perfectly she makes us behold the truth, in which our soul stills itself and is at rest." But the same passage\* shows likewise how he viewed all human knowledge and human interests, as holding their due place in the hierarchy of wisdom, and among the steps of man's perfection. No account of the *Commedia* will prove sufficient, which does not keep in view, first of all, the high moral purpose and deep spirit of faith with which it was written, and then the wide liberty of materials and means which the poet allowed himself in working out his design.

Doubtless, his writings have a political aspect. The "great Ghibelline poet" is one of Dante's received synonyms; of his strong political opinions, and the importance he attached to them, there can be no doubt. And he meant his poem to be the vehicle of them, and the record to all ages of the folly and selfishness with which he saw men governed. That he should take the deepest interest in the goings on of his time, is part of his greatness; to suppose that he stopped at them, or that he subordinated to political objects or feelings all the other elements of his poem, is to shrink up that greatness into very narrow limits. Yet this has been done by men of mark and ability, by Italians, by men who read the *Commedia* in their own mother-tongue. It has been maintained as a satisfactory account of it,—maintained

\* *Convito*, Tr. 2. c. 14, 15.



with great labour and pertinacious ingenuity, — that Dante meant nothing more by his poem than the conflicts and ideal triumph of a political party. The hundred cantos of that Vision of the Universe are but a manifesto of the Ghibelline propaganda, a sort of Ghibelline and mediæval *Histoire de Dix Ans*, designed, under the veil of historic images and scenes, to insinuate what it was dangerous to announce; and Beatrice, in all her glory and sweetness, is but a specimen of the jargon, cant, and slang of Ghibelline freemasonry. To Professor Rosetti must belong the distinction of having degraded the greatest name of his country to a depth of laborious imbecility, to which the trifling of schoolmen and academicians is as nothing; of having solved the enigma of Dante's works, by imagining for him a character in which it is hard to say which predominates, the pedant, mountebank, or infidel. After that we may read Voltaire's sneers with patience, and even enter with gravity on the examination of Father Hardouin's Historic Doubts. The fanaticism of a perhaps outraged, but essentially foolish liberalism, is but a poor excuse for such dulness of heart and perverseness of intellect.\*

Dante was not a Ghibelline, though he longed for the interposition of an Imperial power. Historically, he was not. It is true that he forsook the Guelfs, with whom he had been brought up, and that the White Guelfs, with whom he was expelled from Florence, were at length merged and lost in the Ghibelline party †; and he acted with them for a time.‡ But no words can be stronger than those in which he disjoins himself from that "evil and foolish company," and claims his independence —

"A te fia bello

*Averti fatto parte per te stesso."* §

\* In the "Remains of Arthur Henry Hallam" is a paper, in which he examines and disposes of this theory with a courteous and forbearing irony, which would have deepened probably into something more, on thinking over it a second time.

† Dino Comp. pp. 89—91.

‡ His name appears among the White delegates in 1307. Pelli, p. 117.

§ Parad. 17.

And it is not easy to conceive a Ghibelline partizan putting into the mouth of Justinian, the type of law and empire, a general condemnation of his party as heavy as that of their antagonists;—the crime of having betrayed, as the Guelfs had resisted, the great symbol of public right—

“ Omai puoi giudicar di que' cotali  
 Ch' io accusai di sopra, e de' lor falli  
 Che son cagion di tutti i vostri mali.  
 L' uno al pubblico segno i gigli gialli  
 Oppone, e *quel s' appropria l'altro a parte*,  
 Sì ch' è forte a veder qual più si falli.  
*Faccian li Ghibellin, faccian lor arte*  
*Sott' altro segno; che mal segue quello*  
*Sempre chi la giustizia e lui diparte.”\**

And though, as the victim of the Guelfs of Florence, he found refuge among Ghibelline princes, he had friends among Guelfs also. His steps and his tongue were free to the end. And in character and feeling, in his austerity, his sturdiness and roughness, his intolerance of corruption and pride, his strongly-marked devotional temper, he was much less a Ghibelline than like one of those stern Guelfs who hailed Savonarola.

But he had a very decided and complete political theory, which certainly was not Guelf; and, as parties then were, it was not much more Ghibelline. Most assuredly no set of men would have more vigorously resisted the attempt to realise his theory, would have joined more heartily with all immediate opponents—Guelfs, Black, White, and Green, or even Boniface VIII., to keep out such an emperor as Dante imagined, than the Ghibelline nobles and potentates.

Dante's political views were a dream; though a dream based on what had been, and an anticipation of what was, in part at least, to come. It was a dream in the middle ages, in divided and republican Italy, the Italy of cities,—of a real and national government, based on justice and law. It was the dream of a real *state*. He imagined that the Roman

\* Parad. 6.

empire had been one great state; he persuaded himself that Christendom might be such;—he was wrong in both instances; but in this case, as in so many others, he had already caught the spirit and ideas of a far distant future; and the political organisation of modern times, so familiar to us that we cease to think of its exceeding wonder, is the practical confirmation, though in a form very different from what he imagined, of the depth and farsightedness of those expectations which are in outward form so chimerical — “*i miei non falsi errori.*”

He had studied the “infinite disorders of the world” in one of their most unrestrained scenes, the streets of an Italian republic. Law was powerless, good men were powerless, good intentions came to nought; neither social habits nor public power could resist, when selfishness chose to have its way. The Church was indeed still the salt of the nations; but it had once dared, and achieved more; it had once been the only power which ruled them. And this it could do no longer. If strength and energy had been enough to make the Church’s influence felt on government, there was a Pope who could have done it—a man who was undoubtedly the most wondered at and admired of his age, whom friend or foe never characterised, without adding the invariable epithet of his greatness of soul—the “*magnanimus peccator,*” \* whose Roman grandeur in meeting his unworthy fate fascinated into momentary sympathy even Dante. † But among the things which Boniface VIII. could not do, even

\* Benvenuto da Imola.

† “Veggio in Alagna entrar lo fiordaliso  
E nel vicario suo Cristo esser catto;  
Veggiolo un’ altra volta esser deriso;  
Veggio rinnovellar l’aceto e ’l fele,  
E tra vivi ladroni essere anciso.” — *Purg.* 20.

G. Vill. 8. 63. “Come magnanimo e valente, disse, *Dacchè per tradimento, come Gesù Cristo voglio esser preso e mi conviene morire, almeno voglio morire come Papa;*” e di presente si fece parare dell’ amanto di S. Piero, e colla corona di Costantino in Capo, e colle chiavi e croce in mano, e in su la sedia papale si pose a sedere, e giunto a lui Sciarra e gli altri suoi nimici, con villane parole lo scherniro.”

if he cared about it, was the maintaining peace and law in Italian towns. And while this great political power was failing, its correlative and antagonist was paralysed also. "Since the death of Frederic II.," says Dante's contemporary, "the fame and recollections of the empire were well nigh extinguished."\* Italy was left without government — "come nave senza nocchiero in gran tempesta" — to the mercies of her tyrants: —

"Che le terre d'Italia tutte piene  
 Son di tiranni, e un Marcel diventa  
 Ogni villan, che parteggiando viene." — *Purg.* 6.

In this scene of violence and disorder, with the Papacy gone astray, the empire debased and impotent, the religious orders corrupted, power meaning lawlessness, the well-disposed become weak and cowardly, religion neither guide nor check to society, but only the consolation of its victims — Dante was bold and hopeful enough to believe in the Divine appointment, and the possibility, of law and government — of a state. In his philosophy, the institutions which provide for man's peace and liberty in this life are part of God's great order for raising men to perfection; — not indispensable, yet ordinary parts; having their important place, though but for the present time; and though imperfect, real instruments of His moral government. He could not believe it to be the intention of Providence, that on the introduction of higher hopes and the foundation of a higher society, civil society should collapse and be left to ruin, as henceforth useless or prejudicial in man's trial and training; that the significant intimations of nature, that law and its results, justice, peace, and stability, ought to be and might be realised among men, had lost their meaning and faded away before the announcement of a kingdom not of this world. And if the perfection of civil society had not been superseded by the Church, it had become clear, if events were to be read as signs, that she was not intended to supply its political offices

\* Dino Compagni, p. 135.

and functions. She had taught, elevated, solaced, blessed, not only individual souls, but society; she had for a time even governed it; but though her other powers remained, she could govern it no longer. Failure had made it certain that, in his strong and quaint language, "*Virtus authorizandi regnum nostræ mortalitatis est contra naturam ecclesiæ; ergo non est de numero virtutum suarum.*" Another and distinct organisation was required for this, unless the temporal order was no longer worthy the attention of Christians.

This is the idea of the "De Monarchia;" and though it holds but a place in the great scheme of the *Commedia*, it is prominent there also — an idea seen but in a fantastic shape, encumbered and confused with most grotesque imagery, but the real idea of polity and law, which the experience of modern Europe has attained to.

He found in clear outline in the Greek philosophy, the theory of merely human society; and raising its end and purpose, "*finem totius humanæ civilitatis,*" to a height and dignity which Heathens could not forecast, he adopted it in its more abstract and ideal form. He imagined a single authority, unselfish, inflexible, irresistible, which could make all smaller tyrannies to cease, and enable every man to live in peace and liberty, so that he lived in justice. It is simply what each separate state of Christendom has by this time more or less perfectly achieved. The theorizer of the middle ages could conceive of its accomplishment only in one form, as grand as it was impossible,—a universal monarchy.

But he did not start from an abstraction. He believed that history attested the existence of such a monarchy. The prestige of the Roman empire was then strong. Europe still lingers on the idea, and cannot even yet bring itself to give up its part in that greatest monument of human power. But in the middle ages the Empire was still believed to exist. It was the last greatness which had been seen in the world, and the world would not believe that it was over. Above all, in Italy, a continuity of lineage, of language, of local

\* De Monarch. lib. iii. p. 188. Ed. Fraticelli.

names, and in part of civilisation and law, forbad the thought that the great Roman people had ceased to be. Florentines and Venetians boasted that they were Romans: the legends which the Florentine ladies told to their maidens at the loom were tales of their mother city, Rome. The Roman element, little understood, but profoundly revered and dearly cherished, was dominant; the conductor of civilisation, and enfolding the inheritance of all the wisdom, experience, feeling, art, of the past, it elevated, even while it overawed, oppressed, and enslaved. A deep belief in Providence, added to the intrinsic grandeur of the empire a sacred character. The flight of the eagle has been often told and often sung; but neither in Livy or Virgil, Gibbon or Bossuet, with intenser sympathy or more kindred power, than in those rushing and unflagging verses in which the middle-age poet hears the imperial legislator relate the fated course of the "sacred sign," from the day when Pallas died for it, till it accomplished the vengeance of heaven in Judæa, and afterwards, under Charlemagne, smote down the enemies of the Church.\*

The following passage, from the "De Monarchia," will show the poet's view of the Roman empire, and its office in the world: —

"To the reasons above alleged, a memorable experience brings confirmation: I mean that state of mankind which the Son of God, when He would for man's salvation take man upon Him, either waited for, or ordered when so He willed. For if from the fall of our first parents, which was the starting point of all our wanderings, we retrace the various dispositions of men and their times, we shall not find at any time, except under the divine monarch Augustus, when a perfect monarchy existed, that the world was every where quiet. And that then mankind was happy in the tranquillity of universal peace, this all writers of history, this famous poets, this even the Scribe of the meekness of Christ has deigned to attest. And lastly, Paul has called that most blessed condition, the fulness of time. Truly time, and the things of time, were full, for no mystery of our felicity then lacked its minister. But how the

\* Paradiso, c. 6.

world has gone on from the time when that seamless robe was first torn by the claws of covetousness, we may read, and would that we might not also see. O race of men ! by how great storms and losses, by how great shipwrecks hast thou of necessity been vexed, since, transformed into a beast of many heads, thou hast been struggling different ways, sick in understanding, equally sick in heart. The higher intellect, with its invincible reasons, thou reckest not of ; nor of the inferior, with its eye of experience ; nor of affection, with the sweetness of divine suasion, when the trumpet of the Holy Ghost sounds to thee—‘Behold, how good is it, and how pleasant, brethren, to dwell together in unity.’—*De Monarch.* lib. i. p. 54.

Yet this great Roman Empire existed still unimpaired in name — not unimposing even in what really remained of it. Dante, to supply a want, turned it into a theory, — a theory easy to smile at now, but which contained and was a beginning of unknown or unheeded truth. What he yearns after is the predominance of the principle of justice in civil society. That, if it is still imperfect, is no longer a dream in our day ; but experience had never realised it to him, and he takes refuge in tentative and groping theory. The divinations of the greatest men have been vague and strange, and none have been stranger than those of the author of the “*De Monarchia.*” The second book, in which he establishes the title of the Roman people to Universal Empire, is as startling a piece of mediæval argument as it would be easy to find.

“As when we cannot attain to look upon a cause, we commonly wonder at a new effect, so when we know the cause, we look down with a certain derision on those who remain in wonder. And I indeed wondered once how the Roman people had, without any resistance, been set over the world ; and looking at it superficially, I thought that they had obtained this by no right, but by mere force of arms. But when I fixed deeply the eyes of my mind on it, and by most effectual signs knew that Divine Providence had wrought this, wonder departed, and a certain scornful contempt came in its stead, when I perceived the nations raging against the pre-eminence of the Roman people :—when I see the people imagining a vain thing, as I once used to do ; when, moreover, I grieve over kings and princes agreeing in this only, to be against their Lord, and his anointed Roman Emperor. Wherefore in derision, not without a

certain grief, I can cry out, for that glorious people and for Cæsar, with him who cried in behalf of the Prince of Heaven, ‘Why did the nations rage, and the people imagine vain things; the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were joined in one against the Lord, and his anointed.’ But because natural love suffers not derision to be of long duration, but, — like the summer sun, which, scattering the morning mists, irradiates the east with light, — so prefers to pour forth the light of correction, to break the bonds of the ignorance of such kings and rulers, to show that the human race is free from *their* yoke, therefore I will exhort myself, in company with the most holy Prophet, taking up his following words, ‘Let us break their bonds, and cast away from us their yoke.’—*De Monarch.* lib. ii. p. 58.

And to prove this pre-eminence of right in the Roman people, and their heirs, the Emperors of Christendom, he appeals not merely to the course of Providence, to their high and noble ancestry, to the blessings of their just and considerate laws, to their unselfish guardianship of the world — “*Romanum imperium de fonte nascitur pietatis* ;” — not merely to their noble examples of private virtue, self-devotion, and public spirit — “those most sacred victims of the Decian house, who laid down their lives for the public weal, as Livy, — not as *they* deserved, but as *he* was able, — tells to their glory; and that unspeakable sacrifice of freedom’s sternest guardians, the Catos;” not merely to the “judgment of God” in that great duel and wager of battle for empire, in which heaven declared against all other champions and “co-athletes” — Alexander, Pyrrhus, Hannibal, and by all the formalities of judicial combat awarded the great prize to those who fought, not for love or hatred, but justice — “*Quis igitur nunc adeo obtusæ mentis est, qui non videat, sub jure duelli gloriosum populum coronam totius orbis esse lucratum?*” — not merely to arguments derived “from the principles of the Christian faith” — but to *miracles*. “The Roman Empire,” he says, “was, in order to its perfections, aided by the help of miracles; therefore it was willed by God; and, by consequence, both was, and is, of right.” And these miracles, “proved by the testimony of illustrious authorities,” are the prodigies of Livy — the ancile of Numa,



the geese of the Capitol, the escape of Clelia, the hail-storm which checked Hannibal.\*

The intellectual phenomenon is a strange one. It would be less strange if Dante were arguing in the schools, or pleading for a party. But even Henry of Luxemburgh cared little for such a throne as the poet wanted him to fill, much less Can Grande and the Visconti. The idea, the theory, and the argument, are of the writer's own solitary meditation. We may wonder. But there are few things more strange than the history of argument. How often has a cause or an idea turned out, in the eyes of posterity, so much better than its arguments. How often have we seen argument getting as it were into a groove, and unable to extricate itself, so as to do itself justice. The every day cases of private experience, of men defending right conclusions on wrong or conventional grounds, or in a confused form, engaged with conclusions of a like yet different nature; — of arguments theories, solutions, which once satisfied, satisfying us no longer on a question about which we hold the same belief — of one party unable to comprehend the arguments of another — of one section of the same side smiling at the defence of their common cause by another, — are all reproduced on a grander scale in the history of society. There too, one age cannot comprehend another; there too it takes time to disentangle, subordinate, eliminate. Truth of this sort is not the elaboration of one keen or strong mind, but of the secret experience of many; "*nihil sine atate est, omnia tempus expectant.*" But a counterpart to the "De Monarchia" is not wanting in our own day; theory has not ceased to be mighty. In warmth and earnestness, in sense of historic grandeur, in its support of a great cause and a great idea, not less than in the thought of its motto, *Εἰς κόλρανός ἔστω*, De Maistre's volume "Du Pape," recalls the antagonist "De Monarchia;" but it recalls it not less in its bold dealing with facts, and its bold assumption of principles, though the knowledge and debates of five more busy centuries, and the

\* De Monarch. lib. ii. p. 62. 66. 78. 82. 84. 108—114. 116. 72—76.

experience of modern courts and revolutions, might have guarded the Piedmontese nobleman from the mistakes of the old Florentine.

But the idea of the "De Monarchia" is no key to the *Commedia*. The direct and primary purpose of the *Commedia* is surely its obvious one. It is to stamp a deep impression on the mind, of the issues of good and ill doing here, — of the real worlds of pain and joy. To do this forcibly, it is done in detail — of course it can only be done in figure. Punishment, purification, or the fulness of consolation are, as he would think, at this very moment, the lot of all the numberless spirits who have ever lived here — spirits still living and sentient as himself: parallel with our life, they too are suffering or are at rest. Without pause or interval, in all its parts simultaneously, this awful scene is going on — the judgments of God are being fulfilled — could we but see it. It exists, it might be seen, at each instant of time, by a soul whose eyes were opened, which was carried through it. And this he imagines. It had been imagined before; it is the working out, which is peculiar to him. It is not a barren vision. His subject is, besides the eternal world, the soul which contemplates it; by sight, according to his figures — in reality, by faith. As he is led on from woe to deeper woe, then through the tempered chastisements and resignation of Purgatory to the beatific vision, he is tracing the course of the soul on earth, realising sin and weaning itself from it, — of its purification, and preparation for its high lot, by converse with the good and wise, by the remedies of grace, by efforts of will and love, perhaps by the dominant guidance of some single pure and holy influence, whether of person, or institution, or thought. Nor will we say but that beyond this earthly probation, he is not also striving to grasp and imagine to himself something of that awful process and training, by which, whether in or out of the flesh, the spirit is made fit to meet its Maker, its Judge, and its Chief Good.

Thus it seems that even in its main design, the poem has more than one aspect; it is a picture, a figure, partially a

history, perhaps an anticipation. And this is confirmed, by what the poet has himself distinctly stated, of his ideas of poetic composition. His view is expressed generally in his philosophical treatise, the "Convito;" but it is applied directly to the *Commedia*, in a letter, which, if in its present form, of doubtful authenticity, without any question represents his sentiments, and the substance of which is incorporated in one of the earliest writings on the poem, Boccaccio's commentary. The following is his account of the subject of the poem:—

"For the evidence of what is to be said, it is to be noted, that this work is not of one single meaning only, but may be said to have many meanings (*'polysensuum'*). For the first meaning is that of the letter—another is that of things signified by the letter; the first of these is called the literal sense, the second, the allegorical or moral. This mode of treating a subject may for clearness sake be considered in those verses of the Psalm, '*In exitu Israel.*' 'When Israel came out of Egypt, and the house of Jacob from the strange people, Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion.' For if we look at the *letter* only, there is here signified, the going out of the children of Israel in the time of Moses—if at the *allegory*, there is signified, our redemption through Christ—if at the *moral* sense, there is signified to us, the conversion of the soul from the mourning and misery of sin to the state of grace—if at the *anagogic* sense\*, there is signified, the passing out of the holy soul from the bondage of this corruption, to the liberty of everlasting glory. And these mystical meanings, though called by different names, may all be called *allegorical* as distinguished from the literal or historical sense. . . . This being considered, it is plain that there ought to be a twofold subject, concerning which the two corresponding meanings may proceed. Therefore we must consider first concerning the subject of this work as it is to be understood literally, then as it is to be considered allegorically. The subject then of the whole work, taken literally only, is the state of souls after death considered in itself. For about this, and on this, the whole work turns. But if the work be taken allegorically, its subject is man, as, by his freedom

\* "*Litera gesta refert, quid credas allegoria,  
Moralis quid agas, quid speres anagogia.*"

De Witte's note from Buti.

of choice deserving well or ill, he is subject to the justice which rewards and punishes." \*

The passage in the *Convito* is to the same effect; but his remarks on the *moral* and *anagogic* meaning may be quoted:—

“ The third sense is called *moral*; this it is which readers ought to go on noting carefully in writings, for their own profit and that of their disciples: as in the Gospel it may be noted, when Christ went up to the mountain to be transfigured, that of the twelve Apostles, he took with him only three; in which morally we may understand, that in the most secret things we ought to have but few companions. The fourth sort of meaning is called *anagogic*, that is, above our sense; and this is when we spiritually interpret a passage, which even in its literal meaning, by means of the things signified, expresses the heavenly things of everlasting glory: as may be seen in that song of the Prophet, which says, that in the coming out of the people of Israel from Egypt, Judah was made holy and free; which although it is manifestly true according to the letter, is not less true as spiritually understood; that is, that when the soul comes out of sin, it is made holy and free, in its own power.” †

With this passage before us, there can be no doubt of the meaning, however veiled, of those beautiful lines, already referred to, in which Virgil, after having conducted the poet up the steep of Purgatory, where his sins have been one by one cancelled by the ministering angels, finally takes leave of him, and bids him wait for Beatrice, on the skirts of the earthly Paradise: —

“ Come la scala tutta sotto noi  
 Fu corsa e fummo in su 'l grado superno,  
 In me ficcò Virgilio gli occhi suoi,  
 E disse: ‘ Il temporal fuoco, e l' eterno  
 Veduto hai, figlio, e se' venuto in parte  
 Ov' io per me più oltre non discerno.  
 Tratto t' ho qui con ingegno e con arte:  
 Lo tuo piacere omai prendi per duce;  
 Fuor se' dell' erte vie, fuor se' dell' arte.  
 Vedi il sole che 'n fronte ti riluce:  
 Vedi l' erbetta, i fiori, e gli arboscelli

\* Ep. ad Kan Grand. § 6, 7.

† *Convito*, Tr. 2. c. 1.

Che quella terra sol da se produce.

Mentre che vegnon lieti gli occhi belli  
Che lagrimando a te venir mi fenno,  
Seder ti puoi e puoi andar tra elli.

Non aspettar mio dir più nè mio cenno :  
Liberò, dritto, sano è tuo arbitrio,  
E fallo fora non fare a suo senno :—

Perch' io te sopra te coronò e mitriò.”\*

The general meaning of the *Commedia* is clear enough. But it certainly does appear to refuse to be fitted into a connected formal scheme of interpretation. It is not a homogeneous, consistent allegory, like the *Pilgrim's Progress* and the *Fairy Queen*. The allegory continually breaks off, shifts its ground, gives place to other elements, or mingles with them—like a stream which suddenly sinks into the earth, and after passing under plains and mountains, reappears in a distant point, and in different scenery. We can, indeed, imagine its strange author commenting on it, and finding or marking out its prosaic substratum, with the coldblooded precision and scholastic distinctions of the *Convito*. How-

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“ When we had run

O'er all the ladder to its topmost round,  
As there we stood, on me the Mantuan fix'd  
His eyes, and thus he spake : ‘ Both fires, my son,  
The temporal and the eternal, thou hast seen :  
And art arrived, where of itself my ken  
No further reaches. I, with skill and art,  
Thus far have drawn thee. Now thy pleasure take  
For guide. Thou hast o'ercome the steeper way,  
O'ercome the straiter. Lo ! the sun, that darts  
His beam upon thy forehead : lo ! the herb,  
The arborets and flowers, which of itself  
This land pours forth profuse. Till those bright eyes  
With gladness come, which, weeping, made me haste  
To succour thee, thou mayest or seat thee down,  
Or wander where thou wilt. Expect no more  
Sanction of warning voice or sign from me,  
Free of thine own arbitrement to choose,  
Discreet, judicious. To distrust thy sense  
Were henceforth error. I invest thee then  
With crown and mitre, sovereign o'er thyself.’ ”

*Purg.* c. 27. (Cary.)

ever, he has not done so. And of the many enigmas which present themselves, either in its structure or separate parts, the key seems hopelessly lost. The early commentators are very ingenious, but very unsatisfactory;—they see where we can see, but beyond that they are as full of uncertainty as ourselves. It is in character with that solitary and haughty spirit, while touching universal sympathies, appalling and charming all hearts, to have delighted in his own dark sayings, which had meaning only to himself. It is true that, whether in irony, or from that quaint studious care for the appearance of literal truth, which makes him apologise for the wonders which he relates, and confirm them by an oath, “on the words of his poem,”\* he provokes and challenges us; bids us admire “doctrine hidden under strange verses;”† bids us strain our eyes, for the veil is thin:—

“Aguzza, qui, lettor, ben l’occhi al vero :  
 Che il velo è ora ben tanto sottile,  
 Certo, che il trapassar dentro è leggiero.”—*Purg.* c. 8.

But eyes are still strained in conjecture and doubt.

Yet the most certain and detailed commentary, one which assigned the exact reason for every image or allegory, and its place and connexion in a general scheme, would add but little to the charm or the use of the poem. It is not so obscure but that every man’s experience who has thought over and felt the mystery of our present life, may supply the commentary—the more ample, the wider and more various has been his experience, the deeper and keener his feeling. Details and links of connexion may be matter of controversy. Whether the three beasts of the forest mean definitely the vices of the time, or of Florence specially, or of the poet

\* “Sempre a quel ver, ch’ ha faccia di menzogna,  
 De’ l’ uom chiuder le labbra, quanto puote,  
 Però che senza colpa fa vergogna.  
 Ma qui tacer nol posso; e per le note  
 Di questa Commedia, lettor, ti giuro  
 S’ elle non sien di lunga grazia vote,” &c.—*Inf.* 16.

† *Inf.* 9.

himself—"the wickedness of his heels, compassing him round about,"—may still exercise critics and antiquaries; but that they carry with them distinct and special impressions of evil, and that they are the hindrances of man's salvation, is not doubtful. And our knowledge of the key of the allegory, where we possess it, contributes but little to the effect. We may infer from the *Convito*\* that the eyes of Beatrice stand definitely for the *demonstrations*, and her smiles for the *persuasions* of wisdom; but the poetry of the *Paradiso* is not about demonstrations and persuasions, but about looks and smiles; and the ineffable and holy calm—" *serenitatis et æternitatis afflatus*,"—which pervades it, comes from the sacred truths, and holy persons, and that deep spirit of high-raised yet composed devotion, which it requires no interpreter to show us.

Figure and symbol, then, are doubtless the law of composition in the *Commedia*; but this law discloses itself very variously, and with different degrees of strictness. In its primary and most general form, it is palpable, consistent, pervading. There can be no doubt that the poem is meant to be understood figuratively—no doubt of what in general it is meant to shadow forth—no doubt as to the general meaning of its parts, their connection with each other. But in its secondary and subordinate applications, the law works—to our eye at least—irregularly, unequally, and fitfully. There can be no question that Virgil, the poet's guide, represents the purely human element in the training of the soul and of society, as Beatrice does the divine. But neither represent the whole; he does not sum up all appliances of wisdom in Virgil, nor all teachings and influences of grace in Beatrice; these have their separate figures. And both represent successively several distinct forms of their general antitypes. They have various degrees of abstractness, and narrow down, according to that order of things to which they refer and correspond, into the special and the personal. In the general economy of the poem,

\* *Convito*, Tr. 3. c. 15.

Virgil stands for human wisdom in its widest sense; but he also stands for it in its various shapes, in the different parts. He is the type of human philosophy and science.\* He is, again, more definitely, that spirit of imagination and poetry, which opens men's eyes to the glories of the visible, and the truth of the invisible; and to Italians, he is a definite embodiment of it, their own great poet, "*vates, poeta noster.*†" In the Christian order, he is human wisdom, dimly mindful of its heavenly origin,—presaging dimly its return to God—sheltering in heathen times that "vague and unconnected family of religious truths, originally from God, but sojourning without the sanction of miracle or visible home, as pilgrims up and down the world."‡ In the political order, he is the guide of law-givers, wisdom fashioning the impulses and instincts of men into the harmony of society, contriving stability and peace, guarding justice; fit part for the poet to fill, who had sung the origin of Rome, and the justice and peace of Augustus. In the order of individual life, and the progress of the individual soul, he is the human conscience witnessing to duty, its discipline and its hopes, and with yet more certain and fearful presage, to its vindication; the human conscience seeing and acknowledging the law, but unable to confer power to fulfil it—wakened by grace from among the dead, leading the living man up to it, and waiting for its light and strength. But he is more than a figure. To the poet himself, who blends with his high argument his own life, Virgil had been the utmost that mind can be to mind,—teacher, quickener and revealer of power, source of thought, exemplar and model, never disappointing, never attained to, observed with "long study and great love:"—

"Tu duca, tu signor, e tu maestro."—*Inf.* 2.

And towards this great master, the poet's whole soul is poured forth in reverence and affection. To Dante he is no

\* "O tu ch' onori ogni scienza ed arte."—*Inf.* 4. "Quel savio gentil che tutto seppe."—*Inf.* 7. "Il mar di tutto 'l senno."—*Inf.* 8.

† D: Monarch.

‡ Newman's *Arians*.



figure, but a person—with feelings and weaknesses—overcome by the vexation, kindling into the wrath, carried away by the tenderness, of the moment. He reads his scholar's heart, takes him by the hand in danger, carries him in his arms and in his bosom, "like a son more than a companion," rebukes his unworthy curiosity, kisses him when he shows a noble spirit, asks pardon for his own mistakes. Never were the kind, yet severe ways of a master, or the disciple's diffidence and open-heartedness, drawn with greater force, or less effort; and he seems to have been reflecting on his own affection to Virgil, when he makes Statius forget that they were both but shades:—

" Or puoi la quantitate  
Comprender dell' amor ch' a te mi scalda,  
Quando *dimento la nostra vanitate*  
*Trattando l' ombre come cosa salda.*"—*Purg.* 21.

And so with the poet's second guide. The great idea which Beatrice figures, though always present, is seldom rendered artificially prominent, and is often entirely hidden beneath the rush of real recollections, and the creations of dramatic power. Abstractions venture and trust themselves among realities, and for the time are forgotten. A name, a real person, a historic passage, a lament or denunciation, a tragedy of actual life, a legend of classic times, the fortunes of friends—the story of Francesca or Ugolino, the fate of Buonconte's corpse, the apology of Pier delle Vigne, the epitaph of Madonna Pia, Ulysses' western voyage, the march of Roman history—appear and absorb for themselves all interest: or else it is a philosophical speculation, or a theory of morality, or a case of conscience,—not indeed alien from the main subject, yet independent of the allegory, and not translatable into any new meaning—standing on their own ground, worked out each according to its own law; but they do not disturb the main course of the poet's thought, who grasps and paints each detail of human life in its own peculiarity, while he sees in each a significance and interest beyond itself. He does not stop in each case to tell us so, but he makes it felt. The tale ends, the individual disappears, and the great allegory resumes its

course. It is like one of those great musical compositions which alone seem capable of adequately expressing, in a limited time, a course of unfolding and change, in an idea, a career, a life, a society — where one great thought predominates, recurs, gives colour and meaning, and forms the unity of the whole, yet passes through many shades and transitions; is at one time definite, at another suggestive and mysterious; incorporates and gives free place and play to airs and melodies even of an alien cast; strikes off abruptly from its expected road, but without ever losing itself, without breaking its true continuity, or failing of its completeness.

This then seems to us the end and purpose of the *Commedia*; — to produce on the mind a sense of the judgments of God, analogous to that produced by Scripture itself. They are presented to us in the Bible in shapes which address themselves primarily to the heart and conscience, and seek not carefully to explain themselves. They are likened to the “great deep,” to the “strong mountains,” — vast and awful, but abrupt and incomplete, as the huge, broken, rugged piles and chains of mountains. And we see them through cloud and mist, in shapes only approximating to the true ones. Still they impress us deeply and truly, often the more deeply because unconsciously. A character, an event, a word, isolated and unexplained, stamps its meaning ineffaceably, though ever a matter of question and wonder; it may be dark to the intellect, yet the conscience understands it, often but too well. In such suggestive ways is the Divine government for the most part put before us in the Bible — ways which do not satisfy the understanding, but which fill us with a sense of reality. And it seems to have been by meditating on them, which he certainly did, much and thoughtfully — and on the infinite variety of similar ways in which the strongest impressions are conveyed to us in ordinary life, by means short of clear and distinct explanation — by looks, by images, by sounds, by motions, by remote allusion and broken words, that Dante was led to choose so new and remarkable a mode of conveying to his countrymen his thoughts and feelings and presentiments about the mystery of God’s counsel. The

Bible teaches us by means of real history, traced so far as is necessary along its real course. The poet expresses his view of the world also in real history, but carried on into figure.

The poetry with which the Christian Church had been instinct from the beginning, converges and is gathered up in the *Commedia*. The faith had early shown its poetical aspect. It is superfluous to dwell on this, for it is the charge against ancient teaching that it was too large and imaginative. It soon began to try rude essays in sculpture and mosaic; expressed its feeling of nature in verse and prose, rudely also, but often with originality and force; and opened a new vein of poetry in the thoughts, hopes, and aspirations of regenerate man. Modern poetry must go back, for many of its deepest and most powerful sources, to the writings of the Fathers, and their followers of the School. The Church further had a poetry of its own, besides the poetry of literature; it had the poetry of devotion—the Psalter chanted daily, in a new language and a new meaning; and that wonderful body of hymns, to which age after age had contributed its offering, from the Ambrosian hymns, to the “*Veni, Sancte Spiritus*” of a king of France, the “*Pange lingua*” of Thomas Aquinas, the “*Dies iræ*,” and “*Stabat Mater*,” of the two Franciscan brethren. The elements and fragments of poetry were everywhere in the Church,—in her ideas of life, in her rules and institutions for passing through it, in her preparation for death, in her offices, ceremonial, celebrations, usages, her consecration of domestic, literary, commercial, civic, military, political life, the meanings and ends she had given them, the religious seriousness with which the forms of each were dignified—in her doctrine, and her dogmatic system,—her dependence on the unseen world—her Bible. And from each and all of these, and from that public feeling, which, if it expressed itself but abruptly and incoherently, was quite alive to the poetry which surrounded it, the poet received due impressions of greatness and beauty, of joy and dread; then the poetry of Christian religion and Christian temper, hitherto dispersed, or manifested in act only, found its full and distinct utterance, not unworthy to

rank in grandeur, in music, in sustained strength, with the last noble voices from expiring Heathenism.

But a long interval had passed since then. The *Commedia* first disclosed to Christian and modern Europe that it was to have a literature of its own, great and admirable, though in its own language and embodying its own ideas. "It was as if, at some of the ancient games, a stranger had appeared upon the plain, and thrown his quoit among the marks of former casts, which tradition had ascribed to the demi-gods."\* We are so accustomed to the excellent and varied literature of modern times, so original, so perfect in form and rich in thought, so expressive of all our sentiments, meeting so completely our wants, fulfilling our ideas, that we can scarcely imagine the time when this condition was new—when society was beholden to a foreign language for the exponents of its highest thoughts and feelings. But so it was when Dante wrote. The great poets, historians, philosophers of his day, the last great works of intellect, belonged to old Rome, and the Latin language. So wonderful and prolonged was the fascination of Rome. Men still lived under its influence; believed that the Latin language was the perfect and permanent instrument of thought in its highest forms, the only expression of refinement and civilisation;—and had not conceived the hope that their own dialects could ever rise to such heights of dignity and power. Latin, which had enchased and preserved such precious remains of ancient wisdom, was now shackling the living mind in its efforts. Men imagined that they were still using it naturally on all high themes and solemn business; but though they used it with facility, it was no longer natural; it had lost the elasticity of life, and had become in their hands a stiffened and distorted, though still powerful, instrument. The very use of the word "*latino*," in the writers of this period, to express what is clear and philosophical in language†, while it shows their deep reverence for it, shows how Latin civilisation was no longer their own, how it had insensibly become an external

\* Hallam's *Middle Ages*, c. ix. vol. iii. p. 563.

† *Parad.* 3. 12. 17. *Convit.* p. 108. "A più *Latinamente* vedere la sentenza letterale."

and foreign element. But they found it very hard to resign their claim to a share in its glories; with nothing of their own to match against it, they still delighted to speak of it as “our language,” or its writers as “our poets,” “our historians.”\*

The spell was indeed beginning to break. Guido Cavalcanti, Dante’s strange, stern, speculative friend, who is one of the fathers of the Italian language, is characterised in the *Commedia* † by his scornful dislike of Latin, even in the mouth of Virgil. Yet Dante himself, the great assertor, by argument and example, of the powers of the Vulgar tongue, once dared not to think that it could be other to the Latin, than as a subject to his sovereign. He was bolder when he wrote “*De Vulgari Eloquio* :” but in the earlier *Convito*, while pleading earnestly for the beauty of the Italian, he yields with reverence the first place to the Latin—for nobleness, because the Latin is permanent, and the Vulgar subject to fluctuation and corruption; for power, because the Latin can express conceptions to which the Vulgar is unequal; for beauty, because the structure of the Latin is a masterly arrangement of scientific art, and the beauty of the Vulgar depends on mere use. ‡ The very title of his poem, the *Commedia*, contains in it a homage to the lofty claims of the Latin. It is called a Comedy, and not Tragedy, he says, after a marvellous account of the essence and etymology of the two, first, because it begins sadly, and ends joyfully; and next, because of its language, that humble speech of ordinary life, “in which even women converse.” §

\* *Vid.* the “*De Monarchia*.”

† *Inf.* 10., and compare the *Vit. N.* p. 334. ed. Fraticelli.

‡ *Convito*, i. 5.

§ *Ep. ad Kan Grand.* § 9.,—a curious specimen of the learning of the time : “*Sciendum est, quod Comœdia dicitur a κομη, villa, et ωδη, quod est cantus, unde Comœdia quasi villanus cantus. Et est Comœdia genus quoddam poeticæ narrationis, ab omnibus aliis differens. Differt ergo a Tragœdia in materia per hoc, quod Tragœdia in principio est admirabilis et quieta, in fine fœtida et horribilis; et dicitur propter hoc a τραγος, i. e. hircus, et ωδη, quasi cantus hircinus, i. e. fœtidus ad modum hirci, ut patet per Senecam in suis tragœdiis. Comœdia vero inchoat asperitatem alicujus rei, sed ejus materia prospere terminatur, ut patet per Terentium in suis Comœdiis. . . . Similiter differunt in modo loquendi; elate et sublime Tragœdia, Comœdia vero remisse et humiliter sicut vult Horat. in Poët. . . . Et per hoc patet, quod Comœdia dicitur præsens opus.*”

He honoured the Latin, but his love was for the Italian. He was its champion, and indignant defender against the depreciation of ignorance and fashion. Confident of its power and jealous of its beauty, he pours forth his fierce scorn on the blind stupidity, the affectation, the vain-glory, the envy, and above all, the cowardice of Italians who held lightly their mother tongue. "Many," he says, after enumerating the other offenders, "from this pusillanimity and cowardice disparage their own language, and exalt that of others; and of this sort are those hateful dastards of Italy — *abbominevoli cattivi d' Italia* — who think vilely of that precious language; which, if it is vile in anything, is vile only so far as it sounds in the prostituted mouth of these adulterers."\* He noted and compared its various dialects; he asserted its capabilities not only in verse, but in expressive, flexible, and majestic prose. And to the deliberate admiration of the critic and the man, were added the homely but dear associations, which no language can share with that of early days. Italian had been the language of his parents; — "*Questo mio Volgare fu il congiugnitore delli miei generanti, che con esso parlavano;*" — and further, it was this modern language, "*questo mio Volgare,*" which opened to him the way of knowledge, which had introduced him to Latin, and the sciences which it contained. It was his benefactor and guide; — he personifies it — and his boyish friendship had grown stronger and more intimate by mutual good offices. "There has also been between us the

Nam si ad materiam respiciamus, a principio horribilis et fœtida est, quia Infernus: in fine prospera, desiderabilis et grata, quia Paradisus. Si ad modum loquendi, remissus est modus et humilis, quia locutio Vulgaris, in qua et mulierculæ communicant. Et sic patet quia Comœdia dicitur." Cf. de Vulg. Eloq. 2. 4. Parad. 30. He calls the Æneid, "*l'alta Tragedia,*" Inf. 20. 113. Compare also Boccaccio's explanation of his mother's dream of the *peacock*. Dante, he says, is like the Peacock, among other reasons, "because the peacock has coarse feet, and a quiet gait;" and "the vulgar language, on which the *Commedia* supports itself, is coarse in comparison with the high and masterly literary style which every other poet uses, though it be more beautiful than others, being in conformity with modern minds. The quiet gait signifies the humility of the style, which is necessarily required in '*Commedia,*' as those know who understand what is meant by '*Commedia.*'"

\* Convito, i. 11.

goodwill of intercourse ; for from the beginning of my life I have had with it kindness and conversation, and have used it, deliberating, interpreting, and questioning ; so that, if friendship grows with use, it is evident how it must have grown in me."\*

From this language he exacted a hard trial ; — a work which should rank with the ancient works. None such had appeared ; none had even advanced such a pretension. Not that it was a time dead to literature or literary ambition. Poets and historians had written, and were writing in Italian. The same year of jubilee which fixed itself so deeply in Dante's mind, and became the epoch of his vision — the same scene of Roman greatness in its decay, which afterwards suggested to Gibbon the "Decline and Fall," prompted, in the father of Italian history, the desire to follow in the steps of Sallust and Livy, and prepare the way for Machiavelli and Guicciardini, Davila and Fra Paolo.† Poetry had been cultivated in the Roman languages of the West — in Aquitaine and Provence, especially — for more than two centuries ; and lately, with spirit and success, in Italian. Names had become popular,

\* Convito, i. 13.

† G. Villani was at Rome in the year of jubilee, 1300, and describes the great concourse and order of the pilgrims, whom he reckons at 200,000, in the course of the year. "And I," he proceeds, "finding myself in that blessed pilgrimage in the holy city of Rome, seeing the great and ancient things of the same, and reading the histories of the great deeds of the Romans, written by Virgil, and by Sallust, and Lucan, and Titus Livius, and Valerius, and Paulus Orosius, and other masters of histories, who wrote as well of the smaller matters as of the greater, concerning the exploits and deeds of the Romans ; and further, of the strange things of the whole world, for memory and example's sake to those who should come after — I too, took their style and fashion, albeit that, as their scholar, I be not worthy to execute such a work. But, considering that our city of Florence, the daughter and creation of Rome, was in its rising, and on the eve of achieving great things, as Rome was in its decline, it seemed to me convenient to bring into this volume and new chronicle all the deeds and beginnings of the city of Florence, so far as I have been able to gather and recover them ; and for the future, to follow at large the doings of the Florentines, and the other notable things of the world briefly, as long as it may be God's pleasure ; under which hope, rather by His grace than by my poor science, I entered on this enterprise : and so, in the year 1300, being returned from Rome, I began to compile this book, in reverence towards God and S. John, and commendation of our city of Florence." — G. Vill. viii. 36.

reputations had risen and waned, verses circulated and were criticised, and even descended from the high and refined circles to the workshop. A story is told of Dante's indignation, when he heard the canzoni which had charmed the Florentine ladies mangled by the rude enthusiasm of a blacksmith at his forge.\* Literature was a growing fashion; but it was humble in its aspirations and efforts. Men wrote like children, surprised and pleased with their success; yet allowing themselves in mere amusement, because conscious of weakness which they could not cure.

Dante, by the "Divina Commedia," was the restorer of seriousness in literature. He was so, by the magnitude and pretensions of his work, and by the earnestness of its spirit. He first broke through the prescription which had confined great works to the Latin, and the faithless prejudices which, in the language of society, could see powers fitter for no higher task than that of expressing, in curiously diversified forms, its most ordinary feelings. But he did much more. Literature was going astray in its tone, while growing in importance; the *Commedia* checked it. The Provençal and Italian poetry was, with the exception of some pieces of political satire, almost exclusively amatory, in the most fantastic and affected fashion. In expression, it had not even the merit of being natural; in purpose it was trifling; in the spirit which it encouraged, it was something worse. Doubtless it brought a degree of refinement with it, but it was refinement purchased at a high price, by intellectual distortion, and moral insensibility. But this was not all. The brilliant age of Frederick II., for such it was, was deeply mined by religious unbelief. However strange this charge first sounds against the thirteenth century, no one can look at all closely into its history, at least in Italy, without seeing that the idea of infidelity — not heresy, but infidelity — was quite a familiar one; and that side by side with the theology of Aquinas and Bonaventura, there was working among those who influenced fashion and opinion, among the great men, and the men to whom learning was

\* Sacchetti, Nov. 114.



a profession, a spirit of scepticism and irreligion almost monstrous for its time, which found its countenance in Frederick's refined and enlightened court. The genius of the great doctors might have kept in safety the Latin Schools, but not the free and home thoughts which found utterance in the language of the people, if the solemn beauty of the Italian *Commedia* had not seized on all minds. It would have been an evil thing for Italian, perhaps for European literature, if the siren tales of the *Decameron* had been the first to occupy the ear with the charms of a new language.

Dante has had hard measure, and from some who are most beholden to him. No one in his day served the Church more highly, than he whose faith and genius secured on her side the first great burst of imagination and feeling, the first perfect accents of modern speech. The first fruits of the new literature were consecrated, and offered up. There was no necessity, or even probability in Italy in the 14th century that it should be so, as there might perhaps have been earlier. It was the poet's free act—free in one, for whom nature and heathen learning had strong temptations—that religion was the lesson and influence of the great popular work of the time. That which he held up before men's awakened and captivated minds, was the verity of God's moral government. To rouse them to a sense of the mystery of their state; to startle their common-place notions of sin into an imagination of its variety, its magnitude, and its infinite shapes and degrees; to open their eyes to the beauty of the Christian temper, both as suffering and as consummated; to teach them at once the faithfulness and awful freeness of God's grace; to help the dull and lagging soul to conceive the possibility, in its own case, of rising step by step in joy without an end,—of a felicity not unimaginable by man, though of another order from the highest perfection of earth;—this is the poet's end. Nor was it only vague religious feelings which he wished to excite. He brought within the circle of common thought, and translated into the language of the multitude, what the Schools had done to throw light on the deep questions of human existence, which all are fain to muse

upon, though none can solve. He who had opened so much of men's hearts to themselves, opened to them also that secret sympathy which exists between them and the great mysteries of the Christian doctrine.\* He did the work, in his day, of a great preacher. Yet he has been both claimed and condemned, as a disturber of the Church's faith.

He certainly did not spare the Church's rulers. He thought that they were betraying the most sacred of all trusts; and if history is at all to be relied on, he had some grounds for thinking so. But it is confusing the feelings of the middle ages with our own, to convert every fierce attack on the Popes into an anticipation of Luther. Strong language of this sort was far too common-place to be so significant. No age is blind to practical abuses, or silent on them; and when the middle ages complained, they did so with a full-voiced and clamorous rhetoric, which greedily seized on every topic of vilification within its reach. It was far less singular, and far less bold, to criticise ecclesiastical authorities, than is often supposed; but it by no means implied unsettled faith, or a revolutionary design. In Dante's case, if words have any meaning—not words of deliberate qualification, but his unpremeditated and incidental expressions—his faith in the Divine mission and spiritual powers of the Popes was as strong as his abhorrence of their degeneracy, and desire to see it corrected by a power which they would respect—that of the temporal sword. It would be to mistake altogether his character, to imagine of him, either as a fault or as an excellence, that he was a doubter. It might as well be supposed of Aquinas.

No one ever acknowledged with greater seriousness, as a fact in his position in the world, the agreement in faith among those with whom he was born. No one ever inclined with more simplicity and reverence before that long communion and consent in feeling and purpose, the "*publicus sensus*" of the Christian Church. He did feel difficulties; but the excitement of lingering on them was not among his enjoy-

\* *Vide* Ozanam.

ments. That was the lot of the heathen ; Virgil, made wise by death, counsels him not to desire it : —

“ ‘ Matto è chi spera, che nostra ragione  
 Possa trascorrer la 'nfinita via  
 Che tiene una sustanzia in tre Persone.  
 State contenti, umana gente, al *quia* ;  
 Che se potuto aveste veder tutto,  
 Mestier non era partorir Maria :  
 E disiar vedeste senza frutto  
 Tai, che sarebbe lor disio quietato,  
 Ch' eternamente è dato lor per lutto ;  
 I' dico d' Aristotile e di Plato,  
 E di molti altri : ' — e qui chinò la fronte,  
 E più non disse, e rimase turbato.” — *Purg.* c. 3. \*

The Christian poet felt that it was greater to believe and to act. In the darkness of the world, one bright light appeared, and he followed it. Providence had assigned him his portion of truth, his portion of daily bread ; if to us it appears blended with human elements, it is perfectly clear that he was in no position to sift them. To choose was no trial of his. To examine and seek, where it was impossible to find, would have been folly. The authority from which he started, had not yet been seriously questioned ; there were no palpable signs of doubtfulness on the system which was to him the representative of God's will ; and he sought for none. It came to him claiming his allegiance by custom, by universality, by its completeness as a whole, and satisfying his intellect and his sympathies in detail. And he gave his allegiance — reason-

\* “ ‘ Insensate he, who thinks with mortal ken  
 To pierce Infinitude, which doth enfold  
 Three Persons in one Substance. Seek not then,  
 O mortal race, for reasons, — but believe,  
 And be contented ; for had all been seen,  
 No need there was for Mary to conceive.  
 Men have ye known, who thus desired in vain ;  
 And whose desires, that might at rest have been,  
 Now constitute a source of endless pain ;  
 Plato, the Stagirite ; and many more,  
 I here allude to ; ' — then his head he bent,  
 Was silent, and a troubled aspect wore.” — WRIGHT.

ably, because there was nothing to hope for in doubting, — wisely, because he gave it loyally and from his heart.

And he had his reward — the reward of him who throws himself with frankness and earnestness into a system; who is not afraid or suspicious of it; who is not unfaithful to it. He gained not merely power — he gained that freedom and largeness of mind, which the suspicious or the unfaithful miss. His loyalty to the Church was no cramping or blinding service; it left to its full play that fresh and original mind, left it to range at will in all history and all nature for the traces of Eternal wisdom, left it to please itself with all beauty, and pay its homage to all excellence. For upon all wisdom, beauty, and excellence, the Church had taught him to see, in various and duly distinguished degrees, the seal of the one Creator. She imparts to the poem, to its form and progressive development, her own solemnity, her awe, her calm, her serenity and joy; it follows her sacred seasons and hours; repeats her appointed words of benediction and praise; moulds itself on her belief, her expectations, and forecastings.\* Her intimations, more or less distinct, dogma or tradition or vague hint, guide the poet's imagination through the land where all eyes are open. The journey begins under the Easter moon of the year of jubilee, on the evening of Good Friday; the days of her mourning he spends in the regions of woe, where none dares to pronounce the name of the Redeemer, and he issues forth to "behold again the stars," to learn how to die to sin and rise to righteousness, very early in the morning, as it begins to dawn, on the day of the Resurrection. The whole arrangement of the "Purgatorio" is drawn from Church usages. It is a picture of men suffering in calm and holy hope the sharp discipline of repentance, amid the prayers, the melodies, the consoling images and thoughts, the orderly ritual, the hours of devotion, the sacraments of the Church militant. When he ascends in his hardest flight, and imagines the joys of the perfect and the vision of God, his abundant fancy confines itself strictly to the limits sanctioned by her famous teachers, — ventures into no new sphere, hazards no

\* See an article in the *Brit. Critic*, No. 65. p. 120.

anticipations in which they have not preceded it, and is content with adding to the poetry which it elicits from their ideas, a beauty which it is able to conceive apart altogether from bodily form—the beauty, infinite in its variety, of the expression of the human eye and smile,—the beauty of light, of sound, of motion. And when his song mounts to its last strain of triumph, and the poet's thought, imagination, and feeling of beauty, tasked to the utmost, nor failing under the weight of glory which they have to express, breathe themselves forth in words, higher than which no poetry has ever risen, and represent in images transcending sense, and baffling it, yet missing not one of those deep and transporting sympathies which they were to touch, the sight, eye to eye, of the Creator by the creature,—he beholds the gathering together, in the presence of God, of “all that from our earth has to the skies returned,” and of the countless orders of their thrones mirrored in His light—

“Mira

Quanto è 'l convento delle bianche stole,” —

under a figure already taken into the ceremonial of the Church,—the mystic Rose, whose expanding leaves image forth the joy of the heavenly Jerusalem.\*

\* See the form of benediction of the “Rosa d' oro.” He alludes to it in the *Convito*, iv. 29.

“O isplendor di Dio, per cu' io vidi  
 L' alto trionfo del regno verace,  
 Dammi virtù a dir com' io lo vidi.  
 Lume è lassù, che visibile face  
 Lo creatore a quella creatura,  
 Che solo in lui vedere ha la sua pace :  
 E si distende in circular figura  
 In tanto, che la sua circonferenza  
 Sarebbe al Sol troppo larga cintura.  
 \* \* \* \* \*

E come clivo in acqua di suo imo  
 Si specchia quasi per vedersi adorno,  
 Quanto è nel verde e ne' fioretti opimo ;  
 Sì soprastando al lume intorno intorno

But this universal reference to the religious ideas of the Church is so natural, so unaffected, that it leaves him at full liberty in other orders of thought. He can afford not to be conventional — he can afford to be comprehensive and genuine. It has been remarked how, in a poem where there would seem to be a fitting place for them, the ecclesiastical legends of the middle ages are almost entirely absent. The sainted spirits of the *Paradiso* are not exclusively or chiefly the Saints of popular devotion. After the Saints of the Bible, the holy women, the three great Apostles, the Virgin mother, they are either names personally dear to the poet himself, friends whom he had loved, and teachers to whom he owed wisdom — or great men of masculine energy in thought or action, in their various lines “compensations and antagonists of the world’s evils” — Justinian and Constantine, and Charlemagne, — the founders of the Orders, Augustine, Benedict, and Bernard, Francis and Dominic — the great doctors of the Schools, Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventura, whom the Church had not yet canonized. And with them are joined — and that with a full consciousness of the line which theology draws between the dispensations of nature and grace — some rare type of virtue among the heathen. Cato is admitted to the

Vidi specchiarsi in più di mille soglie,  
 Quanto di noi lassù fatto ha ritorno.  
 E se l' infimo grado in se raccoglie  
 Sì grande lume, quant' è la larghezza  
 Di questa rosa nell' estreme foglie ?

\* \* \* \* \*

Nel giallo della rosa sempiterna,  
 Che si dilata, rigrada, e ridole  
 Odor di lode al Sol, che sempre verna,  
 Qual' è colui, che tace e dicer vuole,  
 Mi trasse Beatrice, e disse ; mira  
 Quanto è 'l convento delle bianche stole !  
 Vedi nostra Città quanto ella gira !  
 Vedi li nostri scanni sì ripieni,  
 Che poca gente omai ci si disira.

\* \* \* \* \*

In forma dunque di candida rosa  
 Mi si mostrava la milizia santa,  
 Che nel suo sangue Cristo fece sposa.” — *Parad.* 30, 31.

outskirts of Purgatory; Trajan, and the righteous king of Virgil's poem, to the heaven of the just.\*

Without confusion or disturbance to the religious character of his train of thought, he is able freely to subordinate to it the lessons and the great recollections of the Gentile times. He contemplates them with the veil drawn off from them; as now known to form but one whole with the history of the Bible and the Church, in the design of Providence. He presents them in their own colours, as drawn by their own writers—he only adds what Christianity seems to show to be their event. Under the conviction, that the light of the Heathen was a real guide from above, calling for vengeance in proportion to unfaithfulness, or outrage done to it,—“He that nurtureth the heathen, it is He that teacheth man knowledge—shall not He punish?”—the great criminals of profane history are mingled with sinners against God's revealed will—and that, with equal dramatic power, with equal feeling of the greatness of their loss. The story of the voyage of Ulysses is told with as much vivid power and pathetic interest as the tales of the day.† He honours unfeignedly the old heathen's brave disdain of ease; that spirit, even to old age, eager, fresh, adventurous, and inquisitive. His faith allowed him to admire all that was beautiful and excellent among the heathen, without forgetting that it fell short of what the new gift of the Gospel can alone impart. He saw in it proof that God had never left His will and law without their witness among men. Virtue was virtue still, though imperfect, and unconsecrated—generosity, largeness of soul, truth, condescension, justice, were never unworthy

\* “Chi crederebbe giù nel mondo errante,  
Che Rifèo Trojano ' in questo tondo  
Fosse la quinta delle luci sante ?  
Ora conosce assai di quel, che 'l mondo  
Veder non può della divina grazia ;  
Benchè sua vista non discerna il fondo.” — *Parad.* c. 20.

† *Inf.* c. 26.

“ Rhipæus justissimus unus  
Qui fuit in Teucris, et servantissimus æqui.” — *Æn.* ii.

of the reverence of Christians. Hence he uses without fear or scruple the classic element. The examples which recal to the mind of the penitents, by sounds and sights, in the different terraces of Purgatory, their sin and the grace they have to attain to, come indiscriminately from poetry and Scripture. The sculptured pavement, to which the proud are obliged ever to bow down their eyes, shows at once the humility of S. Mary and of the Psalmist, and the condescension of Trajan; and elsewhere the pride of Nimrod and Sennacherib, of Niobe, and Cyrus. The envious hear the passing voices of courtesy from saints and heroes, and the bursting cry, like crashing thunder, of repentant jealousy from Cain and Aglaurus; the avaricious, to keep up the memory of their fault, celebrate by day the poverty of Fabricius and the liberality of S. Nicolas, and execrate by night the greediness of Pygmalion and Midas, of Achan, Heliodorus and Crassus.

Dante's all-surveying, all-embracing mind, was worthy to open the grand procession of modern poets. He had chosen his subject in a region remote from popular thought—too awful for it, too abstruse. He had accepted frankly the dogmatic limits of the Church, and thrown himself with even enthusiastic faith into her reasonings, at once so bold and so undoubting—her spirit of certainty, and her deep contemplations on the unseen and infinite. And in literature, he had taken as guides and models, above all criticism and all appeal, the classical writers. Yet with his mind full of the deep and intricate questions of metaphysics and theology, and his poetical taste always owing allegiance to Virgil, Ovid, and Statius,—keen and subtle as a Schoolman—as much an idolater of old heathen art and grandeur as the men of the *renaissance*,—his eye is as open to the delicacies of character, to the variety of external nature, to the wonders of the physical world—his interest in them as diversified and fresh, his impressions as sharp and distinct, his rendering of them as free and true and forcible, as little weakened or confused by imitation or by conventional words, his language as elastic, and as completely under his command, his choice of poetic materials as unrestricted and original, as if he had been



born in days which claim as their own such freedom, and such keen discriminative sense of what is real, in feeling and image; — as if he had never felt the attractions of a crabbed problem of scholastic logic, or bowed before the mellow grace of the Latins. It may be said, indeed, that the time was not yet come when the classics could be really understood and appreciated; and this is true, perhaps fortunate. But admiring them with a kind of devotion, and showing not seldom that he had caught their spirit, he never *attempts* to copy them. His poetry in form and material is all his own. He asserted the poet's claim to borrow from all science, and from every phase of nature, the associations and images which he wants; and he showed that those images and associations did not lose their poetry by being expressed with the most literal reality.

But let no reader of fastidious taste disturb his temper by the study of Dante. Dante certainly opened that path of freedom and poetic conquest, in which the greatest efforts of modern poetry have followed him—opened it with a magnificence and power which have never been surpassed. But the greatest are but pioneers; they must be content to leave to a posterity, which knows more, if it cannot do as much, a keen and even growing sense of their defects. The *Commedia* is open to all the attacks that can be made on grotesqueness and extravagance. This is partly owing, doubtless, to the time, in itself quaint, quainter to us, by being remote and ill-understood; but even then, weaker and less daring writers than Dante do not equally offend or astonish us. So that an image or an expression will render forcibly a thought, there is no strangeness which checks him. Barbarous words are introduced, to express the cries of the demons or the confusion of Babel—even to represent the incomprehensible song of the blessed\*; inarticulate syllables, to convey the impression of some natural sound—the cry of sorrowful surprise—

“Alto sospir, che duolo strinse in *hui* ;”—*Purg.* 16.

\* *Parad.* 7. 1—3.

or the noise of the cracking ice—

“ Se Tabernicch  
Vi fosse su caduto, o Pietra-pana  
Non avria pur del orlo fatto *cricch* ;”—*Inf.* 32.

even separate letters—to express an image, to spell a name, or as used in some popular proverb.\* He employs without scruple, and often with marvellous force of description, any recollection that occurs to him, however homely, of everyday life;—the old tailor threading his needle with trouble (*Inf.* 15.);—the cook's assistant watching over the boiling broth (*Inf.* 21.);—the hurried or impatient horse-groom using his curry-comb (*Inf.* 29.);—or the common sights of the street or the chamber—the wet wood sputtering on the hearth—

“ Come d' un stizzo verde che arso sia  
Dall' un de' capi, che dall' altro geme  
E cigola per vento che va via ;”—*Inf.* 13.†

the paper changing colour when about to catch fire:—

“ Come procede innanzi dall' ardore  
Per lo papiro suso un color bruno  
Che non è nero ancora, e 'l bianco muore :”—*Inf.* 25.‡

the steaming of the hand when bathed, in winter:—

“ Fuman come man bagnata il verno :”—

\* To describe the pinched face of famine;—

“ Parean l' occhiaje anella senza gemme.  
Chi nel viso degli uomini legge OMO  
Ben avria quivi conosciuto l' emme (M).”—*Purg.* 23.

Again,

“ Quella reverenza che s' indonna  
Di tutto me, pur per B e per ICE.”—*Parad.* 7.  
“ Nè O si tosto mai, nè I si scrisse,  
Com' ei s' accese ed arse.”—*Inf.* 24.

† “ Like to a sapling, lighted at one end,  
Which at the other hisses with the wind,  
And drops of sap doth from the outlet send;  
So from the broken twig, both words and blood flow'd forth.”—WRIGHT.

‡ “ Like burning paper, when there glides before  
The advancing flame a brown and dingy shade,  
Which is not black, and yet is white no more.”—WRIGHT.

or the ways and appearances of animals — ants meeting on their path : —

“ Lì veggio d' ogni parte farsi presta  
Ciascun' ombra, e baciarsi una con una  
Senza restar, contente a breve festa :  
Così per entro loro schiera bruna  
*S' ammusa l' una con l' altra formica,*  
Forse a spiar lor via e lor fortuna ;” — *Purg.* 26. \*

the snail drawing in its horns (*Inf.* 25.); — the hog shut out of its sty, and trying to gore with its tusks (*Inf.* 30.); — the dogs' misery in summer (*Inf.* 17.); — the frogs jumping on to the bank before the water-snake (*Inf.* 9.), — or showing their heads above water : —

“ Come al orlo dell' acqua d' un fosso  
Stan gli ranocchi *pur col muso fuori,*  
Sì che celano i piedi, e l' altro grosso.” — *Inf.* 22. †

It must be said, that most of these images, though by no means all, occur in the Inferno ; and that the poet means to paint sin not merely in the greatness of its ruin and misery, but in characters which all understand, of strangeness, of vile-ness, of despicableness, blended with diversified and monstrous horror. Even he seems to despair of his power at times —

\* “ On either hand I saw them haste their meeting,  
And kiss each one the other — pausing not, —  
Contented to enjoy so short a greeting.  
Thus do the ants among their dingy band,  
Face one another — each their neighbour's lot  
Haply to scan, and how their fortunes stand.” — WRIGHT.

† “ As in a trench, frogs at the water side  
Sit squatting, with their noses raised on high,  
The while their feet, and all their bulk they hide —  
Thus upon either hand the sinners stood.  
But Barbariccia now approaching nigh,  
Quick they withdrew beneath the boiling flood.  
I saw — and still my heart is thrill'd with fear —  
One spirit linger ; as beside a ditch,  
One frog remains, the others disappear.” — WRIGHT.

“ S’ io avessi le rime e aspre, e chioce,  
 Come si converrebbe al tristo buco,  
 Sovra ’l qual pontan tutte l’ altre rocce ;  
 Io premerrei di mio concetto il suco  
 Più pienamente ; ma perch’ io non l’ abbo,  
 Non senza tema a dicer mi conduco :  
 Che non è ’mpresa da pigliare a gabbo  
 Descriver fondo a tutto l’ universo,  
 Nè da lingua, che chiami mamma, o babbo.” — *Inf.* 32.\*

Feeling the difference between sins, in their elements and, as far as we see them, their baseness, he treats them variously. His ridicule is apportioned with a purpose. He passes on from the doom of the sins of incontinence—the storm, the frost and hail, the crushing weights,—from the flaming minarets of the city of Dis, of the Furies and Proserpine, “ Donna dell’ eterno pianto,” where the unbelievers lie, each in his burning tomb—from the river of boiling blood—the wood with the Harpies—the waste of barren sand with fiery snow, where the violent are punished,—to the Malebolge, the manifold circles of Falsehood. And here scorn and ridicule in various degrees, according to the vileness of the fraud, begin to predominate, till they culminate in that grim comedy, with its *dramatis personæ* and battle of devils, Draghignazzo, and Graffiacane, and Malacoda, where the speculators and sellers of justice are fished up by the demon, from the boiling pitch, but even there overreach and cheat their tormentors, and make them turn their fangs on each other. The diversified forms of falsehood seem to tempt the poet’s imagination to cope with its changefulness and inventions, as well as its audacity. The transformations of the

\* “ Had I a rhyme so rugged, rough, and hoarse  
 As would become the sorrowful abyss,  
 O’er which the rocky circles wind their course,  
 Then with a more appropriate form I might  
 Endow my vast conceptions ; wanting this,  
 Not without fear I bring myself to write.  
 For no light enterprise it is, I deem,  
 To represent the lowest depth of all ;  
 Nor should a childish tongue attempt the theme.” — WRIGHT.

wildest dream do not daunt him. His power over language is nowhere more forcibly displayed than in those cantos, which describe the punishments of theft—men passing gradually into serpents, and serpents into men:—

“Due e nessun l’ imagine perversa  
Parea.”—*Inf.* 25.

And when the traitor, who murdered his own kinsman, was still alive, and seemed safe from the infamy which it was the poet’s rule to bestow only on the dead, Dante found a way to inflict his vengeance without an anachronism:—Branca D’Oria’s body, though on earth, is only animated by a fiend, and his spirit has long since fled to the icy prison.\*

These are strange experiments in poetry; their strangeness is exaggerated as detached passages; but they are strange enough when they meet us in their place in the context, as

- \* “Ed egli a me: Come ’l mio corpo stea  
Nel mondo su, nulla scienza porto.  
Cotal vantaggio ha questa Tolommea,  
Che spesse volte l’ anima ci cade  
Innanzi, ch’ Atropòs mossa le dea.  
E perchè tu più volontier mi rade  
Le’ nvetriate lagrime dal volto,  
Sappi, che tosto che l’ anima trade,  
Come fec’ io, il corpo suo l’ è tolto  
Da un Dimonio, che poscia il governa,  
Mentre che ’l tempo suo tutto sia volto.  
Ella ruina in sì fatta cisterna;  
E forse pare ancor lo corpo suso  
Dell’ ombra, che di qua dietro mi verna.  
Tu ’l dei saper, se tu vien pur mo giusto:  
Egli è ser Branca d’ Oria, e son più anni  
Pocia passati, ch’ ei fu sì racchiuso.  
Io credo, diss’ io lui, che tu m’ inganni,  
Che Branca d’ Oria non morì unquanche,  
E mangia, e bee, e dorme, e veste panni.  
Nel fosso su, diss’ ei di Malebranche,  
Là dove bolle la tenace pece,  
Non era giunto ancora Michel Zanche;  
Che questi lasciò ’l Diavolo in sua vece  
Nel corpo suo, e d’ un suo prossimano,  
Che ’l tradimento insieme con lui fece.”—*Inf.* 33.

parts of a scene, where the mind is strung and overawed by the sustained power, with which dreariness, horror, hideous absence of every form of good, is kept before the imagination and feelings, in the fearful picture of human sin. But they belong to the poet's system of direct and forcible representation. What his inward eye sees, what he feels, that he means us to see and feel as he does; to make us see and feel is his art. Afterwards we may reflect and meditate; but first we must see—must see what he saw. Evil and deformity are in the world, as well as good and beauty; the eye cannot escape them, they are about our path, in our heart and memory. He has faced them without shrinking or dissembling, and extorted from them a voice of warning. In all poetry that is written for mere delight, in all poetry which regards but a part or an aspect of nature, they have no place—they disturb and mar; but he had conceived a poetry of the whole, which would be weak or false without them. Yet they stand in his poem as they stand in nature—subordinate and relieved. If the grotesque is allowed to intrude itself—if the horrible and the foul, undisguised and unsoftened, make us shudder and shrink, they are kept in strong check and in due subjection by other poetical influences; and the same power which exhibits them in their naked strength, renders its full grace and glory to beauty; its full force and delicacy to the most evanescent feeling.

Dante's eye was free and open to external nature in a degree new among poets; certainly in a far greater degree than among the Latins, even including Lucretius, whom he probably had never read. We have already spoken of his minute notice of the appearance of living creatures; but his eye was caught by the beautiful as well as by the grotesque.

Take the following beautiful picture of the bird looking out for dawn:—

“Come l'augello intra l'amate fronde,  
 Posato al nido de suoi dolci nati,  
 La notte, che le cose ci nasconde,  
 Che per veder gli aspetti desiati,  
 E per trovar lo cibo, onde li pasca,  
 In che i gravi labor gli sono aggrati,

Previene 'l tempo in su l' aperta frasca,  
 E con ardente affetto il sole aspetta,  
 Fiso guardando, pur che l'alba nasca.— *Parad.* 23. \*

Nothing indeed can be more true and original than his images of birds; they are varied and very numerous. We have the water-birds rising in clamorous and changing flocks —

“Come augelli surti di riviera  
*Quasi congratulando a lor pasture,*  
 Fanno di sè or tonda or lunga schiera;”—*Parad.* 18. †

the rooks, beginning to move about at day-break—

“E come per lo natural costume,  
 Le pole insieme, al cominciar del giorno  
 Si muovono a scaldar le fredde piume,  
 Poi altre vanno via senza ritorno,  
 Altre rivolgon sè onde son mosse  
 Ed altre roteando fan soggiorno;”—*Parad.* 21. †

the morning sounds of the swallow—

\* “E'en as the bird that resting in the nest  
 Of her sweet brood, the shelt'ring boughs among,  
 While all things are enwrapt in night's dark vest,—  
 Now eager to behold the looks she loves,  
 And to find food for her impatient young  
 (Whence labour grateful to a mother proves),  
 Forestals the time, high perch'd upon the spray,  
 And with impassion'd zeal the sun expecting,  
 Anxiously waiteth the first break of day.”—WRIGHT.

† “And as birds rising from a stream, whence they  
 Their pastures view, as though their joy confessing,  
 Now form a round, and now a long array.”—WRIGHT.

‡ “And as with one accord, at break of day,  
 The rooks bestir themselves, by nature taught  
 To chase the dew-drops from their wings away;  
 Some flying off, to reappear no more—  
 Others repairing to their nests again,—  
 Some whirling round—then settling as before.”—WRIGHT.

“Nell’ ora che comincia i tristi lai  
La rondinella presso alla mattina  
Forse a memoria de’ suoi primi guai;” — *Purg.* 9.\*

the joy and delight of the nightingale’s song, (*Purg.* 17.); the lark, silent at last, filled with its own sweetness —

“Qual lodoletta, che ’n aere si spazia,  
Prima cantando, e poi tace contenta  
Dell’ ultima dolcezza che la sazia;” — *Parad.* 20.†

the flight of the starlings and storks (*Inf.* 5. *Purg.* 24.); the mournful cry and long line of the cranes (*Inf.* 5. *Purg.* 26.); the young birds trying to escape from the nest (*Purg.* 25.); the eagle hanging in the sky —

“Con l’ ale aperte, e a calare intesa;” —

the dove, standing close to its mate, or wheeling round it —

“Sì come quando ’l colombo si pone  
Presso al compagno, l’ uno e l’ altro pande  
Girando e mormorando l’ affezione;” — *Parad.* 25.‡

or the flock of pigeons, feeding —

“Adunati alla pastura,  
Queti, senza mostrar l’ usato orgoglio.” — *Purg.* 2.

Hawking supplies its images: — the falcon coming for its food —

\* “What time the swallow pours her plaintive strain,  
Saluting the approach of morning grey,  
Thus haply mindful of her former pain.” — WRIGHT.

† “E’en as the lark high soaring pours its throat  
A while, then rests in silence, as though still  
It dwelt enamour’d of its last sweet note.” — WRIGHT.

‡ “As when unto his partner’s side, the dove  
Approaches near, — both fondly circling round,  
And cooing, show the fervour of their love;  
So these great heirs of immortality  
Receive each other; while they joyful sound  
The praises of the food they share on high. — WRIGHT.



“ Il falcon che prima a piè si mira,  
 Indi si volge al grido, e si protende,  
 Per lo disio del pasto, che là il tira ;” — *Purg.* 19. \*

or just unhooded, pluming itself for its flight—

“ Quasi falcon, ch’ esce del cappello,  
 Muove la testa, e con l’ ale s’ applaude,  
*Voglia mostrando, e facendo si bello ;*” — *Parad.* 19. †

or returning without success, sullen and loath—

“ Come ’l falcon ch’ è stato assai su l’ ali,  
 Che senza veder logoro, o uccello,  
 Fa dire al falconiere : Oimè tu cali !  
 Discende lasso onde si muove snello  
 Per cento ruote, e da lungi si pone  
 Dal suo maestro, *disdegnoso e fello.* — *Inf.* 17. ‡

It is curious to observe him taking Virgil’s similes, and altering them. When Virgil describes the throng of souls, he compares them to falling leaves, or gathering birds in autumn—

“ Quam multa in silvis auctumni frigore primo,  
 Lapsa cadunt folia, aut ad terram gurgite ab alto,  
 Quam multæ glomerantur aves, ubi frigidus annus  
 Trans pontum fugat, et terris immittit apricis ” —

Dante uses the same images, but without copying ;—

“ Come d’ Autunno si levan le foglie,  
 L’ una appresso dell’ altra, infin che ’l ramo

\* “ And, as a falcon, which first scans its feet,  
 Then turns him to the call, and forward flies,  
 In eagerness to catch the tempting meat. — WRIGHT.

† “ Lo, as a falcon, from the hood released,  
 Uplifts his head, and joyous flaps his wings,  
 His beauty and his eagerness increased.” — WRIGHT.

‡ “ E’en as a falcon, long upheld in air,  
 Not seeing lure or bird upon the wing,  
 So that the falconer utters in despair  
 ‘ Alas, thou stoop’st !’ fatigued descends from high ;  
 And whirling quickly round in many a ring,  
 Far from his master sits — disdainfully.” — WRIGHT.

Rende alla terra tutte le sue spoglie ;  
 Similmente il mal seme d' Adamo :  
 Gittansi di quel lito ad una ad una  
 Per cenni, com' augel per suo richiamo.  
 Così sen vanno su per l' onda bruna,  
 Ed avanti che sien di là discese,  
 Anche di qua nuova schiera s' aduna."—*Inf.* 3. \*

Again, — compared with one of Virgil's most highly-finished and perfect pictures, the flight of the pigeon, disturbed at first, and then becoming swift and smooth—

"Qualis spelunca subito commota columba,  
 Cui domus et dulces latebroso in pumice nidi,  
 Fertur in arva volans, plausumque exterrita pennis  
 Dat tecto ingentem, mox aere lapsa quieto  
 Radit iter liquidum, celeres neque commovet alas —"

the Italian's simplicity and strength may balance the "ornata parola" of Virgil—

"Quali colombe dal disio chiamate,  
 Con l' ali aperte e ferme al dolce nido  
 Volan per l' aer dal voler portate."—*Inf.* 5. †

\* "As leaves in autumn, borne before the wind,  
 Drop one by one, until the branch laid bare,  
 Sees all its honours to the earth consign'd :  
 So cast them downward at his summons all  
 The guilty race of Adam from that strand—  
 Each as a falcon answering to the call."—WRIGHT.

† "As doves, by strong affection urged, repair  
 With firm expanded wings to their sweet nest,  
 Borne by the impulse of their will through air."—WRIGHT.

It is impossible not to be reminded at every step, in spite of the knowledge and taste which Mr. Cary and Mr. Wright have brought to their most difficult task, of the truth which Dante has expressed with his ordinary positiveness.

He is saying that he does not wish his Canzoni to be explained in Latin to those who could not read them in Italian ;—"Che sarebbe sposta la loro sentenza colà dove elle non la potessono colla loro bellezza portare. E però sappia ciascuno che nulla cosa per legame musaico (i.e. poetico) armonizzata, si può della sua loquela in altra trasmutare senza rompere tutta la sua dolcezza e armonia. E questa è la ragione per che Omero non si mutò mai di Greco in Latino, come l' altre scritture che avemo da loro."—*Convito*, i. c. 8. p. 49.

Mr. Carlyle has given up the idea of attempting to represent Dante's verse

Take, again, the *times of the day*, with what is characteristic of them—appearances, lights, feelings—seldom dwelt on at length, but carried at once to the mind, and stamped upon it sometimes by a single word. The sense of *morning*, its inspiring and cheering strength, softens the opening of the *Inferno*; breathes its refreshing calm, in the interval of repose after the last horrors of hell, in the first canto of the *Purgatorio*; and prepares for the entrance into the earthly *Paradise* at its close. In the waning light of *evening*, and its chilling sense of loneliness, he prepared himself for his dread pilgrimage:—

“Lo giorno se n’ andava, e l’ aer bruno  
Toglieva gli animai che sono ’n terra  
Dalle fatiche loro; ed io sol uno  
M’ apparecchiava a sostener la guerra  
Sì del cammino, e sì della pietate.”—*Inf.* 2.

Indeed there is scarcely an hour of day or night, which has not left its own recollection with him;—of which we cannot find some memorial in his poem. Evening and night have many. Evening, with its softness and melancholy—its exhaustion and languor, after the work, perhaps unfulfilled, of day—its regrets and yearnings, — its sounds and doubtful lights,—the distant bell, the closing chants of *Compline*, the “*Salve Regina*,” the “*Te lucis ante terminum*,”—with its insecurity, and its sense of protection from above,—broods over the poet’s first resting-place on his heavenly road,—that still, solemn, dreamy scene,—the *Valley of Flowers* in the mountain side, where those who have been negligent about their salvation, but not altogether faithless and fruitless—the assembled shades of great kings and of poets—wait, looking upwards, “pale and humble,” for the hour when they may begin in earnest their penance. (*Purg.* 7. and 8.). The level, blinding evening beams (*Purg.* 15.); the contrast of gathering darkness in the valley or on the shore with the lingering lights

by English verse, and has confined himself to assisting Englishmen to read him in his own language. His prose translation is accurate and forcible. And he has added sensible and useful notes.

on the mountain (*Purg.* 17.); the rapid sinking of the sun, and approach of night in the south (*Purg.* 27.); the flaming sunset clouds of August; the sheet lightning of summer (*Purg.* 5.); have left pictures in his mind, which an incidental touch re-awakens, and a few strong words are sufficient to express. Other appearances he describes with more fulness. The stars coming out one by one, baffling at first the eye—

“Ed ecco intorno di chiarezza pari  
Nascere un lustro sopra quel che v'era,  
A guisa d'orizzonte, che rischiari.  
*E sì come al salir di prima sera*  
*Comincian per lo Ciel nuove parvenze,*  
*Sì che la cosa pare, e non par vera;”*—*Parad.* 14. \*

or else, bursting out suddenly over the heavens—

“Quando colui che tutto il mondo allume,  
Del' emisferio nostro si discende,  
E 'l giorno d'ogni parte si consuma;  
Lo ciel che sol di lui prima s'accende,  
Subitamente si rifà parvente  
Per molte luci in che una risplende;” — *Parad.* 20. †

or the effect of shooting stars —

“Quale per li seren tranquilli e puri  
Discorre ad ora ad ora subito fuoco

\* “And lo, on high, and lurid as the one  
Now there, encircling it, a light arose,  
Like heaven when re-illuminated by the sun:  
And as at the first lighting up of eve  
The sky doth new appearances disclose,  
That now seem real, now the sight deceive.” — WRIGHT.

† “When he, who with his universal ray  
The world illumines, quits our hemisphere,  
And, from each quarter, daylight wears away;  
The heaven, erst kindled by his beam alone,  
Sudden its lost effulgence doth repair  
By many lights illumined but by one.” — WRIGHT.

Movendo gli occhi che stavan sicuri,  
 E pare stella che tramuti loco,  
 Se non che dalla parte onde s' accende  
 Nulla sen perde, ed esso dura poco ;"—*Parad.* 15.\*

or, again, that characteristic sight of the Italian summer night,—the fire-flies :—

“ Quante il villan che al poggio si riposa,  
 Nel tempo che colui che 'l mondo schiara  
 La faccia sua a noi tien men ascosa,  
 Come la mosca cede alla zenzara,  
 Vede lucciole giù per la vallea,  
 Forse colà dove vendemmia ed ara.”—*Inf.* 26.†

Noon, too, does not want its characteristic touches—the lightning-like glancing of the lizard's rapid motion—

“ Come il ramarro sotto la gran fersa  
 Ne' dì canicular cangiando siepe  
 Folgore par, se la via attraversa ;”—*Inf.* 25.‡

the motes in the sunbeam at noontide (*Par.* 14.); its clear, diffused, insupportable brightness, filling all things—

“ E tutti eran già pieni  
 Dell' alto dì i giron del sacro monte.”—*Purg.* 19.

and veiling the sun in his own light—

“ Io veggio ben sì come *tu t' annidi*  
*Nel proprio lume.*

\* \* \* \*

\* “ As oft along the pure and tranquil sky  
 A sudden fire by night is seen to dart,  
 Attracting forcibly the heedless eye ;  
 And seems to be a star that changes place,  
 Save that no star is lost from out the part  
 It quits, and that it lasts a moment's space.”—WRIGHT.

† “ As in that season when the sun least veils  
 His face that lightens all, what time the fly  
 Gives place to the shrill gnat, the peasant then,  
 Upon some cliff reclined, beneath him sees  
 Fire-flies innumerable spangling o'er the vale,  
 Vineyard or tilth, where his day-labour lies.”—CARY.

‡ “ As underneath the dog-star's scorching ray  
 The lizard, darting swift from fence to fence,  
 Appears like lightning, if he cross the way.”—WRIGHT.

Sì come 'l sol che si cela egli stessi  
Per troppa luce, quando 'l caldo ha rose,  
Le temperanze de' vapori spessi." — *Parad.* 5.

But the sights and feelings of morning are what he touches on most frequently; and he does so with the precision of one who had watched them with often-repeated delight: the scented freshness of the breeze that stirs before daybreak—

"E quale annunziatrice degli albori  
Aura di maggio muovesi ed olezza  
Tutta impregnata dall' erba e da' fiori;  
Tal mi senti' un vento dar per mezza  
La fronte;" — *Purg.* 24. \*

the chill of early morning (*Purg.*19.); the dawn stealing on, and the stars, one by one, fading "infino alla più bella" (*Parad.* 30.); the brightness of the "trembling morning star,"—

"Par tremolando mattutina stella;" —

the serenity of the dawn, the blue gradually gathering in the east, spreading over the brightening sky (*Parad.*1.); then succeeded by the orange tints,—and Mars setting red, through the mist over the sea—

"Ed ecco, qual sul presso del mattino  
Per li grossi vapor Marte rosseggia  
Giù nel ponente, sopra 'l suol marino,  
Cotal m' apparve, s' io ancor lo veggia,  
Un lume per lo mar venir si ratto  
Che 'l muover suo nessun volar pareggia;" — *Purg.* 2. †

\* "As when, announcing the approach of day,  
Impregnated with herbs and flowers of Spring,  
Breathes fresh and redolent the air of May —  
Such was the breeze that gently fann'd my head;  
And I perceived the waving of a wing  
Which all around ambrosial odours shed." — WRIGHT.

† "When lo! like Mars, in aspect fiery red  
Seen through the vapour, when the morn is nigh  
Far in the west, above the briny bed,  
So (might I once more see it) o'er the sea  
A light approach'd with such rapidity,  
Flies not the bird that might its equal be." — WRIGHT.

the distant sea-beach quivering in the early light—

“L’ alba vinceva l’ ora mattutina  
Che fuggia innanzi, sì che di lontano  
Conobbi il tremolar della marina;”—*Purg.* 1.\*

the contrast of east and west at the moment of sunrise, and the sun appearing, clothed in mist—

“Io vidi già nel cominciar del giorno  
La parte oriental tutta rosata,  
E l’ altro ciel di bel sereno adorno;  
E la faccia del sol nascere ombrata  
Sì che per temperanza di vapori  
L’ occhio lo sostenea lungo fiato;”—*Purg.* 3.†

or breaking through it, and shooting his beams over the sky—

“Di tutte parti saettava il giorno  
Lo sol ch’ avea con le saette conte  
Di mezzo ’l ciel cacciato ’l Capricorno.”—*Purg.* 2.‡

But *light* in general is his special and chosen source of poetic beauty. No poet that we know has shown such singular sensibility to its varied appearances,—has shown that he felt it in itself the cause of a distinct and peculiar pleasure, delighting the eye apart from form, as music delights the ear apart from words, and capable, like music, of definite character, of endless variety, and infinite meanings. He must have studied and dwelt upon it like music. His mind is

\* “Now ’gan the vanquish’d matin hour to flee;  
And seen from far, as onward came the day,  
I recognised the trembling of the sea.”—WRIGHT.

† “Erewhile the eastern regions have I seen  
At daybreak glow with roseate colours, and  
The expanse beside all beauteous and serene;  
And the sun’s face so shrouded at its rise,  
And temper’d by the mists which overhung,  
That I could gaze on it with steadfast eyes.”—WRIGHT.

‡ “On every side the sun shot forth the day,  
And had already with his arrows bright  
From the mid-heaven chased Capricorn away.”—WRIGHT.

charged with its effects and combinations, and they are rendered with a force, a brevity, a precision, a heedlessness and unconsciousness of ornament, an indifference to circumstance and detail; they flash out with a spontaneous readiness, a suitability and felicity, which show the familiarity and grasp given only by daily observation, daily thought, daily pleasure. Light everywhere—in the sky and earth and sea—in the star, the flame, the lamp, the gem—broken in the water, reflected from the mirror, transmitted pure through the glass, or coloured through the edge of the fractured emerald—dimmed in the mist, the halo, the deep water—streaming through the rent cloud, glowing in the coal, quivering in the lightning, flashing in the topaz and the ruby, veiled behind the pure alabaster, mellowed and clouding itself in the pearl,—light contrasted with shadow—shading off and copying itself in the double rainbow, like voice and echo—light seen within light, as voice discerned within voice, “*quando una è ferma, e l'altra va e riede*”—the brighter “nestling” itself in the fainter—the purer set off on the less clear, “*come perla in bianca fronte*”—light in the human eye, and face, displaying, figuring, and confounded with its expressions—light blended with joy in the eye—

“luce

Come letizia in pupilla viva;”

and in the smile—

“Vincendo me col lume d' un sorriso;”

joy lending its expression to light—

“Quivi la donna mia vidi sì lieta  
 Che più lucente se ne fè il pianeta,  
 E se la *stella si cambio, e rise,*  
 Qual mi fec' io;”—*Parad.* 5.

light from every source, and in all its shapes, illuminates, irradiates, gives its glory to the *Commedia*. The remembrance of our “serene life” beneath the “fair stars” keeps up continually the gloom of the *Inferno*. Light, such as we see it and recognise it—the light of morning and evening,



growing and fading—takes off from the unearthliness of the Purgatorio; peopled, as it is, by the undying, who, though suffering for sin, can sin no more, it is thus made like our familiar world,—made to touch our sympathies as an image of our own purification in the flesh. And when he rises beyond the regions of earthly day, light, simple, unalloyed, unshadowed, eternal, lifts the creations of his thought above all affinity to time and matter; light never fails him, as the expression of the gradations of bliss; never reappears the same, never refuses the new shapes of his invention, never becomes confused or dim—though it is seldom thrown into distinct figure, and still more seldom *coloured*. Only once, that we remember, is the thought of colour forced on us;—when the bright joy of heaven suffers change and eclipse, and deepens into red at the sacrilege of men.\*

Yet his eye is everywhere, not confined to the beauty or character of the sky and its lights. His range of observation and largeness of interest prevent that line of imagery, which is his peculiar instrument and predilection, from becoming, in spite of its brightness and variety, dreamy and monotonous; prevent it from arming against itself sympathies which it does not touch. He has watched with equal attention, and draws with not less power, the occurrences and sights of Italian country life; the summer whirlwind sweeping over the plain—“*dinanzi polveroso va superbo*” (*Inf.* 9.); the rain-storm of the Apennines (*Purg.* 5.); the peasant’s alternations of feeling in spring:—

“ In quella parte del giovinetto anno  
 Che ’l sole i crin sotto l’ Aquario temprà,  
 E già le notti al mezzo dì sen vanno;  
 Quando la brina in su la terra assempra  
 L’ imagine di sua sorella bianca,  
 Ma poco dura alla sua penna temprà,  
 Lo villanello a cui la roba manca  
 Si leva e guarda, e vede la campagna  
 Biancheggiar tutta; ond’ ei si batte l’ anca;  
 Ritorna a casa, e qua e là si lagna

\* Parad. 27.

Come 'l tapin che non sa che si faccia :  
 Poi riede e la speranza ringavagna  
 Veggendo 'l mondo aver cangiata faccia  
 In poco d' ora, e prende il suo vincastro  
 E fuor le pecorelle a pascere caccia : ” — *Inf.* 24.\*

the manner in which sheep come out from the fold : —

“ Come le pecorelle escon del chiuso  
*A una a due a tre, e l' altre stanno,*  
*Timidette atterrando l' occhio e' l muso ;*  
*E ciò che fa la prima, e l' altre fanno,*  
*Addossandosi a lei s' ella s' arresta*  
 Semplici e quete, e lo 'mperchè non sanno :  
 Si vid' io muover a venir la testa  
 Di quella mandria fortunata allotta,  
 Pudica in faccia e nell' andare onesta.  
 Come color dinanzi vider rotta  
 La luce . . . . .  
 Ristaro, e trasser se indietro alquanto,  
 E tutti gli altri che veniano appresso,  
 Non sappiendo il perchè, fero altrettanto.” — *Purg.* 3.

So with the beautiful picture of the goats on the mountain, chewing the cud in the noontide heat and stillness, and the goatherd, resting on his staff and watching them — a picture which no traveller among the mountains of Italy or Greece can have missed, or have forgotten : —

\* “ In the new year, when Sol his tresses gay  
 Dips in Aquarius, and the tardy night  
 Divides her empire with the lengthening day, —  
 When o'er the earth the hoar-frost pure and bright  
 Assumes the image of her sister white,  
 Then quickly melts before the genial light —  
 The rustic, now exhausted his supply,  
 Rises betimes — looks out — and sees the land  
 All white around, whereat he strikes his thigh —  
 Turns back — and grieving — wanders here and there,  
 Like one disconsolate and at a stand ;  
 Then issues forth, forgetting his despair,  
 For lo ! the face of nature he beholds  
 Changed on a sudden — takes his crook again,  
 And drives his flock to pasture from the folds.” — WRIGHT.

“Quali si fanno ruminando manse  
 Le capre, *state rapide e proterve*  
*Sopra le cime* avanti che sien pranse,  
*Tacite al ombra mentre che 'l sol ferve,*  
*Guardate dal pastor* che 'n su la verga  
 Poggiato s' è, e lor poggiato serve.” — *Purg.* 27. \*

So again, with his recollections of cities:— the crowd, running together to hear news (*Purg.* 2.), or pressing after the winner of the game (*Purg.* 6.); the blind men at the church doors, or following their guide through the throng (*Purg.* 13. 16.); the friars walking along in silence, one behind another,—

“Taciti, soli, e senza compagnia  
 N' andavam, *l' un dinanzi, e l' altro dopo*  
*Come i frati minor vanno per via.*” — *Inf.* 23.

He turns to account in his poem, the pomp and clamour of the host taking the field (*Inf.* 22.); the devices of heraldry; the answering chimes of morning bells over the city †; the inventions and appliances of art, the wheels within wheels of clocks (*Par.* 24.), the many-coloured carpets of the East (*Inf.* 17.); music and dancing—the organ and voice in church,—

—“Voce mista al dolce suono  
 Che or sì orno s' intendon le parole,” — *Purg.* 9.

the lute and voice in the chamber (*Par.* 20.); the dancers prepar-

\* “Like goats that having over the crags pursued  
 Their wanton sports, now, quiet pass the time  
 In ruminating—sated with their food,  
 Beneath the shade, while glows the sun on high—  
 Watch'd by the goatherd with unceasing care,  
 As on his staff he leans, with watchful eye.” — WRIGHT.

† “Indi come orologio che ne chiami  
 Nell' ora che la sposa di Dio surge  
 A mattinar lo sposo perchè l' ami,  
 Che l' una parte e l' altra tira ed urge  
 Tin tin sonando con sì dolce nota  
 Che 'l ben disposto spirto d' amor turge;  
 Così vid' io la gloriosa ruota  
 Muoversi e render voce a voce, in tempra  
 Ed indolcezza ch' esser non può nota  
 Se non colà dove 'l gioir s' insempra.” — *Parad.* 10.

ing to begin\*, or waiting to catch a new strain.† Or, again, the images of domestic life, the mother's ways to her child, reserved and reproving—"che al figlio par superba,"—or cheering him with her voice, or watching him compassionately in the wandering of fever,—

“ Ond' ella, appresso d' un pio sospiro  
Gli occhi drizzò ver me, con quel sembiante  
Che madre fa sopra figliuol deliro.”—*Parad.* 1.

Nor is he less observant of the more delicate phenomena of mind, in its inward workings, and its connection with the body. The play of features, the involuntary gestures and attitudes of the passions, the power of eye over eye, of hand upon hand, the charm of voice and expression, of musical sounds even when not understood—feelings, sensations, and states of mind which have a name, and others, equally numerous and equally common, which have none,—these, often so fugitive, so shifting, so baffling and intangible, are expressed with a directness, a simplicity, a sense of truth at once broad and refined, which seized at once on the congenial mind of his countrymen, and pointed out to them the road which they have followed in art, unapproached as yet by any competitors.‡

\* “ E come surge, e va, ed entra in ballo  
Vergine lieta, sol per farne onore  
Alla novizia, e non per alcun fallo.”—*Parad.* 25.

† “ Donne mi parver, non da ballo sciolte,  
Ma che s' arrestin tacite ascoltando  
Fin che le nuove note hanno ricolte.”—*Parad.* 10.

‡ For instance:—*thoughts upon thoughts ending in sleep and dreams* :

“ Nuovo pensier dentro de me si mise,  
Dal qual più altri nacquero e diversi;  
E tanto d' uno in altro vaneggiai  
Che gli occhi per vaghezza ricopersi,  
E 'l pensamento in sogno trasmutai.”—*Purg.* 18.

*sleep stealing off when broken by light* :

“ Come si frange il sonno, ove di butto  
Nuova luce percuote 'l viso chiuso,  
Che fratto quizza pria che muoja tutto.”—*Purg.* 17.

And he has anticipated the latest schools of modern poetry, by making not merely nature, but science tributary

*the shock of sudden awakening :*

“ Come al lume acuto si disonna,  
\* \* \* \* \*

*E lo svegliato ciò che vede abborre,*  
Sì nescia è la subita vigilia,  
Finchè la stimativa nol soccorre.”—*Parad.* 26.

*uncasy feelings produced by sight or representation of something unnatural :*

“ Come per sostentar solajo o tetto  
Per mensola talvolta una figura  
Si vede giunger le ginocchia al petto,  
*La qual fa del non ver vera rancura*  
*Nascer a chi la vede ;* così fatti  
Vid' io color.”—*Purg.* 10.

*blushing in innocent sympathy for others :*

“ E come donna onesta che permane  
Di se sicura, e per l' altrui fallenza  
*Pure ascoltando timida si fane :*  
Così Beatrice trasmutò sembianza.”—*Parad.* 27.

*asking and answering by looks only :*

“ Volsi gli occhi agli occhi al signor mio ;  
Ond' elli m' assentì con lieto cenno  
Ciò che chiedea la vista del disio.”—*Purg.* 19.

*watching the effect of words :*

“ Posto avea fine al suo ragionamento  
L' alto dottore, ed attento guardava  
Nella mia vista s' io pareva contento.  
Ed io, cui nuova sete ancor frugava,  
Di fuor taceva e dentro dicea : forse  
Lo troppo dimandar ch' io fo, li grava.  
Ma quel padre verace, che s' accorse  
Del timido voler che non s' apriva,  
Parlando, di parlare ardir mi porse.”—*Purg.* 18.

*Dante betraying Virgil's presence to Statius, by his involuntary smile :*

“ Volser Virgilio a me queste parole  
Con viso che tacendo dicea : ‘ taci ;’  
Ma non può tutto la virtù che vuole ;  
Che riso e pianto son tanto seguaci  
Alla passion da che ciascun si spicca,  
*Che men seguon voler ne' più veraci.*  
*Io pur sorrisi, come l' uom ch' ammicca :*  
*Perchè l' ombra si tacque, e riguardommi*  
*Negli occhi ove 'l sembante più si ficca.*  
E se tanto lavoro in bene assommi,

to a poetry with whose general aim and spirit it has little in common — tributary in its exact forms, even in its

Disse, perchè la faccia tua testeso  
Un lampeggiar d' un riso dimostrommi?"—*Purg.* 21.

*smiles and words together :*

" Per le *sorrise parolette brevi.*"—*Parad.* 1.

*eye meeting eye :*

" Gli occhi ritorsi avanti  
Dritti nel lume della dolce guida  
Che sorridendo ardea negli occhi santi."—*Parad.* 3.

" Come si vede qui alcuna volta  
L' affetto nella vista, s' ello è tanto  
Che da lui sia tutta l' anima tolta :  
Così nel fiammeggiar del fulgor santo  
A cui mi volsi, conobbi la voglia  
In lui di ragionarmi ancora alquanto."—*Parad.* 18.

*gentleness of voice :*

" E cominciommi a dir soave e piana  
Con angelica voce in sua favella."—*Inf.* 2.

" E come agli occhi miei si fe' più bella,  
Così con voce più dolce e soave,  
Ma non con questa moderna favella,  
Dissemi ;"—*Parad.* 16.

*chanting :*

" *Te lucis ante* si divotamente  
Le uscì di bocca e con sì dolce note,  
Che fece me a me uscir di mente.  
E l' altre poi dolcemente e divote  
Seguitar lei per tutto l' inno intero,  
Avendo gli occhi alle superne ruote."—*Purg.* 8.

*chanting blended with the sound of the organ :*

" Io mi rivolsi attento al primo tuono,  
E *Te Deum laudamus* mi pareva  
Udire in voce mista al dolce suono.  
Tale imagine appunto mi rendea  
Ciò ch' io udiva, qual prender si suole  
Quando a cantar con organi si stea ;  
Ch' or sì, or no, s' intendon le parole."—*Purg.* 9.

*voices in concert :*

" E come in voce voce si discerne  
Quando una è ferma, e 'l altra va e riede."—*Parad.* 8.

*attitudes and gestures : e. g. Beatrice addressing him,*

" Con atto e voce di spedito duce."—*Parad.* 30.

*Sordello eyeing the travellers :*

" Venimmo a lei : o anima Lombarda

technicalities. He speaks of the Mediterranean Sea, not merely as a historian, or an observer of its storms or its smiles, but as a geologist\*; of light, not merely in its beautiful appearances, but in its natural laws.† There is a charm, an imaginative charm to him, not merely in the sensible magnificence of the heavens, “in their silence, and light, and watchfulness,” but in the system of Ptolemy and the theories of astrology; and he delights to interweave with the poetry of feeling and of the outward sense, the grandeur — so far as he knew it — of order, proportion, measured magnitudes, the relations of abstract forces, displayed on such a scene as the material universe, as if he wished to show that imagination in its boldest flight was not afraid of the company of the clear and subtle intellect.

Indeed the real never daunts him. It is his leading principle of poetical composition, to draw out of things the poetry which is latent in them, either essentially, or as they are portions, images, or reflexes of something greater — not to invest them with a poetical semblance, by means of words which bring with them poetical associations, and have received a general poetical stamp. Dante has few of those indirect charms which flow from the subtle structure and refined graces

Come ti stavi altera e disdegnosa  
 E nel muover degli occhi onesta e tarda.  
 Ella non ci diceva alcuna cosa,  
 Ma lasciavane gir, solo guardando,  
 A guisa di leon quando si posa.”—*Purg.* 6.

*the angel moving “dry-shod” over the Stygian pool :*

“*Dal volto rimovea quell’ aer grasso  
 Menando la sinistra innanzi spesso,  
 E sol di quell’ angoscia pareo lasso.  
 Ben m’ accorsi ch’ egli era del ciel messo,  
 E volsimi al maestro ; e quei fe’ segno  
 Ch’ io stessi cheto ed inchinassi ed esso.  
 Ah! quanto mi pareo pien di disdegno.*  
 \* \* \* \* \*

Poi si rivolse per la strada lorda,  
 E non fe’ motto a noi, ma fe’ sembante  
 D’ uomo cui altra cura stringa e morde  
 Che quella di colui che gli è davante.”—*Inf.* 9.

\* “*La maggior valle, in che l’acqua si spandi.*”—*Parad.* 9.

† e. g. *Purg.* 15.

of language—none of that exquisitely fitted and self-sustained mechanism of choice words of the Greeks—none of that tempered and majestic amplitude of diction, which clothes, like the folds of a royal robe, the thoughts of the Latins—none of that abundant play of fancy and sentiment, soft or grand, in which the later Italian poets delighted. Words with him are used sparingly, never in play—never because they carry with them poetical recollections—never for their own sake; but because they are instruments which will give the deepest, clearest, sharpest stamp of that image which the poet's mind, piercing to the very heart of his subject, or seizing the characteristic feature which to other men's eyes is confused and lost among others accidental and common, draws forth in severe and living truth. Words will not always bend themselves to his demands on them; and make him often uncouth, abrupt, obscure. But he is too much in earnest to heed uncouthness; and his power over language is too great to allow uncertainty as to what he means, to be other than occasional. Nor is he a stranger to the utmost sweetness and melody of language. But it appears, unsought for and unlaboured, the spontaneous and inevitable obedience of the tongue and pen to the impressions of the mind; as grace and beauty, of themselves, "command and guide the eye" of the painter, who thinks not of his hand but of them. All is in character with the absorbed and serious earnestness which pervades the poem; there is no toying, no ornament, that a man in earnest might not throw into his words;—whether in single images, or in pictures, like that of the Meadow of the Heroes (*Inf.* 4.), or the angel appearing in hell to guide the poet through the burning city (*Inf.* 9.)—or in histories, like those of Count Ugolino, or the life of S. Francis (*Parad.* 11.)—or in dramatic scenes like the meeting of the poets Sordello and Virgil (*Purgat.* 6.), or that one, unequalled in beauty, where Dante himself, after years of forgetfulness and sin, sees Beatrice in glory, and hears his name, never but once pronounced during the vision, from her lips.\*

\* "Io vidi già nel cominciar del giorno  
La parte oriental tutta rosata,



But this, or any other array of scenes and images, might be matched from poets of a far lower order than Dante: and to specimens which might be brought together of his audacity and extravagance, no parallel could be found except among the lowest. We cannot, honestly, plead the barbarism of the time as his excuse. That, doubtless, contributed

E l' altro ciel di bel sereno adorno,  
 E la faccia del sol nascere ombrata,  
 Sì che per temperanza di vapori  
 L' occhio lo sostenea lunga fiata;  
 Così dentro una nuvola di fiori,  
 Che dalle mani angeliche saliva,  
 E ricadeva giù dentro e di fuori,  
 Sovra candido vel cinta d' oliva  
 Donna m' apparve sotto verde manto  
 Vestita di color di fiamma viva.  
 E lo spirito mio, che già cotanto  
 Tempo era stato con la sua presenza,  
 Non era di stupor, tremando, affranto.  
 Senza degli occhi aver più conoscenza,  
 Per occulta virtù, che da lei mosse,  
 D' antico amor senti' la gran potenza.

\* \* \* \* \*

Volsimi alla sinistra col rispetto,  
 Col quale il fantolin corre alla mamma,  
 Quando ha paura, o quando egli è afflitto,  
 Per dicere a Virgilio: Men che dramma  
 Di sangue m' è rimasa, che non tremi :  
 Conosco i segni dell' antica fiamma.  
 Ma Virgilio n' avea lasciati scemi  
 Di se, Virgilio dolcissimo padre,  
 Virgilio, a cui per mia salute diemi :

\* \* \* \* \*

Dante, perchè Virgilio se ne vada,  
 Non piangere anche, non piangere ancora;  
 Che pianger ti convien per altra spada.

\* \* \* \* \*

Regalmente nell' atto ancor proterva  
 Continuò, come colui che dice,  
 E 'l più caldo parlar dietro riserva:  
 Guardami ben: ben son, ben son Beatrice:  
 Come degnasti d' accedere al monte?  
 Non sapei tu, che qui è l' uom felice?"—*Purg.* 30.

But extracts can give but an imperfect notion of this grand and touching canto.

largely to them; but they were the faults of the man. In another age, their form might have been different; yet we cannot believe so much of time, that it would have tamed Dante. Nor can we wish it. It might have made him less great: and his greatness can well bear its own blemishes, and will not less meet its due honour among men, because they can detect its kindred to themselves.

The greatness of his work is not in its details—to be made or marred by them. It is the greatness of a comprehensive and vast conception, sustaining without failure the trial of its long and hazardous execution, and fulfilling at its close the hope and promise of its beginning; like the greatness,—which we watch in its course with anxious suspense, and look back upon when it is secured by death, with deep admiration—of a perfect life. Many a surprise, many a difficulty, many a disappointment, many a strange reverse and alternation of feelings, attend the progress of the most patient and admiring reader of the *Commedia*; as many as attend on one who follows the unfolding of a strong character in life. We are often shocked when we were prepared to admire—repelled, when we came with sympathy; the accustomed key fails at a critical moment—depths are revealed which we cannot sound, mysteries which baffle and confound us. But the check is for a time—the gap and chasm does not dissever. Haste is even an evidence of life—the brief word, the obscure hint, the unexplained, the unfinished, or even the unachieved, are the marks of human feebleness, but are also among those of human truth. The unity of the whole is unimpaired. The strength which is working it out, though it may have at times disappointed us, shows no hollowness or exhaustion. The surprise of disappointment is balanced—there is the surprise of unimagined excellence. Powers do more than they promised; and that spontaneous and living energy, without which neither man nor poet can be trusted, and which showed its strength even in its failures, shows it more abundantly in the novelties of success—by touching sympathies which have never been touched before, by the unconstrained freshness with which it meets the proverbial and

familiar, by the freedom with which it adjusts itself to a new position or an altered task—by the completeness, unstudied and instinctive, with which it holds together dissimilar and uncongenial materials, and forces the most intractable, the most unaccustomed to submission, to receive the colour of the whole—by its orderly and unmistakeable onward march, and its progress, as in height, so in what corresponds to height. It was one and the same man, who rose from the despair, the agony, the vivid and vulgar horrors of the Inferno, to the sense and imagination of certainty, sinlessness, and joy ineffable—the same man whose power and whose sympathies failed him not, whether discriminating and enumerating, as if he had gone through them all, the various forms of human suffering, from the dull, gnawing sense of the loss of happiness, to the infinite woes of the wrecked and ruined spirit, and the coarser pangs of the material flesh; or dwelling on the changeful lights and shades of earnest repentance, in its hard, but not unaided or ungladdened struggle, and on that restoration to liberty and peace, which can change even this life into paradise, and reverse the doom which made sorrow our condition, and laughter and joy unnatural and dangerous—the penalty of that first fault, which

“ In pianto ed in affanno  
Cambiò onesto riso e dolce giuoco ; ”—

or rising finally above mortal experience, to imagine the freedom of the saints, and the peace of eternity. In this consists the greatness of his power. It is not necessary to read through the *Commedia* to see it—open it where we please, we see that he is on his way, and whither he is going; episode and digression share in the solemnity of the general order.

And his greatness was more than that of power. That reach and play of sympathy ministered to a noble wisdom, which used it thoughtfully and consciously for a purpose to which great poetry had never yet been applied, except in the mouth of prophets. Dante was a stern man, and more than stern, among his fellows. But he has left to those who never saw his face an inheritance the most precious; he has

left them that which, reflecting and interpreting their minds, does so, not to amuse, not to bewilder, not to warp, not to turn them in upon themselves in distrust or gloom or selfishness; not merely to hold up a mirror to nature; but to make them true and make them hopeful. Dark as are his words of individuals, his thoughts are not dark or one-sided about mankind; his is no cherished and perverse severity—his faith is too large, too real, for such a fault. He did not write only the *Inferno*. And the *Purgatorio* and the *Paradiso* are not an afterthought, a feebler appendix and compensation, conceived when too late, to a finished whole, which has taken up into itself the poet's real mind. Nowhere else in poetry of equal power is there the same balanced view of what man is, and may be; nowhere so wide a grasp shown of his various capacities, so strong a desire to find a due place and function for all his various dispositions. Where he stands contrasted in his idea of human life with other poets, who have been more powerful exponents of its separate sides, is in his large and truthful comprehensiveness. Fresh from the thought of man's condition as a whole, fresh from the thought of his goodness, his greatness, his power, as well as of his evil, his mind is equally in tune when rejoicing over his restoration, as when contemplating the ruins of his fall. He never lets go the recollection that human life, if it grovels at one end in corruption and sin, and has to pass through the sweat and dust and disfigurement of earthly toil, has throughout, compensations, remedies, functions, spheres innumerable of profitable activity, sources inexhaustible of delight and consolation—and at the other end a perfection which cannot be named. No one ever measured the greatness of man in all its forms with so true and yet with so admiring an eye, and with such glowing hope, as he who has also portrayed so awfully man's littleness and vileness. And he went further—no one who could understand and do homage to greatness in man, ever drew the line so strongly between greatness and goodness, and so unhesitatingly placed the hero of this world only—placed him in all his magnificence, honoured with no timid or dissembling reverence—at the distance of worlds, below the place of the lowest saint.

Those who know the "Divina Commedia" best, will best know how hard it is to be the interpreter of such a mind; but they will sympathise with the wish to call attention to it. They know, and would wish others also to know, not by hearsay, but by experience, the power of that wonderful poem. They know its austere, yet subduing beauty; they know what force there is, in its free and earnest and solemn verse, to strengthen, to tranquillise, to console. It is a small thing that it has the secret of Nature and Man; that a few keen words have opened their eyes to new sights in earth, and sea, and sky; have taught them new mysteries of sound; have made them recognise, in distinct image or thought, fugitive feelings, or their unheeded expression, by look, or gesture, or motion; that it has enriched the public and collective memory of society with new instances, never to be lost, of human feeling and fortune; has charmed ear and mind by the music of its stately march, and the variety and completeness of its plan. But, besides this, they know how often its seriousness has put to shame their trifling, its magnanimity their faint-heartedness, its living energy their indolence, its stern and sad grandeur rebuked low thoughts, its thrilling tenderness overcome sullenness and assuaged distress, its strong faith quelled despair and soothed perplexity, its vast grasp imparted the sense of harmony to the view of clashing truths. They know how often they have found, in times of trouble, if not light, at least that deep sense of reality, permanent, though unseen, which is more than light can always give—in the view which it has suggested to them of the judgments and the love of God.\*

\* It is necessary to state, that these remarks were written before we had seen the chapter on Dante in "Italy, Past and Present, by L. Mariotti." Had we become acquainted with it earlier, we should have had to refer to it often, in the way of acknowledgment, and as often in the way of strong protest.

## ST. ANSELM AND WILLIAM RUFUS.\*

[JAN. 1843.]

WHEN a man has played a great part in his generation, and in the course of years the cause or quarrel in which he was engaged becomes obsolete and is forgotten, his name often survives, and is handed on with a certain vague reverence, people know not why:—*volitat per ora virum*; but the sound is lifeless and unmeaning; he has become a sort of shadowy εἶδωλον, without substance or distinguishable feature. The name of St. Anselm is thus preserved among us; when it is mentioned, we recognise it as one which is not quite new to us; but who he was, when he lived, what he did, whether he was Archbishop of Canterbury or Constantinople, are questions about which a great proportion of readers would feel no shame in confessing ignorance.

Yet St. Anselm was a great man; he was looked upon as *the man* of his time in the Western Church; he was one who in his day fought most nobly the good fight, and drew to himself the hearts of Christendom. Among all who have sat on the throne of Canterbury, none used to be looked upon as greater, or more deserving of lasting remembrance in the English Church.

But it was his fortune to be called to defend the cause of religion, by deed and suffering, against the pride and licentiousness of the feudal system, and to be one of the foremost in the contest. And this, which so endeared him to Englishmen of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, has made

\* *The Life of St. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury; a Contribution to a Knowledge of the Moral, Ecclesiastical, and Literary Life of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries.* Translated from the German of J. A. Möhler, D. D., &c. by H. Rymer, Student of St. Edmund's College, Old Hall Green. London: T. Jones. 1842.

Englishmen of the eighteenth and nineteenth forget him. The cause, to which he devoted himself so earnestly has ceased to be looked upon as the religious or the popular one ; where it does not call forth feelings of bitter hostility, it is regarded with suspicion or indifference.

Partly from ignorance, partly from inveterate prejudice, we cannot get ourselves to look upon the great struggles between the Church and the Crown, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, as other than political. From our childhood we have been used to consider the efforts of the reforming party among the clergy as little short of rebellion ; as mere ambitious and hypocritical aggressions on the state, for the lowest and most selfish ends. We have connected with their cause, disloyalty, superstition, lust of gain, narrowness of mind, and a hateful union of abject servility and domineering tyranny. " Those dark times of priestcraft, when popes and monks bearded the king, and conspired to keep mankind in slavery both of body and soul,"—such is our idea of the days of St. Anselm. At the best, the policy of the Church is regarded as mistaken ; as an interference with matters beyond her sphere, savouring of worldliness and want of faith. But that the party of Gregory VII. and St. Anselm was the *religious* one,—that they were contending for objects not of this world,—that they were the champions of truth and holiness, the reformers of their day,—that they were on the *right* side, the side which good men now would have taken in those circumstances,—and that the kings and nobles were in the wrong, were cruel and dangerous aggressors,—this, we think, many of us find hard to believe, many more even to *fancy*. The notion is too much for their imagination : they can no more master it, than they can conceive the French Revolution to have been right.

This state of feeling has come about naturally, as many other things, good and evil, have come about in our generation ; as most of us have ceased to believe in ghost stories, or suspect old women of witchcraft, or value a priest's blessing. This is not the place to discuss its deep and manifold causes ; for we are writing not of the nineteenth century, but of the eleventh ; of Anselm and his cause, not of English national

character. But we are anxious that this cause should be judged fairly ; and there are one or two sources of prejudice against it, which, while they are manifestly fatal to all true and high views of history, are also so very common and powerful, that we cannot refrain from spending a few words on them, before proceeding to the main subject of our review.

1. One of these sources of prejudice is the irreligious character of our popular historical traditions, and of the literature which embodies and perpetuates them. Men go by tradition in most things, and in none more than in history ; and the feelings and even the judgments with which it has prepossessed us, often last long after opinion has ceased to support them. We have been brought up in familiar acquaintance with a history, which may well have taken a strong hold on our imagination. But in that magnificent line of traditions—the “ *Gesta Regum Anglorum* ”—a series which for interest and sustained grandeur has no parallel but in the history of Rome—in the imposing picture presented by the unfolding and progress of the fortunes of the state and realm of England, we may look in vain for anything of higher stature or diviner mould than what belongs to this world. Our historians speak as they might of a great heathen empire ; as if the most august and awful object in history, the Christian Church, deeply involved too as its fortunes have been with those of our own country, had no existence, or were but a mere title or abstraction. The theory on which they write, recognises not religion as a standard or motive of public action ; it is one which looks not beyond things temporal, for greatness or reality ; which holds no power entitled to exercise a direct and visible control on society, but that of the crown or the constitution :—a theory, on which the claim of the Church to speak and be listened to in the councils of kings, and to thwart, if need be, the policy of nations, is a simple absurdity. It is not too much to say, that there is less in the popular history of the Christian kingdom of England which implies the *reality* of religion—less acknowledgment of the laws and agents of a Divine government, partly concealed and partly manifested, to which the temporal rulers of the world



are even here amenable—than in the legends, or even the political history, of Greece and Rome.

Nor is there much to wonder at in this, considering that our great authorities on the subject of European history have been such as Hume and Robertson. Christians and Churchmen have consented to receive as oracles the dicta of the unbeliever and the cold-hearted *littérateur* on the duties and objects of man and society, and to listen with obsequious patience, while they superciliously gave judgment on the temper and relations of the Church, and the conduct of her prelates. Their influence, no doubt, is somewhat shaken; yet their view and colouring of things still remain among us, as the acknowledged and received one. Their tone of tranquil and deliberate contempt, scarcely disturbed even by bitterness, has become the keynote of the general feeling in England about Churchmen and their cause. They have reconciled us to the belief, that, in the earlier times of modern history, those ages of reality, of young and exuberant life, there were nothing but hollow forms, sickening hypocrisies, uncouth and unmeaning technicalities; and taught us to measure purposes which stirred all Christendom as one man, by the formulæ of an impertinent and shallow philosophy—the hopes of saints, by the selfishness of fashionable society. It speaks ill for the character of any age, when such writers could gain and keep the ascendant in history; ill for its genuineness of feeling, ill for its Christianity. The influence which Hume had on the public was given by the public, which had long been ready for him, and felt as he did. Indeed, between him and his predecessors in English history, there is not much to choose in their way of viewing ecclesiastical matters. He was an unbeliever, and they professed to be Christians: but there is in both the same ignorant contempt for what they call the dark ages, the same sneers at “superstition” and “priestcraft;” the same invariable leaning to the worldly side, however undeniably bad its show, and worthless its supporters; the same inability to conceive of any higher motives in the clergy than selfishness and ambition; the same insensibility to nobleness and height of character in them, however obvious. Nay, we

may see the same spirit at work in deeper and more manly writers than the "polite and ingenious" of our Augustan age. Account for it as we may, ever since the Reformation, the feeling of our most Catholic writers, whenever they are led across the great contests of our early history, is, for the most part, on the side of the King and the State against the Church. The world has brought them to believe, that in these struggles it was always the injured, if not the oppressed party, and an unequal match for the craft of its antagonist: it has insulted religion, and blackened the memory of its defenders, and then called upon Christians to admire and honour its policy; and Christians have been weak and faithless enough to allow themselves for its sake to be estranged from their fathers and fellow champions in the faith, and have even rivalled it in its bitterness against them.

Nowhere does this low morality and dislike of the Church appear more offensively and more mischievously, than in those books from which we first learn history, and which may be taken as fair exponents of popular notions upon the subject. The household traditions of England are now to be found, not in ballads and chronicles, but in the assemblage of unpretending little volumes which we see advertised in the school catalogues of Messrs. Whittaker and Simpkin & Marshall, and some of which are to be met with in most nurseries and juvenile libraries in the United Kingdom. We have all of us been once familiar with them,—a series of small books none of them aspiring beyond 12mo., and bound in a sort of official livery—blue, red, and green, or brown sheep with blue edges;—prim and starched little skeleton compilations, the very essence of propriety and dryness, carefully starving, as far as they can, all appetite for the grand, or poetical, or romantic, and with all the decided conciseness, infallibility, and philosophical absence of feeling, of a statistical report, or treatise on political economy. These manuals of the "Textus receptus" of English history, give a view of their subject more remarkable for its uniformity than its consistency. For though they all fix on the same great men, the same good and bad kings, the same patriots

and traitors, they are not nice as to principles; loyalty and disloyalty, republicanism and high monarchical views, are each, in their turn, grounds both of praise and censure:—just as Locke and Venerable Bede, Milton and Hooker, King Alfred and William III. find themselves in company in a “Temple of British Worthies.” But with all their anomalies, these books follow one rule at least steadily and intelligently: they invariably take part with the political power, whatever it be, against the Church. In the contests between the ecclesiastical and civil powers, at whatever period, we are taught, when children, to take it for granted that all right and wisdom lay with the latter; to look upon all leading Churchmen with aversion, and to doubt systematically in them alone, purity of motive, or reasonableness of purpose. Sympathy and admiration are claimed for political greatness, or successful soldiership; for Christian faith, and magnanimity, and self-devotion, it is well if there is not a sneer. And these bad prejudices, which we thus drink in almost with our mother’s milk, colour our view, even in spite of ourselves, of the ecclesiastical questions of past history.

2. And our indifference or aversion to the cause of the Church in the middle ages, is fostered by the strangely unreal notions which are afloat on the subject of ecclesiastical history; notions which have arisen, not merely from an inability to alter our focus of vision, in order to contemplate what is both very distant, and set to a different scale of greatness from our own, but from a most baseless and fantastic idea, of what was to be looked for beforehand in Church history. Many persons seem to think that they had a right to find it all along a fair and calm picture of holiness and purity: there should be no disturbances, no troubles, no quarrels about lands and rights; nothing but meekness and peace, at least within. Not of course that there should be no suffering or difficulties, but they ought to be of the clearly heroic kind. Martyrdom and confession plainly add to the interest of any history; martyrs and confessors of course there ought to be; but then they ought to be abstract ones, without anything of commonplace

real human nature about them. And the rest of the history ought to be made up solely of the angelic virtues and high deeds of saints, the beautiful lives and sayings of heavenly-minded teachers, the calm unobtrusive dutifulness, the fervent piety, and unwearied zeal of the flock at large. Such, to judge from the way in which we often hear Church history spoken of, *as it has been*, would seem to be the common notion of what *it ought to have been*, in order to be worth anything for a Christian of our day to study heartily and with interest.

Now it is a light thing to assure such theorists, that in the most despised periods of ecclesiastical history, they will find abundance, if they will take the trouble to search for it, to satisfy their demands for religion, all but disengaged from the world. But they must not lay it down as a canon, that nothing can be religious except what is, as it were, disembodied, and exhibited apart from the realities of life as we see it; that the highest principles and most saintly feelings cannot be at work in the business of the court or the market-place. For it is not, for the most part, according to the existing order of things, to find qualities or elements in an unmixed state: if we want them in a simple form, we must disengage them by thought and skill for ourselves; or it may be, they are not to be disengaged at all; if we seek for electricity, for galvanic or magnetic power, we must be content to possess their subtle virtues in Leyden jars, muscles of dead frogs, and bars of iron. When the Church was founded, there was no new world created, as a stage for Christians to act upon. They were still to be men, each with a different face and figure and character, living a certain number of years, every year made up of a certain number of days and seconds, of which each was to have its own object, feeling, and thought — a countless number, and of an infinite variety — to tempt, or soothe, or guide, or harass. Life was with them to be no poetical dream, but in its main circumstances and conditions, exactly as commonplace, as real, as long, as each of us finds it. Their Christian principles were not to be like propositions of Euclid or legal formulæ, things to be thought of by themselves and

paraded on certain occasions; but they were to work *in* and *under* the every-day realities of life, high and low; to hide themselves in all feelings and actions, to possess and inform character, to leaven insensibly whatever stirs and warms men's hearts. They were not meant for a gala robe, but for a working-day dress, and that for no fancy labour, but for the rough and dusty encounters of this (outwardly) very matter-of-fact and unromantic world.

Yet people seem to forget these truisms when they come to study Church history. They forget also that the Bible history itself had its *outside* face, not very different in appearance from what they object to in ecclesiastical history; only in one we are brought within the veil of Providence, and are excluded for the most part in the other.

It is therefore really no great wonder that, from first to last, Church history, like all other history of man, presents a series of conflicts — conflicts between real men, carried on as contests are carried on now, with much in them that is bad, much that is ambiguous, and difficult to disentangle and explain, much that is merely practical and very unpoetical, and what some call very unspiritual. That is to say, men were in earnest; they did not play at controversy; they carried on no paper war with imaginary and harmless antagonists, but a keen struggle with living opponents, who felt as strong an interest in the events as themselves: and the strife was accompanied, as all real strifes are, with excitement and pain, with trouble, risk, and anxious uncertainty.

Yet the very reality and earnestness of these controversies seem in our eyes a sufficient reason for not considering them of importance or interest; and this is especially the case with respect to the history of the Church of the middle ages, which we in England seem scarcely to consider religious history at all. Even the theological student neglects it: in his course of Church history, he reads down to the end of the fourth or fifth century, and then with a huge bound, passes over ten centuries, and begins again with the sixteenth. And the implied reason of this remarkable proceeding is, that in those days of wonderful religious energy,

when every question was a religious one, the history of the Church was but external and secular. For the controversies of the third and fourth centuries, the said student can see reason; for those of the eleventh and twelfth, none.

The great controversies of the early Church, and those of the middle ages, differed in two points. Those of the first five centuries were for the most part carried on with persons out of the pale of the Church, and on points of faith and doctrine: those of the middle ages were mainly connected with life and morals, and were with men who knew no spiritual authority but hers. Her first opponents, quarrelling with her as a teacher of religion, broke off from her, and set up parallel and antagonistic systems of their own; they were heretics and schismatics, self-condemned, and clearly marked out as such by their own formal and deliberate acts: there was no mistaking the grounds or the importance of the dispute. But in the eleventh century, these heresies were things of a past age in the West — lifeless and inoperative carcasses of old enemies, from whom the Church had little, comparatively, to fear for the present. She had living antagonists to cope with, but they were of a different sort. They were no longer the sophist and declaimer of the schools, but mail-clad barons. Just as she had subdued the intelligence and refinement of the old Roman empire, it was swept away, and she was left alone with its wild destroyers. Her commission was changed; she had now to tame and rule the barbarians. But upon them the voice which had rebuked the heretic fell powerless. While they pressed into her fold, they overwhelmed all her efforts to reclaim them, and filled her, from east to west, with violence and stunning disorder. When, therefore, she again roused herself to confront the world, her position and difficulties had shifted. Her enemy was no longer heresy, but vice; — wickedness, which wrought with a high hand; — foul and rampant, like that of Sodom, or the men before the Flood. It was not the Faith, but the first principles of duty — justice, mercy, and truth — which were directly endangered by the unbridled ambition and licentiousness of the feudal aristocracy, who were then

masters of Europe. These proud and resolute men were no enemy out of doors; they were within her pale, professed allegiance to her, and to be her protectors; claimed and exercised important rights in her government and internal arrangements, plausible in their origin, strengthened by prescription, daily placed further out of the reach of attack by ever-extending encroachments, and guarded with the jealousy of men who felt that the restraints of Church discipline, if ever they closed round them, would be fetters of iron. And with this fierce nobility she had to fight the battle of the poor and weak; to settle the question, whether Christian religion and the offices of the Church were to be anything more than names, and honours, and endowments, trappings of chivalry and gentle blood; whether there were yet strength left upon earth to maintain and avenge the laws of God, whoever might break them. She had to stand between the oppressor and his prey; to compel respect for what is pure and sacred, from the lawless and powerful.

The various forms which this great struggle took, touched as truly the reality and permanence of religion, as any of the earlier controversies with heresy. But its nature made it at the time, and makes it still, a difficult one. For a great practical controversy like the present, whether the feudal or the ecclesiastical, the military or the religious principle, should have its rightful predominance in European society, though as real in its grounds as that former contest, which the Church waged against worldliness in the form of heresy, is less capable of being presented in a definite and clearly limited form, with all its due oppositions and distinctions, its complete detail of feature and circumstance, than a dogmatic controversy. Such a scene of conflict must from the number of extraneous elements mixed up in it, present an appearance of vagueness, or at least confusion: it must have many sides, and so be difficult to take in at once: it must be full of occasions for mistake and error, both for actors and spectators. For in such a case, the great principles in debate are scarcely ever presented in a pure and unembarrassed form; the contest is carried on not by opposing statements

and arguments, but, so to speak, by *moves*, the meaning and effect of which are not always obvious, even to him who makes them; which harmonise with and involve principles, but which do not necessarily disclose them. It is put upon issues, and battled upon points, which are often of disproportionately small importance to the real question which is felt to turn on them. The great interests at stake appear but accidentally on the face of the dispute; and we wonder at the eagerness and zeal which the ostensible objects of the contest call forth, till we come to see, as the combatants saw, that trifling as they may be, they are, from the force of circumstances, the key of a whole position. Such a contest, moreover, *must* appear personal: for the real causes of dispute lying out of sight, and being represented not so much by words as by the character and deeds of men; — and further, the different sides not being marked off by plain and broad lines, and the combatants being intermixed, we are tempted to see nothing but individual interests and aims, in cases where in reality a great cause has been fought for, and lost or won. We contemplate only Henry and Gregory, their policy, their errors, and their success as men, and put out of sight the worldly or spiritual power which stood or fell with them. And further, where all parties have, or claim, specific rights in a common society, with some legitimate, some prescriptive, or held by sufferance, some in abeyance — rights between Christian and Christian, clerk and layman, bishop and lord — rights possibly ill-defined and ill-adjusted — the conflict could be carried on for a long time, without apparently touching those deeper and more real grounds of opposition which lay beneath: and instead of a controversy about the most active principles and most vital interests of society, it would present outwardly the appearance of a series of technical and legal questions.\*

\* Our remarks scarcely need illustration: but we are tempted to refer by way of instance, to the struggle now going on in Lower Canada between the English and French population.<sup>1</sup> The English are pouring in upon the French holders

<sup>1</sup> Vide "The Times," Oct. 1. 1842.



We shall now proceed with our main subject, and endeavour to give in some detail one of the scenes in this contest, as it was viewed from the side of the Church, and by persons who had it before their eyes, and were engaged in it; taking from their own mouths what they believed and meant, what were their objects, how they felt, and what they hoped for. It is obviously as vain to expect to gain in any other way a real view of their position, as it would be to look for a fair account of the stand lately made in defence of Church property, from a liberal who hates everything ecclesiastical. Our position towards those times ought not to be an external one; we ought to look at them neither as advocates nor as mere critics, but as Churchmen. And indeed it is high time to do so, if we wish posterity to do justice to our own motives in resisting Church spoliation. We too are embarked in the same cause, and we certainly have not more to show than they had, to prove our disinterestedness.

Anselm's time was an era in the history of the English Church; and the transactions in which he was engaged are rendered yet more interesting by his personal character. For we must not forget that the great champion of ecclesiastical liberty was also the profoundest and most original writer that had appeared in the Latin Church since St. Augustine; or that he was the great model in his time of high Christian character, in its most winning and graceful as well as in its severest aspect. Yet his history has never been treated, at least in England, with the special attention it deserves. Except in the heavy pages of Collier, we know not where the English reader would find a full account of him.

of the soil, endeavouring to establish themselves, and to get the land into their own hands. The French feel that their religion, their language, their habits and ways of life—all that is dear to them, and has hitherto made them happy, must be swept away, if their rough and enterprising neighbours, who have but small sympathy with them, should, by dint of greater capital, gain their footing. With the French, the effort to keep the English out, is a struggle for existence. Now the great obstacle to the English purchaser is the cumbrous and intricate system of French law to which property in Lower Canada is subject: and it is on the minutiae and technicalities of this law that the battle is fought between the two races.

The work which originally suggested these remarks, was the first attempt to supply the deficiency,—a translation of a posthumous essay of Dr. Möhler by Mr. Rymer. Dr. Möhler's object was to draw attention to what really was the state of religion and thought in the times of the great struggle between the Church and the Empire, and to exhibit the "moral, ecclesiastical, and literary life" of the period in the history of its greatest and most complete representative. It was the work of one who thoroughly appreciated Anselm and his times: but it is much to be regretted, that coming from a man who viewed his subject so thoughtfully, and with so clear and steady an eye, it should have appeared in so very unattractive a form. It could scarcely have been intended for publication as it stands. As a composition, it is loose and rambling; too discursive for a history, and without arrangement enough for a dissertation. Important views suggested by the course of the story are continually breaking its thread by the length to which they are pursued: yet they are never distinctly worked out. The narrative is spiritless and flat, in a history which has interest enough for a romance; and there is throughout a carelessness in statements of fact, which is unaccountable in one who evidently had his authorities before him. Nor were the defects of the original supplied in the translation. The most careful part of the work is the essay at the end on the "scholastic philosophy of St. Anselm."

The contemporary materials for a life of Anselm are unusually full and interesting. He held correspondence with persons in every part of Europe, and even in Asia, and in every vocation and grade of society; and of this correspondence, which brings out in a most striking manner his character and objects, a large portion is preserved, extending over part of his private, and almost the whole of his public life. Further, we have two singularly interesting and graphic accounts of his public and private life, by an eye-witness, Eadmer, an English monk of Canterbury, who was his companion and most intimate friend all through his troubles and exile, and was afterwards Archbishop of St. Andrews; a man of sense

and great observation, somewhat disposed to gossip, but remarkably simple and natural in his accounts, and apparently quite entitled to the deference which has always been paid to his authority. He wrote under the eye and correction of the archbishop \*; and his account is borne out, and referred to, by his contemporaries, Ordericus Vitalis, who wrote in Normandy, and William of Malmesbury, whose work was dedicated to a son of Henry I. (one of Anselm's opponents). Such are our main sources of information.

The two contests in which Anselm was successively engaged with William Rufus and Henry I., are sufficiently distinct to be considered separately. His antagonist in the first was the lawless violence of feudalism, in the second its craft and unscrupulous intrigue. The grounds, too, of the dispute, which in the first appear in a vague and general form, were brought to a distinct question in the second. These two contests will form the subjects, respectively, of the present, and the following essay.

To understand what these struggles really meant and involved, we must keep before our eyes throughout, that idea of the Church—of its nature and position in the world—which men in those days had received from their fathers, and took for granted, supposing that they saw it in every line of Scripture.

The Church, as set up by the Apostles, was an organised society, destined to pursue *in* the world objects beyond the world; with laws and a polity, not of man's ordering; governed by powers, delegated indeed *to* men, but not *from* men. It was a *real* and *visible kingdom*; distinct from the kingdoms of this world and independent of them, as well when embracing as when confronting them; with objects and ends, over all earthly ones, paramount. With these unearthly ends, or with the powers granted to the Church to carry them out, by her invisible yet ever-present King, the powers of this world can never innocently interfere. However the Church's essential nature may be obscured by the sin of her members, yet while she exists, her rights and claims must be indefeasible; for they are truly *His*, "to whom the heathen have been given for His

\* Wharton, *Angl'a Sacra*, ii. 182, 183.

inheritance." Princes of the earth, — whatever may have been yielded to them for honour's sake or convenience, may have been usurped by wrong, inherited or acquired by usage, betrayed by cowardice, or sold by worldliness, — can never gain *rights* over the Church in her own province; *rights* to set aside her laws, to wield her powers, or alter her objects; for these laws, powers, and objects are beyond the sphere to which earthly power can as such extend. Many things, — policy, compacts, justice, — may prevent the Church at any particular moment from reclaiming what is her own; but forfeit it finally to the State she cannot. The convenience of time may not set itself in competition with the claims of what is eternal.

Further, this Church, as it was not of the earth, knew no distinctions — no essential ones at least — of rank or country. Giving honour where honour was due, it did so only in subordination to its own fundamental laws. Two of those laws were unity and purity. Be men what they might, they were to be made *one* in the Church, and in her to remain *one*. Be they what they might, if they openly and deliberately committed sin, they were, without respect of persons, to be punished by her. To the Apostles had power been given by our Lord to punish and pardon, to engraft and cut off; by them had this power been passed on to others, who transmitted it in their turn; and besides these, other rightful judges and rulers in the kingdom of God and its concerns, there were none.

Every one knows how the kingdom of God continued separate in its outward position, till the kingdoms of the world broke before it, and it stood in the midst of the wreck of the Roman empire, the one great object of deep interest and awe to all men, conquerors and conquered, Greek and Latin, German and Lombard, Frank and Goth. The princes of the nations and their multitudes were forced to bow before its majesty, and become its subjects. But then came trouble. They would be in *it*, what they were in their own earthly kingdoms: honoured in its pale as kings, they found it hard to be in any sense subjects. Those times, which it is the fashion

to represent as the era of ecclesiastical usurpation, will, as we have already said, be found to have been periods of systematic and unceasing encroachment on the rights of the Church by the lay powers. The Gospel Law had come to be acknowledged as the one ruling principle in Europe; and therefore of course the Church had power, and that which comes with power: her princes sate in high places; she had her broad lands and her palaces, her honours and royalties. But she held all this in the face of a world which grudged, the moment it had given. Oppression, fraud, or compromise were continually at work, abridging her apostolic rights, and confounding them, in order to weaken them, with those of a merely temporal origin and reference; step by step effacing her independent and unearthly character, and bidding fair to dispense altogether with her divinely-imposed laws of unity and holiness.

At length the intolerable license which reigned through the Church, and the utter powerlessness of her rulers to check it, in the pass to which things had come, produced, as we know, the great reaction and reform of the eleventh century;—a reaction which, whatever means it may have used, or whatever other effects it may have produced, humanly speaking, saved Christianity itself in the West. Its leaders boldly reverted to the ancient truths of the Church's intrinsic independence, and the divine origin and really unearthly nature of her powers; and keeping their eyes steadily on these, they risked a conflict with the armed might of Europe. Their cause rested on the following points:—

1. That the Church is not only the appointed witness of the faith, but also the guardian of holiness and justice in the world; and is as much bound to act on the offensive, and to make sacrifices, in behalf of the latter, as of the former.

2. That the rebuke of John the Baptist to Herod is a precedent for Christian bishops in dealing with the great of the earth; whose rank ought no more to exempt *them*, than the lowest, from the rebukes and punishments of the Church.

3. That the powers of the Church, as they were not of *men*, ought not to be *holden* of men; that her rebukes and

punishments, as they are no part of earthly power, ought neither to be directed nor held back by that power; and that the only way of escaping this interference in any degree, was by securing to the Church that independence which her Lord had left her. Hence it was that the questions of simony and lay investiture became so prominent.

To restore strength and efficiency to the Church, by establishing and applying these principles in their various details, was the work to which the religious party of St. Anselm's day thought themselves called; and they set about it bravely and like men. The world has seldom seen such depth and unity of character: we may call it one-sided, but it was one-sidedness which pursued its noble and Christian enterprise with a steadiness of aim, with a breadth and grandeur of plan, with an inflexible earnestness, with a completeness of execution, in comparison of which our efforts to do good seem often but of mixed purpose, and uncertain fulfilment. And of this great party in its various aspects—social, political, intellectual, and religious—the foremost and most perfect representative was Anselm.

“When the storms from without” (we quote Dr. Möhler) “had been laid, then commenced in the Church the happy struggle for regeneration. Anselm was one of the first who entered into this conflict with prudence and with firmness, and of few can it be said that they exercised so universal an influence. The great exertions of his age had only one internal profound motive: to this unity of object they must all be referred, else they would all and each be without a real signification. But when we have considered this one and true spring of action, we see that it divides itself into various manifestations, of which each called into life a particular power, a distinct talent of the human mind. It was only during the entire period that it was fully developed. The entire body of the contemporaries of Anselm displayed it in its whole, but he united in himself so many talents and powers, that in every regard he represented the whole, in which so many formed a part. This whole, divided into a multiplicity of manifestations, was the religious enthusiasm, the renewed yearning after divine and eternal things, which had been so long stifled in the miseries and melancholy woes of the times. The flame of religion struggled for

freedom, and in the glow which it produced, the chains by which the human mind had been held captive melted away."—*Introd.* pp. ix. x.

Their contest with the civil powers was but one part of their vast and connected movement, but it was an integral part of it. For the real point at issue between the rulers of the Church, and the feudal princes of Europe, at the period of which we are speaking, was, whether the Gospel law was in very deed to be considered the supreme law of the Church, and of every member of it; or whether, on the other hand, Christians, when entrusted by God with the temporal government of their fellow-Christians, acquired thereby a certain right of exemption from the obedience to the Christian law to which their brethren were bound, and a control over the powers and sanctions by which that obedience was to be enforced. The existence of such a law, binding on the whole body politic (for all were members of the one Catholic Church,) and the abstract rights and powers of those persons in whom the administration of that law was vested, were not denied. But there was another law, of military obedience and service, which the new population of Europe had brought with them from their forests, and which was strongly and deeply fixed in their minds; and the question was, whether this was not a check or even bar to the Church's law; whether the powers of the Christian dispensation, the *reality* of which no one then questioned, were not by this antagonist law to be controlled and fenced off; whether the obedience and fealty due to a feudal superior—ties which were certainly felt to be of a most stringent kind—were not to dispense or debar a clergyman from doing what otherwise would be his clear and undoubted duty, as standing in the place of the Apostles, towards those who professed to be disciples of the Apostles.

This struggle did not begin in England till the time of Anselm. For though the Church policy of William the Conqueror was in theory perhaps the most tyrannical of any in Europe, its evils were practically kept in check by the per-

sonal characters of the king, and the archbishop, Lanfranc; men very similar in temper—severe, earnest, and practical; each the other's equal in resolution and ability, and who thoroughly understood and trusted one another. William seconded heartily Lanfranc's measures to restore discipline and learning in the English Church;—he had political as well as other reasons for doing so;—and Lanfranc, though in his reforms determined and unyielding, even to the king, studiously kept aloof from the party and policy of Gregory VII. By a sort of tacit compromise, no point seems ever to have been raised between the two, which might open the great questions at issue on the continent. In their day these questions remained in abeyance.

The Conqueror's church policy, which, as we have said, certainly had in part for its object to promote vigour, regularity, and strictness in the Church, is marked by two main features. One is, the disposition to give and guarantee to the Church, within certain limits, a separate and independent jurisdiction. In the important Council, or rather Parliament of Lillebonne, 1080, this was done for Normandy.\* From the floating mass of precedents and customs, definite laws were extricated and fixed in writing; the province of the episcopal courts marked out with tolerable equity; questions about traditionary rights between the feudal and ecclesiastical powers adjusted, and provision made for settling future claims. In the enactments at Lillebonne, all offences against the Church and her ministers, all crimes of impurity and irreligion, and all offences committed by persons in holy orders, were reserved for the judgment of the bishop. In England, the same disposition to recognise and guard the jurisdiction of the Church, appears in the separation of the bishop's court from the secular court of the hundred, and the distinct and clear admission of the independence of that law by which the bishop was to judge. The king's mandate †, by virtue of which this separation was to take place, expresses a strong desire for the restoration of Church laws to their purity

\* Orderic. Vital. v. 552. *et seq.* (c. 5. ed. Le Prevost.)

† Wilkins' Concil. i. 368, 369. Thorpe, Anc. Laws, i. 495.



and force, and secures their exercise from the secular interference to which it had hitherto been subject. And the frequent councils held during William's reign prove that he meant what he said.

But if William, for a feudal sovereign whose will was law, went out of his way to make the Church more active and powerful than she had been, he did so under the full consciousness, and with the distinct and jealous assertion, of his absolute control over her at the moment. Few points of ecclesiastical supremacy were claimed by Henry VIII. which were not also claimed and possessed, though, it may be, differently used, by Norman William. "All matters in Church and State," says Eadmer, "waited on his beck." He had, in England, at least, the absolute nomination of bishops and abbots; and though his appointments were in general good ones, at least in his later years, he never lost sight of his political interests, and had no scruple in making use of his power of election to keep in order a troublesome city, or a refractory Anglo-Saxon monastery.\* The practice of inves-

\* See his conversation with his chaplain Samson about the bishopric of Le Mans, Orderic. Vital. iv. 531.<sup>1</sup>: see also W. Malm. Vit. S. Aldhelm. (Wharton,

<sup>1</sup> Defuncto Ernaldo Cenomannorum episcopo, Guillelmus rex dixit Samsoni Bajocensi capellano suo: "Cenomannensis episcopatus sedes suo viduata est antistite, in qua volente Deo te nunc volo subrogare. Cenomannia a canina rabie dicta, urbs est antiqua, et plebs ejus finitimis est procax et sanguinolenta, dominisque suis semper contumax et rebellionis avida. Pontificales igitur habenas tibi tradere decerno, quem a pueritia nutrivisti et amavi sedulo, et nunc inter maximos regni mei proceres sublimare desidero." Samson respondit: "Secundum apostolicam traditionem oportet episcopum irreprehensibilem esse. Ego autem in omni vita mea sum valde reprehensibilis, omnibusque mentis et corporis ante conspectum deitatis sum pollutus flagitiis, nec tantum decus contingere possum, pro sceleribus meis miser et despicibilis." Rex dixit: "Callidus es et perspicaciter vides quod tu rite peccatorem te confiteri debes. Fixam tamen in te statui sententiam, nec a te statutum convellam, quin episcopatum suspicias, aut alium, qui pro te præsul fiat, porrigas." His auditis gavisus Samson ait: "Nunc, domine mi rex, optime locutus es, et ad hoc agendum adminiculante Deo me promptum invenies. Ecce in capella tua est quidam pauper clericus, sed nobilis et bene morigeratus. Huic præsulatum commenda in Dei timore, quia dignus est (ut aestimo) tali honore." Regi autem per-cunctanti quis esset, Samson respondit: "Hoellus dicitur et est genere Brito; sed humilis est et revera bonus homo." (c. 11. vol. ii. 248. ed. Le Prevost.)

ture, which had come down to him from his Saxon predecessors, assumed under him a new and much more definite meaning, when it came to be interpreted by the principles of the feudal law. But the position in which he established himself towards the Church, is seen most clearly in three very important "Constitutions" mentioned by Eadmer,—no random acts of power, but parts of a systematic and well-understood policy. These "innovations," as Eadmer calls them, were (1.) that no one might recognise a pope in England till the king had ordered him to be acknowledged; or receive letters from him till they had been seen by the king; (2.) that the English Church in council assembled under the primate, might pass no laws or canons but such as were "agreeable to his pleasure, and first ordained by him;" (3.) that no bishop might implead, or punish any of the king's vassals, even for incest, adultery, or any other such great sin, except "by the king's precept."\*

These principles, of which we see the fruit in the following reign, struck at once at the independence and at the legislative and executive power of the Church, and implied her absolute subjection to the feudal law. She was absorbed and incorporated into the feudal system at a time when it was most important that she should stand clear of it, on ground of her own, in evident possession of authority, underived from any child of man; protesting against and resisting the injustice and impurity of the world. In William's policy the feudal sovereign was the source of ecclesiastical as of civil authority; as he had his feudatory barons, so he had his feudatory bishops; both invested with their office and dignity by him;

ii. 39.) Turolde was first appointed Abbot of Glastonbury. "Idem Turolde, dum tyrannidem in subjectos ageret, ad Burh (Peterborough) a rege translatus est, abbatiam opulentam, sed quæ tunc a latrunculis, duce quodam Herevarde, infestaretur; quia inter paludes sita erat. 'Per splendorem Dei,' inquit, 'quia magis se agit militem quam abbatem, inveniam ei comparẽm, qui assultus ejus accipiat.'" Abbot Brand, Turolde's predecessor, and his Saxon monks, had refused to acknowledge William, and were in league with Hereward. — *Thierry*, book v. p. 105. Eng. Transl.

\* Eadm. Hist. Nov. p. 29.

both bound to him by the same oath of homage. This tie of feudal allegiance and fealty, then the strongest bond between man and man, had been thrown over the rulers of the Church not only as subjects and holders of land, but *as bishops*; and by virtue of it, the king claimed from them, as of right, *feudal* obedience, without reserve and without appeal, in the discharge of their office as bishops. They were the great Church officers of the crown, appointed to govern the Church for the king; and according to his wisdom and policy, to make laws and to execute them, not by their own authority, but by his. The last appeal was not to the law of the Gospel, but to the customs and precedents of feudalism. The powers of the Church were surrendered against all but the weak and helpless; and a large body of her members, and those the most licentious and unruly—the mass of the soldiery of the kingdom—were avowedly withdrawn from that control and discipline, which she was to exercise at her own discretion and peril, without respect of persons.

Such was the condition in which the Conqueror left the Church to his successor. He had carried out his policy without meeting any opposition from the clergy. It is not difficult to understand their acquiescence in it, even on the part of such men as Lanfranc. For good certainly came of it, great and manifest good, in a most wild and lawless time. The strongest arm in England, the only power which could make itself felt in such a break-up of society, was, on the whole, on their side. Why should they, at such a distance from the scene of conflict between the Church and the Empire on the continent, and, moreover, so much perplexed\* by its events,

\* After the Emperor had set up the Antipope Guibert against Gregory VII. at Brixen, Lanfranc could write thus to Cardinal Hugo, who wished to draw England to the Emperor's side. After disapproving of Hugo's bitter language against Gregory, he goes on: "It is as yet unknown to man, what they (Gregory VII. and Guibert) are and will be in God's sight; yet I believe that the Emperor would not have ventured on so serious a step without good reason, or have been able to gain so great a victory without great help from God. I do not recommend your coming to England without first having received the King's leave; for our island has not yet disavowed the former (Gregory VII.), nor given judgment whether it ought to obey the latter. When we have heard the

— with fierce and unscrupulous Norman soldiers to deal with on the one hand, and a jealous Anglo-Saxon population, of whose language they were ignorant, on the other— why should they turn it against themselves? Certain it is, that the only voice that was raised against William's policy towards the English Church was Guitmund's, a Norman monk, whose name Anselm couples with Lanfranc's in point of reputation in his day.\* Guitmund refused preferment in England, on the ground that William had no right to dispose of the English sees and abbeys against the wishes of the people. "Search the Scriptures," he said to William, "and see by what law it is allowed, that a pastor elected by their enemies should be placed by force over the Lord's flock? An ecclesiastical election ought first to be honestly made by the faithful themselves, who are to be governed; and then, if canonical, confirmed by the assent of fathers and friends; if otherwise, in all charity amended."† But Guitmund's boldness met with no sympathy in England or Normandy.

It was well, perhaps, that the struggle between the English Church and Feudalism did not fall on the days of a king who, by the force of circumstances, bore rule in her hour of greatest helplessness, and who, with all the foresight, political talent, and unscrupulousness of his successors, had an iron firmness of will which no opposition could have turned from its purpose. "He was a very stark man," says the Saxon Chronicle ‡, "and very savage, so that no man durst do anything against his will. He had earls in his bonds, who had done against his will; bishops he set off their bishoprics, abbots off their abbotries, and thanes in prisons; and at last he did not spare his own brother Odo. Him he set in prison." But as it was, the Church had time to re-

case on each side, if so it happen, we shall be able to see more clearly what ought to be done."—Lanfranc, Ep. 59. This was in or after 1080, when Gregory had been Pope for seven years. — *Vide* Baron. ad ann. 1080, Num. xxiii.

\* Anselm, Ep. i. 16.

† Orderic. Vital. iv. 542. (c. 8. ed. Le Prevost.)

‡ Quoted in Lingard, ii. 68.

cover during his reign from the weakness and want of tone which prevailed before the Conquest, and from the frightful disorders and overthrow which attended it. She had found a protector and favourer in one who might have been her most terrible enemy.

But on the 9th Sept. 1087, the "famous Baron," who had wrought greater things and caused more misery \* than any of his fellows in Europe, was "taken away from human affairs." He died almost alone. Those whose attendance he most desired, Lanfranc and Anselm, were kept from his death-bed by distance or sickness. When his corpse had been deserted by his children and servants, and left without covering on the bare floor, he was indebted for his burial to an obscure country knight, who "for the love of God" brought his body to Caen; and his grave in his own noble Monastery of St. Stephen was at the moment of burial forbidden him by a boor from whom he had of old violently taken the ground on which it stood. His friend and coadjutor, the great archbishop, great not in having founded an empire, but reformed a Church, followed him shortly; he had seen but too certainly the troubles that were coming, and left their full weight for his successor.

That successor was Anselm. He was not a man fitted seemingly, by nature and training, for such a lot. Like Lanfranc, he was the son of an Italian noble. He was born at Aosta in Piedmont, where his parents lived in affluence. His mother was a woman of warm and quiet piety; and her lessons early exerted a strong influence on his mind. As a boy, he was full of the strange simple faith of childhood; brought up among the Alps, he "used to fancy that Heaven rested on the mountain-tops;" and, sleeping, or waking, his thoughts were ever running on what it held. He soon

\* "King William was a very wise man, and very rich, more worshipful and strong than any of his foregangers. He was very mild to good men who loved God, and stark beyond all bounds to those who withsaid his will. . . . Truly in his time men had mickle suffering, and very many hardships. Castles he caused to be wrought, and poor men to be oppressed. He was so very stark.

. . His rich men moaned, and the poor men murmured; but he was so hard, he recked not the hatred of them all." — *Saxon Chronicle*, in Lingard, ii. 68. 70.

distinguished himself in the public schools and showed a strong disposition for the life of the cloister ; but his wishes were checked by his father, and gave way at last before his opening prospects of rank and wealth. As he grew up, his love of religion, and even of literature, was damped by the amusements and pursuits of his station. His mother died early in his youth, and then "the ship of his heart," says his biographer\*, "having lost its sole anchor, drifted off almost entirely into the waves of the world." What seemed to await him was the life of coarse and uneasy riot, the authority, importance, and brawls of a village noble,—ending, perhaps, in the death of a dog,—at the foot of the Alps. But Providence, which had marked out for him so high a destiny, drove him from his home and country by the unappeasable harshness of his father. With one companion he crossed Mont Cenis, and, after three years spent in Burgundy and France, came to Normandy.

At the time of his arrival, all nations which spoke the Latin tongue, say the Chronicles, were ringing with the fame of the Abbey of Bec, in Normandy, and its Prior Lanfranc. Twenty years before a few cells of the homeliest kind were rising beside a mill, in the wooded valley of the Rille, not far from Rouen. A rude old soldier, named Herluin, had with some trouble obtained permission of his feudal lord to devote himself and his patrimony to religion ; and had retired to this spot with his mother and a few companions, over whom he presided as superior. All day long he was employed in building : most of the night he spent in learning to read, and in getting the Psalter by heart ; his mother baked for the monks, washed their clothes, and performed all the menial offices of the house. Herluin was with his own hands building the bakehouse of the monastery, when a Lombard stranger applied for and received admission. This was Lanfranc. He was the son of a nobleman at Pavia ; eminent there as a lawyer, then an exile, a travelling student, a disappointed teacher, — at last robbed of everything, and left penniless by the road side, — he had inquired

\* Fadmer.

for the meanest monastic establishment in the neighbourhood, and had been directed to Bec. To raise money for his brethren, who could not even afford oil to burn in their church at night, the Lombard had reluctantly opened a school. He taught as none had taught in Normandy before.\* The few mean cells grew into a noble abbey, the great light of the West, the rival of Clugny in discipline, and its superior in learning. Lanfranc's school was filled with disciples of all nations, of high and low degree, laymen and clerics; among his pupils were some of the most distinguished continental churchmen of the time, Pope Alexander II., Ivo of Chartres, Guitmund of Aversa †; and to archbishops and bishops mainly trained in the cloisters of Bec, the task was shortly to be committed of remoulding and revivifying in England the Church of St. Augustine.

Thither among the throng of students came Anselm, another Lombard wanderer, travelling, according to the fashion of those days, to acquire knowledge. He soon far outstripped his fellow-pupils; and his genius and untiring industry gained him the especial regard of Lanfranc, who employed him to teach under himself. Meanwhile the wish of his boyhood revived for a religious life: but such a step was not to be taken hastily, and long and anxiously did he think about it, and about the best plan of such a life. Should he become a hermit? or live under rule and vow on his patrimony, dispensing it all, for the benefit of the poor? or enter a monastery? If he entered a monastery, Bec was the most natural place for him; but his unconscious ambition suggested, (so he confessed afterwards,) that at Bec he would be lost, and be of no use while Lanfranc taught there. Clugny, again, was as strict as Bec, but discouraged learning. At last he put his case unreservedly into the hands of Lanfranc and the Archbishop of Rouen. Under their advice he resolved to devote himself to a monastic life; and at length assumed the habit at Bec.

Three years after his admission, the virtual government

\* Order. Vit. iv. c. 6. (ii. 210. ed. Le Prevost.)

† Gallia Christiana, xi. 219.

of the monastery passed into his hands, on his succeeding Lanfranc as prior: and fifteen years later, on the death of Herluin, the simple-hearted and venerable founder, he was elected abbot.\* Bec lost nothing under his rule of what it had gained under Lanfranc. Very different in character and cast of mind from his great predecessor, he worked in the same cause, and with equal earnestness and success. His monastery still continued one of the chief centres of religious and intellectual activity, to England, Normandy, and even France; awakening thought, and restoring a practical and strict sense of Christian duty, in their wild and unsettled population, by its own example of holiness, and by the numerous pupils which it was continually sending forth from its school. The pursuits to which Lanfranc had given the first impulse by his clear and eloquent lectures, and his great erudition, Anselm carried forward by his freshness and vigour of thought, and his native genius for refined metaphysical speculation. He governed his monastery with skill; no such easy task, in days when the abbot had to exercise more personal superintendence and more severity over grown men of all ages, than the master of a large school would now venture upon towards his boys. Lanfranc was famous for his powers of government: Anselm, by his clear insight into character, his patience and firmness, and his winning affectionateness, had as much hold on his monks as Lanfranc had gained by his knowledge of the world, and his forcible and commanding character. "To those in health," says Eadmer, "Anselm was a father, to the sick a mother."

He seemed to have found the sphere for which he was intended. In the quiet of his monastery, his subtle and active intellect could pursue without interruption that striking line of speculation, full of devotion, though so abstract and methodical, the love of which haunted him like a passion †, and which began a new era in Latin theology. He had pupils round him, whose minds were kindling at his own; and friends to whom he could open his heart with the frankness

\* Admitted, 1059; prior, 1063; abbot, 1078. Gall. Christ. xi. 223, 4.

† Eadmer, Vit. S. Anselmi, p. 6.



and warmth which were such strong features of his character — features of which we see so much in his letters, and which would almost have seemed softness, except in one under such stern and strong self-discipline. And further, the presence and society of a large body of men, all of them more or less sincerely engaged in efforts after a religious life, dependent on his care, and needing his succour and counsel, gave infinitely varied play to a character peculiarly delicate and skilful in its appreciation and treatment of others. He found also in his monastery what answered to and satisfied his deep feeling of devotion, in those services of unwearied praise and prayer, and those opportunities for self-recollection, by which men were permitted in those days to realise, in so vivid a manner, the Communion of Saints, and the presence of the Invisible.

His influence reached far beyond the walls of his cloister. His high and self-devoted religion, and his name as a writer and teacher, told even upon the world without; and to these he added popular qualities of a singularly engaging kind. His striking reality and simplicity of character, set off by a strong dash of humour, his good sense and considerateness, his graceful condescension to the weak and poor, his gentleness and evenness of temper, veiling such unquestionable seriousness of purpose, and sternness towards himself, won upon all hearts, even that of the iron-minded Conqueror. "When he used to teach or give advice," says Eadmer, "he was especially careful to be most plain-spoken, avoiding all pomp and generalities, and illustrating his meaning as best he could, by any homely or familiar example. All men rejoice at his converse; he gained the love of young and old, of men and women, of rich and poor, and all were glad to minister to him; of so frank and glad a spirit was he to all, and so readily did he enter into their ways, as far as he might without sin. He was the darling of France and Normandy, known and welcome also in England."\* After his first visit to England "there was no earl or countess, or great person there, who did not think that they had missed favour in the

\* Vit. Anselm. p. 11. Hist. Nov. p. 33.

sight of God if they haply had not had an opportunity of rendering some service to Anselm, Abbot of Bec.”\*

Such was the course to which Anselm seemed to be called; to the calm and meditative life of the cloister, where he might influence his generation by his example and writings, and by the minds which he formed there; to be the counsellor and doctor of his age, calling forth seriousness around him; to be the father of a great religious brotherhood; and, in the world, to be an example of primitive saintliness, carrying blessing and commanding veneration and love, wherever he appeared.

Anselm was twenty-seven † when he finally resolved to “leave all,” and entered for good on what seemed to be his work in life. He had done for ever with the world, with its consolations and joys; as he thought, with its storms also. Thirty-three years of peace were granted him, during which he served God and his brethren in gladness of heart, without thought or fear of change. But they were only to be a long respite. The last of them found him still at Bec, an old man, expecting to die there; but in reality with the great work and trial of his life, not yet begun nor looked for.

In the year 1092 William Rufus had been four years on the throne, and had let loose feudalism, in all its lawlessness, upon England. The hearty frankness, high spirit, and generosity of his youth, had degenerated, especially since the death of Lanfranc, from whom he had received his education and knighthood ‡, into a brutal passion for the wildest debauchery, and a savage impatience of every kind of restraint. Not that even now he was without the remains of what might have been a fine character; gleams of nobleness and generosity broke out at times in the midst of his boisterous orgies, and his fiercest bursts of rage. In his rough and cruel merriment he did not want for humour, which seems even sometimes to have been a veil, under which he expressed self-reproach. But he was frantic with his excessive power. “The truth must be told,” is the reluctant avowal of William of Malmsbury, who can scarcely help making him a

\* Vit. Anselm. p. 11.

† Gall. Christ. xi. 223.

‡ Will. Malmsb. l. iv. § 305.

hero, and who would be inclined to think, "if our Christianity allowed" the doctrine of metempsychosis, that the soul of Julius Cæsar had reappeared in William;—"the truth must be told; he feared God very little, and men not at all."\*

His government was a full-blown specimen of that worldly and cruel system which was in various ways endeavouring to undermine the power which Christianity still maintained over society; a government which, while it allowed any amount of wickedness and oppression among the powerful—the barons and their dependents—repressed with a strong hand and un-sparing severity any breach of the "king's peace" among the poor and weak. "William," says Ordericus †, a contemporary, "took great delight in military distinctions, and showed their possessors much favour for worldly pomp's sake. He took no care to defend the country-people against the soldiers, and suffered their property to be laid waste with impunity by his retainers and armed followers. He was of a strong memory and ardent will, both to good and to evil. . . . . He was terrible in his vengeance against thieves and petty robbers, and with a high hand enforced unbroken peace throughout all his dominions; all the inhabitants of his realm he either won over by his bounty, or kept down by his valour and terror, so that no one dared to mutter a word against him." Appeal to the Church was vain; William, who openly and avowedly hated religion, trampled upon her, and plundered her to support his profuse expenditure, which was on the same wild scale as everything else in his character. The higher clergy suffered, and heard the groans of the poor and defenceless in silence. However some of the best of them may have been ashamed of their feebleness, they all feared to measure their strength with so rough an antagonist, and commit themselves to an untried and perilous struggle, in which even the highest and most undaunted faith could scarcely hope to be allowed to witness its own victory.

William therefore proceeded to treat Church property and offices as his own. In his father's time, the revenues which

\* Will. Malmsb. iv. § 320, 312.

† Ordericus Vitalis, viii. 680. (c. 8. iii. 315. ed. Le Prevost.)

accrued to a see or abbey, during a vacancy, were handed over in full to the next holder; the appointment to the offices, though almost always made by the crown, was yet looked on as a trust. But William Rufus asserted the king's full and exclusive right of property in every possession of the Church, and he acted systematically on this claim. As soon as a church became vacant, a king's commissioner went down and took possession, and it was either disposed of to the highest bidder, for the king's profit, or kept vacant altogether, the revenue going meanwhile to the Exchequer.\* Church benefices were treated as if they were simply royal domains, to be granted or withheld at the king's pleasure.

It is not however to William alone that the credit of these proceedings is due. The man whose influence was supreme in England during most of his reign, and who was the contriver and agent of these and other financial measures of the same sort, was a low-born Norman ecclesiastic, named Ralph Passafabere, or, as he was surnamed, Flambard, the Firebrand—personage whom his contemporaries seemed to have looked at with a mixture of horror, indignation, and amusement. What Cleon was to the Athenian democracy, Ralph Flambard was to the feudal king. By his talent for coarse and boisterous jokes, and his noisy and unfailing merriment, he had become William's chief boon companion; but the king soon found in him a servant as fierce-tempered, unscrupulous, and fearless as himself, and possessed of far superior talents for intrigue and legal chicane. Impudent, cunning, and ready, with a tongue which nothing could silence, and activity and resolution which set at nought all opposition, he simply laid himself out to enrich his master. He was placed at the head of the Exchequer, and rose to be Justiciary of England and Bishop of Durham. In these high offices no class was secure from him, and he cared as little for the hatred of the Court as he did for the curses of the poor.

\* "Videres in super quotidie, spretâ servorum Dei religione, quosque nefandissimos hominum regias pecunias exigentes per claustra monasterii torvo et minaci vultu procedere, hinc inde præcipere, minas intentare, dominationem potentiamque suam in immensum ostentare."—*Eadm. Hist. N.* p. 34.

Among William's proud barons, the upstart cleric was prouder and more overbearing than they; and his address, boldness, and good-fortune, carried him safe through their plots against him.\* Even after William's death, in spite of the universal detestation in which he was held, in spite of Henry's personal hatred of him and the part he had taken against Henry, in spite of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Pope, he contrived to retain his bishopric till his death; and when confined to it, his restlessness and uncontrollable energy found a vent in great works, for the defence of his principality and the adornment of his cathedral.† He carried out his plans against the Church with heart and spirit:—"I robbed the Church, and overbore her customs," said he, many years after, when laid a dying penitent before the high altar of Durham; "I did all this not from stress of poverty, but from wanton lust of gain. My wish to do mischief was greater than my power." Into this man's hands, as king's commissioner, had the see of Canterbury fallen, since the death of Lanfranc; and in spite of every remonstrance, William refused to fill it. Men looked on indignantly—bishops, barons, and people, for mixed or different reasons—at this new and unheard of injury; to see the "mother church of all England" lying in widowhood—the sacred throne of St. Austin, "the stay of Christian religion in the realm," under the feet of Ralph Flambard.

Such was the state of things in England, when, at the earnest request of Hugh le Loup, Earl of Chester, one of the most powerful and magnificent of the Conqueror's barons, Anselm crossed from Normandy. The earl was a specimen—and a favourable one—of that wild and terrible aristocracy at whose mercy the Church found herself, and whom she had to reclaim or combat. He was entrusted with the defence of the western frontier against the Welsh, and he well maintained the name of the Norman sword by his fierce-

\* Monach. Dunelm. in Wharton, i. 706—708.

† "Taliter impulsu quodam impatiente otii, de opere transibat ad opus, nil reputans factum, nisi factis nova jam facienda succederent."—Monachus Dunelm. in Wharton, i. 708.

ness and cruelty. A keen and tried soldier, bred up from his youth in bodily exercises, and in the midst of danger and license,—lawless and undisciplined, yet generous,—with arms in his hands, and absolutely uncontrolled by law, opinion, or force,—he was what might be expected from such a training; heedless of anything but his caprice, self-indulgence, or amusement, and reckless of the means by which he compassed them; hearty, jovial, and open-handed among his boisterous followers, quickly irritated, and utterly careless about life and suffering; yet not without a wild nobleness and freedom of character, and a rude and imperfect faith.

“He was a lover of the world and its pomps,” says his contemporary Ordericus\*, “and accounted them the highest portion of human bliss; he loved sports and luxuries—jesters horses and dogs. He used daily to ride over and lay waste his own lands, caring less for priests and husbandmen than for fowlers and huntsmen. He pampered his appetite, till he became so corpulent that he could scarcely walk; he cared not what he gave away, nor what he took. He was always surrounded with an enormous company of retainers, and his hall was ever in an uproar with a numerous and noisy crew of boys of high and low degree. He entertained also a great number of honourable clerks and knights, whom he delighted to have about him, to share his labours as well as his riches.”

The chaplain of this rough baronial court, a priest named Gerold, whom Hugh had brought with him from Avranches, presented a strange contrast of high saintliness and devotion, in the midst of the turbulence and licentiousness of the household where he ministered. Yet he was not without influence and weight in it; and many, we are told, listened with attention to the histories of the holy warriors in the Old Testament, and the legends of the martyr-soldiers of the Church—St. George and St. Sebastian, St. Maurice the leader of the Thebæan legion, St. Eustace and St. William—

\* Orderic. Vital. p. 598. 522. (l. vi. 2. p. 4. l. iv. 7. p. 219. ed. Le Provost.)

by which he endeavoured to reclaim his rude hearers to seriousness and self-restraint.

The Earl of Chester was, in his way, a patron and friend of religious men. He had an old-standing friendship with Anselm, and there can be little doubt that it was with the view of procuring his election to the primacy, that he sent for him to England, to superintend—so he said—a new monastery which he had just founded in his county. Such certainly was the talk of the day; and Anselm had such misgivings on the subject, that he at first positively refused to go; and it was not till Earl Hugh, who had meanwhile been attacked with a dangerous sickness, and earnestly besought his counsels in the hour of need, had pledged himself on his honour that the reports about Anselm's intended promotion were unfounded, that he was induced to visit England. He was received with honour by the king and the court: at Canterbury, the clergy and people met him with enthusiastic welcome as their future archbishop; but he immediately left the town, and nothing more was said or done for the present to make him expect the primacy. Yet when he had accomplished the immediate objects of his visit, he found himself still detained, and the king refused his permission for him to return to Normandy.

It is not easy to understand William's motives for detaining Anselm. Whatever might have been the wishes of the court, he certainly had no present intention of filling up the archbishopric. When Anselm's holiness was praised in his presence, and the speaker remarked that "the Abbot of Bec had no wishes for anything earthly," William added scoffingly, "No, not even for the archbishopric;" "but \* by the Holy Face of Lucca," he continued fiercely, "other archbishop besides me there shall be none."

He had occasion, however, soon after to change his mind. When he kept his court at Gloucester, at Christmas, 1092, his great men had petitioned, "that at least he would give

\* "*Per Sanctum Vultum de Lucâ*,"—his usual oath. The "Holy Face" was a wooden image of our Lord.—*Vide* Will. Malmsh. ed. Hardy, p. 499. note. It is still exposed on certain festivals at Lucca.

leave that prayers should be offered up throughout England, that God would be pleased to put it into the king's heart to institute a worthy pastor to the church of Canterbury." William, though highly offended at the petition, granted it. "Let the Church ask what she pleases," he said, "I shall not cease to work my will."

Shortly after this he sickened; his danger became imminent; in a moment of remorse and terror, he was induced, among other acts of penitence and amendment, to fill up the archbishopric: and he nominated Anselm.

With our modern notions about preferment, we can scarcely enter into the scene that followed, when the moment of trial which Anselm had for some time foreseen, without the power of escaping from it, was at length arrived, and he saw himself, after a life of quiet, on the point of being cast forth in his old age to buffet with the storms of the world — in those days, a wild and rough one. Many years before this, when only Prior of Bec, and complaining of his inadequacy for his office, Maurilius, Archbishop of Rouen, had forewarned him that he must expect to be called to yet heavier burdens, and had solemnly charged him on his "holy obedience," not to refuse them. In compliance with this command, he had become abbot. But he was now summoned to be the restorer of the English Church, and the colleague of William Rufus in its government\*; to make head against a state of things which the English bishops, frightfully evil as many of them felt it to be, had not the heart to resist. He grew pale and trembled, when he heard the acclamations which announced the king's election. When the bishops came to lead him to the king, to receive investiture, he refused to go: "he was too old," he said, "and knew nothing of business; — and further, his allegiance, his canonical obedience, his counsel and services, were already vowed to others." He was dragged

\* "Aratrum Ecclesiam perpendite. Hoc aratrum in Angliâ duo boves cæteris præcellentes regendo trahunt, et trahendo regunt, Rex videlicet, et Archiepiscopus Cantuariensis: iste sæculari justitiâ et imperio, ille divinâ doctrinâ et magisterio." — Anselm's address to the Bishops and Nobles at Gloucester; in Eadm. Hist. Nov. p. 36.



into the king's sick chamber. William, hard man as he was, was moved even to tears: but his bitter entreaties to Anselm to save him from dying in the guilt of sacrilege, with the archbishopric still in his hands, and the angry remonstrances of the bystanders, that Anselm was troubling the king's dying hours, and betraying the cause of the Church, were all in vain. Anselm refused to receive the archbishopric. "Might it have been the will of God," said he afterwards of those moments, "I would gladly have died on the spot." In his distress of mind, he burst into an agony of tears, and blood gushed from his nostrils. The king became impatient. The old man was dragged to the bed-side, and his right arm held out by the bishops to receive from the king the pastoral staff. But he kept his hand firmly clenched: they tried by main force to wrench it open, and when the pain they put him to caused him to cry out, the bishops held the staff against his still closed hand. He was borne forth, rather than led, with hymns and acclamations, to a neighbouring church, crying out, "It is nought that ye are doing, it is nought that ye are doing." "It would have been difficult to discover," writes he afterwards to his monks at Bec\*, "whether madmen were dragging along one in his senses, or the sane a madman, save that they were chanting, and I looking more like a corpse than a living man, with amazement and anguish: and on the afternoon of the same day, when I had time to recollect myself, and to realise your affection, and the burden imposed on me, sorrow—so unusual with me—overcame my reason to such a degree, that people thought I was dying or fainting, and brought holy water to sprinkle me, or make me drink it." In spite of what had passed, he persisted in refusing to acknowledge the validity of his appointment; and the matter was, meanwhile, referred to the decision of those to whose obedience and service he was already bound—the Archbishop of Rouen, the Duke of Normandy, and the monastery of Bec. Their consent was gained, not without difficulty on the part of the monks of Bec. We give the letter he received from the archbishop, as a specimen of the sober and measured tone

\* Anselm, Epist. iii. 1.

with which serious men in those days addressed a brother who was called to a high office in the Church—a tone, not of congratulation for honours won, but of grave and subdued sympathy for a comrade going to his post of increased hazard and toil.

*“ Brother William, archbishop, to his lord and friend Anselm ;  
God’s blessing and his own.*

“ I have considered long and carefully, as was due in so important a matter, the subject of the king’s letter and yours, and I have asked the advice of my own friends and yours upon it. The wish on all sides is, were it possible, to keep you still among us, and yet not to do anything to oppose the Divine will. But as matters stand, both cannot be fulfilled, and we, therefore, as is fitting and right, submit our will to His ; and in the name of God and St. Peter, and of all my friends and yours, who love you for God’s sake, I command you to undertake the pastoral care of the Church of Canterbury, and to receive, according to the custom of the Church, the episcopal benediction, and thenceforward to watch over the welfare of your sheep, by Divine providence, as we believe, committed to you. Farewell, my beloved.” \*

Anselm’s nomination took place at Gloucester, on the first Sunday in Lent, 1093 (March 6.) ; but it was not till the autumn of the same year, that he was at length prevailed upon by William’s fair promises to undertake the primacy. He did homage †, according to custom, and on the 4th of December he was consecrated at Canterbury by the Archbishop of York, in the presence of nearly all the bishops of England.

At his consecration, when, according to the Roman ritual, the book of the Gospels was opened at random, and laid on his shoulders, the passage which turned up was the following : — “ He bade many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come, for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse.” ‡ Men took this as an omen of the course of his

\* “ Valete, viscera mea.”

† “ Homo regis factus est.” — Eadm. Hist. Nov. p. 37.

‡ St. Luke, xiv. 16—18.

Episcopate. It was no untrue augury. He stood on the verge of twelve years of anxious and unwearied service, to be repaid by unsympathising lukewarmness, or fierce persecution.

The following year witnessed, in England, the first movements in the great struggle between the Church and the temporal power, which was to last in various forms, and with various fortunes, long after Anselm and his antagonists were removed from it. With the revival of strictness, intelligence, and sense of duty, which had taken place in the Norman Church since the middle of the century, it was become inevitable. Such wild folly and wickedness as that of William and his court, must, sooner or later, have called forth rebuke and systematic opposition; and feudal barons were not men to submit tamely to rebuke and opposition from priests and monks. The contest must begin, openly and in earnest, as soon as any churchman should have heart and faith to realise and fulfil his duty: Anselm had foreseen this, and that it must begin with him.

He had done what he could with a good conscience to avoid the primacy, and he had been overruled. But those powers which he had not sought, which had been forced into his hand, he was not going to wield in vain or feebly. William found, that instead of an unpractical recluse, whose natural force had been abated by his monastic life, and who was incapable of energetic and decisive action, a bishop had ascended the throne of Canterbury, who could deal with men, and who, when once his path was plain, knew neither despair nor fear. Anselm had not left his Norman monastery, and altered in his old age, in anxiety and sorrow, his whole course of life, to become a mitred cypher or tool in the impure and boisterous court of William Rufus. The agony of change once over, he had calmly mastered what he was henceforth called to, and prepared himself for the worst. "From the first," says Eadmer, "he perceived and foretold, that many would be the troubles he should have to suffer during his pontificate. Coming, therefore, to a new, and to him an unwonted way of serving God, according to

Solomon's precept, he stood in fear, and prepared his soul for temptation, knowing that all who will live godly in Christ, must needs suffer tribulation."

He had given fair warning. Before he would accept the primacy, he laid before William, explicitly and in the presence of witnesses, the conditions on which alone he could consent to take it. These were, that the property of the see should be restored in full, and without trouble; that the obedience which, as Abbot of Bec, he had vowed to Pope Urban, whom William had not yet acknowledged, should not be questioned; and, thirdly, "I will," said he, "that in those things that pertain to God and Christian religion, thou trust thyself to my counsel before all others; and as I am willing to have thee for my earthly lord and defender, so that thou shouldst have me for thy spiritual father and soul's guardian." He had small hopes that his counsel *would* be taken. "The untamed bull to whom ye have yoked me," said he to the bishops who were so eager for his election at Gloucester, "will gore and trample upon the old and feeble sheep, his yoke-fellow. And," he continued, "when he has crushed me, of yourselves there will be no one who will dare oppose him in anything; and then, rest assured, he will not scruple at his pleasure to trample upon you also."

His anticipations were soon realised. When the contest began, he had to fight alone. Of the English higher clergy, two bishops only \* seem to have shown him any sympathy; the rest either stood aloof, or openly opposed him. From some of them this was to be expected;—from men like John of Bath, who had purchased his see as a good investment of capital, or the intriguing courtier William of Durham, the king's favourite, or Herbert the Wheedler (*Losinga*) † of

\* Gundulf of Rochester, the archbishop's "ever new and true friend" (Ep. iv. 44.); and Ralph of Chichester, a man of blunt humour, of great simplicity of life, of unflinching courage, and of apostolic zeal in preaching, and visiting his diocese: "Proceritate corporis insignis, sed et animi efficaciam famosus, qui intuitu sacerdotalis officii Willielmo II. in faciem pro Anselmo restitit."—Will. Malmsb. de Gest. Pontiff. ii. p. 257.

† "Quod nomen ei ars adulationis impegemat."—*Vide* Will. Malmsb. Gest. Reg. iv. § 338—340.

Norwich. Yet, acting with these men, were several of Lanfranc's bishops; men selected from the Norman monasteries for their earnestness and ability, loved and honoured in their generation. But even these remained neutral, or sided with the world, and that, in the person of William Rufus, against the cause of the Church, though maintained by Anselm.

It is not necessary to suppose them more than usually weak or selfish in order to explain their conduct. They had but ordinary clear-sightedness and courage, in a time which required more. The great revolution which had been working for years on the continent was at last coming on in the farthest West; and they were not yet ready for it. With much of earthly alloy, with much also of keen and genuine sensibility to the heavenly calling of the Church, the conviction was fast spreading that the rights and powers which had been tacitly yielded to feudalism, must at all hazards be reclaimed. But, in times like these, when new or forgotten opinions are gradually forming themselves under old ones, when new principles are silently gathering way, there are but few who from the first descry what is approaching, and master in time the true position and drift of things. Most men go on as usual, unconscious of the powers that are awake and abroad, secretly stirring society. Custom is the stay and guide of life, and to realise change as a *fact* is hard. And even when it is in itself desirable, few feel sufficient confidence in themselves, to warrant it to their own minds that the time is come for moving. It was a new thing for the English bishops to see a deliberate and resolute opposition to the king; a new and hard prospect, to make up their minds to a life of conflict. Probably there was not one of Anselm's principles, which they would have denied in the abstract; but they had not realised them as he had, and could only look at them as, under their circumstances at least, unpractical and romantic. They had been brought up under William the Conqueror's system; under it they had seen cathedrals raised, monasteries restored, the majesty of the church and the dignity of her prelates honoured by the world. And whatever evils and abuses existed under it, a desperate conflict with the king would scarcely

seem the most likely way to mend them. Moreover, Lanfranc, still the greatest name in England, the restorer of the English Church, under whom the best of her bishops had been trained, had given, as far as we can see, his countenance and hearty concurrence to the Conqueror's general policy towards the Church.\* This may explain in some measure the part which the bishops took in the struggles of Anselm's episcopate. So it is however,—it was not till after his death, that the rulers of the English Church acknowledged him as their champion.

The storm, which Anselm had looked for, soon broke. Symptoms of it had shown themselves even before his consecration. On the very day of his enthronement at Canterbury, the joy of the people was disturbed by the appearance of the hateful and dreaded Ralph Flambard, who came to institute a suit against the archbishop in the king's name. And they were soon irreconcilably separated.

William's extortions from the clergy, heavy and cruel as they were, had been submitted to tamely; and he treated their remonstrances as the feeble murmurs of men who were too selfish to resist his injustice in earnest. Thus the money of the Church was squandered, to secure his capricious favour, and support his wastefulness. Grievous, too, as the burden was to the higher clergy, they were not the chief sufferers. It was on the oppressed tenantry of the Church, from whom the money had to be wrung, and on her dependents and pensioners, that the tyranny fell most bitterly; on the poor who found refuge in the monasteries, or were supported by their alms; on the houseless, the sick, and the stranger.

Anselm, on his consecration, had with difficulty raised 500 marks on his wasted estates, for a present to William,

\* During his contest with Henry I, Anselm thus writes to Gundulf:—"Some evil-disposed persons in their ill-nature have put a false meaning on my letter to the king; as if I boasted of having always kept God's law, and accused the king's father and Archbishop Lanfranc of having lived without regard to it. Certainly the wit of these men is too fine, or else too slender. What I say is, that things were done, in their day, by the king's father and Archbishop Lanfranc—both of them great and religious men—which *I* cannot do at *this* time according to God's will, or without peril of my soul's salvation."—Anselm, Ep. iv. 44.

who was in want of money for one of his Norman wars. The king thought the sum too small, and, as his wont was when he was offended, refused it. Anselm went to him and pressed him to accept it;—though small, it was offered freely, nor would it be the last;—but he intimated plainly, that he would not fall in with the king's system of extortion. "As a friend," he said, "you may do what you like with me and mine; on the footing of a slave neither me nor mine shall you have." "Keep your money and foul tongue to yourself; I have enough for myself; go, get you gone," was the king's answer, in his rough and broken way.\* Anselm left him. He thought, says Eadmer, of the words of the Gospel, which had been read on the day when he first entered his cathedral, "No man can serve two masters." "No one now, at least," he said, "can accuse me of simony. The present which I meant for him shall go now, not to him, but to Christ's poor, for the benefit of his soul." He tried, however, once more to regain the king's favour, but he was told that the only way was to double his present; about this he was firm, and he left the court in disgrace.

William was beyond measure irritated at this resolute opposition from a clergyman,—an old feeble monk,—one, too, whom he himself had in a moment of weakness placed in the position to annoy him: but nothing was done for the present to molest Anselm. He held on his course, discharging the duties of his office; in the country, living among his tenants, and writing on theology; at court, preaching against luxury and effeminate fashions, and refusing absolution to the disobedient; doing whatever he could to repair the mischiefs of the last six years. But his single efforts were vain against the frightful license which prevailed, and the other bishops kept aloof from him. His only hope was a synod. Could a council be summoned, men might speak and act in concert, who would not act separately. The court was at Hastings, waiting for a wind to carry over the

\* Will. Malmsb., *De Gest. Reg.* p. 504., "titubantiâ linguæ notabilis, maxime cum ira succresceret;" which Rob. of Glouc. paraphrases, p. 414. :—

"Reinable ne was he nought of tongue, but of speech hastyf (hasty),

Boffing" (*i. e.* spluttering), "and most when he was in wrath or in strife."

king to Normandy; and the bishops had been summoned thither to give him their blessing when he sailed. Anselm resolved to make one more effort to move William. He went to him, and solemnly laid before him the state of things in England: "Christian religion," he said, "had well nigh perished among the people, and the land was become almost a Sodom,—the only remedy was in a council of the Church." William refused to hear of it. Anselm then entreated him at least to appoint abbots to the vacant and disorganised monasteries. "What are they to you?" was the fierce answer; "the abbeys, are they not mine? May I not do what I please with them, as you do with your manors?" "Yours they are," said Anselm, "to protect, but not to lay waste; for they belong to God,—to maintain his servants, not to support your wars." "Your predecessor dared not have held such language to my father," was the reply; go, I will do nothing for you." Anselm retired, and consulted the bishops. They could suggest no other advice than that of purchasing the king's favour. The archbishop indignantly rejected it; for the honour of the Church,—in justice to his poor tenants,—on mere grounds of policy, he could not listen to so unworthy an expedient. "My vassals," said he, "have been plundered and made a prey since Lanfranc's death, and I have nothing to give them: shall I further go on to flay them alive?" The bishops recommended him to give at least the 500 marks which he had originally offered; "No," said he, "he has refused it once—it is gone to the poor now."

William was furious when this was reported to him. "Go tell him," was his message, "that I hated him yesterday: henceforth I will hate him daily more and more. Father and Archbishop he shall be to me no longer. Let him not wait here to give me his blessing. I will cross without it."

Such was the opening of the great trial of strength between the Church and feudalism in England. When opposite principles, which have been for some time silently growing up together in society, at length come into collision, they do not usually meet at first, except in a confused and partial manner. The war begins with skirmishes about petty posts,



with disputes about trifles, and quarrels seemingly personal. Conflicting tendencies touch each other and struggle in their distant results. In time, things clear: issues show themselves more distinctly, and are reduced into definite and tangible questions;—reasons, given and answered, bring up new views of things, disengage and disentangle what was misunderstood or dimly seen, in men's own position, and that of their opponents; and so the main battle is pushed farther and farther back on those great points, upon which the whole movement rests and centres. This apparently petty dispute about 500 marks,—involving, as it did, very sacred principles of that Christian law which was committed to the Church's keeping, and for the observance of which the Church, whenever she has understood her true position, has always made herself responsible,—led on, by a series of close and obvious consequences, to the opening of those great questions between the spiritual and temporal powers,—questions among the highest that can engage men's thoughts,—which, even in our own day, remain unsettled.

There was enough in what had passed, to open the eyes of all parties to the state of things with which they had to deal: to make it clear to Anselm, that if the law and powers of the Church were to continue among the most solemn realities of society, her independence must be at once and unequivocally asserted in the face of all England: and to William, that the Archbishop was resolved at all hazards to make that effort.

There are more than 700 years, with their burden of events—of sins and their punishments—between us and St. Anselm: and this vast interval of time, with the fears and jealousies which are its legacy, make it necessary to say a word, not in defence or excuse of his line of conduct, for that it needs not, but in explanation of it. For in maintaining the claims of the spiritual power, he maintained them, as involved and expressed in the claims of the Pope: and this at once prejudices his cause in modern eyes. In the present unhealthy and shattered state of Christendom, we people past history with phantasms, and colour it with hues, which

belong to our own days. Here in England, to have at any time supported the cause of the popes, shuts a man out from sympathy, and even justice. But without going into the doctrinal part of the question, it is plain that we cannot speak of the Western Church of the eleventh century, as if its circumstances and history were the same as those of the same Church in the nineteenth. The union of European Christendom under the Pope was the arrangement which had lasted under God's providence ever since the barbarians had been Christianised; it was the dispensation which was natural and familiar to men—the only one they could imagine—a dispensation, moreover, under which religion had achieved its conquests. The notion of being independent of the see of St. Peter was one which was never found among the thoughts of a religious man, even as a possibility; which never occurred even to an irreligious one, except as involving disobedience and rebellion. We would have people reflect, who shrink from looking with favour on any person or any policy which strengthened the see of Rome, that there was a time when the authority of the popes was no controverted dogma—when it was as much a matter of course, even to those who opposed its exercise—as much an understood and received point, as the primacy of Canterbury, and the king's supremacy, is with us: and that in such times, men fought for the Church, as they must do always, under the forms—it may be temporary or faulty ones—in which her cause came into their hands. We cannot conceive how the keenest and most jealous Protestant can refuse to admit as much as this, when he calmly realises, that what is history to him, was the unknown future, or the confused and hurried present to other men. And moreover, supposing the state of things we are speaking of to have been as corrupt and disordered as he deems it, we have but little right to judge those who worked with faith and a high heart under a faulty traditional system, which involved and upheld unity in the Church, when we acquiesce so easily in our state of division and isolation from the great body of believers. Nor was it only custom and association which bound men in those days to

the order of things under which they had been born; whatever evil there may have been in it, there was also good, on a great and noble scale, to which they were keenly alive.

The unearthly origin of the Church, its unity and essential independence, the superiority of its claims to those of any power of this world—the idea of the Church as the “kingdom of heaven,”—a universal spiritual empire; all this found an adequate memorial and expression in the Papacy. In those times, men could not conceive of a law, which had not a *person* to administer it; they could not realise an authority or power which had not its representative: and they saw in the Pope, not merely the type, but also the real and highest earthly organ of a power not of this world:—not the symbol only, but the divinely-ordained guardian and minister of the great law of unity. Add to this, what is not matter of theory or doctrine, but a fact of history, that in the time of which we speak, the cause of the Popes was that of religion and holiness. With whatever amount of mistake, misdoing, or corruption among its supporters—however feebly they may often have realised their own principles—it was based on faith in the Unseen; it resisted and rebuked the world; it set a true value on the things of time. It is no wonder then,—it would be a strange thing had it been otherwise,—that such men as St. Anselm should have been found in its ranks.

Certainly nothing so hampered the free working of the lawless and arbitrary spirit of feudalism, as the existence of this system in the Church. Nations and their rulers could not feel that moral irresponsibility which they have since gained. They were members of Christendom, as well as distinct political bodies; united *as Christians* to others, and accountable *as Christians* to the whole Church. There was a standard recognised by all, higher than that of political expediency; a commonly acknowledged law, able to reach and visit crimes which national laws were ready to screen, or were too weak to punish. There was an appeal from all earthly tribunals to one, not merely higher, but different in kind. An appeal to the See of Rome was not only virtually an appeal to the

whole of Christendom, it was also an appeal to the judgment-seat of our Lord.

It was to break loose from the restraints imposed by the still real unity of the Church, that the feudal princes opposed so vigorously the power of the Popes. It was not that they resisted or doubted their claim to be the divinely appointed presidents of the Church: *that* they acknowledged as much as they did the local claims of their own bishops; it was the authority of religion and the Church, which they felt to be represented by the Popes, which excited their impatience and hatred. They acknowledged the law while they disobeyed it: they thought to escape the invisible powers of the Church, by fettering her Ministers, or refusing to hear her sentence; but they never doubted either the reality of those powers, or her right, in the abstract, to use them.\* Their opposition was based, not on any religious scruples, scarcely on any distinct views of political greatness, but on the privileges of the feudal military law; on precedents exempting them from the law of the Church. They recognised its jurisdiction; what they fought for was, unlimited dispensation from it in their own persons.

The results of his quarrel with Anselm had taught William, that the Church, humbled as she was, might yet, under able and resolute guidance, such as she had gained in the archbishop, be able to check and thwart him. And her power of maintaining her ground against him, was visibly strengthened by her union with the rest of the Western Church, and with the Pope. Whatever measures William might pursue in England, he could not prevent Anselm from ultimately falling back on an authority to which it was impossible, without avowed

\* William, Count of Poitiers, had taken another man's wife. "Cum Petrus Pictavorum Episcopus eum liberius argueret, et detrectantem palam excommunicare inciperet, ille præcipiti furore percitus, crinem antistatæ involat, strictumque mucronem vibrans, 'Jam,' inquit, *mories nisi me absolvens.*' Tum vero præsul, *timore simulato, inducias petens loquendi, quod reliquum fuerat excommunicationis fidenter peroravit.*

"Ita officio suo peracto, martyriumque sitiens, collum protendit: 'Feri,' inquit, 'feri.' At Willelmus, refractor, consuetum leporem intulit, ut diceret, 'Tantum certe te odio, ut nec meo te digner odio, nec cælum unquam intrabis meæ manus ministerio.'"—Will. Malsm. l. v. § 439.

disobedience, to refuse to listen. It became William's object, therefore, to perplex and weaken the archbishop by detaching him, indirectly, if possible, from the Pope, and isolating him from the rest of Christendom. The circumstances of the times were favourable to his attempt. There were at the moment two claimants of the throne of St. Peter, Urban the Second, and the Antipope Guibert; and the English Church had hitherto acknowledged neither. Without therefore denying the rights of the apostolic see, William, acting on the precedent established by his father, might require the bishops to suspend their obedience, till he had decided which of the two rivals had really a claim to it.

But there was a difficulty in the case of the archbishop; he had already acknowledged Urban, and had distinctly reserved his obedience to him, before he would accept the primacy. William, however, was not to be turned aside from his purpose easily. The point soon came to an issue between him and the archbishop; in what manner, and with what results, will be seen from the following transaction, the details of which are given by Eadmer.

On Mid-lent Sunday, 1095 (March 11.), the prelates and nobility of England, with a large concourse of the lower orders, met at the hour of prime in the Church of Rockingham Castle, to hold a solemn council. The peers had been summoned to answer an appeal made to them by the archbishop, for their judgment and council in a very important question lately raised between himself and the king. When he had applied to the king for leave to make the customary journey to Rome, in order to receive the metropolitan pall, the king had asked him, "from which Pope he meant to ask it?" and on being told, "from Urban," he had charged the archbishop with a breach of his fealty and allegiance, in daring to recognise a Pope not yet acknowledged by the realm, and told him, that he must either disclaim Urban till the king's pleasure were known, or leave England. His obedience to Pope Urban, the king said, was incompatible with his duty as a subject. It was on this point that the archbishop had asked and received permission to seek the

advice of his peers. He laid his case fully before them, reminding them that they had forced him into his present position, with full warning from him of the difficulties which were likely to ensue, and with a pledge on their part of sympathy and aid. "It is a grievous thing for me," he concluded, "to despise and disown the vicar of St. Peter; it is a grievous thing to break the faith which I promised to keep to the king according to God's law: nevertheless it is a grievous thing to be told, that I cannot do my duty to either one of these, except at the expense of my allegiance to the other."

The bishops, to whom he had especially addressed himself, declined to give him any counsel for the present, except on condition of his submitting unconditionally to the king; but they offered to report what he had said to William, who was waiting the issue in another part of the castle, and communicate what he might say in answer; and thus the question was put off till the next day.

The following morning the assembly met again. The archbishop took his seat in the midst, and repeated his request to the bishops for their counsel. But he again asked in vain. They replied as they had done the day before—they would give no counsel on religious grounds (*secundum Deum*), which should in any respect oppose the king's will. They gave their answer like men who felt the shame and cowardice of their position—"they hung down their heads in silence," says Eadmer, "expecting what was coming on them." Anselm's countenance lighted up, when he heard their determination, and raising his eyes to heaven, he solemnly addressed his protest to the assembled bishops and nobles:—

"Since you," he said, "who are called the pastors of Christ's flock, and you who are styled chiefs among the people, refuse your counsel to me your chief, except according to the will of one man, I will betake myself to the Chief Shepherd and Prince of all, I will fly to the 'Angel of Great Counsel,' and from Him I will receive the counsel which I will follow in this my cause—yea, rather, *His* cause, and that of His Church. He says to the most blessed of the apostles, Peter, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock

I will build my Church,'—and again to all the apostles jointly, 'He who hears you hears Me; and he who despises you despises Me.' It was primarily to St. Peter, and in him to the other apostles—it is to the vicar of St. Peter, and through him to the other bishops who fill the apostles' places,—that these words, as we believe, were addressed; but to no emperor whatsoever, to no king, or duke, or earl. In what point we must be subject to earthly princes, the same Angel of Great Counsel has taught us, saying, 'Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's.' These are the words and counsels of God, and by them I will abide. Know ye therefore all of you, that in the things that are God's, I will render obedience to the vicar of St. Peter; in those that belong of right to the earthly dignity of my lord the king, I will render him both faithful counsel and service, to the best of my knowledge and power."

The bishops had a difficult part to play: they had to support the king's cause in the face of their own convictions, in the face of what they believed to be the plain meaning of texts of Scripture, in the face of their vow of canonical obedience; with the full consciousness that the eyes of all, allies and opponents, were open to their false position; that they would find sympathy neither in England nor in Christendom, and that by none were they so thoroughly seen through and despised as by the king, whose tools they had consented to make themselves. The archbishop's speech was received in clamour and tumult; no one ventured to answer it; no one would report it to the king; and the assembly broke up in confusion. Anselm was not daunted; he went himself to the royal chamber, and repeated his words in William's presence.

The day was spent by the king's party in angry and fruitless deliberation. William looked to the bishops to defeat Anselm on his own ground; the bishops, irritated at once by the hopelessness of their case, and by their fear of disappointing William, were unable to agree among themselves upon the course to be pursued. The archbishop meanwhile had returned to the church to wait the result: while his opponents, broken up into knots of two and three, were engaged in eager and fruitless discussion, he remained in his seat; and at

last, wearied out with the delay, "leaning his head against the wall, he fell into a calm sleep." Towards the end of the day, the bishops, with some of the nobility, came to him from the king. "Their advice to him," they said, "was, that he should submit, without further hesitation, to the customs of the realm, which the king valued as highly as his crown, and at once give up Urban." Anselm asked till the next day to return a formal answer. They thought he was wavering, or at a loss for an immediate reply, and urged the king to take advantage of his indecision. William, Bishop of Durham, who had throughout taken the lead against the archbishop, and who had engaged to force him, either to commit himself to a disavowal of Urban, or to resign his ring and crosier, now came to him, and called on him peremptorily to yield to the king his dignity and prerogative, or to prepare at once for his own just sentence. But he had overstepped his mark. Anselm answered quietly and briefly, "Whosoever wishes to prove that, because I will not renounce the obedience of the chief bishop of the venerable Holy Roman Church, I am therefore breaking faith and allegiance to my earthly king, let him come forward, and he shall find me ready, *as I ought, and where I ought*, to render my answer."

They had nothing to reply, and retired to the king. A suppressed murmur of indignation ran through the crowd of the lower orders, which had filled the body of the church the whole day, and had hitherto looked on in silent sympathy, not daring to express their feelings. At length a soldier stepped out of the throng, and knelt before the archbishop: "Lord and Father," said he, "thy children humbly beseech thee by me that thy heart be not troubled by what thou hast heard; but remember blessed Job, who vanquished the devil on a dung-hill, and avenged Adam, whom the devil had conquered in Paradise."

William of Durham had to report to the king "tamely and faintly"\* the complete failure of his attempt. Evening was closing in, and the assembly again adjourned. The king was

\* "Tepide et silenter."—Eadn.



exasperated\* in the highest degree with the archbishop, and scarcely less so with the bishops. At last William of Durham proposed that Anselm should be deprived by violence, and driven out of England. But against this the lay barons, who had been moved by the archbishop's calm self-possession and readiness in answering, protested strongly. "If this then pleases you not," said the king, "what *will* please you? In this realm I will endure no equal. It is by following your counsel and plans that things have been brought to this pass. Away with you: get you gone, and lay your heads together, for by God's countenance if ye condemn him not, according to my will, I will condemn you."

William found it impossible to prevail upon the bishops to pass sentence on Anselm; but he found them willing to renounce his obedience. The lay barons, on the other hand firmly refused to follow their example. As a feudal superior, he did not claim their obedience; as their archbishop and spiritual father, he had done nothing to forfeit it. This refusal left the bishops alone in their miserable position; and their confusion was increased by William's calling on them severally to declare whether they renounced their obedience to the archbishop unconditionally, or only so far as it implied the claims of Pope Urban. They were divided in their answers: those who refused an unconditional renunciation were driven from William's presence, and had to regain his favour by large gifts. But it was an impolitic step on his part; for it broke up his party among the bishops, and by forcing them to this disgraceful alternative, he brought to a head the growing feeling of disgust and scorn with which their conduct was viewed even by the nobility. Those especially among them who had entirely renounced the archbishop, were openly insulted even in the court: it was plain that their influence would no longer weigh with any one, or their concurrence give plausibility to any measure. There remained nothing farther to be done against the archbishop, except in the way of open violence; and men were not yet ripe for that. It

\* "Usque ad divisionem spiritus sui."—Eadm.

was agreed therefore that matters should be left as they were for the present, and should stand over till after the following Whitsuntide.

William immediately despatched two of his chaplains, Gerard, afterwards archbishop of York, and William Warelwast, to intrigue at Rome. What they said or did there, does not appear. They were men who, as they showed afterwards, would not be scrupulous in serving their master: but the result of their negotiation was the mission, by Pope Urban, of Cardinal Walter of Albano, to the king, secretly bearing with him the metropolitan pall. On landing in England, the legate took no notice of the archbishop, though he had to pass through Canterbury, but went straight to the court. Of his proceedings there, which were looked upon at the time with great distrust and dissatisfaction by the archbishop's friends\*, all we know is, that William was induced, by the grant, Eadmer says, of special privileges from the Roman See, to acknowledge Urban; but that when he demanded in return the deposition of Anselm, by the authority, or at least with the consent, of the legate, he was at once and peremptorily refused. Disappointed and baffled, he seems to have resolved to put the best face upon matters, and consent to a reconciliation with the archbishop, which took place shortly after, but not without another vain attempt, on the part of the bishops, to induce Anselm, by concealing from him the real state of things at court, to purchase the king's favour by a large present.

William's party wished the archbishop to receive the pall

\* Anselm certainly was but little indebted in any way to the legate's good offices, whose wish seems to have been to do as little as he could for the English Church and to save his own character by trying to put Anselm in the wrong. In a letter of Anselm's to him, after the reconciliation (Ep. iii. 36.), written under considerable self-restraint, and in a tone of measured politeness, which scarcely disguises the writer's indignant contempt for his correspondent's insincerity, the archbishop meets the charge of want of hearty concurrence, and remarks with quiet severity upon the legate's affected difficulties about Anselm's consecration, his readiness to listen to stories, and his "defence of the archbishop as far as he could," against accusations which he could not but know to be untrue.

from the hands of the king. Anselm objected, for the privileges and powers, which it symbolised and conveyed, belonged not to the king to give, but to the spiritual ruler of the Church. It was determined therefore that it should be laid on the high altar of Canterbury, from whence the archbishop should take it. On the third Sunday after Trinity, the legate, bearing it in a silver casket, was met at Canterbury by the archbishop and bishops of England in procession, barefooted, but in their sacerdotal vestments, and conducted to the cathedral, where Anselm, wearing for the first time the symbol of his metropolitan dignity, celebrated the holy Eucharist. The gospel read in the service was the same passage which had been taken as the presage of his episcopate at his consecration, the parable of the great supper.\* Those monitory words were still to be fulfilled; the work in which he was engaged, though so far he had been successful, was not yet over.

The reconciliation did not last long. William continued as profligate and oppressive as ever, and soon began to molest the archbishop personally. For some alleged neglect of feudal service, he was summoned to appear before the king's court. "We looked for peace," said he on receiving the order, "and there is no good,—for the time of healing, and behold trouble." It was become plain that the king was resolved to crush him; in England he was fighting single-handed; there was nothing left for him but to refer matters to the Pope. We will give his own account of his position about this time, in an extract from a letter written by him to Pope Urban, shortly after he had received the pall.

"Holy father," he writes, after having explained why he had not been able yet to visit Rome, "it grieves me that I am what I am,—that I am not what I was. It grieves me that I am a bishop, for my sins prevent me from doing the work of a bishop. When I was in a humble station, I seemed to be doing something; now that I am exalted to high place, I am weighed down with a load which is too heavy for me, and I do no good either for myself or others. . . . I long to escape from an intolerable charge, and

\* This is read in the Sarum Missal on the 2d Sunday.

to lay down my burden : on the other hand, I fear to offend God. The fear of God, which made me undertake it, compels me to keep it. If I knew God's will, I would direct my will and conduct according to it ; but it is hidden from me, and I know not what to do : I cannot see my way, or make out what conclusion I ought to come to."

He goes on to entreat Urban's prayers, "lest, tossed by the waves of such thoughts, he should altogether sink, or attain to nothing;" and prays, that, if at last "in shipwreck he should have to seek refuge from the storm in the bosom of his mother the Church, he may, for the sake of Him who shed His blood for us, find there ready and compassionate aid and solace."\*

Such were his feelings and prospects in 1096. Shortly after, in that same year, he was forced by William to quit England as a banished man. The causes of his exile are thus stated in a letter written by him two years after, to Paschal II., Urban's successor.†

. . . . "I had before my eyes in England a multitude of evils which it was my province to correct. I could neither correct them, nor yet tolerate them without sin. The king required me, on the score of duty, to consent to his will and pleasure, in matters which were against the law and will of God. For without his command, he would not that any successor of the Apostles should be received, or be so styled, in England : nor that I should hold communication with him, or obey his decrees. Since he came to the throne, which is now thirteen years, he has not allowed a council to be held. The lands of the Church he gave to his vassals : and if, in these and such like matters, I sought counsel, every one refused it to me, even my own suffragans, except according to his will. Seeing then these, and many other violations of the will and law of God, I asked leave of him to visit the Apostolic See, that I might receive advice from thence touching my own soul, and the office enjoined me. The king answered that I had committed a crime against him in merely thus asking leave, and gave me the choice, either of making amends for this as for an offence, and giving him security, that I would never ask this

\* Ep. iii. 37.

† Ep. iii. 40.

leave again, or appeal to the Apostolic See;—or else, of taking my speedy departure from his realm. I chose rather to depart, than to agree to such a scandalous act. I came to Rome, as you know, and laid the whole matter before my Lord the Pope. The king, as soon as I had left England, laid hands on the whole archbishopric, and leaving just enough to clothe and feed our monks, turned it to his own purposes. Warned and intreated by my Lord the Pope to alter his conduct, he has scorned to do so, and to this day holds on in the same course. It is now the third year since I thus left England: the little that I brought with me, and the large sums which I have borrowed and not yet repaid, are all spent; and thus deeply in debt, but possessed of nothing, I am living on the bounty of our venerable father, the Archbishop of Lyons.” . . .

As the letter states, the king, though he had acknowledged Urban, had treated Anselm's application as a breach of his oath of allegiance. The nobility took part against the archbishop, and his suffragans again deserted him. Their address to him is too remarkable to be omitted:

“ ‘Lord father, we well know that thou art a pious and holy man, and hast thy desires in heaven. We, by our relatives, whom we support, by temporal circumstances in which we are engaged, are withheld from ascending to your magnanimity, and from making sport of the world. But if you are willing to descend to us and imitate our conduct, we will assist you with the same counsel with which we assist each other, and will succour you in your embarrassments. But should you abide by your former principles, we will not desert our fidelity to the king, nor separate ourselves from him.’ Anselm replied, ‘You have answered well: go to your lord—I will hold to my God.’”—*Möhler*, (from Eadm.) p. 82.\*

On his refusing to comply with the king's wishes, he was ordered to be ready to quit England in ten days. Before he left the court, he went to the king, “with a cheerful and pleasant countenance,” and offered him his benediction. “I know not when I shall see you again,” he said, “and, if you refuse it not, I would fain give you my blessing—the blessing of a father to his son, of the Archbishop of Canterbury to

\* We have altered a few words in this translation.

the King of England." The rough king was for a moment touched, perhaps awed, by Anselm's calm but solemn way of closing their personal intercourse. He could not refrain from bowing his head, while the Archbishop made the sign of the cross over him, and departed: and they never met again.

Anselm was persecuted to the last with insult and annoyance. As he was embarking at Dover, William Warelwast, the king's chaplain, who had been living for several days at the archbishop's board, caused his luggage to be broken open on the beach, and searched, in the hope of finding treasure. Thus he went forth to his exile; it was the issue he had foreseen from the first; to pass his old age in destitution, and "without certain dwelling-place; in journeyings often, in perils of robbers, in weariness and painfulness, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness."

The part of a confessor was no easy or safe one: yet in those days, in spite of the wickedness and misery so rife in them, the promise made to those who leave all for the Gospel, of finding, even here, "houses and brethren, an hundred fold," was still amply fulfilled. Travellers, especially if they bore a religious character, were generally sure of a welcome—not as foreigners, but as Christians;—toilsome and dangerous as their road usually was, they might reckon on a monastery at the end of each day's journey, where they would find not only rest but sympathy. And moreover, in spite of imperfect civilisation, and fierce wars, Christendom was, in a very great measure, even politically, one body; and national distinctions were often forgotten in the common citizenship of the Church. Thus it was no strange thing for a native of the South to connect his name and fortunes for ever with a people of the North. We have in Lanfranc, for instance, an Italian, first the ruler, and all but the founder of the most famous Norman monastery, and then, as primate of England, master of the sympathies, and guiding the ecclesiastical action of these same Normans among their newly conquered Saxon subjects:—and shortly after, we see another Italian, trained in the same Norman abbey, returning

in his old age to his native land, a stranger, and an exiled Archbishop of Canterbury.

Along his road, and in Italy, Anselm was received, as was due to his name and cause, with honour by the great, with almost enthusiastic love by the poor. Nothing is more striking in Eadmer's minute, but unstudied narratives, than his account of the intercourse between the archbishop and the lower orders, and the interest he excited among them. Over and above his untiring sympathy for their wants and wishes, bodily and spiritual, there was a charm in his singular elasticity of character, and graceful bearing, in his easy gaiety, and hearty condescending kindness, which drew them in throngs around him. "His countenance alone,"\* says his companion, "even where he was not known, arrested their admiring attention." While staying in the camp of the Duke of Apulia, the very Saracens of the army, some of whom had shared his bounty, used to bless him with uplifted hands, and salute him after their national fashion, "kissing their own hands and bending their knees before him," as he passed through their quarters.†

But his quarrel was taken up feebly at Rome. He waited through two years of negotiation, but nothing was done. His able and seasonable defence of the Latin Creed against the Greeks at the council of Bari, together with his uncomplaining cheerfulness, had won him the sympathy of the Italian bishops; and by many of them, the indecision and lukewarmness of the Roman Court were felt strongly. At the Council of Lateran, 1099, this feeling showed itself. We quote Dr. Möhler's account of the proceedings, with a few verbal alterations:

"At Easter, the customary Roman Synod was held; many Gallic and Italian bishops were present; at the conclusion, the canons which had been passed, were again to be read. As the synod was held publicly in the church, in the same manner as the

\* Ead. Vit. S. Anselmi, p. 20.

† Id. p. 21. Many of them, he adds, would have received Anselm's instructions, and become Christians, but for their lord, the Count of Sicily, who would suffer none of them to embrace the faith with impunity.

assembly of the lords and bishops, which Anselm had convened (?) at the commencement of his contest, many of the people flocked to the important discussion. It was desirable that the resolutions should be distinctly read; the Bishop of Lucca, who had a powerful voice, was therefore selected for this office. He had read but a few decrees, when he suddenly paused, and under violent internal excitement, manifested by his agitated appearance, and by the various expressions of his countenance, addressed the Pope in these violent words:—‘What are we doing? We are loading our people with decrees, and we offer no resistance to the despotism of tyrants. Their oppressions and robberies of the church are daily reported to this See. As the head of all, you are called upon for counsel and assistance; but with what success is known and deplored by the whole world. From the ends of the earth there sits one among us, in meek and humble silence. But his silence is a loud cry. The greater his humility, the milder his mood, the more powerful is he with God, and the more should he inflame us. It is now two years since his arrival, and what assistance has he received? Know ye not all to whom I allude? It is to Anselm, the Primate of England.’ With these words he raised his staff, and struck it so violently upon the pavement, that the church re-echoed around. The Pope looked towards him and said, ‘It is sufficient, Reinger, it is sufficient; good counsel shall soon be adopted.’—*Möhler*, pp. 86, 87.

The council however broke up without any further steps being taken, and Anselm at length left Italy in despair, and took refuge, as he states in the letter quoted above, with the Archbishop of Lyons.\*

The death of the Pope, which happened shortly afterwards, relieved William from the difficulty into which he had brought himself by acknowledging Urban. “Evil be with him who cares for it,” was his remark on hearing the news. He was resolved not to repeat the mistake, especially as the new Pope was reported to be “one of Anselm’s sort.” “His popedom,”

\* It must be said in fairness that Dr. Möhler, not from any blind partiality, approves Urban’s “moderation.” The Pope, he says, “could not act otherwise.” Anselm, however, certainly did feel that Urban *might* have done something for him, but showed no disposition to do it.—*Sec Epist.* iii. 40. Dr. Möhler is mistaken in saying that the Bishop of Lucca called for William’s “unconditional deposition:” there were many measures of punishment short of that.



he said with an oath, "shall not override me this time; now that I am free, I will remain so."

But the career of this miserable man was coming to a close. Men shuddered at his frightful blasphemies, and his ferocious hatred against everything connected with religion; they waited with awe to see where his reckless course would end, and looked out for visible signs of the presence and power of the evil one to whom he had sold himself. He had sworn with an oath on recovering from his last sickness\*, "that God should never have any good in him, for all the evil which he had brought upon him." "From that time," says Eadmer, "he succeeded in everything he wished for or attempted. The very wind and sea seemed to serve his will, as if God would leave him without excuse, by granting all that he wished for." "Yet," said those around him, "never a night came but he lay down a worse man than he rose; and never a morning but he rose worse than he lay down."

He heard of Urban's death in October, 1099. On the 2d of August following he rode out at midday, after a wild debauch, to hunt in the New Forest — the chase, which his father had made by laying waste hearth and burial ground, and in which two of his family had already perished; — in the evening his body was found pierced with an arrow through the heart. This is all that is certainly known of his end. The account commonly received was, that he was killed by a chance arrow from Sir Walter Tyrrell.† Wild and strange tales were circulated respecting the circumstances of his death — the warnings which he had received — the weapon with which he was slain — the invocation of the name of the evil one with which he called for the fatal discharge; showing at least the

\* When Gundulf, Bishop of Rochester, expressed a hope that he would take warning by what had happened, his answer was, "Scias, O Episcopo, quod per Sanctum Vultum de Luca, nunquam me Deus bonum habebit, pro malo quod mihi intulit" — which is strangely mistranslated in Möhler, *Engl. Transl.* p. 67.

† Doubt is thrown upon it by Eadmer, and by Abbot Suger, who writes that he had often heard Tyrrell declare on his oath, that he had not been in the same part of the forest with the king during the whole day. (Quoted in Hardy's ed. of *W. Malms.* p. 508.) No one ever professed to have been an eye witness of William's death.

deep and peculiar awe with which his contemporaries regarded his mysterious end, and which even at this distance of time we can hardly help sharing, while we read their accounts. In the full tide of his triumph, on the eve of adding Poitou and Aquitaine to his dominions, of all princes of the West the most wicked, yet the most prosperous, he was struck down in a moment, "impenitent and unshriven," with the spoils of sacrilege, which he had relinquished in sickness, once more in his hands. His body was found by some charcoal burners, who threw it into their cart "as if it had been the carcass of some savage beast of chase," and carried it into Winchester, — "his blood dropping along the road as they went." He was buried the next day in the Cathedral choir, for he had been a King of England; but his funeral was a hurried and unwept one. The church bells in many places, which "toll," says Ordericus, "for the poorest beggars and basest women, tolled not for him; and" — he continues — "out of the vast heaps of treasure which he had wrung from rich and poor, no alms were given for his soul."

## ST. ANSELM AND HENRY I.\*

[JULY, 1843.]

IN the efforts of the reforming party in the Church in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, one of the most prominent points, as every one knows, was their pertinacious war against the practice of laymen investing clergymen with church benefices and offices. For nearly a century this was the cause of strife, the *fons malorum*; in the eyes of churchmen, the unendurable grievance, the foul and deadly abomination which darkened their day, the all but heretical corruption which foreboded Antichrist. It was a slight matter in itself. A ceremony—a trifling act of state and show—a form, symbolical in its origin, of simply arbitrary and disputable meaning, by long practice come to be a mere matter of course, a technicality of feudal etiquette—the delivery of a gold ring and a bent staff by a layman to a priest—this was the point in debate—this it was which employed the lives of such men as Pope Gregory VII. and the Emperor Henry IV., and threatened to shiver Christendom into fragments, soon to return to their old barbarian heathenism. But what seemed the cause was only the symbol of the quarrel, a serious and real one. As in many other instances before and since, principles which were life or death to the world had attached themselves to some paltry fragment of human pageantry, some device or fancy of the hour, thenceforth the gage or prize of battle, and were to stand or fall with it. The fate of Europe, perhaps of the Church, hung on the decision of the investiture question. It was the struggle—a confused and entangled, but a real one—of faith against self-will—of purity against lawlessness—of spiritual power against force and the sword.

\* *Le Rationalisme Chrétien à la fin du XI<sup>e</sup> Siècle, ou Monologium et Proslodium de S. Anselme : traduits et précédés d'une Introduction ;* par H. Bouchitté, &c. Paris : 1842.

This and no other, as far as man can separate and oppose parties and their motives, is the meaning of the contest in those times between "royalty and the priesthood," as we should now term it, between Church and State. The Church could not reform itself—could not do its work—could not insure its own permanence in Europe, while its present relations to the rulers of the world, the growth of three hundred years of misdoing, continued; if it was to hope for purity, it must strive and, if necessary, suffer for liberty. And by the joint instinct of both parties the issue was put upon the question of lay investiture.

This issue was first raised in England by St. Anselm. The present essay is intended to present a sketch of the contest upon it. But the subject itself of investiture, though it cannot be fully investigated here, requires a few words to trace its connection with the great struggle in which it was so prominent a feature.

In the tumultuary beginnings of society in modern Europe, the claims of the Church and of the barbarian kings, both equally great, ran side by side, clashing, or in turn prevailing by the force of circumstances or personal character, without any serious attempt, as there was no pressing need, to harmonise or guard them. Thus it was till the union of Western Christendom under the empire of Charlemagne. This great event was, as it were, a new beginning to European history. This empire was a mighty religious monarchy, which aimed at reviving, in Christian times and on a grander scale, the kingdoms of Solomon and Josiah—a power thought to be received by consecration from above, as truly as the priesthood—the guardian of the Catholic faith, and of truth, duty, and peace among all Christian men. It rose among the new nations of the West, awakening ideas, and opening prospects hitherto unknown to them. Then for the first time they realised their own greatness and dignity; they had not only conquered Rome, but inherited her grandeur. Till Charlemagne they had felt themselves intruders—they called themselves barbarians. But now the "glorious and religious emperor of the Christians," so valorous, so wise, so potent that he over-

shadowed all the old heathen Cæsars, was one of their own blood and language: he had been crowned at Rome, "the Mother of the Empire, where Cæsars and emperors were wont always to sit"—they had seen the "worship" and heard the acclamations of the Roman people—" *Carolo Augusto à Deo coronato, magno et pacifico Imperatori, vita et victoria.*"\* He became to them as a national ancestor, a sort of mythic hero, sung in legends which took their place among those old songs—*barbara et antiquissima carmina, quibus veterum regum actus et prælia canebantur*†, which he had loved so much himself. Aix-la-Chapelle became almost a hallowed city. He had fixed and embodied to Europe the idea of Christian royalty, and was henceforth its great model and type.

The idea of Charlemagne's empire was a severe all-absorbing despotism, serving the cause of justice and the Christian faith;—set up not for mere secular government, but in order to make earthly power bend to the revealed designs of God. The emperor bore a sacred office; he was the "figure of God's majesty," the image and instrument of God's power—power without stint or appeal, guided by inflexible goodness. He was raised up to be the *advocatus ecclesiæ*: to his honour and good sword was committed the Bride of the Holy One while sojourning on earth; for her safety and purity his imperial faith was pledged. Nations and individuals—the whole multitude of the faithful, small and great—the Church in her spiritual and temporal interests, were given into his hands—there was nothing for which he was not directly responsible. Bishops as well as counts "bore a part, and but a part, in the ministry which in its fulness centered in him."‡ And because spiritual things are above temporal, he would be betraying his trust, unless in every matter, spiritual even more than temporal, he was most jealously watchful—unless while he honoured bishops as God's especial servants, he kept them most strictly to their duty. Hence, while their place was the nearest to his throne, while he secured

\* Eginhard, Ann. Franc. 801.

† Eginhard, Vit. Kar. Imp. c. 29.

‡ Capit. Lud. Pi. anno 823, c. 3.

their fair and free election, and gave them wealth and honour it was he who "committed the bishoprics to their hands" before they could be consecrated: he watched over and admonished his ecclesiastical as well as his lay "helpers" (*adjutores*)—holding councils with them—collecting and promulgating through Christendom the canons of the Church—inquiring into and ruling everything, from the business of a synod to that of an archdeacon or parish vestry—points of faith, morality, discipline, ecclesiastical convenience—the Catholic creed, names of angels, apocryphal works, festivals and tithes, furniture of the altar, church building, the use and preparation of chrism and holy water, the duties of the confessor to his penitents—publishing in juxtaposition laws about the assembling of councils or the education of the people, and regulations that "priests should ring their bells at due times," that "scribes should not write faultily," and that "no man should force another to drink wine against his will."

Thus did Charlemagne read his commission. A theory in strong hands is, or creates, what it supposes; and, with the allowances required by every age and every kind of rule, he was a true and earnest Christian emperor—his monarchy looks still, as the Middle Age Church considered it, a providential order. But his great and leading idea, the empire of *Law* based upon the Church, issuing from one, binding together and controlling men and kingdoms—his "*regnandi disciplina*," was soon lost in the tumults and violence which were not yet to cease in Europe. His empire continued in name and theory and pretensions the same, but its religious character ceased to be a reality under his feudal successors.

In the eleventh century, feudalism, the joint result of the temper and native customs of the barbarians, and of their position in Roman Europe\*, was the recognised political system of Christendom—a system daily shaping itself into greater distinctness and consistency of detail, and to whose precedents and forms every thing was adjusting itself. Its characteristic feature was vassalage, as the necessary and universal condition of social life. Where it prevailed, men

\* Palgrave's *Anglo-Saxons*, c. xvii.

were held together, not so much by public law and power as by a kind of network, a mutually connected series of personal and private ties, of a formal and solemn character, between the weak and the powerful. And a strong tie it was. There was no earthly bond between man and man more stringent in its idea than that between lord and vassal; not that between master and slave, general and soldier, king and subject—nay, even between parent and child. It ran parallel to the relation between man and wife; and accordingly the feudal law, at least in England, excused a woman from the full profession of vassalage\*, “because it is not fitting that a woman should say, that she will become a woman to any man, but to her husband when she is married.” It was in all its forms and terms a *military* relation, supposing a state of continual war. In days when men were not born into a self-acting system of order and law, when every man must look to himself and none could stand alone, the weak could do nothing better than link himself unconditionally to one more powerful and noble, who could give him a standing-place in the confusion; while to the strong, there was nothing more useful than the free service of a stout vassal. Thus the lord and vassal were bound together by the honour and frank generosity of soldiers. Such was vassalage in its theory and forms, even after they had become legal fictions. “Between lord and man there is only faith,” say the old feudal customs; a fief was not bargained for and sold, but given; the return was, not rents, but a man’s unstinted devotion; the formal crime which forfeited it, was “ingratitude.” When the compact was sealed by the vassal’s homage, “the most honourable service, and most humble service, that a free tenant may do his lord,” he came before him in the guise of a helpless suppliant, without arms or spurs, and surrendered up person and fortunes into his hands. “The tenant shall be ungirt and his head uncovered, and his lord shall sit, and the tenant shall kneel before him on both his knees, and hold his hands jointly together between the hands of his lord, and shall say thus, ‘I become your man from this day forward

\* Litt. ii. 87.

of life and limb, and earthly worship, and unto you shall be true and faithful—saving the faith that I owe to our sovereign lord the king;’ and his lord so sitting shall kiss him.”\* The reservation at the end was no idle or superfluous one. Feudal law by no means took it as *a matter of course* that duty to the king superseded duty to the lord.†

Feudalism, in spite of its generous maxims—in spite of the noble and gallant character which, to a certain extent justly, is associated with it—the compensation for the turmoil and suffering which nursed it—soon stiffened into a hard system of customary law, interpreted and administered by those who had the stoutest arm and fewest scruples. It became the strength of a great military aristocracy. And truly those noble barons were a rough sort of governors and shepherds of the people. Our poetical notions of a gay and gentle chivalry fade away cruelly, we had almost said ludicrously, before the frightful realities of European life as drawn by the Middle Age historians. *Their* picture is, of a gradation of chiefs, with their rude ferocious soldiery, posted through the country; each in his own county or honor or castlewick, able safely to do as he pleased; men of ungovernable passions, living for the stormy excitements of battle, or of their own scarcely less terrible castles; savagely vindictive, and wayward as children, holding scruples of all kinds in very unaffected contempt, and increasing their broad lands and ready money by every means in their power. Portraits of them meet us at every turn in the contemporary chroniclers. In the early years of the Conqueror, Ivo Taillebois played tyrant in Hoyland; and though the Hoylanders “most worshipfully honoured him, and bent the knee before him, and paid him all the honours they could, and all the service they ought,” his hard mind was not moved thereby; “he did not love them with reciprocal confidence,” but drove them out of their senses or their lands, especially the monks, against whom he had an especial spite, by his ruthless deeds—*torquens et tribulans, angens et angarians, incarcerationans et excrucians*

\* Litt. ii. 85.

† Allen, Royal Prerog. p. 74. Hallam, Midd. Ages, i. 174.



—in very wantonness cutting off the ears and tails of their cattle, or chasing them into the fens with his hounds, or breaking their backs and legs, and so making them “altogether useless.” Such were the multitude of lords great and small, and not less redoubtable countesses and ladies, who shared in various measures whatever of power there was in Europe, and made it a hard time for all, clergy or laity, who had not a good sword to trust to. And at the head of this aristocracy, identified with its customs and feelings, battling hard with it for his place, stood the king or the emperor; no longer feeling himself the divinely appointed guardian of the Church and her canons,—though Charlemagne’s grand theory might survive, as it does still, in coronation services and court etiquette,—but the feudal chief of a confederacy of ambitious barons;—bullied by them, if weak;—if strong, carrying out to the utmost the feudal maxims which favoured his power.

Charlemagne had linked the episcopate to the crown, and so it had remained; and now the crown had changed its character, and with it the episcopate had become a feudal order. Two things were the practical belief of the day; first, that a bishop was the king’s nominee, and secondly, that he was simply the king’s vassal, deriving his authority from him, bound to his obedience and service, with as little qualification as a lay noble. Whatever other laws or authority a bishop had to acknowledge, his relation to the king and the great feudal body, had a reality, a common sense palpable truth about it, a consistency with the order of things, which in matters of serious business would decide a man’s conduct. It was a tie which made it mere romance and wildness for him to rebuke and punish vice, to defend the poor, to stir in good earnest against the corruption and worldliness of a system, of which his lord and patron was head. For such a proceeding there would have been no name known but treason, the unpardonable crime of feudal days.

Further, the feudal relation which had grown up between

\* Ingulph, a. 1071, p. 71.

the bishop and the crown, besides its influence on the episcopal office, affected very seriously the security of Church property. This became a distinct but very important point in the dispute. Part of this property was from the first given and accepted on feudal conditions; but the bulk of it was in a different case. It had been offered and consecrated to God and His service with a reality of sacrifice and surrender which we can hardly feel now. In the most solemn way possible all earthly claim to resume it had been renounced. But in time the conditions which were fairly attached to part were extended to the whole. It was not merely charged with certain services, such as were often reserved in the original grant, but claimed for a feudal superior in the same sense as a temporal fief. The king had become not merely the trustee, but the lord of the Church lands: it might be sacrilege, but on feudal principles it was not usurpation, when on the death or disobedience of a bishop, he seized the revenues of the see. To this lordship, *under the circumstances*, the king had no right. It is hard, indeed, to say in the abstract where the right over property stops in the supreme power of the state, granting that it is irresponsible; but rights are created and governed by the admitted principles of the day, and at that time it was an admitted principle, that the king was a responsible member of the Church, and that Church property was sacred. It was going, therefore, against the convictions and feelings of the time—it was indirectly regaining a hold on what he was supposed to have surrendered—it was taking away a safeguard he professed to have given—when the king claimed feudal dominion over the lands of the Church.

Of these relations, the expression and warrant was the form of investiture, with the attending homage. "Prudent antiquitie," says our English lawyer, "did for more solemnitie and better memorie of that which was to be done, express substances under ceremonies." The "substance" in this case was that the king gave away, not merely the royalties or the temporalities of the see, or a certain worldly honour or jurisdiction, but *the bishopric*; he put into the

bishop's hands, not a sword or a sceptre, but the symbols of his spiritual functions, the ring and the pastoral staff.

Such was the state of things when the contest about investitures began, in the middle of the eleventh century. The attack on them was a new line, on the part of the Church party. Investiture was one of those practices which have their importance from the system in which they are found, altering their meaning as that system insensibly passes into another. It had begun early in connection with Charlemagne's theory of a Christian empire, and had continued as a ceremony, unopposed and unnoticed; its meaning was vague—it was sanctioned by the almost ecclesiastical office of the king or emperor; and doubtless there was many a bishop who liked the feudal effect thus given to Church dignities, who had no objection to call "the alms and munificence of ancient kings, his barony and royal fief," so that he might ride at the head of his chivalry—an array as brave and gallant as the neighbouring earl's whom he had to keep at bay. The Church had acquiesced in the custom, for she had seen no evil in it. Her old recognised policy against the world had been, to try to check *directly* the interference of the secular power in *elections* of the higher clergy. So things had gone on for above 200 years: canons had been framed; princes had resisted, yielded, made promises, and broken them: bishoprics were important offices—chaplains and court-clerks were useful, were importunate, and had ready money to offer:—it was the old story over and over again; when the king was weak or threatened by danger, the theory at least of a free and canonical election was graciously acknowledged; when he was strong, laughed at. Churchmen protested loudly and hotly, or complained in secret. Still matters went on as before; but a free and canonical election was ever their hope, their watchword—the palladium of the purity of the Church: to be secured some day or other, on the faith of feudal kings; who were becoming more and more indisposed to part with any of their power, as great political objects, which gave increased value to that power, were, generation after generation, opening more distinctly to view.

There could be no doubt which side was really gaining: free and canonical election was becoming more and more a dream—for bishops were not merely subjects, but vassals; what had free and canonical election to do with the king's vassals? Popes and councils and divines might preach and argue and decree about it to the end of time—but the phrase had come to sound like a worn-out formula; power was power, in spite of their protests, and it was not in their hands. And, meanwhile, as the terms on which a bishop received his office identified him more and more with the state nobility, the very notion of a bishop became degraded and secularised.

Such seems to have been the view of the earnest and clear-sighted men who headed the movement of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. What good was it repeating year after year ineffectual claims—asserting rights which were not denied but simply laughed at—even gaining concessions, which were to exist only on parchment? To restore the lost feeling of the sanctity and heavenly mission of the episcopate—the tokens and cognisances—*divini signa decoris*—which connected it with the Apostles—this was what the times required. What matter who elected, if they were merely to elect an ecclesiastical baron? Distinctly and unequivocally, before it was too late, the Church must be detached from feudalism; popular and kingly notions about bishops must be broken down—a point which would bring matters to issue must be fixed on and carried, and carried at all hazards and without mistake—carried through evil report and good report; if necessary, and it was necessary, through war, exile, and even death. If any thing was to be done, they must strike a blow—must prove that priests as well as soldiers could act. They could not keep kings from meddling in elections; but they might keep bishops from receiving their offices on terms which fettered and lowered them. Abstract rights might not help them much; but they might fix on a *practice*, and draw upon it the strong and indignant feeling of Christendom. Investiture and homage, as they had long been exacted from the clergy, created not merely a spell and *prestige* in favour of feudal claims, but, according

to prevailing principles, a real undeniable right. They were the links which bound the Church; and cost what it might—the Church was above all price—they must be snapped. It was no safe experiment, but they had hit the blot; nothing shows it plainer than the rage and reluctance with which their opponents at length yielded. The emperor Henry V., when he had the Pope in prison, “holding him fast,” says his panegyrist, “as Jacob did the Angel, and not letting him go till he gave him a blessing,” could afford to let his captive bargain about free election—the “blessing” which he wanted was, to give him the right of investiture.\*

Such was the effort made against investiture. It was the effort necessary for the time to save the Church from falling—the course into which faithfulness and self-devotion in that day threw itself—the cause in which all high religious feelings, by instinct oftener than by any clear reason, found their symbol and representative. There were ideas of purity which were revolted, when hands consecrated to the holiest service were placed between those of the filthy and blood-stained, and surrendered also to *them*. There were yearnings after freedom—enthusiastic glimpses of the unutterable glory even of the Church militant, which spurned at the notion of her being a “handmaid,” to mortal greatness. There were thoughts of our Lord’s actual presence in the rites and voice of the Church, which made the interference of secular power feel like a profanation. All these rose up in men’s minds as the movement went on, and turned themselves with more or less success and consistency into arguments. They at least showed what was in men’s minds—what was identified with the contest. And, in spite of irrelevant reasoning and weak points, the question was what it was felt to be, one of the deepest principle—a matter which could not rest any longer as it had done—whose consequences, of one kind or another, had come to the birth, and could no longer be delayed. If investiture continued *now*, it was equivalent to surrendering the Christian law to those who hated it.

It was in vain, when the Church became alive to the real

\* Quoted in Will. Malms. Gest. Reg. l. v. §. 420.

meaning of the dispute, that moderate and peaceful men, suspicious of great movements, keenly alive to what was wrong or questionable on their own side, appalled at the terrors of a struggle, and hopeless of the strength of the Church to overthrow a custom so tenaciously held—took a middle line—drew distinctions and formed theories to elude its meaning. What did feudal kings care for theories? Canonists might refine in their schools on the possible or original meaning of the symbols, and urge that the staff might mean only temporal jurisdiction—that the ring could not mean anything sacramental in the hands of a layman—that symbols were but matters of opinion, and were of little consequence, so that right doctrines on the subject were maintained; doubtless by due limitations and distinctions, a strong, perhaps irresistible, position might be taken on paper, if the war was only on paper. But their distinctions could not alter facts, or force the practical belief of the multitude. Argue and explain as they would, William the Conqueror and the German emperors knew very well what *they* meant by investiture, and the opinion of their age bore them out. When William told Lanfranc that he “would have all the crosiers in England in his own hand,” it was in no meagre and restricted sense that he intended his words to be taken. The Church had to deal not with abstractions and theories, but with a great established practical system, acted out day after day by living men. She was in danger of becoming feudalized in spirit and outward form. Bishoprics and canonries were being made the prey, not of a considerate legislature providing for vested interests, but of the more summary and urgent avarice of spendthrift soldiers. The higher clergy were becoming more and more worldly and profligate. If this was to be checked, it must be by other means, than by explaining away the meaning of investiture. Ivo, bishop of Chartres, who was one of the representatives of this moderate party—Anselm’s friend, and fellow-pupil at Bec—a brave and earnest churchman, too—reasoned plausibly enough in the abstract, that there was a ground on which investiture was defensible\* ;

\* Ivo Carnot. Ep. 60.

—that it was folly to sacrifice religion to a point of positive order. Doubtless, as he said, St. Augustine made great account of the claims of human law;—doubtless the Pharisees in their day “strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel;” probably also he only spoke the truth when he complained that great scandals were left unredressed during the struggle, and that the ministers of the Roman See often behaved very badly; but the question on which all hinged yet remained, whether he or the Pope’s party best understood the feelings and necessities of the time. He only proved—what they had good reason to know as well as he—that they were playing a strong game, were making great sacrifices. It might be, that the object was worth them, and required them; it might be, that it *did* matter whether investiture were granted by this or that symbol. It certainly did so happen that those most interested, the feudal lords, thought so. Ivo, however, himself, as the contest went on, came to see that the point was not so indifferent or secondary, as he had once represented it.\*

It was on this question that, after the death of William Rufus, Anselm carried on his battle against feudalism, under the new king, Henry I. As far as we can see, it was William’s tyranny in driving Anselm out of England, that gave him this new ground. For it was during his exile that the canons against investiture, which hitherto the Popes had not cared to enforce in England, were brought under his notice: and in them he gained a distinct expression for his principles, the want of which he had felt in his resistance to William.

It was a strange destiny which seemed to pursue him. His old enemy was dead, but the conflict was to be renewed at once, with scarce a breathing time, against a fresh one. Dispute and turmoil were still to be his lot. The contrast is indeed a striking one,—it is suggested by the work referred to at the beginning of these remarks, a translation of his two most celebrated works—between Anselm the writer, and Anselm the arch-

\* Id. Ep. 236. De Marca, viii. xx. 5.

bishop. Most great men have one sphere and one function; and accordingly, however diversified their powers or history, every thing about them seems subordinate to this one end. Whatever bears not on it, may be matter for curiosity, or give life and reality to the broad popular notion of them; but it is no essential feature of their portrait. The statesman may be a scholar—the orator have an ambition to shine also as a man of science, or a poet, or, it may be, as a theologian; but their feats or failures alike are absorbed into or drop off from their memory, and will be forgotten before the fashion of their clothes, the look of their face, or the tone of their voice. The law of their course forbids them the coveted place in another fraternity besides their own. Many men indeed have, like St. Athanasius, worked out their peculiar task, *both* by their writings and by the influence of a powerful character during an eventful life; but their actions and writings have been the one the complement and illustration of the other; they have led directly to the same point of sight; they cannot be separated; they are promise and fulfilment, text and commentary. And again, there is sometimes a kind of contrast between men's lives and writings, which arises from a want of harmony between them,—painful or amusing, as the case may be—where the deed is inconsistent with the word, or where a man's feebleness and helplessness of speech, his rude phrase and stammering lips, stand out in ludicrous juxtaposition with his practical clearness and energy. But this is not the contrast we are speaking of in the case of St. Anselm; it is the contrast of different and almost opposite characters in the same person. He is at once the deep and original metaphysician, intensely absorbed with abstract problems, the most baffling to men's reason and trying to their faith—in a rude age and with slender appliances, by the help of St. Augustine and his own thoughts, facing them boldly, and marking out a new and definite course which was to be followed in schools of the Church for centuries: and he is also the active champion and leader of the Church party in the West, who has at once to bear the “stress and burden” of the English primacy in a newly organised and unsettled Church—to carry on the routine and



detail of business—and further, to contend singly against overwhelming odds for an obnoxious principle, to raise a feeling, and form a party, where at starting he was alone. There is a sort of instinct which disjoins and opposes the speculative and the practical, and where it finds the one is surprised to find the other. Such works as the *Monologium* and *Proslodium* seem to fix their author's place. Calm profound *à priori* speculations on the most sacred foundations of all religion,—which issuing from the densest gloom of the Middle Ages, and clothed in their grotesque though scientific diction, arrested the attention of Leibnitz, and are making their writer's name a familiar and respected one in the schools of Germany and France,—they mark him out as belonging to those who live apart, who work for mankind in secret; whose memories, known to the world by their writings, are shrouded from popular curiosity in a sort of mythical vagueness; as a subtle teacher, whose very sentences are weighed with heed:—fitly placed where the great poet has placed him—in the consecrated brotherhood of those, who have especially ministered God's gifts of reason—prophets and preachers, historians and philosophers, men of the schools and the cloister—

“Natan profeta, e 'l Metropolitanò  
Crisostomo, ed Anselmo, e quel Donato,  
Che alla prim' arte degnò poner mano—”

But such an one we do not expect to meet with also on the turbulent stage of English history; in company with the practical, the intrepid, the far-sighted rulers of the multitude—influencing and encountering the powers of the world—the fellow-champion of Hildebrand and Becket—the mate and rival of our Norman kings. The effect is much as if we could imagine that Bishop Butler had fought and suffered for the Church against the Puritans, or Archbishop Laud had written the “*Analogy*.”

Not that there is any great mystery in this, or that Anselm possessed any very wonderful versatility or variety of talent. Well as he acquitted himself when called to act in public, he never changed the character which he had formed in his days

of peace. He always continued to look on his vocation in the world as that of the theologian and the ascetic. In the very tug and crisis of the battle, when standing face to face with what we call the realities of life,—man of business and action as he seemed, he was still in reality the devout and enthusiastic metaphysician. In the hall at Rockingham, or the cloister of Canterbury, or the palace of the Lateran—journeying along the “rugged and ruinous ways” to Italy—as well as in his Campanian monastery, with its mountains and sweet cool air\*, his thoughts without effort disengaged themselves from those absorbing interests which seemed at stake, to ‘fly back to their sacred and remembered spring,’—the deep things of God and the soul. To the last, on his death-bed, it was evident that he considered it his especial work to unravel and communicate high and difficult truths. Nor was he wrong. He was not a statesman, but a monk. The secret of his victory—of his high and noble bearing in the world—of his dignity and self-possession—of his clear-sighted decision—of his firmness and readiness—of that unbroken calm which seemed in so undefinable a way to be about him—the secret of all this lay not in any unusual proportion of those powers which enable men of the world to charm or overawe their fellows, but in his thorough earnestness and self-devotion; in that completeness of character which by dint of continual and genuine self-mastery, has become fitted for every kind of service, because it has really surrendered every end but one. And so when called to a new sphere, he was ready and qualified for it—he at once recognised his place and took it. The scene was changed, but the man was the same. All that he brought to meet it was his former fidelity and patience—his unexcited and commonplace sense of duty—the unconscious heroism which had been growing up in him in secret—*fortezza, ed umiltate, e largo core*—and the vivid and constant certainty that, come what might, he had chosen the winning side. And thus, monk and schoolman as he was, he was not discomfited by the jeers of

\* Eadmer, de Vit. Ans. p. 20.

William Rufus and his court, nor surprised to find himself wresting from the "great King Henry" one of the dearest privileges of feudal royalty.

The fact of this contrast—that there is so little visible connection between Anselm the theologian and Anselm the archbishop—is an instructive one. The cause of "ecclesiastical liberty" was not of interest only to men of statesman-like powers—whose line was action, command, and policy—in whom a great and noble cause, to be battled for in the world against selfishness and power, was of itself sufficient to rouse enthusiasm and enlist their whole souls—for Anselm certainly belonged not to this class. Yet no man fought more sturdily or heartily, with less doubt as to the importance of his quarrel, with greater readiness to risk and suffer every thing for it, than he did; and that, not as a tool, or blind partisan; for no one prompted him, and the court of Rome, as well as the English bishops, left him very much to fight his own battle. In his case, certainly, it was no political ends, however good and high, which moved him. The excitements of the strife, the *certaminis gaudia*, had little charm for him. Nothing can account for his line of conduct, but the calm, ever-present conviction, that those high interests which filled his thoughts in the cell, and before the altar, were in visible and open jeopardy in the feudal palace.

Our readers, however, know something of Anselm, and we need not say more about him: his antagonist we must introduce at somewhat greater length.

Henry Beauclerk was the youngest of the Conqueror's sons, and not the least remarkable of that remarkable family, who collectively present a fair specimen of the race of stirring and adventurous men, of whom they were the head—a race whose banners, in the eleventh century, had been seen in almost every country round the Mediterranean—*gens fere orbem terrarum bello pervagata*—who had met and humbled alike Greek and Latin emperors, soldans of Syria and Africa, and had set up their thrones east, west, and south,—in Russia and England, in Naples, Palermo, and Antioch; at once the unscrupulous persecutors of the Church, and its most enthu-

siastic liegemen and soldiers. The three brothers were all of them restless, daring, and ambitious; full of that wild eagerness of character, which threw itself, with the same reality for the moment, into devotion, crime, and romantic enterprise, and changed at once from merriment and pleasantry into brutal ferocity. But otherwise they were very different. Robert, the model of courtesy, the fiery and dashing knight, who had never met his match in "Paynim land or Christendom," the hero of the first crusade—with a soldier's kindness and frankness, had all a soldier's licence, and, except in war, was a general laughing-stock for his inconceivable weakness and indolence. William, as brave and enterprising, and far more profligate, had none of his feebleness; in his headlong vehemence there was foresight, quick intelligence, and steady decision. Henry had been schooled by his fortunes. In his youth he was the scholar of the family, the man of peace and studious tastes; the frequenter of learned companies; the dabbler in classical quotations and snatches of philosophy; whose attainments, if they were somewhat "tumultuary,"—if, like Charlemagne, he seldom ventured "to read aloud, or to chant, except in an undertone,"\* were yet sufficient—in a prince—to vindicate the "fair clerk's" right to his name. Yet he was no mere idle dilettante or pedant. However loudly his rough brothers might laugh, when they heard the saws about "illiterate kings being crowned asses," with which he used to entertain his practical, but not very accomplished parent, the dealer in proverbs was shrewd and wily withal. His was not a speculative and abstract love of philosophy, which would be contented in the retirement of the bower or cloister; he was not without hopes that England would some day be Plato's blissful commonwealth, where a philosopher should be king, or the king a philosopher. His father was alive to his talents:—"Never mind, child, you will be king yet," was the consolatory prediction with which he bade his son dry his tears,

\* William of Malmsbury copies Eginhard's words about Charlemagne. Will. Malms. I. v. § 390. Eginh. Vit. C. M. §. 26.

when he found him once weeping at some affront from his brothers.

His father's death left him a person of some consequence, either as a friend or a prize. "He had his father's blessing, and his mother's inheritance, and much treasure withal to depend upon"—and with this, though without any territory, he thought he could defy his brothers, and hold the balance between them. His plan was to support Robert; he was the least formidable, and was easily worked upon; Henry's firmness and longsightedness might temper his softness. But Robert, though gentle and weak, knew well the value of money, and could listen to slanderers. Henry made the inexcusable mistake of leaving his secret of strength, his 3000 marks, within Robert's grasp, while he went over into England on his brother's service; when he returned he found that Robert had made use of him in another way,—the 3000 marks were gone irrecoverably—squandered on Robert's mercenaries. His hopes of influence thus rudely put an end to, "perhaps," says William of Malmsbury, "he took it unkindly, but he held his peace." After experiencing more of Robert's ingratitude, he accepted an invitation from William; but William was satisfied when he had got him away from Normandy; and after a year of want and disappointed expectation, he escaped across the channel to Robert, whose flattering tone changed as soon as he was once more in his power. Thus he lived, bandied about from one brother to the other, each disliking him equally, but afraid to trust him with the other. It was in vain that he tried to win Robert's confidence, that he saved Rouen for him, that he tossed traitors over the walls into the Seine, so zealous was he in his cause; Robert requited him by turning him out of the city he had preserved. In the end both brothers joined against him.—"And so," says his historian, "having shown himself loyal and active on behalf of each of them, they plundered the young man of all he had, and trained him up to greater prudence by lack of victuals."

He took to his lesson kindly and learned it well. At length William was killed. Robert was at the time far away.

He had gone some years before to the East. The bravest of the Christian host, he had gained great glory against the infidels; the crown of Jerusalem was pressed upon him, but home and rest were dearer; he was now on his way back, wooing a fair lady in Italy, and refreshing himself after his toils. Meanwhile his quiet brother had been gaining popularity, forming a party, and biding his time in England. The news of William's death brought with it the expectation of universal confusion; most of the court dispersed hurriedly to their homes to prepare for the worst. Henry was on the spot and ready. The day William was killed, he claimed the keys of his treasury: the keeper opposed him, and reminded him that he had sworn homage to Robert. Henry answered by drawing his sword; he was not going to lose his father's sceptre by "frivolous procrastination." Robert's title, after all, was an imperfect one; his father had expressly excluded him from the crown of England; and, any how, it rested with the bishops and great men to accept or refuse him. Personally there were many things against him — his indolent spendthrift ways, his childish feebleness. Above all, he was away; "the great men knew not what had become of him," and England wanted a governor at once. Henry was willing to be king of England; he was a fit man to be a king, resolute and steady, and, except with the riotous companions of King Rufus, popular. Even the Saxons felt kindly towards a born Englishman, a son too of William *the King*: and he was a friend of justice and quiet; his soul abhorred the loud, coarse, impudent profligacy which had been rampant in his brother's palaces. The whole crew of the dead king's companions, male and female, were at once mercilessly chased away; "the use of lights at night restored in the court." He promised a strong and righteous government, fair customs to the crown vassals, to the people the "old laws of King Edward," and liberty to the Church. The clergy and great men unanimously agreed to have Henry. Three days after William's death he was "consecrated to be king" at Westminster, with great "rejoicings

of the people."\* Robert hastened home, but it was too late; his chance was gone, and his place filled by one who could keep it. The smooth, pleasant, clerkly youth, "of fairest form and manners, and most gentyl and free," † who had so assiduously courted his service, and been flouted by him in return so lightly, was now master of the game—a king in good earnest, no trifler with titles, or hero of forays or tilt-yards; and he had not forgotten what he had learned or suffered of Robert. He was still the man of smiles and decencies; he could wait for his object, but not forgive or relent. "Silly Robelin Courte-hose"—he had but to be left to himself, to work out ample vengeance for his brother. He first sold his claim to England for a pension of 3000 marks; but he was a gallant and courteous knight, and could not refuse a lady—at the suit of Henry's queen he gave it up. Robert knew not how to govern his dukedom. Normandy was in wild disorder, and he helpless and listless; it was a sore sight, and Henry took it much to heart; his brother was disgracing himself and ruining a noble province, "playing the monk instead of the count;" he expostulated—"once blandly by words, more than once roughly by war;"—but Robert was incorrigible. Henry was at last prevailed upon—it was very painful, but necessary—to sacrifice his "indiscreet brotherly affection to endangered justice:" there were maxims of Cæsar to justify him;—one after another he won the towns and castles of Normandy. Robert wandered about, deserted, begging his bread; at last he made one desperate effort; it ended in a captivity of thirty years. "He was kept in free custody till the day of his death," says Henry's astute and ironical panegyrist, "by his brother's laudable kindness (*pictate*); for he suffered no evil except solitude, if it could be called solitude where his keepers were all attention to him, and where he had plenty of jollities and dainty dinners."‡ Poor Robert doubtless had a keen relish for "jollities and dainty dinners;" but coupled with "free

\* Ord. Vit. x. c. 14. p. 88. ed. Le Prevost. Will. Malmsh.

† Robert of Gloucester.

‡ Will. Malmsh. §. 389. 395.

custody"—stories too there are of something rougher still, of "strong prison" and blindness;—but even with *free* custody, they could have been but a poor solace to the fiery spirit of the most gallant of the crusaders. He dragged on through the thirty years in miserable fretfulness, and at last—so the story went—in a burst of rage at some fancied insult from Henry—the "dastard clerkling who had outwitted him"—he vowed that he would never taste food again, and died "pining and angry with himself, cursing the day of his birth."\* Dreary finish of his brilliant and gay career; melancholy waste of gallantry and enterprise, of talent, eloquence, and wit—for, for these also Robert was famous in his time. The "clerkling's" revenge was a stern and complete one. Robert survived all his fellow-travellers to Palestine. "Alas," says the old English chronicler, moralising on the change since he fought with them at Antioch and Ascalon, "him had better have been king of the Holy Land;" he refused to be "the highest prince in Christendom when God would, and took to rest;—therefore did God send him rest in prison."

Henry had his difficulties; but he was fully able to cope with them. The line that he had taken—his unmilitary character—his reforms and popular concessions—the prospect of a strict government—his professed sympathy with the clergy and the Anglo-Saxon population—his quiet Saxon queen, with her monastic education and tastes—drew on him the angry contempt of the great Norman nobility. They had been taken by surprise—many of them at least—in electing him. Robert's easy sway was much more suited to their unruly independence. Till after the conquest of Normandy, "both while a youth and as king," says a contemporary, "Henry was held in the utmost contempt." But he was not a king to be despised, as his barons found to their cost: the "Lion of Justice" † could use his fangs and claws on occasion. High aristocratical Montgomerys, and Grentmainils, and De Warennes, might sneer in his presence at sober "Godric Godfadyr and his wife Godiva," ‡ and feel very

\* Matt. Paris, a. 1134, and note to Hearne's Robert of Gloucester, ii. 426.

† John of Salisb. Polycr. vi. 18.

‡ Will. Malmsh. §. 394, 409, 406.



little respect for a king who had a taste for natural history and collected a menagerie at Woodstock—who encouraged his young nobility to puzzle cardinals in logic, instead of upsetting knights in the lists:—he was not put out of temper; he only received their sarcasms with an “ominous laughter” (*formidabiles cachinnos ejiciebat*)—laughter, which, like his praise, was the sure forerunner of mischief—and in due time showed them, either by war, or “modestly and in courts of justice,” that Godric Godfadyr could do other things than amuse himself with his camels and porcupines at Woodstock. But Henry deserves his own praise; he made himself felt in England for good as well as for evil. He at least allowed no oppression but his own. The castles, “filled with devils and evil men,” which were the curse of England in Stephen’s time, were not raised in Henry’s. If the poor felt his severity, they also felt his protection:

“He was in thought, day and night,  
To save poor men from rich men’s unright.”\*

The Saxon chronicler, who records the Leicestershire assize, where the king’s justiciary “hanged more thieves than were ever known before,”—many of them, true men said, very unjustly,—and who complains of the misery of that “heavy year”—“first the wretched people are bereaved of their property, and then are they slain”—speaks probably the voice of the lower orders in his concluding eulogy on Henry. “A good man he was, and there was great dread of him; no man durst do wrong with another in his time. Peace he made for man and beast. Whoso bore his burden of gold and silver, no man durst say ought to him but good.”

His position, in respect of the aristocracy, dictated his Church policy. His jealous and quarrelsome nobility, with their feuds and seigniorial rights, threatened to split up the kingdom into a number of independent principalities like the great fiefs of France. He saw clearly enough that this would be ruinous—that *the thing* for England was to make the crown all-powerful, and next, as far as could be, respect-

\* Robert of Gloucester,

able and popular. And for this he could not spare the Church. To a certain point she was his natural ally—a force, powerful, both from its activity and from its dead weight also, on the side of order. Her higher clergy were an aristocracy of peace, contrasted with the military aristocracy—not, like the barons, hereditary, but continually replenished from the tried servants of the crown, and defenceless if refractory. Moreover, the great want of kings is money, and money was more easily to be drawn from the Church than from the spendthrift and pugnacious barons. Henry was quite content that the Church should be strong and honourable as in the days of his father; he did not mean to seize or farm her bishoprics and abbeys, and had no notion of encouraging disreputable clerks like Ralph Flambard to bring shame on their patron by their impudent profligacy. Almost his first measure was one of justice on this grand delinquent. Ralph, now Bishop of Durham, was seized and shut up in the Tower of London—“the people rejoicing as if a raging lion had been caught:” \*—but he shortly after escaped, to play fresh pranks in Normandy. We cannot dismiss him without giving the account of his escape, from the Norman monk Ordericus. †

“The crafty prelate managed to get forth from the rigour of the prison-house, and by means of friends cunningly contrived his escape. For he was deft and a man of words, and though cruel and fierce tempered, yet was he bountiful withal, and generally of a merry humour, so that to many he was pleasant and right dear. By the king’s order he had daily two shillings to his board, where-with, by the help of his friends, he did disport himself (*tripudiabat*) in the prison, and ordered a noble banquet to be served daily for himself and his guards. On a certain day a rope was brought in to him in a flagon of wine,” (*proh dolus!*—exclaims the shocked librarian of Malmsbury ‡, in his account of the adventure),—“and a dainty feast was made of the bishop’s bounty. The guards ate with him, and were made merry by deep draughts of potent wine; who being exceeding drunk, and snoring carelessly, the bishop fastened the rope to the pillar which was in the middle of the tower window,

\* Anselm. Ep. iv. 2.

† Order. Vit. x. 18.

‡ W. Malmsb. §. 394.

and taking his pastoral staff with him, he slid down the rope. But because he had forgotten to guard his hands with gloves, they were cut to the very bone by the roughness of the rope; and moreover, for that the rope did not reach to the ground, the fat prelate (*corpulentus flamen*) came down with a heavy fall, and being nearly dashed to pieces began to groan most piteously—

His friends, however, were in waiting with horses to convey him to the coast, and he escaped. It was some consolation to the population at large that he had not got off quite scathless.—“If he hurt his arms and scraped the skin off his hands,” says William of Malmsbury, with a chuckle of satisfaction, “little does the people care for that.”

Henry meant in his own way to reform the Church. He was ready to appoint worthy and respectable men to preside over her government—friends and chaplains of his own, discreet, able men of business, who had travelled and been charged with embassies, and learned something of the world, and who by their princely state and magnificence and public spirit would keep up the dignity of the Church and their order. Such were Henry's favourite bishops. Roger, afterwards styled the Great, was a poor chantry priest in a suburb of Caen when he first took Henry's fancy—then a needy ill-used younger brother with a small following—by his expeditious mode of performing divine service; Henry thought he would make a good soldier's chaplain, and took him into his service. Roger proved useful—he kept the purse-strings discreetly; and he rose with his patron's fortunes to be Bishop of Salisbury, one of the most trusted and wealthiest subjects in England. If he was rather more of a man of the world than became a bishop—if he loved riches, and was reputed somewhat free in his life, yet he was known to begin the day with the due religious offices, and his public works were monuments of his taste and liberality. Such another was Robert Bloet, Bishop of Lincoln—a contemporary's recollections of him might almost stand for a sketch of Wolsey's fortunes.

“In my boyhood and youth,” he says, “when I used to see the glory of our Bishop Robert—his knights so gallant, his pages of noblest birth, his stud of the greatest value, his gold and gilt plate, the profusion of his table, the state of his attendants, his wardrobe of purple and fine linen, I could conceive no greater happiness. How could I feel otherwise, when every one, even those who used to lecture in the schools on despising the world, paid their court to him, and he himself, regarded as the father and lord of all, most dearly loved and embraced the world. But when I grew up, I heard tell of foulest reproaches cast in his teeth, which would have half killed me, beggar as I was, to have endured before so great an audience; and so I began to hold that inestimable blessing at a cheaper rate.

“And finally I will tell what happened to him before his death,—he, the justiciary of all England, the terror of every one, was in the last year of his life twice sued by the king through some petty justice, and twice cast with every circumstance of indignity. His distress was such, that while with him as his archdeacon at dinner, I have seen him burst into tears; and when asked the reason, ‘My attendants,’ he said, ‘once used to be dressed in costly stuffs: now fines to the king, whose favour I have ever studied, have reduced them to lamb skins.’ And so completely did he despair of the king’s friendship, that, when told of the high terms in which the king had spoken of him, he said, with a sigh, ‘The king never praises any of his servants whom he does not mean to ruin utterly.’ For king Henry, if I may say so, bore a grudge bitterly, and was very hard to fathom (*nimis inscrutabilis*).

“A few days after he fell down in a fit of apoplexy at Woodstock, and died.”\*

But, further, the king was a man of learning, and he would not be without learned bishops also; he brought Gilbert the Universal, “whose equal in science was not to be found between England and Rome,” from the schools of Nevers to be Bishop of London. Gilbert justified his patron’s choice, and moreover left at his death immense wealth, which Henry seized—“the bishop’s boots also, filled with gold and silver, being carried to the Exchequer.” But at the same time Henry could fully appreciate a higher and stricter character,

\* Henry of Huntingdon, de Contemptu Mundi, in Wharton, ii. 694.

and it was quite to his taste to have the metropolitan see filled by such a man as Anselm.

Such was Henry Beauclerk and his policy. On coming to the throne he at once recalled the archbishop. Anselm found things changed; from William's reckless tyranny, England had passed under the rule of a long-sighted statesman, who was bent on crushing licence; a man above the gross vices of his time—utterly despising the fashionable taste for military glitter and fame—professedly a man of peace, but not afraid of war; the avowed patron and friend of the Church. The prospect seemed hopeful; Anselm's plans of reform in the English Church might now be carried into effect; Henry, from his gentler temper, was more likely to enter into them than his father. But very few days passed before formidable difficulties began to show themselves. Anselm, however, threw himself heart and soul into Henry's interest; mediated between him and his suspicious subjects; received in the name of the nobility of the realm, and the great body of the people, the king's plighted hand, and his promise to govern by "just and holy laws;"\* accompanied him to the field when Robert invaded England; kept the changeable and faithless barons to their duty, and induced Robert to consent to a reconciliation. In the only critical moment of Henry's reign, he owed his fortunes mainly to the archbishop.

The difficulties alluded to arose from the question of investiture. Henry, following the analogy of lay fiefs, required that Anselm should receive his archbishopric afresh from the hands of his new lord, and do homage for it, according to the usage of former kings. As we have already said, these feudal customs had been hitherto exercised without protest in England; Anselm himself had received investiture from William Rufus. But the case was now altered; he had assisted at councils, where the canons against investiture were confirmed and republished; where those who gave and those who received it were alike excommunicated. He had now but one course—to obey the canons, and refuse Henry's demand. His experience, too, in his last dispute, had taught him the real importance of the question, and he had made up

\* Eadm. Hist. Nov. p. 59., who is the authority for what follows.

his mind, while supported by the Pope, to hazard every thing in trying it.

The archbishop's objection to investiture was a sufficiently provoking derangement to Henry's plans. To give up what his predecessors had possessed was a check at starting; to resist, was to come into collision with the body he wished of all things to have on his side; with Anselm, too, an indomitable fearless old man, a confessor in the freshness of triumph. Henry could not yet afford to break with him openly, but he had not the slightest intention of yielding the point—"it was worth half his realm." Negotiation with the Pope opened a hopeful prospect of delay; it was a course to which the archbishop could not object; if it gained nothing else, time of itself was well worth gaining. Anselm knew well that this was "mere trifling;" but his position was, obedience to superior authority, and besides, he did not wish to bring suspicion on his loyalty. It was settled, therefore, that matters should remain in abeyance, till an answer could be received from Rome.

Henry stood on the "usages of the realm;" he was doing no more than all his predecessors, Saxon and Norman, had done—requiring no more than Anselm himself had yielded to William Rufus. He was anxious, he said, to honour the Roman Church as his father had done—to profit by the presence and counsel of his archbishop—but, come what might, his "usages," the honour of his crown, must remain inviolate; their surrender could not be a question with him; he did not send to Rome to ask them as a concession from the Pope, but to see what could be done to enable Anselm with a good conscience to submit to them. If the Church decrees could not be dispensed with, he regretted it; he was loth to depart from the Pope's obedience; but whatever resolution Anselm or the Pope might adopt, he must abide by the "usages."

Henry had this strong advantage, that he could say that the Church claim was a new one. He could seem to others and to himself to be appealing against a theory, to realities and immemorial practice. "Saw you ever, since you were

children, ring or staff given away in England, except by the king? Whom can you conceive doing it but him?" Long before Norman times—in the days of King Edward—back to the old time of Charlemagne, kings had used their right, and bishops never resisted: why should this objection be now for the first time thought of? If the usage was wrong now, why was it ever permitted? Why should Henry, the friend and protector of the Church, be the first to forfeit his privileges? What was this new claim but an open encroachment, a lowering of temporal honour? and what were Church decrees, that they should, at this time of day, pretend to meddle with what all men accounted most sublime and great—the glory of the king's majesty?

Anselm did innovate certainly: loyal, unworldly man as he was, he was giving a bold and rude shake to Henry's royalty. But time had been innovating before him—time and feudalism had been encroaching on the Church—and if she was to be even with them, she must bring up her way at once, and therefore,—though principles as old as Christianity were appealed to,—abruptly. Quietly, silently, for years and years before his day, society with its feelings and opinions had been going through its unceasing flux, changing, drifting, settling anew from day to day; what had at length come of all this was, that kings and nobles thought that bishoprics were their own, to do what they pleased with; what seemed likely was, that soon the rest of the world, lay and clerical, would come to think so too. These venerable, long endured "customs," had been hinting, insinuating, at last plainly telling men so; leave them alone a little longer, and their evidence would be irresistible. Since they were fresh and young, every thing around them was altered. For our own part, we are not very much disposed to quarrel, in its own age and circumstances, with what it would be a convenient anachronism to call the Erastianism of Charlemagne. His was, on the whole, a real, earnest Christian government, doing, according to its light, a great religious work. If he meddled, in a high and summary way, in most Church matters, it was with the hearty zeal of one who felt her service to be in truth his business and mis-

sion, and his highest honour. But Charlemagne, with his capitularies collected from the canons of councils, and his "missi" travelling all over Europe to execute them, was among things departed and obsolete, known only to antiquarians, or dimly celebrated by minstrels and romancers, fabling of the majesty and pomp—*μεγαλοσχήμονα κάρχαιο-πρεπή τιμάν*—of the old Christian emperor. The living ruling powers of Europe were of a different mould—haughty and proud lords of the world—soldiers and hunters—"fathers of the hare and high deer;" at best wise and cunning statesmen: a new dynasty of force, forgetful of the Power more than human—minister of blessing, teacher of wisdom and mysteries—the child of heaven as well as earth, which had in old time upheld their thrones, and which they were recompensing now with insults and bonds:

*νέοι γὰρ οἰακονόμοι  
κρατοῦσ' Ὀλύμπου· νεοχμοῖς δὲ δὴ νόμοις Ζεὺς ἀθέτως κρατύνει.  
τὰ πρὶν δὲ πελώρια νῦν ἄιστοῖ.*

It was time for the Church to claim what she could no longer leave in their hands, if she might yet dream of her old functions. Whatever disadvantages she might have entailed on herself, she had at least a right, had she but courage, to save her divine commission and powers from being accounted mere human gifts for human purposes. Usages of England—the honour of kings—were serious things, and not to be wantonly tampered with. Henry, practical man that he was, was right in thinking that they were not to be sacrificed to a theory. But there were serious and practical things in the world besides King Henry's usages; there were other great works going on, other deep matters filling men's thoughts, besides the establishment of his power: the Church, too, had her ends, her customs, laws, dignities, not on paper, but in the living world, which to some men were too precious to be sacrificed even to King Henry's glory and policy. She, too, had to preserve, and more than this, to restore.

But to return to our narrative: Henry's envoys returned, probably with all the success he expected. The Pope was



inflexible, but his long letter against investitures had as little effect on the king. Henry, without taking the slightest notice of it, turned upon Anselm, coaxing, threatening, bullying, sending message after message through the bishops, with the object, if he would not submit, of getting him out of England. He was loth to repeat in earnest his brother's rough game; it was his way to "worry rather with words than with arms;"\* —but he tried to intimidate. Anselm, however, was immovable;—"he could not leave his church—he had work to do there, and there he must abide till forced from it." At last a new embassy was proposed;—men were to go of higher note,—perhaps the Pope would be moved, when he was told, that, unless he relented, Anselm must be driven out of England, and the Roman See lose the obedience of the whole realm, with the advantage which it yearly derived from it. Anselm was to send his representatives, if it were but to testify to the king's determination—a trusted monk, named Baldwin, and another. The king's commissioners were three bishops; the chief was William Rufus's old envoy, Gerard, now Archbishop of York—a man of slippery doubtful ways, and unhappy end,—shrewd and plausible, and with much reputation for learning. "No man in England might be of more use to the Church," writes Anselm to the Pope, "and I hope in God he has the will, as he has the power."† But he was an ambitious and unsteady churchman, as easily tempted as he was easily frightened. He had a most sensitive jealousy of the primacy of Canterbury, and was not very nice in displaying it. On one occasion, when the English bishops met in synod—so went the story among the canons of York—and a seat of solitary dignity raised above the rest was prepared for the Archbishop of Canterbury, Gerard, in high dudgeon, kicked it over, with an oath "in the vulgar tongue"—*Dei odium ei qui sic paraverat vulgariter imprecans*—and would not take his seat except as co-ordinate in honour. The other two were Robert of Chester and Herbert of Norwich, men of very questionable respectability.

\* Robert of Gloucester.

† Ep. iii. 48.

They returned with fresh letters for the king and the archbishop: and the nobility and higher clergy, were immediately summoned to meet in London. They found that the king refused to communicate the contents of his letter, but again required unqualified submission from Anselm, under pain of expulsion. To Anselm the Pope wrote, that he had peremptorily refused to comply with Henry's demands.

"Only a few days before," he said, "it had been again decreed in council, that churches and church benefices were not to be received by the clergy from lay hands. This practice was the root of simony—a temptation to the clergy to pay court to power. Princes must not come between the Church and her offices, nor make themselves channels of what is really Christ's gift, and has his stamp upon it." "For," he continues, "as through Christ alone the first door is opened by baptism into the Church, and the last by death into life eternal—so through Christ alone should the door-keeper of his fold be appointed, by whom not for the hire of the flock, but for Christ's sake, the sheep may go in and out till they are led to everlasting life."

So wrote Paschal to the archbishop; the letter was handed about and eagerly read; and in a few days it came out that he had written to the king to the same effect. Matters seemed to have come to a crisis, when the three bishops came forward to make an important communication—they had received, they said, privately and secretly from the Pope, a verbal message to Henry, to assure him, "that so long as he acted as a good king, and appointed religious prelates, the Pope would not enforce the decrees against investiture; but that he was obliged to hold another language in public, and that he could not give the privilege in writing, lest other princes should use it to the prejudice of the Church." This startling announcement, to which the king's envoys pledged their faith and honour as bishops, raised a storm of debate in the assembly. Anselm's representatives had heard nothing of the message, which was inconsistent with everything which had passed in public between them and the Pope. Baldwin especially was indignant—the bishops, he said, were breaking their canonical allegiance, trifling with the

Pope's honour. The altercation became hot and fast—Baldwin insisted that nothing could supersede the authority of documents sealed with the Pope's signet—the king's party were fierce and insulting in their rejoinder—"The word of three bishops ought to weigh more than bescribbled sheep skins with a lump of lead at the bottom, backed by the testimony of two paltry monks, who, when they renounced the world, lost all weight as evidence in business of the world." "But this is no secular matter," said Baldwin. "Sir," was the answer, "we know you to be discreet and a man of business, yet still even order requires that we should set more by the evidence of an archbishop and two bishops than by yours." "But what becomes of the evidence of the letters?" "When we refuse to receive the evidence of monks against bishops," was the sneering reply, "how could we receive that of sheep skins?" A cry of disgust and indignation burst from the monks who were looking on. "Woe, woe!" they exclaimed, "are not the Gospels written on sheep-skins?"

Thus things were more embarrassed than ever, and the archbishop thrown into a most painful state of uncertainty. What was he to believe, the Pope's letters or the solemnly pledged word of the bishops? It was plain that things could not go on without a fresh embassy, and a fresh embassy accordingly was sent. Anselm wrote, detailing the transaction, and earnestly begging for some clear and definite directions how he was to act.

"I am not afraid," he wrote, "of banishment, or poverty, or torments, or death:—for all these, God comforting me, my heart is ready, in obedience to the Apostolic See, and for the liberty of my mother the Church—all I ask is certainty, that I may know without doubt, what course I ought to hold by your authority."\*

It may occur perhaps to some of our readers, did the bishops after all speak the truth? Was this a trick and manœuvre of the Pope to keep on good terms with England

\* Ep. iii. 73.

during his struggle with the emperor? The supposition seems to us to be quite negatived, both by Paschal's personal character and by the subsequent events. Paschal certainly was not a great man: he was diplomatic and wavering, and dull to the claims of his own cause except when at his very door; but still he was in earnest, and there is no reason to suspect him of an act of such incredible folly, which could not be kept secret, and must prove ruinous to his influence and cause whenever known. Further, he at once and most solemnly denied it, and excommunicated the bishops, without any protest as far as appears on their part; on the contrary, both Eadmer and William of Malmsbury\*, take it for granted that at the time they were writing, the bishops' story was a notorious and confessed falsehood: nor is there any thing in the character of the envoys to redeem their credit.

During the absence of the new embassy, things were taking a turn in England, which Henry could scarcely have expected. He had early in his reign nominated one William Gifford, who had repeatedly held the office of chancellor under the preceding kings, to the bishopric of Winchester. Gifford refused to receive it, as it must come to him from the hands of the king; but on Anselm's return to England, the clergy and people of the see earnestly petitioned the archbishop that they might have Gifford for bishop, and he was at last prevailed upon to take the office. But he still would not consent to receive the ring and staff from Henry. However, for what reason it does not appear, the king connived at his receiving investiture in the cathedral from the hands of the archbishop. But his consecration was deferred. Subsequently to this, on the strength of the report brought from Rome by the bishops, Henry had invested two of his chaplains with the bishoprics of Salisbury and Hereford, and he now called on Anselm to consecrate the three bishops elect. Anselm remonstrated—he was ready to consecrate Gifford, but as to the other two, it had been agreed between him and the king, that till the Pope's decision had been finally

\* Gest. Reg. § 417.

ascertained, he at least should not be expected to sanction lay investiture. Henry swore that he should consecrate all or none: he still refused, and the king ordered Gerard of York to consecrate. This was a gross infringement of the metropolitan rights of Canterbury: a point keenly felt at the time; but Gerard was ready. The tide, however, was turning. To Henry's surprise and indignation, the bishop elect of Hereford, a member of his court and the queen's chancellor, brought back the ring and crosier to the king, and resigned them, expressing his sorrow that, as things then stood, he had ever consented to take them: to go on, and receive consecration from Gerard, would be receiving a curse instead of a blessing. He of course was disgraced, and obliged to leave the court. But he was not alone. On the day of consecration, at the very last moment, when every thing was prepared for the ceremony, and the church was thronged with spectators, Gifford's conscience misgave him; he interrupted the service, and refused Gerard's benediction. Confounded and indignant, the officiating bishops retired, without finishing the ceremony for Roger, who had been appointed to Salisbury. "At this a shout burst from the whole multitude, who had come together to see the issue; they cried out with one voice, that William was for the right—that the bishops were no bishops, but perverters of justice." With changed countenance, and burning with rage at the insult, they rushed to the king to make their complaint. Gifford was summoned to Henry's presence; menaces on all sides were showered on him. "There he stood," says Eadmer, "but he would not flinch from the right; so he was despoiled of all he had, and driven from the realm." Anselm protested strongly and repeatedly, of course without effect; yet Henry had learnt what he had scarcely looked for. If the court clergy were becoming infected with Anselm's views of Church and State, and were beginning to turn on their patron, it might be time to think of some rougher and more summary way of finishing the dispute.

Henry, the most dissembling of men, was visibly showing his impatience; it was at all events necessary to get Anselm

out of England—out of sight, and cut off from communication with the clergy. On some trifling pretext, the king suddenly made his appearance at Canterbury: his real intention was by some means or other to drive the archbishop away. A letter had by this time come from the Pope—the king refused to see it. Anselm, on the other hand, dared not break the seal, for its contents might involve an immediate rupture; and further, to avoid the suspicion of forgery, he wished it to come sealed into the king's hands. But Henry had come to settle matters—he must have his own, he said, whether the Pope agreed or not: “let every one who loved him know for certain, that whoever refused him his paternal customs was his enemy.” Rumours were becoming rife among those most in his confidence, of intentions of violence: the quarrel was waxing hot, and the future looked dismal and full of danger. “The very nobles,” says Eadmer, “on whose advice Henry depended, I have seen in tears, at the thought of the mischief which was at hand.” Special prayers even were offered up for the crisis. But in the midst of this excitement, Henry all at once changed his tone: he took up the language of entreaty—“would the archbishop go to Rome himself, and try his influence there”? Anselm answered that if his peers thought it right for him to go, he was ready, “as God should give him strength;” but that “even if he should reach the threshold of the apostles, he could do nothing to the prejudice of the liberty of the Church, or his own honour—he could but bear witness to facts.” The reply was that nothing more was required—the king's commissioner would be there also, to plead for his master.

Four days after this had been settled, he was on horseback, leaving Canterbury to cross again the length of Europe, a feeble time-worn man on the verge of seventy, but fearless and cheerful as ever. The intense heat of the season stopped his progress, and gave him a month of quiet in his old home at Bec; but he was on his way again before the summer was over. Henry had now gained his point in having got Anselm out of England—he had no wish that he should be seen and heard at Rome; it would be much more to his pur-

pose if Anselm could be detained in Normandy or France. We find incidentally from one of Anselm's letters that the king had suddenly become anxious about "his archbishop's" health, and the fatigues of so long and rough a journey; he strongly recommended the archbishop to spare himself—to halt somewhere, and transact his business at Rome by envoys. Anselm's answer is dated from the passes of Mont Cenis; he is thankful for the king's care for him, and assurances of his esteem, but he was too far on his way now to think of turning back—he must go on to his journey's end.\*

At Rome he found his old companion in these transactions, William Warelwast; and in due course the subject was brought before the Roman court. Warelwast urged the old ground of usage; moreover the English kings were distinguished for their munificence to the Holy See, and he knew for certain, he said, that if investitures were not allowed, it would be so much the worse for the Romans, and they would be sorry for it when too late. He had his friends in the Curia; his words were received with encouragement—many of the cardinals thought that the "wishes of so great a man as the king of England were on no consideration to be overlooked." Anselm was silent; Paschal also had not spoken, and Warelwast was emboldened. "Let what will be said," he exclaimed with vehemence, "know all present, that if it should cost him his realm, King Henry will not lose investitures." "Sayest thou that King Henry will not give up investitures?" was the quick rejoinder,—"nor, before God, will Pope Paschal, to save his head, let him have them:"—"the sound of which words exceedingly dismayed William." He obtained however for Henry a personal exemption for a time from excommunication. Anselm was ordered to hold communion with him, but not with any of the other offenders, who were to remain under excommunication, till the archbishop saw grounds to take off the sentence.

Warelwast worked hard, after Anselm had left Rome, to gain some further concessions; but all he could get was a

\* Ep. iii. 76, from the valley of Maurienne.

kind of coaxing letter from the Pope to Henry, to smooth down the sternness of refusal with compliment and congratulation, about his successes, and his "distinguished and glorious consort," and the son she had just brought him—"whom we have been told you have named William, after your illustrious father:"—appealing to his devotional feelings, assuring him that he was parting with nothing really valuable, and promising him on his compliance to indulge him with any favour he might ask, besides the apostolic absolution for himself and his queen, and the protection of the Roman Church for his son. The Pope scarcely knew King Henry.

Warelwast overtook the archbishop's company, who were escorted through the Apennines by the great Countess Matilda; and travelled with him as far as Lyons. There he delivered to him a message from Henry—the last expedient, if the Roman negotiations failed. "The king earnestly desired his return to England, if he was willing to do all that his predecessors had done to former kings." "Is that all?" said Anselm. "I speak to a man of understanding," was the reply. It was intelligible enough; and accordingly Anselm took up his abode a second time with the Archbishop of Lyons, and Warelwast returned to England.

Thus was Anselm, a second time, cast out to eat the bread of strangers—thrown aside, and forced to sit by, checked, humbled, and sick at heart, while the great powers in Church and State exchanged their messages of civility, and carried on the game for which he was suffering, by the most approved rules of political manœuvre. Anselm felt most strongly the necessity of releasing the Church from the feudal yoke; but his line from the first had been, not his own view of the matter, but simply obedience to the law of the Church, as soon as it came before him, and to the Pope. Only let the Pope speak out, and he was ready, (as he showed afterwards,) to abide by his decision. "You tell me," says he in one of his letters to England, with unwonted sharpness, "that they say that I forbid the King to grant investitures. Tell them that they lie. It is not I who forbid the king; but having heard the Vicar of the Apostles in a great council excommunicate



all who give or receive investiture, I have no mind to hold communion with excommunicates, or to become excommunicate myself."\* But Paschal's policy was a cruel and embarrassing one. With his hands full at home, he was afraid of the king of England, the son of him who had kept Gregory VII. at bay; his words were strong, but he shrunk from acting. He had confirmed and republished, most emphatically and without exception, the canons against investiture, and solemnly declared his intention to enforce them. Henry from the first had held but one language—he wanted no compromise: "nothing in the world should make him give up his usages." And yet Paschal had allowed, or rather encouraged, embassy after embassy in endless succession to come with its hollow compliments and unvarying message, and to return, as it was intended, with a letter of expostulation, or, at most, a distant menace. Nothing could better suit with Henry's wishes and policy: and thus Anselm, whom the Roman court was well content to see the champion of ecclesiastical liberty, was in reality left to fight his battle, as he best could, alone—with words indeed of respect and praise, but with little hearty aid, and with instructions which, he complained, only embarrassed him.

And in England, friends and foes alike tried his patience, teasing, mistaking, and criticising him. The king, greatly relieved by his absence, sent fresh embassies to Rome, and seized the archbishop's revenue for his own use, as if he had been a convicted traitor: "yet," says Eadmer, "with consideration and tenderness." At the same time in his letters he was as bland and smooth as ever;—so full of respect and attachment to Anselm, so grieved that he could not be with him as Lanfranc had been for many years with his father. Meanwhile he had no objection that Anselm should be allowed what was "convenient" out of the revenues of Canterbury.† But Anselm's questions to him as to his intentions for the future were asked in vain. Then, on the other hand, Queen Matilda—"good queen Molde"—amiable, warm-hearted,

\* Ep. iii. 100.

† Ep. iii. 94.

religious lady, could not live without her venerable confessor. She could not understand why he should stand out so obstinately against her lord and master's kind wishes. She argued with the archbishop "to soften what with all respect she must call his iron heart." She incessantly importuned him, with a lady's impatience of reasons and means, to find "some way by which neither he might do wrong, nor the rights of majesty be infringed."\* His poor monks too at Canterbury were sore beset by the king's exactions; they were perplexed in conscience, jealousies and complaints were becoming rife, every thing was getting into disorder; they wanted their head among them, and their very loyalty and affection made them fretful and peevish, that in spite of the king he did not return. Letter after letter he had to write to Prior Ernulf, and to "his dearest brethren and children," quieting their fears, exhorting them to manly endurance, soothing their pettishness, cheering them with hopes of the future—remembering especially, in his characteristic way, the young boys and children, and sending messages to them, "not to forget what they had heard from him." Himself the greatest sufferer, all looked to him to receive their complaints, to keep up their spirits, to throw himself into their difficulties, and point out a clear way out of them. Distrust, irritation, perplexity, all found their way to his ears. The sufferings and scandals of the day were all laid at his door—thrown in his teeth by ill-nature, gossip, or impatient zeal. "Was he so holy that he could not do as Lanfranc had done?" "Was he such a coward as to fly from his post at the word of one William?" "How could he bear the thoughts of the judgment seat, and the souls which he might have rescued by his presence in England?"†—Such were the questions addressed to him by his own party. Critics of another sort charged him with "letting wicked clerks invade and lay waste the Church without rising up against them," while—what was only less mischievous and culpable than his negligence—he was depriving the king of his rights.‡ The

\* Ep. iii. 96.

† Eadm. p. 69. Ep. iii. 90., iv. 44.

‡ Ep. iii. 100.

trouble which he endured shows itself in his correspondence, in the quiet nervous plainness of language which marks struggling but repressed vexation. His great comfort during these years of exile was the steady attachment of Gundulf, Bishop of Rochester. He was not a man to take a lead or throw much weight into either scale in a contest like the present; but in him the archbishop had a friend who had long loved and revered him—in whom he could place most implicit confidence; a man of plain good sense, whose unpretending yet active service, in matters of routine business, he could always count on.

At length, after waiting a year and a half at Lyons, Anselm resolved to act on his own responsibility. The king of course showed no intention of yielding, or of giving up the archiepiscopal revenues which he had seized. The utmost the Pope would do, after all the delay, was to excommunicate by name the king's advisers, the chief of whom was the crafty Earl of Mellent. The king's sentence was delayed, so he wrote Anselm, "because another embassy (the second since Anselm had left Rome) was expected." "On receiving this letter," says Eadmer, "Anselm saw that it was useless waiting at Lyons for help from Rome, especially as he had repeatedly sent agents and letters to the Pope about the settlement of this business, and up to this time nothing was vouchsafed to him, save from time to time a promise of something, held out by way of consolation." For the third time he had called upon Henry to restore the lands of Canterbury. "The cause is not mine, but God's, entrusted to me, and I fear to delay long to cry to God. Force me not, I pray you, to cry sorrowfully and reluctantly, 'Arise, O God, and judge thou thy cause.'"\* Henry had returned no answer save his usual smooth evasions—*blandientem sibi dilationem*: and Anselm then resolved to approach the borders of Normandy and fulfil his threat.

This alarmed Henry: an excommunication from Anselm at this time would have been a serious embarrassment to him.

\* Ep. iii. 95.

He had enemies enough on all sides looking out for an opportunity of attacking at advantage a power "which was not loved over much," *potestatem non adeo amatam*,—which threatened or had injured them. And he was besides on the point of attempting the conquest of Normandy. His sister the Countess of Blois mediated, and a conference was arranged between him and the archbishop at a castle called L'Aigle. Henry was all respect and complaisance,—expressed the greatest delight at meeting Anselm, and would always go himself to the archbishop's quarters, instead of sending for him. The result was that the revenues of the see were given up, and Anselm restored to the king's favour.

But things were far from being settled. Henry was not a man to yield while a single chance remained to be tried. The old question was still open; there must be fresh communications with Rome, which were put off as long as possible. Meanwhile Anselm could not return to England. Henry made the most of the interval. He was just at this time in pressing need of money for his war in Normandy: and the Church of course did not escape, "in the manifold contributions, which never ceased, before the king went over to Normandy, and while he was there, and after he came back again."\* Henry had some skill in inventing, on such emergencies, new "*foris facta*"—matters for fine and forfeiture—questions for the "*Curia Regis*" to settle between him and his lieges. On this occasion he was seized with a zeal for Church discipline. Many of the parochial clergy were living in disobedience to the canons of a late synod at London, which had forbidden clerical marriage: "this sin the king could not endure to see unpunished." So, to bring the offenders to their duty, of his own mere motion, he proceeded to mulct them heavily. The tax, however, proved not so productive as he had anticipated; and therefore, changing his mind, he imposed the assessment on the whole body of the parochial clergy, innocent as well as guilty, throughout the kingdom. Anselm expostulated; the offending clergy ought

\* Saxon Chron.

to be punished, he said, not by the officers of the Exchequer, but by their bishops. Henry, in his reply, is much surprised at the archbishop's objections; he thought he was only doing his work for him, labouring in his cause; but he would see to it; "however, whatever else had happened, the archbishop's people had been left in peace."—But as to the mass of the clergy, seizures, imprisonment, and every kind of annoyance, had enforced the tax-gatherer's demands. Two hundred priests went barefooted in procession, in alb and stole, to Henry's palace, "with one voice imploring him to have mercy upon them;" but they were driven from his presence—"the king perhaps was busy." They then, clothed with "confusion upon confusion," besought the intercession and good offices of the queen: she was moved to tears at their story, but she was afraid to interfere in their behalf. And what is a still greater proof of Henry's tyranny, the court party of the clergy, and, among them, the excommunicated bishops, were at last beginning to turn their eyes towards Anselm. A letter was sent to him about this time, signed by several of the bishops, entreating him to return, as the only means of remedying the misery of the English Church. "We have waited for peace, but it has departed far from us. Laymen have broken in even to the altar. . . Thy children," they continue, "will fight with thee the battle of the Lord; and if thou art gathered to thy fathers before us, we will receive of thy hand the heritage of thy labours. Delay then no longer; thou hast now no excuse before God; we are ready not only to follow, but to go before thee, if thou command us. . . for *now* we are seeking in this cause, not what is ours, but what is the Lord's." Among the names attached to this letter are those of Gerard of York, Herbert of Norwich, and Robert of Chester.

At length the envoys returned from Rome with Paschal's final instructions to Anselm. He was firm in prohibiting investiture, but yielded the point of homage. "We must stoop," he wrote to Anselm, "to raise the fallen; but though in doing so we are bent, and appear to be falling, we do not

really lose our uprightness.”\* Anselm felt as strongly about homage as about investiture; but it was his duty to obey, and he prepared to do so. He was long detained in Normandy by a desperate illness; for his health, never strong, was now completely broken by anxiety and hardship. Henry began to fear that he should after all lose the credit of his reconciliation and reluctant concessions, and should have to bear the odium of having driven a man, whose character and prolonged sufferings had been year after year rousing more and more the sympathy of England and France, to die in exile. But Anselm recovered, and in the autumn of 1106 returned to England. A further delay of a year took place before matters were adjusted. Henry was during part of this time in Normandy, where the decisive battle of Tinchebrai placed his brother Robert and his dominions in his power; and later, the presence of Paschal at the council of Troyes gave the king a new pretext for postponement. At length, on the first three days of August, 1107, a great council was held in London, where the subjects in question were debated between Henry and the bishops, the archbishop not being present. A party among the bishops still held out for the old usages, but they were overruled. Henry, in the presence of Anselm, and in a larger assembly, to which the commons were admitted, solemnly “allowed and ordained that no one should hereafter for ever receive investiture of bishopric or abbey by ring and crosier from the king, or any lay hand;” and Anselm agreed not to refuse consecration to bishops or abbots, who had done homage to the king for their benefices.

So ended Anselm’s long battle, just soon enough to give him a short breathing time, before he was called away. And now what good came of the result? Was it a victory? Was it worth the gaining?

Dr. Lingard thinks cheaply of it;—“on the whole, he says, “the Church gained little by the compromise. It might check, but it did not abolish the principal abuse. If Henry

\* Ep. iii. 90.

surrendered an unnecessary ceremony, he still retained the substance. The right he assumed of nominating bishops and abbots remained unimpaired."

This is an easy view of the subject, and perhaps a convenient one, when writing in the nineteenth century on behalf of churchmen of the twelfth. It may produce a better impression of them to underrate their claims, and what they achieved; to represent Anselm as, "in the true spirit of conciliation, giving up part of his pretensions," and treat the king's reluctant submission as the mere "surrender of an unnecessary ceremony." But the position is scarcely tenable. The Church of those days did aim at, did gain, did use more power, than Dr. Lingard would imply. Investiture was held too pertinaciously, to have been a mere "unnecessary ceremony," to have been given up without defeat. What Anselm did—what all parties then felt to be a triumph—was, *to break the prescription of feudalism*: a prescription which delivered up the Church, bound hand and foot, to the will of rulers, who could no longer be trusted; against whose corruption and usurpation there was no ordinary remedy. The dangerous tendencies of the day were, not completely indeed, but in a real and marked manner, checked. It was settled that the Church was not irrevocably bound up with the doctrines of the feudal law. When Henry gave up investiture, he broke in, as he truly felt, on a great system; he surrendered what not merely *reminded* the Church of his power over her, but what actually, as things were then, *gave him a title* to command unqualified obedience from the clergy, and made resistance to his will treason. Homage indeed remained—a very solemn form of surrender of "life and limb, and earthly worship;" but it remained broken off from the other ceremony with which it had been so long connected, without meaning, or forced into a new one—an anomaly, a mere form of common fealty, a memorial of power lost—an engagement, which in its old stringent shape, the common lawyers of succeeding reigns came to see was "inconvenient," in a "man of religion, for that he hath professed himself to be

only the man of God."\* This, almost more than the question of nomination, was the vital point to establish. Even if elections had remained as they had been, it would have been a victory to carry it. But, in truth, the king's *exclusive* right of nomination was, naturally and of course, very much affected also. For where the State recognises the Church, the election of her rulers, even if popular in theory, cannot but be the result of mixed influences: no practical man in the eleventh or twelfth century dreamed of excluding altogether the king's voice—the question was one of checks and counterbalances, however at times it might be strongly and nakedly stated. Whatever therefore weakened the king's hold on the bishops as mere feudal vassals, weakened also his claim to exclusive nomination, and let in, in varying measure, the influence of the Church. The claim, indeed, even in William the Conqueror's time, seems never to have been more than a customary act of power, without any such pretext of legal consistency as the claim of investiture; it was a claim much like that of a great landholder, or borough-proprietor, to return his member. But early in Henry's reign, we hear of the form of election by the clergy and people †; that is, the acknowledged form, dormant apparently under the despotism of the preceding kings, revived of itself, when Henry, in his early and unsettled days, promised liberty to the Church. His concession of investitures would practically have the same effect, and in a still greater degree. And it is probably to this practical effect, not settled by formal stipulation, because the right was not denied in theory, that Eadmer refers when he says of Henry ‡, that when he gave up investiture, he also left the customs of his predecessors, and no longer elected

\* Litt. ii. s. 86. v. Coke, who quotes the lawyers from Glanville (H. II.) downwards.

† Gerard of York (Anselm. Ep. iv. 2., comp. Anselm's letter, Eadm. p. 80.), Roger of Salisbury (Rudborne in Wharton, i. 274.), William Gifford (Eadm. p. 64.).

‡ De Vit. S. Anselm, p. 25.; Anselm. Ep. ad Pasch. (iii. 181.) in Eadm. H. N. p. 78. "In personis eligendis nullatenus propria utitur voluntate, sed religiosorum se penitus committit consilio."—So Peter of Blois, in his Continuation of Ingulph, p. 126., "Electiones praelatorum omnibus collegiis libere concessit."



prelates at his own will (*per se elegit*), an account which is confirmed by a letter of Anselm to the Pope: while the influence which he still retained may account for William of Malmsbury's statement that he "retained the privilege of election." The election of Archbishop Ralph, Anselm's successor, supplies the best illustration of the change brought about in this respect. The king's influence, though visible and weighty throughout, is no longer the mere nomination of the Conqueror, or William Rufus: the voice of the Church, *both* through the bishops, and through the more immediate representatives of the common people—the monks—makes itself distinctly heard, and really affects the election.\*

But after all, in the great battles of the world, it is not mere "carrying points" which constitutes victory, and makes the combatant's toil and sufferings worth undergoing. Terms of accommodation and compromise are very far from showing always which is the winning, the rising side. To have enabled a cause to show its strength, or its greatness, to have palpably called out in its behalf wisdom, courage, faithfulness—heroic energy, heroic endurance; to have looked in the face for its sake what men commonly shrink from; to have resisted unto blood—this, even under outward disadvantage and failure, is really victory,—this is well worth the having, and in time will bear its fruits. In this contest, with more than a fair field—with all appliances of force and subtlety, short of open violence, with the vantage of prescription, with all the honour and power of England, bishops and barons, the strong hand and ready tongue, to second them, two kings tried their strength against the Church; for more than ten years they did their best, to beat down a cause upheld mainly by the conscience and fortitude of one old man. They were no triflers—they had laid down their stake and contested it stoutly; and, in the face of all England, they lost it. Was this little to gain? Was it little for the weak

\* Eadmer, H. N. p. 86, 87., Will. Malm. de Gest. Pontif. i. p. 230. "In commune arbitrium refudit electionem." See also the election of William of Corboil, Sax. Chron. a. 1123.

and defenceless to have not only resisted, but to have overcome the soldier's sword and statesman's craft?—little for the Church to have made itself felt against such odds? Were Norman barons and a Norman king *fainéants* and mere devotees, that it was a small matter for a monk to have made them acknowledge, that there was a power about them, spiritual only and intangible, which it was not enough for them to honour with words and forms, in churches and ceremonies, but to whose control too they must bend in matters of serious business? Is it such an every-day occurrence for a religious party to bring a resolute and able statesman against his will to a compromise? Was it possible that Anselm, who had twice sailed from England in disgrace, leaving behind him the sympathies of few, besides monks and Saxon churls, should, after ten years of banishment, return—the same old monk, with his monkish retinue, though greeted and ministered to by the Queen of England; and should have his cause allowed in full parliament, by his most violent opponents, by King Henry himself,—without impressing on his age, in a way not to be at once forgotten, that the spiritual claims of the Church were a reality of some consequence; that an archbishop of Canterbury might be something more than a venerable old man in rich vestments, whose chief business was to place the crown on the king's head, at the high tides of the year.

He broke a spell. He showed that, though the days of martyrdom were gone by,—so he thought\*, rather prematurely perhaps,—men of consequence and name, guests in kings' palaces, accustomed to be treated with tenderness, and spoken to softly and honourably, might still in sober earnest have to rough it for a bare principle. A needful lesson often, when society has got into fixed ways, and takes high truths for granted; when those truths have become mixed up with matters of every-day business—things to be seen and felt, ceremonial and etiquette, made ready by the hands of men—about which they laugh, or gossip, or yawn, or, still

\* Ep. iii. 90. "At nihil horum super me cadet."

worse, cheat and lie. This atmosphere of custom and commonplace has a sad effect in tarnishing the glorious and heroic—in confounding the great and the little—in making it unpractical and visionary to do anything, “but go on as we have been going.” So things remain, till they sink into ruin, or till amid dulness, and wrongheadedness, and quackery, some man of free and genuine mind discerns what is really noble and worth exalting, and is willing, at the risk of at least being called a bigot or an enthusiast, to sacrifice himself to it. Anselm had got hold of such a principle. He saw in it the cause of purity and sincerity—the cause also of the despised and friendless, against the great and lordly. Providence, instincts, the voice of the Church, seemed to entrust it to him, and nothing could scare or lure him away from it. There might be much to say against his course—the usages were but forms and trifles—or they were an important right of the crown, and to assail them was usurpation and disloyalty—or it was a mere dream to hope to abolish them—or they were not worth the disturbance they caused—or there were worse things to be remedied; difficulties there were no doubt: still, for all that, he felt that this was the fight of the day, and he held on unmoved. Through what was romantic and what was unromantic in his fortunes; whether the contest showed in its high or low form—as a struggle “in heavenly places” against evil, before saints and angels, with the unfading crown in view—or as a game against cowardly selfishness and the intrigue of courts;—cheered by the sympathies of Christendom, by the love and reverence of crowds which sought his blessing—or brought down from his height of feeling by commonplace disagreeables, the inconveniences of life—dust, heat, and wet, bad roads, and imperialist robbers, debts and fevers, low insults and troublesome friends:—through it all, his faith failed him not: it was ever the same precious and ennobling cause—bringing consolation in trouble—giving dignity to what was vexatious and humiliating.

It was her own fault if the Church gained little by the compromise, and by so rare a lesson. In one sense, indeed,

what is gained by any great religious movement? What are all reforms, remedies, restorations, victories of truth, but protests of a minority — efforts, clogged, and incomplete, of the good and brave, just enough in their own day to stop instant ruin,— the appointed means to save what is to be saved, but in themselves failures? Good men work and suffer, and bad men enjoy their labours and spoil them: a step is made in advance — evil rolled back and kept in check for a while only to return, perhaps, the stronger. But thus, and thus only, is truth passed on, and the world preserved from utter corruption. Doubtless bad men still continued powerful in the English Church—Henry tyrannised, evil was done, and the bishops kept silence—low aims and corruption may have still polluted the very seats of justice — gold may have been as powerful with cardinals as with King Henry and his chancellors—Anselm may have overrated his success. Yet success and victory it was—a vantage ground for all true men who would follow him. If his work was undone by others, he at least had done his task manfully. And he had left his Church another saintly name, and the memory of his good confession, enshrining as it were her cause, to await the day when some other champion should again take up the quarrel— thus from age to age to be maintained, till He shall come, for whom alone it is reserved “to still” for ever “the enemy and avenger,” and to “root out all wicked doers from the City of the Lord.”

The struggle ended, Anselm applied himself, during the short time that was left him, to carry out those great objects, which had given importance to the contest — the reformation of the clergy and the protection of the poor: and to do Henry justice, it must be said that in the latter point, while the archbishop lived, he seconded him vigorously. But Anselm’s task was now ended. Soon after his return he buried his friend Gundulf; and in little more than a year, he followed him. We shall give the account of his last days in the words of one who had shared his sufferings, and who watched by his death-bed, the monk Eadmer.

“During these events,” (the final settlement of his dispute with the king), “he wrote a treatise ‘concerning the agreement of Foreknowledge, Predestination, and the Grace of God, with Free-will.’ In which, contrary to his wont, he found difficulty in writing: for after his illness at Bury St. Edmunds, as long as he was spared to this life, he was weaker in body than before; so that, when moving from place to place, he was from that time carried in a litter, instead of riding on horseback. He was tried also by frequent and sharp sicknesses, so that we scarce dared to promise him life. He however never left off his old way of living, but was always engaged in godly meditations, or holy exhortations, or other good works.

“In the third year after King Henry had recalled him from his second banishment, every kind of food by which nature is sustained became loathsome to him. He used to eat however, putting force upon himself, knowing that he could not live without food; and in this way he somehow or another dragged on life through half a year, gradually sinking day by day in body, though in vigour of mind he was still the same as he used to be. So being strong in spirit, though but very feeble in the flesh, he could not go to his oratory on foot—but from his strong desire to attend the consecration of our Lord’s Body, which he venerated with a special feeling of devotion, he caused himself to be carried thither every day in a chair. We who attended on him tried to prevail on him to desist, because it fatigued him so much: but we succeeded, and that with difficulty, only four days before he died.

“From that time he took to his bed; and with gasping breath, continued to exhort all who had the privilege of drawing near him, to live to God, each in his own order. Palm Sunday had dawned, and we, as usual, were sitting round him; one of us said to him, ‘Lord Father, we are given to understand that you are going to leave the world for your Lord’s Easter Court.’ He answered, ‘If His will be so, I shall gladly obey His will. But if He will rather that I should yet remain among you, at least till I have solved a question which I am turning in my mind, about the origin of the soul, I should receive it thankfully, for I know not whether any one will finish it when I am gone. I trust, that if I could take food, I might yet get well. For I feel no pain anywhere—only a general sinking, from weakness of my stomach, which cannot take food.’

“On the following Tuesday, towards evening, he was no longer

able to speak intelligibly. Ralph, Bishop of Rochester, asked him to bestow his absolution and blessing on us who were present, and on his other children, and also on the King and Queen with their children, and the people of the land who had kept themselves under God in his obedience. He raised his right hand, as if he was suffering nothing, and made the sign of the Holy Cross; and then drooped his head and sunk down.

“The congregation of the brethren were already chanting matins in the great Church, when one of those who watched about our Father, took the book of the Gospels, and read before him the history of the Passion, which was to be read that day at the mass. But when he came to our Lord’s words, ‘Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations, and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table’—he began to draw his breath more slowly. We saw that he was just going: so he was removed from his bed, and laid upon sackcloth and ashes. And thus, with the whole family of his children collected round him, he gave up his last breath into the hands of his Creator, and slept in peace.

“He passed away, as morning was breaking, on the Wednesday before the day of our Lord’s Supper, the 21st of April, in the year of our Lord’s Incarnation 1109; the sixteenth of his pontificate and seventy-sixth of his life.”

Such was his end: there is nothing remarkable about it—nothing apparently to distinguish it from the last hours of many whom we may have known familiarly ourselves; nothing to fix upon, but a kind of homely quiet; an unconscious readiness, without emotion or effort of any kind, to meet the future. Death is at the door—yet he seems to be but continuing his wonted tenor of life, as when he was a monk at Bec—there is no break; he seems not to feel anything unusual to be coming on—he talks of death as of some mere ordinary hindrance to his work. The combatant, the confessor, the veteran of ten tempestuous years, is there, just finishing his course: but all traces of the storm and battle have disappeared; there is no scar to be seen—no heaving of the waters—no look thrown back to the past, or forward to the future. For God he has suffered and toiled—to Him he leaves the Church; his own share in the work done, he has

fallen back, as of course, into his old ways of living and thinking. He says little; but one thing is evidently filling his thoughts, the contemplation of the mysteries of the faith; and at the end he seems to vanish, he "passes away," amid chanting of psalms and gospel lessons, sacraments and blessings, sackcloth and ashes — the accompaniments of his everyday life. Strange contrast to the thrilling and awful scene which closed with such grandeur the career of the next confessor of the Church.

## BRITTANY.\*

[JANUARY, 1846.]

STEAM has done wonders, and promises more, for those who desire to see with their own eyes what is far off, and who delight in the contrast of juxtaposition between what is familiar and what is remote and strange. What it cannot bring to our door, it takes us most comfortably and without loss of time to see. It is making a raree-show of the world; exhibiting all that the present affords of wonderful, and magnificent, and curious, before those who are never out of the sound of their mother tongue, and are travellers only in the multiplicity of their portmanteaus. Before we have time to forget the express train and the railway-porters in velvet, and Southampton Water and Netley Abbey and the Cowes yachts, we are brought face to face with the bounds of the old world, the pillars of Hercules, and look upon distant Atlas; another flight, and we are on the river of Egypt, in the land of Pharaoh and Cleopatra, of St. Athanasius and St. Antony; among the pyramids, amid turbans and the languages of the East. We have passed through the wilderness, and the waves of the Red Sea are breaking on the shore at our feet; and in a space of time no longer measured by months and weeks, but by days, and soon by hours and their fractions, we are in India. The first of the month saw us riding in an omnibus in Holborn, the last sees us in the land of elephants and pagodas. Steam will deny us nothing; in

- \* 1. *Voyage dans le Finistère*, par CAMBRY : nouvelle édition, par M. Le Chev. DE FRÉMINVILLE. Brest : 1836.
2. *A Summer in Brittany*: by T. A. TROLLOPE, Esq. B. A. 2 Vols. London : 1840.
3. *Les Derniers Bretons* : par EMILE SOUVESTRE ; nouvelle édition. Paris : 1843.
4. *La Bretagne, Ancienne et Moderne* : par PITRE-CHEVALIER. Paris : 1844.



the circle round us, we have but to mark out our goal, and the genius straight transports us.

It puts us into communication with all the present; but not even steam can bring us to the past. In its way, indeed, it toils; it slaves for the antiquarian and the draughtsman; in letter-press, in form, in colour, it strives most assiduously to bring up the image of the past; it multiplies and disperses abroad. But the living past is not in books or engravings, and cannot be brought to us, nor we to it.

Only here and there, left to itself in some neglected corner of the world, the living past survives, projecting itself into the uncongenial and almost unconscious present. A couple of days off from Paris or Southampton, we may reach a race of men more difficult to piece on to modern society, than those who live by the Nile or the Ganges, or sell one another beneath the Line. Shooting out from the dim middle ages into the glare and bustle of the civilised "present day," in the midst of English manufactories, and French revolutions, and wars of the Empire—stretching forth its granite base into a sea ploughed by steam-ships, and itself planted all over with tri-coloured flags, dark old Brittany goes on unmoved, unsympathising,—believing and working as it and its fellow-nations did five hundred years ago. Surrounded by excitement and change,—sparkling Frenchmen vaporing about glory; drudging Englishmen, deep in railways; venomous Yankee Locofocos, in a white heat about Oregon,—while all eyes are straining into the future, and all hearts are beating high with expectation,—the old-fashioned Breton eyes with the utmost unconcern these "heirs of all the ages, foremost in the files of time,"—combs his long black hair, and walks about unashamed in his *bragou-bras*;—turns his back on the future, and looks only on the past—on his dead ancestors and the cross; and profoundly distrusts all improvement in this world. A grand, sublime, miraculous Past, is contrasted in his mind with a poor uninteresting Present, its mere appendix, and a Future without form or hope till the Last Day; the past is to him the great reality of the world—the reality, not of dilettantism, of forced reverence, of partial or factitious

interest, but of life-long faith. Fixed, undeniable, stands the solid past, and he reflects and rehearses it as he can; the work of present men is but vanity, their promised future a shadow. The progress of the ages, roughly as it has sometimes gone, has left him much as it found him, some considerable time before the Council of Trent.

“*Le pays le plus arriéré de la France!*” says the *commis-voyageur* from civilised Orleans or Rouen, to his neighbours in the barbarian diligence: and such is it likely to remain for some time longer, in spite of tri-color and steam-engine; in spite of the sneers and wares of *commis-voyageurs*, and interesting poetical accounts of the country by “*Bretons francisés*”—in spite of walking and reading parties from Oxford—in spite of departemental roads, and improving inns, and agricultural societies. The onslaught of civilisation is determined, and full of hope—nay, it is progressive; statistics measure the encroachments of the French language upon the Breton, as we measure those of the sea, by leagues; but civilisation has a tough and intractable pupil, and does not get on fast with its work. It tells, to be sure, on the enlightened *bourgeois*; but the enlightened *bourgeois* cannot print their mark on the country or the population, or force themselves into notice. The peasantry represent Brittany as the middle classes represent England; they are the people of most will and character—a hard, silent, obstinate, impassive race, living in their own old world, and, in the lofty feeling of its antiquity, taking no reflection from that upstart one which mixes with them—almost ignoring it. Modern France has been struggling hard to pull them up to a respectable level in society; they shake their heads, and resist in silence. First the guillotine was tried—“*Quel torrent révolutionnaire que cette Loire!*”\* wrote Carrier—Carrier of the *noyades*; “enraptured,” adds the historian, “with the poetry of his crime:”—but it would not do:—

—“It was a war between the guillotine and belief; a murderous war, in which the guillotine used its knife, and was beaten. This

\* Michelet, vol. i.

contest did not, as in La Vendée, degenerate into a civil war; with some exceptions, Lower Brittany remained immoveable; but remained on her knees, with clasped hands, in spite of all that could be done to hinder her. Nothing could impair the freshness of her primitive faith. She yielded neither to anger nor to fear. The *bonnet rouge* might be forced on her head, but not on her ideas.

“I will have your church-tower knocked down,” said Jean Bon-Saint-André to the Maire of a village, ‘that you may have no object to recall to you your old superstitions.’ ‘Anyhow you will have to leave us the stars,’ replied the peasant, ‘and those we can see farther off than our church-tower.’” — *Souvestre*, pp. 206, 207.

In the quieter times of the Directory, busy, fussy, sentimental citizen Cambry, “commissioned to detail the state, political, moral, and statistical, of the department of Finistère,” plunged fearlessly into its bogs and thick darkness, philosophised, pitied, collected stories; found citizen-*Maires* in sabots, polite and attentive; had many interviews with ignorant but promising municipalities, suggested improvements, reported on capabilities,—hopeful, ardent, citizen Cambry, filled with lofty compassion, devoted to the conversion of “*notre pauvre vieille Bretagne*” to civism and cleanliness:—but, alas, citizen Cambry is dead of apoplexy, and civil *Maires* and municipalities have not realised the promises they gave; they still believe in their priests. The great imperial mind, which new-modelled France, tried his hand on Brittany;—tried to give it a centre; called Pontivy, after his own name, Napoléonville; began a new broad straight street among its crooked alleys; but the new street is unfinished, and Napoléonville has gone back to Pontivy.\* Even the conscription did little: even captains in the imperial armies, when they got back to Basse Bretagne, resumed their sabots and baggy breeches, their *bragou-bras*. “We shall stay as we are,” says a modern Breton writer, “till the railroad drives through our villages of granite;” †—and, we cannot help thinking, for some time longer. The railway, and the navigators, its pioneers, will most assuredly produce some strange and strong impressions on the Breton peasants, and

\* Trollope, vol. i. p. 371.

† Pitre-Chevalier.

they will open their eyes and make the sign of the cross; it will enable, perhaps, navy officers from Brest, and merchants from St. Malo, to see more of their friends in Paris: but it will pass by the *villages*, the *foci* of Breton character and feeling. It will be a long time before the influence, which the railway brings with it, works upon them.

Still, the struggle is going on, and it is a curious spectacle to see the new intruding into the old, setting itself up by its side, fastening itself on to it, and slowly and cunningly—for the old is strong—edging it out. The new has now become discreet and cautious; the old looks on, dubious, unintelligent, mistrustful, but by no means in an imitative humour, doggedly keeping its old fashions. Paris has mapped out the old province into departments and *communes*, and *préfetures* and *souspréfetures*; the system is externally the same as in the rest of uniform new-fangled France; but the old ignored divisions are those which are felt. Parishes will maintain their isolation and singularities; Léon and Cornouaille still keep their ancient names, and continue distinct and hostile, though clamped together to make up Finistère. The contrast is grotesque:—for instance, when the modern government machinery for improvement is at work amid the old Breton customs. The feast of the patron saint comes round,—the people naturally collect, as they have done for centuries, to a wake,—as they call it, a *pardon*,—to gain an indulgence, to worship, to make merry. They collect from various parishes, and in various costumes, nowhere else seen in the world,—men as well as women, long-haired, dark-vested, wild-looking men, talking gravely their old Celtic dialect, and a little bad French, and sounding their bagpipes. French civilisation meets them; M. le Maire and M. le Souspréfet issue their programmes; there shall be a “*Fête patronale*,” a “*Fête agricole*.” Government and agricultural societies are full of encouragement; there are horse-races, matches between ploughs of the country and ploughs “*perfectionnées*,”—cattle shows for the improvement “*des races chevalines, bovines, ovines, et gallinacées* ;” prizes are given, purses of francs, model ploughs, “*Bodin’s Elémens d’Agriculture*.” — *Fortunati si*

*bona nōrint*,—if instead of telling old world stories, they could seize the opportunity, and study “Bodin.” Meanwhile, in the midst of enlightened civic authorities with tight pantaloons and peaked beards, they herd together, a wild crowd of Celts, thinking a good deal more of the *pardon*, and the dancing and wrestling, and the grand opportunity of getting drunk, than of improving themselves in agriculture. The same contrast meets you on the face of the country. You are tempted to turn aside from the road to look at an old parish church; there it is, open, and empty, and silent, except the invariable ticking of the clock; there is its charnel house, and shelves of skulls, each with a name, and in a box by itself; its granite “Calvaire,” with its hard Egyptian-looking figures; there is the votive lock of hair, or the holy spring; or the picture of a miracle of the last few years in the neighbourhood; or the rude weather-beaten image of the village saint, carved from the tree as it grew in the churchyard, about whom the peasant boys will tell you stories, if you can understand them. You cross the ridge, full of the thoughts of old Brittany, and you come upon modern industry and enterprise at work;—smuggling merchants of some unheard-of little port, building unaccountably extravagant basins and jetties,—the engineer hanging his light and beautiful suspension bridge, high over the large blue oily eddies of one of the tide rivers which tear the jagged coast-line, pushing his communications over the obstacles which annoyed Cæsar—“*pedestria itinera concisa æstuariis*.” Or you come to a chosen stage of innovation and modern fashion,—the modern race-course,—the “Hippodrome,” which is the pride of Landerneau, and the envy of Quimper; here are all the appliances of the French turf, the course marked out, the seats for the Préfet, and the seats for the musicians;—and, in the midst, a gaunt weather-stained stone cross, to which the peasant, as he passes it, pulls off his hat.

Nevertheless, whatever lodgement civilisation may have made, people curious in these matters are yet in time to see a very fair specimen of a middle-age population,—a peasantry, that is,—for, as we have said, the towns-people except in the

more remote parts, or in the lowest rank, are simply French of a mongrel sort. The look, indeed, of some of the towns carries us back some centuries;—the old burgher houses, for instance, at Lannion and Morlaix; or Dinan, with its walled town on the hill, and its suburb straggling up the hill side, with a street as steep and narrow and feudal-looking, as in the days of Du Guesclin;—but all this may easily be matched in other parts of the continent. Old Brittany is outside the towns.

“Poor rough Brittany,” writes Michelet, “the element of resistance in France, extends her fields of quartz and schist, from the slate-quarries of Châteaulin, near Brest, to the slate-quarries of Angers. This is her extent, geologically speaking. However, from Angers to Rennes, the country is a *debateable* land, a *border* like that between England and Scotland, which early escaped from Brittany. The Breton tongue does not even begin at Rennes, but about Elven, Pontivy, Loudéac, and Châtelaudren. Thence, as far as the extremity of Finistère, it is true Brittany—*Bretagne bretonnante*, a country which has become alien to our own, exactly because it has remained too faithful to our original condition; so Gaulish, that it is scarcely French;—a country which would have slipped from us more than once, had we not held it fast, clenched and gripped as in a vice, between four French cities, rough and stout Nantes and St. Malo, Rennes and Brest.”\*

It is to this part of Brittany, where the old language is still preserved, that our remarks are meant to apply. Even in this part, there are many differences, between the four old Bishoprics of Léon, Tréguier, Cornouaille, and Vannes;—certainly of dialect, it is said, also, of character. Still, though each parish has its peculiarities and costume, and Tréguier may be more ribald, and Cornouaille dirtier and more light-hearted, than sombre Léon, there is a sufficient uniformity about them to allow of our speaking of them together.

One feature is common to them all—their religion. In these times of unbelief, or of a faith which, perhaps, for self-

\* Michelet, Hist. de France. (Engl. tr.)

protection, is sparing of outward show and sign, it is a solemn and awful sight to see a whole population, visibly, and by habit, religious; believing in God, and instinctively showing their belief all day long, and in all possible circumstances. Their faith may, or may not, restrain and purify them — it need not necessarily; but in Brittany, there it is, not a formula, but a spirit penetrating every corner and cranny of their character and life, free, unaffected, undisguised, not shrinking from the homeliest contacts and most startling conclusions, matching itself without stint or fear with every other reality. The sight, we repeat, is very subduing to those, who have lived where nothing but the present world is assumed and referred to, in the forms and language of ordinary intercourse; where society is ever silent about God, and nothing that men do or say in their usual business, implies His existence. To such persons, this perpetual recognition of His name and power, so uniformly, and often so unexpectedly, is like an evidence to the senses—a result and warning of the nearness of His presence.

Brittany is a religious country, if ever the term could be applied to a country. The Church has set her seal on land and people. How she gained over these tough, stubborn, dark-thoughted people, is not the least wonderful question in her history. Her conquest is best explained by the countless legends of self-sacrifice and gospel labour, which the Breton calendar has of its own. But once gained, they pay no divided allegiance; and if the outlines of their faith are coarse, they seem indelible. The feeling that they are Christians is ever present to them; they delight in the title. Their most popular songs are religious. Even their tragedies begin in the Most Holy name. The cross is every where; the beggar traces it on his morsel before he touches it; on all things, animate or inanimate, which are turned to the use of man, its mark is placed; it is set up in granite at the cross-road, on the moor, on the shifting sands, where, as long as it is in sight above the waves, the passenger need not fear the tide—“*puisque,*” says his guide, “*la croix nous voit.*”

Even the brute creation is brought within the hallowed

circle—they have to fast with men on Christmas-eve, and they receive a blessing of their own from the Church: the very dogs, when they are sick, have a patron saint. The people may smile or joke themselves; but they do not the less believe. The speculator from civilised France, who comes to improve in Brittany, finds, to his cost, that nothing can shake this faith. Say, he has to finish a sea-wall before the next spring-tide—there remains but one day:—

—“The evening before, as the workmen were going from their work, a carter came to tell me that he could not bring his team tomorrow, because it was the *fête* of St. Eloi, and he must take his horses to hear Mass at Landerneau; another came soon after with the same tidings; then a third, then a fourth, at last all. I was alarmed; I explained to them the danger of waiting; I entreated; I got into a rage; I offered to double, to treble the wages of their work: but it was no use. They listened attentively, entered into all my reasons, approved them,—and ended by repeating that they could not come because their horses would die, if they did not hear the Mass of St. Eloi. I had to resign myself. Next day the spring-tide rose, covered the unfinished works, flooded the whole bay, and swept away the dyke, as it ebbed. This Mass cost me 30,000 francs.”—*Souvestre*, p. 433.

They have not yet learnt the powers which God's wisdom has, in these last days, placed in the hands of man. In Brittany still, as in those middle ages which it reflects, men feel that God only is strong, and that they are weak—helpless in a world of dangers—among irresistible and unknown powers, where God only can help them. “My God, succour me: my bark is so little, and thy sea is so great;”—so prays the Breton sailor as he passes the terrible cape, the *Bec du Raz*—and he speaks the universal feeling. He sees nothing between himself and the hand of God. He is still in the days of the Bible: he realises the invisible world without effort, he is deeply interested in it, he has his scruples, his fears, his axioms about it, as his civilised contemporaries have about the order of *their* world. They take for granted their own power, and trouble themselves about no other. He delivers himself up in his weakness, almost passively, into the



hands of God. His submission, his intense conviction of the sorrows of this world, would almost amount to fatalism, were it not for his faith in the power of prayer.

“It is only within a few years,” says M. Souvestre, and we believe he does not over-colour the case — “that physicians have been employed in the country districts; even now confidence in them is far from being general. Some traditional medicines, prayers, masses at the parish church, vows to the best known saints, are the remedies mostly used. Every Sunday at service time, you may see women with eyes red with weeping, going up to the altar of the Virgin, with tapers, which they light and place there; they are sisters or wives who come to beg some dear life, of her in heaven, who, like themselves, has known the cost of tears shed over a bier. You can tell by counting these tapers, which burn with a pale light upon the altar, how many souls there are in the parish ready to quit the earth.”—*Souvestre*, pp. 9, 10.

The stern resignation to which this faith leads, this steady acquiescence in suffering as the order of Providence, puts out the political economist sadly. The Breton peasant or workman, strange to say, unlike his brethren in England or France, does not care to mend his condition. He is firmly persuaded that it is all one where he is, in this world,—a broad heroic view of things, though a partial and wrong one; but very maddening to speculators on “capabilities” and “resources.” There the peasant sits in his hovel by his fireside, silent and grave, moaning and dreaming about things invisible and days gone by, chanting his monotonous mournful poetry, making his coarse cloth, which no one wants to buy of him. It is no use telling him that his manufacture is too rude, that his market is gone—his father made cloth before him, and, whether it sells or not, he cannot give over making it. “*Dans notre famille nous avons toujours été fabricants de toiles.*” Arguments are beaten back by the recollection of past days—“*Dans notre famille nous avons été riches autrefois;*” and when he can no longer resist the assertion that times are changed, he sighs and says—“*C’est le bon Dieu qui conduit le pauvre monde.*”—“After that, press him no more; you have reached the end of his arguments, you have driven

him back on Providence; to any further objections he will make no answer."\* Yet at this very moment he has not given up the hope that the old days will come back; he can see no reason why they should not. He dreams of his new coat of brown cloth that he will "purchase, and of the silver dishes that he will substitute for his wooden spoons—these silver dishes are the utmost stretch of the Breton workman's ambitious visions. This point reached, he goes to sleep in his rapture; and the next morning, cold and hunger awaken him as usual at sunrise, and he resumes the toils and bitter realities of his daily life."†

But there are times when this heavy, narrow-minded, melancholy, lethargic drudge, who drones and pines while others work, rises and fills out into a breadth and grandeur of character, when all other men are helpless and despicable with terror. The cholera, when it was in the province, drew forth to the full the Breton peasant, his nobleness and his folly;—his faith and uncomplaining resignation—his obstinate distrust of all that comes through man: and both in exaggerated proportions. We quote from M. Souvestre: after speaking of the cry of the Paris mob, that the government had poisoned the provisions, he goes on:—

"In Brittany, where the government, its form and name, are almost unknown, and parties are political only because they are religious, it was naturally otherwise. Any one who had told our peasants that government was poisoning them, would scarcely have been understood. For them, there are but two powers, God and the devil,—they looked not to criminal conspiracies for the cause of the evil which smote them. '*The finger of God has touched us;*' '*God has delivered us to the devil;*'—this was their energetic language. And forthwith the report was spread in the country, of supernatural apparitions,—red women had been seen near Brest, breathing the pestilence over the valleys. A beggar woman maintained before the magistrates, 'that she had seen them—had spoken with them.' Menacing signs gave warning that God was about to cast his '*evil air*' over the country,—the churches were opened, and the people awaited, without taking any precau-

\* Souvestre, p. 368.

† Ibid. p. 369.

tions, the fearful guest, whose approach was announced to them. I asked the priest of one of the parishes in the Léonais, what precautions he had taken. As we were leaving the church, he silently pointed with his hand, and showed me *twelve pits ready opened.*"

The cholera soon came, and came with fury :—

"But the peasant of Léon, accustomed to hard trials, bowed his head beneath the scourge. Once only the murmur of grief and discontent was heard in our country districts; it was when, for fear of contagion, it was proposed to bury those who died of cholera in the cemeteries of remote chapels. The relations and friends of the dead collected round the coffin, and opposed its removal from the parish churchyard, which already contained the bones of those whom he loved. Indeed, in some places, it was not without danger that the new orders were carried into effect: these men who disdain to wrangle about their place in life, disputed with eagerness for their place in the churchyard. You should have heard their words in this strange long dispute, to know the depth of those hearts. 'The remains of our fathers are here,' they repeated; 'why separate him who is just dead? Banished down there to the burying-ground of the chapel, he will hear neither the chants of the service, nor the prayers which ransom the departed. Here is his place. We can see his grave from our windows; we can send our smallest children every evening to pray here; this earth is the property of the dead, no power can take it from them, or exchange it for another.' In vain people spoke of the danger of the accumulation of corpses in the parish churchyard, always in the middle of the village, and surrounded with houses. They shook their large heads sadly, and their flowing hair. 'Corpses do not kill those who are alive,' they answered; 'death does not come except by the will of God.' At last it became necessary to apply to the priests, to overcome their resistance; and all the authority of the priests themselves was scarcely enough to make them yield to the change. I shall never forget having heard the rector at Taulé talking long to them about it, and assuring them, in the name of God, whom he represented, that the dead had not the feelings of the living, and did not suffer by this separation from the graves of their forefathers. These explanations, which would have made one smile under other circumstances, took so strange a character of seriousness, from the air of conviction in the priest, and the intense attention of the crowd, that they left no feeling but that of

extreme amazement and involuntary awe."—*Souvestre*, pp. 14—17.

These views of life are not the views of a soft and tender-hearted people. The Breton who suffers unmoved, looks unmoved on suffering in others. He may help or not, as it may be; he will not waste many words or much compassion. But the Church, which has not made him feel for suffering as such, has impressed, like an instinct on his soul, that deep reverence for earthly humiliation, which since the Sermon on the Mount she has never forgotten. The roughest and hardest Breton wrecker never turned away from the beggar—" *hôte du bon Dieu*," who visits his hovel, or who sits praying and begging by the way-side or the church-door. He sees in him one touched by the "finger of God"—this moves him, though physical suffering does not. And that touching faith of early times is still strong among them, which revered the idiot; which believed him to be in grace, and sought his intercession because he could do no sin; which, because of the extremity of his degradation, felt sure that the All-merciful was with him, and would visit one who was so humbled in the eyes of men. The most famous church in Brittany was raised to consecrate the memory of one of them. Every one who travels there, hears wherever he goes of the renown of the *Folgoat*—the work of the glorious days of Brittany, now scathed and battered by the Revolution: where, instead of the princely convent, a few *Sœurs de la Providence* educate poor children—" *les filles des misérables*." And though English taste may think it over-rated, it is a noble church,—with its two towers and spires of pierced granite, and its line of five altars, along the eastern wall, carved with the most exquisite beauty, of the sharp dark grey *Kersanton*. The legend which led to the building of this church, shall be given as it was read in the church itself.\* We shall not be surprised at our readers smiling, or, if it is worth while, condemning; but we think they will be touched, at least, by the manner in which it is told.

\* The legend is hung up on a board, in old French, on one of the piers.

“On the Sunday before All Saints, 1370, deceased the blessed Salaun, or Solomon, vulgarly called the Fool, because he was taken for one naturally dull, and wanting reason, having never been able to learn anything save only these two words, ‘*Ave Maria*,’ which he would say and repeat without ceasing. This poor innocent had made for himself a wretched dwelling beneath a great tree, whereof the branches were very low, and were to him for a roof and walls. There he lived by himself, lying on the bare ground: and when he was hungry, going through the town of Lesneven, he asked for bread, saying, in his Breton language, ‘*Ave Maria, Salaun a de pre bara*,’—that is, ‘*Solomon would fain eat bread* ;’ and then he would return to his abode, where he dipped his bread in the water of a fountain hard by; and no one all his life long could make him eat or drink any thing else, or sleep elsewhere. And when in winter time he was cold, he climbed up into his tree, and hung on to the branches, swinging backwards and forwards, to warm himself by the motion of his body, and singing the while with a loud voice, ‘*O-o-o-o-o, Maria*.’ So that, from his simpleness of life, they called him only ‘*the fool*.’ At last, he having deceased, the neighbours, who were poor country-folk, simple and ignorant, supposing from his innocence, that as he had lived without use of reason, or knowledge of God or religion, as far as it appeared to them, so he had not died like a Christian, not having been assisted by the Church-folk, nor having asked for any of the Sacraments; and thinking also that those frequent words which he had in his mouth, ‘*Ave Maria*,’ meant nothing religious, but rather that they were a custom, without his knowing their meaning; and also setting down his great austerity of life to a brutish disposition by nature, which never could have tasted good or evil;—therefore they thought him not worthy to be buried in holy ground. And, moreover, his body being disowned of his friends, and despised by others, the trouble and charges of carrying it to be buried in the parish burying-ground, which was about one league distant, were an excuse to each one of them, to flatter himself in this lack of charity and kindness. So it was, that he was buried by the peasants, like a beast, at the foot of his tree, without priests, or the accustomed ceremonies of the Church. But the good and all-merciful God, to whom only it appertains to judge of the end, whether blessed or miserable, of all men, caused it to be seen then, for the consolation of the poor and simple in heart, that paradise is not only for those whom the world calls wise and

understanding ; and, above all, that the invocation of the name of his Holy Mother, is verily a mark of predestination and salvation. For the night following, there sprung and grew up marvellously, out of the grave of this innocent, a lily all covered with flowers, though the season was adverse, and near to winter ; and upon these flowers, and also upon the leaves of the tree, were read these words, imprinted, ‘ *O Maria,*’ and ‘ *Ave Maria,*’ just as if they had been naturally traced and graven ; and they continued, until, the winter drawing on, the leaves fell off from the flowers, and from the tree. At the noise and fame of this so admirable an event, there came together from all parts, an infinite number of folk, as well of the clergy, as of the nobility and others, who proposed to build a church in honour of the glorious Virgin, in this place, sanctified by so evident a miracle, and where the invocation of her holy name had appeared so effectual.”

A people who build churches in honour of fools, must be expected to do many other strange things, grotesque, puzzling, revolting, to the shrinking taste and the cautious, unventuresome imagination of the civilised traveller, who suddenly throws himself into this mediæval race. Modern faith shrinks from details, declines the doubtful, cannot tolerate juxtaposition of the heterogeneous ; it is not imaginative or wide. Not so the hardy, daring faith that still survives in Brittany. There the world of faith is the counterpart of the world of sight ; a world which addresses itself not merely to the devotional or contemplative feelings, but to the whole man ; as full of detail and variety as the visible creation ; with its heights and depths, with its unaccountable phenomena, its strange conjunctions ; which opens up, not by a formless, featureless expanse of light, but by visions insulated, unfinished, yet distinct, to the Everlasting Throne — which sinks down, through all loathsomeness, absurdity, terror, to the depths of the bottomless pit ; and in this middle world presents a mixture astounding, yet to its own denizens most natural, of the heavenly, the human, and the infernal.

There is one prominent feature in this, which excites very strange feelings in the serious Englishman. He has probably been accustomed to think only with solemn fear, of that evil

being, who is to him almost the unnameable: not with hatred, not with contempt, not with anything approaching to levity. He goes to Brittany, and he finds, as in the middle ages, that the prevailing feeling is one of heart-felt derision, implying, but almost too strong to show, real human hatred—the feeling of redeemed man, triumphing over and laughing to scorn his outwitted enemy. The Evil one is brought in to make sport, in the Breton play, or the Breton tale: the Breton hero must always, to keep up his character, “*jouer quelque mauvais tour au diable.*” “Le diable,” says M. Souvestre, “est la victime obligée, c’est l’Orgon du fabliau Bas-Breton; dans le genre plaisant, comme dans le genre terrible, sa figure est celle qui domine.” “C’est une assez curieuse étude,” adds our philosophic *Breton-francisé*, “que celle de cette vieille haine, qui prend tour à tour la forme de la malédiction, ou de la raillerie.”\*

The popular stories are all of his baffled power and cunning,—not of tremendous conflicts, souls staked and lost, or hardly saved, but of his ridiculous failures, or precipitate and foolish bargains with men. There is a grotesque belief,—sprung, perhaps, from the same feeling which gave birth to Eastern Dualism,—that the wild animals, and the coarse and ugly species of the same type, are the result of his abortive efforts at creation; the ass in his copy of the horse, the fox of the dog. In his contests with man, he is defeated not by sanctity, but by superior cunning. He tries his sharpness against the long-headed shrewd peasant, or the light-hearted, quick-witted Troadec, the great mythic hero of these encounters; and he is disgracefully taken in, laughed at, and duly tortured. Nothing so completely recalls the grotesque side of the middle ages, as these strange tales, so profane to our ears, which the traveller may still hear in the inn-kitchen, or in the *petite voiture*.

Another, and a different feature of mediæval times, are the pilgrimages and “*pardons* ;”—assemblages, by hundreds and thousands, to seek the blessing attached to a particular spot.

\* Souvestre, p. 83.

There is the same undoubting and ardent devotion—there are also, in many cases, the same excesses. The smaller meetings, it is said, are free from these scandals: certainly, nothing can be more striking and solemn than some of them, from first to last,—unless there happens to be present a rude Englishman, or, what is still worse, a mocking Frenchman. But at the larger ones, part of the business of the day is to get drunk, to the annual vexation of the priests, and the annual entertainment of the neighbouring *bourgeois*. M. Souvestre's account of one of the most famous pilgrimages, is revolting in the extreme. Mr. Trollope gives a description of another, which probably is a fairer specimen,—the pilgrimage to St. Jean du Doigt, near Morlaix.

“We left Morlaix by the picturesque fauxbourg of Troudosten, which lines the side of the valley with its irregular collection of buildings; and then traversed the shady woods of Tréfeunteiou, and the deep valley of the Dourdu. . . . Farther on, we crossed the little stream of the Mesqueau, and soon after arrived at the object of our pilgrimage.

“All this time we had been journeying amid a crowd of all ages and sexes, who were bound to the same point, and which became denser as we approached the village. We made directly for the church, as the grand centre of interest; and, having reached the churchyard, found ourselves in the midst of a scene, which it is almost as difficult adequately to describe, as it is impossible ever to forget.

“The church is a large building, with a handsome tower, standing in the midst of an area, which is but little encumbered with gravestones. This was thickly crowded with a collection of men, women, and children, more motley in appearance than can readily be conceived by any one who has not seen the never-ending variety of Breton costume. The churchyard was bounded on part of one side by a long straggling building, which had been turned into a cabaret for the occasion. The door, and front of this house, were on the side looking away from the church; but a window opening into the churchyard, had been converted into a temporary door, for the more ready passage of the pilgrims from one to the other of the two occupations, drinking and devotion, which, on a pilgrimage, as for the most part elsewhere, form the principal amusements of a Breton's life.



“In the parts of the inclosure farthest from the church, were erected a quantity of booths, beneath which were exposed for sale innumerable specimens of all the various trumpery which forms the machinery of Romish devotion. Pictures and figures of saints, especially of St. John the Baptist, of every possible size, form, and sort; chaplets of various materials; bottles of water from holy fountains; crucifixes, crosses, and calvaries, &c., were the principal articles. Amid these, other stalls were devoted to the more mundane luxuries of nuts, rolls, figs, sausages, prunes, biscuits, apples, crêpe, &c. By the side of the pathway leading to the principal door of the church the dealers in wax and tallow candles had stationed themselves. The consumption of these, and the supply provided for it, were enormous.

“The thing that most struck me after the first glance at the various heterogeneous parts of this strange scene, was an equable and constant motion of that part of the crowd who were nearest to the church, around the walls of the building; and, on pressing forwards, I found an unceasing stream of pilgrims walking round the church, saying prayers, and telling their beads. Many performed this part of the ceremony on their bare knees.

“Just outside the moving circle thus formed, and constituting a sort of division between it and the rest of the crowd, were a row of mendicants, whose united appearance was something far more horrible than I have any hope of conveying an idea of to the reader.

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“Each horrible object continued all the day in the position he had taken up, and in many instances, in attitudes which it appeared scarcely possible to retain so long. One man lay on his back on the ground, while both his bare legs were raised high in air, and sustained in that position by crutches. Of course each studiously placed himself so as most to expose that particular affliction which qualified him to take his place among the sickening crew. All vociferated their appeals to the charity of the crowd incessantly, and most of them appeared to receive a great many alms from the pilgrims. Some gave a small coin to every one of the revolting circle. In many instances we observed change demanded by the giver, and produced readily by the miserable object of his charity. Many gave part of the provisions which they had brought with them in their wallets from their distant homes.

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“The novelty and strangeness of the scene around the church detained us long from entering it. Fresh pilgrims continued to

arrive every instant, and joined themselves to the never-ceasing procession around the building, who came, as was evident from their costume, from various distant parts of the country. Grave, decorous peasants, in black, from the neighbourhood of Morlaix and St. Thégonec, were mixed with wild-looking-travel-stained figures from the hills. Here a group might be seen, whose white flannel jackets and violet-coloured breeches showed them to be from the neighbourhood of St. Pol de Léon; and there a blue cloak with its short, falling cape, declared its wearer to have come from the western extremity of the northern coast. Roscovites were there, with their close, green jackets, white trousers, and red sashes; and inhabitants of the distant shores opposite to Brest, distinguishable by their glaring costume of red coats and breeches, and white waistcoats, adorned with crimson buttons. \* \*

“Each freshly arrived party, as they entered the churchyard, fell into the ranks, and, muttering as they went, commenced the tour of the church; and, having performed that, some more, some fewer times, proceeded next into the interior, and struggled onwards through the crowd towards the altar. This was no easy matter to accomplish. We followed into the church a recently arrived party of very poor-looking pilgrims from the hills, whose liberal alms-giving we had been observing with surprise and interest, and endeavoured to make our way towards the altar in their wake.

“The church was large; but it was crowded to such a degree, that it was absolutely difficult to find room to stand within the doors. By degrees, however, and by dint of long perseverance and much striving, we at length got near the principal altar. A narrow passage along the front of the rails of this had been partitioned off, into one end of which the crowd struggled, and issued from the other.

“Within the rails was a priest, carrying the Finger, in its little case, and applying it to the eyes of the people, one after another as fast as he possibly could. Running the whole length along the top of the rails of the altar was a sort of box, about four inches broad, by six deep. The top consisted of a sort of grating, formed of a succession of wooden bars, with interstices between them, about a third of an inch in breadth. Into this each devotee dropped one or more pieces of money as soon as the miraculous relic had touched his eyes.

“I have been assured that the sum of money received annually

at St. Jean du Doigt on this day is very considerable indeed. And I can easily conceive it to be so; for the confluence of people was immense, and, of course, no one there failed to come to the altar, nor could I perceive that any one left it without having deposited an offering in the box.

“The crowding, pushing, struggling, and jostling, at the entrance to the passage in front of the altar, was tremendous. Here, high above the heads of the undulating crowd, mounted on a level with the top of the altar-rails, was a beadle, with a good stout cane in his hand, with which he was laying about him vigorously; whacking the most violent and impatient of the crowds over their heads and shoulders; much in the same manner that a Smithfield drover regulates the motions of an irritated and over-driven herd of bullocks.

“We remained near the altar for some time. But there was nothing more to see than we had seen. The same thing continued without the slightest variation. Fresh comers continually thronged to the door of the passage, and supplied the places of those who kept streaming from the other end, as fast as the priest could touch both their eyes with the sacred relic. And this continued nearly the whole day.

“I could not perceive that any body watched, to see if the people dropped their money. The priest certainly paid no attention to it, being fully engaged in performing his own task, now stepping back a little, and now forward, and now stretching out his arm to some one behind, whom the throng prevented from getting close to the altar-rails. It appeared, indeed, that the honesty or fanaticism of the pilgrims rendered any care on this point unnecessary. For I observed many, who had had the finger applied to their eyes across others, and were consequently separated from the box on the rails, and were being carried away by the motion of the crowd, struggling hard to reach the box with their hand, to deposit therein their offering . . . . This continued without stopping till about six o'clock, at which hour the procession was to take place.”

Mr. Trollope proceeds to describe a custom which has struck all who have seen it—the fires of St. John's Day.

“There are few villages or hamlets in Brittany that have not their bonfire on the eve of St. John; but of course, in the village under his peculiar patronage, and in the presence of hundreds of pilgrims, assembled for his express honour, the rite is solemnized

with especial pomp and circumstance, and the blaze is a glorious one. \* \* \* \* \*

“To this spot the solemn train proceeded. A hollow way led up the side of the hill, and in some degree compelled, by its narrowness, the immense crowd to keep behind the procession. We however climbed up the steep side of this ravine, and thus, high above the heads of the crowd, looked down upon the assembled multitude. The coup d’œil was certainly a very striking one. The processional pomp, examined in detail, was of course mean and ridiculous. But the general aspect of the prodigious multitude, assembled from so many distant homes, their deep seriousness, and evident devotion, as with bare heads, and long locks streaming in the wind, they raised the burthen of their solemn chant, could not fail to affect powerfully the imagination.\* \* \* \* \*

“At length the living mass reached the top of the hill, and arranged itself in a vast circle around the huge stack of dry broom and furze, which was destined to the flames. Some fireworks were to be let off first; and when this had been done, the firing of a cannon gave the signal that the bonfire was about to be lighted. This, however, was to be accomplished in no ordinary way, but by fire from heaven, or by a contrivance intended to resemble it in effect, as nearly as might be. A long rope was attached to the top of the church tower, the other end of which communicated with the fuel. Along this a ‘feu d’artifice,’ in the form of a dove, was to be launched, which was to run along the line, and ignite the dry brushwood.

“Great is the importance attached to this feat of ingenuity, and long is the sight looked forward to by the admiring peasants. Down shot the fiery dove at the sound of the cannon, and briskly she flew along the rope, amid the murmured raptures of the crowd, till she had travelled about half the distance. But, there, alas! she stopped dead, nor could any expedient of shaking the rope, &c., induce her to advance another inch.

“The fact was, that the rope was not stretched tightly enough to produce an uninterrupted line in an inclined plane. Its own weight caused it to form a considerable curve, and the dove decidedly refused to advance an inch up hill. Thus foiled in their scenic effect, the masters of the ceremonies were fain to light their bonfire in an ordinary and less ambitious way.

“This was soon done. The dry brushwood blazed up in an instant, and the already wide circle round the fire was soon enlarged

by the heat, which drove back the thick ranks by its rapidly increasing power. \* \* \* \* \*

“ Soon after the pile was lighted, the clergy, with the banners, the relics, and the principal part of the procession, left the bonfire, and returned down the hill to the village. This appeared to be the signal that all semblance of a religious ceremony might now be dropped. The remainder of the evening was given up to unrestrained merry-making and carousing. The dance round the fire which, when formerly it was lighted at the same period of the year, in honour of the Sun, was intended to typify the motion of the stars, and has been preserved, though meaningless since the Christianization of the festival, was duly performed. Cattle were brought, and made to leap over the burning embers, to preserve them from disease, and from the malice of the fairies. Boys and girls rushed in, and snatched from the glowing mass a half-consumed morsel, to be carefully preserved till next St. John’s eve for good-luck—shouts and cries rose on all sides from the excited multitude; and the whole scene, over which a solemn and religious spirit had so recently presided, became one of frolic and confusion.

“ One after another the surrounding hills were lighted up each with its crowning bonfire, and the reflections of many others still more distant were seen in the sky, imparting to the heavens in every direction the ruddy glow of a golden sunset. Then groups of girls, in their holyday trim, might be seen stealing off and mounting the various points of the hills, to try if they could see nine fires at once. For, if they can do this, they are sure of being married in the course of the year. \* \* \* \* \*

“ We did not return by the road we had come, but by Lanmeur. The whole country through which we passed was illumined by a succession of fires. And on many of the hills a shadowy circle of ghost-like figures might be seen, moving around the distant flames. We found no less than three bonfires blazing in different places in the very middle of the road, over which two or three diligences would have to pass in the course of a few hours.”

It is not necessary, we think, to have recourse to a Celtic rite for the explanation of the fires on St. John’s Eve. But there are more questionable usages among these wild people. Paganism has scarcely yet been quite rubbed out from among them—the religion of the wells, and woods, and heaths, and shores. The tall ghost-like stone on the moor,

still fills the peasant with supernatural awe, though the cross has been set upon it. It is startling to be told by M. de Fréminville, a writer who professes accuracy, and is not a free-thinker, that on the western coast, and in the Isle of Ushant, idolatry was practised as late as the seventeenth century.\* Idolatry is now gone; but wild fearful ideas about the invisible world still linger, and belief in the mystic powers of nature, mixed up with Christian legends. It is on the western coast that these superstitions, solemn everywhere in Brittany, are most dreary and terrible; that coast which looks out on the desolate ocean — “*la proue de l'ancien monde*” — and shares its gloom and storm. Even on the stillest day there is a sullen savage look about the scene, about the gaunt dark rocks, the long low sandy islands in the hazy distance, the heavy sleepy balancing of the endless waters in their bed, *immensi tremor Oceani*. “Who has ever passed along this funereal coast without exclaiming or feeling, ‘*Tristis usque ad mortem?*’” † Every cape and island has its associations of terror or death; fit place for the *Νεκυία* of the Odyssey; — the refuge of the spirits of darkness whom the Gospel had scared from Greece, and the East, — the abode of the weird virgins, who ruled the tempests; the birth-place of Merlin; the haunt of mermaids and sea-monsters, and, in later times, of wreckers.

The local legends are equally gloomy; — legends of sin and judgment, of the great city of Ys, and the cry of its wickedness coming up to heaven like Sodom, till its measure was full. Then King Gradlon's wicked and beautiful daughter Dahut stole the golden key, which kept out the sea, and opened the floodgates, and let in the waters. But S. Gwenolen was sent to the king to save him: — “Ah! sire, sire, let us depart quickly hence, for the wrath of God will destroy this place! Thou knowest the sin of this people, the measure is full; let us haste to depart, lest we be overtaken in the same calamity.” The king mounted his horse, with his daughter behind him, and fled out of the city; but the

\* Trollope, ii. 299. 386. 389. Cambry, p. 64.

† Michelet.

raging waves followed him, and were about to devour him. — “King Gradlon,” cried then a terrible voice, “if thou wilt not perish, separate thyself from that evil one thou carriest behind thee.” The king knew the voice of Gwenolen, — the voice of God; he cast off his daughter to the sea, and the sea was satisfied with its prey, and stood still. But the city was swallowed up, with all that were in it, and its ruins are still pointed out under the Bay of Douarnenez.\* There, when the storm is rising, the fishermen hear in the whistling moaning gale, the *crierien*, the voices of the shipwrecked, shrieking for burial; and tell that on Allsouls-day, *le jour des morts*, you may see the pale spirits rising on the crests of the waves, and scudding like the spray before the wind, in the *Baie des Trépassés*: it is the annual gathering of those who once lived on these shores, the drowned and the buried, and they seek each other among the waves. There also they believe that the demons which wait for the lost soul, show themselves in visible form about his door during his agony; they tell of fishers’ boats deeply laden with their invisible freight of spirits, gliding off to the ocean. There, at mysterious Carnac, the tombs are opened at midnight, the church is lighted up, and Death, clad in the vestments of a priest, preaches from the pulpit to thousands of kneeling skeletons: the peasants say that they have seen the lights, and heard the voice of the preacher. There also, near Auray, is the battlefield of Pluvigner, where the souls of the unshriven slain are condemned to wander till the Great Day, each in a straight line across the plain; and woe to the traveller who crosses the path of a spirit!

“While I was at Auray,” says Souvestre, “I was enabled to judge how deeply the belief is rooted in the minds of the country people. A young country girl came to the house where I was staying, crying bitterly, and unable to speak. We interrogated her in alarm, and the poor girl told us, through her sobs, that her father was dying. He had gone yesterday to the fair of Pluvigner, and had returned alone and late by the fatal field. *He had been met by*

\* Pitre-Chevalier, p. 88.

a spirit—(while she said these words, her whole body trembled); he had been thrown down, and it was only in the morning that he had been found and brought home; a doctor was no good, it was a priest that he wanted; his hours were numbered.

“We went to the dying man. He was already in the agony; but he told us his story, in words interrupted by the horrible hiccough of the deathrattle. He told us, that ‘he had felt himself struck by the spirit,’ and, in spite of his efforts, he had been hurled from his horse.—The physician arrived, and declared that he had been seized with apoplexy.”—*Souvestre*, pp. 115, 116.

Nowhere do the ideas of death crowd in so thickly and drearily. But it is on the coast that they are most gloomy and terrible. In the interior, they are of a more Christian and fireside character. On the coast, men think of the dead as exposed to the sea and storm; inland, they still think of them, but as lingering about their old homes and families. In Léon especially, as we have already seen in one instance, they keep up very strongly these household feelings about the dead. On Allsouls-day, the day on which the fishermen of the coast see the vexed spirits in the tossing waves of the *Baie des Trépassés*,—

“The whole population of the Léonais rises serious and in mourning. It is the family anniversary, the time of commemorations; and nearly the whole day is spent in devotion. About midnight, after a meal taken in common, all retire; but the dishes are left on the table; for the Bretons think that, at that hour, those whom they have lost rise from their graveyards, and come to take their annual repast under the roof where they were born.”—*Souvestre*, p. 10.

The Breton shrinks from the thought of laying his bones out of the consecrated land of Brittany:—“what would his poor soul feel, if it found itself at night among so many strange souls?”—and he shrinks equally from disturbing his fathers, by burying strangers in their honoured fellowship.\* In the midst of rejoicing, the dead are not forgotten. On St. John’s night, seats are set for them by the fires, that

\* *Souvestre*, pp. 363. 428.



they may come and look on at the dancers. Even at the wedding, amid its grotesque ceremonies, they are thought of; the *bazvalan*, or village tailor, who conducts the negotiations, after inviting all the living relatives to go with him to church, excuses himself from inviting the dead, because to pronounce their names would be too painful;—“but let every one uncover himself, as I do, and beg for them the blessing of the Church, and rest for their souls;”—and he aloud, and the rest in an under tone, repeat the “*De profundis*.”

These feelings are stamped on the face of the country. Even in the course of a summer visit, when the long sunny days, and the bright warm looks of sea and earth and sky, continuing week after week, make the mind less attentive and less open to opposite impressions—again and again will they force themselves upon it. What is elsewhere put out of sight, is here as much as possible kept before the face of the living. The way-side cross, with the inscription, “*Ici trespassa N.*,” meets you perpetually. The parish churches in the country, especially if of any antiquity, have a strange character of hardness and dreariness, distinct from mere rudeness, and quite their own. The well-known forms of church architecture reappear, but with altered proportions, and a peculiar grotesque sternness;—granite without, instead of the chequered flint, and warm rich freestone of France and England—within, whitewash, with perhaps a broad border of black; wide open paved spaces; and the church ending, not in a chancel, but in a cross transept. Even when empty, there is generally one sound heard in them—the loud ticking of a clock. At the east end, are the heavy, brightly painted images; in other parts of the church, and in the porch, set up on shelves, each in a small black box, pierced, and surmounted by the cross, the skulls of those who have worshipped there, taken out of their graves when their flesh has perished, and placed on high with their names—“*Cy est le chef de N.*,” in the sight of their children when they come to pray. They are churches of the dead as well as of the living.

In keeping with this character of the country, is the "sacred city" of old Armorica—the chief see of Brittany, now decayed and brought low,—S. Pol de Léon. It still shows the beauty—the grace mingled with sternness—which the Church impressed upon it. For a couple of hours before he reaches the city, the traveller looks at its group of spires, which spring upwards, on a rising ground, from the vague outline of trees and houses; they are imprinted on his eye, and occupy and prepossess his imagination while he is approaching, and they grow in interest as he comes near. There are the two cathedral spires, and, like them, but leaving them far behind, the Creisker; a pierced spire of granite, of strange and singular beauty, boldly deviating from the most graceful western types—not springing from its base with a continuously tapering outline, but rising long with solemn evenness from the ground, and then, after pausing at a deep and heavy cornice, shooting up amid a crowd of pinnacles, with inexpressible lightness and freedom into the sky. But the city beneath these beautiful structures is deserted and desolate. There is nothing but dull unbroken streets of granite, with a few people sitting at their doors, or, it may be, squatted outside, like savages, round a fire. "The general air of the place," says Mr. Trollope, "might impress a traveller with the notion that all the inhabitants were asleep. A deep and slumbering tranquillity seems to be the presiding genius of the town. The cathedral is small, low, and gloomy. No service was going on there when we entered. Two or three silent figures were kneeling motionless in different parts of the nave, and not a sound but the echo of our own footsteps disturbed the death-like stillness of the sombre place. But the quiet was hardly more profound than that of the city without; and the deep silence, the dingy walls, and the undisturbed dust on them, seemed attributes fitting a place of worship for this scarcely living city."\*

Even the Creisker seems, to some minds, to harmonise with the melancholy of the city. It was the remark of an

\* Trollope, vol. ii. pp. 277, 278.

intelligent Breton, that it was “the only Gothic church that gave him the idea of *repose*, like the Grecian temples.” And any one who has wandered from the cold silent streets to the great *cimetière* outside, late on a summer’s evening, when the full moon was rising, and hanging low and red over the misty bay behind; and has walked in this uncertain twilight along its straight avenues, bordered by ossuaries and “stations,” till he stood in front of the great “Calvary,” to which all the paths converge—in a broad open space paved with grave-stones, — with dimly-seen groups, as large as life, of the Passion and the Burial, before and around him, and in the background the long low shapeless outline of the chapel of the cemetery—must remember well the solemn dreariness of the place—

“*Reliquiæ mortis hîc inhabitant.*”

But Breton religion, with its mixture of wildness and thoughtfulness, its tenderness and sad resignation, has other sides. Faith, as of old, works in many ways. It is a fearful thing, yet nothing new, that it can co-exist, strong and all-pervading, with monstrous evil; it is compatible with violence, and hatred, and impurity. Faith is no restraint by itself,—is no test of the virtue of the multitude. An age of faith will be fruitful in good: but the evil that grows along with it may rival in horrible excess the most portentous births of atheism. The French Pantheist sees God in himself: “*même dans ses passions et ses délires.*” The Breton savage reverses this: firmly believing in the One above him, he sees his own wild passions on the Throne of Power—he sees sympathy there with his feuds and hatreds. At no distant time, we are told, he made pilgrimages to obtain “*des bons naufrages* ;” \* and stranger things still are reported of him.

\* Souvestre asserts that there is a chapel near Tréguier, dedicated to N. D. *de la Haine*. “Une chapelle dédiée à N. D. *de la Haine* existe toujours près de Tréguier, et le peuple n’a pas cessé de croire à la puissance des prières qui y sont faites. Parfois encore, vers le soir, on voit des ombres honteuses, se glisser furtivement vers ce triste édifice placé au haut d’un coteau sans verdure. Ce sont de jeunes pupilles lassés de la surveillance de leurs tuteurs; des vieillards jaloux de la prospérité d’un voisin; des femmes trop rudement froissées par le

The fanaticism of this stern faith, when it blazes out, is of the same terrible character. Take the following scene, which Souvestre states that he witnessed in 1839. A *pardon* is going on—all are dancing under the light clear sky,

“When suddenly there was a movement in the crowd; the bagpipe was silent, the dance stopped, and I heard, passing round me, a name which struck me, Jôan de Guiklan. I had heard his name the day before, and had been told that he had gone out of his mind after a retreat at S. Pol de Léon, where the sermons, the solitude, and his naturally excitable temper had worked him up into a wild fanaticism; and that he went about everywhere, preaching repentance, and throwing himself across the joys of life like a mes-

despotisme d'un mari, qui viennent là prier pour la mort de l'objet de leur haine. Trois *Ave*, dévotement répétés, amènent irrévocablement cette mort dans l'année.” This statement, on which some remarks were founded in the pages of the Review in which this paper first appeared, was contradicted by the Bishop of St. Brieuc, in whose diocese Tréguier is situated, and by the clergyman at the head of the “Petit Séminaire” at Tréguier, l'Abbé Urvoy, in letters, which were printed in the *Christian Remembrancer*, July, 1846. p. 295. M. Urvoy, after warmly denying the truth of Souvestre's statement, offers the following explanation of the possible origin of the story. “Mais quel objet a pu lui donner le thème de sa burlesque histoire? Le voici probablement. Il y a sur la rive opposée au quai de Tréguier un oratoire, sous le titre de *S. Yves de Vérité*. L'amour de la justice dont était pénétré la saint et savant magistrat, le zèle et le dévouement avec lesquels il défendait les opprimés, sont demeurés tellement gravés dans les esprits, que, dans des cas d'injuste oppression ou de procès inique, on l'a invoqué spécialement dans ce lieu pour obtenir de Dieu par son entremise que la vérité fut connue, et l'injustice condamnée. Voilà un culte et un oratoire qui sont connus ici. Mais pour la chapelle de N. D. de la Haine, et sa bizarre superstition, elles sont de la création de M. E. Souvestre, et réellement sorties de son imagination fantasque. Car ici on ne trouve rien du pareil, ni dans le passé, ni dans le présent.” The contradiction is, of course, of the highest authority, as to the existence of such a chapel as Souvestre speaks of. But the very *culte* which M. Urvoy admits might very easily, in a rude people, pass into something much stronger than his description of it, and lurk among them in a shape, not so far removed from the detestable and shameful superstition which Souvestre alleges to exist. We must add that these letters rather injure the effect of their explanations, by insisting that “Brittany is one of the least superstitious parts of France;” and by the wholesale way in which they ascribe to Souvestre the intention of discrediting the clergy, and depreciate his knowledge of the people he describes. He may be an exaggerated writer; but there is every appearance that he writes, from continual and familiar intercourse with the peasantry.

senger of death. It was added, that he had lived for many years without house, or friends, or family. He taught the word of God in the country towns, slept at the foot of the stone crosses by the roadside, or on the thresholds of solitary chapels; he took in alms only what was necessary to satisfy his hunger, and refused, with disgust, the offer of money. Never, since his madness, had his hand been stretched out to ask for, or to clasp, another hand; never a word, save of holy counsel or prophetic threatening had fallen from his lips. In the darkest and coldest winter nights, when the frost or snow had surprised him in some lonely track, and prevented him from sleeping on his bed of stone, he remained all night standing with his rosary in his hand, chanting hymns in Breton. The people of the neighbourhood said, that a supernatural foreknowledge had been granted him, and that, at the hour when death was knocking at the door of a house, the madman always preceded it, crying Repentance, Repentance! . . . We soon perceived him standing on the blackened walls of a house which had been burnt some years before. He was a tall man, pale and thin. His hair fell over his shoulders, and he rolled his haggard eyes over the crowd which surrounded him. His gestures were frequent, and in jerks. He often shook his head like a wild beast, and then his black shaggy hair, half veiling his face, gave a terrible character to his look. His piercing voice had that marked tone common to the Breton accent.

“ His sermon, which turned upon the dangers of dancing, and the necessity of flying from the pleasures of the world, was in itself a very commonplace repetition of what I had heard twenty times in country churches; but, by degrees, the fit came upon him, and then his language assumed an energy by which I confess to have been myself overcome. Vivid images, stirring appeals, sarcasm, pointed, coarse, and driven home to the heart, and leaving its mark like a hot iron — this was its character. He pointed out to the crowd of dancers the rising tide, which would soon wash away the foot-tracks which they had left on the sand; he compared the sea which roared round their mirth as if in menace, to eternity, incessantly murmuring round their life a terrible warning; then, by an abrupt and familiar transition, he addressed his words to a young man who stood before him —

“ ‘ Good morrow, Pierre; good morrow to thee; dance and laugh, my son; here thou art, where, two years ago, they found the body of thy brother who was drowned.’ ”

“ He continued in the same strain, calling every one by his

name, stirring each heart by the bitterest recollections, and detailing them with ferocious exactness. This lasted long, and yet his cutting bantering was not softened. One felt, by turns, touched and indignant at hearing these sarcasms, sharp as daggers, which searched about in each man's history, to find out some old wound to open. At last Jôan quitted these personal addresses, to speak of the pains reserved for the sinner, and, attributing to God a horrible irony, he proclaimed to those who, on earth, had loved the intoxication of the dance and the revel, an eternal dance in the midst of the flames of hell. He described this circle of the damned, whirled about for millions of ages in a perpetual round of sufferings ever renewed, to the sound of wailing, and sobbing, and gnashing of teeth. In my life I had never heard anything so agitating as this grotesque sermon, mingled with bursts of maniac laughter, with imprecations, and prayers :—the crowd breathed hard.

“Then he contrasted, with this frightful description, a picture of the blessedness of the elect ; but his expressions were feeble and tame. He was not carried away, except when he spoke of the necessity of self-mortification, and of offering our sufferings to God. Then he gave the history of his life with so majestic a simplicity, that one might have fancied that one was hearing a page of Scripture. He told how he had lost his fortune, his children, his wife ; and, at the recital of each loss, he exclaimed,—‘It is well, my God : blessed be Thy holy name !’ The women burst into tears. He added advice and exhortations to repentance ; and finally, warming more and more, he told how his losses had appeared to him too little to expiate his sins. Jesus Christ had appeared to him in a dream, and had said to him, ‘Jôan, give me thy left hand—to me, who gave my life for thy salvation.’ ‘Lord, it is thine,’ he had answered.—‘And I have fulfilled my promise,’ he cried, raising above his head his left arm, which till now we had not noticed.

“There was a stump, wrapped round with bloody rags. A murmur of amazement and horror burst out all round.

“‘Who is afraid ?—who is afraid ?’ rejoined the maniac, whose vehemence seemed only to increase. ‘I have restored to God that which he gave me. Woe be to you, if the deed done at the command of Christ has made your hearts sick ! Behold ! behold ! It is Christ who has willed it. See what I have done for the love of Christ.’

“And the miserable man tore off, in a frantic transport, the bandages of his wound, and, shaking his bare stump over the crowd, made the blood spurt in a half circle on all their heads.

“ A long cry of horror rose ; part of the spectators fled terrified ; some men threw themselves on the wall where he stood, and bore him to a neighbouring cottage, almost insensible.” — *Souvestre*, pp. 25—28.

Yet this Breton peasant—this outlandish mediæval being—with his stoical, unhoping apathy, his low views of life, and vivid thoughts of death ; with his wild dangerous faith, and dogged attachment to the past ; so lofty and awful, and narrow-minded, and quaint,—is, after all, still a man ; the chances are, a thoughtful, well-judging, honest man, without pretence or sham,—understanding and trusting himself with fairness ; a man for unromantic self-sacrifices. Home and family feelings are as strong in Brittany as they are in England. Not that he is the least romantic in his domestic affections ; home and family, however indispensable, are simply what tame prose makes them, scenes of work, trials of temper. Never does the Breton cheat himself by gay illusions, not even on his wedding-day. Though he is poetical then, and sings, his poetry comes in, not to dwell on visions of bliss, but on the troubles of the cottage nursery ; to chant not an Epithalamium, but a Threnode. A strange “ Song of the Bride,” is that which Mr. Trollope has translated from Souvestre ; and the Bridegroom’s is like it :—

“ In other days—in the days of my youth—how warm a heart I had ! Adieu, my companions—adieu for ever !

“ I had a heart so ardent ! Neither for gold, nor for silver, would I have given my poor heart ! Adieu, my companions, adieu for ever !

“ Alas ! I have given it for nothing ! Alas ! I have placed it where joys and pleasures are no more. Adieu, my companions, adieu for ever !

“ Pains and toil await me. Three cradles in the corner of the fire ! A boy and a girl in each of them ! Adieu, my companions, adieu for ever !

“ Three others in the middle of the house ! Boys and girls are there together ! Adieu, my companions, adieu for ever !

“ Go, maidens ! haste to fairs and to pardons ! but for me I must do so no longer ! Adieu, my companions, adieu for ever !

“For me, see you not, that I must remain here! Henceforward I am but a servant, girls; for I am married. Adieu, my companions, adieu for ever!”

There is little gaiety, or gossip, or comfort in a Breton cottage, but nothing could make up to its tenant for the loss of its dull monotony. Just as it is, it exactly suits him; his surly affectionateness is satisfied with its dingy walls and silent company. We have drawn the wild side of his character; we will now extract a story from Souvestre, which shows him in his family—a curious picture of simplicity and reserve, of feeling and composure.

The writer goes to explore a Breton farm, one of the numberless little “homes” which parcel out the country, and which, with their surrounding fields, lie out of view of the great thoroughfares, hidden by their sheltering elms, or betrayed only by their thin column of smoke.

“The home of Jean Mauguerou, like all others in Brittany, consisted exclusively of a ground-floor room. The floor was of earth beaten hard, and the ceiling was formed of hazel bushes, with their dry leaves still on them, made into bundles, and supported on cross poles. On two sides of the house were four ‘*lits clos*’ (beds like berths on shipboard), the wood-work blackened by time, and with the monogram H surmounted by the cross—the usual decoration of Christian altars—carved in open work on their sliding pannels. Below these beds were seen chests of oak, with their delicate mouldings and slender shafts, spoils, no doubt, of some neighbouring manor-house, in the bad days, and carried off from the bower of some lady of the château to the peasant’s cottage. A high-backed arm chair, coarsely carved, was pushed into a corner of the huge chimney; and on the table opposite the casement, was the loaf of rye-bread wrapped up in a fringed napkin, under a white wicker cover. . . . As to the circumstances of the inhabitants, the large dung-heap which I had observed near the pond, and the sides of bacon hung over the hearth, showed plainly that Mauguerou might be reckoned among the rich farmers of the country.

“Just at this moment he appeared. He was a man of about five-and thirty, stern and plain, but stoutly built. While he was talking with my friend, his wife was putting out milk, butter, and



brown bread. She asked us to sit down, which we did, while Mauguerou lit his pipe at the fire.

“As I took up the box-wood spoon which had been set for me, I noticed that it was less rude in its make than the others, and that the name ‘Etienne’ was carved along the handle, between two vine-leaves, rather gracefully cut.

“‘Who is called Etienne in this house!’ I asked. The farmer’s wife blushed, but answered without hesitation, ‘It is a young man who is now a soldier.’

“‘Don’t you expect him soon?’ asked my friend.

“‘He wrote that he should be here for August.’

“‘That will be two good arms more to help you.’

“‘And a good heart,’ said the woman, almost to herself.

“The husband, enveloped in his cloud of smoke, listened unmoved.

“‘Who is this Etienne?’ I said to my friend, in French.

“‘He is Yvonne’s lover,’ said he, pointing to the woman.

“‘And is he coming to stay here?’

“‘Yes, in a few days.’

“‘And is her husband satisfied?’

“‘Her husband knows all.’

“I stared.

“‘What sort of man is he, then?’ I asked.

“‘He is a worthy man, who has confidence, and with good reason; Etienne has been tried, he has nothing to fear from him.’”

Etienne and Yvonne had known each other, and been in love with each other from children. In course of time, Etienne became farm servant to Yvonne’s father; and the two lovers plighted their troth, and made up their minds that they were to be man and wife. But Yvonne’s father had been ill for a long time; the farm had been neglected, and had got out of order. Things became worse and worse; the bailiffs began to threaten. Etienne was a mere boy, and knew nothing of farming; he could not help. At this pinch, Mauguerou, another of the farm servants, who had hitherto been in the back-ground, came forward, and took the command. Under his management, things improved, and at length righted. Before dawn, and after night-fall, he was at work. His cheek sank, and his hair turned, his back became bowed, his limbs stiffened; still he toiled on, silently

and unostentatiously, with stern calmness, and the family was saved.

“ But Yvonne’s father was dying. He called his children about his bed, and there, with the prayers for the dying already sounding in his ears, and with the funeral tapers already lighted at his bed’s head as at the head of a coffin, he spoke those sacred and solemn words, which the departing utter when their soul is in view of heaven. He bade Yvonne come near, and, laying his icy hand on her brow, he reminded her that she was now the mother of her young brothers and sisters. Then calling Mauguerou to her side — ‘ Here is the man who has raised our house,’ he said to her, ‘ and has saved you from wandering about the roads with the beggar’s wallet on your shoulder. You want him, Yvonne, for a stay to these children ; he must be your husband, and master.’

“ He saw that the young girl shuddered.

“ ‘ I know,’ he added, ‘ that thy heart is elsewhere ; but he whom thou lovest cannot carry on the farm. Submit to what God wills ; Christians receive baptism to suffer ; thy duty is better than thy joy. —

“ ‘ And you, Mauguerou, be gentle to your wife, and allow her to weep sometimes.’

“ Mauguerou, in silence, laid his hand on his heart, and bowed himself.

“ ‘ It is well,’ said the dying man. ‘ Now, Yvonne, will you do what I have asked of you ? Will you be this man’s wife, after I am dead ? ’

“ The young girl did not answer ; she had fallen on her knees by the bed, sobbing, and in agony, she cried, ‘ My father, my father ! ’ But her tears prevented her from saying more, and she shrunk instinctively from the promise.

“ ‘ Promise to obey your father, who is dying,’ said a voice behind her, full of lofty despair. Yvonne turned round ; her eyes met Etienne’s ; it was a farewell to happiness for both. Yvonne gave the promise, and her father died.

“ A month afterwards she had married Mauguerou. The day after the marriage, Etienne, who had been away for a week, came into the farm house. He went up to Mauguerou, who was sitting by the fire, took off his hat, and said, with a faint voice, —

“ ‘ Master, I am going away : yesterday, I became the king’s soldier.’

“ Mauguerou looked at him with surprise.

“ ‘ Why are you leaving us ? ’ he asked.

“ ‘ My heart is sick ; I must go elsewhere.’

“ ‘ You could have found a cure here among us.’

“ The young man shook his head, without answering.

“ ‘ Listen to me, Etienne,’ said Mauguerou, with simplicity ; ‘ remain here ; every body wishes you well ; you have your stool by the fire and your porringer in the dish-rack ; your going will make a void among us.’

“ ‘ It is better so, master — let me go. There are bad spirits round me in this house. I will come back when I have forgotten what is gone, when — when you have children.’\*

“ Mauguerou made a sign of distressed consent ; Etienne twisted his hat for a moment in embarrassment, and there was a pause.

“ ‘ Good bye, Mauguerou,’ he said, at last, with a choked voice.

“ The peasant seized his hand with both his own, and pressed it for some minutes without saying anything ; then he called out —

“ ‘ Yvonne, Etienne is going ; come and speak to him ! ’ And he left the house.

“ After a long and bitter farewell, the two lovers separated, and Etienne joined his regiment.” — *Souvestre*, pp. 442 — 450.

Jean Mauguerou is a true Breton peasant ; a reserved, silent, not unobservant, not unintelligent man ; though “ progress ” has no charms for him : if you are a stranger and an Englishman — a *Saxon* — he will bear you no particular love, but he will probably treat you with a kind of just courtesy, and be a man of his word ; his curiosity, or his local interest, may even make him talkative, and, if you can make out his French, he may startle you with some *naïve* disclosure of Chouan feeling, or popular superstition. Nor does he want for shrewdness, though he lives so much out of the world ; in some districts especially, for every parish almost has its own character, he is a match for most opponents. The people of Roscoff, the green-grocers of the province, who travel riding and singing in their light carts almost to the

\* “ L’adultère est extrêmement rare chez les paysans de la basse Bretagne ; le titre de mère est une sauvegarde pour une femme, et éloigne d’elle toute idée de séduction. C’est avant le mariage seulement, que les lois de la chasteté sont violées.” — *Souvestre*, p. 449.

gates of Paris, are dangerous traders : a purchaser must take care how he deals with them. Souvestre describes almost feelingly their skill in handling a customer ; their bullying, or their caressing, according to circumstances ; “ how, if he finds you firm, he will call you *son cher pauvre Chrétien*, and lavish on you the most endearing expressions of the Breton vocabulary, till he has insinuated his merchandise into your basket, and concluded his bargain before you have offered a price.” But this is an exception ; the grand resource of the Breton in making a bargain, is resolute ignorance of any language but his own.

“ The natural enemies of the Breton farmers are the cunning, subtle, Norman horse-dealers, who have long ‘worked’ the province to great advantage. The Bretons know this, and are in a state of perpetual distrust of the horse-dealers, which increases their natural taciturnity. They often sham drunkenness, to make the horse-dealers think that it will be easy to surprise them ; but generally, they entrench themselves in an apparent stupidity, of which nothing can express the grotesque truth. On that day not a single peasant knows French ; and the inexperienced purchaser lets fall expressions which guide the seller in his bargaining : but the older dealers are up to the farce, and retort by affecting an entire ignorance of the Celtic language. Then it is a scene worth looking at, this struggle between Breton and Norman trickery ; the peasant, listening immovably, with a stupid attention, to the horse-dealer’s remarks, who, with an air of indifference, looks at the horse as if he cared not a straw about it, remarks fifty faults, loud enough for the seller to hear, and ends by proposing half the real value ;—the result of this ‘*fourberie laborieuse*’ naturally being that, if the bargainers are equally matched, the fair price is hit upon.”—*Souvestre*, p. 395.

But bargain-making of any kind is not the line of the Breton ; his defensive position shows that he is not at home in it. He adheres to the old notion of riches ; he makes money, if he can, but by close parsimony, not by speculation ; he hoards, but does not invest. The mere process of buying and selling has no attractions for him ; his enjoyments are of a different kind. The nation is still too poetical for the joys of business.

As in many other things, so in this, Brittany is a specimen of the old world: it is still in its poetical phase; it has scarcely yet reached to prose; all is rhythm, all is traditional, everything is chanted or sung. "When the cholera was in the province," says Souvestre, "it was in vain that the *préfet* and the doctors sent forth proclamations, directions, warnings; no peasant would look at them, for they were mere official prose. The only way was to make a *chanson sur le choléra*, and set it to a national air; and then the beggars were soon chanting in all parts of the country, "what Christians were to do to escape the cholera." Poetry is there in its earliest state, before it has become a literature, or a luxury, or the voice of individual feeling or genius; the natural, free, careless outpouring of feeling in rude and warm-hearted masses. Poetry is with them not an inspiration, but a habit of mind, a sense or faculty; a natural part of a character impressible and thoughtful, intent on few objects, and those absorbing ones. Without any great events, or great names, their poetry floats and circulates from village to village, from generation to generation, homely, and real, and touching; perpetually oozing out, fresh and exuberant, from the undistinguished crowd — hymns, and ballads, and elegies, and Theocritean idyls, and love laments, and satires, and tragedies; quaint combinations, in every conceivable degree, of clumsiness and delicacy, the genuine work of the people; of village tailors and schoolmasters, strolling beggars, and young seminarists. The individual author may put his name, but it is forgotten; his work is known only by its subject; it is passed from mouth to mouth, altered and interpolated at will, to make it a more perfect expression of the feeling which it embodies. After a time it may be printed; but its home is in the voices and memories of the peasants. The blind beggar goes from *pardon* to *pardon*, like the old *ῥαψωδὸς*, and stands by the church reciting his poem on the birth of Jesus Christ, which it takes him a whole day to get through. And as it is living poetry, it has its music, and is sung; and poems and airs alike are endless.

The character of these “songs of the people”—the genuine expression of feelings, which elsewhere the sympathy of art prides itself on copying — is well given in the following, the “famous complaint of the labourer.” Even diluted through French prose into English, it calls up some notion of what the original must be, when it is heard in its own rude force, and monotonous rhythm, in the smoky cottages, or on the half-cultivated “landes” of Brittany.

“THE COMPLAINT OF THE LABOURER.

“My daughter, when the silver ring is put on thy finger beware who gives it thee :

“My daughter, when thou makest room for two in thy cottage-bed, see that thou hast a soft pillow.

“My daughter, when thou choosest a husband, take not a soldier, for his life is the King’s : take not a sailor, for his life is the sea’s ; but, before all, take not a labourer, for his life belongs to toil and misfortune.

“The labourer rises before the little birds are awake in the woods, and he toils until evening. He fights with the earth without peace or respite, till his limbs are stiff, and he leaves drops of sweat on every blade of grass.

“Rain or snow, hail or sunshine, the little birds are happy, for the good God gives a leaf to each of them for shelter ; but the labourer, he has no hiding-place : his bare head is his roof-tree ; his flesh is his home.

“Every year he must pay his rent to the landlord ; and if he is behind, the master sends his bailiff. Rent !—the labourer shows his fields parched up, and his mangers empty. Rent ! Rent !—the labourer shows his children’s coffins at the door, covered with the white cloth. Rent ! Rent ! Rent !—the labourer bows his head, and they lead him to prison.

“Very miserable, too, is it to be the labourer’s wife : all night long the children cry, and she rocks them ; all day, at her husband’s side, she is turning the ground : she has no time to comfort herself — no time to pray, to soothe her heart. Her body is like the wheel of the parish mill ; ever must it be going, to grind for her little ones.

“And when her sons are grown great, and their arms are grown strong to relieve their parents, then the king says to the labourer

and his wife:—‘You are old, and too weak to train up your children; see how strong they are, I will take them from you for my war.’

“And the labourer and his wife begin afresh to sweat and to suffer, for they are once more alone. The labourer and his wife are like the swallows which build their nest under the windows in the town; every day they are swept away, every day they must begin again.

“O labourers! ye lead a sore life in the world. Ye are poor, and ye make others rich;—despised, and ye pay honour;—persecuted, and ye submit yourselves; ye are cold, and ye are hungry. O labourers! ye endure much in this life; labourers, ye are, blessed.

“God hath said, that the great gates of His Paradise shall be open for those who have wept upon earth. When ye shall come to heaven, the saints will know you for their brethren by your wounds.

“The Saints will say—‘brothers, it is not good to live; brothers, life is sorrowful, and it is a happy thing to be dead;’ and they will receive you into glory, and into joy.”—*Souvestre*, p. 450.

But the Paris newspaper is on its way, and doubtless this natural poetry is gradually failing, hemmed in by French prose. The marriage negotiations, which used to be a trial of extempore poetical talent between the young lady’s friends and the village tailor who was the mediator, are now generally carried on in set couplets;—even the *bazvalan*, the humpbacked, squinting tailor, with his one stocking white, and the other blue, is become a formula. And other things in time will follow him. But they are not gone yet. The story, and song, and tragedy are still the great delight of the Breton peasantry, which they enjoy with the utmost gravity and seriousness, as they enjoy their not less solemn dances, or wrestling matches, and, at fitting times, the pleasure of getting drunk.

Nothing brings out the mingled clumsiness and feeling of the Breton character, its originality of idea and want of resources, so much as their tragedies. The Breton tragedy is a remarkable thing in its way; a serious and important

affair, both in the eyes of actors and spectators, by no means to be confounded with what, at first sight, it most resembles, the trumpery of an English fair, or the exhibition of strolling players; nay, not even with the refined and magnificent opera. There is a rude quaint dignity and self-respect about it: it is not a money-making show, presented by paid and professional actors, but an entertainment given to equals by their equals, who find an ample recompense in the pleasure of their own acting, and the attention of their audience. The tragedy itself has lofty pretensions, and professes a higher mission than merely to amuse. Supremely despising all effect, all artificial arrangement, or strokes of passion, it marshals, with solemn clumsy exactness, the instructive moralities of some notable life before the audience, "in chapters, rather than scenes." It begins with unaffected gravity, in the most Holy Name; then comes the Prologue, giving good advice, and the key of the drama, to the "Christian and honourable" assembly which has collected to hear it, while at every four verses the actor who is reciting, makes the circuit of the theatre, followed by all the company, during which "march," say the stage directions, "the rebecks and bagpipes must sound:" and then, in perfect keeping with this grotesque beginning, follows the interminable length of the play itself, divided into a number of "*journées*," and often actually extending over more than one day. But however long it may be, it never tires out the grave patience of a Breton audience.

The external appliances and machinery of the theatre show the same high-minded contempt for scenic illusion. Tragedy in Brittany still preserves, in its theatre, its antique simplicity. While it has elsewhere retired under cover, strutting by gas-light before the rich in a gorgeous playhouse, or ranting in a barn before the poor by dim rush-light illumination, it here comes forward under the open sky, and its stage is still mounted upon waggons. Mr. Trollope thus describes what he saw of the Tragedy of St. Helena.

"The ground, though all covered with turf, was considerably broken and uneven, so as to afford peculiar facilities to a large



concourse of people, all anxious to have a perfect view of the same object. On the highest point of the ground, with its back against the gable end of a house adjoining the common, was the stage. Nine large carts had been arranged in close order, in three rows of three each, and on these a rude scaffolding of planks was supported. At the back of this were hung, on a rope sustained by poles, on either side, several sheets, so as to partition off a portion at the back of the stage, to serve as a green-room for the performers to retire to. This white back ground was ornamented with a few boughs of laurel, and bunches of wild flowers, and, somewhat less appropriately, perhaps, with two or three coloured prints, from the cottages of the neighbours, of Bonaparte and the Virgin.

“Of the performers — though it was now past two o’clock, despite the promised punctuality of our friend, the tailor — there was yet no appearance. The crowd, however, seemed to be waiting with great patience, and every body appeared to be in high good humour. All were busily engaged in securing the most advantageous places. One long row, chiefly composed of women, occupied the top of the churchyard wall — a most desirable position, inasmuch as, though seated at their ease, they were sufficiently raised to see over the heads of those who stood at the bottom of the wall. Some preferred seats on a bank which commanded a perfect view of the stage, but which must have been rather too far to hear well, to a nearer place, were it would have been necessary to stand. The greater part of the men stood in the immediate front of the scaffolding, gazing on the unoccupied stage, and waiting with imperturbable patience the appearance of the performers.

“At length, the shrill tones of the national instrument — the bag-pipe — were heard approaching from a lane, which opened upon the common, and all eyes were immediately turned in that direction. We were, probably, the only persons on the ground, who were not aware that this betokened the arrival of the players. But we were not long left in our ignorance. For presently the bag-piper himself, followed by men bearing the banners belonging to the church, made their appearance upon the common. Behind these, in grave and solemn procession, and full theatrical costume, came the tragedians. The crowd immediately formed a lane for them to pass, and thus, with great dignity and decorum, they reached the scaffolding, and, one after another, mounted by a ladder to the stage. When they were all up, they marched thrice round the boards in the same order as before, with the bagpipe still playing at their head; then

gravely bowed to the audience, who lifted their hats in return, and retired behind the sheets, to their green-room.

“The appearance of the corps dramatique was more preposterously absurd and strange than can well be conceived by those who have not seen them with the accompanying circumstances of air, manner, and expression, and all the surrounding objects, which gave such novelty and striking character to the scene.

“There was the pope with his triple crown, very ingeniously constructed of coloured paper, a black petticoat for a cassock, a shirt for a surplice, and a splendid cope, made of paper-hangings, and with the twofold cross in his hand. There were two kings with paper crowns, adorned with little waxen figures of saints, and arrayed in printed cotton robes, carrying in one hand a sword and in the other a cross. Three or four wore the uniform of the national guard, and the remainder made any additions they could to their usual costume, which they thought would most contribute to the general effect. The female characters were all sustained by men, dressed as much like the usual costume of ladies as their knowledge and resources would permit. A very fine young man, six feet high by two and a half at least broad, was selected to personate St. Helen, who was dressed entirely in white, with a large table-cloth for a veil.

“There was one exception only to the general air of deep gravity and perfect seriousness which prevailed throughout. This was a buffoon, who was dressed in shreds, with a cap and bells, and a long pigtail, with a huge horn in his hand, which he blew from time to time. His part was to fill up the time between the acts with buffoonery and jests. He was regarded by the crowd as he walked in the procession, making faces and affecting to ridicule the tragedians, with a passing smile; but, for the most part, they were as grave as the performers.

“The performance commenced by a single actor coming from behind the curtain of sheets, and making a very long speech. It was in rhyme, and was delivered in a very distinct manner, with much, but very unvaried action, and an extremely loud voice, that strongly marked the rhythm and cadences of the verse. He began at one corner of the front of the stage, and spoke a certain number of lines, then moved to the middle and repeated a similar quantity, did the same at the other corner, and then returned to his original position, and so on. In this manner, he must have delivered, I should think, nearly two hundred verses.

“He then retired, and out came the buffoon. His fun consisted, of course, chiefly in absurd attitudes, in blowing his horn, in ribaldry, and sundry standing jests, which succeeded in producing shouts of laughter. The most successful joke of all, which was repeated every time he came upon the stage, consisted in his assuming an air of the greatest terror, and effecting his escape in the most precipitate manner, when the graver actors returned upon the scene.

“The same remarks will apply to the delivery of all the other actors as to that of the first. They generally continued walking up and down the stage while speaking, and marched round it in procession at the conclusion of every scene.”

And yet this scene, with all its ineffable grotesqueness, — spiritless, childish, wearisome, — of all coarse and helpless attempts after the sublime, the most ludicrous, — is not vulgar; you cannot despise it, while you laugh at it. In spite of the matchless clumsiness of the whole proceeding, there is a seriousness about it, a composure, a genuine appreciation of the high and great; and its glaring freedom from all efforts after effect, the simple undisguised monotony of the whole scene, raises it out of the class of ordinary stage shows. It aims in earnest at reviving the past, — the heroic, or the saintly, the strange changes of character, the visible providences, that were then. The popular interest is still set high, and that, of its own accord; for these tragedies come from the people, — their authors are scarcely known. The exhibition is not that of a low-minded or low-bred people; even about the manner of giving it there is a dignity and mutual self-respect, an *ἐλευθεριότης*, a sort of gentlemanliness; actors and spectators meet as equals; the spectators come, not to pay hirelings to amuse them, but to assist at an entertainment given by their fellows and friends. All goes on as between equals, — equals of high breeding, — with solemn etiquette, and all the ceremoniousness of old-fashioned aristocratic courtesy.

Indeed this self-respect is one of the most striking characteristics of the Breton peasant. The eldest born of the races of France, he has a strong feeling of the honours of

years and ancient blood: he is the old *noblesse* among the French peasantry. There was no prouder noble in the French peerage than the Breton Rohan — ‘*Roi je ne suis, prince ne daigne, Rohan je suis,*’—but before the proudest of the Rohans his own tenants would have drawn themselves up, and said in their solemn manner, “*Me zo deuzar Armorig—I too am a Breton.*” \* Yet with them the pride of the Celt is deeply hidden; it does not show itself in any thing petty, — in any small peevishness, or uneasy watchfulness after small slights. It is dignified, almost unconscious, — it pervades the man; and, when it appears, it explodes. Their blood is as good as the gentleman’s, and so is their faith; and while the gentleman is just, the peasant is content with his lower place in the world: but the gentleman must not interfere with what God has appointed, or with what the peasant thinks his due. No one can, on occasion, hate the gentleman with deeper, bloodier hatred, than the old-fashioned royalist peasant. He is at once aristocratic and republican; too proud not to recognise gentle blood and superiority in others; too proud, also, to do so slavishly. He will not refuse to work for the *messieurs*, but it is a traditional point of honour with him that the “labour of the gentleman” should not display an excess of zeal. † Nor will he defile himself with the low toil and base gains of the artizan. His thoughts and his works are about that where man’s art stops short, and the mysterious unseen Hand only works, without labour or stint; with the old, sacred, benignant earth, which rewards, but does not traffic; — with his own peculiar plot of ground, and the masterless sea; the pasture and the corn field, and the sea-weed on the beach. Careless about the works of his own hands, and rugged in his skill, he rejoices in the gifts which come perfect and immediate from God, and by which his life is nourished. He ploughs, he reaps, he threshes the grain, in the spirit and gladness of patriarchal faith; as it is his labour, so is it his chief joy in life.

\* Michelet.

† Souvestre, p. 459.

The Breton threshing-floor is well described by Souvestre. The sound of the flail is one of the most familiar summer sounds in Brittany. Every one who has travelled there will remember it—borne from a distance on the wind, as his road passed the opening of some valley—and the lines of dancing, bounding figures, among the corn.

“When the sheaves were carefully spread out on the floor, the old peasant who had led the reapers, took his place, and made the sign of the cross, by striking with his flail several times; this was, as it were, the taking possession of the floor. The other labourers then ranged themselves in a circle. The flails first rose slowly, and without order, whirling round, and poising themselves like waltzers ready to start and getting into the step,—then, on a sudden, at a shout of the leader, they fell all together, and rose again and descended in cadence. The stroke, at first light and moderate, soon took a more lively movement: it fell heavier, it grew animated, then hurried and furious. The reapers, carried away by a sort of nervous intoxication, danced up and down among the resounding sheaves, on which their blows fell fast and thick as a summer hail-storm. The dust of the chaff raised by the flail rose round them in light eddying clouds, and a line of sweat marked each muscle beneath their tight-fitting dress. At intervals they seemed to yield to this toil, and the regular beat became weaker by degrees, as if it was lost in the distance; but then, the leader gave a peculiar cry, a mixture of encouragement, rebuke, and command, and, in a moment, thirty shouts responded and, the sound of the threshing became louder and louder, like an approaching peal of thunder,—it rallied, it spread, more rapid, more wild, more furious.”—*Souvestre*, p. 463.

Out of this wild country, and its stern, poetical-minded people, French enterprise is trying to make something more adapted to the standard of Paris and *Napoléonesque* ideas. French enterprise is not the most promising engine to produce great changes in commerce and industry. It talks very cleverly, but it talks too much; it wants the spirit of plodding, it wants capital. But it is at work. A manufactory of steam engines was set up at Landerneau\*, great trouble

\* *Souvestre*, p. 485.

was taken, great patience shown by the engineer; the Breton peasants were drilled out of their clumsiness and poetry, and learnt to believe that the steam engine was a machine, and that they could make one. But capital failed. We have before alluded to the attempts to introduce a more modern style of farming,—an up-hill work, in which the disinterestedness of the improvers is suspected, and every failure is looked upon by the peasantry as a judgment against them. Interference with the earth, their ancient ally and friend, is peculiarly repugnant to Breton feeling, and deemed almost profane.

The following passage will show in what spirit the improvements of the French farmer are met. It is a dialogue between an old Breton peasant, the patriarch of the neighbourhood, and an “improving” French gentleman-farmer, who had reclaimed a large tract from the sea, by shutting it out with a dyke. The dyke did not please his old-fashioned neighbour. A report got about of a compact with evil spirits, and it was called *le Mole du Diable*. The farmer, for his own protection, and to prevent its being injured by them, had all the new works “baptized” by the parish priest—the dyke, and the drained land, and his own new house. To the surprise of the peasants, the improvements stood the holy water without moving; but the people were not a bit the more reconciled to them.

“‘You were one of those,’ (he says to the old peasant,) ‘who maintained that I should never succeed in enclosing the bay.’

“‘It is true, sir.’

“‘*Eh bien, père*, you see that you are out. The sea herself has furnished me with rocks and sand to wage war with her; and she has produced a child stronger than herself; and now the dyke laughs at her.’

“‘Men say that it is a sin for children to make a mock at their parents,’ answered Carfor.

“‘However, you see I have done what I said.’

“The old man shrugged his shoulders, as if to express his doubts; he was silent for a moment; then stretching out his hand to the shoulder of the farmer, with a gesture at once respectful and familiar,—

“ ‘You are strong, Sir,’ he said ; ‘but *le bon Dieu* is stronger than you ; *le bon Dieu* had said to the sea to go as far as there ;’ and he pointed to the hillocks. ‘Some day he will find out that the sea is no longer obeying him, and then your dyke will have to give way to the will of God.’

“ ‘And how do you know, father, whether *le bon Dieu* has not himself given me this bay?’

“The peasant shook his head.

“ ‘*Monsieur le bon Dieu ne vend pas son bien,*’ said he gravely ; ‘this is land stolen from the sea, and stolen goods bring no luck.’”

—The farmer is a little nettled ; and talks of the money he has put into circulation, and the various benefits to the neighbourhood which would result from his improvements ; “*mais ces hommes ne comprennent rien.*”

“ ‘We understand,’ answered Carfor, ‘that when the rocks begin to move, the grains of sand are crushed. Rich men like you are always awkward neighbours for the small folk. The country was made for the country-folk, and towns for the gentlefolk ; and if these come into the country, there will soon be no place for us. Before, when this bay belonged to the sea, the sea lent it to us for eight hours in the day ; we could bring our carts over it, to go to the beach to pile up our sea-weed. Down in the corner there, was some coarse grass, on which our sheep browsed ; now you have made a ditch all round it, and said to the sea, and to us, who were its kinsmen and friends, You shall not come here any more, this belongs to me. And you wonder that we are not satisfied. We poor people do not like these changes, because there is never a change without taking from us a bit of our little place under the sun. If we used to like better to see the water there than the corn, it is because the sea was always a better neighbour than the *bourgeois.*’” — *Souvestre*, p. 435.

The old quarrel, so hard to adjust, but so certain in its issue, between the improver, and the poor man of his day : to whom it is small comfort to be told, what is perfectly true, that returns will come to *some one*, and to him, *if he can but wait*. The story goes on to relate, that the sea *did* prove stronger than Monsieur, and in the course of an equinoctial night washed away his dyke, and destroyed everything. When he comes down to view his losses, there is the old

Breton standing on the ruined dyke, looking out on the sea, "*comme pour la complimenter de sa victoire.*" The cause of improvement had not much to hope for in the neighbourhood after this.

But this might happen anywhere; habit, and distrust of improvements, and suspicion of the disinterestedness of improvers, are not confined to Brittany. There is something deeper at work beneath. Brittany is really not France, any more than the outlandish names on its map, its Plouha, and Poullaouen, and Locmariaker, and Guipava, and Lannilis, are French. It is little more to France than a nursery for some thousands of good soldiers and sailors, and a causeway for the road to Brest. Opposite in character to the people, and uncongenial in feeling, the Frenchman is not at home in Brittany; he feels as a stranger, and is felt as such. They hate England there, it is true. Englishmen, besides being strangers and enemies, are *Saxon heretics*; Souvestre talks of the little village girls dancing with triumphant glee over the unconsecrated graves of a shipwrecked "Saxon" crew: — but they have not forgotten that they once had wars with France. When the Duke de Nemours visited them, two years ago, the names of Breton victories over the French were not forgotten, on the triumphal arches under which he passed. Brittany hangs on to France, because it cannot well do otherwise; but like a mass of extraneous matter, which will not assimilate, dead and heavy and unsympathising. As a part of France, she is not doing her work. A national character that ought to tell on the whole country, resolute, steady, serious, and though slow, apprehensive, — full of quiet deep fortitude, — seems thrown away. The field of European civilisation is not, of course, the only or the highest field for these qualities; but if the advance of human society is to be considered as a providential dispensation, it is one field; and they are missed, they have not found their place, when they are not there. Brittany is like a nation which has failed in its object, and been beaten. While her neighbours are in the heyday of success, hopeful and busy, she keeps apart, contented with her own isolation, stagnant, almost in decay; and looks on with



melancholy listlessness amid the stirring of the world. Her time may be yet to come. But now, with so much that is striking in individual character, amid genuine and deeply-felt influences of the Church, she languishes as a country, aimless, without any part to play; a study for the summer tourist,—a curious contrast to that he has left behind. Yet she may remind him also, if he be wise, of times, when the present, if it had as much of man's heart, had less of his feelings and his reason; a witness, like those times, of that perplexing truth, the seeming vanity to each individual man of the wonderful and magnificent order of things in which he lives—of the very short and passing interest he appears to have personally, in that which, for society, and as a system, has such high-wrought perfection and value.

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## AUDIN'S LEO X.\*

[OCTOBER, 1846.]

M. D'AUBIGNÉ'S History of the Reformation is a bold attempt to revive in all their strength the feelings of that time, and to represent Luther and Zwingli not merely as great men and reformers, but as little short of Apostles. M. D'Aubigné writes with much liveliness and spirit, with much minuteness of detail, and profusion of citation; every page overflows with sympathy, with admiration, with triumph—and as the subjects of his panegyric were equally strong in their praise and their abuse, he aims at copying them in rough sweeping expressions of abhorrence and vituperation. He identifies himself most successfully with their ideas and measures: nothing comes amiss; nothing, however, apparently awkward, finds him embarrassed—we can hardly say for excuses, for that would be to degrade his heroes, but,—for ingenious laudation. He pushes on without shrinking or misgiving, with an enthusiasm which nothing can put out of countenance, with an admiration which no continued exercise can fatigue, with a confidence which nothing can shame. His pages are no bad picture of the progress of the movement; they roll on, crowded with the Reformers' own words, boisterous, abrupt, scornful, self-complacent—secure of convincing, unconscious of fallibility, and incapable of doubt. One broad maxim governs the whole: that it is impossible to say anything too bad against Rome, or too good about Luther. And by the help of this, with a generous imagination, and a skilful use of grotesque old quotations,

\* *Histoire de Léon X.* Par M. AUDIN, Chevalier de l'Ordre de Saint-Grégoire le Grand, Membre de l'Académie et du Cercle Littéraire de Lyon, Président de l'Institut Catholique de la même Ville, Membre de l'Académie Tibérine, et l'Académie de la Religion Catholique de Rome. Paris: L. Maisson. 1844.

M. D'Aubigné has eased his heart of much spite against the Pope, and has accomplished a popular history, very graphic and dramatic, according to the use of the day.

We have before us, in M. Audin's *Leo X.*, the appropriate pendant to M. D'Aubigné's *Reformation*. In many respects, of course, a great contrast, it nevertheless matches it very well, as opposites often do. Like D'Aubigné's book, it is a history of the newest fashion, alive with picturesque incident, strewed thick with characteristic quotations, for the sake rather of their words than of their weight as evidence, animated all through by a resolute spirit of admiration, which expresses itself, not in the stiff formal reflections which satisfied the stupid earnestness of old party historians, but in gushes of warm sympathy, in brilliant strokes of dramatic effect, in touches and bursts, which mark not only the historian, but the *littérateur*, the wit, the poet, the man. But it looks at the times from an opposite point of view. M. D'Aubigné writes as the historian of the *Reformation*; M. Audin, as the historian of the "*Renaissance*." Italy and the Pope, who are the objects of M. D'Aubigné's horror, fill M. Audin with inexpressible enthusiasm; and as M. D'Aubigné makes an Apostle of Luther, M. Audin makes a Saint of Leo X.

The differences of style and execution which mark these two remarkable efforts at picturesque apology, only make each the more suitable companion of the other. M. D'Aubigné writes as the historian of revolution and strife, who is in his element amidst confusion and storm. He admires the eager restlessness, the turbulence, the insurgent and conquering energies of the time. He paints with warmth the struggles and doubts of conscience, the agonised throes of approaching liberty. He revels in the truculent jest, the withering rebuke, the triumphant retort, the staggering interrogation; he gloats over the rage of defeated Tetzels and Ecks, the trepidations of exposed friars, and the mortification of humbled diplomatists. Fully persuaded of the victory of his own side, he thoroughly enjoys the conflict. He affects the free, the impetuous, the uncouth, the wild; his style is harsh, sententious, broken, without finish or measure. M. Audin

has all that the other wants of smoothness and repose. He writes to set forth a time of "unity and faith, of light and liberty\*;" his visions are all of peace and beauty; a gentle insinuating softness pervades his volumes; he speaks in the tones of wronged innocence—wronged, yet not provoked, only plaintive. For the dark, gusty sky of Germany and Switzerland, we have the bright gay light of the South, making all objects look smiling and fair. All that was grim and forbidding in the history of the *Renaissance* is smoothed and softened into a lofty sternness and heroic majesty; dark blots and scandals dissolve and vanish in the rosy brilliancy of his poetical pages, and even the fearful name of Borgia, the bugbear of history, expands into magnificence, and in the lustre of great purposes and deeds loses all its horrors. But calm scenes and peaceful souls, such as at the *Renaissance* he finds in abundance, are his delight: one after another they rise up in his smooth, flowing, glossy descriptions, touched off with delicate fondness, graceful tenderness, or irony, playful, but not severe. D'Aubigné's history is tempestuous and stirring. Audin's, soothing, sentimental, unctuous. He allows the intrusion of no foul crimes to shock us—nothing but the ebullitions of some lofty but undisciplined spirit, whose very falls give it a romantic interest. War makes its appearance, indeed; war carried on by a Pope. But it is war consecrated by high zeal, and without taint of worldly ambition; war ennobled alternately by graceful resignation in disaster, or paternal forbearance in victory: and this is succeeded by a time of peace and unrivalled splendour. We see a court at once the wisest and holiest, and the most brilliant in Europe; where austere self-denial and the keenest wit go hand in hand—where Pagan art and literature lend all their grace, and are purified from all their evil—where hearty affection, sportive gaiety, and tender charity shine forth amid the marvels of reviving art, and the charms of poetry; a time of easy and yet guarded innocence, enjoying in thankfulness and security its rich and magnificent home, till the rebel monk arose to disturb its peace, with his turbulence and

\* Vol. i. p. xviii.

craft and ingratitude, his vulgar jests and brutal slanders. Such is M. Audin's picture of the Rome of Leo X.; a very fairy-land of Ultra-montanism has he conjured up, in his ardent enthusiasm, out of the records of the sixteenth century.

M. Audin is a disciple of De Maistre, and his book is a bold attempt to recover for his master's views a field of history, where hitherto they have found more than ordinary embarrassment; to gain back to the interest and sympathy of his own side a time, when the Roman court and hierarchy have been supposed very generally to have forgotten, for a while, their mission. This has of course ever been a chosen subject for Protestant criticism and vituperation; Catholics also, says M. Audin, have been carried away by fatal prejudices, and they have left it to the suspicious admiration of a learned but liberal Protestant to write the most popular eulogy of a great Pope.

“Leo X. has been unfortunate; he has not escaped the praises any more than the calumnies of the Reformation: and praise, in the form in which it is given, would wrong the memory of the Pope more than insult itself. Protestantism makes of him an accomplished man of letters, a brilliant poet, a mere literary character of the *Renaissance*, entirely taken up, on the throne of St. Peter, with the vanities of this world: what is more sad, it has imposed upon Catholic opinion, which acquiesces in a judgment dictated by passion. We fully accept the praises which Protestant writers have, for their own ends, awarded to Leo X.; but we claim for him a glory more lasting than that one, which finds here below its reward in the admiration and applause of men: and this glory, which God only can give, we shall have to restore to him, when we see him, in the course of a life so short and so pregnant, practising all the Gospel precepts, which he had studied, as a child, at Florence—preserving in exile that purity which, according to the expression of a contemporary writer, defied suspicion itself; living in the midst of the Roman *literati*, after the manner of the primitive Christians,—fasting, praying, rude to himself—practising abstinence three times a-week—scattering round him abundant alms—and when God calls him to be head of the Church, giving to the world the spectacle of the most eminent Christian virtues.”—*Audin*, i. xiv. xv.

No one, of course, can wonder at M. Audin's taking a new view of his subject, and a very different one from Roscoe, Sismondi, or Ranke; he has every right to do so. Every great principle gives a new grouping and effect, a new light and shade, to the facts of history. M. Audin is an Ultramontane, and the others are not. And considering how Protestant writers have often treated this period, and the absurd and incredible picture which they have drawn of it — their blundering spite, their voracious credulity, their shallowness, and meanness of principle—the marvellous way in which they have taken for facts, the mythical exaggerations with which Luther eased his soul, and solemnly believed that they were describing a true state of things, when they painted the Church of the day as having absolutely lost all Christianity, we cannot quarrel with M. Audin for coming forward to vindicate this age of the Church from the attacks of such mingled stupidity and ill-nature. It is quite true that Christianity was not forgotten; that goodness and faith were not extinct; and that such an extremely improbable supposition as that the Church was teaching nothing but falsehood, and doing no good in the world, is by no means borne out by the facts of the case.

We are now in the days of fairness and candour. All are ready to make admissions and give up prejudices. The papacy of Leo's age must have had a good side: and a fair statement of its true position claims, and probably would receive, attention. Nor could any one complain, if M. Audin took full advantage of the absurdities of antagonist historians. If he chose to be witty, or ironical, or indignant, it cannot, we think, be denied that they are fair game, and that his victory would not be a hard one. And even that luscious profusion of sentiment with which he envelopes his subject, his bursts of feeling, and his peremptory apophthegms, the dramatic turns and highly imaginative colouring in which he delights, must be judged of by French and not English rules of criticism, and much must be allowed to an ardent writer, anxious to convey vividly his impressions of a great history, and of striking and varied character.

But after all allowances made, M. Audin's book is a very strong case of historical daring—one, we think, which few but a Frenchman would have thought of, or ventured on. That the scandals of the Church of Leo's time were much exaggerated by the Reformers is credible. That ecclesiastical feelings and traditions were not extinct among the clergy, that the ordinary long-used methods of the Church to reform abuses, and maintain her discipline, were not utterly forgotten—that there were in Italy, often high in station, noble examples of a pure and devoted life, is also highly probable. In the worst days, God's providence has been more merciful to His Church than reformers could admit, or than history has recorded. But M. Audin wishes us to believe that the time of the *Renaissance* was one of the brightest eras of Church history, till darkened by the rise of the Reformation. He wishes us to believe that the Papacy was still witnessing to Europe for the cause of truth and goodness, and guiding with zeal and deep wisdom the interests of Christendom; that besides some exceptional cases of partial scandal, there was nothing wrong or out of order in the government of the Church; that there never was a time of deeper and stronger faith, never a time when the rulers of the Church were more alive to their duties, or were more earnest in discharging them.

M. Audin forgets that, as we said, we live in days of candour—unless across the Channel it is not necessary to remember it. Here certainly it has been a favourite and very effective topic of controversy, that attachment to principles could not change facts. People have been told with much truth, and with great force, that a bad case, or a bad story, will not bear patching. The charge of bolstering up the Reformation has been a well-chosen subject for keen irony and triumphant scorn, and more than one waverer has been decided in his course by the fear of being committed to such plausibilities. We have been drilled into a state of sensitive and rigorous candour: it is a nervous thing to attack any one, except one's own friends; and we are never so comfortable as when making admissions against our own side. The

Roman communion has reaped the full benefit of this feeling. But they must not claim opposite advantages at once: they must not shame us into frankness, and enjoy nothing but theory and sentiment themselves. A Roman Catholic is not obliged to write history, when it seems to go against him; but if he chooses to do so, he must remember that if history will not bend for Protestantism or Anglicanism, neither will it for Ultra-montanism. M. Audin thinks that he has destroyed the prestige that hung about Luther: he has done so, as one of his critics expresses it, by prying about with keen and curious eye behind the scenes — “particulièrement dans les coulisses.” When he turned his hand to the work of “*réhabilitation*,” he should have remembered his former employment. He should have remembered that Time, “that fearless historian,” as he calls him, is not more afraid of Popes than of Reformers; and he should have been cautious about engaging his feelings in a piece of wholesale whitewashing, which equals most Protestant efforts in that way, both in daring and in sustained self-complacency, and leaves them far behind, clumsy productions as most of them are, in its ingenious adaptation to the ideas of the nineteenth century.

The cause of the Papacy has hitherto been recommended, and has hitherto found sympathy, because, as has been said, it has always taken the strict side. M. Audin fans his enthusiasm, and seeks to arouse that of his reader in its favour, by glowing pictures of the *Renaissance* in Italy, and by showing how the Papacy, especially under Leo, was allied with it.

Considering that M. Audin is a Catholic, his ecstatic admiration of the revival of letters, — no other words can convey an idea of his way of speaking — is somewhat startling. That the *Renaissance* was a most brilliant and wonderful period; that it was a time when the highest gifts of mind were seen on all sides in rich profusion — that a sense of grace and beauty was strikingly developed and cultivated — that the *Renaissance* was a great step in civilisation, is quite true — as it is true also of the time of Socrates and Aristophanes. But a Christian and a champion of that Church, whose boast it is,



never to have heeded the charge of bigotry or barbarism when matters affecting Christian faith or Christian morals were at stake, might well pause before he expressed such warm and unreserved sympathy with the spirit and men of the *Renaissance*.

M. Audin, however, does not feel himself under any restrictions; and he throws himself, with the utmost zest, into a highly-coloured and impassioned description of the scene of Leo's birth and education—the gay, and Platonic, and voluptuous Florence: and we have pages of flowery declamation about Lorenzo and his literary Greeks, his villas and his groves, his manuscripts and his statues, his philosophical walks and the Platonic vigils of his friends; about the change produced by his mild rule on his subjects, the extinction of family feuds, the refinement of life—no more noise of daggers and stiletos in the streets—“tout cela est remplacé par des discussions philosophiques, des cantiques aux muses, des douces causeries, des spéculations spiritualistes à l'ombre des bois.” But we must give one or two of his paragraphs at length, as specimens; and we will not do them the injustice of translating them.

“C'est que jamais prince n'aima les lettres d'un amour plus éclairé que Laurent de Médicis ! Il était heureux quand le soir, loin de Florence, et dans un de ces palais que lui avait laissés en mourant Cosme, son grand-père, il pouvait montrer à ses protégés ces beaux manuscrits qu'un Israélite lui avait vendus au poids de l'or ! Il disait quelquefois à Nicolas Leoniceno : ‘Je les aime tant ces livres, que je vendrais jusqu'à ma garde-robe de prince pour m'en procurer.’ A Careggi, Cosme avait fait élever une maison toute royale, distribuée en petites cellules où Laurent logeait ses humanistes chéris. Il y avait deux salles pour les livres, une pour les œuvres et les partitions musicales. On lisait sur l'une des portes de cet asile dédié aux muses cette inscription grecque :

‘Τέρμα ὄρᾳν βίωτοιο.  
Μέτρον ἄριστον.’

“Après des causeries toutes philosophiques, imprégnées de poésie platonique, où brillait surtout Ficin, on passait dans la salle du

concert, et Squarcialuppi, son chanteur de prédilection, entonnait un hymne dont le prince avait composé les paroles, et l'on se séparait pour se réunir le lendemain au coucher du soleil. Laurent revenait toujours avec quelque nouvelle miniature d'un moine ignoré, quelque codex antique acheté à Venise, quelque statuette récemment déterrée à Rome. Les poètes, les philosophes, les lettrés tombaient en extase et se mettaient à célébrer la bonne fortune du prince."— Vol. i. pp. 4—6.

"Il tardait à Laurent d'échapper au tumulte des affaires, et libre de soucis, et loin des gardes dont il marchait accompagné dans les rues de Florence, de se réfugier dans le *Muscion* dont nous a parlé Politien. Quelques-uns de ses amis l'attendaient au sortir de la ville: tous ensemble ils gravissaient la colline au sommet de laquelle s'élève la ville de Fiesole, discourant en chemin de lettres, d'art ou de philosophie. Ficcin attendait le prince avec impatience: on échangeait, en se revoyant, de douces paroles d'affection, et la conversation commençait. C'est dans ces promenades au crépuscule, que Marsile aimait à soulever quelques-uns des voiles qui cachaient aux yeux profanes les mystères de sa doctrine favorite. Laurent prenait souvent la parole, et faisait admirer, dans une vive improvisation, sa connaissance du cœur humain, ses trésors d'érudition, son culte pour le beau. La séance finie, un repas à l'ombre des pins d'Italie terminait délicieusement la soirée; puis la nuit venue, le poète, nous parlons du prince, écrivait ce *laude*, où l'on retrouve les idées philosophiques de l'époque."— Vol. i. pp. 9, 10.

No doubt all this was very enjoyable to live in, and is very brilliant to look back to. Lovers of art and lovers of letters may celebrate and envy it. We can well believe that seldom have wealth, and good taste, and inventive power, and love of grace, and freedom of manners, and deep sensibility, and novelty, combined so harmoniously, to supply a greater variety of pleasures or to give them a keener edge.

But there is another side to this philosophical and literary Court—one which must qualify the admiration of a Christian and Churchman. This rapturous admiration of Plato, these Platonic academies, and Platonic lectures, and Platonic *rêveries*, were not altogether without effect on the Christian faith of the distinguished courtiers. Not that there were

any symptoms of open revolt against the doctrines of the Church. It was not the time to think of such things. The Court of the Medici was no place for theological controversy, which Lorenzo's temper and hatred of the schools would never invite, and which his tact and good taste would discourage if it appeared. But men of taste and fashion began to talk in an unwonted and very enlightened manner about the most serious subjects, and showed much more fear of offending, in their speculations, against the *placita* of Plato than against the Creed of the Church. Mr. Roscoe thus states the character of the Platonic academy:—"The principal advantages of this institution seem to have been the collecting together men of talent and erudition, who had courage to dissent from established modes of belief, and supplying them with new, rational, and important topics of conversation."\* No doubt, much that has come down to us of their sayings and doings is to be set down to the literary foppery and affectation of these very brilliant, but not very earnest philosophers. But their very trifling betrayed a most suspicious laxity of belief and feeling; and it boded nothing good, when men, brought up as strict Catholics, and still professing to be so, began to call one another "*Fratres dilectissimi in Platone*;" and when Lorenzo, the Pontiff of these zealous converts from scholasticism, aped the festivals of the Church, by keeping the 13th of November in honour of Plato, after the example of Plotinus and Porphyry, and celebrated his memory with all but religious pomp, with "lauds and canticles," before his statue. M. Audin mentions all this in quite a natural way; he tells us with great *naïveté* that Lorenzo's philosophers made "a veritable pagan" of him,—that the "lauds and canticles" which they chanted on Plato's festival contained "*des offenses fréquentes aux dogmes Catholiques*"—but he seems to find no particular harm in this—he can pardon much to such poetical people, and to the father of Leo X.: and though they did teach, as he says, a "disguised pantheism," yet they were in no danger,—"they

\* Roscoe, Lorenzo de Medici, c. iii.

all thought themselves safe from even the suspicion of heresy — *tant leur foi était vive et docile.*”\*

In the second place, this philosophic Court was, according to ordinary Christian ideas, a very licentious one. Refinement, genius, sensibility, taste, seem to give a kind of authority and sanction to vice—to make it more tolerable by adorning it; and one effect of the *Renaissance* was, to make clever and accomplished men feel more at their ease in pursuing their pleasures, because they could combine them with literature and love of art. Lorenzo de' Medici took the full benefit of the revival of classical feelings. M. Audin is aware of this, and feels called upon, “in behalf of Christian spiritualism, to condemn the sensual instincts of this prince.”† But the flow and gush of his admiration is surprisingly little checked by this admission. Considering *what* he says of Lorenzo in the following passage, we think that he might have spared some of his poetical touches, and not made him quite so interesting. The description would not be amiss in a *feuilleton*, but is rather unqualified for an ecclesiastical history.

“Dans l'ancienne Rome il eût passé pour un épicurien, tant il avait peu de souci du lendemain, tant il semblait négliger l'avenir; à Florence on disait qu'il avait deux âmes. Il resta longtemps païen, malgré le baptême qu'il avait reçu dans l'église de Santa Reparata. Les joies turbulentes des jours du carnaval, si beau en Toscane, le mouvement des masques qui emplissaient à cette époque les rues de Florence, les cris des ouvriers, les danses des femmes couronnées de fleurs excitaient sa verve, et lui inspiraient des chants étincelants de poésie, mais dont Rome moderne a dû punir la licencieuse expression: du reste meilleur père encore que poète, quand il ne s'occupait pas de lettres, son plus doux amusement était de jouer avec ses enfants, qu'il mettait sur ses genoux, qu'il couvrait de caresses, qu'il endormait au son de cette petite lyre dont Squarcialuppi lui avait appris à se servir: heureux si quelqu'une de ces beautés faciles que Savonarole poursuivait, en chaire, de ses colères, ne venait pas frapper à sa porte pour l'arracher à ses préoccupations de père, de poète, ou de philosophe.”— Vol. i. pp. 14, 15.

\* Vol. i. p. 9.

† Vol. i. p. 17.

But M. Audin professes a discriminating and indulgent criticism. Lorenzo's virtues were his own; the defects which sullied that "*belle vie*," those of his age: and he surmises, with philosophical good-nature, that "some of his too frequent transgressions of the precepts of the gospel were owing less *aux exigences d'une nature libertine, qu'à la fastueuse imitation de l'antiquité.*" An opposition more important psychologically than morally; and if true, not complimentary to the *Renaissance*.

The early years of Giovanni de' Medici are dwelt upon by M. Audin with the unsuspecting tenderness and amiable loquacity of a friend of the family. He begins from the beginning—the dreams which preceded his birth—when he began to learn to ride—and how Piero de' Medici taught Virgil to his little brother; and he imagines that these early lectures may have given him a taste for Rome—"Jean se prit aussi d'une véritable passion pour la belle Rome chantée par Virgile." It might be difficult to speak with certainty of these youthful predilections: but his keen and sharp-sighted father no doubt turned his thoughts early in that direction, with the prudent family forethought which marked the Medici. We will give a scene from M. Audin.

"Lorenzo, like all great men, had an insight into the future. He had divined the wondrous instincts (*les merveilleux instincts*) of his beloved son. In the evening, after the gates of his palace had been closed to petitioners, he would call for his favourites—Politian, Chalcondylas, Marsilius Ficinus, Gentile, Verino the poet, who has celebrated with more enthusiasm than talent the glory of Florence; and, taking Giovanni on his knees, he would point out to them that eye in perpetual movement; that brow with its lines so clear and pure; those locks curling like a young girl's; that swan-like neck with its graceful bend; that smile so sweet and full of mind; and he would ask them to draw the horoscope of the boy. Politian looked at his countenance, and announced that Giovanni would one day do honour to ancient literature. Ficinus lifted his eyes to the horizon, and predicted an era of glory for Platonism, whose empire the Grand-Duke's son should extend in Italy. Chalcondylas, in the boy's Grecian profile, read of happy days for his exiled countrymen; and old Gentile of Urbino repeated, with

Simeon in the Scripture: 'Bless the Lord, O my soul.' John will be the honour of the sanctuary."

"Long had it been since the science of divination had seen so clearly into the future.

"Lorenzo's heart expanded with joy at these beautiful dreams, and his hand, in token of his delight, pressed the hands of his noble friends. He destined his child to the priesthood."—*Audin*, vol. i. pp. 20, 21.

M. Audin seems thoroughly to enter into the father's feelings for the advancement of his favourite son. "At seven years old, Giovanni de' Medici received the tonsure, and the day on which he entered into orders a courier left Florence to demand from Louis XI. the collation of a benefice;" a very natural request, as M. Audin shows, and as Louis thought, who at once named him Abbot of Font-Douce, in Saintonge, and a month after, Archbishop of Aix; but the old Archbishop turned out not to be yet dead. But Font-Douce, as M. Audin says, "was but the first of those favours which heaven reserved in such rich abundance for the ducal child." The Pope, Sixtus IV., on account of a family quarrel, had been deeply implicated in the conspiracy of the Pazzi—that conspiracy in which the leading agent was an Archbishop; its scene, the cathedral of Florence; and the signal for murder, the elevation of the host;—he had excommunicated Lorenzo and his friends for executing the conspirators; and he had need now, as M. Audin mildly expresses it, "*de se faire pardonner son amitié pour les Pazzi.*" The abbey of Passignano was demanded for the young Abbot of Font-Douce, and given by the Pope, as the price of reconciliation,—"*c'était noblement se repentir,*" is the biographer's reflection. But this was nothing to the preferment that was heaped on the boy, when Innocent VIII., whose illegitimate son had married one of his sisters, became Pope. "Every day," says the warm-hearted biographer, "brought a new joy to Lorenzo;" and he proceeds to give at full length, as if a mere natural subject for pride to parent and historian, the long catalogue of benefices.

"Every day, so to speak, brought a new joy to Lorenzo. In

the space of some years, his son was successively named Canon of the Cathedral of Florence, of Fiesole, and of Arezzo; rector of Carmignano, of Giogoli, of San Casciano, of San Giovanni in Val d'Arno, of San Pietro di Casale, of San Marcellino di Cacchiano; prior of Monte Varchi; precentor of S. Antonio, at Florence; provost of Prato; abbot of Monte Cassino, of San Giovanni di Passignano, of Sta. Maria di Morimondo, of St. Martin de Font-Douce, of S. Salvatore di Vajano, of S. Bartolommeo d'Anghiari, of S. Lorenzo di Coltibuono, of Sta. Maria di Monte Piano, of St. Julien de Tours, of S. Giusto and S. Clemente at Volterra, of S. Stefano at Bologna, of S. Michele at Arezzo, of Chiaravalle near Milan, of Pin in Poitou, of Chaise-Dieu near Clermont —” — *Audin*, vol. i. p. 25.

“In 1510,” adds Roscoe, “he became Archbishop of Amalfi. ‘*Bone Deus,*’ exclaims the good Fabroni; ‘*quot in uno juvene cumulata sacerdotia!*’” — *Roscoe, Leo X.* vol. i. note 7.

But even this was not enough to satisfy the fond father; one thing was still wanting. His son was now more than twelve years old, and he was not yet a Cardinal. Innocent VIII. was infirm, and was getting old. “Lorenzo had no time to lose; *il lui fallait la pourpre, et il la demanda.*” Innocent had, it is true, promised the Conclave, when elected Pope, that he would never create a Cardinal under thirty years of age\*; but he was of feeble mind, and Lorenzo, as M. Audin expresses it, “had received from nature an eagle eye, a will of iron, and a tenacity of purpose, which nothing could conquer;” and his letters to his agent — still preserved in the archives of Florence — show, says Roscoe, “such a degree of policy and assiduity on the part of the great man as could scarcely fail of success.” To the Pope himself he wrote with the importunity of a benefactor and a relation, begging the favour, “with the earnestness with which he would beg of God the salvation of his own soul.” † “I can assure your

\* — “Sub pœnâ perjuriæ, et anathematis, a quibus nec me ipsum absolvam, nec absolutionem alieni committam.” — *Burchard*, in *Raynald.* ad ann. 1484. No. 41. Raynaldi observes that these engagements were “ad cardinalium commoda detorta; quæ cum contra fas conventa essent, in aliquibus infringendis religione se minime teneri putavit, sicut videbimus.”

† “La richieggo questa volta con l'efficacia chel' farei a N. S. Dio la salute dell' anima mia.” — *Roscoe, Leo X.*, vol. i. App. i.

Holiness," he continues, as M. Audin paraphrases him, "that nothing could be so delightful to my heart as a father, nothing so happy for Florence, as the hat which I beg of you for my son; without this distinguished favour, I see not how your Holiness could recompense my devotedness to your person, and prove to the world that I am not undeserving of your favour." His desires were soon fulfilled.

"Innocent VIII. could not long resist the prayers of Lorenzo, and the wishes of the Cardinal Ascanio Sforza, and of the Vice-Chancellor of the Church, Roderic Borgia. The 9th of October, 1488, a courier brought to the '*Magnificent*' a note from the Cardinal of Angers" [old Jean Balue, the ex-confident of Louis XI., and hero of the boar-hunt scene in Quentin Durward,]\* "written in haste, and running thus:—

"Magnificent and dear brother, greeting. Good news for your son, for you, for Florence: John is created Cardinal, by the title of Sta. Maria in Dominica. I cannot express to you my joy."

"Never was father so happy as Lorenzo. The evening after this good news Florence was illuminated, and the Grand Duke spent the night in announcing the event to his numerous friends." — *Audin*, i. p. 27.

And M. Audin really expects to carry off this miserable scandal by seeming not to be aware of it. He affects to throw himself into the spirit of the times,—of the courts of

\* The novelist has probably libelled the equestrian accomplishments of this worthy personage, as he has certainly libelled Wolsey, by naming him in the same breath with the most finished, and, in spite of some rough vicissitudes, luckiest, of the scoundrels of the day. "Un bon diable d'évêque pour cette heure," said Louis of him, "mais je ne sais ce qu'il sera à l'avenir."<sup>1</sup> Jean Balue long did business with much success for himself and the king, till he became too venturesome and greedy, and was caught tripping. He was bishop of several places, gained a cardinal's hat from Paul II., was eleven years in a cage at Loches, for having led the king into the scrape at Peronne,—and yet escaped alive,—reappeared in France as Pope's Legate, and died in much comfort and respectability at Rome, in a good old age. Among many other things, he was an amateur, for his own amusement, in military matters, as also in old manuscripts, of which he formed a collection for his cathedral.<sup>2</sup> M. Audin should not have omitted to tell us the name of Lorenzo's affectionate correspondent.

<sup>1</sup> Sismondi, *Hist. des Français*, xiv. 162.

<sup>2</sup> *Gall. Christ.* xi. 606. *Biog. Univ.*



Rome and Florence, who certainly saw nothing wrong in it.\* He treats it as a very natural arrangement, which did equal honour to the father's affection, the son's precocious excellence, and the Pope's discrimination. He draws an interesting family picture of Lorenzo's parental feelings; of his overflowing gratitude to the Pope; of the never-ceasing congratulations of the citizens, and the rapturous delight of the Neo-platonists. He tells us at great length how Politian wrote an elaborate letter to the Pope, to praise his pupil, and his pupil's family, and his pupil's patron; and how "inconsolable" the "*humaniste*" was to find that "so enlightened a judge as Pope Innocent" thought his epistle affected. And he takes occasion from this to give us an episode about the "noble exchange of flatteries" which had recently passed between Lorenzo's man of letters and the Pope—dedications of Herodian on one side—ducats and epistles of thanks on the other; and to correct the estimate of Lorenzo's ambassador at Rome, who had "for a moment underrated Innocent's talents," and said that he was a man "*di non molto letteratura*"—"Politien pense autrement." He tells us how Florence forgot the old quarrel with Sixtus IV., how for a moment "*elle se prend d'un amour tout lyrique pour Rome;*"

\* Lorenzo had strong views on the subject of family claims. The sacred duties incurred by Popes towards their relatives are forcibly stated in the following letter, in which the Grand Duke expresses his anxiety lest Innocent VIII. should have forgotten them:—

"Others," he writes, "have not so long deferred their endeavour to be popes, and have troubled themselves little about the decorum and modesty which your holiness has for so long a time observed. Your holiness is now not only excused in the sight of God and man, but men may perhaps even censure this reserved demeanour, and ascribe it to other motives. *My zeal and duty* render it a *matter of conscience* with me to remind your holiness that no man is immortal; that a pope is of the importance which he chooses to give himself; he cannot make his dignity hereditary: *the honours and the benefits he confers on those belonging to him are all that he can call his own.*"<sup>1</sup>

With respect to his discharge of these duties, Innocent's conscience must have been at rest; his correspondent's concern for him was more disinterested in appearance than in reality. Lorenzo had a son, who was brother-in-law to the son of the pope.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from Fabroni, by Ranke, i. 44.

how she "felicitated the Papacy in prose and verse;" "how she crowned Innocent VIII., placed him in her museums, celebrated him in her professors' chairs, and struck medals, *pour éterniser dans ses annales la glorieuse faveur qu'elle en a reçue.*"\* Then he gives us touching sketches, the product of his own warm sensibilities, of the young cardinal's boyhood, and of the great *literati* who formed him. He shows him as the "pride of his masters"—affectionately caressing old Chalcondylas—sportively surprising Ficinus at his lamp, and discoursing sweet music, or sweeter philosophy, with him—or else, as the student of Pisa, "*bon écolier, excellent camarade,*" mixing without pride among "les enfants du peuple," and "gaining such reputation for gravity in the university, that Cardinal Farnese recommended the bishop of Pampe-luna, who came to study canon law, to his patronage."† Finally, he tells us, with what *éclat* he took his doctor's degree; how severe the examination was, and how pleased were the examiners; and with what pomp he received the cardinal's *barrette* at Fiesole; and how his brother pranced up on his charger caparisoned with gold, to embrace him; and how a poet in the frenzy of his joy divined that the noble child would one day be Pope. "The poet saw into the future," says M. Audin; "but wherefore did he conceal himself under the name of *Philomus*?"‡

Such is M. Audin's picture of the early education of Giovanni de' Medici. We must now give the reverse, drawn by no unfavourable hand.

"But whilst it may be presumed that the subsequent honours and success of Giovanni de' Medici are to be attributed in a great degree to his early education, and to the advantages which he possessed under his paternal roof, it must be allowed that those defects in his ecclesiastical character, which were afterwards so ap-

\* Vol. i. pp. 27—32.

† M. Audin, with his love of incident, should not have omitted to say, that this episcopal student of law, commended to the young Cardinal elect, was no other than Cæsar Borgia.

‡ Vol. i. p. 78. He might have found his name in Roscoe, Leo X. i. note 212. (Bohn's edit.)

parent, were probably derived from the same source. The associates of Lorenzo de' Medici were much better acquainted with the writings of the poets, and the doctrines of the ancient philosophers, than with the dogmas of the Christian faith. Of the followers of Plato, Lorenzo was at this time considered as the chief. He had himself arranged and methodized a system of theology which inculcates opinions very different from those of the Romish Church, and in a forcible manner points out the object of supreme adoration as one and indivisible. Hence it is not unlikely that the young Cardinal was induced to regard with less reverence those doctrinal points of the established creed, the belief of which is considered as indispensable to the clerical character ; and hence he might have acquired such ideas of the Supreme Being, and of the duties of his intelligent creatures, as, in counteracting the spirit of bigotry, rendered him liable to the imputation of indifference in matters of religion. A rigid economy in his household was certainly not one of the first qualifications of Lorenzo, and the example of the father might perhaps counteract his precept in the estimation of the son ; whose liberality in future life, too often carried to profusion, reduced him to the necessity of adopting those measures for the supplying his exigences which gave rise to consequences of the utmost importance to the Christian world. From the splendid exhibitions which were frequently displayed in the city of Florence, he probably derived that relish for similar entertainments which he is supposed to have carried, during his pontificate, to an indecorous, if not to a culpable excess ; whilst the freedom and indecency of the songs with which the spectacles of Florence were accompanied, of many of which Lorenzo was himself the author, could scarcely have failed to banish at intervals that gravity of carriage which the young Cardinal was directed to support, and to sow those seeds of dissipation which afterwards met with a more suitable climate in the fervid atmosphere of Rome."—*Roscoe, Leo X.* pp. 17, 18.

When M. Audin sees so much to admire and dilate upon in the young Cardinal's boyhood, it is not surprising that he should give a loose reign to his sensibilities and his fancy when describing his life at Rome.

His first appearance at Rome excited much sensation : we have pictures such as the following, in great profusion :—

“ At the consistory, the Cardinals remarked the modest carriage,

the brief speech, the noble air of the son of Lorenzo : in the streets, what was most striking was his countenance.

“ At that period, when *Form* was on the point of being restored in Italy, we can understand how Giovanni de' Medici drew all eyes upon him. He resembled then some of those beautiful statues of youth in its bloom, which Pomponio Leto used so often to find in subterranean Rome.

“ Painters, sculptors, and artists in general, who saw him pass, were never tired of contemplating that elastic form, that harmony of feature, that straight and muscular leg, that hand of snow, that Greco-Roman countenance, that azure eye, that strong head reposing on its broad shoulders, that slightly filled lip, and all those beautiful proportions of which the type seemed lost. They dreamed of some divinity who had crossed the seas to light down at Rome, to restore there the worship of Matter — (*le culte de la matière.*) We must pardon them, these admirers of the flesh, their enthusiasm for Form.”\* — *Audin*, i. p. 84.

He tells us of the young Cardinal's simplicity of life — his early hours — his frugal table, his exquisite neatness of dress. The following picture is drawn a good deal from fancy, but no doubt it is generally correct : —

“ Enamoured of the old Latin world, he rose in the morning with the sun, and after having heard mass, he knocked at the door of his still slumbering secretary, whom he awakened with these verses of Ausonius :

“ Mane jam clarum reserat fenestras,  
Jam strepit nidis vigilax hirundo :  
Tu velut primam, mediamque noctem,  
Parmeno dormis ;”

“ And then both of them took their way to some of those vineyards, where excavations were going on — watchful of all the lucky chances which the pickaxe was then opening to explorers. The little statue which reappeared to the light was hailed by a double cry of joy, and often celebrated in the evening by the Cardinal and his secretary. After having paid generously for it,

\* This description of the Cardinal's person is worked up from a funeral panegyric, by a Roman professor of eloquence. — *Doctoris J. A. Ghibbesii, “ Trismegistus Medicus.”*

they would wash it carefully from the dirt of centuries, and bear it like a relic to the prelate's study, whither, informed of the discovery, soon arrived a crowd of antiquaries, of men of letters, of sculptors, of *savans*, who hunted after its name, found it sometimes, still more often gave one, and sung its resurrection in Greek and Latin poetry. Soft delights these—which could not disturb Alexander VI. The Pope had ended by becoming attached to the Cardinal: and he had good reason, for the young man was a model of virtues. . . . Thus Medici had soon his little court at Rome, composed of the choicest spirits—*âmes d'élite*, living and discoursing only on ruins, on antiquities, on arts, and letters.”—*Audin*, vol. i. 280—283.

And if this easy, and splendid, and pleasant life of gentlemanly dilettantism, very graceful as it may be in a high-born dignitary, seem hardly to amount to what we look for in a great ecclesiastical character, we are reminded of the great work of the day—“*l'affranchissement—la redemption—de la Pensée*,” which was going on in the cabinets and *ateliers* of Rome and Florence.

“Is it not a beautiful sight, that great conspiracy of the literati of the *Renaissance* against ignorance! Holy league, in which are enrolled Popes, Cardinals, Bishops, Priests, Kings, Dukes, nobles, peasants, craftsmen—each one using the gifts which he has received from above, to fight against the common enemy. In the van of this crusade, the Popes distribute bulls, gold, mitres, and hats of cardinals. Here is the work of Pius II., of Nicolas V., of Sixtus IV. of Innocent VIII. Cardinals solicit for those who cultivate literature the favours of the Holy See; thus do Besarion, Grimani, Piccolomini, and so many others, whose names we shall mention. Priests often refuse dignities, in order to live in peace in a convent, and there to labour in silence for the improvement of morals.”—*Audin*, i. 141.

“*L'amélioration des mœurs*”—the words rather break the spell of M. Audin's eloquence. The *Renaissance* did much for art, and much for literature; but it was also a time when it was to the credit of a Cardinal of the Church that scandal against him might reasonably be disbelieved.

We will say a word in passing on this subject: for connected

with it is one of the worst faults in M. Audin's book. If there is one sin more than another against which the early Church, and the Middle Age Church also, strove more zealously than another, it was impurity. Men of the world complain of the exaggerated importance, and the unnatural blackness, which they ascribed to it. Everything undoubtedly bears witness to the seriousness and depth of their feeling—their ecclesiastical regulations, their institutions of life—their stern, often tremendous, penitences. There is no mistake about their sincerity; there really seems nothing in human life which they are not ready to sacrifice, if thereby they appear likely to secure greater purity. It is so with the Fathers; it is so with the leading Churchmen of the Middle Ages. Rome especially had always claimed to be the champion of holiness. The cause of the Popes, in the days of their struggles with the empire, was the cause of strictness, and on this is now founded one of their most vaunted titles to the reverence of Christendom. But the severity of the early times is really, as a moral phenomenon, less astonishing than the laxity of those of Leo X. The tolerance for licentiousness in writings, and in life, is one of the features of this period which over and over again excites the amazement of a modern reader. It is not merely its corruption, but its insensibility, which is so strange—the cool, easy, indifferent way in which all, from high to low, seem to judge and speak of sins of this kind. Nobody appears to think anything of them: no one's character seems to suffer from a taint of this kind; no one seems to feel that amendment or acknowledgment is at any time due for a profligate life, or profligate books:—the Church is silent, and does not interfere. There is scarcely a distinguished man of the period, however amiable, or noble, or refined, about whom we can feel safe that some disgraceful fact may not at any moment turn up against him. In art, in literature, in conduct, it is the same. In each sphere, it is the leaders and illustrious ornaments—the men who stamp the age as it is passing, and by whom it is remembered afterwards, and remembered in many cases with admiration—who exhibit so recklessly this absence of moral feeling.

That same Roman court which had battled with emperors for the cause of purity, and had excommunicated kings for their licentiousness, now regarded such offences, even in its own members, with the most indulgent facility. The profligacy of Cardinals could scarcely be said to outrage public opinion, for it was unrebuked, and had almost established a prescriptive right. To have led an immoral life was no bar to the purple — no one seemed to think that it should be: no, nor even to the throne of St. Peter. When Innocent VIII., or Alexander VI., are elected Popes, no one seems to be even surprised; it passes as an ordinary political change, agreeable to some, disagreeable to others, but a scandal to none; and public opinion is silent, except in the epigrams of literary men of the opposite party, who make it their business and pride to imitate Martial and Juvenal, and to outdo them.

It is one of the worst points, as we have said, in M. Audin's book, that he allows himself to treat this deep corruption so very lightly. He has a right to retort, if he can, its own charges upon Protestantism; he has a right, also, to extenuate and explain, to bring out what is great and striking in the time, and to claim respect for what instances of goodness he finds in it. But he does much more. It cannot be said that he absolutely ignores its licentiousness, for there are occasions when it is forced on his notice; but this must be said, that it makes no more difference in his admiration and panegyric, than it would in that of the most indulgent literary liberal. The recollection of it never seems to restrain or sadden him, or to suggest some measure to the flow and transports of his imaginative mind. He is glad, of course, when he can, to repel the charge; but when he cannot, he proceeds undisturbed in the work of laudation, maundering on in his way of loose, thin, sugary declamation about the "beautiful spectacle," and the "holy confederacy, of the *Renaissance*" — making interesting, or tender, or romantic pictures of poets and artists, with a gentle regret, or an exculpatory rebuke, or a little mild raillery, or a few grotesque touches of good-natured malice, where he has to do with a particularly disorderly spirit. The worship of brilliancy and splendour, of taste, and

feeling, and genius, of keen and graceful wit, of Ciceronian latinity, and Catullian elegance; admiration of the beautiful figures and long hair of young nobles and painters; of the profound raptures and joyful tears of poetical antiquarians over *codices*, and coins, and statues; of literary suppers, and philosophical *causeries* in gardens;— seem to have superseded with M. Audin a regard for the common-place rules of moral judgment. He treats the *Renaissance* with a kind of affectionate indulgence, like a spoilt child, full of spirit and promise, though wild, and sometimes wayward; and, large as is the licence which it claims, he has not the heart to refuse its demands. There can scarcely be a more serious offence in such a writer—a defender of religion and the Church—than thus to trick out a licentious time, and to be seduced, by its intellect or its love of beauty, to invite sympathy for what he dares not openly call good, by help of the shifts and sentiment of the novel-writer.

When Giovanni de' Medici came to Rome, his brother-in-law, Innocent VIII., was Pope. He passed through the pontificate of Alexander VI. in comparative retirement, and came out into public life under Julius II., his own immediate predecessor.

M. Audin writes to make out that the Papacy had not, at this time, in any degree, degenerated from its best days; and that, though its outward conduct was altered, it was still pursuing, in the due and natural way, the course suggested by change of times as most beneficial to the Church universal. He will not allow that there was any swerving, or wrong direction—any, even temporary, remissness in the policy of the Popes; and indignantly stops the mouths of Roman Catholic critics, who think, with regret, that the Roman court might have taken a higher, and wiser, and more becoming line. Each one of these Popes, according to M. Audin, did exactly what his time required.

Undoubtedly the policy of the Church cannot be immovably stereotyped in one form, and must alter insensibly with altering, or altered times. Undoubtedly, also, her champions and heroes have been of every character, as various as the



character of other men, and the exigences of the time; and the turn of her fortunes has often pressed into her service men who could not have been expected to be fit for it. Such men have often been misunderstood; their perplexed, and perhaps, turbulent career, has appeared to set the world's seal upon them, and to give the world a right to claim them as its own for judgment. But, if they are her true servants, they will be sure to bear about them some sign—zeal, or self-forgetfulness, or humility, or love of purity—which, even in kings' palaces and the corruption of courts, or amid the strife of tongues, or under the coat of mail, marks them to belong to the cause of goodness. It would be hard to find any such tokens among the Popes of M. Audin's history.

The Papacy was no longer, in spirit and object, nor yet in power, what it had been. The Popes of the Middle Ages, whether always wisely or not, really watched over religion, and made their vigilance felt. They often fought, and often intrigued. But to resist the overshadowing corruptions of feudalism was a sufficient object to give meaning and dignity even to a merely *traditional* cause; and often this object was pursued with the highest and most unselfish earnestness. But the great fight of Julius II. and Leo X. was to keep a slippery and unsteady footing among the princes of Italy. Still acknowledged and honoured as the religious chiefs of Christendom, they had sunk down to the temper and policy of one of those petty, though brilliant, provincial courts, which crowded and jostled one another so fiercely in their narrow peninsula. The great idea and venerable cry of ecclesiastical liberty had disappeared, and was ill supplied by the watchword of the "Patrimony of St. Peter."

The serious object of the Roman court, from being religious or ecclesiastical, had become a temporal one. It is impossible to say that the maxims and principles of Innocent III. were those of Julius II. or Leo X. The Papacy had forgotten at this time its own idea. The charge against it is not merely that there were great disorders and corruptions, such as every system on a large scale, at some time or other, in the long run, is sure to suffer from. Nay, even still, there

was much grandeur in its aspect, and much that was beneficial to Christendom in its influence. But it had left its true position, and had failed in doing its proper work; and, with such perilous prerogatives as it claimed, far more grandeur and far greater benefits would not have been enough to atone for such unfaithfulness to its trust. Like every other prince in Europe, the Popes were establishing their sovereignty by humbling their barons. Like every other prince in Italy, they were patronising literature and encouraging art; adding province to province, and city to city; forming leagues and breaking them; building palaces and planting gardens; raising wonderful monuments to their fame; settling their families; heaping dignities and honours on their friends—till the storm rose suddenly on them, to remind them, that the duties of the first bishop of Christendom had not been fulfilled by balancing its princes against one another, or even by consecrating the genius and magnificence of the age to the honour of the first Apostle. The condemnation of these days of security was pronounced in a way that cannot be gainsaid—and, alas! their effects not remedied—by the too late reforms of Trent, and the order of the Jesuits.

At the death of Innocent VIII. the two Cardinals who had divided between them the power of the Roman court, came into direct collision. Julian de la Rovere, the Cardinal of St. Peter *ad vincula*, had been great under his uncle Sixtus IV., and under the feeble Innocent—“*S. Pier. in Vincula si può dir esser Papa,*” wrote the Florentine Envoy to Lorenzo, at the time of Innocent’s election, “*e più potrà che con Papa Sisto, se lo saprà mantenere.*”<sup>\*</sup> But though he was afterwards to become Julius II., he had first to give way to one yet stronger than himself, and more unscrupulous—Roderic Borgia.

Cardinal Borgia was vice-chancellor of the holy see. He held large preferment, and was one of the wealthiest of the College. And he acknowledged, without rebuke or shame, a family of illegitimate children, born during his long cardinal-

<sup>\*</sup> In Roscoe, *Lor. de' Med.* vol. ii. App. xliv. (8vo. ed.)

ship—several sons and a daughter, whose melancholy celebrity has engaged the sympathy of Mr. Roscoe. But Mr. Roscoe's defence of Lucretia is cold, compared with M. Audin's enthusiasm.

M. Audin disclaims attempting a "*réhabilitation*" of Alexander VI. \*; but, as his friendly French critic † observes, this is pretty nearly what he has attempted. The mass of scandal against him he sweeps away with a stroke of his pen:—it rests solely on epigrams—on the malignity of Burchard, his Master of Ceremonies, a man of the North, "a veritable Teuton, who seeks everywhere to find some fault with the man of the South," ‡ and whose crabbed writing, besides, has very likely been ill-read, or maliciously copied by some protestant decypherer §:—and, lastly, on the malevolence of his cotemporaries, and especially the "Florentine hatred" of Guicciardini. Drawing a distinction between the man and the pope—"il y a deux êtres en lui,"—he allows that the *man* often fell deeply; but, as *pope*, he considers Alexander as a sort of hero-king, who performed in his day noble and admirable works; and dwells on his Italian patriotism, his wise and beneficial policy in putting down the tyranny of the great families of Romagna, and that fine Christian enthusiasm—"ce beau mouvement de zèle évangélique," which prompted him to call upon the sacred college to pay a tenth for the purposes of a crusade against the Turks.

We have not space, nor is it our wish, to go into the intricacies of the secret history of the Borgias—no doubt it is a

\* Vol. i. p. 301.

† Université Catholique, vol. xx. p. 154.

‡ Vol. i. p. 300.

§ "Nous voudrions bien savoir comment on doit s'en rapporter aveuglément au protestant qui s'est chargé de déchiffrer ce journal," &c.—Vol. i. p. 304. This is rather desperate. M. Audin might easily have convicted the Protestant copyist: there are nearly a dozen MSS. of the "Diary" (v. *Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscript.* t. xvii. p. 597. *sqq.*; *Notices des MSS. du Roi*, i. 68. *sqq.* referred to by himself, i. p. 302.). M. Audin's wrath against Burchard is quite misplaced. Burchard was a simple, absurd, pompous sort of gossiping official, exceedingly proud of his post at court, very touchy about etiquette, and who put things down as important, because he saw them. As M. de Bréquigny says (*Notices*, i. p. 111.), there is much more *naïveté* than malice in his stories. It is observable that he attributes Alexander's death to natural causes, and not to poison.

very dark and perplexed one;—but if Alexander VI. has suffered from slanders, it is equally true that his apologist exhibits, in a most remarkable degree, a readiness to call evil good.

Alexander's election, says Burchard—who was not a mere epigram writer, but a man, necessarily from his position, in the secrets of the palace—was brought about by bribery. Such an event can hardly be said to have been beyond possibility, considering that Julius II., Alexander's successor, and bitter enemy, thought it necessary on his death-bed to issue a constitution against such bribery—one of the most stringent and threatening enactments ever promulgated.\* M. Audin, without mentioning the charge, indirectly meets it by pointing out the probability that the Cardinals would choose a Pope of strong and energetic character; and then proceeds to set up a witness—as he considers, an overwhelming one in Borgia's favour—the complimentary inscriptions addressed to him by the Roman populace :

\* “Concil. Later. V.—Sess. 5. Absente per ægritudinem Julio, præsedit Raphael Card. Episc. Ostiensis. Perlecta est Julii constitutio, et a Concilio approbata, non solum districte vetans omnem in creatione Rom. Pont. simoniam, sed etiam sic factam electionem abrogans et invalidam declarans, nec ullam sic electo conferre potestatem, ipsosque Cardinales qui sic elegerint esse ipso facto Cardinalatu et aliis quibuscunque dignitatibus et beneficiis absque aliâ declaratione privatos: prætereaque excommunicatione reservatâ irretiri, a quo non nisi summo Pontifice legitime electo possint extra vitæ discrimen solvi: paribusque pœnis subijci omnes et singulos hujusce simoniæ fautores, consiliarios, et proxenetas. — Faxit Deus, ne unquam hujusmodi casus eveniant; si enim, interveniente simoniâ, vigeret ista constitutio, *vel ignota esset ac occulta simonia, et tunc Ecclesia credens se alicui in terris capiti subjectam esse, falleretur, essetque Acephala, nullusque valere posset ad Pont. Max. recursus, quo illa nesciens careret: atque quicumque vel censura vel alia reservatione supremæ Sedis essent irretiti, tametsi recurrerent ad putatum et existimatum Pontificem, insolubili adhuc nexu ligati remanerent*: quia recursus fieret ad eum, cui sua electio nullam potest tribuere potestatem, qui est excommunicatus, et ab ipso ecclesiæ corpore divulsus. Si vero illa simonia innotesceret, dici non potest quanta inde perniciēs emergeret, illo per factiones sibi Pontificatum sibi asserente—et aliis novam alterius Pontificis electionem efflagitantibus. Quonam, quæso, iudice nulli partium suspecto, et cujus sententiæ acquieturi omnes essent, controversia ista dirimeretur?”

*Synopsis Conciliorum*: auct. R. P. J. Cabassutio, Congreg. Orator. Presbyt. tom. iii. pp. 138–9: Paris, 1838.

“In these difficult times, a man of the character of Alexander might well be regarded as an instrument of Providence. There is, therefore, nothing but what is quite natural in his election: the people sanctioned the choice of the Conclave. In one of the inscriptions which they had extemporised (*improvisées*), they compared the two princes who, with the same name, had borne rule in the Roman world; granting to the one, to Cæsar, only human nature; of the other, making a god:

“Cæsare magna fuit, nunc Roma est maxima: Sextus  
Regnat Alexander: ille vir, iste deus.’

“In another transparency they said, ‘Honour and glory to Alexander’—‘*Alexandro sapientissimo, Alexandro magnificentissimo, Alexandro in omnibus maximo.*’

“These cries of the people at the exaltation of the Pontiff are also those of history. If the cardinal Roderic had altogether resembled the Borgia of Burchard, *it seems to us that the people would have had the modesty to be silent*; at least, they would not have made a god of a scandalous character; they would not have called by the name of the Most Holy, a priest famous for his profligacy—or else scandals and profligacy were secrets hidden from all eyes; and, how could Roderic have escaped the eyes of those who read through stone walls, and who divine that which they have not seen? This is a phenomenon, of which the historian has a right to demand the explanation.”—Vol. i. p. 157.

Does M. Audin, then, mean that a Cardinal, openly living in adultery—for there is no dispute about this—was not a “*scandalous character*?”

Certainly a writer who puts such faith in popular compliments, ought not to be so contemptuous about epigrams. It is to be feared that he gives the Roman populace of that day more credit for “shamefacedness” than they deserved.

But M. Audin, without insisting on Alexander’s personal excellence, maintains that, making allowances for the manners of the time, he was a great Pope.\* A great Pope in former days was one who, if he diplomatized with kings, was not afraid to face their enmity in the cause of justice and purity. If Innocent III. treated King John haughtily, he punished

\* Vol. i. p. 288.

Philip of France for his adultery, and forced him to take back his ill-used stranger-wife. In the time of Pope Alexander, a King of France became tired of his wife, whom he had married from fear or policy, in less powerful days. She was deformed and unattractive; and his predecessor's widow was young and beautiful, and the heiress, in her own right, of the great Dukes of Brittany. The Pope also had his wishes. His second son, Cæsar Borgia, had been created an Archbishop and a Cardinal, witnesses swearing that he was the legitimate son of a Roman gentleman\*; but his elder brother had perished by assassination, and as he was now the head of the family, he wished to exchange the crozier and Cardinal's red hat for a baton and coronet. The King of France had these to give; the Pope had bulls and dispensations; and they exchanged their gifts. "The Cardinal came one morning into the consistory, and besought his father, and the other Cardinals, that, *considering he had never had his mind inclined to the sacerdotal profession*, they would grant him power to lay aside the dignity and the habit, and to follow that exercise to which he was drawn by the Fates."† Leave was given; and, having assumed the secular habit, he carried to France the bulls of dispensation, and the Cardinal's hat which he had laid aside for the King's favourite. The deformed Queen was put away; Louis XII. married Anne of Brittany, and Cæsar Borgia came back Duke of Valentinois, a baron of Dauphiny, at the head of his hundred lances, to look out for a rich heiress, and to found a house in Romagna, on the ruins of the Orsini and Colonna.

But M. Audin still considers that Alexander VI. did a great work, and one peculiarly befitting a Pope at his day. "He made Romagna quiet," he says. It was of great importance that the Papal States should not be disturbed by turbulent and perfidious nobles. Accordingly, this great papal work turns out to be the *extermination of them*, and Cæsar Borgia was the instrument which he made use of to chastise

\* Peter Martyr Angler. Ep. 173.

† Guicciardini, lib. iv. p. 257. Peter Martyr Angler. Ep. 178.

the treason of his vassals."\* M. Audin gives us the portrait of Borgia, and exclaims—"La devise de Borgia est magnifique: *Aut Cæsar aut nihil.*"

Of these "chastisements," which M. Audin thinks that the necessities of the time and the position of the Papacy almost justified in the *Pope*, though not in the man, we will give an instance, which made much noise, even in Italy, and has been recorded by one who was almost an eye-witness, if not an abettor.

The following is the title of a short work of Machiavelli:—*Descrizione del modo tenuto dal Duca Valentino nello ammazzare Vitellozzo Vitelli, Oliverotto da Fermo, il Signor Pagolo et il Duca di Gravina Orsini.* These were certain allies of Cæsar's, who had lately taken alarm at his increasing greatness, and had quarrelled with him. We quote from an old English translation.

"The news of that defeat put the duke upon new counsels, to try if he could stop that humour by any practice of accord; and being excellent at dissembling, he omitted nothing that might persuade them that they were the aggressors, and had taken up arms first against him; that what was in his hands he would willingly surrender: and, if they pleased, the principality should be theirs; and he deluded them so far, that they sent Signor Pagolo to him to treat about a peace, and in the mean time granted a cessation of arms. Whilst these things were in transaction, a supply of 500 lances arrived to him from France; and though by their help he found himself strong enough to confront his enemy in the field, yet he judged it more secure and profitable to go on with the cheat, and not break off the capitulation that then was on foot. And he acted it so well, that a peace was concluded: their old pensions confirmed, 4000 ducats paid down, a solemn engagement given not to disturb the Bentivogli; he made an alliance with Giovanni, and declared that he could not, and had no power to constrain any of them to come personally to him unless they pleased to do it themselves. They

\* Vol. i. pp. 294, 295.

promised on their part to restore the duchy of Urbino, and whatever else they had taken from him; to serve him in all his enterprises; not to make war without his leave; nor hire themselves to anybody else.

“But Duke Valentine having finished the agreement, and disposed his army into quarters all over Romagna, about the end of November, removed from Imola to Cesena, where he continued several days in consultation with certain commissioners sent from the Vitelli and Ursini (who were then with their troops in the duchy of Urbino), about what new enterprise they were next to undertake. And because nothing was concluded, Oliverotto da Fermo was sent to propose to him, if he thought good, an expedition into Tuscany; if not, that they might join, and set down before Sinigaglia. The Duke replied, that the Florentines were his friends, and he could not with honour carry the war into Tuscany; but their proposal for Sinigaglia he embraced very willingly. Having beleaguered the town, it was not long before they had news it was taken, but the castle held out, for the governor refused to surrender to anybody but the duke, whereupon they entreated him to come. The Duke thought this a fair opportunity, and the better because he went not of himself, but upon their invitation; and to make them the more secure, he dismissed his French, and sent them back into Lombardy (only he retained a hundred lances under the command of his kinsman Monsieur de Candale).

“Departing about the end of December from Cesena he went to Fano, where, with all the cunning and artifice he could use, he persuaded the Vitelli and Ursini to stay with the army till he came: remonstrating to them that such jealousies and suspicions as those must needs weaken their alliance, and render it undurable; and that for his part he was a man who desired to make use as well of the counsels as the arms of his friends. And though Vitellozzo opposed it very much (for by the death of his brother he had been taught how unwise it was to offend a prince first, and then put himself into his hands), nevertheless, persuaded by Paolo Ursino (who underhand was corrupted by presents and promises,



from the duke), he consented to stay. Hereupon the duke, upon his departure the 30th of December, 1502, imparted his design to eight of his principal intimates (amongst whom Don Michael and Monsignor d'Euna were two), and appointed, that when Vitellozzo, Pagolo Ursini, the duke de Gravina, and Oliverotto should come to meet him, two of his favourites should be sure to order it so as to get one of the Ursini betwixt them (assigning every couple his man), and entertain them till they came to Sinigaglia: with express injunction not to part with them upon any terms till they were brought to the duke's lodgings, and taken into custody.

“The Vitelli and Ursini, having concluded to attend the duke themselves, and to pay their personal respects, to make room for his men had drawn off their own, and disposed them into certain castles at the distance of six miles; only they had left in Sinigaglia, Oliverotto with a party of about 1000 foot, and 150 horse, which were quartered in the said Bourg. Things being in this order, Duke Valentine approached, but when his horse in the van came up to the bridge they did not pass; but, opening to the right and left, and wheeling away, they made room for the foot, who marched immediately into the town. Vitellozzo, Pagolo, and the Duke de Gravina, advanced upon their mules, to wait upon Duke Valentine; Vitellozzo was unarmed, in a cape lined with green, very sad and melancholy, as if he had had some foresight of his destiny, which, considering his former courage and exploits, was admired by every body; and it is said, that when he came from his house, in order to meeting Duke Valentine at Sinigaglia, he took his last leave very solemnly of every body. He recommended his family and its fortunes to the chief of his officers, and admonished his grandchildren, not so much to commemorate the fortune, as the magnanimity, of their ancestors.

“These three Princes being arrived in the presence of Duke Valentine, saluted him with great civility, and were civilly received; and each of them (as soon as they were well observed by the persons appointed to secure them) were singled, and disposed betwixt two of them. But the duke,

perceiving that Oliverotto was wanting (who was left behind with his regiment, and had drawn it up in the market-place for the greater formality), he winked upon Don Michael (to whom the care of Oliverotto was assigned) that he should be sure to provide he might not escape. Upon this intimation, Don Michael clapped spurs to his horse, and rid before, and being come up to Oliverotto, he told him it was inconvenient to keep his men to their arms, for unless they were sent presently to their quarters, their lodgings would be occupied by the duke's men; wherefore he persuaded him to dismiss them, and go with him to the duke. Oliverotto following his counsel, went along with him to the duke, who no sooner saw him, but he called him to him, and Oliverotto, having paid his ceremony, fell in with the rest.

"Being come into the town, and come up to the duke's quarters, they all dismounted, and attended him up, where, being carried by him into a private chamber, they were instantly arrested and made prisoners. The duke immediately mounted, and commanded their soldiers should be all of them disarmed; Oliverotto's party being so near at hand, were plundered into the bargain. . . . .

"The night coming on, and the tumults appeased, the duke began to think of his prisoners, resolved Vitellozzo and Oliverotto should die, and having caused them to be guarded into a convenient place, he commanded they should be strangled. But they said nothing at their deaths that was answerable to their lives; for Vitellozzo begged only that the Pope might be supplicated in his behalf, for a plenary indulgence. Oliverotto impeached Vitellozzo, and laid all upon his back. Pagolo and the Duke de Gravina were continued alive, till the duke had information that his Holiness at Rome had seized upon the Cardinal Orsini, the archbishop of Florence, and Messer Jacopo de Santa Croce; upon which news, on the eighteenth of January, they also were both strangled in the castle of Pieve, after the same manner."

"Here finishes," concludes the imperturbable narrator, "the description of the manner which Duke Valentine took to slay Vitellozzo," &c.

M. Audin, without justifying this, thinks that it was the way to emancipate the Popedom.

“If, like this fatalist historian, we might estimate an action by its beneficial influence, we ought to express our satisfaction, without a murmur, at these stern blows which Cæsar Borgia struck at some of the Orsini family; but crime, whether profitable or not to society, is ever a violation of the divine laws. It is certain that these vicars of the Holy See, so miserably assassinated, were an obstacle to that unity, of which Italy stood in such pressing need, in order that she might drive out the stranger—that they contributed, by their revolt against Alexander, to the conquest of the country—that they lent aid and protection to the French monarch—that, *shackled by them, the papacy could not fulfil its duties, either as a spiritual or as a temporal kingdom.* . . . Most of their fiefs they held by the grace of the Sovereign of Rome, and they used his gifts to sell and betray him. *When they pleased, they could starve the Pope, the Cardinals, and the inhabitants of Romagna.*”—Vol. i. p. 299.

An opposite view was certainly taken at the time, by one who knew Cæsar Borgia well, and entertained a high respect for his talents and strength of will. These are the reflections of Machiavelli on the objects and probable results of Borgia's proceedings.

“Pope Alexander the Sixth,” he says, “had a desire to make his son Duke Valentine great, but he saw many blocks and impediments in the way, both for the present and the future.” The historian enumerates these obstacles, and how they were partly got over, and then proceeds:—

“The duke, finding himself powerful enough, and secure against present danger, being himself as strong as he desired, and his neighbours in a manner reduced to an incapacity of hurting him, being willing to go on with his conquests, there remained nothing but a jealousy of France; and not without cause, for he knew that king had found his error at last, and would be sure to obstruct him. Hereupon he began to look abroad for new allies, and to vacillate towards France; as appeared when the French army advanced into the kingdom of

Naples against the Spaniards, who had besieged Cajeta. His great design was to secure himself against the French, and he had doubtless done it if Alexander had lived. These were his provisions against the dangers that were imminent, but those that were remote were more doubtful and uncertain. The first thing he feared was, lest *the next Pope should be his enemy, and reassume all that Alexander had given him*, to prevent which he proposed *four several ways*. The first was by destroying the whole line of those lords whom he had dispossessed, that his Holiness might have no occasion to restore them; the second was to cajole *the nobility in Rome, and draw them over to his party, that thereby he might put an awe and restraint upon the Pope*; the third was, if possible, to *make the college his friends*; the fourth was to *make himself so strong before the death of his father, as to be able to stand upon his own legs*, and repel the first violence that should be practised against him. Three of these four expedients he had tried before Alexander died, and was in a fair way for the fourth; all the disseised lords which came into his clutches he put to death, and left few of them remaining: he had insinuated with the nobility of Rome, and got a great party in the College of Cardinals, and, as to his own corroboration, he had designed to make himself master of Tuscany, had got possession of Perugia and Piombino already, and taken Pisa into his protection. . . .

“ But his father died five years after his son had taken up arms, and left him nothing solid and in certainty, but Romagna only, and the rest were *in nubibus*, infested with two formidable armies, and himself mortally sick. This duke was a man of that *magnanimity and prudence, understood so well which way men were to be wheedled, or destroyed, and such were the foundations that he had laid in a short time, that, had he not had those two great armies upon his back, and a fierce distemper upon his body, he had overcome all difficulties, and brought his designs to perfection.*

“ He told me himself, about the time that Julius II. was created, that he had considered well the accidents that might befall him upon the death of his father, and provided against

them all, only he did not imagine that, at *his* death, he should be so near it himself. Upon serious examination, therefore, of the whole conduct of Duke Valentine, I see nothing to be reprehended; it seems rather proper to me to propose him (as I have done) as an example for the imitation of all such as, by the favour of fortune, or the supplies of other princes, have got into the saddle: for his mind being so large, and his intentions so high, he could not do otherwise, and nothing could have opposed the greatness and wisdom of his designs, but his own infirmity, and the death of his father.”\*

And for these times M. Audin does not condescend to the figure, half-admission, half-apology, which he applies, after Baronius, to the tenth century — that our Lord was asleep in the bark of Peter. For Alexander VI. and his “truly royal qualities,” † he claims an historical grandeur.

Julius II. is certainly a relief after Alexander VI. At least he was a great man — undisciplined as the wild sea, and one who in less evil times would have been thought a scandal to the smallest cure in Christendom; but if the Roman Pontiff was to play the king, it was as well to have one who could play his part with grandeur. He schemed and fought, but not for the sole object of setting up in the world his own base-born and abandoned son. He provided one nephew with a dukedom, and kept up his own Cardinal's title, *S. Peter ad Vincula*, in his own family — giving it to two of his other nephews successively, both of them men of honourable character — and then he devoted himself to strengthen the dominions of the Roman See.

M. Audin feels the effect of the change of scene. Julius is the “Moses of Italy,” capable of any thing — “he might have been a great general, a great artist, even a Napoleon;” and following the hint of M. de Maistre ‡, he enlarges on the “great idea” of the Pope — the independence of Italy,

“Not one of these sovereigns, national or foreign, gives a serious

\* Machiavelli, “The Prince,” c. vii. pp. 207. 208. London, 1680.

† Vol. i. p. 300.

‡ Du Pape, l. ii. c. 7.

thought to the interests of the Holy See, the integrity of Romagna, the deliverance of Italy, the glory of Catholicism, the preservation of arts and literature. Julius II. towers above all these crowned heads, as the cupola of St. Peter's above the spires of other churches. He has an object, a plan, an idea : — the emancipation of his country, which is invaded, and which he wishes to save. Talk not to us of his ambition : is it not sanctified by the end he has before him ? — We may be told that Julius loved too well the helmet and breast-plate ; — that he wielded too well the sword ; that he remained too long on horseback ; — this is possible ; this is written not only in history, but on the marble, on the bronze, on the canvass. But let us confess, that the noblest work that ever monarch can attempt on behalf of a people — the salvation of its nationality — could not have been accomplished by one of those cold and feeble natures, without defects as without virtues." — *Audin*, vol. i. pp. 350 — 352.

The coolness of this is rather provoking. There is always a satisfaction in seeing a man work his post well, whatever that post is : it is pleasant to see a general command his army well, or a captain fight his ship well, or a jockey ride his horse well. And as an Italian prince, Julius is a man to be admired for his spirit, and indomitable courage, and magnificent designs. During his long life, thirty-two years of which he had been Cardinal, he had seen the Papacy go on as a temporal power ; he had himself commanded armies, defended garrisons, formed and broken alliances, in the Pope's name and his own. He had seen Rome governed by a weak hand and a strong — interposing, with success and without success, in the broils and fights of the Italian and foreign powers. When he became Pope he resolved to make the throne, and the state which he had gained, as great as he could ; and under him the political power of the Roman State was felt with a new and unusual force. "*Vol esser il dominus et maistro del jocho del mundo,*" wrote the Venetian envoy in his strange idiom. The French at Milan — the Baglioni and Bentivogli at Perugia and Bologna, — were considerable impediments to this ; the French besides were "*barbari* ;" he hated them with a good Italian hatred, and Pope Julius was even more than an

ordinary Italian hater. And so he did his best to put down "the tyrants," and to drive the *barbarians* out of Italy. But when M. Audin talks about "his patriotism taking its source in religion," — about his "making himself a soldier only that he might the better adorn his spouse, the Church, with gold and diamonds" \* — and would persuade us that if his pontificate had not been so turbulent, he would have set about the reform of the clergy, † we are reminded that he was able to be a great man, just because, as spiritual Head of Christendom, he left his first duties utterly neglected.

Even his political greatness has many blots. M. Audin is for ever ringing the changes on the "independence of Italy." Even Alexander VI., according to him, deserves credit for having aimed at the independence of Italy — and still greater glory is due to Julius. But before he made so much of Julius's struggle with the intruding strangers, he should have remembered that, as he has told us himself ‡, it was *Cardinal Julian*, who, when the Holy See was in the hands of a personal enemy, fled to the court of France, and there was the first to tempt and allure the *barbarians* into Italy, and to persuade them to attack the Pope — that it was *Pope Julius*, too, who leagued with the Germans, the French, and the Spaniards at Cambray, to *partition Italy with them*, as the price of the destruction of Venice. In those days unfaithfulness to promises and treaties was not much thought of; but Julius was preeminently unscrupulous. The man who could take in Cæsar Borgia § and cow him by superior wiliness and audacity, could be no bad proficient in dissimulation. He forms the league of Cambray with France against Venice, and excommunicates the Republic; when he has secured Romagna he deserts his ally, and forms the *Holy League* with Venice against France. || After the defeat of Ravenna he is ready to make peace

\* Vol. i. pp. 364, 365.

† Vol. ii. pp. 10, 11.

‡ Audin, vol. i. pp. 162, 163.; also Roscoe, Leo X. vol. i. note 88. (Bohn's edit.)

§ Roscoe, Leo X. c. vii. Sismondi, Rep. Ital. xii. 260.

|| Roscoe, Leo X. c. viii.

with Louis; but, while the treaty is waiting his own signature, he tells the ambassadors of Spain and Venice that he only meant "to gain time and impose upon the king;"\* and so the event proved. This would be sharp practice in a Bentivoglio or a Sforza, or any of the other crafty princes of Italy; but in the spiritual guide of Christendom, even if he be a professedly warrior Pope, it is a stain and infamy, which nothing can atone for.

Julius II. was great among the Italian politicians of his time; but, instead of being a great Pope, it is far more likely that his pontificate did more even than the personal wickedness of Alexander VI. to injure the Roman See. He plunged it, without remorse, into the very thick of the political game. Even those days were startled at his unrestrained secularity. He left nothing undone to make the Church appear as a mere power of the world. Wielding St. Peter's keys, he forgot to use them against the abandoned men — nobles and churchmen — who haunted the Roman court; he only thought of excommunication as a cheap and ready weapon against a doomed state or a restive ally. It is no wonder that his antagonists thought of a Council as a political instrument against him. A schism was not at that time so strange and dreaded a thing in the churches of the Roman obedience as it has become since the Reformation alarmed them; and abler opponents might have given Julius trouble. He was unecclesiastical, even in his magnificent use of art at Rome. The regal mausoleum, the gigantic Basilica, and the proud and simple inscription on its foundation stone †, speak of the severe and imperial mind of their projector; but speak of

\* Roscoe, Leo X. i. 269. From Bembo. Ist. Venet.

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ÆDEM PRINCIPIS APOSTOLORUM  
IN VATICANO  
VETUSTATE ET SITU  
SQUALENTEM  
A FUNDAMENTIS  
RESTITUIT JULIUS LIGUR.  
PONT. MAX. AN. MDVI.



the lofty grandeur of the prince far more than of the religion of the churchman. When the Cardinals lamented the destruction of the old Basilica — the venerated building of Constantine, hallowed by so many sacred sepulchres, and the scene of such great events — the Pope ordered its demolition without emotion.\* He had no sighs or thoughts for the past. "Julius the Ligurian" was the man of his own time; it was at once the cause of his faults and of his greatness, that he so thoroughly represented its spirit. There was no veil, no pretence, about his character; he never condescended to disguise his objects. But his very frankness and bold openness show, how little it then cost a Pope to be unreservedly secular.

M. Audin's parting eulogy reads like bitter sarcasm. Speaking of Francis the First's saying, "that Julius would have been a better General than Pope," he says —

"It is a judgment that we do not accept. Julius II. was a still greater Pope than he was warrior. If to know how to protect the rights of authority menaced by some schismatical cardinals — to defend in a council the teaching of the Apostles — if to call none but men of science and piety to his councils — to give to the world an example of irreproachable chastity of life — if to watch without ceasing over the administration of justice — to keep his plighted faith — to pardon his enemies — to trust in God in adversity, — to give alms — to love the poor — to be careful of the public treasure, and never to divert a farthing of it to the benefit of his own friends — and at last, to die as a Christian ought — if all this is to be a good Pope, Julius II. was worthy of the tiara." — *Audin*, i. 425, 426.

Really, the great and proud old Italian, with all his sins and faults, deserves something better than this formal and false panegyric of a sentimental Frenchman.

It was the glory of Italy and the vision of a great kingdom which haunted him to the last. "My dear brother," he wrote to his nephew, "you do not understand why I weary myself so when my life is spent. I do it to reunite *our common country under a single master, and he ought to be per-*

\* *Audin*, vol. i. p. 384.

*petually the Roman Pontiff.* That which harasses me (*ciò che mi strazia*), is the thought of not being able to compass so much for *the glory of Italy* as my heart conceives of. *Oh, se avessi venti anni di meno!* But I fear that my pains and toils have been thrown away.\* He died with dignity among his Cardinals, almost in public. His words were calm, and his directions precise. Because, he said, he had been a great sinner, and had not governed the Churches as he ought, he wished less expense to be used at his funeral; but there was no weakness or quailing about the old man — all was spoken with majesty — “*Latino sermone, graviter et pontificaliter, in plurali loquendo.*” †

“*Vivant vigeantque juniores,*” cried Cardinal Alfonso Petrucci ‡, to the Roman people, when he announced to them the election of Leo X. Three years afterwards, Cardinal Petrucci found that even under Leo, the *juniores* could not have all they wished. Money did not flow in fast enough, his retinue was not sufficiently great; and he joined with the oldest of the Cardinals, Riario, the former accomplice of the Pazzi, and three others of the college, in a plot to destroy the Pope by one of the most hideous devices that ever man thought of; — for which he was strangled in St. Angelo. But his hearty *viva* now, expressed without doubt the feeling of many at Rome. The age of roughness and war was gone with old Pope Julius, and a new one was to begin under the affable and accomplished young nobleman of Florence — a brilliant age of refinement, of easy and splendid enjoyment, of peace and indulgent mildness. Unspeakable were the triumphs and rejoicings with which the new Pontificate was inaugurated. The Reverend Father, Paride de Grassis, Master of the Ceremonies, the usual reciter of such events, was too fully occupied to be able to record much; but his place was supplied by a certain Florentine doctor, Giovan Giacomo Penni, a ragged but humorous man §, who surveyed

\* Letter in a MS. journal of Paris de Grassis. Audin, vol. i. p. 426.

† Paris de Grassis, in Raynald, ann. 1513. No. 8.

‡ Raynald, vol. xii. ann. 1513. No. 15.

§ “At the end,” he writes, “came my magnificence. I alone cut a sorry

the splendid show on foot, and has left us a full description. It is given in Mr. Roscoe, and still more fully in M. Audin : — there were crowds of Italian princes on palfreys, and ecclesiastics on mules shod with gold, and still greater crowds of their major-duomos and footmen, — velvet and plumes, jewels and brocade, streamers and banners and white wands, triumphal arches, allegories and statues, heathen and Christian, — the Pope under a silk canopy, riding the white charger he had mounted on the disastrous day of Ravenna\*, — and last of all, the ragged doctor, and the ragged populace in swarms innumerable, shouting, “*Palle, Palle.*”† No doubt a glorious and dazzling spectacle, though a warm one, on an August day in Rome. “*Mars fuit; est Pallas; Cypria semper ero,*” said one of the inscriptions; and when the hasty effusions of the people were over, the poets poured forth their more elaborate and prolonged compliments, and sung the returning age of Astræa : —

“Now comes the happier age, so long foretold,  
 When the true pastor guards his favoured fold;  
 Soon shall the streams with honied sweetness flow,  
 And truth and justice fix their seats below:  
 Retiring Mars his dreadful anger cease,  
 And all the world be hushed in lasting peace.”§

M. Audin has a singular propensity, while he shows a very proper distrust of Italian epigrams, to believe in Italian congratulatory inscriptions. The key to his view of Leo X. is in fact one of these felicitations. A merchant of Florence had written up on a triumphal arch,

“*Leoni X. Restitutori Religionis, Pacis, et Artium.*”

On this the author observes with some grandeur : —

“The merchant had understood and divined Leo X. It was

figure, in the midst of all these notabilities : I resembled the mule of Zachariah. I had hose on, one of them with holes in it, and the other torn : I was alone, without lacqueys, without blazonries, and on foot.” — *Quoted by Audin, i. 444.*

\* And on which he is painted in the “Expulsion of Attila.”

† The arms and cry of the Medici.

‡ L. Parmenius Genesis. Transl. by Roscoe, Leo X. i. 337.

exactly to these three great works that he was intending to devote himself, when he mounted the throne. Protestantism has misunderstood this Pontiff: it makes him only a man of art, to whom it condescends to grant some praise. But it is in this triple life of Pope, of Sovereign, and of lover of Art, that we mean to study him. . . . Of the Catholic reader, binded, perhaps, by fatal prejudices, drawn from the writings of separatists, we ask but one thing—to yield their belief to nothing but facts; facts are the poetry of the historian.”—*Audin*, i. 461, 462.

The scene had certainly changed. Leo had none of the old Pope's fierce temper and love of fighting; he was not a man to hang up votive cannon-balls in gratitude for his escape in the batteries, or to ride into a captured town, sword in hand, through the breach. He was like his wise father, a man of peace. The contrast was great between the two Popes:—between the old hard-featured, white-bearded veteran, who had been tossed about the world for the greatest part of a century, since, as a boy, he pulled his boat between Arbizuola and Genoa\*—with his burning ambition, and rude, stammering, hesitating tongue—imperious, inflexible, and like a volcano in his rage:—and on the other hand, the sleek, smooth-faced nobleman of thirty-seven, with his double chin, and fair white hand, and somewhat portly person †, mirthful and courtly, with his musical voice, and Florentine elegance of address—nursed from his childhood in wealth and ease; whose only exile had been a pleasant literary tour through Europe, and only hardship, to be for a short time an honoured prisoner of war; so varied and easy, and witty in conversation; so indulgent and condescending, so open-handed, so conciliating, so frank and

\* *Audin*, i. 362.

† M. Audin thus describes Raphael's famous picture—“C'est bien là, cette figure de Médicis, au coloris tout Vénitien; ces chairs blanches et mates de tous les hommes de sa race; cet œil myope, qui semble échapper de son orbite; ce front d'une pureté limpide; cette large tête, reposant sur deux épaules évasées; ces mains, un peu trop féminines, aux doigts ornés de camées antiques; et dans tous les traits cet air d'angélique bonté, qui charmaient tous qui avaient le bonheur de l'approcher, avant même qu'il eût pu les séduire par le doux son de voix que les poètes de l'époque comparaient à de la musique.”—Vol. ii. p. 551.

affable, so gentle in temper. "*Pour le Pape,*" says his admiring biographer, who now feels himself beyond the region of apology, and can expatiate in unqualified panegyric — "*pour le Pape, aimer est un besoin ; il dit à tout le monde, je vous aime.*"\* All is kindness and reconciliation. Machiavelli is let out from prison, and is soon to be consulted about giving a constitution to Florence ; the exiled rival of the Medici, Pier Soderini, is benignantly invited to Rome ; the kings of Europe, especially the young and clever king of England †, are complimented with blended tenderness, dignity, and address : even to the hostile King of France, stubborn and insensible as he is, he sends messages of the most winning persuasion, and moving affection ‡ ; — the Pope's letters, to whomsoever he writes, breathe "in every line a fresh perfume of charity."§ Even the schismatical Cardinals of the Council of Pisa, whom Julius, in his wrath, would have crushed to the earth, are received with a kindness and a lenity, which surprises themselves, and shocks old men like the Cardinal of Sion, Matthew Schinner, tough, stern men of war, like their late master. The offenders have to make an apology, which is lightened by the "benignant looks," and "gentle raillery," and "tender embrace" of the Pope ||, and then receive back their full honours, with only the light penance of a monthly fast : their secretary also, who was a poet, and had lampooned Pope Julius, "wept his fault, and besought forgiveness in prose and verse ;" and received from Julius' placable and literary successor at once his pardon and his forfeited Doctorship.¶ If Julius' mission had been one of vengeance, Leo's was to restore and heal.

\* Vol. i. 467.

† Audin, i. 465.

‡ Cf. Audin, i. 467, 468., with Roscoe, Leo X. i. 307. (Bohn's ed.)

§ Vol. i. 467.

|| Vide Audin, ii. 6.—The sentiment of the scene is entirely due to M. Audin. His "*doux regards,*" and "*paroles de douceur,*" &c. are not found in *Paris de Grassis*, who gives a very business-like turn to the matter, and tells us of the various shifts of the offenders, to preserve their dignity during their humiliation, which the vigilant Master of the Ceremonies had some difficulty in disconcerting ; "*que cum postea intellexisset Papa, risit mirabiliter cum Cardinalibus.*"

¶ Audin, ii. 9.

Such was undoubtedly the course which Leo had traced out for himself, and which gives occasion to such an exuberant flow of eulogy in his biographer. The restless and fiery craving for Italian supremacy had gone out in Rome. But if Leo was a Medici in his love of peace, he was a Medici also in his love of family. This feeling, which actuated him so strongly both as Cardinal and as Pope, is put by M. Audin with some *naïveté*, and in rather a touching light. Speaking of his life at Rome, when a Cardinal, he says:—

“He did not, however, lose sight of the interests of his family. He had but one thought—the re-establishment of the Medici. Lucretia, his sister, laboured with success at Florence at this entirely filial work. She was a woman of exemplary character, of a noble courage, whose words were as admirable as her conduct. More than one [political] conversion was owing to her. . . . It rested with the Cardinal to choose the moment to overthrow the Gonfalonier Soderini. Meanwhile his conduct was skilful; no one could dream that he took any interest in the affairs of Florence. His friends were almost all painters, sculptors, musicians, artists,—people who do not usually excite suspicion. Politics were banished from his saloons; and they discussed only, as at the court of Urbino, the pre-eminence of painting or sculpture, the nature of the beautiful, the rules of colouring and design. . . . If he received his partisans with warmth, he had no bitter word even for his avowed adversaries; at the farthest, he only allowed himself in some of those pleasantries in which he was so accomplished a master,—keen as a needle, but which grazed without tearing. When he came to speak of Lorenzo, he was eloquent with all a son’s enthusiasm. Then he called up, as in a magnificent picture, all those noble antique minds which his father had introduced to the Italian world, that ‘pack of manuscript-hunters,’ whom he maintained at great expense in the East; the little honey-suckle bower, beneath which Politian wrote his *Sylva*, &c. &c. When by chance the conversation turned on his brother Piero the unhappy exile, tears started in the Cardinal’s eyes, and in a voice broken by sobs, he described the bitterness which the land of banishment has for the patriot soul: then he recited some lines of Dante, while his hearers pressed in emotion around him, and showed by silent signs how they sympathised with his fraternal grief.”—*Audin*, vol. i. 316—320.

This is very amiable, and not at all unnatural in a nobleman. Nor, as things were then, was it at all unnatural that as Pope, and with increased power, he should pursue the same object. It was not unnatural that he should act on his wise father's maxims, which we have quoted above, and remember, as his family foe, Sixtus, and his own patron, Innocent, had done, that a Pope's dignity and power is but a life interest, and that the patronage which it confers is all that he can secure for himself. It was not unnatural, therefore, that his first four cardinals should be his own relations or adherents\*; it was not unnatural, that after the precedent of Alexander VI., he should have his uncle's natural son declared legitimate, in order to promote him to the purple †; it was not unnatural that he should establish one of his nephews in a Roman principality, by expelling — at once by excommunication and cannon — the late Pope's nephew ‡, its previous occupant, who had extended his dominions in much the same way; it was not unnatural that he should ally himself with great houses, and seek among the princesses and dukedoms of France for wives and titles for his brother and nephew §; it was not unnatural that he should use his opportunity to rivet fast the power of his family in Florence, and to found in his father's city a great and permanent dynasty. In all this there was no innovation; if it was in the blood of a Medici to do it, the fashion had gone on for many years before him. But it scarcely falls in with theoretical notions of a great Pope. And certainly these transactions do not appear in such prominence in M. Audin's narrative;

\* Roscoe, Leo X. i. 325.

† Ib. p. 326., and note 229. On evidence, attesting a promise of marriage, "Leo declared Giulio de Medici 'legitimum, et ex legitimo matrimonio inter Julianum Medic. et Florettam Antonii natum fuisse et esse: eumque pro legitimo et ex legitimo matrimonio procreatum, in omnibus, et per omnia, pleno jure, vere et non fide, haberi et reputari,' &c."

‡ Francesco-Maria della Rovere, Duke of Urbino. Roscoe, ii. 55. *seq.*

§ Giuliano, his brother, married the aunt of Francis I., and was called Duke of Nemours; his nephew, Lorenzo, married another relative of the French royal family, Madeleine de la Tour.

they come in only so far as they display Leo's warmth of heart.

But though Leo had given up the grand and systematic designs of Julius, it was not easy, in the then state of Italy, to avoid war. Julius had boldly met and faced it: Leo's expedient for staving it off was certainly more ecclesiastical and more useful to Christendom. For many a long year the popes had been preaching to the kings, to give up their wars and unite against the Turks. It was a wise and a Christian part. The idea and object of the crusade had indeed changed; it was now a defensive war, to repel invasion; and the object was not the sepulchre of our Lord, but the capital of the Turks in Europe. It was suggested rather by fear than by religion. Still, it was for the good and for the union of Christendom. Leo took up the crusade with zeal; and the perseverance and ardour with which he strove to the last to unite the princes of Europe against the Turks, form one of the most prominent and the most creditable features in his policy. Ægidius of Viterbo preached the Holy War at the opening of the Council of Lateran, begun under Julius II., and continued under Leo.

“Ægidius,” says M. Audin, “weeps, prays, implores the compassion of Christendom, and, like those who have gone before him, prophesies the ruin of man and of humanity, if his voice be not heard. Julius II., as Nicholas V., Callixtus III., Pius II., Sixtus IV., Innocent VIII., Alexander VI., promises indulgences—for he has no other treasures to give—to him who will take the Cross against the Turk.”—*Audin*, vol. ii. 430.

M. Audin, as his manner is frequently, contrives to make his praise read like very ill-natured irony; but this by the way. With Leo, the Turkish war was undoubtedly a serious object; and we have no reason for doubting that it was so, for its own sake, and for the behoof of the Church. But it was also his favourite expedient, though not a successful one, for keeping the French and Germans out of Italy. And he combined with this, when he found it likely to fail, the less paternal device of setting them on, one against another,



and joining each successively, as he found the balance required it.

The effect is perfectly astounding, when the reader comes fresh from M. Audin's pictures of Leo's "angelic sweetness" and ecclesiastical majesty, to the spectacle, exhibited in the matter-of-fact pages of Roscoe, or even Raynaldus, of keen intrigue, of imperturbable falsehood, and, when necessary, of smiling and finished craft, modelled with the most fearful accuracy on that of Cæsar Borgia. Julius, in the prosecution of his impossible, though brilliant dream, the independence of Italy, broke treaties with the most consummate indifference: but treachery was not his natural weapon. In the game of profligate selfishness and dissimulation, then played so hotly and deep among the potentates of Europe, Leo's diplomacy was pre-eminent for its daring deceitfulness; and with Leo the "independence of Italy"—the expulsion of the French from Milan—was but another name for pensions, and principalities, and dukedoms for the branches, legitimate or illegitimate, of the house of the Medici.\* Let any one turn only to Roscoe's account of the intrigues which were going on just before Leo's death; and if he wishes to see them in more shameful detail, he may find them in Raynaldus.† Through his smooth-tongued, agreeable, elegant envoys in France, the Pope makes a treaty with France, *to seize and partition Naples*; at the same moment, he is concluding a treaty with Charles V. to drive the French out of Milan. The following narrative from Roscoe, Leo's admirer and very lenient judge, recalls the tragedy of Sinigaglia:—

"The city of Perugia was governed by Gian-Paolo Baglioni, who, if we may believe contemporary historians, was a monster of iniquity and impiety; but the cruelty with which he exercised his usurped authority, rendered him no less an object of dread, than his other crimes did of horror. Acting on those maxims which he appears to have adopted on other occasions, and which, however fallacious, have found apologists, in subsequent times, Leo

\* *Vide* Roscoe, no unfavourable judge, ii. 359. 380., and *passim*.

† Raynald. ann. 1521. No. 77. *seq.*

conceived that against such an offender, every species of treachery was justifiable. Pretending, therefore, that he wished to consult with Baglioni, on affairs of importance, he invited him to Rome; but Baglioni, affecting to be indisposed, sent in his stead his son, Gian-Paolo, for the purpose of discovering the intentions of the Pope. Leo received the youth with the greatest kindness, and, after detaining him some time, sent him back to his father, whom he again requested to take a journey to Rome, and at the same time transmitted to him a safe-conduct. The violation of such an assurance was a crime, which even the guilty mind of Baglioni could not conceive, and he accordingly hastened to Rome, where he was admitted to the presence of the pontiff, and to the honour of kissing his feet. On the following day, however, he was taken into custody by Annibale Rangone, captain of the pontifical guard, and subjected to the torture, where he is said to have disclosed enormities, the perpetration of which could not have been expiated by a thousand deaths. This treacherous and tyrannical act was closed by the decapitation of Baglioni, in the castle of S. Angelo, and by the Pope possessing himself of the states of Perugia.\*

On this whole side of Leo's character, M. Audin maintains a deep silence. Those last three years of his life, so crowded with thickening and complicated intrigues, M. Audin passes over in a chapter entitled "*Mort de Léon X.*," most of which is taken up with the ceremonial of the emperor's coronation, or reflections on the benefit to the world of the "sword of Pope Julius," or episodes about Matthew Schinner, and "Don Inigo" Loyola at the siege of Pampeluna. In this reserve he has at least shown himself an artist, and judges rightly of discordant effects. These "facts" of political history have little "poetry" in them, and do not suit that reverend and guileless character in which Leo X. appears in his pages;—like a "pius Æneas," or a French *Télémaque*,—in all the amiability of insipid blamelessness.

His great object is, as he says, to show the religious side † of Leo's character; and he appeals with great triumph to the acts of the Council of Lateran to show how Leo anticipated and remedied beforehand the complaints of the Reformers.

\* Vol. i. Pref. p. xviii.

† Roscoe, vol. ii. 355, 356.

“ There it is,” he says, “ that Leo shows himself in all his Christian grandeur—at the Lateran, when he listens to the groans of Catholic hearts, and, under his inspiration, the Council promulgates those rules of wisdom, which have not yet received their full appreciation. . . . We will analyze its acts, and then let us hear whether Leo was wanting to his apostolical mission. Open the books of those who have written the life of this Pope: they pass with their eyes shut before these truly evangelical labours.”\* And we have three chapters, headed the “ Lateran Council,” but devoted not so much to the analysis of its acts, as to very digressive reflections and anecdotes about Italian society at the time.

The Council of Lateran — whether under the “ supreme inspiration ” of the Pope, or of others — passed many excellent and necessary regulations. It is a proof, if any were wanted, that there was a strict party in the Church, whose opinion in a religious assembly must be respected. The “ *Reformatio a capite ad pedes* ” had been a demand made even at the scandalous election of Innocent VIII.: it was made again now, and the Pope, in the words of the minute Paride de Grassis, “ *subridens dixit, se velle aliquantulum cogitare.* ” † But less could not be done, in order to keep up, as was politically necessary, the character of the Council, than to notice and condemn flagrant scandals. And when this was done, and the rival *conciliabulum* of Pisa humbled, the Pope, in spite of the wish of the majority ‡, dismissed the Council and took matters into his own hands. And how were the regulations of the Council enforced? The Pope, according to M. Audin, had been very “ *exigeant* ” towards the Cardinals — very precise and peremptory, in banishing from their tables and houses all luxury and display, in abridging pluralities, and enforcing the performance of duties. Was any Cardinal less wealthy or less profuse for the re-enactment of these unheeded Church laws? Nor can it be said, that the Pope could not enforce what he wished: he could excommunicate the Duke of Urbino for keeping a city; he could threaten

\* Vol. i. p. xvi.

† In Raynald. ann. 1513. No. 57. .

‡ Raynald. ann. 1513. No. 16.

to excommunicate the bookseller who should pirate Ariosto's works; could he not excommunicate a scandalous or disobedient Cardinal?

Raynaldi's opinion of the benefits of the Council of Lateran is, we think, worth more than M. Audin's:—"The attendance of so small a number of Bishops," he says, "out of all the great kingdoms which then were obedient to the Roman Church, and in spite of the repeated summons of the Apostolical See, is a proof of the laxity of those times, in which many Bishops, casting aside the care of their Churches, plunged into frivolous engagements, ensnared by the love of the world. And so it was that the ungodly rage of even one false monk was too much for them to master. The decrees of this Council were finally, in great measure, without their desired result."\*

And yet never was Pope more jealous of his prerogatives than Leo at this time, when the Roman See appeared, not as the representative and leader of the Church against the world, but as an Italian principality, pushing for power. But the manner in which he maintained this is characteristic. For the acknowledgment of his authority in form, he was quite willing to sell all that in former times Popes had fought for. Kings might do what they pleased with the Church, so that they did it as his delegates. Every one knows of the fierce quarrel in the middle ages between Church and State concerning the appointment to ecclesiastical offices: it had not yet ceased. In France, under the Pragmatic Sanction, founded on the canons of the Council of Basle, the form prevailed of election by Chapters, subject to the king's recommendation and approval. The Popes had for a long time protested and acted against this system, which ignored their authority, and which, as they alleged, produced a very scan-

\* "Tam paucos numero præsules, et tot amplissimis regnis, quæ tunc Rom. Ecclesiæ parebant, toties ad concilium apostolico imperio vocatos venisse, indicat eorum temporum socordiam, quibus plures Episcopi, abjectâ Ecclesiarum curâ, terrenarumque rerum amore irretiti, inanibus curis se implicabant: quamobrem nec unius Pseudomonachi impios furores coercuerunt. Hujus concilii decreta optato fructu magnâ ex parte demum caruerunt."—*Raynald. ad An. 1517. No. 1.*

dalous Clergy. The arrangement of this dispute was one of the first achievements of Leo; and M. Audin considers it "a work of wisdom on which the Papacy has good right to pride itself." But the days of contest for an ecclesiastical principle were gone by. The Pope could fight only for cities and provinces: in spiritual claims he displayed his wisdom by bargaining and compromise. The victory of Marignan was followed by the most courteous interchange of compliments between Francis I. and Leo, which M. Audin details with much satisfaction. The French King was full of devotion for the Holy See. "Nor was this mere show," M. Audin assures us; "for Francis loved, as much as he admired, the character of Leo" — and Leo, on his part, was not wanting in one of those exquisite letters, which his biographer extols so much: —

"The Pope thought proper to thank Francis I. for these expressions of devotion to the Holy See, in a letter, in which he brings out, with infinite felicity of language, those fine qualities which Heaven had bestowed on the young prince. Call it address if you will, but it is address with which one cannot find fault. If he alludes indirectly to the victory of Marignan, it is to ascribe the glory of it to God, and to conjure him to use his triumph for the welfare of Christendom. The letter finishes with most cordial wishes—*'Adieu! aimez-nous.'* Long had it been since the Kings of France had been accustomed to a language so full of affection: Francis I. was quite the man to appreciate it."—*Audin*, ii. 144, 145.

Francis proposed to treat in person; Leo "consented with joy; for Rome had been demanding for more than a century the abrogation of that Pragmatic Sanction, which surrendered the election of Bishops to capricious and fatal influences." — "Leo, in his work of reformation, could not leave in force a form of election which left the sanctuary a prey to such gross disorders."\*

The two potentates met at Bologna. That most fidgetty and important of men, the Master of the Ceremonies, who under different names attends the reigns of all the Popes of

\* Vol. ii. pp. 145, 146.

this period, — ever minute and vigilant, — has accurately recorded the pomp and courtesy of the occasion. Paris de Grassis — “*une belle âme*,” says M. Audin, “who did not, like malignant Burchard, listen behind screens,”\* is more than usually diffuse in his account of what passed: — of the triumphal procession at Florence, and the difficult question of etiquette which arose; how the Pope’s umbrella was left behind at Rome, and how the Pope solved the difficulty; how the city magistrates would not yield precedence to the Cardinals, and how he, Paris, paid them off, by “appointing that the Cardinals should not look up as they passed the magistrates’ balcony;” † and how in his thoughtfulness, he had ordered that no guns should be fired during the procession, “on account of our horses, and the multitude of timid mules:” ‡ how at Bologna, on the contrary, everything was mismanaged, and the French Nobles were so ill-mannered, that they would not listen to his directions; how he and King Francis, whom he was introducing, were wedged in the dense crowd which filled the Pope’s reception-chamber; and how at last, “*Rex et ego ascendimus ad osculum pacis*;” with what care and felicity, at last, he marshalled the ceremony, and what trouble and alarm he was in, lest the Pope should forget himself, and take off his cap in the King’s presence, as Alexander VI. did in the presence of Charles VIII.: — a mistake, which Paris whispered to the Pope to guard against; “and the Pope,” he adds, “observed the caution faithfully, at least in my presence.” §

With two such men as Leo and Francis, there could be nothing jarring or disagreeable. Leo was full of grace and

\* Though on one occasion he informs us how he peeped through a key-hole, to see what the Pope and the Cardinals were doing. — *Audin*, ii. 205.

† “*Ego, subridens vanitatem hujusmodi, jussi ut remaneret in Palatio suo*” — then seeing that they did not rise up when the Cardinals went by their gallery, “*statui quod nullus Cardinalis transiens elevaret oculos ad palcum, sive taxillum illud, ne contingeret eos videri, aut audire; et sic Vexillifer et Priores remanserunt in sua vanitate.*” — *Roscoe*, vol. ii. *App.* 11.

‡ — “*In nocte bombardis sine fine crepitantibus, quia ego in die sic ordinavi propter equos nostros, et multitudinem mularum timidarum, ne propter siliceas stratas in viis aliqui caderent.*” — *Ibid.*

§ *Audin*, ii. 155. 158.

benignity; Francis profuse in his homage and devotion. M. Audin can for once give full scope both to his national and to his religious feelings.

“The Chancellor’s harangue is a manifesto in honour of the Holy See, whose claims the orator sets forth to the love, not less than to the gratitude, of the kingdom of France. It is at the same time a profession of faith on the part of the Most Christian king in the authority of the Head of the Church. It is noble to hear the conqueror of Marignan exclaim, by his accredited spokesman, ‘Most Holy Father,—the army of the Most Christian king is yours — dispose of it at your pleasure — the forces of France are yours — her standards are yours — Leo, behold before you your obedient son — *tuus e religione, tuus jure, tuus more majorum, tuus consuetudine, tuus fide, tuus voluntate.*’ French words can but feebly give the force of the Latin phrase. ‘This devoted child,’ he adds, ‘is ready to defend on all occasions your sacred rights, by his word or by his sword.’ ‘*L’ombre de Jules II.*’ (continues M. Audin,) *qui sans doute assistait à cette entrevue, dut tressaillir de joie.*’—Audin, ii. 156, 157.

The shade of old Papa Giulio was more likely to have smiled a very grim smile.—Leo, on his side, was not behind, in his rivalry of amenity and compliment. He granted Francis various spiritual and temporal favours, — the nomination to some, and the suppression of other bishoprics, — the recall of ecclesiastical censures on the French bishops, and a tithe to be levied on the Church property in France\*; he distributed rich jewels to the King, and to the “beautiful and accomplished” ladies of the Court †, — and both parties broke up from the conference with expressions of the warmest esteem.

The results of the negotiations, concerning the Pragmatic Sanction, are thus stated by Roscoe: —

“In agitating this important question, the object of Francis was not only to obtain a formal concession of the jurisdiction exercised by the monarchs of France in the ecclesiastical affairs of the kingdom, but to transfer to the crown some of those privileges which had been claimed and exercised by the French clergy, and to vest in the king a right to those presentations to ecclesiastical benefices,

\* Audin, ii. 168.

† Roscoe, ii. 39.

which had heretofore been claimed by the Roman see. On the other hand, Leo was not less desirous to accomplish an object which had frustrated the efforts of his predecessors, and to abolish a code of laws which had been so long regarded as the opprobrium of the Church; and although the pretensions of the king went beyond the claims of the Pragmatic Sanction, yet, as the destruction of that system would overturn the independence of the French clergy, and as the rights of the sovereign were to be exercised under the express sanction of the holy see, and not in direct opposition to its authority, as had theretofore been done, the pontiff willingly listened to the representations made to him by the king on this head, and the discussion was soon terminated to their mutual satisfaction. It was in consequence agreed that the Pragmatic Sanction should be abolished in express terms, both by the pope and the king, but that its chief provisions and immunities should be revived and extended by a contemporary act, which should invest the king with greater power in the ecclesiastical concerns of the kingdom, than he had before enjoyed. Hence arose the celebrated *Concordat*, by which the nomination to all ecclesiastical benefices within the French dominions was expressly granted to the king, with a reservation of the *annates* to the Roman see; besides which, the right of deciding all controversies respecting the affairs of the Church, excepting in some particular instances, was conceded to the judicature of the sovereign without appeal.\*

There may have been necessity in this; or Francis I. was perhaps a safe person to trust with the appointment of Bishops: but was there any great difference, in point of dignity, or in substantial results, between Leo surrendering to Francis, and Cranmer surrendering to Henry, what used to be called the liberties of the Church? †

In all that concerns the real interest of the Church, Leo's pontificate, as far as it depended on himself, was the complete reign of "*laissez-faire*." For himself, he kept up appearances and was respectable; so say the fairest and most probable accounts. He was frugal in his ordinary table, and attended

\* Roscoe, Leo X. vol. ii. 41, 42.

† The Pope reserved a *veto*; he thus saved his claims, but the king might without any risk yield them in this point.



to the distinction of fasting days. He gave no cause for slander against his life. And he performed religious services with dignity and impressiveness. "*È bona persona:*"—says one of those sharp men, whom the Venetian Senate sent to watch things at Rome, — "*è ben religioso: — ma vuol vivere.*"\* He liked to enjoy life himself, and was very good-natured and indulgent to his friends. He had his brilliant court, his artists and musicians, his circle of wit and talent, his grand public works going on. He had his elegant country villa, and his sumptuous town entertainments. He could equally enjoy deep and intellectual conversation, or a contest of banter and raillery. † He hunted, hawked, and fished with the zest and keenness of a country gentleman — it was said, for the benefit of his health. In due moderation, he played cards and chess; — and he threw off in private, with graceful ease, the reserve and ceremony which he knew so well how to maintain in its proper place. At the risk of shocking the correct Paris de Grassis, he did not mind going into the country ‡, without his rochet, and, still worse, *cum stivalibus, sive ocreis* — booted like a layman. Never was there a Pope with less stiffness. Even the more vulgar kinds of amusement were not without their interest for him. The most temperate of men himself, he rivalled the luxury of the Roman emperors in his banquets, that he might laugh at the gluttony of his guests §, who voraciously devoured his "*peacock sausages*;" he had his *improvisatori*, who drank and sang alternately, and were scolded if their verses were bad; he had his jester, — "a mendicant friar, named Father Martinus, or Marianus, who had the reputation of being able to swallow a young pigeon whole, and despatched four hundred eggs, or twenty capons, at a sitting." || And on one occasion Rome

\* Quoted in Ranke, i. 71.

† Roscoe, ii. 390.

‡ "Et fuit cum stolâ, sed pejus, sine rochetto, et quod pessimum, cum stivalibus, sive ocreis, in pedibus munitus." — Roscoe, ii. 510.

§ Roscoe, ii. 180. 392.

|| Roscoe, ii. note 330.

was astonished by a ponderous jest, which was deemed worthy of a lasting record in the Vatican itself.

“But the most remarkable instance of folly and of absurdity is preserved to us in the account given of Baraballo, abate of Gaeta, one of that unfortunate but numerous class, who, without the talent, possess the inclination for poetry, and who, like the rest of his brethren, was perfectly insensible of his own defects. The commendations ironically bestowed on his absurd productions had, however, raised him to such importance in his own opinion, that he thought himself another Petrarca, and, like him, aspired to the honour of being crowned in the Capitol. This afforded too favourable an opportunity for amusement to be neglected by the pontiff and his attendants; and the festival of SS. Cosma and Damiano was fixed upon as the day for gratifying the wishes of the poet. In order to add to the ridicule, it was resolved, that the elephant, which had lately been presented to the pontiff by the king of Portugal, should be brought out and splendidly decorated, and that Baraballo, arrayed in the triumphal habit of a Roman conqueror, should mount it, and be conveyed in triumph to the Capitol. The preparations on this occasion were highly splendid and expensive; but before they were completed, a deputation arrived from Gaeta, where the relations of Baraballo held a respectable rank, for the purpose of dissuading him from rendering himself an object of laughter to the whole city. Baraballo, however, construed their kindness into an illiberal jealousy of his good fortune, in having obtained the favour of the pontiff, and dismissed them with reproaches and anger. Having then recited several of his poems, replete with the most ridiculous absurdities, until his hearers were no longer able to maintain their gravity, he was brought to the area of the Vatican, where he mounted the elephant, and proceeded in great state through the streets, amidst the confused noise of drums and trumpets, and the acclamations of the populace. ‘I should scarcely have believed,’ says Jovius, ‘unless I had myself been present at the sight, that a man not less than sixty years of age, of an honourable family, and venerable by his stature and his grey hairs, should have suffered himself to be decorated with the  *toga palmata*  and the  *latum clavum*  of the ancient Romans, and bedecked with gold and purple, to be led in a triumphal procession before the public, with the sound of trumpets.’ His triumph was not, however, of long continuance. On arriving at the bridge

of S. Angelo, the sagacious quadruped refused to contribute any longer to the ungenerous mirth of the crowd, and the hero of the day was glad to descend in safety from his exalted station. The remembrance of this important incident was, by the orders of the pope, perpetuated by a piece of sculpture in wood, which yet remains upon the door of one of the inner chambers in the Vatican.\*

Leo's taste for these strange amusements is ascribed by Mr. Roscoe to that "diversity and range of intellect which distinguished him and many of his family." No doubt they were the amusements of the noblemen of the day: but the nobleman in this case was a Pope. And Leo carried the good nature and princely freedom, not, perhaps, ungraceful in a nobleman, into the government of the Church. M. Audin, with singular coolness, exhibits his generosity and goodness when still Cardinal, by telling us how when Ariosto begged for a dispensation of the "*tria incompatibilia*"—that is, the power of "*keeping ecclesiastical benefices, without at once taking orders,*"—the Cardinal interested himself in the poet's cause, and gained him the favour.† M. Audin seems to see nothing but what is natural in this. He has a strong feeling about the efforts of "*beaux vers.*" When Julius II. threatened to throw Ariosto into the sea for his impertinence, M. Audin remarks, "*il est fâcheux que l'Arioste n'ait pas adressé une supplique à Jules II. : le pape aimait les beaux vers.*"‡ And so he sees no difficulty in the principle on which Leo went, in distributing the offices and preferments of the Church. Leo scattered bishoprics and abbeys round him, as if they were purses of ducats, on the poets and literati who flocked to his court. His patronage of literature and the

\* Roscoe, ii. 180, 181.

† "*Mieux qu'un autre, le légat connaissait les péchés contre le Saint-Siège, où le poète était tombé, et pourtant l'Arioste obtint ce qu'il demandait.*"—Vol. i. 329.

‡ Audin, i. 361. M. Audin delights to record instances of doing penance in elegies. "*Postumo obtint son pardon au prix d'une élégie. Il est vrai que l'élégie était écrite en beau Latin.*" (ii. 331.) The schismatical secretary of the *Conciliabulum* of Pisa no longer languishes when he hears of Leo's election:—"*Car il est impossible que le souverain pontife ne pardonne pas au proscrit, quand le proscrit se repent en vers Latins.*"—(ii. 329.)

arts means, among other things, that he filled the benefices of the Church with men whose recommendation to him was their wit, or their skill, or their classical learning. "Andrea Marone," says Roscoe, "having been desired, at a solemn entertainment given by the Pontiff to several of the ambassadors of foreign powers, to deliver extempore verses on the league which was then forming against the Turks; he acquitted himself in such a manner as to obtain the applause of the whole assembly, and the Pope immediately afterwards presented him with a benefice in the diocese of Capua."\* "Colocci," says M. Audin, "used to read verses in the Roman Academy, which were of a grace quite Catullian. Now the poet had had the honour of addressing a copy of verses to his Holiness. The reward was not long in coming — 4000 *scudi*, which the author at once employed in buying new statues and new marbles. It was money well bestowed. But Leo X. did not consider himself quit towards Colocci: he gave him the *survivorship of the bishopric of Nocera*."† The Cardinalship itself, the place of highest influence in the Church, was disposed of in the same way, — to satisfy private friendship — relationship — political claims; given to a handsome and courtly young man, "*fou de gaieté*," "who would have been the first comic writer of his day, if Leo X. had not thrown over the poet's shoulders the Cardinal's red robe" ‡ — or to a royal child of seven years old; — placed at the disposal of a French captain as the price of a prisoner's life §; — promised, if Vasari is to be believed, to a great painter, to liquidate an inconvenient debt. ||

It was no remedy to the evil, thus produced, and is no answer to the charges against Leo, that he had good sense enough not to confine himself to such promotions — that he picked out good and religious men like Sadolet, Ægidius of

\* Roscoe, ii. 178.

† Audin, ii. 333.

‡ Bibbiena. Audin, i. 272.

§ Audin, ii. 545.

|| "Perchè, avendo tanti anni servito la corte, ed essendo creditore di Leone di buona somma, gli era stato dato indizio che alla fine della sala (di Costantino), il Papa gli avrebbe dato un capello rosso." Vasari (of Raphael, quoted by Rumohr, iii. 126.)

Viterbo, and Cajetan, for high offices, or for the honours of the purple. He had good need, after the conspiracy of the five Cardinals, three of whom had enjoyed a high reputation for prudence and respectability \*, to swamp the old conclave, the leaven of the Roveres and Borgias, with a numerous addition of men whom he could trust either from friendship, interest, or worth. M. Audin strangely thinks it a high merit in Leo, that, in a creation of thirty-one Cardinals in one day, several of them should have been men who entirely deserved the trust committed to them.

But M. Audin is a singular person. With the contemporary historians before him—the writers of Roman Catholic Italy—he persists in telling us that we must believe that Leo lived like “the primitive Christians—that he prayed, fasted, and was rude to himself” like them; and treats any other belief as a prejudice arising from “*des écrivains dissidents.*” In the same way he dwells with fond admiration and pleasure on Leo’s intimates—on his artists and poets—on the high and refined tone of society at Rome. Leo’s character, he says, is reflected by his three friends, Sadolet, Bembo, and Bibbiena. “*Tous trois sont des hommes de paix et de charité.*” He praises Sadolet, and justly:—he tells us indeed that Bembo was a “pagan, in literary feeling,” but he does not tell us that Bembo, at the very time that he was Leo’s secretary—writing the beautiful letters which M. Audin dwells upon with such delight, and enjoying the money of benefices † without being in orders—was openly living with a beautiful mistress ‡:—he does not bring Cardinal Bibbiena before us as the glozing and plausible envoy, hunting for still more preferment at the French Court, and never out of debt.§ He does not tell us that Sadolet’s high character could not prevent even a friend from coupling his name in some bacchanalian verses, as a boon companion, with the

\* Audin, ii. 202, 203.

† It is said, to his credit, that till he became Cardinal, under Paul III., he declined benefices with *cure of souls*.

‡ Roscoe, ii. 114. Greswell’s Memoirs of Bembo, &c. p. 420.

§ Roscoe, ii. 192.

names of a jester, and of the Aspasia of the day.\* He tells us how literary Rome was—how it was the haven and haunt of all that was elegant and intellectual. He does not tell us that among these pensioners of Leo's munificence was one Pietro Aretino. †

We have only space to set side by side two passages from M. Audin and Mr. Roscoe on this subject.

"Thanks to the daily intercourse of minds," says M. Audin, "humanity insensibly changes its nature, and ceases to wrangle. Satire disappears from books. . . . irony lives indeed, but it is delicate, playful, and no longer merciless, as of old at Naples and Florence. *Berni and his numerous disciples* amuse themselves at the expense of humanity, never at the expense of the man. . . . The life of the man of letters—it is a remark which has not escaped Roscoe—is a fair and decent one: his writings are not disgraced by insolence or impurity. Should you ever desire to make acquaintance with the poets whom Leo used to receive at the Vatican, *you would be astonished at the chastity of style which reigns in their writings.* To please their illustrious master, they sing all that he loves with passion—peace in the city, peace at the hearth, peace in the fields. There is not one of them—and their number is very great—who has not in his collection some beautiful hymn to God or the Virgin. When men take for their subject our Lord at Golgotha, or Mary at Bethlehem, *it is that the age is religious.* It is beyond dispute that a revolution was brought about in the manners of Roman society after Leo mounted the papal throne." ‡

No doubt Politian's ferocious style of lampooning had gone out of fashion in the much more civilised days of Leo. § But impurity need not be that of the pot-house. And as M. Audin has specified "*Berni and his numerous disciples,*" as favourites of Leo ||, and men who did honour to his patronage, we will quote, first what he says of them himself, and then Mr. Roscoe's account.

"Berni," says M. Audin, "taught the man of letters to put himself into a passion, without offending against the catechism, or

\* Roscoe, ii. 486.

† Roscoe, ii. 273.

‡ Audin, ii. pp. 333, 334.

§ Roscoe, ii. 173.

|| Audin, ii. 573.

against civility. . . . He formed a school at Rome. Gio. della Casa, Angelo Firenzuola, Fr. Molza, Piero Nelli, have trodden in his steps, but they have not eclipsed his memory. Like all imitators, they have exaggerated the defects of their model. The master is very free; the disciple has become libertine. *Berni himself gave in later days, in his Capitoli, sad specimens of an unbridled mind: he was old then.*”\*

We now give Roscoe's account of Berni himself, and Berni's writings; —

“Having now taken the ecclesiastical habit, Berni was occasionally employed by Ghiberti in missions to his more distant benefices, and frequently accompanied the Bishop on his journeys through Italy; but the fatigues of business, and the habits of regularity were irksome to him, and he sought for relief in the society of the Muses, who generally brought both Bacchus and Venus in their train. Being at length preferred to the affluent and easy station of a canon of Florence, he retired to that city, where he was much more distinguished by the eccentricity of his conduct and the pungency of his satire, than by the regularity of his life. Such was his aversion to a state of servitude, if we may credit the humorous passages in which he has professedly drawn his own character, that he no sooner received a command from his patron, than he felt an invincible reluctance to comply with it. He delighted not in music, dancing, gaming, or hunting; his sole pleasure consisting in having nothing to do, and stretching himself at full length in his bed. His chief exercise was to eat a little and then compose himself to sleep, and after sleep to eat again. He observed neither days nor almanacks; and his servants were ordered to bring him no news, whether good or bad. These exaggerations, among many others yet more extravagant, may at least be admitted as a proof that Berni was fond of his ease, and that his writings were rather the amusement of his leisure than a serious occupation.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Perhaps the most characteristic idea of the writings of Berni and his associates, may be obtained by considering them to be, in lively and unaffected verse, what the works of Rabelais, of Cervantes, and of Sterne, are in prose. It is, however, much to be

\* Audin, ii. 303, 304.

regretted that a great part of these compositions are remarkable for a degree of indecency and profaneness, which requires all the wit and elegance of the original, and perhaps more sympathy with such subjects than an untainted mind should feel, to prevent their being read without disapprobation or disgust. It can, therefore, occasion no surprise, that these pieces, many of which have been written by men of high ecclesiastical rank, should have brought some degree of disgrace upon the Roman Church.\*

And in the midst of this whirl of pleasure, and play of wit, and splendour of art, and profusion of riches, and heady excitement of intellectual achievement, and dizzy intrigues of state, the Reformation broke out in the rude and distant north, lands which the brilliant and refined Italians thought of with disgust, as the abode of coarseness and barbarism —

“Quaque non notos populos et urbes  
Damnat æternis Helice pruinis” —

and despised the intelligence of their inhabitants, as much as they dreaded their fierceness.

Leo never thoroughly understood and realised the seriousness of the crisis — he had more pressing cares, and he did not live long enough. He had begun by reforming the Church with a Council of Lateran. And he met Luther with diplomacy, and a Bull drawn up in classical Latin — “a picture,” adds M. Audin, “like one of Michael Angelo’s.”

Leo’s had been a successful and fortunate life, above that of most men. Born to nobility and wealth, and, before he could speak or remember, a dignitary of the Church, his course had been a rapid and a splendid one to the highest place in Christendom. Little had ever crossed him; and with a cheerful and even temper, and ample talent to enjoy to the full his prosperous lot, he viewed himself as a chosen child of fortune. “It seems to have been his intention,” says one of his biographers, “to pass his time cheerfully, and to secure himself against trouble and anxiety by all the means in his power.” The almost uninterrupted good fortune of his

\* Vol. ii. 129, 130.



career, throws into melancholy relief its dark and abrupt and mysterious close. At the moment when he thought that his triumph over the French was beginning, without any warning or serious sickness, he suddenly sunk and died. All is strange and unaccountable about his death: nothing was certainly known of his last days of illness; but his attendant, Paris de Grassis, believed that he was poisoned.

And now we take leave of M. Audin's very ambitious, and, we must call it, very impudent book. The Reformation may be very vulnerable—the system which it assailed has no doubt those claims for equitable judgment which all great systems may justly urge: it has further its good side, however such insincerity as M. Audin's may tempt us to forget or doubt it. Luther disbelieved the dormant life of the Roman Church, and events showed that he was wrong. But if ever despondency or hostility could justify themselves by broad and palpable appearances—if ever great and leading signs might influence and guide abstract thought—if ever abhorrence of what is specious and hollow, and instinctive presages of its doom, might turn the balance in theological difficulties—if ever an assailant might indignantly override all defence and palliation as the mere plausibilities of selfishness, by pointing to the significant events of the time—this advantage of position and argument belonged to Luther. If it be enough to warrant despair, that a system seems to be breaking up under the weight of scandals—that the powers, which alone could restore and reform, are in hands which will not use them—that the whole machine is so entangled and clogged, so inextricably linked to the worldliness and selfishness of great classes of men, that to disengage it, is to endanger society,—if to find that attempts at improvement are checked and fail, that energy slackens, and self-devotion relapses, and all strength and hope sink in an apparently final exhaustion,—if to see in the highest and holiest places not merely dull laziness, or easy respectability, but the foulest and most unblushing vice,—if to see Church offices turned into mere prizes of this world, Church interests put aside for the convenience of kings, the

dignity of the Church lost in her low-minded and worldly servants,—if to see primitive ideas of strictness forgotten in bustle and refinement and pleasure, the revival of them suspected, perhaps tried unwisely, and miscarrying,—if to see a system so deranged, that a man like Savonarola, who might have been a saint, is driven to be a fanatic and a demagogue,—if all this is enough to excuse alienation of minds from such a system, disbelief in its divinity, indifference to the good that is in it, separation from its communion—this justification for his revolt Luther could certainly claim.

Well may Manning say that "an appeal to History is heresy".

See a Sermon by Newman on "the Mission of St. Philip Neri" sermons preached on various occasions since he became a Romanist.

## FRENCH REVOLUTION OF 1848.\*

[JULY, 1848.]

WE are now half through this year of revolutions, and their novelty is wearing off. We are becoming familiar with a state of things which, compared with all that we have hitherto known, is a reversed order of the world. The game, indeed, is far from being played out. We seldom look in vain in the morning for those headings in large capitals, characteristic of the newspaper files of 1848, which imply another throne shaken, or another perilous encounter between rival elements of society. But now, every new event of this kind, however exciting in itself, is perfectly natural, and belongs to the established course of things. Chaos is, for the present, the recognised condition of Europe. Conflict, convulsion, and overthrow belong to that condition. They affect us only like any other phenomena with which life has made us acquainted. Not so those astounding and incredible tidings, which used to come in the gloomy mornings of February and March, more trying to our faith even than to our fears or hopes, like the shocks of an earthquake to persons who have never felt one. We, the children of tranquil monotony and unbroken peace, gravely doubting whether war was henceforth a possibility, found ourselves in a moment the contemporaries of a revolution, in very deed accepting the traditions of 1793, and not hesitating before any of its consequences. We found ourselves at once a historical generation. But the bewilderment attending this novel transformation has worn off. We have recovered our breath, and can look back and about us.

But, though the shock of surprise is over, the scene is still

\* *Narrative of the French Revolution of 1848.* By W. K. KELLY. London: Chapman and Hall. 1848.

too confused, and the drama not sufficiently gone forward, to admit of any very satisfactory or comprehensive criticism. All seems broken up, floating apparently at random, the sport of a day's accidents, wanting informing principle within to shape and guide it, or energy and power without to control it. What order of things will arise from this wreck? Which are the really powerful and prevailing tendencies among the many which have shown themselves? Is this the beginning of a state of society new to Europe?—or one in a chain of steps and series of conflicts? Or is it a dream or hour's madness? Is the spell of old opinions and old associations finally broken? Have the old ideas of rank and privilege, of property and hereditary right, received their death-wound? The immemorial unquestioned *data* of social arrangements—are they going to make way for a new political economy, a new public opinion and social creed,—or will they return to their strength again as they have ever done before? Are we really driven down to first principles,—or do we only seem to be so? Is it possible that this time next year may find old Europe again settled as of old,—somewhat shaken by the rude hand of democracy, but fast subsiding to its old tranquillity; or will it be in the thick of that pitiless and inter-necine “war of principles,” which a great statesman is said to have foreboded? Are the great problems of industry about to be solved? Is the condition of the labouring classes likely to receive a fundamental change,—or is all that is propounded and promised them a fatal and hopeless rebellion against the strong laws of Providence? Is there really in modern Republicanism the self-devotion, the self-denial, the justice, the kindness, the hatred of unfairness and corruption, the insight, and the energy, which it has so largely promised? Does society stand on the edge of the abyss?—on the border of the promised land?—or is it entering the wilderness? or have we exaggerated at once the forces, the talent, the perils, and the prospects of the revolution? Is it, after all, but “the situation?”

The great revolution, and its foreign progeny, are still too young for their history to be written. They have not yet

taken shape; they are simply monstrous, though, no doubt, they will grow into something—some new type, or, possibly, some very old one. Nor would any wise man, who cared about his character, stake much of it on any but the most general prophecies about the future. We, who cannot wait for the issues of things, but must speak when our turn comes round, must not encroach on the business of the historian, much less have we any inclination to try our chance in forecasting. The obvious and palpable characteristics of this last strange birth of time are all that come within our sphere to notice: but they are worth noticing.

The French revolution is the centre of the system of European revolution, and we shall confine ourselves to it. Paris is the heart and brain of Europe, which moves when Paris moves, and thinks what Paris thinks—so cry all Parisians and Frenchmen, journalists, poets, tragedy-writers and comedy-writers, philosophers, historians and preachers, novelists and *fabricants*, deputies and the great family of *commis-voyageurs*—Guizot and Thiers, Michelet and De Maistre, Lamennais and Lacordaire, and stern little M. Alexis Pupin, the crop-haired, bullet-headed, black-bearded, full-waisted, short man, who travels with *bijouterie* for the *Maison Flamm* of Marseilles, and who lays down the law peremptorily on cookery questions, politics, and taste, at every *table d'hôte* from Frankfort to the Fair of Sinigaglia. They make so much noise that we are inclined to disbelieve: nevertheless there is some truth in what they say. France popularizes, and communicates; easily, elegantly. Her writers seem to think that this is the whole of the civilising process; but, though this is one of their many simplicities, a people who have this gift cannot be without vast influence. Again, they are eloquent in descanting on the sacrifices which France has made to redeem the nations;—but though this, too, is a hyperbole, such as none but Frenchmen would venture on, it is undeniable that they have shown those who are so disposed the way to overturn governments. Glib, excitable, frowning M. Alexis Pupin, the oracle of *tables d'hôte*, is unquestionably a ridiculous little man; yet, to use the French formula, Pupin

represents a principle. The solemn German burghers vilipend him, and his subtle Italian friends secretly mock him; they have their own way of thinking and acting, quite independent of Pupin and his country; but (besides that they find the *bijouterie Flamm* to their taste) Pupin, in conversation, is at a loss on no subject; he discourses with fluency, spirit, and assurance, with breadth of view, yet with apparent precision; bold and rapid in inference, and, where ignorant, inventive. Further, however his local criticisms may be accepted, he is an authority worth listening to in Frankfort about Sinigaglia, and at Sinigaglia about Frankfort; and at both, about the mysteries of St. Petersburg, and the monster system of the English aristocracy: he is sure to be ingenious, and plausible, and amusing, even where his lying becomes too bold. Pupin, too, is a hater of despotisms: his opinions are strong, and his sentiments generous, whenever the question of oppressed nationalities turns up: and when foreign patriots despair, he cheers their fainting spirits by the example of France, and the assurance of its warm sympathy. So that M. Pupin, besides the *bijouterie* business, also keeps up liberal enthusiasm, and dispenses information pleasantly: and what M. Pupin does in his small measure, is done in a large way by the French nation in general, and specially by the writers and speakers of the city of Paris.

The doings and fortunes of the French revolution, though with one exception—the doings and fortunes of the Roman see—the most absorbing spectacle in Europe, are far from being the only one worthy of attention and study. Its history does not virtually comprehend that of the German or Italian movements, nor are these mere copies of the 24th February. But the French revolution is far the most advanced of all the others, the most systematic, the most uncompromising and venturesome; the type of revolution, though not the actual model. While the Italians are aiming at national independence, and the Germans at national unity, the idea of the French revolution is an entire recasting of society, not in France only, but throughout the civilised world. This is the idea, at least, which its leaders profess, and which will hence-

forth become the keynote and highest mark of revolutionary action throughout Europe. We shall therefore devote what space we have to it, and review briefly the state of things which preceded it, and its past and present aspects.

A strong government and a long one, a fortunate and a rich one, had not been able, even with the aid of peace and increasing prosperity, to bring about and secure the harmony of French society. It had its own way more than any government not avowedly despotic. There was no want of ability among its statesmen, no want of choice among those who might be its instruments, no want of devotion in those who were chosen, no want of purpose and will in its chief. Its influence extended wide and deep through the mass of French society, knitting and tying it together by a tissue and network of mutually connected interests, joined to, and directly dependent on, its central power, as the nerves are on the brain. It gave opportunity and encouragement for what was disturbed to settle, and for what was dislocated and fractured to unite; it gave time, it appeared to give a solid basis, and confidence for the future. It used to be said that every hour of peace gained to France, was a further pledge of future tranquillity. This government secured seventeen years of peace. It had no overwhelming difficulties to struggle with, no want of money, no discontented army, no universal famine; nothing more than the ordinary trials of statesmen. And there was a minister in power who appeared equal to far greater emergencies than any that threatened; the very personification of good sense and of moderate and conciliating policy, never shrinking from the call of duty, yet as cool and philosophical as if he had been less bold and firm; of the simplest and austere manners, which yet in public life did not make him inopportunistically nice, and allowed him a large range in the use of political instruments; bent with passionate devotion, and unscrupulous only in this cause, on building up on deep and stable foundations, and at whatever cost, the fabric of French society; patient of a corruption which he scorned, and of a stigma on himself, so

that he might not lose that last chance for his countrymen,  
*repose* —

“ Si Pergama dextrâ  
Defendi possent, etiam hâc defensa fuissent.”

But two deadly symptoms, which make revolution a continual possibility, had never disappeared from French society since the first revolution; a feverish, uncontrollable, sudden excitability, and a cynical *insouciance* for their existing political institutions of whatever sort. Whether from their own fault or that of the institutions, they never have become attached to them. The instincts and customs of loyal subordination have perished among them. They have never known what it is to value and respect while they find fault. A sneering or dogged obedience, or the acquiescence of perfect indifference, has marked the general temper of the French people, towards the various political arrangements, under which they have found themselves for the last half century. Enthusiasm they have shown in abundance, but never, except in the field of battle, *trust*. We are not going into the causes of this; but it is obvious that it has gone along with great social disorder. The dark pictures that we have lately seen of French society, drawn by Frenchmen, and Frenchmen of very opposite parties, and which taken by themselves appear exaggerations, receive confirmation from recent events, of which they offer a key. Exaggerations probably they are, for the writers we allude to are given to exaggeration; but they cannot be wholly false, and they point exactly to those evils which we should expect to precede a great convulsion, for which no very sufficient cause appears on the surface. They speak of the way in which French society has separated itself from the past; of the traditions, and recollections, and sentiments of old days which have been violently broken off; of the absence of any instincts or habits powerful enough to replace them; of the alarming way in which authority has lost its *prestige*, and law all that is sacrosanct and inviolable; of the disunion, isolation, mutual jealousy of classes; of the failing hearts of the peasantry, the viciousness of the artisans, the feebleness, decay, stag-



nation and incapacity of the easy inhabitants of the towns; of the weakening of the family tie; of the loss of influence among the clergy; of the savage spirit which any attempt to regain it calls up; of the light and reckless scepticism, or the selfish and sulky indifference, which is shown, not only in respect of religion, but morality. Their authors complain of dissatisfaction and misunderstanding, a fretful restlessness, vexing and wearying men, they scarcely know why;—and finish their description with the worst feature of the whole,—a corruption which is not satisfied with its own excesses, but morbidly seeks to parade itself, and uses the brilliant style and cosmopolite press of France to publish its abominations and its miseries to the whole of Europe.

These social evils are not confined to France; but in France their poison is inflamed, in proportion to the fiery vehemence of French temper, incapable of balancing and enduring—in proportion to its exaggeration of sentiment, its want of reserve and patience. Making allowances for this, may we not say that such views as the following have been amply confirmed; or, at least, that they explain with painful probability the strange events we have seen. The bitterness with which evils are published and commented on may help forward their effects, but can hardly of itself produce those effects.

We will take some statements of a French clergyman writing in 1845.\* The revival of religion in France, of which a good deal has been said, and the change of tone towards it, from mockery to respect, he treats as a mere superficial symptom, marking, indeed, a partial reaction from past madness, and suggesting hope, but in itself worth little.

After saying that there never was a time when religion seemed so much to interest the world, and to claim the homage even of its enemies, he proceeds:—

“You who speak of religion, who seem to humble yourselves at its feet and devote to it your heart, your soul, your deceitful lips, show us your religious *acts*. Acts, alas! you have none to show.

\* De l'État et des Besoins Religieux et Moraux des Populations en France : par M. l'Abbé J. Bonnetat. Paris, 1845.

What, then, do you mean by religion? I know not; probably you know not yourselves. . . . Who can venture to deny that, in the present day, every one has two characters? There is the outward and the inward man; each has his show side, and his concealed side: each is at once the man of the drawing-room, with his honeyed words, his correct and guarded conversation, and also the man of the saloons, with his deeds of shame and ignominy, often of infamy. Their lips and their hearts have each a set of doctrines of their own. Hence the change of our society into a vast theatre where each plays his part as best he may; hence this understanding, each to be deceived; hence the necessity of this accomplished and faultless hypocrisy; hence this woeful scepticism which extends through every thing, so that men no longer believe anything, not even virtue; hence this false position, this universal uneasiness, these vague and sad forebodings of suffering humanity, balancing between the fear of impending dissolution, and the yearning after speedy regeneration; hence this language of etiquette and conventionality, which all mock at in their hearts, and which offers such a contrast to their actions.”—Pp. 3, 4.

Yet in this arrest of open and rampant infidelity, he sees some hope; a hesitation in the path of destruction. But this is only in the higher classes. If there seems a chance of improvement in them, he sees nothing but increasing degradation in the lower, a degradation getting deeper in a far more rapid proportion than the utmost improvement in the higher. For example, in the matter of religion:—

“The people—as it is the way to designate the laborious classes—have preserved nought of their fathers’ faith and virtues but the remembrance of them. . . . Except a small number of families, on whom the fatal cause which produces all these evils has not yet acted, or acted but slightly, the remainder presents only the fearful aspect of a revolting degradation,—a degradation the more amazing, as in no age to which we can carry back our thoughts, has the ease and material prosperity of the people been so great. \* \* \* \* \*

“I am not exaggerating. There is, at this day, in general, in any given district, on an average, almost a tenth of the *men*, who do not believe in God, and who glory in this tremendous unbelief. About half of the remaining nine-tenths, and a great number of the *women*, do not believe in the immortality of the soul, and make

no concealment of it. Let me give an idea of their language; one set of them say,—‘For my part, I only know him who gives us light—God means the sun: there is no other. Is it not the sun who causes rain and fair weather; who makes the fruit of the ground to spring? If there be a God, as people say, why does he not show himself, and let us see him?’ The others say,—‘People tell us that after death there is a soul: what is a soul? once dead, we are dead for good and all.’ And all these misbelievers, these small professors of free-thinking, are usually grossly ignorant and stupid, and without exception, the most abandoned and vicious people of the place. A proof of their ignorance and stupidity is that, believing nothing, they are yet most superstitious. . . . The other four-tenths have faith, but, for the most part, a dead faith, or a faith simply negative: they believe, in the sense of denying nothing: they want, as compared with the others, the science of misbelief; they deny nothing, and affirm nothing. Their ignorance is extreme; they know nothing of their own hearts, of the faith, of religion. They are preeminently *indifferentists*; such is the least bad we have to show in a religious point of view. . . . Their breaches of the rules of discipline, of the commandments of God and the Church, are numerous, almost of daily occurrence. Those even who are considered religious for the most part pay no attention to them; the sacraments are neglected, the churches deserted, and the streets of Sion mourn because her children come not to her solemnities. They have their children baptized, they make them receive their first communion, here they stop; after this no more talk of religious acts, of attendance on the sacraments, except when they marry, and, in this case, it is more a matter of custom than of religion.

“As to the divine and salutary institution of the Sunday, it no longer attains its end. In the towns the working and trading classes scarcely ever put foot in the churches. In the country, about a tenth of the people never come, viz. those who do not believe in God, the worshippers of the sun; half the other nine-tenths come four or five times a year, or the more solemn festivals; the rest more frequently, but very irregularly. One Sunday they attend the parish services, the next they work in the fields or at home, or do nothing, but any how do not come to church. The young people, especially after twelve or fourteen, when they usually receive their first communion, leave off coming in a great many districts, except it may be three or four times a-year.

“It is fair to say there are exceptions. We have still in France a number of parishes in the country which have preserved the faith and simplicity of their fathers; to whatever cause this be owing, the fact is certain. But the number of these localities is small compared with those which have been swept away by the torrent, and even *they* begin to feel the first touch of the contagion of the age. In those where irreligion and carelessness reign supreme, some good and sensible persons have had the happiness to preserve a spark of piety. . . . But what happens? They are unceasingly the objects of a regular persecution: let them but attend church with tolerable regularity, let them but fulfil some of the practical duties of religion,—this is enough: the rest get up a cry against them, make them the subject of their coarse jests, their insolent sneers, and contemptuous slights. . . .”—Pp. 7—14.

The parish church, he says, is empty; the only chance which the clergy have of bringing them back to religious ways, the pulpit, is taken from them by the desecration of Sunday, with respect to which all feelings of sacredness are extinguished.

He further complains of the great social and domestic disorder among the poorer classes of the towns and villages;—  
“*Aujourd’hui il n’y a plus de famille.*”

“In the greater number of married people, the profoundest indifference takes the place of the sacred friendship which ought to unite them. . . . From indifference to hatred is but a step—a step which is often passed. . . . When they speak to one another, even in their moments of good humour, it is with that tone of carelessness which would wound the least susceptible heart; but their usual tone is one of discontent, dislike, contempt. When they hear good people speaking the language of the heart, they call it *sentiment* and *humbug*, and would blush to imitate them. . . . When the labourer returns home at night, worn out with fatigue, and his brow loaded with sadness and anxiety, not a word, not a look, much less a smile, to welcome him to the threshold of his silent hovel. . . . Speak to them of the bad conduct which they allow in their children, they will answer, ‘Oh, nowadays, children are masters, they must be left to themselves; if they tried to force them, they would lose their help.’ . . . Nothing do they fear so much as hearing their children called stupid. . . . Their sons might be very fiends, so that they were ‘smart fellows’—

*degourdis*; this is the term of their ambition—the manners learnt in the pot-house. . . . Their daughters are brought up like their boys, free as they, going where they will, coming home at night when they will, with a language of their own. ‘Amuse yourselves,’ they say, ‘while you are young; you will have other things to think of when you are married:’ never a word to them of religion or duty. When their boys have gone to their first communion, they never set foot again in church; their girls often spend the time of service, of vespers specially, in houses where the boys meet together. And the parents never ask their children, ‘Were you at mass? where were you at vespers? why were you not at church?’ . . . . By their own mockery of religion, its duties, ceremonies, and doctrines, their own gross language and gross actions, and their daily general bad example, they are the first corrupters of their children.”\*

But what, after all, is perhaps the most alarming symptom, is the way in which religion itself cannot act without breaking up households, chilling affection, estranging hearts. The fact is witnessed by its friends and foes. The priest and the priest-hater speak almost in the same language:—it is “*la question la plus brûlante de l’époque.*”

“We may speak,” says the latter, “to our mothers, wives, and daughters on any of the subjects which form the topics of our conversation with indifferent persons, such as business, or the news of the day; but never on subjects that affect the heart and moral life, such as eternity, religion, the soul, and God.

“Choose, for instance, the moment when we naturally feel disposed to meditate with our family in common thought, some quiet evening at the family table; venture even there, in your own house, at your own fire-side, to say one word about these things; your mother sadly shakes her head, your wife contradicts you, your daughter, by her very silence, shows her disapprobation. They are on one side of the table, and you on the other—and alone. One would think that in the midst of them, and opposite you, was seated an invisible personage to contradict *whatever you may say.* †

\* Pp. 43. 46, 47. 22—28.

† Michelet, Priests, Women, and Families, pref. p. xxix.

“ Oh, shame of our times,” says the clergyman, “ in which it is possible to say what follows: — that at the family hearth Faith is still seated in the person of a wife, but at her side is Unbelief, sitting there in the person of the husband, and there is disunion in the household: that, in order to put a stop to this permanent state of warfare and intestine troubles, to gain that peace and union which is to be prized before all things, it is necessary to withdraw the wife from the influence of that religion which makes her what she is, which gives her feelings and belief different from her husband’s, and thus to expel faith, and consequently virtue, from her home.” \*

Side by side with this view of French society from the pen of a priest, a common one among religious people in France, set the statements of their extreme opponents, such as Lamennais or Michelet. Whether exaggerated or not, they bear testimony to the same disorganisation, so to speak, of society — the dull uneasy discontent and jealousy, which work in secret under the dazzling veil of the most refined civilisation: the bitter sense of wrong, the isolation and fear, the absence of loyalty from the citizen to the law, of trust from the subordinate to the superior. Take, for example, Michelet’s book, “ *Du Peuple*,” published in 1846. He begins by protesting formally against the unfair and exaggerated pictures of French social disorders, which Frenchmen have held up to the scorn of the world. “ We are not so bad as the world thinks us,” he says; “ in the excess of our frankness, we have accused ourselves, but our self-condemnation has been extreme.” And yet he writes his book on purpose to shame his countrymen into union and patriotism, by a detail of the misery which they inflict on and suffer from one another. “ *Du Servage, et de la Haine* ” — this is the title of his chapters. This is the condition, and this the feeling, which he finds in all classes alike; he describes it in each, often with affectation and extravagance, but often too with touches of nature, which

\* Bonnetat, p. 83.

it is hard not to believe. He is enthusiastic in his admiration of the people,—meaning by the word, not, as Louis Blanc, the workmen of great towns, but the labourers of the field, where, neglected by statesmen and economists, he finds the virtue, the self-denial, the hope of France. Yet, in this country-population of twenty-four millions of agricultural labourers, “not only the most numerous, but the strongest, the healthiest, and, on the whole, taking in together physical and moral considerations, the best part of France,” he too finds religion extinct; and, by way of substitute for the faith which has been lost, nothing but the military ideas and remembrances of the empire. “Unsupported by the faith which formerly sustained him, left to himself, halting betwixt that religion which is no longer his and the lights of modern philosophy which are withheld from him, he is yet the depository of the national sentiment, the grand military tradition of his race, he still preserves something of the honour of the soldier. He is selfish and hard to deal with, no doubt; but who can rail at this who knows all that he has to go through?” He describes the peasant as engaged in a hopeless war with the usurer:—

“And thus,” he continues, “the peasant is more and more isolated and embittered. His heart is too frozen up for him to open it, to any sentiment of goodwill. He hates the rich; he hates his neighbour and the world. Alone on this miserable plot of ground of his, as much alone as if on a desert island, he becomes a savage. His unsociableness, arising from the very sense of his misery, renders it irremediable, and prevents him from coming to an understanding with those who ought to be his natural aids and friends, his brother peasants; he would die sooner than advance one step to meet them. On the other hand, the denizen of the town has no mind to draw near to this fierce man, and almost fears him. ‘The peasant is mischievous, malignant, capable of any thing. . . . You cannot live among them with any safety.’ So, people in easy circumstances become more estranged from them; they make short visits to the country, but do not fix permanently there; their dwelling is the town. They leave the field open to the village banker, to the lawyer,—the secret confessor of all, who gains by all.”

Yet of all the pictures which he draws, that of the labourer, both as to his condition and his character, is the most hopeful.

Is this exaggeration? Possibly: but not therefore total falsehood. General descriptions are apt to overstate; French writers are apt to overstate; M. Bonnetat and M. Michelet are apt to overstate;—and they *say*, which is a probability the other way, that they do *not* overstate. But are they simply false witnesses? If so, they have a large body of compurgators. Two parties are disputing a battle ground: and both assume the same facts to begin with. Both parties, religious and irreligious, assume that French society presents certain phenomena: these phenomena each lays to the other's door; and each professes to give the only remedy. M. Bonnetat confesses that the influence of the Church has dwindled down to nearly total extinction. M. Michelet, who hates it, yet abstains from triumphing—what the Church has lost, "*la patrie*" has not yet gained. Each has to charge his opponent for the failure of his own cause; but each cause meantime appears as a failure. And between them, French society, even if its actual misery be painted too darkly, appears at least in a state of apathetic indifference, on the look-out for good which it would receive from any hand—neither opponent charging it with those prejudices which imply principles or at least fixed habits and sentiments, or even with the parties which result from these, and which, if they separate also bind together; both looking on it as a field where nothing is so settled, as that it may not legitimately be disturbed, and where, in default of steady attachment and steady purposes, bold enthusiasm might most hopefully make its ventures.

Further, to whatever extent social evils exist in France, whether different, or in a greater or less degree, from those of other countries, those who are affected by them are, at all events, more sensitive, and more precipitate, than Englishmen or Germans. An Englishman broods long over an abuse, and ponders long on an improvement: first, whether it *is* an abuse or improvement; and next, whether he can mend by altering: it may be, he is not sensitive enough. But with a



Frenchman, impressions magnify, and inference hurries on; and before this "infinitely sensitive public," or before the infinitely susceptible part of it which reads, such pictures as we have quoted cannot be paraded, without irritating misfortune, poisoning wounds, infusing bitterness, goading on discontent. And such pictures have been daily presented to it for years past, in the pages of the brilliant and exciting journalism of Paris—a series of papers, not so rich or so practical as much of our English press, but combining singularly a scientific and luminous method of exposition, with equal pungency, and far more direct and significant calls for an immediate response from the public. Add to these the novelists, as representing phases of society in France, or at least what the most popular literary men have not hesitated to present as such—have not been ashamed to make interesting, nor the public, to admire and applaud. Michelet—here, at least, an authority who may be trusted—thus records and comments on this fact in French literature:—

"Immortal and classic romances, revealing the domestic tragedies of the higher and wealthier classes, have made it an established article of European belief, that domestic life is not to be found in France.

"Other works, of incontestable talent, but dealing in terrible phantasmagoria, have given as examples of ordinary life in our towns, retaken criminals and returned convicts.

"A painter of manners, of wonderful genius for details, amuses himself with painting a loathsome village ale-house, a low tavern for the reception of thieves and blackguards; and to this hideous sketch he has the effrontery to affix a word which is the name of the majority of the inhabitants of France.

"Europe reads greedily, admires, and recognizes such or such a touch from life; and from some minute incident which startles her with its truth, jumps to the conclusion that all the rest is true.

"No people upon earth can stand such a test. This singular mania for blackening ourselves, for parading our sores, and, as it were, for courting disgrace, will be fatal to us in the end. Many, I know, belie the present, that they may hasten a more brilliant future, and exaggerate our evils to hurry us on to the fruition of the felicity which their theories are to secure us. Have a care,

nevertheless, have a care ; it is a dangerous game to play. Europe takes no account of all these clever tricks ; if we call ourselves despicable, she is very ready to believe us."

"Just the opposite to the English," he says, this French people "takes a delight and a pride in parading itself as worse than it really is"—it is one of their ways of "showing their independence"; bad government and bad customs have cut them off from most others. Such is his apology. In French character and French scenes, there is no place, it seems, for freshness of heart and force of imagination, but where the existing order of things is reversed: truth is not to be found except in wild or monstrous forms: where there is repose there is falsehood, and with obedience goes along weakness and stagnation.

"Our novelists have supposed that art lies in the revolting, and believed that its most infallible effects were to be found in moral deformity. To them, a vagabond love has seemed more poetical than the domestic affections; robbery than industry; the galleys than the workshop. Had they but tasted for themselves, by personal sufferings, of the profound realities of the life of this epoch, they would then have seen that the family circle, the hard work, the lives of the humblest and the meanest of the people, have a holy poetry of their own. To feel this, and to describe it, is not the business of the machinist—is no proper subject for stage effect; only it requires to bring to the study the 'single eye' adapted to the subdued light of these humble scenes, fitted to penetrate into the obscure, the small, and the humble, aided by the heart which shrinks not from the recesses of the fireside, thrown into Rembrandt shades.

"Whenever our great writers have taken this view, they have been worthy of all admiration; but, too generally, they have turned aside their eyes to the fantastic, the violent, the strange, the rare; nor have they even deigned to warn us that they have been painting the exception."

French literature of late, whether in the shape of novel, or history, or journal, or drama, has come more and more to represent society in this contradictory and disorganised state; and ever and anon events have happened which gave mean-

ing to the strong words and wild pictures of the popular writers. Whether or not their exceptional heroism was realised, their exceptional crimes were. The tribunals of Europe have furnished, of late, no parallel, we do not say in ferocity or baseness, but in strange extravagance of combination, to the mysteries of French wickedness. The great criminals who in France have from time to time figured before all Europe, have thrown all others into the shade by their daring, inventiveness, and originality; and they have ranged in all classes of men. The accumulated horrors and abominations of last year are not forgotten: and many who read of them, must have felt at the time forebodings for a state of things, over which they threw such an ominous shadow.

We have said that a variety of symptoms indicated certain great evils in French society; indicated that it wanted stability and union; indicated uneasiness, dissatisfaction, the want of new ties and new principles to replace those which had vanished; showed talent and energy spending themselves on the work of destruction, love of peace without loyalty, repose nursing itself in indifference. In the midst of this state of things, an idea, long stifled by the effects of the empire, began to push forward, to take shape, and gather strength—the idea of the Republic. It was too new a revival in 1830 to have much chance of prevailing then; and its partizans were not ready for their opportunity. But they had gained an immense step: the sacred right of insurrection, dormant since the “whiff of grape-shot” in Vendémiaire, had been again asserted, and with success. They took courage. The Republic, so long given up as utopian, again began to appear feasible. The tide had begun to turn, with the recall of the Tricolor. Men once more ventured to scrutinise that terrible revolution from which they had so long averted their eyes. In spite of its terrors, it wore attractions; with long years, the alarm had worn off; from being defended, it came to be glorified; horror and hatred had grown common-place, and it was generous and original to praise. The Revolution became more and more interesting—more and more identified with the glory of France—nay, marvellous to relate, with

the glory of Christianity, and the strengthening of the Church. Mignet and Thiers broke in the public mind to admire the Revolution, *minus* the "Terror," and to excuse that: but they were tame panegyrists compared with two fervent and, we are told, self-denying Catholics, who in 1833 commenced the most laborious and minute history of the Revolution, on the theory that "it was at bottom an attempt to realise Christianity, and fairly put it in action in our world."\* One of this pair of Catholic historians has since become himself historical, and is M. Buchez, the late president of the National Assembly. He is not ashamed of the "Terror;" he and his companion shock M. Michelet, "by their apologies for the 2nd September, and the S. Bartholomew, their testimonial of good Catholics given to the Jacobins, their satire on Charlotte Corday, and praise of Marat:"† M. Michelet is forced to protest against them, that the Convention saved France, not *by*, but *in spite of*, the "Terror," hopes that in the next edition these sad "paradoxes" will disappear, and laments the activity which in 1845 was "distributing these strange absurdities, by means of cheap papers, among the people and labourers who have not time to examine." The last and most brilliant apology was furnished by an illustrious convert from the ranks of legitimacy. Men in France do not write in vain, if they write well: the republican party drew into itself a large proportion, perhaps the largest, of the ablest writers of the day; it was served too by many more keen pens and brilliant imaginations than it could claim as its own. But it did not confine itself to writing—it worked, organised, paraded itself. It tried its hand; baffled, it recommenced; defeated, it never lost confidence; it changed its shape, its name, its tactics, as necessary; it showed daring, and threw away lives, though without being uselessly prodigal, to deepen an impression, and gain the consecration which is given by death; and when it found itself premature, the lesson was not lost, and it learnt resolution to bide its

\* Roux et Buchez, "Histoire Parlementaire." Vide Carlyle, Miscell. vol. v. p. 228.

† Michelet, "Du Peuple," p. 263. note.

opportunity. It tried, and not without success, to unite the dazzling praise of chivalrous daring, with the lustre of high intellect and noble thought, and with the severer merits of indefatigable industry, simplicity of manners, and self-sacrifice, warmed and softened by all tender and generous emotions—it presented itself as the cause of the young, as well as the cause of the poor. There was no want of bombast and buckram in it; but amid the damaged reputations, the tried and but too well-known expedients, the feeble attachments, the inconsistencies and selfishness by which it was surrounded, itself unproved, it bore itself bravely, and made a figure. It conciliated, it promised, it seduced; and no one need recognise the children of the grim and grisly Jacobins, in the long-haired handsome youths, redolent of poetry and flowers, with melancholy tender eye, but firmly set lip and manly mouth, who gloried in the “traditions of ’93.” Their old heroic sires had been compelled to do rough work; their sons would be heroic, but not rough. Republicanism had laid aside its terrors, its knife and sabre, and red cap, and was become mild as the age—

“Positis novus exuviis, nitidusque juvena  
Volvitur”—

graceful and gentle, and gay, yet not without aggression on its crest, and menace in its restless glittering tongue —

“Arduus ad solem, et linguis micat ore trisulcis.”

“The party,” says Louis Blanc, “had distinguished and even illustrious representatives in the parliament, the Institute, the press, the army, in the sciences, in the arts, and in trade. But it is particularly as a *militant party* that it deserves to be considered in this period of French history.”

“A great and serious thought possessed the leaders of the republican militia, and was about to form the business of their lives. They wished to reconstruct the chain of modern ideas which the empire had so rudely broken. They wished to lead back into the course of history that marvellous epoch of the first Revolution, over which had passed the *coups d'état* of General Bonaparte. It was their glory, as we shall see, to accomplish this

vast design at the cost of absolute self-sacrifice—an incalculable service, enough for ever to mark out their place in the narrative of the most pregnant vicissitudes of French society.

“They were for the most part men of brilliant intellect, of chivalric valour, and who answered more exactly than the legitimatist party itself to the ancient national type. Amongst them had taken refuge, when banished from a society overspread with mercantilism, that tone of sarcastic levity and intelligent turbulence, that love of adventure, that impetuosity in self-abandonment, that gaiety in danger, that appetite for action, those lively ways of treating serious things, that formerly constituted the salient characteristics of the nation. Thus, with a curious contrast, an earnest care for the things of the future was found precisely amongst those whose personal qualities best recalled the most brilliant features of the past.”\*

For seventeen years—it is a thing worth noting, for it is not so common—this republican party have worked as no other body of men of their time have served a cause; with clear ability, and singular pertinacity and daring, and an enthusiasm which never cooled down from the hottest point. They started into life, warriors—the sights and sounds of their birthdays in July 1830, had entered deep into their soul: warriors in all sorts of ways—wielding the journalist’s pen, and the musket of the barricades, and the duellist’s pistol. They were not vain seekers after present improvement; that they left to a prudish, pettish, blind government, and an inconsistent, illogical, selfish opposition. Their line was a clear one, attack—perpetual, manifold, varied attack. When everything existing was destroyed, it would be time to begin to build. “Every institution,” Robespierre had said, “which does not suppose the people *good*, and the magistrate *corruptible*, is vicious;” and such were the institutions of 1830. “*La liberté vit de défiances*,” had been laid down by M. Armand Marrast, editor of the *Tribune*, and on it he had founded the “theory of personal attacks,”—“*la théorie des attaques personnelles*,”†—made a reality with a faith and determination such as few theories inspire. “The theory of *personal at-*

\* Louis Blanc, *Dix Ans*, vol. i. p. 429. Eng. Tr.

† Louis Blanc, *Dix Ans*, c. xxi. vol. i. 477. Eng. Tr.

*tacks*” was not confined to the journalist in his higher sphere — exercising in the *bureaux* of his paper “a magistracy, say rather a priesthood.” The maxim, that “his life belongs to the cause of truth,” meant, that he might have to end it not merely in hard work, but, if needs be, in the *Bois de Boulogne* by a bullet. He was bound to do battle against all men, like the knight errant of old, for the honour of his lady. “*Notre dame, à nous, c'est la liberté,*”\* cried the chivalric M. Ferdinand Flocon, of the *Tribune*, to the whole legitimatist party, when he solemnly forbade them, under pain of mortal encounter, “to speak concerning her either good or evil.” Twelve republican champions chose each his man, from among twelve legitimatists, in the quarrel of Liberty against the Duchess de Berri; and Armand Carrel led the band,— Armand Carrel, who was to shed his blood again, and for the last time, in defending the sacred purity of the press against the intrigues of a “speculator:” —

“The *Corsaire*, a satirical journal belonging to the republican party, having one day alluded to the suspicions indulged in by public malice, the editor, M. Eugène Brifault, was called out by a royalist and wounded. Another attack was followed by another challenge upon the part of the writers in the *Revenant*, to which the *Corsaire* on this occasion replied by an energetic appeal to the respect due to the liberty of the press. Now to have recourse to measures of intimidation against the republican party was a proof how little that party was understood. Composed of men full of courage, impetuosity, and daring, the strength of that party consisted precisely in its ardour in braving death. No sooner did it find itself threatened than its indignation burst forth with tremendous vehemence. The *National* and the *Tribune*, which until then had spoken only with chivalrous generosity of the unfortunate and captive Duchess de Berri, now hurled a formal and haughty defiance at the legitimatists. With that lofty disdain which characterised him, Armand Carrel wrote, ‘It seems that the moment is come for testing the famous Carlo-republican alliance; be it so. Let messieurs *cavalieri serventi* say how many they are; let us see each other once face to face, and then let there be an end of the matter. We will not call in the *juste-milieu* men

\* Louis Blanc, c. xxxii. vol. ii. 134. Eng. Tr.

to help us.' A declaration of the same kind appeared in the *Tribune*. Instantly the popular societies, the schools, and all were in motion. The offices of the two republican newspapers were filled with impassioned crowds. Every one demanded permission to enrol his name; every one claimed for himself the honour of the first fight. A list of twelve names had been deposited by the legitimatists at the offices of the *National* and the *Tribune*, and from that list Armand Carrel had selected the name of Roux Laborie; but in matters of single combat the republicans admitted no representative, and they all insisted that the engagement should have a character more in conformity with the intensity of their anger. Accordingly they deposited at the offices both of the *National* and the *Tribune* twelve names in opposition to the twelve that had been furnished to them, and declared that they determined to have, not a collective engagement, not a listed field, which would have been impracticable, but a combat divided into twelve rencontres, at different hours, and at different places. After several negotiations and a long correspondence, the legitimatists refused to subscribe to these conditions. The following letter addressed to the *Revenant*, by MM. Godefroi Cavaignac, Marrast, and Garderin, will give an idea of this singular conflict, in which the spirit of the middle ages seemed to be revived.

“We send you a first list of twelve persons. We demand, not twelve simultaneous duels, but twelve successive duels, at times and places on which we shall easily agree. No excuses, no pretexts; which would not save you from the disgrace of cowardice, nor, above all, from the consequences which ensue from it. Henceforth there is war, man to man, between your party and ours; no truce till one of the two shall have given way to the other.’

“From the acrimony of this language, it may be conceived what must have been the surprise of the republican party when its opponents dared to threaten it. The men of intelligence among the royalists felt that a great blunder had been committed, and they exerted all their energies to stifle this deplorable quarrel. In pursuance of a decision come to at a meeting of their leading men, the legitimatists declared that they could not consent to generalise the dispute. Tardy prudence, and insufficient to the end proposed! On the 2d of February, MM. Armand Carrel and Roux Laborie met upon the ground. The fight took place with swords, and lasted three minutes. Carrel had already twice wounded his adversary in the arm; but in making a lunge, he met the point of the sword, and received a deep wound in the abdomen. The news



spread like lightning, and immediately became the subject of every conversation. Nothing was talked of in the schools, the journals, at the Bourse, in the theatres, but the courage of Armand Carrel, his devotedness, and the danger impending over his life.\*

They carried on the war with the advantages which all extreme opinions possess as long as they are extreme; the cheap cost at which they can get credit for two important virtues—candour and consistency. They looked down on the struggles between cabinets and chambers with contemptuous fairness—on the false position of the July monarchy as against that of Charles X., of the liberal opponents of the peerage as against its supporters, on the dynastic opposition as against the ministry, on the curtailers of prerogative as against its extenders—each the impotent and self-contradictory result of that masterpiece of human madness, “*chef d’œuvre de folie humaine*”—a constitutional *régime*. The nearer to truth, the more false; the more liberal, the more absurd. They laughed with the legitimatist *Gazette de France*, they admired its talent, they celebrated, at least for a time, the uprightness and honour of its party, they were moved to tears by M. Berryer’s eloquence, and could afford to sympathise with the touching adventures of Marie Caroline. If, again, the system of the ministry was bad, that of the opposition was worse. One appeared at least a “*politique d’affaires*,” the other but a “*politique de sentiment*.” When the liberals talked of liberty, they were answered that their liberty was a “cowardly despotism:” when they murmured against authority, they were told that what society wanted was just a *stronger* authority—*la réhabilitation du principe d’autorité*,—not fresh “guarantees for existing liberties.”† Themselves far beyond the reach of religion to trammel or alarm, the republicans could be tolerant against a bigoted infidelity, and defend even middle-age usages against prosaic reformers. They sneered at the officious attempt of “a priest named

\* Louis Blanc, vol. ii. pp. 132, 133.

† Louis Blanc, c. xxxiii. vol. ii. 187.

Chatel, who had taken upon him to introduce the French language into the Liturgy—a schism without meaning, without sense, because it deprived of all mystery, that is of all poetry, the prayer which rises from the depths of simple souls.”\* They made game of the narrow-minded, sour, fretful, petty Voltairianism which took alarm at the idea of admitting priests to the Chamber; they protested sternly against the liberals for “their famous principle of Atheism in the law—the equality of religions—the liberty of instruction,” “the consecration of the grossest of quackeries;” and reminded them that if the “state declares itself indifferent in religion, it abdicates; and that what in the state is taken away from the sovereignty of God, is added to the sovereignty of the executioner.”† And this exposition of self-contradiction and want of consequence, so peculiarly powerful on a Frenchman’s mind, was not confined to institutions or parties, or measures. With their “theory of personal attacks,” the republicans were not likely to neglect such a powerful weapon as personal inconsistency. Their memory was good. When the “Society of the Rights of Man” was attacked in the chamber, its champions turned on the ministers:—

“The famous debate on this law, which was to end in a civil war, was opened on the 11th of March. There was not a heart but was filled with trouble, not a face but what wore the marks of the liveliest anxiety. It was well known that if such a law passed, it could only be met by the *Société des Droits de l’Homme* with open resistance; and therefore greater sensation than astonishment was excited in the Chamber when M. de Ludre launched from the tribune these bold and terrible words—‘The *Société des Droits de l’Homme* will begin no tumults; but were it not resolved to wait until the French people shall declare their sentiments, the number and courage of its members might perchance impel it at once to arms.’ Such was the declaration with which the debate opened, and *personal attacks were the order of the day*. Allusions were made to three individuals sitting on the ministerial bench, of whom one (M. de Broglie) had opened his house, during the Restoration, to

\* Louis Blanc, c. xviii. vol. i. 387.

† Louis Blanc, c. xviii. “Liberté d’enseignement, la gestation d’anarchie,” vol. ii. p. 49.

the *Société des Amis de la Presse*; another (M. Guizot) had been the prime mover in the *Société Aide-toi le ciel t'aidera*; and the third (M. Barthe) had been an associate of the *Carbonari*. The allusion was understood by all present, and M. Pagès (de l'Arrière) overwhelmed ministers, especially M. Guizot, with his sarcasms on that point. The only answer the latter could make, was by explaining away the views and intentions of the *Société Aide-toi*, when he belonged to it—a pitiable begging of the question unworthy of him, and of which he was, doubtless, conscious, since his humbled pride sought refuge in passion. Pale, with head erect, body trembling with emotion, and extended arm, he hurled at the republican party insults for their defiance. Quick at making up for the weakness of his defence by the haughtiness of his attacks, he was great in his bravado and contempt. 'Man vexes himself, God leads him,' he exclaimed, quoting Bossuet; and, according to him, the paths of ministers are God's ways in France."\*

It is not necessary to say that the Republican party justified this war of the pen and the tongue by its deeds. The 29th of Robespierre's 38 Articles of the "Rights of Man" declares that, "when government violates the rights of the people, insurrection is the most sacred of rights, and most indispensable of duties."† The duty was not allowed to be forgotten. From time to time, it was the "theory of personal attacks," in the shape of an infernal machine, or a pistol bullet—from time to time, the barricades were raised again in Paris. The Provinces helped occasionally, or were turned to account. If the Lyons weavers rose in 1831 in a quarrel with their masters, yet, any how, they rose; and next time, care was taken that they should rise against the government also. And so, though the insurgents were beaten, it was always good practice. The tradition was not broken; and, on each occasion, the party gained a new talismanic name or motto, for future watchwords. The "Cloître S. Méry," and the "Faubourg de Vaise," became as stirring words as Austerlitz and Lodi; and the stern war-cry of the vanquished workmen of Lyons, "*Vivre en travaillant, ou mourir en combattant*," has survived to lead others to victory.

\* Louis Blanc, ii. pp. 231, 232.

† Ibid. ii. p. 182.

But it was when an insurrection had failed, and its leaders were in prison or before their judges, that the spirit of unconquerable pugnacity rose highest. The tribunals—the Chamber of Peers especially—were the chosen fields of republican warfare. A trial had the interest of a fight for life. At the sight of the organs of law, the blood of the republicans boiled over, and they rose against them with all the hatred and scorn which they felt for the system which those tribunals guarded. They felt too, and turned to account, the advantages of the weaker party; they felt that they had sympathy on their side, admiration for their gallant audacity, an impressible audience. They made it an opportunity for inculcating republicanism: they did not defend themselves, but discussed first principles, and the judges answered them. It was as they wished. Whether from the inevitable condition of things, or from the peculiarities of French Courts, the trials were mere scenes of party collision of the bitterest kind. The historian of the rise of modern republicanism dwells with delight on such scenes, of which his pages are full.

“After a brief address from the President M. Hardoin, who thought it right to recommend a calm demeanour to the actors in the judicial drama about to commence, the examination of the prisoners began. But it was easy to judge, from the deportment of the accused, *how much they reckoned on the ascendancy of their patriotism and their intrepidity. Far from thinking of defending themselves, they attacked; and were, by turns, sarcastic and vehement, ironical and impassioned. The trial lasted two days, and the excitement of the people increased continually. . . .*

“The trial gave rise to highly interesting scenes. In the sittings of the 7th of April, the President having reproached M. Pécheux d’Herbinville, one of the accused, with having had arms by him, and with having distributed them, ‘Yes,’ replied the prisoner, ‘I have had arms, a great many arms, and I will tell you how I came by them.’ Then, relating the part he had taken in the three days, he told how, followed by his comrades, he had disarmed posts, and sustained glorious conflicts; and how, though not wealthy, he had equipped national guards at his own cost. There still burned in the hearts of the people some of the fire kindled by the revolution of July; such recitals as this fanned the embers. The young man

himself, as he concluded his brief defence, wore a face radiant with enthusiasm, and his eyes were filled with tears. . . . .

“M. Cavaignac next rose. Though endowed with the organisation of an artist, which revealed itself in the original grace of his manners, the freshness of his writings, and a most sparkling conversation, Cavaignac took pleasure in studies of deep research, and had adopted an especially serious course of life. As son of the conventionalist of the same name, he watched jealously over the honour of memories so cruelly calumniated during the Restoration and the Empire.

“‘My father,’ he began, ‘was one of those who, in the Convention, proclaimed the republic in the face of then victorious Europe. . . Study has confirmed this bent naturally given to my political ideas; and now that the opportunity at last presents itself to me this day to pronounce a word which so many others proscribe, I declare, without affectation and without fear, I am, in my heart and by conviction, a republican.’

“After this noble exordium, Cavaignac repudiated, with singular elevation of thought, all the reproaches addressed to the republican party. It was accused of conspiracy. An idle accusation. Ever since revolutions had been in vogue, conspiracies had counted for very little. The republican party was too sure of the future to lose patience; too sure, not to rely on the fortune of the popular cause. It was much better pleased to let monarchy conspire for it by a host of incurable blunders and iniquities. Why should the republican party be over-hasty? Could it fail to know that a solvent was at work so potently on all the means of government, that the latter would require to be wholly reconstructed? Did it not know that, tormented as the world was by new, immense wants, even a god would find it more difficult to govern than to reconstruct it? . . He argued against monarchy considered in its action, not on France, but on the secondary powers. Thank heaven! France carried within her what enabled her to surmount the most fearful trials; but what was to become of the nations placed under her ægis, and which it was one of the necessary conditions of the monarchy to abandon? ‘The revolution,’ said M. Cavaignac, in concluding his address, ‘is the whole nation, with the exception of those who fatten upon the nation; it is our country fulfilling that mission of emancipation confided to it by the providence which watches over nations; it is all France which has done her duty towards them. As for us,

gentlemen, we have done our duty towards her, and she will find us ready at her call, whenever she shall have need of us; whatever she demands of us, she shall obtain.' A burst of applause followed these last words. Nor was the impression less strong after the speech of M. Guinard, one of those young men of lofty stature and noble features, who combined the energetic virtues of the republican with the elegant manners of the high-born gentleman." \*

Or take the following scene from the trial of the Lyons and Paris insurgents of 1834: —

"This fermentation of men's minds made it obvious that a vigorous resistance would be entered upon; and accordingly, the very next day, at the sitting of the 6th of May, it burst forth with a vehemence and unanimity, a concentration of purpose, which absolutely overwhelmed the judges. M. Godefroi Cavaignac having demanded to be heard against the decision of the previous evening, and his demand being refused, the whole body of the defendants arose with a spontaneous, simultaneous movement, and, with arms upraised, and eyes darting fire, exclaimed, 'Speak, Cavaignac, speak!' The municipal guards were ordered to check the tumult, but overwhelmed with sudden stupor, they advanced not a step. The cries redoubled. The President, who seemed quite confounded, sought alternately to conciliate and to bully the clamourers, but equally in vain. He then, after consulting with the Keeper of the Seals, and with the Vice-President, M. de Bastard, intimated to the Court that it was desirable to retire for the purpose of deliberation. The words had scarcely quitted his lips, when the Peers rushed towards the Council Chamber, manifestly labouring under the strongest agitation. As the doors closed upon them, the recent uproar was succeeded by the most profound silence. Outside the troops were under arms. After four hours of solemn expectation, the spectators beheld the judges resume their seats. A decision against M. Cavaignac was read, and the municipal guard led away the defendants.

"Next day the tempest raged again, and with increased violence. An advocate, M. Crivelli, had begun a speech, having for its purpose the challenging of such Peers as had taken part in the indictments, when he was interrupted by the defendants themselves. His claim was perfectly valid, it being alike contrary to the formal

\* Vol. i. pp. 431 — 433.

rules of the code of criminal prosecution, and to the elementary principles of justice, that men who have preferred the charge, who have issued the indictment against a person, shall afterwards sit in judgment upon him. But it was in the highest degree important to the accused that the trial should not proceed as the matter then stood. They therefore sought by their outcries to stifle the nascent discussions, and it became necessary, in consequence, to remove them to the waiting-rooms below, while the Court drew up the decision by which M. Crivelli's demand was rejected. The defendants were then brought back, and the decision just formed having been read to them, M. Cauchy, the Clerk of the Records, began to recite the indictments. No language can describe the various aspects exhibited at this moment by that assembly. As on the previous evening, all the defendants rose *en masse*, and with one voice, exclaimed, 'Our advocates! our advocates!' the colonel of the municipal guard, M. Feisthamel, issued orders of a menacing character. The President essayed in vain to conceal the emotion which agitated him. The Crown officers, from their seats beneath, addressed to him words of exhortation, but all were lost in the tumult of the Peers—some standing up in a state of great excitement, were adding by their vociferations to the general clamour; others had thrown themselves back in their arm-chairs, as if panic-struck. The shorthand writers had laid down their pencils in despair, while from the galleries, the spectators, their bodies bent as much forward as possible, watched with eager and disquiet gaze the progress of this strange drama. All at once the Attorney-general rose to read a requisition; but at the same moment, M. Baune, on his part, rose in the name of the accused to read a protest. The two voices made themselves heard above the tumult, that of M. Martin (du Nord), sharp and piercing, though somewhat faltering from weariness; that of M. Baune, grave, deep, solemn, reverberating. We can only give an idea of this scene by placing in parallel columns the requisition of the Attorney-general, and the protest of M. Baune, as they concurrently proceeded from the lips of the respective gentlemen:—

“ M. BAUNE.

“ The undersigned defendants, inhabitants of Lyons, Paris, St. Étienne, Arbois, Lunéville, Marseilles, Épinal, Grenoble,

“ After the events of grave import which have taken place at the two first

“ M. MARTIN (DU NORD).

The King's Attorney-General in the Chamber of Peers.

“ In pursuance of the decree dated the sixth of the present month, which orders that all necessary steps for assuring to justice its free course shall be

sittings in the case wherein they are concerned, hold it due to their own honour, and to the public welfare, to address to the Chamber of Peers, the following declaration :—

“The Court has, by its decision of yesterday, violated the undoubted right of the subject to a free defence. (Loud cries of Hear, hear, hear, from the defendants’ bench.)

“A supreme court armed with exorbitant powers, judging without control, proceeding without law, it deprives of the most sacred of securities men whom, as its political opponents, it has kept in prison fourteen months, and whom it now calls upon to come before it to defend their honour and their lives.

“Yesterday it went still further than ever, and, contrary to the practice in all criminal courts, where speech is never forbidden until after the final termination of a case, it has pronounced a decision against the defendant Cavaignac, without allowing him, or any one for him, to say a word in his defence.

“Finally, M. le Président has actually sought to begin the reading of the indictments before the identity of the defendants had been established, and ere they had a single counsel in court.

“All these acts constitute judicial outrages, which are the natural antecedents to those administrative outrages at which they regard the Chamber of Peers to be aiming.

“Under these circumstances the undersigned declare that, in the absence of counsel to plead their cause, the forms even of justice are wanting, that the acts of the Chamber of Peers are no longer in their eyes any other than measures of brute force, whose only sanction is in the bayonets by which it has surrounded itself.

“In consequence, they refuse henceforth to take any share, by their presence, in this so-called trial (Hear, hear,

taken in the event of any further disorders being committed by the defendants ;—(Loud outcries from the defendants’ bench, which grew more and more vociferous as the reading of the requisition proceeded. At times the voices of particular defendants predominated, and we shall give the more striking of their interpolations.)

“And whereas, in point of fact, instead of attending to our caution, certain of the defendants by violent manifestations, by a series of tumultuous clamour, evidently the result of a pre-arranged system, seek to render the regular progress of the trial impossible, so that it appears clear that the proceedings cannot go on in the presence of such defendants ;’ (‘Cut off all our heads at once!’)

“And whereas, if defendants were permitted with impunity, by any means they might adopt, to impede the progress of a case, the whole power of government would become vested in their hands, anarchy would usurp the place of justice ; and tolerance accorded to such rebellion against the law, would constitute a denial of justice towards society at large, and towards those defendants who, in the exercise of their rights, demand their trial.’ (‘No, no, we protest against it!—all of us! all, all!’)

“And whereas it is the manifest duty of the Court to prevent the recurrence of such scandalous proceedings, and to assure the full course of justice to the public, and to such of the defendants as demand a trial.’ (‘We none of us demand it!’)

“May it therefore please the Court, in pursuance of the discretionary power vested in it as indispensable to the carrying out its proceedings, to authorise M. le Président to expel from the Chamber and have reconducted to prison, all such defendants as shall seek to create a



hear), where speech is forbidden both to the defendants and to their chosen advocates. Convinced that the only resource for freemen is unalterable firmness, they declare that they will not again present themselves before the Chamber of Peers, and that they make the Chamber personally responsible for any ill results that may attend this their determination.' ('Hear, hear, hear, that is the determination of us all!')

disturbance,'—('We'll all go back to prison!') 'so that, the clerk having it in charge to make a note of the proceedings, and communicate the same to such expelled defendants at the close of each sitting, the trial may proceed as well with reference to those defendants whose conduct has necessitated their expulsion, as with regard to those who are actually present.' ('You may be our butchers—our judges you shall never be!')

In spite of the complaints made by Louis Blanc, of their want of discipline, and headstrong intractable temper, in their first efforts, there was forethought and generalship combined with this fiery enthusiasm. They organised their agitation from the first, and improved as time went on. There were secret societies and open societies, passing one into another and changing their form as a defeat or discovery, or the circumstances of the time, required. "Rebellion," says the historian of it, "had in the bosom of the State its own Government, its body of functionaries, its geographical divisions, its army. A great disorder, doubtless," he adds, "but there, at least, an element of life was to be found. The Society of the Rights of Man was necessary, as a reaction against the enervating action of an oligarchy of tradespeople. Selfishness and fear were gaining ground: anarchy was the counterpoise."\* They began by acting by themselves. In a few years they were strong enough and clever enough to propose and effect a union of forces with the "constitutional opposition." The move was an important one; they divided the liberals, part of whom, with Odillon Barrot, shrunk from the alliance, while they themselves joined the coalition with an open profession of hostility to the existing state of things. With them all was gain; for the liberals there was but a doubtful alliance, purchased by a schism. Louis Blanc recounts the proceeding with a justifiable self-complacency:—

"Relying on these grounds, MM. Dupont, *avocat*, and Louis

\* Louis Blanc, c. xxxiii.

Blanc, took the first steps for forming an electoral committee in the very centre of the democratic party. Dupont de l'Eure promised his co-operation; Arago's was obtained, and through him that of Laffitte; and, this being done, the members of the dynastic opposition were invited to join the committee, the first nucleus of which had just been formed by the democratic party.

"One of two results was foreseen; either the dynastic opposition would accept the proposals, and then the democrats would fight by its side—difference of opinion apart; or else it would refuse, and in that case the democrats were prepared to do without it, since they had on their side Arago, Laffitte, and Dupont de l'Eure; that is to say, three men the want of whom would be fatal to any opposition committee.

"The plan was well conceived, as the sequel proved. A meeting having been appointed in the offices of the *Nouvelle Minerve*, in the Marché des Jacobins, the two oppositions met there. The republic was represented there in the persons of some of its staunchest champions, among whom were MM. Dupont, Dornèz, Thomas, principal editor of the *National*, and Frédéric Degeorges, principal editor of the *Propagateur du Pas de Calais*. The discussion began under the presidency of M. Laffitte.

"The question was put to the meeting in the midst of extreme excitement; a strong majority declared in favour of the radicals; the most energetic members of the dynastic opposition joined the democratic party, the dissentients withdrew, and the following note appeared next day in the papers:—

"A CENTRAL COMMITTEE has been established in Paris for the purpose of attending to the elections. Its aim is to unite in one undivided system of action all shades of the national opposition, and to obtain an independent Chamber by their combined efforts.

"The Committee consists at present of MM. Dupont de l'Eure, Arago, Mauguin, Mathieu, Larabit, Laffitte, Ernest Girardin, Marshal Clauzel, Garnier Pagès, Cormenin, Salverte, and Thiers, members of the late Chamber; Chatelain, principal editor of the *Courrier Français*; Cauchois Lemaire, principal editor of the *Minerve*; Bert, principal editor of the *Commerce*; E. D. Durand, of the *Minerve*; Louis Blanc, principal editor of the *Bon Sens*; Frédéric Lacroix, principal editor of the *Monde*; Thomas, principal editor of the *National*; Dubose, principal editor of the *Journal du Peuple*; Goudchaux, banker; Viardot, *Homme de Lettres*; Dornèz, *Avocat*; Nepomucène Lemer cier, of the Académie

Française; Rostand, *Professor in the École de Médecine*; Félix Desportes, *Propriétaire*; Marie, *Avocat*; Ledru Rollin, *Avocat*; Dupont, *Avocat*; Sarrans, *Homme de Lettres*; A. Guilbert; David (d'Angers), *sculpteur*.

“ Secretaries — MM. Garnier Pagès, Cauchois Lemaire, and Mauguin.’

“ The composition of this committee was almost wholly democratic, and beside it no other opposition committee could possibly exist. M. Chambolle, principal editor of the *Siècle*, detailed to the public, in a very discreet and temperate article, the reasons that had induced him to keep aloof. M. Odillon Barrot, chief of the dynastic opposition, published on his own part a note, in which he expressed his deep sorrow at the schism which had taken place in the constitutional party, but declared that he could not serve on a committee into which the republican party had entered with colours flying.

“ Thus the control of the electioneering movement remained concentrated in the hands of the radicals. It was the first time they made their way into the heart of public affairs resolutely and in one compact body; it was the first time, they seemed to say, ‘ We have no need of stirring up the tempest around us, in order to seize the helm.’ ” — Vol. ii. pp. 536—539.

The republican party, when it first started, was but the party of extreme opposition. It took up in the main, excusing or protesting against their disastrous consequences, the traditions of the former Revolution, viewed as a whole, and maintained them against a monarchical constitution. But it was a purely traditionary party, the “ logicians of liberalism; ”\* it was distinguished by maxims and sentiments rather than by an idea; its originality was shown mainly in the details of its attack on all things established. Its type was Armand Carrel, the famous editor of the *National*, who “ on the 2nd January, 1832., pronounced for the republic.” Louis Blanc thus draws his picture: —

“ There was about the whole person and manner of Armand Carrel a decidedly chivalrous air. His free, bold step, his brief emphatic action, his deportment, full of manly elegance, his taste

\* *Vide* Louis Blanc, vol. i. 387., and vol. ii. 56. Eng. Tr.

for bodily exercises, and, furthermore, a certain ruggedness of temperament, made manifest in the strongly projecting lines of his face, and the energetic determination of his look, all this had much more of the soldier about it than of the writer. An officer under the Restoration, a conspirator at B efort, in arms in Spain against the white flag, dragged at a later period before three councils of war, 1830 found him a journalist. But the soldier still lived in him. How many times have we seen him entering the court-yard of the H otel Colbert, on horseback, whip in hand, wearing as stern and martial a mien as ever did belted knight of old. Full of gentle kindness and winning ease when among his private friends, he appeared in public life domineering, despotic. As a writer, his style had less brilliancy than keenness, less animation than nerve; but he handled with inimitable effect the weapon of scorn; he did not criticise his adversaries, he chastised them; and as he was always ready to risk the sacrifice of his life in affording satisfaction to any person who might take offence at what he wrote, he reigned supreme over the domain of polemics, disdainful, formidable, and respected. He was born to be the chief of a party; chief of a school he could never be. He was utterly deficient in that cool, immoveable fanaticism, which springs from stubborn undeviating devotion to one particular class of studies, and creates innovators. Above all things a Voltairian, he seemed never to have conceived the notion of marking his place in history by originality of thought. . . . All violent systems were repugnant to him; the American principles greatly pleased him, in the homage they paid to individual liberty, and the dignity of human nature. He had long been a Girondin from sentiment; and most reluctantly had he bowed before the majesty of the revolutionary dictatorship, the terror, the glory, the despair, and the salvation of France. Though the empire had tempted his fancy with its surpassing glories, his mind revolted against the insolence of its organised force; and he experienced a sort of haughty enjoyment in throwing scorn upon the rudeness of the soldiers of the court, whom in his energetic way he called 'swash-bucklers.' Unfortunately he had too profound a faith in the prodigies of discipline, though he himself had been much more conspirator than soldier. Can an insurgent people get the better of a regiment faithful to its standard? This is what Armand Carrel, even after the revolution of July, always refused to believe. On the other hand, the craving after action was ever at work within him, urging him on and on;

he would eagerly have overturned every thing that was an obstacle to the exaltation of the destinies of his country, with which his own were closely interwoven by high and honourable ambition. The war of the pen which he had declared against power, notwithstanding the real dangers which it involved, only served to console without satisfying his daring spirit, to beguile the uneasy yearnings of his heart. Often compelled to extinguish in his friends the fire that was consuming himself, he was by turns exalted and depressed in this internal struggle; checking the impulses of passion by the dictates of prudence, and then indignant at the very wisdom which imposed that restraint. While struggling between bright hopes and bitter fears, it was sometimes his fate, under the influence of the latter, to declare against movements which, perhaps, sanctioned and supported by him, would have succeeded. Yet when the battle against which he had raised his voice had been fought and lost, he embraced the cause of the vanquished, unreservedly, without limitation. Heroic inconsistency, the inevitable weakness of lofty souls!"—Vol. i. pp. 573—575.

But, in the midst of the republican party—a party comprising, of course, infinite shades of opinion—and to which, in one sense, the whole population of France, as recent events have shown, may be said to have implicitly belonged, there soon appeared a nucleus of men who *had* an idea and a philosophy, whose object was definite and precise as well as novel—novel, that is, in the distinct way in which it was laid down and systematised. They, too, went back to the old revolution, but not to every part and phase of it, not to the constitutional period of '89, but to the wild scenes of '93. It was Robespierre who, according to them, accepted, with heroic self-devotion, the anathema of the world so that he might realise ideas which were to become its salvation.

“There were two individuals in Robespierre—the philosopher and the tribune. As a philosopher he certainly had not been as bold as *Jéan Jacques Rousseau*, *Mably*, or *Fénélon*. But as tribune, he had laid up for himself stores of vengeance; superior in his devotedness to those warriors of ancient Rome, who dedicated themselves to the infernal deities, he had, with heroic aim and wild magnanimity, immolated his name to the execration of future ages; he had been of those who said, ‘Perish our

memories, rather than the ideas which will be the salvation of the world ;' and he had rendered himself responsible for chaos, until the day when, wishing to hold back the revolution which was drowning itself in blood, he was himself dragged in, and sank. A conquered man, whose history was written by his conquerors, Robespierre had left behind him a memory which was accursed."\*

These ideas it was their business to elaborate and unfold with the light of modern science; and in the comparative calm of modern days to develop the oracles of Robespierre and S. Just into a theory, a social system, a creed. A political revolution they wanted, of course; but as a step to something deeper. Their great quarrel was not with government, but with society. The injustice and oppression of kings and ministers were crying, but still more crying those "two great immoralities, riches and poverty," and that "invisible tyranny of *things*, of recognised arrangements and opinions, and usages, and divisions of men," which was never surpassed in cruelty by any sensible, palpable "tyranny of human force."† Philosophers, who had hitherto studied society, had erred, first, by accepting its phenomena as they stood, as ultimate facts and unchangeable laws; and, secondly by beginning at the wrong end, with the rich and the refined instead of the poor. Accustomed to think seriously only of the wants and welfare of those who could help themselves, they had never understood, never fairly considered, the condition and the claims of those who could not. It was time for this to cease. It was not the rich who wanted to be made richer, or the comfortable more comfortable, but the poor who wanted, not merely to be fed, but to *command* food, and *command* comfort. The true and primary object, both of political science and of government, was to see not so much to the *production*, but to the *distribution*, of wealth; a principle which all the current doctrines, and all the acknowledged rights of society, deny. It had been asserted once only, in 1793; the only hope of society was to assert it again. Political economy had provoked its reaction.

\* Louis Blanc, *Dix Ans*, c. xxxiii.

† Louis Blanc, *Organisation du Travail*, Preface.

“The early republicans,” says Louis Blanc, “had only touched, in their declaration of principles, on purely political and national questions: they had not as yet opened any of those which are indicated by that deep and formidable word, *le prolétariat*.” The various men and sects who soon after began to examine and decide upon these questions, became, in spite of their differences, their absurdities, and their failures, the most weighty element of the republican party. For they had the advantage of knowing what they were working for. Whether Charles Fourier, meditating in solitude, or *Enfantin* founding a religion, or Louis Blanc and *Considérant* journalising in the *Bon Sens* and the *Démocratie Pacifique*, they were men *with a view*—with a positive object, to attain which, and not merely from logic, or love of political forms, or hatred of abuses, they required a revolution. They touched the sorest evils; they mooted the deepest questions; they committed themselves with great apparent conviction and earnestness, at once to very broad principles and very detailed applications of them; they forced the *social* question on their own party, and with it the honour of its audacity, and the danger of its solution. And as they were the boldest, they were the most active in their speculations. They collected their materials, whether or not accurately, at least widely. English travellers, in a remote part of France, have been surprised to find a French socialist,—not a student, but an engineer, it might be, or a bagman, or an *enseigne de vaisseau*, deep in the history of colliery strikes and Manchester associations.

Another feature in the language, at least, of this party was its religious cast. It is a feature which suggests very unpleasant thoughts, though it wore a Christian guise, sometimes more and sometimes less marked; and it would be the height of simplicity to mistake it for anything that has been hitherto known as Christianity. Heathenism had its faith, the natural man has his religious thoughts and aspirations. But, contrasted with the heartless and flip-pant scepticism of the day, this religious tone appeared to advantage. It, too, in this day of reactions, was a revolt

against the traditional supremacy of Voltaire. It was a new thing to hear French revolutionists, like Louis Blanc, sneering at the liberals for their scepticism, rebuking the law for its Atheism, and proclaiming religion as the necessary basis of a Constitution, "the religious sentiment," we should rather say, "the source of all poetry, of all force and grandeur."\* Still more novel was it when, in the mocking city of Paris, the Père Enfantin had the hardihood to invent, and divers of the ablest men of France the hardihood to exercise, with all seriousness, a new worship, the very counterpart of ancient Gnosticism. Further, these new preachers of democracy rejected, with startling earnestness, the cant of the liberal schools about individual *rights*, and checks upon government. Careless of the seeming paradox, they maintained that the bane of the age was anarchy; its want was not constitutions, but government; their own mission, to re-establish an authority powerful enough to curb, and, if necessary, annihilate, individual rights and influences. Who shall protect and help the weak, except the state? And how shall it protect them, unless every thwarting power is overthrown before it? "It is, therefore, in the name of Liberty, and in her behalf, that we demand the restoration of the principle of authority. We want a strong government, because, with the system of inequality under which we still vegetate, there are helpless classes who need a social force to protect them. . . . In a word, we invoke the idea of *power*, because the liberty of this day is a lie, and the liberty of the future must be a reality."†

It was these men who, we conceive, were the life and strength of the republican party. They gained for themselves, and for their party, the credit of grappling with the great question of the day,—more real and interesting than abstract questions of government, broader and more elevated than questions of administrative abuses. "*L'organisation du travail*," said its apostle, in 1845, "these words four or five

\* Louis Blanc, *Dix Ans*, c. xxxiii.

† Louis Blanc, *Organisation du Travail*, p. 31.



years ago, were uttered to the winds; now they resound from one end of France to the other." The boldness with which a principle asks for power, is one test of its substance; and there seemed reality and the consciousness of capacity, in the unguarded and peremptory way, in which the extremest champions of liberty maintained, regardless of the charge of inconsistency, the necessity of a government not less strong than a despotism. And in full faith of the revolution close at hand, they called on their party to master the "social question" which would then present itself for solution. The time was short enough for preparation, and there was none to be lost: the chance was not far off, and would be missed if they were not ready. "On se trompe étrangement," wrote Louis Blanc in 1845, "si l'on croit que les révolutions s'improvisent. *Les révolutions qui n'avortent pas, sont celles dont le but est précis, et a été défini d'avance.*"

Thus, with France as a whole, apathetic and indifferent, there was a body of men, considerable in point of number, and still more so in point of ability, whose set and declared purpose it was, when their time came, to overthrow the existing state of things: who day by day were working most powerfully on public opinion, and meanwhile, were watching the right moment to raise and slip the populace of Paris against the Government. It was not a conspiracy in the ordinary sense of the word. A revolution to come was an understood thing; it was to be of course, whenever it could be—as a checkmate at chess, as soon as it is possible. If the world was sceptical about it, it was because it is sceptical about most things which it does not yet see: but, in spite of defeats and prosecutions—"Cloître S. Méry," Barbès and Blanqui in prison, and Laws of September—the *National* was not sceptical.

"Laws of September" indeed, laws making prosecutions easier, and "deportation" heavier, which set up the censorship, and which forbade to speak evil of the king or the monarchy, or to take the name of republican,—were a weak spell by themselves to conjure down the storm. Republicans, indeed, of the Louis Blanc sort, advocates of strong govern-

ment, are inconsiderate in taxing these laws with monstrous inconsistency, and raising their brows in admiration of the impudence which let a man call himself an atheist, but not a republican.\* In one shape or another, whether as acknowledged laws, or as exceptional stretches of power, they will be wanted and will be in force for some time to come, in France, under all governments. All governments there will think, and think rightly, that they are instruments not to be despised, and which very few men really do despise. But instruments which cut will not heal; and cutting, by itself, is bad surgery. Louis Philippe and his ministers shot down insurrection, imprisoned conspirators, prosecuted unflinchingly men of strong language—Lamennais both as a priest and as an unbeliever—Enfantin for his S. Simonian religion and morality—newspaper editors without end. They even seized Louis Blanc's pamphlet on the organisation of labour. But though in the more showy parts of administration, in public works†, and the encouragement of art and literature, they spent much money and have left behind no inconsiderable results, it is hard to find traces of much attention to those domestic questions which the republicans were turning to such account—hard to find even a poor law or a factory law. At court and in the Chambers, we used to see an unceasing personal struggle between clever men, who represented little beyond themselves. The absorbing questions were questions of foreign politics, in which the national pride had remained hurt and unsatisfied,—the American question, the Right of Search question, the Syrian question, the Pritchard indemnity question. And at last, with charges of corruption waxing louder and louder against them, the king and the ministers found time and inclination to dabble together in a snug family intrigue, and adequate occupation for their ambition in manœuvres, like those of a scheming dowager, or the cunning doings of a not very scrupulous broker.

\* "Discuter Dieu restait un droit : discuter le roi devenait un crime."

† Lacave-Laplagne's answer to Garnier Pagès : extract in *Times*, June 5. 1848.

The storm came without preparation. It was improbable—not like the course of history—too poetically just—that there should be a second “three days.” Those who most suspected the back-stroke of 1830, looked for it in another shape—and certainly not now. There was nothing pressing to excite alarm. Louis Philippe was hated, but so he had been for a long time. There had been sixty-two Reform Banquets in the provinces; but the “*Toast au Roi*,” had descended into them as an opportune spirit of discord between *Opposition dynastique* and Opposition pure, and bickerings, hard names, and resignations of chairmen had followed. There had been some unpleasant exposures, some revolting crimes in the course of the year, some grumblings, and some declamation about national honour; but were not these either accidental, or perpetual? Sharp distress there was none. Money crisis there was none. The ministry had lasted seven years, but it had a strong majority in the Chambers. The opposition deputies came to Paris: the king met and branded them as the slaves of “blind and hostile passions.” They would hold a “monster banquet” in Paris: M. Duchâtel, believing very naturally in 100,000 men and his cannons, told them finally that they should not. They protested, and submitted. To the last, all seemed firm as a rock: the sensitive race of stock-jobbers bought and sold in security—nay, in increasing security. The opposition threatened impeachment. M. Guizot met them in the Chamber, with his pale scornful look. The President handed him a paper containing this or some other of their proposals. He perused it, and “laughed immoderately,” a memorable laugh, likely to become proverbial. Another hot anxious day—vacillation and troubling of spirit in the palace, confusion in the streets, Guizot again in the Tribune, commanding and haughty, with defiance and scorn telling the Chamber that he would “do his duty:”—and then the end. In the night, some uncertain Republican—perhaps one Lagrange, a hero of the Lyons insurrection—thinking that the mob had been behaving itself too lightly, shot the officer, or the officer’s horse, at Guizot’s hotel—“*Cosa fatta capo ha.*” The volley was elicited, the

victims made, the mob ceased their ill-timed jocose levity, and began to yell out vengeance and the Girondins' chorus. Next day, sudden and swift, in the course of a morning, the kingdom of the French passed away: in the evening it was the Republic.

Few Englishmen, we believe, can do justice to the phenomenon of thirty-five millions of men, living, the most part of them, peaceably, and pursuing their various callings without serious interruption, for seventeen years and a half, under one form of government — and then, in the course of a week, as fast as telegraphs could beckon and mail-coaches gallop — and mainly *because* telegraphs beckoned and mails arrived — quietly resolving that they would be, and in fact were, under a totally different one. When the letters were delivered, they considered themselves citizens of a monarchy; when they had read them, they shrugged their shoulders, and were republicans. There was no objection made; no pause of surprise or suspense; far less any resistance. The transition was imperceptible and soft as from sleeping to waking, or from one dream to another. “*On ne se détache jamais sans douleur,*” said Pascal: the customary and familiar, with all its faults, is apt to levy a natural regret when finally parted with. But France had none for its July monarchy. It saw the established disappear with philosophic calmness, and gracefully and frankly, as it would to a new fashion, “adhered” to the provisional.

No doubt, the terror of the triumphant *bonnet-rouge*, and sympathy with success, and absence of anything more hopeful, were powerful agents in proselytizing. No doubt, too, the Republic was the most genuine and most logical development of the political principles in vogue; for “the Revolution” was accepted by all politicians as a starting point, and M. Guizot, as well as M. Thiers or M. Lamartine, claimed to represent and carry on its ideas. And as to that old-fashioned and rapidly-vanishing virtue of loyalty — the belief in a mission and an authority in governors in some sense divine, which associates their names and place in society more or less distinctly with a religious reverence — it certainly would

be vain, in matter of fact, to look for it; and it seems to us unfair to expect what, after the events of the last half-century, would simply be unnatural. But was it a genuine love of a republic, a love long latent, deep, unacknowledged, but springing up spontaneous and strong at the sight of its object, which turned the thirty-five millions of France as in one day to the side of the Provisional Government? We cannot think so.

Republicanism has gained a victory, but its conquests are still to come. The explanation of its acceptance is to be found much more in political scepticism than in political faith. It came, as a successful theory, with the lustre of instant and unexpected triumph, before a society long familiar with it — accustomed to canvass without embarrassment many theories, and contemplate in turn the possible truth of all. Since the Revolution, everything had been cut loose from prejudices and prescriptions—law, polity, religion, morality, rights, interests, ties; — each to stand on its own basis, and make out its case independently. And they had done so—each stating its claims, erecting its theories, pushing its consequences, without fear or reserve, before a keen, dialectical, pitiless intelligence, which spied all their weak places, but was candid withal, and did not refuse to acknowledge, and even abandon itself to, their attractions. Republicanism appeared with double charms when it issued forth into the world of action, and displayed itself as a reality. But it will do a great work indeed, if it can implant a creed — if it can permanently fascinate, as it has captivated; if, as in America, beyond a sentiment and an enthusiasm, it can create a loyalty. It will be strong and great if it does this. There is in every human statement of truth a flaw which makes it issue in falsehood, as in every human institution a plague-spot from which its corruption spreads: will Republicanism be able to turn away from itself or charm that unrespecting audacious eye, which no sacredness has ever yet abashed, which has pried into the secret and fault of every human belief, and every human passion, which has not feared to look on any nakedness? The republican leaders rejoiced at the rapidity and hardihood of intelligence, which followed them

to the depths and bottom of rights and duties, which comprehended and responded to their exposures of constitutional fictions, solemn farces of law, conventionalities of opinion, trammels of usage, impositions of selfishness. Are *they* not human also? Are their "formulas" the vehicles of pure truth — invulnerable — dipped, even over the fatal spot, in the charmed waters? — never to fail, never to tire, never to wear out? Is this French cleverness at length to be satisfied and set at rest, — or will the world yet have to speak of it, as a gift and dower as fatal to France, as her beauty has been to Italy?

As to the Revolution itself of the 24th February there is not very much to say, and nothing new. The insurrection singularly resembles in its details and course that of July, except that what was premature then, was ripe for accomplishment now, and Lamartine did easily and naturally what Lafayette dared not. And the republic, which has grown out of it, strikes us as belonging as yet to the class of phenomena, which have been remarked upon as characteristic of the time, namely, *revivals*. Revival has been the rage; there have been good revivals and bad ones, wise ones and unwise; but though very fashionable, the world has not treated them, even in their most respectable form, with much reverence. They are, of course, a symptom of weakness and want of what is at once genuine and satisfying; and without careful watching they easily run off into forms which it is painful, and not edifying, to contemplate. Our liberal friends have made merry with mediæval revivals — not always in the best taste, nor always, it must be confessed, without reason; — they may now contemplate a Jacobin revival. The course of the Revolution suggests — it is certainly comparing great things to small — one of our cotemporary "Punch's" imitations of designs of the ancient masters. We are speaking rigorously of the present. It is a more serious matter to play at Jacobins than to hold Eglintoun tournaments. But have we not had as yet — it is very satisfactory in some respects that it should be so — a Revolution "in rose-water?" There has been a rigorous and accurate adherence to the rules and precedents of the elder artists, as far as consistent with modern

feelings. Read a history of the old Revolution, with its demonstrations and ceremonial; its chafings and unquiet days; its leaders passing rapidly from point to point of their historic city, with a few fiery words calming the multitudes or rousing them; with its journals and editors unnumbered; its clamorous hawkers, and flights of bill-stickers; its vast swarming assemblages; its feasts of fraternity; its endless processions passing along from morning till evening; its theatrical symbolism; its plaster statues and cars of liberty, and fairy illuminations; its phrases and formulas; its costume and its antics; its trees of liberty; its zealous rubbing out of arms from coach pannels, and royal names from streets and monuments; its patriot deputations and patriot offerings; its clubs, and conventions and constitution-making;—read all this, and you might fancy you were reading the “Times” Correspondent, till you come to September massacres and the guillotine. There the modern change begins. Humanity, gentleness, respectability, colour the reproduction. The enormous oath-takings are abolished; the political guillotine is abolished; the “adored” of 1848 is neither Necker, nor Mirabeau, nor Robespierre, but the most chivalrous of the modern gentlemen, and the most imaginative and most religious of the modern poets, of France—a man who heard his double destiny as poet and statesman from the lips of the mysterious Princess and Prophetess of Lebanon—the accomplished Lamartine. For a “sniffing” Abbé Sieyès to make the constitution, there is a solemn Lamennais; for a mocking Bishop Talleyrand, the most eloquent of modern preachers. Insurrection itself, National Guards and S. Antoine, meet and part, more noisily, it is true, but as harmlessly, as chartists and police at Kennington Common; a mob could thrust out the National Assembly, and be thrust out itself without loss of life or limb; and fiery Barbès allows himself to be arrested in the very room which saw the fall of Robespierre, without finding it necessary to share Robespierre’s fate.

Of course, this ought to be so. We live in the middle of the nineteenth century. The warnings of the end of the eigh-

teenth ought to be, and doubtless are, present to men's minds. They walk in fear. Besides, there are not the same exasperations; no burning recollections of *Corvées* and *haute justice*; no emigrant aristocrats at Coblenz; no impotent, but vindictive court; no rebellious Clergy; no disappearance of money and corn; no banded leagues of kings; no minister Pitt. The Republic of 1848 is born amid the applause and congratulations of sympathising Germany and complacent England. Never did a fallen throne and an exiled king attract less sympathy. Money is scarce, but in spite of bankruptcy prophesied every week, is still to be had. Aristocracy prudently holds its tongue. The Clergy, the highest and strictest, no longer ban the Republic; but press into the National Assembly, and bless trees of liberty. The army is obedient, and ready for work. The provinces adhere. The government finds none to dispute its commands. It ought to succeed: never had the Republic a fairer chance.

It is time for the Republic and its government "to march." For it, the old policy of "*Laisser passer*" is exploded for good. It promised—and this is its characteristic vaunt in contrast to all other governments, to be a moving, originating, interfering government; a government not afraid of responsibility, not afraid of the initiative, not afraid of realities, not afraid of ideas, afraid only of going to sleep. Custom and the etiquette of the bureau should not trammel it: and doubtless it has broken through them. But now comes the tug. Can it do that high work which it has set itself? Will it shame the sluggishness and incapacity of other governments, by refusing no social question, by seeking out the difficulties which others ignore, by showing that a strong and central government, in the hands of true and brave men, may do as great and visible things, may change, cure, harmonise, with as signal and palpable success, as a great general, by spontaneous and forward action, not by mere control, organises an army and wins victories, or as a great adventurer arranges a speculation, and opens a new line of commerce?

The Revolution will, on all hands, have utterly failed, unless this is its result; and it can hardly fail with impunity.



The Republic is still young—too young, perhaps, to judge of—and it is still confident. But there are signs and symptoms which damp self-gratulation, and vex hope—signs and symptoms which do not diminish as the months wear on. We in England may think, though it may not so strike a Frenchman, that the whole movement has a preternatural rapidity about it which is not ominous of strength, and bears too prominently the mark of its birth-place, the newspaper offices. Conversions were too sudden. Sweeping decrees spoke with brief apophthegmatic point, like leading articles. Alterations were so hurried, and so showy. Genuine and deep the change may be, but it is unlike what usually is so. But there are still more unpleasant features. Government is clogged. In spite of efforts hitherto not unsuccessful, there is the difficulty about money; the finance minister puts on a cheerful face, but the weight does not grow lighter. And now—now that the days of work are come, and success is old, and fervour is cooling, disunion—disunion among Frenchmen, which was to have taken flight in February last, is come back, and is making itself more and more an understood condition of the state. It was seemingly quelled in its first displays: querulous and impertinent in the *compagnies d'élite* of the National Guard, rebellious and ill-mannered in the violators of the National Assembly, treasonable and audacious in Blanqui and Barbès, it was then shamed down, expelled, or arrested. But now it has taken its seat, obstreperous, ill-tempered, and full of suspicion, in the National Assembly; it growls, and mocks, and jostles, with cursing and frowns, in the streets of Paris. Shopkeepers and workmen, alas! are not so soon made friends, though they have sung the Marseillaise together, and, perhaps, embraced. Cunning M. Thiers, frank republican as he has become, is not so easily persuaded of the generous doctrine of Lamartine. The great Dominican preacher finds that the Assembly is no place for him. Proposition follows on proposition, report on report, interpellation on interpellation; but something stops the free and onward flow of business. Perplexities and complications and perpetual changes interrupt it. A minister of justice quarrels with his attorney-general,

and the attorney-general resigns; the lie is exchanged, then the minister resigns, and the officer returns. Members distrust the executive, and hold conventicles apart in the old Chamber of Deputies.\* Intrigues, and the rumours of intrigues; uncertainties, ignorances, jealousies, plots and counterplots, reactions and conspiracies, agitate and sway, from day to day, the sensitive and ever-changing mind of Paris, in all streets, squares, and cafés. The bureaux of the Assembly, and the clubs, do some work; but whether they work together remains to be seen.

Paris, too, is not all France. What is really passing in the provinces? It is hard to say; for rarely do they find place in that daily portion of the history of France which the morning newspapers unroll for us. Nothing reaches us but incomplete notices, indicative of restlessness and discontent. We have heard of Limoges, with its provisional government; Lyons, with its anarchy not yet stopped; Brittany reverting to its old provincial ideas, and talking of a federate state †; the cry for young Napoleon spreading—heard in northern Ardennes, and southern Gascony. It is true that a prolonged state of disturbance inevitably follows a great convulsion. It was no doubt foreseen; it was allowed for. But are there the able men, to face, master, and bring round to order and peace, the elements of confusion which are so threatening?

They have been as yet simply kept down by main force. And to do this, the men in power have had to deny rights which they claimed themselves with the sword's point, and to listen to their own fierce words directed against themselves by their old companions—companions in February, prisoners in May. The hard but common necessity of revolutions. Barbès must have arrested Lamartine, if Lamartine had not arrested Barbès: it is no question of consistency, but of strength. But, meanwhile, the Republic has to do as Louis Philippe did, and be called a persecutor; to turn against her benefactors, to imprison even her ex-minister Albert—and that soon. It, too, has to make "Draconian" ‡ laws.

\* *Times*, June 13.

† *Times*, June 13.

‡ *Times*, June 10.

A law against "*atroupements*," gatherings of citizens, even without arms, is absolutely necessary; the Republic, too, must have the streets cleared; the Republic must make 2000 prisoners in one night, a *razzia* of the Boulevards; the Republic must call in the soldiers; the Republic must gag the clubs, if they go faster than itself; the Republic has to acknowledge that there is such a crime as sedition, and must punish, how we know not, its most generous-minded citizens, only for pure republicanism. Of course it must: who can blame it? for it, too, is made up of the strong and the weak; it, too, is afraid of opinion—it must seem to contradict its own first principles. It has to proscribe the innocent, because they *may be* dangerous; the unborn children of the Orleans race, and the *name* of the most glorious of Frenchmen; condemned by the malice of fate to give an example of what it had most severely censured, and to repeat to the letter those acts of the dynasty, which its own writers had most delighted in as subjects for their irony—the bootless expedient of a jealousy which could only make itself odious. But, as M. Armand Marrast said, "*la liberté vit de défiances.*" This meant, once, that the guillotine must be always at work; now, it only means that the national guard must be always on duty. But this is a painful life, and she has many times before now got tired of it.

There is one feature, however, which does give a new importance to the Revolution—without which, indeed, the republicans would be merely beginning work afresh, in a feeble and unpromising fashion, with every thing to do over again, after fifty years wasted. This feature is the prominence it has given to the socialist doctrines.

We do not overrate their importance. We do not mean that socialism is the only, or the strongest cause of the Revolution, or that all the republican leaders are socialists—far from it. Indeed, there are symptoms that socialism is becoming unfashionable. But the question has been raised for the first time in a public and formal manner; and the government of the 24th February not only pledged itself to meet it, but by its first steps committed itself to the socialist

line — nor has the National Assembly, whatever may be its predominant feeling, recalled their measures.

Socialism, which in England we associate with the unfortunate Mr. Robert Owen, has in France made itself heard. It is there no longer cramped and entangled in repulsive uncouthness or unintelligible jargon. It has risen for some time into the region of letters, and been developed by some of the most forcible writers of France, in language measured, exact, and refined, as well as impassioned; and it has now risen, further, into the region of politics, and changed the extreme field of liberal battle from forms of government to the fundamental ideas of society. The evils which liberals have long descanted upon as arising from the tyranny of kings and bigotry of cler-gies, come, it seems, from a deeper source, from a social order which necessitates tyranny and bigotry — which sanctions a claim, baseless in reason, and terrible in its consequences—that a man may draw to himself exclusively, and subject to his single will, any amount of this world's good, far beyond what his personal strength could keep, his personal labour gain, his personal needs require: which, while it allows some of its members to do this, and erects it into a right — a right which depends on nothing but its own pleasure — has no help, and creates no rights, for those who have not enough, who may even be starving; artificial in the most extreme degree at one end, and leaving all to nature at the other; which has raised the most complex apparatus of law, to guard for the rich man's son the accumulations for which he had never laboured; while it has left the day labour of the workman, kept up from hour to hour, and prolonged from year to year, with its real toil, and real productions, to its minimum of reward, and uninsured even of this.

It is an old story, that “it never was merry since gentlemen came up.” The peculiarity of socialism is, that it takes the shape of a philosophy, competing not among the poor and untaught, but among the educated, with the two most popular social doctrines of the day — the commercial philosophy of the economists, and the political philosophy of Locke and

Montesquieu. It is a philosophy full grown and of due proportions; duly generalised, and duly illustrated; reposing on statistics, and animating novels; old enough, and discussed sufficiently, to have room and range for separate schools and doctors, each with distinct "definitions," "problems," "solutions," "formulæ;" all clearly divided, and hotly at war—disciples of S. Simon combating those of Fourier, and both of them criticising and criticised by Louis Blanc. And outside of these sects is a crowd of writers, who, without adopting any formal doctrines, yet take for their first principle, the necessity of an entire reconstitution of social orders.

The contrast is singular between the two philosophies. Both are systematic and comprehensive, and deal in universals. Each disposes of the will and actions and fortunes of men, as if all were referrible to a "human nature" as unvaried and inflexible as the nature of electricity, or the peremptory formulæ of algebra. Neither take account of exceptions. But then comes the difference. Political economy, in philosophising on society, left out morality. Socialism calls it in to the solution of every question of trade and wealth. While both profess to be practical and real in the highest sense, the one talks of man as of a natural agent, the other will admit in the discussion nothing short of the highest laws of conscience. One takes self-interest as a primitive fact, working like gravitation or attraction, the basis of all that goes on between man and man: the other aims at its extinction, and contemplates the great world at large going on upon pure principles of love. One ignores in its sphere the idea of duty or self-denial: the other looks upon all that does not represent that idea as simply accidental and vicious. One speaks of questions of wages and production in mere terms of the market, which make us forget that they relate to creatures with will and conscience, and to whom they bring suffering or pleasure: the other invades with the idea of duty the limits within which self-interest thought itself privileged and secure, and gravely queries whether property is lawful, and how far the gains of mere capital are compatible with morality. One subordinates the real, living, feeling man who works, to the

great results of speculations in which he performs such a fractional part :—“ Who,” asks the other, “ in a social question, can put the *impersonal* services of the capitalist on the same footing with the *personal* services of the workman ?” \* Competition is to one a natural law, therefore it is right: it involves greediness and selfishness, according to the other, therefore it is wrong. † Its evils are a mere bating of the sum of its good, according to one; a conclusive argument, according to the other, that there can be no good in it. One views with resignation, as a natural result of power, the rich capitalist ruining the poor one: to the other it is an intolerable abuse, that what has no basis in right should exist in fact. It *cannot* be helped, says the one, that the weaker should go to the wall: it *must* be helped, replies the other, therefore whatever is in the way must be overthrown. The greater the ability, the greater the claim for reward, is the rule of distributive justice in the one. No, says the other, only the greater debt of service;—the weak have claims, the able, duties †; and the sensitive feelings of the awakened conscience are made the universally applicable law and formula of society.

In a word, socialism adopts the great commandment of charity as the scientific and practicable basis of civilised legis-

\* Louis Blanc, “ *Organisation du Travail*,” p. 160.

† Louis Blanc considers the fundamental error of S. Simonism to be, that it made *capacity a measure of rights and rewards*, instead simply of *duties* :—“ Il y a deux choses dans l'homme : des besoins, et des facultés. Par les besoins, l'homme est passif, par les facultés, il est actif. Par les besoins, il appelle ses semblables à son secours; par les facultés, il se met au service de ses semblables. *Les besoins sont l'indication que Dieu donne à la société de ce qu'elle doit à l'individu. Les facultés sont l'indication que Dieu donne à l'individu de ce qu'il doit à la société. Donc, il est dû davantage à celui qui a plus de besoin, et il est sensible d'exiger davantage de celui qui a plus de facultés.* Donc, d'après la loi divine écrite dans l'organisation de chaque homme, *une intelligence plus grande suppose une action plus utile, mais non pas une rétribution plus considérable; et l'inégalité des aptitudes ne saurait légitimement aboutir qu'à l'inégalité des devoirs. L'hierarchie par capacités est nécessaire et féconde: la rétribution par capacités est plus que funeste, elle est impie.*—*Dix Ans*, c. 25. And in his *Organisation du Travail*, p. 133. “ *Beaucoup d'idées fausses sont à détruire . . . Ce n'est pas à l'inégalité des droits que l'inégalité des aptitudes doit aboutir, c'est à l'inégalité des devoirs.*”

lation. This is its boast. It does not reject religion, like the old infidels; it but professes to complete Christianity. It takes up, not with less faith, but with more philosophy, what Christianity failed in. Christianity, it says, started from the right point, *the poor*; it took *them*, and not the rich, as the true essence of society, not, with modern economists, as an inconvenient accident; and it laid down the true law of society to be, not individual interest, but mutual self-devotion. Socialism accordingly echoes its highest principles. S. Simon repeated the apostolic canon, that if a man would not work, neither should he eat. Louis Blanc shot beyond him, and built his system on the principle, that the strong were to work, that the weak might eat; that nothing that a man has is his own, but all a trust for others. And so history, in their hands, proclaims self-sacrifice to be the only measure of greatness: fiction, but too questionable in its end, yet not less powerful in its art, paints touchingly, and not falsely, the contrast between Christian mercy and man's hardness, between the world's mockery at once of innocence and of penitence, and that Divine Love which blessed the little children and forgave the Magdalen. But though Christianity — so runs the Socialist doctrine — has done so much, it has not done all. We cannot be satisfied with any thing which does not directly tell on the masses. Christianity makes good men, but leaves society unjust and cruel; its individual charity heals single wounds, but cannot stop the fount of evil. It has failed — so say these apostles of a new Christianity — because its doctrines were not hopeful enough; because it wanted faith, because it dared not trust man. And it has cloaked its failure by two fatal doctrines; it has thrown the *cause* of it upon a supposed incapability of perfection, a doctrine of original sin; and it has smoothed over the *effect* of it by preaching resignation, a doctrine of meritorious suffering, — by bringing in a supplement of future life to make up for the defects of the present; by comforting Lazarus in the next world, when it could not comfort him here.

Such were the ideas with which the Republic was inaugurated. The Republic was to succeed the Church — to

realise that the Church had only attempted — by education, and by a state all-powerful and all-wise, to do those impossibilities which the Church had failed in, or only done in the way of specimen and exception; not, indeed, to deprive men of hope in another life, but to make them able to afford to dispense with the necessity of it.

Frenchmen easily believe in perfection — that what has taken shape so easily and completely, with such keen outline and neat finish, in their own ideas, will as easily be reproduced in the world. The age of gold has ever been one of their weaknesses. Frenchmen — and who but Frenchmen could have done so? — wrote “Numa Pompilius,” and “Télémaque.” So Socialism has been believed in. And now comes the trial of these long-meditated plans, the application of these mighty formulæ. They are simple, society very complicated. They ask for new conditions to start with. The hard, vast, impenetrable world remains as it is. It is hard to move; its reformers are more likely to break against it, than it is to yield. The Republic began with Socialism, but has grown cold, and does not seem disposed to go on with it. *Bourgeois* national guards love their shops too well, obstinate country farmers are too fond of their land, and object to subordinating it to associations of artizans — very selfishly, it is said, and foolishly too; but probably they think that the gentlemen who so peremptorily, and with such clear logic, require of them the sacrifice of all interests, and the surrender of all power to themselves, ought to show clearer credentials for a mission scarcely less than Divine: if *they* can see through the others, possibly the others can see through them. Socialism as yet has not prospered: it has found it easier to overturn a throne, than to set an *atelier social* fairly at work. The hearts of the sanguine masses are beginning to fail. Poor toil-worn multitudes, whose days had passed in heaviness and hard work, multitudes not knowing their right hand from their left, had heard from eloquent lips, and, we are ready to believe, in some cases, from earnest and feeling hearts, the big words of hope — had heard and rejoiced that their hour was come. Many, no doubt, trusted that they



should now spoil their enemies — but many too, that a fair place in the world should be secured to them. But neither are likely to gain their hope, least of the two the latter. Hard, it seems to some, such brief triumph and blank disappointment; harder will it be, if, in their blind following, they meet with the eternal laws across their path, and refusing this life as one of probation, they find it at least not one of refreshment.

Foiled, however, as they may be for the present, the Socialist chiefs, of whatever shade of opinion, and there are many, have not lost confidence. They know well that their antagonists are strong. Besides the established political parties, with various “pretenders,” and the redoubtable and abhorred Thiers to boot, there are the great interests of money and agriculture against them, a powerful literary opposition, and, still more formidable, a powerful shopkeeper opposition. The hour of their triumph is not yet close at hand, as they know: but they are hopeful. It is singular to read the enthusiastic articles of their journals, written in the thick of the difficulties in which France is plunged. They revolt, as from a blasphemy, from the idea of comparing their “France of ’48,” — *bourgeois* and all — with England, “degraded by an aristocracy, and swarming with famished workmen and prostitutes.” Frightful as is the failing of counsel, barren and meagre as seem the measures proposed to arrest immediate ruin, still they triumph; at least, the “system of expedients” is giving way to the reign of ideas and of thought. They are not men to be turned from their hopes and purposes by anything but the absorbing enthusiasm of a great war.

And whatever becomes of Socialist theories in the shocks of war, or in the reaction which their arrogance and extravagance is sure to provoke, the prominence which they have assumed, and the partial adoption of their ideas by the Republic, are facts which cannot be dismissed as unimportant. This public recognition of them forms a distinct and a new step in the direction towards which all changes have long steadily looked — a step as real and as pregnant with consequences, as any political change of the last century in the

rights and position of classes—consequences very various and very mixed, perhaps a long way off, but wide and lasting; a step in that “progress” which it is the fashion, especially in France, to take for granted is towards perfection, but which at any rate, as a fact, is scarcely to be denied. Whether it means forfeiture of useful powers by those who have not used them well, or the gaining of them by their rightful claimants; whether it is the advance of justice and fellow-feeling, or of self-will and disobedience; whether it is the breaking up of baseless opinions, or the breaking away from traditions which connect us with truth—exchanging the venerable for the true, or the steady ways of wisdom for the lights of tempting theory; whether it is disturbing good which we did not, and could not, create for ourselves, or winning, in the due order of providence, the good which is given only to those who dare to seize it; whether the tendency of it is to combine, or to resolve—towards wise self-government or towards anarchy; whether we look on with hope or fear,—we can scarcely doubt which way the current is flowing—faster now, and now slower—but ever one way, from high to low. New claims, which from time to time are made, are made for the many: new theories push ever further the dominion of the many. In the actual world changes are slower, but there too the new rights which are at last acknowledged, are rights which are shared by many, not by few. Socialism, in respect of the rights of property and the rights of labour, has contrasted strongly and broadly the interest of the few and of the many, as constitutionalism did in respect of the rights of prerogative and the rights of citizenship. It is easy to take exceptions—easy to apologise with grave and real reason—easier still, when theorists are tempted to indulge in construction, to expose presumption, and overthrow ideal fabrics. Experience will distrust the contrast drawn, power can long afford to despise it. Still, in one case as in the other, the general effect remains—an impression which legislatures must henceforth reckon with, and which society cannot help acknowledging. There is a difference, it is true, between the two cases. Constitutionalism could always point to a real

existing government, the model, on the whole, by which it illustrated its lessons. Socialism cannot boast of much in the world of realities. But, on the other hand, Socialism appeals to higher feelings, and more real necessities, and deals in more home truths: if its remedies are too impracticable and unnatural for success, its complaints are too weighty to be soon forgotten. It is true that its arrogant and meagre speculations offend self-interest deeply, and good sense still more deeply; but it must not be overlooked, that, visionary as are its hopes, and anti-Christian its design, its warnings coincide with those of the Bible.

They coincide, but not for the same ends. We cannot help thinking, when Socialism comes before us, of those ancient heresies, which loom so mysterious in the distance of years, hanging around, rather than appearing to belong to the Church—revolts, certainly, against her, but much more against God's government of the world—which found their subjects, not so much in theology, as in the disorders and perplexities of our present life, and served themselves at their good pleasure of Christian principles, as they happened to fall in with a theory. Socialism is not unlike the living analogue, in our days, and with our questions, of Manicheeism. Of this upturning of all old ideas, this bursting up, not merely of force, but of thought, against the old orders of society, who can tell what is to come? The idea of a ludicrous and impotent conclusion to it does sometimes cross the mind. But the elements of storm are too numerous and potent. Daring intellect and zeal, allied with the wild power, Titan-like and blind, of the strong inexorable masses, and tempted by perplexity and distress, promise no such easy issues. This is the time of suspense. At home and abroad, there is holding back, and waiting. Yet who but feels, that at any moment the holding back may cease—that at any moment, to conjure down domestic war, France, which claims the nations for her inheritance, which claims the right of shedding her blood to convert them to liberty, may dash down her armies into the fields of Europe, and challenge her primacy, “the Pontificate of the age of light.” And how will the Church shape her

course? What is she to do with the multitudes who throng round her, accepting her poetry, but despising her creed; or with those not rare cases of noble-minded and serious men, who, in the confusion of the times, have grown up by themselves, out of the fold of her children? If she dares not be exclusive, is not the reality and positiveness of her faith open to the subtle gradual sap of vague sentiment? And, benign as has been the greeting of the Republic, and ready the congratulations of many of the Clergy, and great the marks of mutual respect and good will, which gave a new character to the Revolution of February, — the men of the barricades saluting the sacred symbol, and protecting the Clergy, the Clergy substituting the People for the King, in the Church offices, the Archbishop offering his silver spoons as a patriotic gift, — is it so clear that old jealousies are disarmed, that the old instincts of mistrust and fear are weakened? And when the Socialists talk of *unity, religious* as well as social and political, what sort of unity do they look to?

She and we are in our Master's hand. This is not the first time in history that the appalling cry has been heard, that unless justice be seen *here*, it never will be. Others before our time have been perplexed, and have desponded too hastily. As it is certain that God's providence does not sleep, it may be that under this tempest of the wrath of man, the gradual and slow growth of good is going on, which, in spite of ever-new evils, we seem to discern even here. But—whether this heralds the last storm, or whether, just as amid those overflowings of ungodliness which made our fathers afraid, much was working which God has turned to good for us, so now things may be growing up wherewith the indulgence of an over-ruling Providence shall bless our children — we, at any rate, may take refuge in the thought, not new to us, or resorted to for the first time in perplexity, that “God's government is a scheme imperfectly comprehended.” In the faith involved in these solemn words we may keep ourselves collected in the dizzy and terrible scene of wreck and madness; we may be content to depart

hence without seeing the end, without seeing destruction repaired, or good completed —

“And rejoice to think God’s greatness flows around our incompleteness :

Round our restlessness, His rest.”\*

We had written so far, when the news arrived of the terrible events which began on the 24th.† The change has come at last over the Revolution. *Bourgeois* and workmen, who fought by one another’s side in February, — who met in anger, yet parted without bloodshed, in May,—have met once more, for defeat and carnage only to part them. It has been the relentless and unflinching battle of class against class, rich against poor. Bloodier days have seldom fallen on that doomed city of Paris. The scene will now change. Power will now pass from one who, whatever else he may have been, was noble-minded and a lover of peace, into probably stronger hands. But who will appease the spirit of unforgiving vengeance which must haunt every neighbourhood? Recollections of mortal strife,—spots where men have been slaughtered, will be familiar in the crowded thoroughfares, and close to each man’s door. Who is there to stand between the dead and the living, and charm down, on that reeking ground and in those polluted homes, the cry of blood?

\* Elizabeth Barrett’s Poems.

† June, 1848.

## FARINI'S ROMAN STATE.\*

[OCTOBER, 1851.]

THE result of the events which, some three years ago, drew the eyes of all Europe, even in the midst of unwonted domestic anxiety, upon Italy and the Papacy, has left an impression on the minds of most Englishmen, very unfavourable to all the parties concerned. A mixture of disgust and contempt, despair of amendment anywhere, incredulity about the statements of all sides alike, distrust equally of principle and capacity in the leaders, have succeeded to the interest and wonderment, joined in some with hope, in many more with unconvinced misgivings, with which movements so strange in their origin, and so triumphant in their first success, were looked upon here. Italian reform has been a failure, and a failure as complete as it has been miserable. Only in the representatives of the two extremes, — in the foreign supporters of despotism, and the native supporters of democracy, was there energy, determination, and steadiness. Radetsky and Mazzini stand out like men, amid the bewildered and baffled crowd, and extort, the one in his victory, the other in his defeat, the admiration which it is hard to withhold from vigour and a clear purpose.

But everywhere else appears that ludicrous disproportion between excitement and principle, between sentiment and capacity, between powers of language and of business, between anticipations indulged in and realised, between promises made and fulfilled, which is so fatal to sympathy not less than to

\* *The Roman State from 1815 to 1850.* By LUIGI CARLO FARINI. Translated from the Italian by the Right Hon. W. E. GLADSTONE, M.P. for the University of Oxford. London: John Murray. 1851.

approval. The new Revolution was to be quite different, we were led to expect, from the old, conducted on different principles, guided by men who had learnt sense, moderation, and unselfishness, from past mistakes; a revolution from above, not from below; from the pope and the sovereigns, not from the mob, — conciliatory, patient, gradual; sober in its hopes as well as its aims; averse to violence; not merely respectful, but loyal, to religion. Such it was meant and wished to be, by the accomplished and eloquent men whose writings prepared the way for it; thus, in appearance at least, it began. But now that it has run its course, and for the present is all over, it seems to differ from any other vulgar revolution only in the feebleness and hollowness of all its proceedings, except its fierce death-struggle under the Roman triumvirate.

There is therefore, now, less interest than ever felt here, for Italian politicians, and their attempts. We were always accustomed to look with doubtful eye on their ideas of improvement; and now when, for once, they had raised some serious expectations, they have disappointed them as completely as the most distrustful could have augured. They appear to have not only failed, but failed discreditably, by their own quarrels and vacillations, their pettiness of spirit, and want of seriousness, as much as by their military inferiority to the armies of Austria and France. And thus, after three years of noise and vainglory, of illuminations and constitution-making, the civic guard has ignominiously doffed its Roman helmet and sword, and slunk out of sight behind desks and counters; and the old order of things, faithless, lawless, cowardly, and corrupt, wherever "Reasons of State" influence it, is once more restored. That such a drama should awaken no great interest, no great curiosity about its details and actors, is not very astonishing. With Italian art, Italian music, and Italian scenery, we are content; and leave the men, the abuses of their social condition, and the way in which these abuses are either maintained or assaulted, without inquiry or notice.

Undeterred, however, by this indifference, Mr. Gladstone has, in the present publication, invited attention to the his-

tory and results of these movements, in a very emphatic way. For a man like Mr. Gladstone does not translate two large volumes simply to amuse himself, or gratify a fancy. He has felt that something more is due to the objects, at least, which have been aimed at by the various parties in Italy for the last few years, than a careless and contemptuous ignorance. And, in truth, they are worth understanding — not merely from the position which Italy holds still, as it always has held in Europe, — a position varying in importance, but never unimportant — and from the character of Italian civilisation, historical traditions, intellectual culture, and political institutions, always peculiar; not only from the strange fatality which has doomed the Italian people, with all the promise of their rare gifts, and, what is more, of those gifts rarely balanced and tempered, to be as a nation invariably unprosperous and unfortunate, to be the country where abuses linger longest, and most shamelessly — not only for this, but also because Italy is, and has been for centuries, the territorial basis on which the ecclesiastical monarchy of the West reposes. To this great power, in a degree scarcely to be exaggerated, Italy has communicated its national spirit, and temper, and talent, and ways of thought and action; the direction of it has been kept in the hands of Italians, with ever-increasing jealousy and exclusiveness, since the issue of the great schism practically confined the chair of S. Peter to their race; it is the national boast of Italians, identifying itself with their interests and prejudices, and reflecting through the remotest of its vast ramifications the characteristics of its local centre.

In Italy the governing body of the Roman Catholic Church has for ten centuries been a temporal power, and has had liberty to direct as it pleased, with the independence of sovereignty, the civil order and social welfare of a remarkable people, whose enthusiastic faith in its religious pretensions has never faltered. Beyond its own territorial borders, it has acted on its Italian neighbours with whatever political force belongs to a separate state; while there also, as much as in its own dominions, the spiritual training and government of



the whole population has been, with the free choice of princes and subjects, exclusively in its hands. Italy and the Roman Catholic Church are, indeed, bound up together. It is difficult to follow the development of the Roman Catholic Church, without keeping in mind the peculiarities of the nation of its choice; and still more difficult to trace the fortunes of that nation, without reverting continually to that ecclesiastical autocracy which has had so much influence in making Italians what they are. On no conceivable principle can a Church of such claims, and also of such undoubted power over the hearts, the habits, and the actions of men, be left out of sight, when studying, whether to account for, or to learn from, the state of that country which is its principal seat. To those, to whom that Church, in any of its aspects, is an object of interest, Italy must always be an object of interest also.

The last strange and eventful chapter in the history of the Papal State is given in the work before us, by one who was an eye-witness, an actor, and, it must be borne in mind, for fairness' sake, a sufferer also. It begins with that point of departure for all recent history, the settlement of 1815, when all the governments of Europe, after the tremendous chastisements and warnings of the French invasion, were again allowed a fresh and fair start. How the pontifical government used that new chance—how, after a singular display of dignity under adversity, restoration brought with it, not pride, or vindictiveness, but a feeble slackness, and insensibility to the claims and opportunities of the time—how the ecclesiastical government, as if nothing had intervened, and nothing had been changed, took up the threads of its old habitudes and maxims just where they had been so rudely broken, is set forth in its opening chapters. It shows us, of how little avail were the noble and majestic gentleness of Pius VII., when coupled with want of capacity and of real inclination for the hard tough work of improving government, to meet a bitter and implacable discontent, which had its continual food in undeniable and untouched abuses. It relates, how far, in combating this subversive spirit, and in

default of the serious will to face its real cause, matters were mended by the expedients substituted,—by enlisting a virulent sectarianism, the old curse of Italian society, on the side of government, and opposing to the liberal conspiracies a fanaticism as savage, as unscrupulous, as turbulent as themselves,—by the bold return of Leo XII. to the high-handed and uncompromising system of the older Papacy,—by the exchange of his predecessor's independence for Austrian countenance, by Pius VIII.,—by the secret police, jealous and vindictive, and the military commissions which alternated with outbreaks of civil war, through the long and sullen reign of Gregory XVI. It shows, in what state the end of this first thirty years of the restored Popedom, a time of profound external peace, found the system, the experience, the temper, the administrative habits, the law, the finances of the government, and the well-being, the social discipline, the loyalty of its subjects—how the result of this fresh trial of government was, that all these had sunk down so low, that men had lost all reliance on one another and on themselves, and the extremity of social disorganisation seemed at hand. It goes on to tell, how, at this crisis, when no one seemed to have any expedients but the rudest, and now the most desperate, Gregory died, and Pius IX. began to reign—with how much of sincerity, with how clear an estimate of the work before him, with what aids, with what hindrances, he entered on his difficult office:—to describe the brilliant beginnings and prospects of the reformed Popedom, and the amount of intelligence and spirit with which it met the obstacles which necessarily arose as it came seriously into action; finally, to relate its abrupt and ignominious catastrophe, almost premature, in spite of the signs of confused and uncertain purposes which had portended it—the complete bursting of the bubble, the utter downfall of vaunts and hopes—and how, after all, Pius IX. had to go back, without a struggle, without disguise, and on a scale as yet unprecedented, to those old-fashioned and odious props of power, which seemed the last evils threatened by the misrule of Gregory—foreign armies of occupation, and a police without limitation by law. All

this is related in the volumes before us, in order and at length.

It is related, too, with an apparent seriousness, candour, and truthfulness, which have plainly been the great recommendations of the book to its distinguished translator, and which are said to have gained for the work great authority in the writer's own country. He has to tell a story of bitter disappointment—a story which seems to pass judgment on the calculations and ideas, as well as on the hopes of himself and his friends; that is, of those who, in late years in Italy, have endeavoured to ally a zeal for social and political improvement, with sincere loyalty towards their Church and its head. He has to tell how he and his party, with fair chances in their favour, endeavoured to give body and practical effect to their principles; and how, on the first trial, after an ominous gleam of delusive success, they failed utterly—how they were unable to realise one of their conceptions—how they were driven from the field discomfited and hopeless, as theorists whom facts had confounded. And this, a trying story for a man to tell of himself and his party, he does tell with frankness, dignity, and temper. Claiming full credit still for the substantive truth of his principles, both as a Catholic and a citizen, and for sincerity and zeal in applying them, he does not disguise that, so far, they have proved inapplicable. The experiment being for the time at an end, he has set to work to note its turns and phases, not as an apologist, nor to complain, or shift the blame on others, but to ascertain and record for future instruction, the mistakes and faults of all, and the degree in which inherited difficulties, or the influence of collateral disturbing circumstances, affected the result.

Farini, we learn from his translator, is a native of the Roman States. He was born in 1812, near Ravenna, and brought up to the medical profession, apparently at Bologna, a city of which he always speaks with strong attachment, as the centre of intelligence, and of free and manly, yet temperate opinion, in Romagna; and where he appears to have possessed personal influence. He speaks as a sincere, and zealous Roman Catholic, and appears to have been admitted to a considerable

share of the confidence of Pius IX., by whom he was employed in one of the trying crises of his pontificate as a special envoy and commissioner in the camp of Charles Albert. Like most, however, who have had the reputation of being Liberals in Italy, he has been a political exile or refugee, which seems to be as much a matter of course under the circumstances, as being some part of his life in opposition is to an English M. P.

“He was twice in exile,” we are told, “under Gregory XVI., and returned to his country under the amnesty of Pius IX., July, 1846. In March, 1848, he became Secretary of State for the Interior, sat in the Council of Deputies, and retired from political office when Mamiani was minister. In October, he was appointed Director of the Board of Health, but was ejected by the Triumvirs of the Republic. He resumed his post on the entry of the French, but was dismissed by the Triumvirate of Cardinals. He has taken refuge in Turin, and holds an appointment there.”—P. x.

Thus he has felt the hostility of both the extreme parties—the Republicans and the Absolutists; and it is hard to say, to which of them, in the course of his narrative, he shows himself most strongly opposed. The leader in whom he placed most confidence, and from whom he expected most, was the victim of the Republicans, Pellegrino Rossi. He belongs to a party, or probably we ought to say now, a school, of Italian liberal politicians, only lately discriminated in England from the hot-headed enthusiasts, or the desperate plotters and levellers, who have been, hitherto, the most prominent representatives of the class. In truth, we fear in many parts of Italy it cannot require any very extraordinary restlessness and independence of mind to make a man what is there called a Liberal,—to place and keep his reason in habitual discord with the authority and institutions under which he lives. Of Liberalism, theoretical and active, there are many shades in Italy; and many who are rightly ranked among its leaders are very far indeed from being either destructives or unbelievers. Theorists they may be—unpractical, fruitless disturbers of what exists, for the sake

of what is impossible—dreamers over a glorious but irrecoverable past; but such men as Balbo, d'Azeglio, and Rosmini, are at least not enemies of government and order, and, as far as men can know, are as good Catholics as their opponents. But, good Catholics as they are, and *because* they are such, their moral sense has been deeply shocked by that absence of morality, both in what is neglected, and in what is done or allowed to be done, by authorities which claim most loudly the sanction of religion. In the home and centre of Roman Catholicism, in that Italy whose faith has never been shaken in the traditions of antiquity, and under the eye of the guardian of that faith, the methods of governing are the by-word of Christendom. And this is no mere question of political philosophy or party; it is something much more elementary than a comparison of different theories or models of government. It means, that such is the system which has grown up and taken root in many parts of that country, in the employment of political power, that neither truth, nor fairness, nor mercy, nor honour, nor justice, nor integrity, are reckoned among its essential and indispensable laws and conditions. It means, that no one *expects* these, as a matter of course, at the hands of those in authority; and that rulers never show any hesitation, or scruple, when it is convenient, in departing from them. It means, that where religion is alleged to be purest and most influential, falsehood, and corruption, and loathsome villany, vex and pollute the civil and social relations of men, more widely, more systematically, and more hopelessly, than in any other Christian people; and that those who have the welfare of their fellows in their hands, cannot, after many attempts, be divested of the idea that these disgraceful expedients are justifiable. It means further, that those who, in times of difficulty, meet resistance with vindictive cruelty, cannot be got to take the trouble, in times of peace, to consult seriously for the happiness and improvement of their subjects. This is what is meant by the political degradation of Italy. In a race of so much intelligence and such high cultivation, authority is without dignity and without principle. The very ideas of truth and justice between the governors

and the governed, have been obliterated, on either side, by the immemorial and incurable contempt of them. This, and not the mere admiration of constitutions and representatives — this it is, which makes men Liberals in Italy; not only the violent and impetuous, but the religious, the temperate, and the well-judging; those who know, how the Bible speaks of cruelty and oppression, of treachery and denial of justice; and that these are not the less sins against religion, because contrary to a civilisation itself not always religious. And it is this which has roused the sympathy of one like Mr. Gladstone for Italian Liberals.

The school to whom Farini belongs have as yet been more distinguished as writers than as statesmen. They are, in politics, what would be generally termed Constitutionalists, though their line is more moral than political, more directed to elevate and refine the public mind, to excite a sense of the debasement encouraged or allowed by those who ought to prevent it, than to discuss the indirect advantages or evils of this or that political institution. They have tried to impress on their countrymen in all ranks, on all who can think and exert influence, that the first great want is a real and pervading sense of justice and respect for law; and next, they have sought to chasten the extravagance and childishness which so often mar the great natural powers of the Italians, and to point their thoughts and wishes to greater manliness and greater sobriety. These aims are on the surface of all that has been written by Balbo, by d'Azeglio, by Gioberti, and those who have worked with them; and it is to the force and eloquence with which they have urged these points, to the earnestness and breadth with which they have worked out the moral above the political side of their cause, rather than to any theory of state, or party watchword, or plan of practical reform, that they are indebted for the remarkable attention which their works have commanded. Possibly enough, they may have overrated what they could do by mere writing. But they have written with great effect and great honour to themselves; in form, far too diffusively and enthusiastically for a country like England, where political writing

has enjoyed the training of two centuries; yet with great acuteness, with great moderation, with great comprehensiveness, often with very nervous and weighty language, and with a very grave and sorrowful reality of tone.

What these men have hitherto succeeded in accomplishing for their country is but too clearly shown in the book before us. We believe them to be men above the common stamp in spirit and devotedness to their cause, men of high principle and noble feeling; but they are not the men to save a state, much less to re-create and restore one. Subtle, eloquent, and refined, they have shown themselves as men of ideas and wishes, not of means. Still, if they can keep to that for which they are fitted, they may yet do good service to their countrymen. So far as they can in any measure correct and brace up public feeling in Italy, on political matters—so far as they can leaven public opinion with that manliness, that patience, that soberness, on which they place such a high value—can wean the thinkers from their extravagance, and the practical men from their slipperiness,—so far they will be effectual, though only indirect, workers in that cause of real improvement, the immediate steps towards which will only *then* become clear and possible, when a healthier and wiser tone prevails in society than exists at present.

Having said thus much of the writer, we turn to his book. The object of it is, as we have said, to trace the political history of the Roman States from the peace of 1815 to the present time, and to show what have been the social evils and wants of those states, and how far the Papal government has shown itself able to deal with them.

After the peace of Vienna, the old forms of government, guarded and maintained with the jealousy of a restoration, came in contact with a population unsettled by French ideas and occupation, and become acquainted to a certain degree with the vigour and method of French administration. It was a trying state of things; and it required great forbearance, great forethought, and great firmness, to reconcile and harmonise the anomalies of a clerical government restored to all its ancient privileges and exclusiveness, and disposed to

enforce them stiffly, with the spirit of independence or of lawlessness left behind after the great war. Real zeal, care, and pains, visibly displayed by the government in its civil duties, might have done this, especially with a population in general so warmly attached to their religion as that of the Roman States. But it was not done. It was barely attempted. In all that concerned the civil order of its subjects, and their present and prospective peace and welfare, the Roman court, so keen about its old prerogatives, was doggedly indifferent and slack. Asking once more for the responsibilities of temporal government at the hands of the European powers, it took no pains—none of that earnest and persevering trouble which it never spares in its diplomacy—to fulfil them. The result was a natural one. Those who reviled ecclesiastical government had every day better reasons given them for reviling it. What the government would not try to provide against, it had in time to encounter by violence; and thus to lay the foundation of fresh hatred and fresh misery. Finesse and adroitness, or else bold and thorough-going rigour, were the only qualities that ever seemed to take the place of feeble mismanagement. Thus severity, without the effort to improve, was met by conspiracy, with the sole aim of revenge; and, even under the mild Pius VII., before five years were over, the Roman Provinces were festering with faction and ill-blood, and abuses had acquired their terrible defence, that it was become too hazardous to touch them.

The beginning of this state of things, which has led on to the results which we have witnessed of late, is thus described:—

“On the restoration of the Pope, the clerical party came back to power with the ideas it had when it fell, and with passions not tempered, but inflamed, by calamity. Consalvi was at a distance; in spite of the Pope, the most hot-headed and fanatical persons prevailed at court; and these persons who counted the very moments until they could get full power to reverse all that had been effected, did and said the strangest and maddest things in the world.” . . . . .



“ When Consalvi had returned to Rome, he endeavoured, in the discharge of his duty as Secretary of State, to stem that current, but with incomplete success ; in fact, they neither gave any uniformity of frame to the entire state, nor did they simply reinstate the ancient order of things : nor did they so adjust what they newly introduced, as to make it harmonise with the peculiar circumstances of the States of the Church, or with the fresh wants and altered conditions of society. They ought to have acted with forethought, both in cancelling the old and introducing the new, instead of which they put new upon old, without cement, and without dovetailing ; and whether of new or of old, they maintained or restored rather the bad than the good, or, at any rate, rather what was hateful, than what was agreeable, to the people. There were unbounded promises of civil and criminal codes, but there came of them only some proclamations of Cardinals and Papal bulls, with a few new and yet jarring laws. There were taxes and duties in the French fashion, general administration in the Roman ; no rules for a military conscription, troops picked up at random on the highways ; while commerce and industry were discouraged by that legal meddling which some economists call protection and favour. Instruction was impoverished, the censorship peddling ; all the men who had been distinguished in the time of Napoleon were suspected and in disesteem. . . . In the lay principalities, the administrative and civil institutions had already been in part reformed before the French Revolution ; in Lombardy, at Naples, and in Tuscany, the excess of encroachment by the Church upon the State had at that period been retrenched ; nor did the sovereigns, when restored, think of destroying all that which they themselves or their fathers had effected. At Rome, on the contrary, although Consalvi tried to cheek it, the retrograde movement tended towards those methods of administration, of legislation, and of policy, which reflected the likeness of the middle ages ; a matter which was the cause of serious discontent, especially in those provinces that for many years had formed part of the kingdom of Italy. In the lay states the public functionaries were changed, and perhaps, too, according to the custom of revolutions and of restorations, without any restraint of justice or kindness ; but in the pontifical State the havoc was much greater, inasmuch as the ecclesiastics returned to the exercise of those civil offices, which in former times, when society was in infancy, they had filled not without distinction to themselves and advantage

to the public, but which now they *resumed by mere privilege of caste*. It is manifest how much evil this must have caused to the laity, how much jealousy towards the clergy."—Vol. i. pp. 6—8.

Pius was succeeded by a much abler man, Leo XII. Leo boldly faced the danger; and, with no hesitating or inconsistent purpose, tried what could be done by a uniform return to the old methods of government.

‘Being resolved to change the policy of the state, and bring it back, as far as possible, to the ancient rules and customs, which he thought admirable, he set about carrying these plans into effect with a persevering anxiety. Owing to him, the authority of the congregations of Cardinals was restored, and many ancient practices and methods of the Roman Court were re-established. He gave countenance and protection to every kind of religious congregation and pious confraternity; by the Bull *Quod divina sapientia* he appointed that education should be brought entirely under the ecclesiastical hierarchy; he determined to have all institutions of charity and beneficence administered and governed by the clergy; he confirmed and enlarged the clerical exemptions, privileges, and jurisdictions. He took away from the Jews the right to hold real property, binding them to sell what they possessed within a fixed period; he recalled into vigour, to their detriment, many offensive practices and barbarous customs of the middle age; he caused them to be shut up in *Ghetti* with walls and gates, and he put them in charge of the Holy Office. The result was, that many wealthy and honourable merchants emigrated to Lombardy, to Venice, to Trieste, and to Tuscany. *He dissolved the board which superintended vaccination*, and quashed its rules; he gave unlimited power to appoint *majorats* and entails; he abolished the collegiate courts which administered justice, and instead of them instituted pretorships, or courts of a single judge; he reduced the municipalities to dependence on the government, changed the denominations of magisterial offices, made stringent game and fishery laws, enjoined the use, or, to speak more truly, the torture, of the Latin language in forensic speaking and writing, and in the universities.”—Vol. i. pp. 20, 21.

Leo's vigour and courage, which excite the respect of the liberal historian, were by no means without their benefits;

but their very success, commensurate only with Leo's lifetime, but showed more clearly the weakness of the system.

“Truth requires me to relate, that, in the reign of Leo XII., and under Bernetti's administration, some good and useful acts were done. There were abuses removed, and persons guilty of them punished ; endeavours were made to set in order the hospitals and charitable institutions of Rome ; streets, bridges, and other public works, were completed or commenced ; general security was re-established in those districts that had been plundered by brigands ; method was introduced into the expenditure, and the land-tax was diminished by a third ; a sinking fund for extinguishing the public debt was established on an adequate basis. These were benefits which might have gained for the papal authority the strength both of gratitude and of love, if, when the people were presented with them, they had been gratified simultaneously with those institutions and those civilising laws which others, even though subjects of absolute monarchies, enjoyed ; and if they had not been accompanied with superfluous severities and acts of political injustice. . . . . And those extravagant assaults upon the liberals, that practice of clothing inquisitors with the long robe and judges with the cowl, that mixing up religion with politics, and ecclesiastics with police officers, that placing the throne upon the altar, rendered the government and the clerical party odious to persons of refinement, to the youth hopeful of the future, to the cultivated laity, which revolted in heart against the domination of the clergy. And because that public opinion, by which governments acquire stability or fall, forms itself out of the sentiments, the likes and the dislikes, of that very description of people, and not according to the sympathies and the notions of the stupid and indifferent multitude ; hence it happened that everything abusive was stated and believed, about Rome, and the cardinals, and the government of priests. These circumstances kept alive the disposition to conspire, and paved the way for the excesses both of friendly and of hostile factions.”—Vol. i. pp. 28—30.

Of the methods employed by Leo to stop the evils of the time, the following is given as a specimen :—

“Cardinal Rivarola surrounded himself with *gendarmes* and spies, encouraged informers, set on foot secret inquisitions, published a proclamation which prohibited going about at night with-

out a lantern in the hand, under pain of such sentence as the authorities might please, and imprisoned persons of every age, class, and condition. Then, on the 31st of August, in the year 1825, he sentenced five hundred and eight individuals. Of these, seven were to suffer death; thirteen, hard labour for life; sixteen, for twenty years; four, for fifteen years; sixteen, for ten years; three, for seven years; one, for five; one, for three; six were to have imprisonment for life in a fortress; thirteen, for twenty years; twelve, for fifteen years; twenty-one, for ten; one, for seven; four, for five; two, for a single year; two were banished for life. Two hundred and twenty-nine were punished by surveillance and the *precetto politico* of the first order; one hundred and fifty-seven by that of the second order. The first of these bound the party not to quit his native town and province; to return home within an hour after sun-set, and not to go out before sun-rise; to appear before the inspector of police every fifteen days; to confess once a month, and to prove it to the police by the declaration of an approved confessor; and, lastly, to perform every year the spiritual exercises for at least three days, in a convent to be chosen by the bishop. The penalty for disobedience was three years of labour on the public works. The *precetto* of the second order was a little less severe, and the penalty for deviation more lenient. The sentences of death were afterwards commuted for perpetual imprisonment. Of the five hundred and eight condemned by Rivarola, thirty were nobles, one hundred and fifty-six landed proprietors or traders, two priests, seventy-four public functionaries, thirty-eight military men; seventy-two were doctors, advocates, engineers, or men of letters: the rest artisans. The sentence was grounded upon simple presumptions of belonging to the liberal sects, and it was pronounced by the cardinal *a latere* without any sort of guarantee, whether of defence or of publicity, and without any other rule than the mere will of a cardinal sitting as judge. There followed a proclamation, in which a free pardon was declared for all those members of the sects who were not included in the sentence; but if they attached themselves to those bodies afresh, they were to be punished even for the offence which had once received pardon. And, lastly, it was provided that, from that time forwards, the heads and propagators of sects should be punished with death upon simple *ex parte* evidence; those who kept arms, emblems, or money, with twenty years of labour on public works; those simply associated, with ten; and, lastly, those

who, knowing or suspecting the existence of a sect, or the connexion of an individual with one, should not give information, were to be punished with seven years of the galleys.

“ After this burst was over, Rivarola appeared to grow gentle, recalled here and there an exile, did another act or two of grace, declared he had it at heart to reconcile political factions, and in proof of that intention, had a strange plan, that in Faenza, a city afflicted more than any with party quarrels, there should be celebrated, by way of example to the public, various marriages, for which he paid the dowry and the charges.”— Vol. i. pp. 21—24.

But this merciless abuse of the judicial office is really a light evil, compared with that savage spirit of faction which the government scrupled not to elicit and employ. Vigorous, and what to bystanders seems cruel repression, may be carried on upon some sort of principle, even though in its exercise the laws, not only of humanity, but of truth, are broken without much scruple. But the deliberate sanctioning of the spirit of civil feud is such a deadly blow to the existence of society, that on no principle, that a government could dare to avow, can it be justified. That fierce sects existed in the Roman states was, indeed, a terrible evil; that the opposition to government took the shape of conspiracy, aiding itself by secret societies, was a serious danger. But the Roman government did their best to legitimate and perpetuate this fatal temper, when it used the like instruments on its own side, and allowed them to dignify themselves with sacred names. Against the liberal *Carbonari* were arrayed the *Sanfedisti*; the crimes of the one were imitated closely by the other: the dagger of the one was to achieve liberty; of the other, to maintain the Catholic faith.

The beginning of the *Sanfedisti*, under Pius VII., is thus related, and commented on:—

“ The Pope formally condemned, and smote with an anathema, the sect of the *Carbonari*, which was spreading in the States of the Church, and the court of Rome allowed the formation of the hostile sect of the *Sanfedists*.

“ There had existed anciently a politico-religious association called the *Pacifici*, or the *Santa Unione*, which took for its motto

the text of the Gospel, '*Beati pacifici quia filii Dei vocabuntur*,' and was sworn to maintain the public peace at the risk of life. Perhaps in its origin Sanfedism was the development and amplification of a scheme of this kind: its professed object was, to defend the Catholic religion and the privileges and jurisdictions of the Court of Rome, with the temporal dominion and the prerogatives of the Papacy, as well from the plots of innovators as from the aggressions of the Empire. . . . . It was, or seemed to be, national, by opposing the influence of the Empire. Those who held high office in the Church or in the State,—those who were in esteem for property, for high birth, or for wisdom,—those who were conspicuous for well-ordered life and firm belief, should have been the natural governors and moderators of the society; but since all human designs deteriorate as they go into operation, so it easily happened that rank and dignity were held sufficient without merit and learning, fortune without the habit of employing it properly, nobility of origin without nobility of mind; and that hypocrisy assumed the garb of religion, covetousness of loyalty. Hence there were many knaves, many impostors, and many scoundrels, who made use of the influence of the society for their personal advantage. Time brought about modifications, and Sanfedism grew worse while it grew older, as will presently be seen. In the meantime it is well to fix the mind on this association, which held absolute and extreme principles together with retrograde political aims, and to place it in comparison with the sect of the Carbonari; we may then well conceive how many feuds, and what standing conflict, must needs have been the result. . . . . It is but too true, that *sects in opposition* are indispensable, more than elsewhere, in Lower Italy, where conspiracy must remain a second nature, as long as governments discountenance publicity and parliaments, which are its only genuine remedies; too true, that such sects work ill in our times, and can never work really well: but sects in aid of the executive power are always and everywhere unnatural and anti-rational; they lead governments into a course of excess, and so to destruction."—Vol. i. pp. 10—13.

In the time of Gregory XIV. things had advanced; and an armed and secret association was set on foot by cardinals and ecclesiastics, which was allowed to take law into its own hands throughout the cities of Romagna:—

“The pontifical government was in danger from the Liberals;

in the French it had at best but doubtful friends ; Austrian aid was doubtful and perilous, the heterodox Powers suspected. Sanfedism, orthodox in politics as in religion, thought itself equal to sustaining and defending the fabric of government by augmenting and training in military discipline the actual force of the sect, and all who on religious or political grounds sympathised with it.

“ Hence came the idea of a soldiery to be called Centurions, a most ancient institution of the States of the Church, mentioned by the chroniclers who condemn its working, and eulogise Sixtus V., among other things, for having destroyed it. . . . . So at this juncture, in defence of the Government, when Cardinal Bernetti was Secretary of State, these Centurions were reproduced. Not indeed that I think the minister had any merely factious aim, or proposed to employ them except in the way of legitimate defence: but I well know and affirm that they were principally used and abused for the annoyance of the Liberals, it being in the nature of the spirit of party so to blind men, that they think governments can only be defended by injuring their enemies. Cardinal Brignole, who had come to Bologna as Commissioner Extraordinary instead of Albani, showed great zeal in the foundation of this secret militia, which remained in the condition of a clandestine society in the Marches, in Umbria, and in the other Lower Provinces ; but in the four Legations they assumed the name and uniform of Pontifical Volunteers. These Centurions and Volunteers obtained their recruits amidst the meanest and most criminal of the people. They had the privilege of carrying arms ; were exempt from certain municipal taxes ; and were influenced by fanaticism, not only political, but likewise religious, because certain Bishops and Priests enrolled and instructed them. In some towns and castles they domineered with brutal ferocity ; at Faenza particularly, where Sanfedism had of old struck deep root, they scoured the place, in arms to the teeth, like a horde of savages in a conquered country ; the police was in their hands, so that they practised insolence and excess with impunity ; the country people and servants resisted the authority of their masters ; nor was there any mode of remedy, for those in power were either of the same fry, or else were afraid of the excesses of this dominant faction. It avenged the wrongs of the Government, those of religion, those of the sect and of every member of it, and it lighted up in Romagna a very hell of frantic

passions ; I have only to add, that the Centurions were also political assassins. I have already told, and I sorrowfully repeat it, how the Liberal sects of Romagna had begun at an early date to imbrue their hands in the blood of their party opponents. The example was fatal : blood brought forth blood. The Carbonari, execrable deed ! had treacherously shed it under the pretext of freedom and of patriotism ; the Centurions were greedy of it for the honour of Mary and of the Vicar of Christ ; a twofold and a threefold abomination. Oh ! may it please the mercy of God, that all parties may imbibe the persuasion, that no enormity is necessary or advantageous to the cause of nations, of the masses, or of Governments."—Vol. i. pp. 71—73.

The turbulence which was made the excuse of such vile expedients was, as it could not fail to be, perpetuated and inflamed by them. This excessive severity of persecution, brutal as it was, and not now the same powerful instrument that it once may have been, because civilisation now "will not permit effectual extermination," might yet in vigorous hands have enforced temporary tranquillity ; not so, when the lawless sects of revolutionists found the government willing to play the same game as themselves. At the beginning of Gregory's reign, the writer tells us, that the times were too degenerate for even factions to be violent and boisterous ; yet still, there had "been no peace for fifteen years in the Pontifical State ; Prince and people lived in continual suspicion the one of the other, and contending sects were engaged in alternate efforts at mutual destruction."\* Thus it was when Gregory began ; under him there was violence enough, at least, to wipe away from the time the charge of degenerating from the ancient bitterness of Italian factions. With the same or worse obstinacy, on the part of the court, in evading the real duties of civil government, there grew daily, and with daily aggravation, the reasons and the pretexts of mutual hostility between itself and the discontented part of its subjects. Daily each side found itself with fresh and greater wrongs,—more unable to forgive, and more resolved not to spare.

\* Vol. i. p. 39.



In his account of this pontificate, Farini seems to do justice, both to what was wise and beneficial, and to what was tolerable and excusable, in the organisation of the court and government,—of which he gives a curious and detailed account\*, and also, to the private virtues both of Gregory and his minister Lambruschini. He bears witness to the learning and the simplicity of the Pope, to his zeal, his prudence, and conciliatory spirit, in managing the affairs of the Jesuits in France, and especially, to the dignity and courage with which he confronted the Emperor of Russia. And to Lambruschini, though he charges him with the full responsibility of the policy of that unprosperous reign, and with an imperious and haughty temper which could endure no rival, he gives full credit for his devotion to the Church, and speaks of him invariably as of one who had always commanded the respect of honourable antagonists. But his administration, like that of his predecessor, Bernetti—a vigorous and perhaps able one, if there had been nothing to amend, and amendment had not been the most sacred duty—was powerless for anything but harsh repression. There was a famous document presented to the Papal government in 1831, which bears the most fatal testimony against its fitness and its willingness to govern well. In that year, alarmed for its very existence, the ministers of the great powers earnestly and solemnly urged on it the necessity of placing its power on a “solid basis, by means of timely ameliorations.” They spoke of these ameliorations as changes, which would realise Cardinal Bernetti’s promise of a “new era” to the Pope’s subjects, and of the necessity of securing them by internal guarantees against the vicissitudes of an elective monarchy. These ameliorations touched the great springs of society. The ministers recommended, first and foremost, a reformed administration of justice, according to the as yet unfulfilled promises of 1816,—a wise system of partial self-government for the towns and the provinces,—in the finance, an order and responsibility which had never yet existed,—and, further, the admission of laymen

\* Book I. c. xi.

to judicial and administrative functions. These were not the demands of Liberal conspirators. They were not the device of the constitutional powers of Europe. This was the remonstrance and advice, not only of France and England, but of Prussia, of Austria, and of Russia, and "was urged on the Pope for adoption by the Austrian ambassador, Count Lutzwow."\* How it was attended to, the narrative of these volumes shows. The changes reluctantly made were soon withdrawn. A pretext was found in outbreaks, which the Government punished with indiscriminate severity:—

"The pontifical Government seemed to bind bad and good in the same bundle. Punishments for political causes ought as a general rule to be lenient for the greater part of offenders, and not to touch too many nor to be too much prolonged, otherwise they carry an appearance of excess, vindictiveness, and cruelty, and they sustain and quicken that spirit of rebellion which they are meant to exhaust and to extinguish. . . . Already numerous were the exiles of the Papal States, not few the prisoners for plots old and new, for revolts and for disturbances. Were not these enough? The Government had on its side French, Austrian, native troops, two Swiss regiments, the Volunteers and the Centurions; and, further, it was set at ease both with respect to the pacific tendency of the policy of France, and because the spirit of its enemies was cowed by recent defeats and by egregious disappointments. It had, then, nothing to fear; yet it resolved to punish to excess, and to punish, perhaps, yet more, the mere aspiration of youth, than acts really seditious. It determined to close the universities, and it gave licence to private persons, in the small towns and provincial cities, to teach the sciences; it inhibited youths, although minors, who in 1831 had borne arms, from completing their course of studies and taking degrees; it repelled many from the courts of law; against many more it closed every career of honour; and thus it cast the whole of a new generation into the Sects and their conspiracies. It dissolved the Municipal Councils nominated towards the end of 1831; it imprisoned and condemned those who had made efforts to resist their dissolution, and it turned the representative bodies into servile assemblages of needy, ignorant, and factious indi-

\* Parl. Papers, Italy, 1846-7, part i. p. 126.

viduals. No person, who was in bad odour as a Liberal (and in the estimation of the Sanfedists little was needed for the purpose), could keep an office, whether under Government or Municipal, or could obtain one if he asked for it, or could represent either municipality or province. Thus they swelled excessively the numbers of those that were called the excluded, and that might well have been called, in a political phrase of the Florentine Republic, 'the warned.' Besides this, no more was thought of the reforms and institutions indicated in the Memorandum of 1831."—Vol. i. pp. 75—77.

The goading unfairness of the judicial administration still continued; and the finances were left to the conscience of their officers:—

"The Judicial department was not rectified according to promise; codes were not published; an ill-patched penal statute was enacted; in which there were merciless punishments for the crimes which were called treasonable, or which might be so construed. There exists a confidential circular of Cardinal Bernetti, in which he orders the judges, in the case of Liberals charged with ordinary offences or crimes, invariably to inflict the highest degree of punishment. The judges seconded all this from passion, if they were of the colour of the sect, or else from fear, or from venality. The police was all faction in some places, and an agent of police caused more alarm among the inhabitants than a highwayman; those bullies, uniting with the Centurions, would pluck out the very beard or moustache of the citizens; they would not let the Liberals indulge in shooting or any amusement; they refused them passports, pried into their families, and used force against their domiciles and persons with incessant and minute searches. Meanwhile, the administration of the public revenue remained as of old, without method and without audit; ruinous loans were contracted; ruinous leases of public revenues were given; trade, instruction, and industry, suffered not only neglect, but discouragement and deterioration."—Vol. i. pp. 77, 78.

"Miserable," says the historian, "were those first years of the reign of Gregory, and not only infested by revolts, intestine feuds, and the bitterness of faction, but likewise by the casualties of nature." In the summer of 1832, storms and hail such as had not been seen within the memory of man

destroyed the crops, tore down the trees, and wasted the fields of Romagna. Earthquakes were frequent in those years. Men's minds were filled with terror. In 1833, and again in 1837, cholera raged destructively at Ancona and Rome, and for a moment awed into stillness the ferocity of the sects. The years 1839 and 1840 were marked by extraordinary and devastating inundations: visitations, all these, which were not confined to Romagna; but the historian only reflects the feeling of the time, when he interweaves them with the story of social unhappiness, which always makes men mark such scourges, when they coincide with it, as direct and solemn chastisements.

And such was the state of things which continued through the reign of Gregory. Meanwhile, among the Liberals, that is, those who more or less boldly set themselves against the government, there was going on a gradual clearing up of their aims, and a growing definiteness of plan and intention. The Liberals of 1830 in the Pontifical State were

“for the most part, either the followers of Voltaire or indifferentists in the matter of religion, materialists in philosophy; almost all of them Constitutionals in politics, some in the French fashion, others in the Spanish. But whether unitarians or federalists, few of them had any well-defined conception, either philosophical or political, or any true and comprehensive idea of nationality. The greater part of them thought chiefly of what they had to pull down; about building up, they meant to think afterwards; only anxious, to speak plainly, that in the mean time the priests and the Sanfedists should be well beaten, and their odious government done away with.”—Vol. i. p. 33.

Not so the body formed and directed by one who was, perhaps, never exceeded by any founder of an order, in his self-devotion, perseverance, and patience—Mazzini:—

“But these, and other like considerations, did not restrain Giuseppe Mazzini from founding a new clandestine Association, which was intended, not only to absorb and to recast the sects formerly existing, but to extend them, bind them to one another at home, and to himself as their head abroad. To this new

sect he gave the name of *Giovine Italia*, as if in token of a new creed and new objects; and he designedly shut out of it every man that was more than forty years old, to show that he based his calculations on the buoyant enthusiasm of youth, and *not* on judgment and experience. He enjoined obedience, and surrender of will and of strength, on the part of every member, to the orders of their chiefs; he arranged that all should have arms, ammunition, and military training. This *Giovine Italia* was a mixture of Germanism and of Christianity, of Romanism and Mysticism, through which the old and purely political Sects were transmuted into an association, in part political, in part social, and in part religious. The Carbonari, it is true, were for the most part either indifferentists or followers of Voltaire, but that old sect bore more enmity to the priests than to the religion of our fathers; the new one had a positive religious faith, not avowed, it is true, or determined, but in substance heretical with reference to the Roman Catholic creed. And as in philosophy and in religion, so likewise it was positive in politics, whether with respect to an organisation for the nation, or to the form of government, or to its social institutions; choosing as its idol Unity for the first, a Republic for the second, and pure Democracy for the third. . . . .

“War then was to be waged upon all the Governments and upon all the princes of Italy; war upon the very idea of a Prince or of a Monarch; war upon the Austrians; war upon Europe, the guardian and avenger of treaties. *Giovine Italia* begged the *obolus* out of the lean purses of the refugees—such were its revenues; it enlisted on foreign soil, with an oath of life and death, Italian exiles and young Poles, fearless for their lives, and forward to expose themselves to conflict—such were its armies; it conspired with the republicans of France—such were its allies; it despatched conspirators and agitators into Italy—such were its ambassadors and diplomatists. And, as if its movements to and fro, its levies of money, its purchases of arms and its other numerous indications, any single one of which is more than enough in the eyes of a modern police, did not suffice to give an inkling of its machinations, this *Giovine Italia* printed a Journal, in which the principles and aims of the association were frankly declared.”—Vol. i. pp. 81—83.

But Mazzini's first attempts were failures; and the enthusiastic and visionary ideas of his sect, its democratic elements

and purpose, and its unscrupulousness, had further discredited him with the more educated, more refined, and more moderate classes, who equally wished for great changes. About 1844 Balbo and Gioberti began to write:—

“The leading idea of the book of Balbo was that of independence; while Gioberti chiefly affected and recommended all practicable modes of conciliation and thorough concord of the people with their Princes. He taught, that Sects and partial insurrections would not forward, but retard and obstruct, the recovery of Italy; that the Catholic Religion was not opposed to any honourable plans for freedom, but blessed and sanctified them; that the Italians should revere and jealously preserve it as their chief, their sole, their inexhaustible treasure, amidst the great miseries of their country; that her fortunes ought to be restored, but by honourable and virtuous means; that the sanctity of the end does not justify measures in themselves unrighteous; that the concord of the various classes with one another was indispensable, and also the concord of the Princes with their subjects. All this would be gained, if the Liberals would give up their fruitless plots, their irreverence towards the Church, their assaults upon Royalty; and if the Princes would reform their civil and political systems and laws, as the times and the judgments of the wise required. . . . . What was wanting, was, if I may so express myself, a political conscience — a faith on which enlightened minds and well-disposed hearts might rely, — a system that would define what was possible, and declared what was probable, in respect both to means and ends, and would form a training both for the understanding and the feelings. The books of which I am speaking had this effect upon all the men of a certain grade in age, judgment, knowledge and character, being in the main those by whose influence public opinion is shaped. It appeared a great gain, and a great comfort, to have it proved that men might be liberal without being irreligious; might love their country, and labour for its good, without offending the eternal principles of justice, and without being surrounded by continual dangers; that they might believe in good without producing evil, believe in the resurrection of Italy without renouncing their reason, and might take this for their guide instead of chance. But the *Giovine Italia* began to bristle up, and censured these famous works, with their no less famous authors. The sects, too, remained. But the sectarian

temper was everywhere softened; the reformers soon became more numerous than the revolutionists: an attainable end had been pointed out, and all eyes that could see regarded it with eagerness: their means, their advances, their order of proceeding, were elucidated; and thus materials and aim were supplied for the diligence of the well-disposed."—Vol. i. pp. 103—106.

In June, 1846, Gregory died. The Pontifical government had been restored for more than thirty years. During that time it had enjoyed, not indeed quiet, but under the guarantees of treaties, and the support of all Europe, perfect safety. At this time what was the condition of the population specially entrusted to the care, temporal as well as spiritual, of the Roman Court?

Without dwelling on matters of political economy and wealth, we have before us the following summary, drawn up apparently with all due fairness and discrimination, of matters necessarily affecting the moral habits and character of the people.

In the country the people did not complain. "The country people," says Farini, "were everywhere peaceful, devoted to the head of their religion, reverent to the priesthood, only discontented at paying too much. The minor clergy, whether of the capital or of the provinces, were single-minded, little instructed, given to complain of the abuses of Rome and of the badness of the government, and, with few exceptions, neither turbulent nor immoral." But the hangers-on of the court, "more foreign than Roman," were "false, hypocritical, sectarian, and factious." The lower class in Rome, "perhaps attached to the Pontiff, but little to the Prince, and not at all to the government," were rude and turbulent: in the provinces, they were sectaries and "daring partisans." The middle class was small, and discontented. The nobility at Rome were reverent to the Papacy, but jealous of the exclusive power of the clergy; and in the provinces, "disinclined or positively hostile to the government, or else indifferent." In general, the government "was far from strong in the attachment of its subjects or in public opinion." But the following circumstance calls for special attention: of itself, it

tells a whole story. Not individuals, but whole bodies of men, were under punishment:—“Thousands upon thousands of citizens were what is called *under warning*: these were *interdicted from all offices of honour and emolument, whether under government or in the municipalities*. The number of families, who, after 1831, were persecuted for political causes, by the government or the Sanfedists, was very great. The exiles, with those proscribed and under sentence, amounted perhaps to two thousand. The military commissions were permanent.” In the promised reforms of justice and finance nothing had been done. It is scarcely surprising that such a government should be “the object, abroad, of sharp reproach and sarcasm, and that the diplomatic body stood in dread of insurrection and revolution.”

Such a state of things was indeed both scandalous and formidable. At the very time when the Church of Rome was drawing deep and earnest attention throughout Europe to her religious claims—at the very time when, after the indifference or hostility of the last century, a strong reaction in her favour was setting in,—at the very time when it was becoming the fashion, even with liberal writers, to be not only dispassionate, but indulgent,—at the very time when she was rising more and more to the height of her ancient spirit, and her advocates were eagerly maintaining that not only all truth and high morality, but all civilization, all enlightenment, all art, all social order had flowed from her, and were dependent on her,—at the very time that they were arguing for the necessity of her temporal power, and even suggesting her claim to the guardianship of law and justice between nations and kings,—coincidentally with this remarkable change in opinion and language on her religious aspect, and this progress of her own spiritual pretensions, and inversely with it, her temporal government was becoming more intolerable and infamous. There was nothing to save her responsibility. She was independent; her ministers had exclusive and absolute possession of power; her population was devoted to the religion which she taught, and had ever been so; her presence was in itself their highest boast.



And yet the Roman government was, not only in matters of material prosperity, but in those of truth, and justice, and mercy, the worst in Europe.

Yet, even in this respect, it seemed as if at length the Roman Church was going to show its power, and make good the boast of its modern champions. Undoubtedly the accession of Pius IX. was a time of the most singular and exciting interest. His attempts, and their result, first, to remove the plain abuses of the old system, next, to give an essentially new organisation to his government, are the subject of the remainder of the volumes.

The narrative is given in great detail, and has every appearance of truthfulness. Each step in the history is noted, from the conclave to the amnesty, from the amnesty to the plot, from the plot to the constitution, from the constitution to the Austrian war, from the Austrian war to the Triumvirate. Each turn in the popular mind is watched and put down; each procession and fête, with their peculiar symptoms—what they arose from, and what they portended. Each personage is scrutinised and weighed, as he appears on the scene; his merits and his motives adjusted with care, not with any great breadth of effect, yet as if they had been actually seen and thoughtfully observed. Towns, parties, cliques, journals, are discriminated with equal care, and the degree marked, in which the opposite elements, mixed up in this singular passage of history, were a drag or a stimulus to one another—how in the same person, the Cardinal jarred or coincided with the Minister, the Italian with the Roman, the Liberal with the Catholic, the Prince with the Pope. It is on this minute exhibition of character, and of the various shades of the movement, that much of the interest of the book depends; for, as a narrative, partly it may be from the nature of the events themselves, it is deficient in concentration and force.

The first measure of Pius IX. was, without doubt, as wise as it was popular. With “thousands upon thousands under punishment,” for political offences, there was no beginning anew without a fresh and clear start. The amnesty was the act of a considerate and merciful ruler, and might well have

been that of a far-sighted one. Nor is there much to criticise in the rapturous enthusiasm with which it was received by the Italians. At such an omen, and such an act of grace, cheering so many hearts, the most serious and thoughtful might allow himself to be carried away by the unaffected gladness and pride of the hour. The amnesty and the rejoicings which greeted it are the only point on which it is possible to dwell with satisfaction, in this melancholy, yet most grotesque history.

But the clouds began to gather immediately. That exaggeration of sentiment, in its external acts leading, perhaps, only to childish folly, but the too sure symptom, in grown-up men, of hollowness and want of truth, soon made its appearance. Many of the exiles made professions of extravagant gratitude; like Galletti, the future republican minister, "who swore at the feet of the Pontiff, by the heart's blood of himself and his children, that he would be grateful and faithful; and made himself conspicuous by declaring, through the press, the strongest sentiments of the same kind." The Jesuits, though more backward than the other orders, celebrated the amnesty by "appointing to be held in the Church of S. Ignazio, a grand literary assembly, under the title of the Triumph of Mercy:" not without exciting the murmurs of the city, "both at the lateness of the demonstration, and at some of the compositions which were read at it." "There was a kind of plot in which all were implicated, to make soft speeches and keep holiday." Exorbitant adulation seemed the only means of relieving the public mind from its burden of delight. "Every little act of good was magnified and exalted to the skies. Every one took pleasure in blinding himself and others, and public opinion learned the accents of a court. If the Pope revived the Academy of the Lincei\*, the Members of the Arcadia chanted, Marvellous! even as if he were opening a parliament of civilisation for the whole world. If he permitted industrial associations, evening schools, infant asylums, reading rooms, it seemed a miracle. If he

\* The earliest scientific society of Italy, founded by Galileo.

gave it to be understood that he did not object to scientific meetings, the crowd of the half learned, to whom this puffing age distributes chaplets, blew the trumpet of Fame forthwith." "All the journals sang a chorus of his praises: any man that did not do the like, and join in the general rejoicing, was pointed at with the finger." "Interminable odes of poetasters, and discourses of puny scribblers—in whose hands all popes and heroes grew dwarfish when compared with Pius IX.—" every form into which pedantry and folly could twist flattery, every prank which "merry and addle-headed politicians" could imagine, abounded. If the Pope visited a church, if an anniversary came round, or if the weather was fine and men in high spirits, demonstrations were got up, processions went to the Quirinal to cry Viva, and fire-works were let off. In the towns, parties of "Gregorians" and "Pians" were formed. "The name of Gregory became a by-word of abuse, but that of Pius, with his likeness and his shield, became the fashion. Besides these, there were a thousand of those little follies through which men lose their senses, and, in jest and unawares, fan the accursed flame of civil discord."

The amiable Pope looked on complacently, with smiles and blessings. "*Perhaps*," says the cautious, and not unfriendly historian, "he too was self-deceived, and exulted in the universal exultation, with the reverent homage which was paid him by his subjects, by all Italy, and by strangers." The actual business of the Government, meanwhile, was going very wrong. In its control it was slack and feeble. Very soon "there were noticed certain signs of an ill-disposition, and certain greater signs of remissness in the Government, and of an unruly temper in the people." "Malcontents, aware of the gentle temper of the Prince, and the laxity of the Government, ventured more than they would probably had dared under Gregory." Much was said and promised about Reforms—much praise given, by anticipation, for them; and extremely little clearly seen, as to what was necessary and how it was to be done, either by the Pope, or his Liberal flatterers. On the one hand,—

“Pius IX. and Cardinal Gizzi, aware of these difficulties and dangers, and by nature given to hesitate, would not proceed in haste, for fear of furnishing matter rather for quarrel than for union, and, accordingly, they conducted themselves rather with a view to inspiring the innovators with a persuasion of their disposition to effect reforms, than so as to exasperate, by real and prompt acts of reformation, those who were averse to them. For this purpose it was, that they nominated commissions to deliberate and advise upon many and various subjects; and that Cardinal Gizzi wrote letters of the 24th of August, to the Presidents of the Provinces, directing them to invite the municipal magistracies, the ecclesiastics, and all respectable citizens, to consider and suggest the most suitable schemes for popular education, and especially for the moral, religious, and industrial instruction of the children of the poor. But this practice of talking much and doing little, of showing a disposition to innovate, and letting all plans of change be strained through a series of discussions and of congregations, was not good for the Pontifical State. Whether because this country was too far behind others in the path of civilisation, or because the people had too little patience and too sanguine anticipations, such a method of proceeding begot an excess of hopes on the one side, and of apprehensions on the other, and left open that boundless field of conjecture, over which the mind of man, when eager in expectation, wanders without a guide. Already the Liberals had conceived boundless desires, and the Retrogradists were haunted with unreasonable fear. The Government had, to-day, to moderate on the left; to-morrow, to re-assure on the right; then with fresh circular despatches, well nigh to scold men for hoping too much, and, in seeming at least, to contradict and stultify itself, and to lose its presence of mind.” — Vol. i. pp. 186, 187.

On the other,

“Liberal opinion seemed more inclined to skim lightly the fields of fancy, and to cull delicate exotic flowers of freedom, than to work out, with steady will, measures of practical reform; and the Court, tenacious of the privileges and the temporal possessions of the clergy, looked complacently upon this levity of liberalism, and upon the intoxication of the public from joy. This intoxication grew in such a way, that it had become the habitual mood of the spirits and the understandings of the generality; and it seemed as if altering the constitution of a State was a game of capering

children, or a carnival freak, and not a task of men in earnest. But that incessant summoning of the people into the streets, and their assembling, was such a sign of rankness in their vitality, and such a stimulus to their southern temperaments, as made it easy to conclude that, at a more advanced stage, there would be a change of humour for the worse! and that easy indifference of the Government was of no good omen in regard to the future, either for its own authority or the public security. And who could have checked this utter ebriety? . . . . At that time all restraining councils, all serious warnings, were held cheap, as bugbears from the minds of alarmists, and auguries of ill-willed prophets. Former Governments had used to give encouragement to the triumphs of singers and dancing girls, to pastimes, harliquinades, the loungers, and lounging processions, of one kind; hence it was an easy matter to fall in with the habit, and to bring into fashion triumphs and mountebanks, lounges and shows of another kind. In Rome especially, where idling is a habit with many, where spectacles are highly popular, where the people are going in processions all the year round, it was more easy than elsewhere to turn bacchanalian spirits to a political end, and to change religious into political processions. And in Rome especially, popular agitation was of moment; because from thence went forth impulses and examples to the Provinces. The pious Pontiff, who, since the amnesty, had probably remarked not only a greater respect to sacred persons and things, but likewise an unusual, or at least an increased, resort to the observances of public worship, rejoicing in the reconciliation of souls to God, gratified, too, with that of subjects to their Sovereign, was readily tolerant of their superlative manifestations of gratitude and merriment. And it is no more than the truth that the accents of pardon, descending from the chair of Saint Peter upon the souls of men, had reunited many to their God; the humanity and the compassion, of which the Vicar of Christ set a bright example, had revived the religious sentiment; and numerous were the consciences encouraged and tranquillised by the benediction of a Pope friendly to the advancement of Christian civilisation."— Vol. i. pp. 207 — 209.

And so after a year had passed, little had been done except to enfeeble and disorganise the Executive Government, and to encourage men in thinking it the necessity of the times, to play unnatural and incongruous parts: —

“The Government had acquired a character for boldness in innovation, although, in reality, it had done little to renew either institutions, systems, or men. The Finances, Justice, Public Instruction, the Military Service, Commerce, all these principal departments of the State, were still administered and directed as in former times. The commissions indefinitely prolonged their labours. The practical anomalies of the former system still continued. Questions of form absorbed the minds of men, while little was thought of the substance. The appetite of the Liberals was sharpened from day to day by the stimulants of the press and of the popular assemblages. The old Government, virtually condemned by the new, had fallen without the new one's founding itself firmly on any ground of its own; it lived upon the mere credit which was lent it by the opinion of the Liberals. It was, therefore, in the discharge of its functions, hesitating and remiss, while the popular action was lively. The country had always had a Government incapable of training it, because itself ill-trained; still, up to that time, there had been material force adequate to the business of repression. Now, that system had come to an end, and unruliness bore sway; both the governors and the governed were in the hand of chance. The official servants of the Gregorian administration, who all, or nearly all, were still in office, laboured under great uncertainty as to their own destiny and that of the State. Accustomed to hunt down the Liberals, and to be hated by them, they now studied to win their indulgence and favour by throwing the reins upon their necks. They apologised for having served Gregory; some of them disclosed the ill deeds of the police in which they had themselves had a hand. Even the Prelates felt the itch for popularity. Yet the merry-makings never ceased. The agitators loved them, as stimulants to the people, which they are; the masses loved them, as the masses always love spectacles; the Government began to dislike, but did not dare to discountenance them.”—Vol. i. pp. 223, 224.

The sort of men who came to be of importance were an evil omen. The Prince of Canino traversed Italy, as the preacher of the new era. “Forgetting his ancient alliance with the Gregorian Cardinals, he came to Genoa, run wild in praise of Pius IX., and gave it to be understood, that he was commissioned to invite the men of science to hold a meeting in the Papal States.” A more important man was the notorious Ciceruacchio.

“Angelo Brunetti, known under the name of Ciceruacchio, signalised himself in getting up and managing this popular celebration, which was more imposing than any former one. Already in the earliest public demonstrations, having many bound to him by affection and by favours conferred, he had made himself conspicuous among the leaders of the people. He was a person of single mind, rustic in manners, proud, and at the same time generous, as is common with Romans of the lower class. Industrious and persevering, he had amassed something like a fortune; by his generosity and charities, he had gained a species of primacy among the men of his own class, who let out carriages, kept pot-houses, and such like small dealers; he now put these men on their mettle, and fired them with his own enthusiasm for Pius IX.”—Vol. i. p. 192.

Prelates and Governors of Rome “courted his countenance, and gained a hold on his attachment by all sorts of complimentary attentions.” Now, also, journalism, practically set free from all restraints, began to give power and consequence to more than one of the prominent actors in the revolutionary times that were approaching; while the ecclesiastics, whom the Pope called into employment, were, for the most part, either men who had no business, from their previous conduct, to be acting in concert with the Liberals; or they were men, who were unequal, from want of sympathy or of talent, to the very difficult work required of them, and who felt themselves to be so. Of this latter class were the Cardinals, who succeeded one another reluctantly in the office of Prime Minister, rather on their obedience as ecclesiastics than with the plans or feelings of statesmen. On the other hand, such a person as Monsignor Savelli might have been in his place under the old Government, but appears awkwardly in the new:—

“There were stories of his having adopted a determination, at the time when he was vicar to Cardinal Giustiniani, the Bishop of Imola, that persons guilty of blaspheming should have their tongues bored. It was also said that, when he afterwards became Delegate, he took bribes from the farmers of the state revenues; and furthermore, that once when a criminal condemned to death would not settle the concerns of his soul,

Savelli, as Delegate, induced him to perceive the consolations of religion by presenting fifty crowns to his wife, which, when the sentence had been executed, he took away from her in her bereavement; and that the Pope was so indignant at this proceeding, that he both fined the Monsignore in twice that amount for the benefit of the poor woman, and deprived him of his office.”—Vol. i, p. 170.

Yet this gentleman appears afterwards under Pius IX. as Minister of Police, in which office he is charged with encouraging or at least allowing the formation of an ultra-liberal and democratic club, which came to be the nucleus of the revolution.

“When, in that month of November, Monsignor Savelli was summoned from Forlì, where he was prolegate to the department of police, he shortly gave permission for the establishment of a club called the *Circolo popolare*. It was then said, and it was believed, that the Monsignore had thoughts of pitting this new association (which he hoped to control and lead by means of his own agents) against the meeting at the [liberal] *Circolo Romano*; which gave him annoyance, possibly because it exerted itself in maintaining goodwill and in restraining passion. It is a fact, at any rate, that the Club of the People sprang up in Rome under the auspices of Monsignore Savelli, or, if this cannot be believed, it was, at any rate, during his administration of the police.”—Vol. i. pp. 314, 315.

It is at this time that we find the rise and advancement of a personage, whose name has eclipsed most others of late, Cardinal Antonelli. He was made Cardinal by Pius IX. on the 11th June, 1847.

“Antonelli had left a bad name at Viterbo for political inquisitions and sentences: but in the offices which he had filled in the Secretary of State's department, he had merited praise for acuteness and diligence; and in the capacity of Treasurer he had succeeded, if not in setting his office and the funds of the States to rights, which was impracticable, at least in checking the disorder in which Tosti had left them . . . . Antonelli continued in the office of Treasurer. He, clearsighted as he was in the highest degree, caught the will of the Pope and the tendency



of the times, and backed the one and the other, in the hope of realising for himself popularity and weight, for the Court *éclat*, and for the temporal dominion of the Church security."—Vol. i. pp. 222, 223.

He was the president of the new Council of State the following October; president of the still more liberal ministry which succeeded the French Revolution, of which Farini was a member, and which resigned because the Pope would not openly join in the Italian war—a subject on which Cardinal Antonelli showed no disagreement with his colleagues; and all through, a member of the most important commissions for reform, moderating, but far from opposing, the proposed changes.

There is indeed a want of reality about all the proceedings, of clearness of head and wish, which explains, if explanation were wanted, why the men of good intentions became the victims of the revolution. Men did not know their own minds: they were partly flattered, partly puzzled, partly frightened by the apparent opportunity of doing some great things, they did not exactly know what, and of doing them so easily. No one knew his own mind less than the amiable Pontiff; and as the enormous difficulties of his undertaking rose to view, enormous even if they had not been aggravated by events without, he lost all self-reliance, and surrendered himself to the events or the men in whose power he found himself. There is truth and reason in the following sketch of his character:—

“Pius IX. had applied himself to political reform, not so much for the reason that his conscience as an honourable man and a most pious Sovereign enjoined it, as because his high view of the Papal office prompted him to employ the temporal power for the benefit of his spiritual authority. A meek man and a benevolent Prince, Pius IX. was as a Pontiff, lofty even to sternness. With a soul not only devout, but mystical, he referred everything to God, and respect and venerated his own person as standing in God's place. He thought it his duty to guard with jealousy the temporal sovereignty of the Church, because he thought it essential to the safe keeping and the apostleship of the Faith. Aware of

the numerous vices of that temporal Government, and hostile to all vice and all its agents, he had sought, on mounting the throne, to effect those reforms which justice, public opinion, and the times required. He hoped to give lustre to the Papacy by their means, and so to extend and to consolidate the Faith. He hoped to acquire for the clergy that credit, which is a great part of the decorum of religion, and an efficient cause of reverence and devotion in the people. His first efforts were successful in such a degree, that no Pontiff ever got greater praise. By this he was greatly stimulated and encouraged, and perhaps he gave into the seduction of applause and the temptations of popularity more than is fitting for a man of decision, or for a prudent Prince. But when, after a little, Europe was shaken by universal revolution, the work he had commenced was in his view marred; he then retired within himself, and took alarm. In his heart, the Pontiff always came before the Prince, the Priest before the citizen; in the secret struggles of his mind, the Pontifical and priestly conscience always outweighed the conscience of the Prince and citizen. And as his conscience was a very timid one, it followed that his inward conflicts were frequent, that hesitation was a matter of course, and that he often took resolutions even about temporal affairs more from religious intuition or impulse, than from his judgment as a man. Add that his health was weak and susceptible of nervous excitement, the dregs of his old complaint. From this he suffered most, when his mind was most troubled and uneasy; another cause of wavering and changefulness. When the frenzy of the revolution of Paris, in the days of February, bowed the knee before the sacred image of Christ, and amidst its triumph respected the altars and their ministers, Pius IX. anticipated more favour to the Church from the new political order, than it had had from the indevout monarchy of Orleans. Then he took pleasure in the religious language of M. Forbin Janson, Envoy of the infant Republic, and in his fervent reverence for the Papal person; and he rejoiced to learn, and to tell others, that he was the nephew of a pious French Bishop. At the news of the violence suffered by the Jesuits in Naples, and threatened in his own States, he was troubled, and his heart conceived resentment against the innovators. Afterwards he was cheered, by learning that one of the rulers of the new Republic of Venice was Tommaseo, whom he valued as a zealous Catholic. He had a tenderness towards the dynasty of Savoy, illustrious for its Saints, and towards Charles

Albert, who was himself most devout. He learnt with exultation, that Venice and Milan had emancipated their Bishops from the censorship and scrutiny of the Government in their correspondence with Rome. It seemed as if God were using the Revolution to free the Church from the vexations entailed by the laws of Joseph II., which Pius IX. ever remembered with horror, and considered to be a curse weighing down the Empire. Where he did not foresee or suspect injury to Religion, he was in accordance with the friends of change. But everything disturbed his mind and soul, which impugned or gave any token of impugning it, or imported disparagement to spiritual discipline or persons. And if, from his vacillating nature, and his inborn mildness, he did not adopt strong resolutions, which would have given proof of his uneasy thoughts and feelings, yet they wrought on him in secret, and he had no peace till he could find some way to set his conscience at ease. He had fondled the idea of making the people happy with guarded freedom, in harmony with their Sovereigns; of bringing both into harmony with the Papal See; of a Popedom presiding over the League of Italian States; of internal repose and agreement; of civilising prosperity, and of splendour for Religion. But events, as they proceeded from day to day, shattered this design. When in the name of freedom and of Italy, and by the acts of the innovators, priests were insulted, excesses perpetrated, the Popedom or the ecclesiastical hierarchy assailed, Pius IX. ceased to trust them: then he began to regret and repent of his own work; then he doubted, whether by his mildness and liberality he had not encouraged a spirit irreverent to the Church, rebellious to the Popedom; then he complained of the ingratitude of mankind, faltered in his political designs, and prognosticated calamity."—Vol. ii. pp. 68—71.

Among the difficulties which beset the attempt to make changes in the Roman system of Government, besides those very serious ones arising from the temper of the people, and the chances of external disturbance, two apparently insuperable ones show themselves on the surface.

The first was, the presence of Austria in Italy. It was a piece of diplomatic flippancy as insolent as it is untrue, which pronounced Italy to be a mere "geographical expression." However parcelled out Italy may be, — differently

governed, and with strong local peculiarities and jealousies, yet history, language, and character bind all the Italian races together in a natural cohesion and sympathy, which centuries of conquest and occupation have been unable, we do not say, to sever, but even to disturb. The national tie is real and ineffaceable. To judge, at least, from the past, Austria, if she keeps Lombardy for five centuries more, will never make the Lombard care about what goes on in Germany, or prevent him from caring about what goes on in Rome or Naples. To every Italian, however his life and associations may be pent up within the walls of an obscure municipality, all Italy is a country. In every part of it he is at home as he is nowhere else, even though at a distance of ten miles from his native town he may be an exile.

It is therefore quite impossible that any great series of changes can go on in one part of the peninsula, without putting every other part on the *qui vive*. And thus a foreign power cannot acquire territory in Italy, without becoming deeply, and, in its own view, fairly interested in the domestic policy of all the other states; and no one state can be very different in its measures and principles, without affecting, and, it may be, endangering and undermining, the stability of the rest. England or France might be as reforming and liberal as they please, without Italians caring about it, except at critical moments. But Piedmont cannot be constitutional, without making it more troublesome for Austria to be absolute in Lombardy. And much less could Rome relax from her immemorial rigour, and deviate from her traditions of policy, without quickening in north and south the ideas of change, and being held responsible, by those opposed to these ideas, for shaking the foundations of their power, and of the public tranquillity.

Austria, therefore, can never look with favour on any mode of government in Italy, different from her own in Lombardy; and her government there is a government of conquest. She has never taken root there. She holds by the sword, and by the sword only. Whether by her own fault or that of her subjects, she is compelled to be arbitrary. She has not won

them over; she cannot assimilate them: she can but daunt and keep them down. It is neither profit nor pride to them to be Austrians; allow them any liberty, and they would say so. Europe owes much to Austria, as the guardian both of independence and of authority, and as one of the greatest examples, perhaps, in modern times, of tenacity and resolution under adversity. Nor, under her rule, have the rich plains of Lombardy languished, or the thriving population which tills them become impoverished. Between man and man she is, we believe, just and considerate, and is trusted. Yet it cannot be denied that, politically, she is there as a harsh and suspicious mistress, with jealous eye and heavy hand. She can be cruel. What is almost worse, she teases. But this is not all. She cannot afford to leave the other states of Italy to themselves. That contagion of national feeling which her ministers so contemptuously ignored, is the necessity which makes Austria keep her eye on the state of parties in every city of Italy: and not only her eye, but her hand. She says, "You cannot reform, you cannot allow more freedom of speech and action, without doing me mischief, without encouraging my subjects to wish and scheme for the same; and to me you shall not do mischief." "The emperor," said Prince Metternich, "has determined not to lose his Italian possessions." And, in consequence, he claims the right of the strong, to check or stop whatever endangers them.

All changes, therefore, in Italy, which involve greater freedom, whether made on good principles or bad, are a real and inevitable peril to the Austrian dominion there. To all she must be hostile; and as the states of Italy are on a small scale, her tone has generally been, as if it were scarcely less impertinence, than folly and mischief, for such insignificant powers to act for themselves. And she has, more than once, been able to taunt them with the experiment ending in their having recourse to her, to help them out of it. In self-defence — not necessarily to extend her territory, but to keep what she has — she must meddle. And her influence and strength have been always lent, without scruple, to all who

opposed change, whether it were revolution or improvement, and whose lawlessness and oppression were frequently far worse than her own stern rule. Not hostile herself to improvements which do not involve political freedom, it was yet all the same to her, whether what she supported politically was fair authority or the vilest tyranny.

The presence, therefore, of Austria in Italy was one great bar to the changes attempted in the government of the Roman State. The fact of their going on made Lombardy unsafe, and that Lombardy should be unsafe was a reason with Austria why, whoever wished for them, they should not go on. For a moment, indeed, it seemed as if she was going to lose Lombardy. But she regained it; and once more there, the reason returned, and with the reason the power to enforce it. It is necessary to bear this fairly in mind, to do justice to the Italian cry for independence, which all the reforming parties, from Rosmini to the Republicans, have uttered alike, and for which, as Mr. Gladstone remarks, little sympathy, indeed little patience, is felt in England. The words of the Roman council of Deputies to the Pope, after the rout of Custoza, are, *as a fact*, we conceive, undeniable: "The independence of no Italian state can be secure, if all Italy be not independent."\* It is the influence of Austria *out* of her Italian dominions, on states which claim to be their own masters, as much as her holding Italian ground by conquest, which is the cause of it. Both sides feel the fact to be, that Austria cannot be there, in any part, without virtually controlling the policy of the whole: and if her safety is a reason with her against their reform, it is, at least, not unnatural that they should feel that their reforms are a reason why she should not be there at all. This feeling, according to Farini, was the dominant one, in the movement in Pio's reign. "The foreign publicists," he says, "did not appear sufficiently to understand the case." . . . . "I do not wish to deal in conjecture; but this I strongly affirm, that the sentiment of independence warmed the public mind more than any other;

\* August, 1848. — Vol. ii. p. 304.

and that those politicians were at fault who thought that in 1846 and 1847 Italy could have been tranquillised for any length of time, by meeting our desires for reform, and supplying us with codes, with railroads, nay even with some modicum of civilised and free institutions. If they have no other specific, they did, and ever will deceive themselves. As often as Italy shall have a little life and freedom, she will always be planning and struggling to use it for the purpose of national independence." The difficulty was not long in presenting itself in Pio's path; he could not make up his mind how to meet it; and, as much as anything else, it overthrew him.

The other difficulty was yet more serious. It was one, too, which a change in external circumstances would not remove. Nothing could remove it, but that change in the opinions and feelings of men which is the slow and secret effect of time—one which it is vain to hurry, or hope to bring about by the same power which can remodel or subvert institutions. If not an Austrian sentinel were to be seen to the south of the Alps, this difficulty would exist in its full force.

It lay in the very nature of the Roman government; in the principle on which it was based, and the effects which this principle had produced. This principle was, as all know, that none but the clergy could be entrusted with political and administrative power; that the laity were disqualified for it, except in a very subordinate degree, by their being the laity. The Roman state, by being a state, has all the temporal incidents and responsibilities of a state; so far, it must be administered in the same way as the other European states, with whom it is incorporated, and maintains political relations. It must have secular laws, over and above its religious ones; it must have civil and criminal justice, maintain a police, raise taxes, have a commercial policy, be on its guard against its neighbours, and use the same precautions as they,—soldiers, fortresses, and diplomatists. The three millions of Roman subjects will quarrel like other men about lands and houses, and need a law-suit to bring them to

reason. Some of them will steal or cheat or murder, and must be sent to the galleys or hung. Others will employ themselves in trade, or manufactures, or agriculture; and these sources of national and private wealth must be dealt with and regulated, one way or another, by government. In all these matters, the Roman government, whoever carries it on, and for whatever purpose, must have to do with the same kind of affairs as any other government. Yet the men who thus deal with police and justice, diplomacy, war, and trade, are clergymen: and none but clergymen may deal with them, except as mere officials. What is emphatically the business of the laity, all over the world, what is elsewhere emphatically not business for the clergy, is here equally emphatically, their business only. "The finances," we read, "were administered by a Prelate as Treasurer, who was entitled on quitting his office to be appointed Cardinal. His acts were liable to review only by the Pope, his accounts were not audited, and probably were not susceptible of audit, by reason of the badness of the system, and the privileged quality of the person." This clergyman settled the taxes, managed the public debt, farmed out the monopolies of salt and tobacco, negotiated loans with foreign capitalists. "Commerce and industry were governed by the Cardinal of the Exchequer of Holy Church, under a system of prohibitory and protective regulations, by tariffs, premiums, monopolies, and privileges." "The Secretaryship of State for Foreign Affairs, both ecclesiastical and lay, is held by a Cardinal." "The department of State for Home Affairs is likewise under a Cardinal, in each case, with a Prelate for deputy, and clerical and lay subordinates." The Legations are governed by Cardinals, the other provinces by Prelates. The Cardinal Legates "direct the police of the province, command the armed force, superintend the provincial, and are guardians of the municipal, administration; sentence to imprisonment summarily, release from punishment, and administer mercy within fixed limits." The assistant councillors only, and inferior governors, are laymen. "The supreme administration of the police lies with a Prelate, who is also



Governor of Rome. The office is held by a Cardinal, from whom authority passes downwards to the Cardinal Legates; and in another branch it likewise passes through the successive grades of the Carabineers, a police force commanded by the same Governor-Prelate." "The Department, elsewhere called of War, is governed by a Prelate, with the title of President of Arms. This is likewise a Cardinal's post." All the higher courts of law are, in like manner, composed of Cardinals and Prelates, with a thin sprinkling of lawyers who are not clergymen, but who "are bound to wear the clerical dress"—the "Rota," and the "Segnatura," courts of civil appeal; and the "Sagra Consulta," a court of review for capital cases, and for the trial of political offences, which also "decides causes of the Woods and Forests, and of Public Health and Quarantine, and directs in chief the Department of Public Health and Prisons." "The Cardinal Vicar at Rome, with the aid of deputies and assessors, and each Bishop in his own diocese, with his Vicar and some assessors, try causes both criminal and civil. Their jurisdiction extends to all the controversies which affect properties, either ecclesiastical, or administered by ecclesiastics, and to the persons of all clerks. Besides this, they have the whole police over morals, and try all the causes belonging to it. . . . The Bishops imprison, fine and otherwise punish for blasphemy, and for disobeying the precepts of holiday and fasting. In criminal cases, the clerk has always the advantage of going into the Church court; in civil, he may choose at his will either the temporal or the Church court:" the appeal is to courts composed of ecclesiastics. This was the ordinary course of things. In times of trouble, Cardinals directed the movements of the public force, and presided over the extraordinary commissions of tribunals appointed to punish revolt.

However logical, however necessary, however under given conditions, reasonable, this state of things may be, it has the disadvantage and misfortune of summoning up against itself ideas and feelings which have become well-nigh instinctive in nearly the whole of civilised Europe,—ideas which condemn, and feelings which shrink from, the confusion

of functions which it involves. Among the disciples just as much as among the opponents of the Roman Church, these are the recognised and practical principles of most thinking men — of those who are most deeply interested for religion, as well as of those who are jealous of it. The charge of wishing to blend temporal with spiritual power, is certainly not more strongly imputed on one side, than disclaimed on the other. And the disclaimer is genuine and truthful. The ambition of classes, if not of individuals, is regulated by the habits of thought which prevail at the time; and the employment and absorption, in the business of diplomacy or government, of time and zeal, consecrated once for all to that of religion, is as repugnant to our modern habits of thought,—both in men who reverence, and men who hate, religion,—as the dedication of them to any other professed secular pursuits. Fair men will see much to admire — at any rate, will excuse much,—in the Episcopal Chancellors and Cardinal Prime Ministers, who played their parts in the confused politics of the middle ages of Europe: but not many would wish to recall them in our days.

Thus, the Roman government, however the anomaly which it presented might, on special grounds, and from particular points of view, be defended or palliated, was in very violent contradiction to the general sense, and the most undisputed maxims of all parties of serious and reflecting men. But its theoretical anomaly was its least defect. It might have been in theory, absurd and inconsistent, and yet have produced much good. But it is abundantly clear, that those, whose real and proper business was about something very different from taxes, and tariffs, and courts of law, did, as was very natural, mismanage them grossly. Their administration has not been more contrary to modern political ideas, than productive of vast practical mischief. Untrained and unqualified for their work, the Roman hierarchy have, as a class, done it without understanding it,—without trying to understand it. They have spared themselves—we may almost say, they have on principle declined the trouble and concentrated attention, which administrative

functions, connected with secular affairs, receive in other states. The clergy thus employed may in many cases have been, though too often they certainly were not, men who meant to do their duty seriously and well; but, unfortunately, governing is not a duty which can be done well by wishing to do it well. The best had little to rely on, but their good sense and good feeling. The average ones had to go by traditional expedients and customs, which countenanced every remissness, and sanctioned harshness as its remedy, or insincerity and bad faith as its escape; and, like the average of men elsewhere, they saved themselves pains, which they were not forced to take. Then, when their routine betrayed them, and their mismanagement caused mischief, with the perplexity and vexation of men who know that they do not understand what they are about, they took the shortest and roughest method to bring the crisis to an end, and thought that they could save their credit, as they did perhaps their consciences, by laying all the blame on the evil disposition of their subjects. The last expedient ever thought of, was, to investigate and try to remove the causes of evil. Possibly enough, they did not know how.

Whatever other privileges the Roman Court may claim, no set of men can have the privilege, of not taking the trouble to do decently, what they will not let any one else do. If they must govern, and govern exclusively, their connexion with the Church abates nothing from their duties as civil governors; nor does this connexion make it less a grievous crime in them, that they should choose the very worst and most debased systems of government to copy, and should in practice be worse than their models. It makes very little difference that the state which has the misfortune to be entrusted to their care should be but a small one: three millions of men are quite a large enough number, to have a claim for provident and just government on those who insist upon governing them. We may criticise and blame, as we will, the advocates of lay rights. We may think that "the desire of civil equality that the subjects of other states enjoyed—the impatience of the privileges, exemptions, and exceptional

jurisdictions of the clergy—the detriment, the jealousy, the contempt, the humiliation of the laity under the absolute government of priests;”—which, as we are told, were the peculiar causes of the agitation in the Papal States, and “on which we must fix our thoughts, if we seek to know the cause of the occurrences in them,”—were not enough to palliate liberalism, or justify revolution. But bad government is bad government still, however faulty the temper and measures of its opponents. Nor can the Roman government expect, that it should be an indifferent matter to the rest of the world, what it chooses to do in its own dominions. They who govern ill, and think it enough to say, that they, like all other governments, are irresponsible, and may govern as they see best, have to recollect *what else*, besides a human government, they profess to be and to represent, before the eyes of Christendom and the whole world.

Here, then, was the great difficulty for a reforming Pope. He had to improve the worst government in Europe, and, at the same time, to guard, even against risk, the temporal power of the Papacy. But to guard the temporal power, clerical government seemed essential; and clerical government seemed incapable of improvement; so at least thought most, both of its advocates and opponents. Both appeared to agree that, to touch it, would be to destroy it.

And, further, he had to proceed in the face of a deep and obstinate distrust. How many lasting and salutary changes are to be brought about, without some degree of mutual confidence between the various classes of Italian society, and how, as things are now, there is ever to be any, we really cannot see. Weakness, and the insincerity which attends on weakness, and the knowledge of this insincerity, and the supposed necessity of meeting it by equal insincerity,—and the consciousness on all sides that *this* is the way in which the game is being carried on, that it is a struggle in which neither party can either overpower, or can depend upon the other,—this, which marks the political movement all over the Peninsula, was to be found in its worst forms in the Roman states. The clergy did not trust the laity; the laity did not trust the clergy.

Both sides knew their own want of strength; and neither one nor the other, those who resisted, or those who wished for change, had a clear conscience, or even knew exactly their own minds. Both were ready to push forward, or to retract concessions, as might seem feasible; and each party was perfectly aware of this in the other. Dissimulation and distrust ruled the game, and are visible at every step.

Pius IX. began with simple attempts at functional improvement. The course of events soon forced him on to organic changes. He tried to abate the anomaly of the Papal government, and adapt it, if possible, to its place in Europe, by conciliatory temperaments; but the two classes whom he had to reconcile and harmonise, would not be reconciled. Early in the day, as the historian complains, the moderate party found that they could persuade few to join, seriously and in good faith, in a policy which should maintain, and yet enlarge, the basis of the temporal power:—

“The party that desired to strengthen the government, to obtain freedom through its agency, and by its means to prepare the way to independence, had to encounter far greater obstacles in the Papal States than in the rest; whether because it was thought that the good faith of the clergy could not be relied on, or because the temporal dominion of the Pope was, in the view of many, not only ill adapted to harmonise with genuine liberty, but also an obstacle to realising the unity of the nation. It was, therefore, an arduous task to keep the public mind trustful and at rest; and an easy one to disturb it with misgiving, which is most potent of all things in ripening those humours that engender and feed revolution. . . .

. . . The Moderate party had no share, had no hand or voice in the government; rather, indeed, it was ever viewed by those in power with suspicion, or in the light of a troublesome and self-appointed counsellor: nor was it at liberty to form secret societies, in order to constitute, or, as is said, to organise itself, or to oppose them by intrigue and dishonourable means. A party favourable to government cannot be strong, unless it governs. The Court of Rome, thanks to the will of the Pontiff, yielded to reform; but it could not yield to the admission of laymen into the government; or, if it made up its mind to call them into council, it did not call them to

resolve, administer, and execute, in which governing really consists." — Vol. i. pp. 216—218.

After laymen had been admitted to share in the government, the difficulty was not yet got over:—

“ . . . . . The lay Ministers, strange to the business of governing, and most strange to the Court, were beset with grave and peculiar difficulties. In order better to apprehend them, it is fitting to reflect, how all the ordinary criteria of reason, experience, public opinion, and utility, lose their power, whenever the Sovereign, being also Pope, conceives that some temporal affair of his State has to do with the spiritual power. When the Sovereign, Guardian of the Faith and Guide of consciences, gives such a judgment, then any such affair is through him drawn within the sphere of that infallible will, which does not admit of influence or advice in a contrary sense. In questions of such a nature, laymen are always and throughout impotent in dealing with ecclesiastics; because these last are always prone to contemn human wisdom, and readily find means to oust and proscribe it with the metaphysics of theology, and with the doctrines of the canons and the bulls. And the priestly class has invariably such a mistrust of the laity as perverts their logic; so that discussion assumes the character, if not the form, of bitter contest. There was no evidence, since the new measures were adopted, that the Sacred College had continued its interference in the administration of the State . . . . Yet the Sacred College was still, in virtue of the Statute, the political Senate of the Sovereign: and hence it cannot be presumed to have laid aside all concern, every wish, or every habit, related to government; rather we may with reason surmise, that it was no friend to lay administration; for, in truth, the Liberal party both acted and spoke in a manner ill suited to conciliate the Cardinals to the new political system. Nothing could be more sottish and imprudent, than to cry a crusade all day against the College of Cardinals — which, after all, was a constitutional organ, and which, moreover, was by law the perpetual and sole Electoral Assembly of the Sovereignty, as well as by custom the list of persons exclusively capable of being elected — and then to think of consolidating the new system in Rome. The Prelates, except a few, who certainly were the best, such as Corboli Morichini, and Pentini, had no influence in the City, and little at Court; but the Prelature in general, envious of the recent advance-

ment of the laity, combated them with that sort of finesse in which the clerical courtier vies with women, nay beats them. Nor should we forget, that there still subsisted the relics of Sanfedism, and of the *cliques* devoted to the Gregorian system, which was deeply rooted in the Court, and, by its abundant offshoots, through ways shrouded in intricacy, figment, and insinuation, was always mining under the new order of things. The lay functionaries, and especially those of the old department of the Secretary of State, who all remained in office, could ill adapt themselves to a system of audit, accountability, and publicity, or to those prompt, vigorous, and determined modes of governing, which the times demanded. A race brought up, fed, and trained in an Ecclesiastical Court, they were masters of trick, most accomplished in winking, smirking, twisting phrases, above all, in wasting away time, or, rather in wasting away other men by means of time; sheer buttresses of inertia, on which broke in vain every effort of volition." — Vol. ii. pp. 72—74.

And thus, with clergy and laity, only brought by their novel juxtaposition into collision, not into agreement, compelled, or thinking themselves compelled, to a continual war of manœuvre and intrigue, the step was not far from the wish on either side to get rid completely of the other; and as the laity were for the time in the ascendant, and the assailing party, their purposes distinctly took that direction. Even among those, in whom the spirit of change was least violent and impatient, this feeling, we are told, prevailed; and the reason assigned for it is of very serious significance:—

“But it must not be overlooked, that the old aversion to priestly government was ever in vigour among them; and they keenly desired the cessation of the privileges and preferences which that class still enjoyed. The germs of misgiving and mistrust were always there; and it might easily be seen, that a small matter would bring them to flower and fruit. Herein lies the wretchedness of States governed by a caste, *that when its name has become a byword for bad faith*, unless it be entirely ousted, the moral weight of Government hardly admits of being restored. Now the Constitution had been essentially altered; the civil equality of citizens established; the avenues to public employment laid open for all; yet still the privileges of the clergy subsisted: we had

clergy in the political departments, clergy in the supreme courts, clergy in the governments of Provinces. And doubtless the Provinces wished the temporal Sovereignty of the Pontiff to be respected and entire; but wished the Statute to be entire too, in its spirit; and public offices to be entrusted to citizens, according, not to their class, but to their competency. *The priest, as a civil governor, had so utterly fallen in the affection and estimation of the governed, that the miracles of Pius IX. availed little to lift him up again.* I do not say this was always and absolutely rational and just; but it was the effect of a reaction according to nature, whence wrong was done even to worthy men that belonged to the disliked caste."—Vol. ii. pp. 80, 81.

And to complete the picture, the laity are accused of shrinking, in critical moments, from the very employments for which they had been so clamorous. When the Pope wanted to send a lay envoy to Vienna, to offer his mediation between Austria and the Italians, though the liberal Mamiani was his minister, and was loud in praise of the design, "the Pope was not seconded as he should have been." . . . "For the laity, who complained so much of having no share or voice in the diplomatic service, and mistrusted the clergy, now hung back from accepting that honourable charge." \*

We have not space to follow, with the historian, the slippery and shifting revolution; the inversion and transformation of all that Rome used to hold most inviolable and fixed. Now that things are once more returned to their old courses, and Pope, Cardinals, and Prelates are again what they used to be, the liberties which the story seems to take with them, and the probabilities which it seems to violate, task our powers of belief. Changes and substitutions, and interchange of functions, are as many, as rapid, as audacious, as coolly told, as in the Eastern tales, where giants rise out of bottles, black stones are men, and princes and tailors act the most unusual parts, with the most easy and natural air. It is hard to conceive that the same men who now rule in Rome, no better and no worse than their predecessors ruled, and seem as if they never

\* Vol. ii. p. 158.



had heard of any other way of ruling, should be the very persons who did and who saw all these strange things. It is so, however: it is but three years ago, since old-fashioned Rome beheld these wonders, and most of the witnesses are alive. Chekib Effendi, likening himself to the Queen of Sheba coming to salute King Solomon, arrives from Constantinople, to compliment the Pope in the name of the Sultan. He extols the "wonderful and lofty acts of his Holiness, which have filled the whole world with the sound of his praises; tenders to him the Sultan's most gracious congratulations on his elevation to the throne of the Prince of the Apostles, with whose successors his master hopes still to live in cordial friendship, and for whose sake he undertakes the protection of the Christians of Turkey." The West emulates the East: from Chili comes Don Raimond Jrarazzeval, as Minister Plenipotentiary; from the United States, comes a "warm and respectful address." An honourable Roman Embassy returns the courtesy of the Sultan. The praises of the English press are given and appreciated. Protestants are enthusiastic about a Pope, and their enthusiasm is not distasteful. Padre Ventura, the famous preacher of Rome, preaches about civil progress, and publishes a project of a Constitution. The crowds sing national hymns under the Pope's balcony, before they receive his blessing. Newspapers, both "responsible" and clandestine, start up in all directions, and say what they please; the once inexorable censorship is too indulgent even for some of the Liberal leaders. Under its mild sway, says the historian, "our infant journalism had its infant passions and caprices; instead of meditating, it gambolled, and every day it smashed its toys of the day before, as children do." Priests blessed the new banners. To the Papal colours were added pennons of the new Italian tricolor. In the popular processions, together with the civic guard and the mob, marched bodies of ecclesiastics, "flanked by tricolor flags," and "all wearing tricolor tassels." The funeral masses for the "Victims of Milan," "ostentatiously offered by the youth of Rome," were attended also by the Pope's "consulta." As the Pope's coach moved through the shouting crowds and waving banners, "Ciceruacchio,

mounting on the hinder part of the carriage, lifts a flag with the inscription, 'Holy Father, rely on the people;' and Pius IX., with emotion, signifies that he will." Cardinal Altieri makes popular harangues from the windows of his palace. Cardinal Savelli patronises a popular club. Cardinal Ferretti argues with Prince Metternich in favour of the Pope's "gigantic design," and appeals to "all acquainted with the history of great reforms," to bear witness to the comparative peacefulness of this. Cardinal Antonelli frames, and, with liberals for his colleagues, administers, a constitution; and resigns with them, because the Pope will not go to war with Austria.\* The Pope creates lay ministers, and sends away the Jesuits out of Rome; hints once more at the employment of spiritual weapons, but against Catholic Austria; turns himself, by his own act, into a constitutional sovereign, and "purposes to embody the statute in a Bull, according to the ancient form, in perpetual memory." That dream of reform, and mad fit of liberalism, was indeed a strange interlude to disturb and put out of countenance the solemn decorum and antique fashions of the Roman Court. And now that it is over, the subjects and patients seem scarcely conscious of what they have gone through.

They may, however, derive some excuse, from the way in which the Reformed government was carried on by its representatives. The proceedings of the ministries and parliaments of Rome, which are given in ample detail, were not of a kind to inspire respect. The deep and subtle heads which saw through the emptiness and impertinences of the day, as much as they feared their consequences, must have looked on with mingled amusement and disgust at the scenes described in these pages, as the first efforts of infant constitutionalism at Rome. Of business really done or attempted, there is the least possible trace. All is words. Words are the great subject of debate between the Pope and his ministers. Words are all the recorded contributions of the leaders of parties and opinion. Words are what they fight about, and

\* Vol. ii. pp. 100—105.

what they fight with. Words, and a voice to boot, are all that appears to explain the influence of a popular chief, in the street or in parliament. Everything is drowned by words — words take the precedence, if some one, more sensible or more tongue-tied, claims a little time for business. The Council of Deputies \* was immediately taken possession of by glib tongues and stentorian voices, and turned into something more uproarious than a parish vestry, with a grotesque mountebank, the Prince de Canino, for its loudest speaker. Of the High Council little is recorded except its addresses to the Pope, and the Pope's replies to its addresses. If any one really understood how business was to be carried on, under the new liberties, he failed in making others understand. No one appears with sufficient character, purpose, and clearness of head, to form a party or control others: for Rossi, the man of most promise, had not time. The Pope, apparently, did not at all comprehend that he had assigned away any rights, by proclaiming himself a constitutional monarch, and calling into play a constitutional machinery. Between him and his ministers, there seems to have been little more than a continual, but rather feeble and sluggish game, as to which should pull the other over, a little bit more, to absolutism or to liberalism. The ministers wanted independence, and war with Austria: the Pope liked independence, but not war. The ministers went as far as *they* dared, in their line; joined the tricolor with the Papal cockade, and put the troops where they were pretty sure to fight. The Pope went as far as *he* dared, in making an allocution against the war, which embarrassed the ministers; though he left the ministers' acts as they were, and themselves still ministers. They resign, and are restored, and resign again, "greatly disheartened by the street disorders, and by the reserve of the court, as well as by the singular nature of a government, where a constitution had actually been given before the ministers knew what it was; and where, just now, the question of peace and war had been settled by the sovereign, without and against the advice of

\* Cf. ii. 328., where a more favourable account is given; but it is not borne out by the history itself.

his ministers, and that sovereign had issued proclamations accordingly, to the people, of his own motion." But they resign, only to be succeeded by the great liberal leader, Mamiani, who accepts office "on condition that he should be allowed to adhere to the policy of his predecessors in what concerned the cause of Italy" — that is, to dabble, at least, in the war against Austria — and "have a lay foreign secretary for temporal affairs;" — which conditions were accepted or "acquiesced in (for in such arrangements it is no easy matter to distinguish acquiescence from acceptance) by the Pope." But this "ministry of the 4th of May had hardly been formed, when an article, printed on *the 5th of May*, in the government gazette, with the title of "Ministerial Programme," was censured by the Pope, because it indicated an intention to support the war: hence *it was necessary*," what? — not to resign, but — "to declare, in the number of the *next* day, that that writing was not in any way a programme of policy." Mamiani was a liberal, according to Farini, who wished to separate the Pope from the prince, keeping his authority intact, as Pope, but committing all temporal affairs to lay hands \*; he was the favourite, for the time, with those who looked for further changes, and was distrusted by the Pope. Yet he governed "in the name of Pius IX., who either let him have his own way, or, first resigning himself and approving, afterwards murmured." A series of small quarrels marked the reign of the Mamiani ministry. The Pope first corrected, and then rejected, their draft of the speech from the throne, proposing one of his own; and, without consulting them, he ordered the official censor, a Dominican Friar, to prepare a law on the press. The ministers refused to have anything to do either with his speech or his law.

"On the morning of the 5th, the City was in holiday garb, because the Municipality, and the ordinary political masters of the ceremonies, had chosen to turn the opening of Parliament into a popular spectacle. . . . The long and ostentatious train was already on the way, when the Ministers went to the Pope, to

\* Vol. ii. pp. 162. 311.

announce that they did not mean to consent to the delivery of that Speech, which he had remodelled at his own pleasure: and they proposed, that he should cause his Delegate to read a few words of no political significancy, and that the Minister should afterwards read a speech on the first regular day of setting. The Pope received both the Ministers and what they said to him resentfully; he suspected that they were using the actual pressure in point of time for the purposes of moral coercion: he broke into strong language, spoke something about treachery, and dismissed them. Accordingly, it became necessary to interpose good offices, that the Ministers might not, there and then, quit their posts, and that the Pope might acquiesce in allowing a certain interval to elapse before he should execute his resolution to appoint new ones; a resolution to which it was impossible to give instant effect, without public scandal and risk. . . . .

“The Pope had now been persuaded, that a new Ministry could hardly be constituted forthwith, and had resolved to wait until the inclinations of Parliament should appear. When his Ministers requested their discharge, he bid them continue provisionally in office; he allowed them to set about framing the Speech they intended to deliver to Parliament, which they were to put on paper, and submit to him for approval. On the 7th, the programme of the Government, which Mamiani had been commissioned by his colleagues to prepare, was discussed and approved by the Council of Ministers. I was charged to carry it to the Holy Father for his approbation, and I must now enlarge somewhat on this topic.”—Vol. ii. pp. 191—194.

A new battle about words and phrases followed, very minutely described by the historian, who was concerned in it. In the midst of events big with peril, the Pope was making a fight, whether by changing a word or two, his liberal ministers' speech might not have one or two liberalisms fewer. So things continued; the ministers remaining ministers, for want of any one else, and doing much what they liked—which was nothing considerable: the Pope, if he wished to do anything, which was equally little, doing it without them, and censuring them in the same breath in which he was recommending agreement with them.\*

\* Vol. ii. pp. 258. 260.

How, indeed, it may be asked, should it be otherwise? How should the Pope trust Mamiani, an avowed Liberal, who wanted to take the temporal government entirely out of the hands of the clergy? True; but, avowed Liberal as he was, it was the Pope who, knowing his opinions, had asked him to take the government, and had the benefit for the time of his influence with the Liberals. And in Mamiani, at least, he appears to have had no reason to complain of insincerity. Farini, who was not of his party, and criticises his statesmanship severely, gives him the character of an honourable and upright man, who "had studied every mode of acquiring the Pope's love and esteem, short of truckling in his will and debasing his understanding." The Mamiani ministry was a fair consequence of the Pope's experiment, and threw much light on its wisdom.

It is not wonderful, perhaps, that of this ministry, which lasted one month *before*, and two months *after*, it had quarrelled with the Pope, "the acts should not have been numerous." "It promulgated," we are informed, "one law only, which conferred the right of citizenship on the Swiss troops; and Galetti put forth an ordinance, which bound all servants and journeymen to keep a book for the police, a measure which was held invalid, because the councils had not passed it."

These are illustrations of the inherent difficulties which lay in the way of changes, of which all, from the highest to the lowest, were at least most willing to have the credit. These difficulties were, it must be admitted, out of immediate control. So was a further and unlooked-for, but most formidable one; the turn which things took abroad,—the revolutions in Paris, in Palermo, in Naples, in Vienna. On the King of Naples this historian lays the chief blame of having been the first to give extravagant and delusive liberties. After a tumult at Naples, he conceded a constitution—"he showed his wish to surpass the rest of the Italian sovereigns, as in the amplitude of the institutions conceded, so also in the abundance of his ingratiating acts. He was all to all. He laid open the gates of his palace, con-

versed familiarly with men who yesterday were in fetters, and bid for votes and acclamation, and for the character of a liberal king. And in this manner, first by excess of resistance and of obstinacy, then by a new excess of weakness and haste, he wholly shifted the Italian movement off the line of measured progress, and as it were jerked the states to a point, which no one expected to see them reach within any short period. . . . Thus the chapter of reforms was closed in Italy. Next began that of Constitutions, which were invented or copied; every one vied with his neighbour to do most work and quickest." To this supposed necessity of following his neighbours in granting a constitution, the Pope makes reference in the preamble to his own hasty and crude "Fundamental Statute," as his reason for issuing it. Of the sincerity of the Neapolitan King's co-operation in what the Pope's minister, Cardinal Ferretti, called his "gigantic design," there can be, we suppose, little doubt. But all these difficulties gained tenfold force, from the Pope's utter inability to meet them, not merely with intelligence and vigour, but with a straightforward purpose.

The whole of the second volume of Farini's work is but an exemplification of this remark. We do not at all underrate the very trying circumstances of the Pope's position. Doubtless he was betrayed; and we are certainly very far indeed from sympathising with the men who, by their cowardice or their treachery, betrayed him. The best of the men whom he took into his service, as his coadjutors in his "gigantic design," were, on the historian's own showing, with one exception, most inefficient allies. They, too, were below their work; or they did not know their own minds; or they had secret purposes and reservations of their own, while professing loyalty to him; and the party into whose hands these men played, were unscrupulously bent on the destruction of his power. But amidst these dangers, amid this feebleness, and treachery, and formidable hatred, there was always room for a manly and consistent course. Pio IX. had received in advance and in profusion the reformer's glory. He bid high, and a place little short of the highest

among his contemporaries was not refused him; he has no right to claim exemption from the criticism of those whose admiration was so loudly challenged for him, and challenged upon trust. That he failed, was not perhaps his fault; but he might at least have failed like a man. For this at least, the history of the Papacy might have furnished him with more than one precedent.

But we look in vain, through the course of the rapid downfall, which followed the promulgation of that boastful "Fundamental Statute," by which the Papacy was changed into a Constitutional government, for one single act of courageous resistance, or conscientious denial, on the part of the Pope. Scruples, reluctance, impatience, disapprobation, obstinacy, — there are in abundance. It is quite certain that he did not like the turn that things were taking, or the use which the new responsible ministers were making of the authority which he had given them. But his distrust and dislike exhaled in complaints to his courtiers, bickerings with his ministers about the wording of a speech, and querulous proclamations to the "Romans." He thought it strange and ungrateful that Liberal ministers should follow the stream of Liberal policy and sympathies; but to obstruct and perplex was the utmost he ventured on. It was clear enough when he consented to shut up the Jesuit houses in Rome, and send away the Fathers, that he did it sorely against his will, and to men whom he approved and honoured. He had condescended, in the beginning of the month, to expostulate, to intercede, with the senseless mob and their blackguard leaders — finally, even to intimate a threat. But as the mob and their leaders were proof against flattery and paternal exhortation, and had no cause to be alarmed about threats, at the end of the month the Jesuits had to go.\*

It was in the matter of the Austrian war, that this vacillation displayed itself most unworthily, and most fatally. Whether it was right or wrong for the Pope to go to war with Austria, in order to drive her out of Italy, it was clearly right that in such a matter, he should be above trifling. He

\* Vol. ii. pp. 4. 17—21.



should either have joined in the war, or he should have refused to join. Another course might be convenient; right and honourable it could not be. Austria, it may be, has forgiven him, as having acted under the terror of the Liberals, and received a memorable lesson to boot: but this does not affect the example set by one with such claims as the Pope, and a Pope like Pio IX.

Both the Pope and his subjects, such at least as shouted his praises, wished the Austrians out of Italy: and when in the troubles that succeeded the French revolution, the opportunity seemed come for getting them out, both in different, but equally significant ways, showed their satisfaction. But, as it was not likely that the Austrians would go without fighting, the Pope's subjects, and his ministers, were for trying to fight them.

Here the Pope paused. Conscientiously, no one can doubt, he shrunk from aggressive war. But he shrunk equally from encountering the feeling which in his subjects was all for that war. They went on arming avowedly for it, and he said nothing. They entered into the war. He went on, as if in perfect ignorance or perfect indifference about their proceeding; certainly as if he had no voice, either as priest or as sovereign, to command, to warn, even to remonstrate. At last he thought proper to declare to the world that he did not mean to go to war. But though his ministers resigned, his subjects went on going to war; his next ministers came in with the same avowed purpose; and he himself placed his troops "beyond the Po," under the command of the King of Sardinia.

A few extracts from Farini's narrative will illustrate this.

In March, 1848, Milan rose, and drove out the Austrian troops. The Pope expressed his feelings on the occasion in the following proclamation:—

"From time to time he thrilled with the inspiration of ideas that exalted the Papacy to a new and astonishing elevation, and uttered sentences such that from his lips we seemed to hear the voice of God. Godlike words were these:

“ ‘ Pius Papa IX., to the people of the States of Italy,  
Health and Apostolic benediction.

“ ‘ The events which the last two months have witnessed, following and thronging one another in such rapid succession, are no work of man. Woe to him that does not discern the Lord's Voice in this blast that agitates, uproots, and rends the cedar and the oak ! Woe to the pride of man, if he shall refer these marvellous changes to any human merit or any human fault, instead of adoring the hidden designs of Providence, whether manifested in the paths of His justice, or of His mercy : of that providence in whose hands are all the ends of the earth. And We, who are endowed with speech in order to interpret the dumb eloquence of the works of God, We cannot be mute, amidst the longings, the fears and the hopes, which agitate the minds of our children.

“ ‘ And first, it is our duty to make known to you, that if our heart has been moved at hearing how, in a part of Italy, the consolations of Religion have preceded the perils of battle, and nobleness of mind has been displayed in works of charity, We nevertheless could not and cannot but deeply grieve over the injuries which, in other places, have been done to the Ministers of that same Religion,—injuries which, even if, contrary to our duty, We were silent concerning them, our silence could not hinder from impairing the efficacy of our Benedictions.

“ ‘ Neither can we refrain from telling you, that to use victory well is a greater and more difficult achievement than to be victorious. If the present day recalls to you any other period of your history, let the children profit by the errors of their forefathers. Remember that all stability and all prosperity has its main earthly ground in concord : that it is God alone Who maketh of one mind them that dwell in an house : that He grants this reward only to the humble and the meek, to those that respect His laws, in the liberty of His Church, in the order of society, in charity towards all mankind. Remember that righteousness alone can build, that passion destroys, and He that adopts the name of King of Kings entitles himself likewise the Ruler of Nations.

“ ‘ May our prayers have strength to ascend into the presence of the Lord, and to bring down upon you that spirit of counsel, of strength, and of wisdom, of which the fear of God is the beginning ; that so our eyes may behold peace over all this land of Italy, which if our love towards the whole Catholic world does not allow us to call the most beloved, yet God has willed to be to Ourselves, the most dear.

“ ‘ Given in Rome, at Santa Maria Maggiore, on the 30th of March, 1848, in the second year of Our Pontificate.’

“ This language more and more increased the fervent love of Pius IX., of liberty, and of Italy ; so that every one as he repaired to arms felt himself a champion of Religion, of Liberty, and of Italy.”—Vol. ii. pp. 21, 22.

To say the least, these words show strong sympathy with the “ victory ” of the Italians, in this first step in the war of independence. The second step was the entry of Charles Albert into Lombardy. The greatest enthusiasm for war was created by it in the Roman States—and in this enthusiasm the Pope was not backward :—

“ The Pope and the religious Congregations made rich contributions ; the Princes of Rome vied in liberality with the citizens ; every one joyfully and spontaneously paid the tribute of free bounty to their country ; the people emulated them, if not in the magnificence yet in the multitude of their gifts and in the fervour of their feelings ; the very mendicant, stretching out his hand to passengers, begged of them for Italy . . . Cardinals and Princes presented horses for the artillery ; and Princes, Dukes, nobles, citizens, commons, set out for the camp, all as brethren : among them were two nephews of the Pope ; within a few days there were at least twelve thousand volunteers from the Papal States. The Pope gave his benediction, letting it be understood that it descended upon warriors, who were on their way to defend the confines of the States of the Church ; the cities were all in jubilee ; even the country folks greeted merrily the Papal legions. The Pontifical ensigns were blended with the colours of the nation ; the Cross surmounted the Italian flag.”—Vol. ii. p. 25.

The reservation noticed in this extract must not be forgotten. It was for *the defence of his own states*, that the Pope authorised all these warlike preparations. But the Pope knew very well that no one in that army which he had blessed, no one in the ministry which directed that army, had any such limitations in their warlike purposes. They went, to favour, and, if necessary, help, in that Piedmontese invasion, which had been greeted in Rome with such en-

thusiasm; and they went under orders from their superiors in Rome: —

“But when the Roman government had heard of the entry of the Piedmontese into Lombardy, Cardinal Antonelli wrote on the 27th of March to the Cardinal Legate of Bologna, that he was to apprise the General [Durando] of Charles Albert's desire that our force should remain at the confines, and should there assemble the largest numbers practicable, in order to overawe the Austrians; giving him to understand that he, as President of the Council of Ministers, conceived it necessary to convey to Durando, as Commander of the *Pontifical corps of operation*, this information ‘both for his guidance, and also in consideration that a different attitude’ (such are the words of the despatch) ‘might hamper the operations of the King of Piedmont.’ Aldobrandini, the Minister of War, wrote on the 28th to the selfsame General Durando, “enjoining him at once to place himself in communication with the Head-quarters of his Majesty, and to act in concert with him.’

. . . . Let it then stand for a fact, that, after the war had broken out in Lombardy, the Pope sent a person to represent him [Monsignor Corboli Bussi] in the Italian camp; that this person was an ecclesiastic, the most distinguished man of the Prelacy of Rome, the dearest, too, and most devoted to Pius IX.; that same person who a few months before had gone as Commissioner for the conclusion of the Custom's League: and, further, let this stand, that the Roman Government ordered the Commander of the Papal troops ‘at once to place himself in communication with the Head-quarters of His Majesty, and to act in concert with him.’

. . . . “But the Ministry would not determine upon ordering Durando to act on the offensive without the Pope's explicit order. Accordingly they pointed out to his Holiness into what peril the peace of the country would be brought, if that uncertainty should continue longer; and gave him to understand, that they must resign office, rather than undertake to abstain from giving countenance to the war. To this the Pope replied, that he had not as yet taken any final resolution; that he was waiting for intelligence from Piedmont about the proposal of a League, and that the Ministers therefore should not resign, but should act ‘according to circumstances.’ One of the Ministers remarked, that the question was not simply about sending our troops across the Po, but about sharing in a war which would necessarily involve

the shedding of human blood, a responsibility which the conscience of a Christian statesman could not assume without the consent of his Sovereign. Upon this the Pope guaranteed him against every scruple, by saying that there would always be time to recall the troops, in case he should decide upon taking no part in the war. Aldobrandini, the Minister of War, a frank and high-minded gentleman, who sought in any case to set *his own conscience at ease*, heard such language more than once, so that he was *encouraged* to give orders to Durando to encamp *beyond the Po*, and, under date of the 18th of April, wrote to him as follows :

“ I have to acknowledge the receipt of your acceptable letter of the 14th current, which I have forthwith submitted to the Holy Father: and he has deigned to answer me, that you are authorised to do all that you may judge requisite for the tranquillity and the advantage of the Pontifical States. Accordingly, I hasten to send to you this intelligence by express.”—Vol. ii. pp. 61—63.

It is no matter of surprise, however irregular it may have been, that the Roman general, Durando, should on the banks of the Po tell his soldiers that the “ Holy Pontiff had blessed their swords, which, when united to those of Charles Albert, were to work concurrently, for the extermination of the enemies of God and of Italy,” and bid them wear a tricolor cross on their heart, as crusaders. But this proclamation disturbed the Pope; not so much from its unwarrantable presumption, as from the sentiments it expressed. He said, that he must now allay the scruples of the Catholic world; that he must speak. And in spite of the Ministers, among whom was Cardinal Antonelli, he did speak. On the 25th of April, they laid a paper before him, in which they present

“ their most earnest prayers to your Holiness, that you would deign to make a precise declaration of your sentiments concerning the war, and to determine the rules of policy which were to be followed. Such a declaration becomes every day more necessary; whether considered in respect to the tranquillity of the country, the dignity of the Government, or the actual condition of the Ministry and the army. Upon this cardinal act depends, in great part, the future of the State, and of Italy at large.”—Vol. ii. p. 102.

And, leaving the ecclesiastical point of view to him, as Pope, they put the question before him as his temporal ministers thus:—

“ ‘The question may be resolved in three modes :

“ ‘Your Holiness will either allow your subjects to make war ;

“ ‘Or declare your will absolutely against them making war ;

“ ‘Or finally, announce that, though desirous of peace, you cannot prevent their making war.’”—Vol. ii. p. 102.

They recommended the first: they strongly dissuaded from the second; and still more strongly from the third, with very unanswerable arguments.\* It will be said, they observed,—

“ ‘That a deception lies in these words; because, if the Government cannot prevent this anarchical movement, it should at least show its good faith by putting into operation all such means as it possesses for that purpose; but since, on the contrary, it furnishes arms and stores to the Volunteers, and moreover finds Generals to command them, these are proofs of its secretly wishing well to the war which it ostensibly repudiates. The Papal authority will be no less assailed by the perfidious, than it would be in the case of an open declaration of war. Lastly, both the regular troops, and the Volunteers, who after such a manifesto, might continue beyond the Po, would find themselves wholly stripped of those rights which the law of nations grants even in the hottest wars, provided they have been declared in the first instance. They would, on the contrary, be treated as outlaws, assassins, and brigands; and yet they are Pontifical subjects, serving under Generals chosen by Your Holiness, wearing the Papal uniform, carrying your flags and the cross. These considerations the Undersigned lay at the feet of Your Holiness, and

\* “ ‘Now, any one who reads this paper of the Ministers of the 10th of March, will be perhaps in no small marvel if he happen to have read and heard it repeated, in more languages than one, that they sought to take advantage of the general excitement to drive the Pope into a declaration of war. Still more will he wonder that this should be said and repeated, and allowed to be said and repeated, while Pius IX. is alive, and while that same Cardinal Antonelli, who subscribed the remonstrance, is anew in power.’”—Vol. ii. p. 105.

bowing profoundly before Your Blessedness they kiss your sacred foot.

“Your most humble and devoted subjects,

“ANTONELLI.	SIMONETTI.
RECCHI.	PASOLINI.
MINGHETTI.	STURBINETTI.
ALDOBRANDINI.	GALLETTI.

“Rome 25th April, 1848.”—Vol. ii. p. 104.

The Pope said nothing at the time — but on the 29th appeared the famous “Allocation” to the Cardinals, which was one of the turning points of the history; the Pope’s first step backward, the palinode of his previous reign.

“The Allocation had already been printed, but either no one knew, or no one would tell what it contained. Cardinal Antonelli was not privy to it, and he stated that those about the Court did not breathe on it: even the nephew of the Pope, who had much of his affection, knew nothing of it, and asked others for information; circumstances, these, that are well worthy to be known and reflected on. The meeting of the Consistory was hardly over, when Cardinal Antonelli looked for me with the paper containing the Allocation in his hand: and as I was wild with eagerness to know the contents, and asked him for it, he told me that he had not been able to form an adequate idea of them from the single reading aloud, which he had scarcely heard; so we set ourselves to peruse it together.”—Vol. ii. p. 106.

The Allocation contained the following, among other apo-  
logetic passages:—

“Besides which, the above-mentioned people of Germany could not be incensed with Us, if it has been absolutely impossible for Us to restrain the ardour of those persons, within our temporal sway, who have thought fit to applaud the acts done against them in Upper Italy, and who, caught by the same ardour as others for the cause of their own Nation, have, together with the subjects of other Italian States, exerted themselves on behalf of that cause.

“For several other European Potentates, greatly excelling Us in the number of their troops, have been unable at this particular epoch to resist the impetus of their people.

“Moreover, in this condition of affairs, We have declined to allow the imposition of any other obligation on our soldiers, despatched to the confines of the Pontifical State, except that of maintaining its integrity and security.

“But, seeing that some at present desire that We too, along with the other Princes of Italy and their subjects, should engage in war against the Austrians, We have thought it convenient to proclaim clearly and openly, in this our solemn Assembly, that such a measure is altogether alien from our counsels, inasmuch as We, albeit unworthy, are upon earth the vicegerent of Him that is the Author of Peace, and the Lover of Charity, and, conformably to the function of our supreme Apostolate, We reach to and embrace all kindreds, people, and nations, with equal solicitude of paternal affection. But if, notwithstanding, there are not wanting among our subjects those who allow themselves to be carried away by the example of the rest of the Italians, in what manner could We possibly curb their ardour?”—Vol. ii. pp. 109, 110.

This was from the Pope, who on the 30th of the preceding March, had blessed, and if he warned, warned with the voice of full sympathy, the victorious insurgents of Milan; and had joined in the military enthusiasm which he knew well had no other mark but the war against Austria.

But this was not all. If the war was wrong, the Pope had not said so to his subjects. He had now said so, not indeed, to them, who were engaged in it, but to Europe generally. Some step might now be looked for, from one who was not insensible, at least to his spiritual power. “How,” he says, a day or two after, when disaster threatened at Rome, “how in such contingencies, could the spiritual power, which God has given us, remain idle in our hands? Let all know, once for all, that we are conscious of the greatness of our office, and the efficacy of our power.” But the word of recall was not yet given. The new Ministry was allowed to come in, professing the same warlike intentions as the old one. More than this: the Allocution produced, as might have been foreseen, great excitement, to the astonishment of the Pope. Then came various means to take off its edge. The Pope was to mediate a peace. This,



it seemed, was what he had meant. He had meant only to protest against war, not to discredit the sacred cause of Italian nationality. By way of preliminary, he sent to confer on Charles Albert, then before Verona, the command of all the Pontifical troops beyond the Po.

“Meanwhile, the Pope decided upon sending to Charles Albert a Legate of his own commissioned to conclude a treaty for conferring on the King the command of all the Pontifical troops beyond the Po: to give such explanations as might mitigate any sinister impressions made by the allocution, and to continue at the camp of the King, in the stead of Monsignor Corboli, who was recalled to Rome. This mission was entrusted by the Pope to the Author; and I likewise received from him, and from the Ministers, authority to take measures in regard to any disorders which might chance to have occurred in the portion of the country which I should have to traverse in order to get to Lombardy.”—Vol. ii. p. 121.

Bologna was quieted with this assurance:

“But, according to my duty and commission, I gave the Bolognese the assurance that his Holiness would not abandon the Italian cause; that I was on my way to the camp of Charles Albert, to offer him, in the Pope’s name, the command of our forces; and that the Allocution would not involve a change in policy. Upon this calm returned; yet, to speak truly, rather the calm of expectation than of assurance.”—Vol. ii. p. 130.

And Cardinal Antonelli thus writes to Farini, at Somma-Campagna:—

“ ‘ Most esteemed Signor Farini,

“ ‘ The Holy Father gives me the honourable commission to reply to the letter which you addressed to him under date of the 7th current, from the camp of H. M. King Charles Albert. I do not disguise from you, that his Holiness is unable to comprehend how an interpretation different from that which the true sense of his Allocution carries can be given to it. In that Allocution, the Holy Father has not shown himself hostile in the slightest degree to Italian nationality, and has only said, that as he is the Prince of Peace, and the common Father of the Faithful, his mind recoiled

from sharing in the war, but yet that he did not perceive in what manner it was in his power to restrain the ardour of his subjects. He then testified the satisfaction he would have experienced, if he could instead have undertaken to mediate a peace. From this idea, which is well unfolded in the Allocution, you think that the Holy Father might now opportunely interpose his mediation as a pacific Sovereign, always in the sense of establishing the nationality of Italy. You know how I, especially before your departure from Rome, dwelt upon this idea; you may therefore well believe how I should be gratified if I could see it properly carried into execution, with a prosperous result.”—Vol. ii. p. 135.

Is it surprising that the following letter — “this very noble letter,” as our admiring historian calls it — to the Emperor of Austria, of which a copy was sent to Charles Albert, produced little effect?

“Your Majesty,

“It has ever been customary, that a word of peace should go forth from this Holy See amidst the wars which have bathed Christian lands with blood: and, in the Allocution of the 29th of April, while We have said that our paternal heart shrinks from declaring war, We have expressly stated our ardent desire to contribute towards a peace. Let it not then be distasteful to Your Majesty, that We should appeal to your piety and devotion, and with paternal sentiments should exhort You to withdraw your arms from the contest, which, without any possibility of again subduing to your empire the spirit of the Lombards and the Venetians, draws with it the fatal series of calamities that are wont to attend on war, and that without doubt are by You detested and abhorred.

“Let not, then, the generous German nation take it in ill part, if We invite them to lay resentment aside, and to convert into the beneficial relations of friendly neighbourhood a domination, which could never be prosperous or noble while it depended solely on the sword.

“Thus then We trust that the said Nation, honourably proud of its own nationality, will not think its honour to consist in bloody efforts against the Italian Nation, but rather in generously acknowledging her for a sister, even as both are daughters to Us, and most dear to our heart; that so each may confine itself to

reside within its natural limits, upon honourable terms, and with the blessing of the Lord. In the meantime we entreat the Giver of every light, and Author of every good, to inspire Your Majesty with holy counsel; while from the inmost of our heart we impart to You, to H. M. the Empress, and to the Imperial family, the Apostolic Benediction.

“Given in Rome, at Santa Maria Maggiore, on the 3d of May, 1848, in the second year of our Pontificate.”—Vol. ii. pp. 136, 137.

The Pope's troops, however, continued to fight the Austrians, with the full sanction of the Ministry, and murmurs indeed, but no remonstrance, from the Pope. Then when Charles Albert was beaten, and Marshal Walden and his Austrians, with the same disclaimer of hostile purposes as that in the Pope's Allocution, enter the Papal territory, the Pope is indignant and “greatly surprised” that his “prudence and mildness have failed in preventing the entrance into the States of an Austrian army.”\*

Such were the conditions under which it was attempted to reconstruct the Government of the States of the Church, to form ministries and make laws. First, things to all appearance contradictory had to be reconciled—the ideas of the College of Cardinals, with those of the Liberals, from Rosmini and Mamiani to Mazzini and the Republican Clubs. Next, this had to be done, in the midst of a rapid and astonishing collapse, in Rome as in Europe generally, of traditional authority and respect, of the moral power and the material force of the Governments, of the influence of great names, great offices, great popularity. And lastly, the men who were responsible for the attempt, and its fulfilment, brought to their task little besides an enthusiasm, which jealousy, scruples, ignorance, and insincerity first rendered ridiculous, and then converted into despair.

Rossi, an Italian pupil of Guizot, a politician who began life as a university Professor at Bologna, and after being

\* Vol. ii. p. 317,

long a proscribed fugitive, finished by being an Ambassador of France, was the last minister to whom the Pope had recourse, and the only one who showed any appearance of energy and self-reliance. But it was now too late. He was, indeed, scarcely less liberal than his predecessors. He too was in favour of an Italian war against Austria. He had early said "that the national feeling for war was so strong, that Pius IX. must either take it resolutely in hand, or the factions hostile to him would seize it, and turn it against him and the Popedom."\* And now the latter alternative of the prophecy was to be verified. The Pope's miserable vacillation had not prevented the war; but it had made a wreck of his authority: and the first minister who dared to act vigorously on that authority, showed by his fall, so fearful, yet unavenged, that it too had fallen. Rossi did act vigorously. This was enough to gain for him the epithet of tyrant, and that epithet was the warrant for his murder. He knew his danger; he was warned of it also. But Rossi was at least a brave and resolute man; the one man, among these scrupulous or boasting personages, who, when he thought he saw his duty, was not afraid to attempt it.

"It appertained, as is usual in Constitutional States, to the President of the Council of Deputies, to regulate its police; nor had Rossi, who was a scrupulous observer of constitutional method and custom, any idea of having a hand or voice in it. To any person who, under an apprehension of violence, advised him to look to the matter, he replied, that he would call for armed assistance, if it were desired by the President; but not otherwise. He had repeatedly received anonymous letters, in which his life was threatened, and he had scorned them, as every brave and wise man should. On the very morning of the 15th, he got one, which differed from the rest in this, that it brought him an intimation, rather than a mere threat, of his death. A distinguished lady, likewise, wrote to him, that her mind stood in doubt and fear of some untoward occurrence: a veteran Polish General came to him, and signified his misgivings, lest the threats should be put into execution: and a pious priest warned him of the dangers that

\* Vol. ii. p. 100.

were hanging over him. To all this he answered, that he had taken the measures he thought suitable for keeping the seditious in order: that he could not, because of risks he might personally run, forego repairing to the Council according to his duty: that, perhaps, these were idle menaces; that, moreover, if any one thirsted for his blood, he would have the means of shedding it elsewhere on some other day, even if on that day he should lose his opportunity: he would therefore go: and he repeated again and again, that the Government was in readiness to put down any faction that might seek to lift up its head. . . .

“When the ordinary hour of the parliamentary sitting, which was about noon, had arrived, the people began to gather in the Square of the *Cancellaria* and by degrees in the courtyard, and then in the public galleries of the hall. Shortly all were full. A battalion of the Civic Guard was drawn up in the Square: in the court and hall there was no guard greater than ordinary. There were, however, not a few individuals, armed with their daggers, in the dress of the volunteers, returned from Vicenza, and wearing the medals with which the Municipality of Rome had decorated them. They stood close together, and formed a line from the gate up to the staircase of the palace. Sullen visages were to be seen, and ferocious imprecations heard, among them. During the time when the Deputies were slowly assembling, and business could not commence, because there was not yet a *quorum* present, a cry for help suddenly proceeded from the extremity of the public gallery, on which every one turned thither a curious eye, but nothing more was heard or seen, and those who went to get some explanation of the circumstance, returned without success.

“In the meantime Rossi's carriage entered the court of the palace. He sat on the right, and Righetti, Deputy-Minister of Finance, on the left. A howl was raised in the court and yard, which echoed even into the hall of the Council. Rossi got out first, and moved briskly, as was his habit in walking, across the short space which leads from the centre of the court to the staircase on the left hand. Righetti, who descended after him, remained behind, because the persons were in his way who raised the outcry, and who, brandishing their cutlasses, had surrounded Rossi, and were loading him with opprobrium. At this moment might be seen amidst the throng the flash of a poniard, and then Rossi losing his feet, and sinking to the ground. Alas! he was spouting blood from a broad gash in the neck. He was raised by

Righetti, but could hardly hold himself up, and did not articulate a syllable; his eyes grew clouded, and his blood spirted in a copious jet. Some of those, whom I named as clad in military uniform, were above upon the stairs; they came down, and formed a ring about the unhappy man: and when they saw him shedding blood and half lifeless, they all turned, and rejoined their companions. He was borne, amidst his death-struggle, into the apartments of Cardinal Gazzoli, at the head of the stairs on the left side; and there, after a few moments, he breathed his last.”—Vol. ii. pp. 405—407.

Horrible as this was, it was not half so horrible as the indifference about it among those who were held to be respectable men. Whether they felt this unconcern, or were cowed into it, it is equally a mark far more damning on religious and Catholic Rome than the murder itself. It disclosed in a moment the incredible corruption of feeling, and decay of all seriousness and all strength, to which public men and the public mind had come, amid these antics of a sham reform. The President of the chamber sat quiet, as if nothing had happened, while the intelligence was passing from mouth to mouth; and no one in the chamber ventured to take public notice of it.

“Some of those present rose to demand an account of what had happened, and a reason for the stir; to which a Deputy replied, they could not tell; then, after a while, the President Sturbinetti takes the chair, and, though scarcely twenty-five Deputies were present, orders the minutes of the last sitting to be read. A low buzz may now be heard: the Secretary begins to read: the Deputies stand unheeding and absorbed, or go forth: the galleries grow thin, and soon the hall is void and mute. Not one voice was raised to protest before God and man against the enormous crime. Was this from fear? Some have thought to term it prudence: by foreign nations it is named disgrace.

“I was no longer a Deputy at the time, but, as an eye-witness to the facts, I can now speak the truth with a mind free from prejudice of whatever kind. Possibly it was terror, disguised as prudence, and whitewashed with imperturbability, in him who desired the record of the last sitting to be read. There was no

legal meeting: no motion could be made: the few Deputies, taken by surprise and incensed, almost all went out on the instant, prompted by sympathy with Rossi, whom they thought wounded, but not dead. One worthless voice alone was heard to cry, 'Why all this fuss? one would think he was King of Rome.' Truly some other voice might have cried, 'Out upon such infamy!' and shame it was, that no such voice was heard!"—Vol. ii. pp. 407, 408.

It was natural for the bad to exult; but where were the good, even to protest? "Such was the poltroonery, or such the depravity, of consciences, that no journal would or dared to denounce the murder. Pantaleoni wanted to print in the *Epoca*, a paper of his, condemning and abominating it, but the managers of the journal would not consent. But why do I speak of execration? The murder was honoured with illuminations and festivities in numerous cities, and not in these states exclusively, but beyond them, especially at Leghorn." One yet more foul trait is recorded by the historian. He tells us of one Monsignor Muzzarelli, a Roman Prelate, whom his bewildered and powerless master had named minister in the room of the murdered man. This person, "who was in favour with the insurgents, had intimated even to the Pope, that he held the death of Rossi to be a blessing."

With this consummation of the reformed Papal Government, the history stops for the present:—the account of its overthrow and restoration is yet to come. The moral of the whole is thus stated by Mr. Gladstone:—

"A great problem, of deep and lasting interest to the whole of Europe and of Christendom, has for some time been in process of solution in the Roman or Papal States.

"This process has been, during the reign of the present Pope, greatly, and beyond all expectation, accelerated; and it may now be said to be virtually complete, although the interposition of material force obstructs for the present its manifestation to the world.

"Its three principal stages, since the peace of 1815, have been as follows:—

“First, until the death of Gregory XVI. the question was, whether the temporal power of the Popes could be perpetuated upon the basis of its old and very defective traditional system, further deteriorated by some of the worse characteristics of that system of government which owes its paternity to the first French Revolution.

“From the accession of Pius IX. in June, 1846, a second era commenced, and the question now became this: whether it was possible to remove the crying oppressions and abuses of the old system, and to establish constitutional freedom, retaining at the same time any effective sovereignty in the Papal Chair.

“This period is, indeed, divisible into two; for there is no evidence to show that Pius IX. desired or intended, of his own free will, to establish anything like what we understand by Constitutional freedom. Still, he bent his neck to the necessity, which the French Revolution of 1848 brought upon him; and, for the present purpose, it is enough to mark November, 1848, as the term of the second stage of the process under view.

“The third stage is, from the entry of the French, and the restoration of the Papal Government, in the summer of 1849, down to the present time. Though it is not yet formally at an end, it may be considered morally complete. During this period, a third form of the question has been put. It has been this: whether the temporal power of the Popedom had life enough in itself to reconstruct and improve its external forms, and during the interval of forced but entire repose afforded by the presence of the overwhelming military power of three or four nations—the smallest of them outnumbering, three times over, the population of the Roman States—to strike such roots into the soil as might again give it a substantive existence, might enable it to endure the removal of those screens which cover it from east, west, north, and south, and might embolden it to expose itself once more to the free current of the air of Heaven?

“Every one of these three questions has, I believe, received an answer from the facts of the time; an answer, in substance, already complete and final.”—Vol. i. pp. vii. viii.

Three things appear in this history and its upshot:—

1. The coincidence of very great disorder, corruption, and misery, social and political, with the Ecclesiastical government of the centre of the Roman Church; and then worst,



when that Ecclesiastical government was most strong; and the mischief and danger thence ensuing.

2. The utter failure of the attempt to infuse new life into it; the absence of anything in the old system which the new could take hold of, with which it could be knit together, and could harmonise.

3. The consequent necessity of falling back, without alteration or compromise, on the old system; and as that system had none of the ordinary elements of political strength, the further necessity of absolute and helpless dependence on foreign influence and foreign arms; the acknowledged necessity of garrisons, French or Austrian, to protect the Roman government against its own subjects: the alliance, once more mutually cultivated, and daily coming closer, between the Roman court and the harshest of despotic governments, those of Austria and Naples.

Persons must be very insensible who can look on a spectacle like this, a problem so precisely and clearly defined, and so distinctly solved, without being moved by it; those especially who, in a spirit of chivalrous paradox, in opposition to common opinion, have vaunted of the elasticity and power of the Papacy, of the necessity to the Church of its temporal dominion; of its independence of the powers of the world. What sort of independence is that, which is indebted for existence to one foreign army, which it wishes away, in order that it may be indebted for it, to another which it likes better? What sort of dominion is that, where neither love, nor fear, nor habit, nor interest, nor national sentiment, nor even religion, can ensure for a week the safety of the state? What sort of power is that, which has been for centuries influencing its subjects, and finds them at the end no more to be either trusted or controlled, than if they were Malays or Caffres, instead of one of the most cultivated and intelligent races of Christian Europe? What sort of elasticity is that, which, after two years of factitious and unsuccessful liberalism relapses blindly and desperately into the most antiquated despotism?

The political is not necessarily the theological point of

view ; but a great deal has been said, of late, in theological discussions on two points :—1. on the brilliant part which the Papacy has played in civilisation— of arts, science, political institutions, all indebted to its fostering encouragement : and, 2. in another aspect of things, on the compatibility of good and successful political institutions with a very low standard of morality and religion ; of public truth and justice flourishing, it may be, more in heretical than in Catholic countries, more among people devoted to wealth and self-indulgence, than in those marked by faith and devotion, yet flourishing simply on principles of the world, and a well-understood selfishness.

We are far from denying that there is truth in both these considerations. The Papacy has done much for civilisation. Good political institutions may be very imperfect tests of Christian character. But there is another side to these considerations, and if one side is of weight, so is the other.

We believe that there is a great debt, for good as well as for evil, which Europe owes to the Papacy ; but whatever the Papacy may have been, or have done in times past, is not to be put in the place of what it is and does *now*. If, formerly, it grappled with the times, and directed their energies — if it enlightened, and humanised, and guarded justice between the strong and the weak, it does not now. Let its most ardent champion in France or England imagine the political spirit of the Papacy, its customs and methods of governing, extended to the whole of Europe, and ask himself if even he could congratulate Christendom on the change. A Pope has acknowledged, as clearly as he could, that civilisation has outstripped the Papacy, and he tried to overtake it in vain. We do not know what can be a scandal, if it is not one of the worst kind, that the professed centre and judgment seat of the Christian Church should be a political evil of the first magnitude, and as incurable as it is great ; that the fountain and guardian of Christian principles for the whole world, cannot keep its own people, the people whom it trains as it thinks best, from a chronic state of bloody faction ;

that a Pope has tried to govern well, to govern mercifully and justly, by law and not by terror, and could not.

And, on the other hand, if the excellence of a political system, the general rule of law in a nation, a real pervading regard paid to truth, justice, and equity, in matters social and political, a temper of considerateness and mercy, an attention, incomplete it may be, but systematic and effectual, to the welfare of the poorer classes, a wide sympathy for enterprises of benevolence, a strong sense of security and mutual confidence; and resulting from all this, order, tranquillity, and the successful exercise of industry, be but imperfect guarantees of the Christianity of a nation and its government, if they may be but the exquisitely adjusted contrivance of a worldly-wise selfishness, at least the absence of these things are actual positive proof against the soundness of professed religious principles. Christianity may be, doubtless, far short of its purity and due influence, in a nation which is well governed, and in order; but it is ludicrous to speak of its being more influential, where power is plainly abused, and government corrupt; where justice cannot be trusted, where mercy is esteemed dangerous, where falsehood and violence are found by experience to be more successful than straightforwardness and reason; and all this under a government unrestricted in its power, safe from external violence, possessing the highest religious influence, the spiritual guides as well as the temporal rulers of its subjects.

“La tyrannie est,” says Pascal, “de vouloir avoir par une voie, ce qu'on ne peut avoir que par une autre.” Order, confidence, and peace can only come to a government which will think and work for them. They are not meant to be the reward of one which has been, if not harsh, yet selfishly remiss and inattentive to the wants and welfare of its subjects. But as all governments must have subordination, such a one has to compel, what it ought to have brought about; the sword and the illegal tribunal must supply the place of past obligations evaded, duties unfulfilled, and influence wasted. Providence allows, for the time, in this as in other cases, an

inversion of its appointed order, allows of these illegitimate expedients and short rough roads to peace; but even in its visible course, it usually exacts compensation, and that not sparingly. And those who tell us how cheaply it holds, and how severely it judges, in its secret visitations, man's industry, man's justice, and man's merey, may not doubt, how it will judge man's cruelty, to which he has been driven by his indolent neglect.

## PASCAL AND ULTRAMONTANISM.\*

[JULY, 1852.]

THIS is a curious book. Pascal's famous Letters elicited, at the time of their publication, a vigorous defence on the part of the great order whom they had attacked so unceremoniously; but of that fierce and eventful controversy they are now almost the sole memorials. It may be supposed that the able and shrewd men against whom they were directed, had something to say to them. As a company, the Jesuits possessed more available talent, more concentrated resources, more discipline, than any public body in Europe. They sifted and contradicted the "Provincial Letters;" they explained with ingenuity, and even with wit; they made out, with much plausibility, that they had said nothing but what other people had said. But it is very hard now to get a sight of their books. We may look in vain in some of our most famous libraries: all seem to have disappeared — the Jesuit books which Pascal attacked, and the Jesuit books which attacked Pascal; the Pères Bauny, and Binet, and Garasse, and Le Moyne, his victims, and their defenders, Pères Annat and Nouet, and Pirot and Pinthereau, and even the polite P. Daniel. This want, however, has been supplied by the work before us, an edition of the "Provincial Letters," with their refutation, by the Abbé Maynard, a French ecclesiastic of some literary pretensions, who may stand very well for the Baunys and Daniels, now so seldom met with.

In noticing this book, we wish one thing distinctly to be understood. It is not that we are opening afresh these by-gone scandals. It is M. Maynard who has brought them

\* *Les Provinciales; et leur Réfutation.* Par M. l'Abbé MAYNARD, Chanoine Honoraire de Poitiers. Ouvrage dédié à Mons. de Vesins, Evêque d'Agen. Paris: 1851. 2 vols. 8vo.

before us, to show us how he could dispose of them, by an elaborate and ostentatious refutation. And what we propose to consider is not so much Pascal and his charges, as the way in which M. Maynard deals with them, and the light which his statements, whether in attack or defence, throw on the practical system and feelings of those in whose behalf he speaks. We notice the book the more, because it is a characteristic specimen of the style and spirit which mark the school of Joseph de Maistre — of the line of argument which they adopt — of the self-complacent contempt of facts, the extravagance of misrepresentation and even calumny, which seem to sit so lightly on the consciences, and are expressed so glibly by the pens, of the disciples of that master of brilliant and insolent theory, who bids fair to become the acknowledged exponent of the principles of modern Romanism.

The book is what we might call in England a “Family *Pascal*.” Pascal’s “Provincial Letters,” says the Abbé Maynard, have done more harm to the cause of religion and the Church in France, than perhaps any other book in the French language. They are the most hypocritical and lying production of the most hypocritical sect of heretics, that ever assailed Christianity. Yet they are so clever, that it is hopeless to expect that Frenchmen will ever cease to read them; and equally hopeless, that they will read the solid refutations which the Jesuits wrote of them. The effect of answers, he says, has only been like that of Père Daniel’s book on James the Second’s courtiers at St. Germain, who were so delighted with the extracts that he gave from Pascal, in order to refute them, that they sent off at once to Paris for a copy of the *Provinciales*, and thought no more of Père Daniel. What is to be done in this case? says M. Maynard. Doubtless, the best would be, that the *Provinciales* should be forgotten, at any sacrifice to literature. But as this is past praying for, M. Maynard has taken the next best course. He has published, “on the favourable opinion of the highest ecclesiastical authority existing in France,” a new edition of the *Provinciales*, with all the attractions of Firmin Didot’s elegant typography, and a collated text, accompanied with a running and popular

refutation in the introductions and notes. The method is convenient, but it has its disadvantages. There is something ungracious in editing a great writer, avowedly to pick him to pieces. But in Pascal's case, it is also rather a perilous method; for we are apt to compare the note-maker with his victim; and a hostile editor of Pascal had need be a considerable person, to venture to place his remarks in proximity with their text, without running the risk of looking very like a lacquey, soliciting our attention to the faults of his master.

The Abbé Maynard, however, fully sensible, as he professes to be, of Pascal's genius, cannot be said to have any fear of this contrast. We might have expected that M. Maynard would have confined himself to careful rectifications of quotations or facts, and to comprehensive expositions of principles or systems. But the lively Abbé is not satisfied with the resources of theology and history. He adds to them the perilous ones of pleasantry. Over and above his heavier artillery, a running fire of sharp little sayings at the bottom of the page, makes answer to the rapid and deadly hits which succeed one another in the text. Besides carefully recording his opinion of the probability of everything that the Jesuits said or insinuated against Pascal and his friends, as that Jansenius swindled for the benefit of his friend's nephew\*, M. Maynard has enriched his edition, and thought to damage Pascal, by a vast quantity of brief notes, such as impatient readers scribble with pencil on the margin of irritating books — such, as we are sorry to find, have considerably damaged our own copy of his elegantly printed volumes. They are very commonly in the second person — direct addresses to the offending writer, or his Jesuit interlocutor. Now it is a brisk dialogue in which he pushes Pascal to the wall; now indignant interpellations, such as we used to see reported in the French Chamber; now ironical answers to Pascal's ironical questions; now apostrophes by single words, brief and emphatic: — “*Mensonge!*” “*Calomnie!*” — “*Pourquoi falsifier toujours?*” — “*Non, non! c'est pas vrai!*” — “*Courage, bon père* (to the Jesuit speaker), “*vous avez droit dans le*

\* Vol. ii. p. 233.

*fonds, quoique Pascal vous donne tort dans la forme.*” — “*Voilà ce qui est plaisant!*” — “*Mon Dieu! quel entêtement!*” — “*C'est le comble de l'impudence!*” — “*C'est une infamie!*” — “*Eh, misérables Gallicans, soyez donc conséquents avec vous-mêmes.*” — “*Allons! voilà Gros-Jean qui en remontre à son curé, quelques docteurs pédants qui font la leçon aux Papes!*” Pascal observes that the Jesuits called him “*impie, bouffon, ignorant, farceur, imposteur, calomniateur, fourbe, hérétique, Calviniste déguisé, disciple de Du Moulin, possédé d'une légion de diables, et tout ce qui vous plaît:*” the measured annotation says, “*Il y avait bien un peu de tout cela dans l'auteur des Lettres, moins peut-être la légion de diables.*” These sarcastic interjections are varied by others of candour or compassion. At the end of some merciless paragraph of Pascal's, we find his editor only laughing at the joke, “*Nous rions de tout notre cœur;*” or we have little bursts of “*Charmant!*” — “*Charmante satire du pédantisme de l'école!*” showing that he can appreciate the beauty which he deems so fatal. At the end of the ninth *Provinciale*, about the devotional novelties of Pères Bauny and Binet, Pascal adds a postscript to tell his correspondent that since he had written the letter, he had himself seen the books — “*ce sont des pièces dignes d'être vues.*” We used to think that this was part of the joke. But we were, it seems, mistaken. M. Maynard is both indignant and grieved: — “*Quoi! vous avez écrit une lettre sur des ouvrages que vous ne connaissiez pas, et que vous n'avez lus qu'ensuite! L'aveu est naïf, et se conçoit difficilement d'un homme ordinairement si habile; 'mentita est iniquitas sibi.'* — *Preuve nouvelle,*” he adds, with a sympathetic allowance for genius, “*que le pauvre Pascal était victime de ses amis, acceptait aveuglement leurs mémoires, et se faisait l'écho docile de leurs erreurs et de leurs passions.*”\*

These little explosive protests, in which he bandies irony with Pascal, are a curious method of turning the edge of the “*Provincial Letters.*” His way of meeting their direct charges is equally remarkable.

Pascal's book, it appears, must be dealt with in a sweeping

\*\_Vol. i. p. 441.



manner. The safe, and we should imagine, the old answer would be, that the Jesuits were not the Church; and that the relaxed and extravagant opinions which he attacked, were those of individuals, or, at worst, of an order, for which the Church was not responsible. It might be further observed, that lists of propositions, many of them the very ones which Pascal had quoted, were formally condemned shortly after by the Popes; and finally that the Church at length disclaimed the general policy of the Jesuits, showed that even their zeal and services could not excuse their errors, and publicly separated her cause from theirs, by formally dissolving the order. This is one line of defence. There are others also: as that Pascal hit a weak point, but exaggerated it; that he and his friends went as dangerously in one direction as the Jesuits did in the other; that it was really a dispute about speculative and open points, in which both parties lost their temper and their way. But these answers are too tame, have not enough of "principle" in them, for the dashing philosophy of the disciple of De Maistre.

The Abbé Maynard is one of those eager combatants who disdain to do things by halves. The battle seems to him not worth gaining, unless he can gain one of those heroic ones in which every man of the enemy is killed on the spot, and not one of his own. He accepts the whole weight of the Jesuit case. One side was right without any wrong, and that was the Jesuits; the other wrong without any right, and that was the Jansenists. This is the simple issue, according to M. Maynard, of the quarrel which distracted the great Church of France, in its palmiest days, for a century and a half.

At the same time, M. Maynard is far from giving up the charge against Pascal of gross falsehood and wilful misrepresentation in nearly every text that he cites. But the substance of the refutation is that in all the points which Pascal singled out for attack, whether doctrine, or morality, or discipline, he attacked in the Jesuits what is now universally accepted by the Church. The Abbé's ambition aims at a triumph short of nothing less than the brilliant one of putting Pascal out of court for ever, as being, after every allowance

made for genius and bad company, a convicted and notorious liar, hypocrite, impostor, slanderer, and heretic.

After M. Maynard's book, it is to be supposed that no one can any longer entertain a doubt on the subject. He, and— if it will take his advice—the rest of the world, will leave Pascal in peace, and his Letters also. The following peroration shows how M. Maynard considers that he has accomplished his task, and is suggestive of the spirit in which he has worked:—

“We are at the end of this long controversy; what is there wanting to complete what we have said in the course of the discussion? For the first time for two centuries, all the documents relating to the cause have been submitted at once to the examination of the public. Well: without any presumption, it seems to us, that no man of fairness will hesitate to pronounce, that the Provincial Letters are the most notoriously calumnious charge ever framed by passion and hatred. As to Pascal himself, divided between our profound sympathy for his person, and our still greater love of Catholic truth, we feel, when we wish to judge him, that our thoughts become confused, and that our words die away on our lips. At the risk of scandalising many men of our days, we will say, nevertheless, that we would gladly tear a page out of his life, even if the Provincial Letters must go with it. But,—severe for a doctrine, and for a work which have been so fatal to religion in France, we have nothing but indulgence and compassion for the unhappy writer whose genius was made a tool of. Contrary to the majority of our contemporaries, we condemn the work and absolve the man; the reason is, that the work has been judged by the highest authority which exists in this world, and that no one has the right to disturb the ashes of the man, and to cite before his own tribunal his intentions and his memory.

“Son cercueil est fermé; Dieu l'a jugé; silence.”\*

“*Le vrai malheur des Jesuites au dix-septième siècle,*” he says, “*a été de n'avoir pas eu un Pascal.*”

But from M. Maynard himself we must go on to his statements. We propose to notice the ground which he takes against Pascal, first, historically; next, as disclosing the principles which he represents as established in his own commu-

\* Vol. ii. pp. 440, 441.

nion. It is mainly for this latter purpose that we have given so much space to the subject. It may be as well, however, at starting, though we are not dealing with the controversy in itself, to say a few words on the alleged unfairness of Pascal.

We certainly do think that his charges, on the whole, are very serious, both in their matter and evidence; and also that they reach beyond the Jesuits. But we certainly cannot defend Pascal as M. Maynard does the Jesuits. Few persons read him without more or less of misgiving as to his perfect fairness. Indeed, it is not unnatural that after such a sweeping victory of human wit, there should come a reaction; the mind feels disposed to be sceptical, whether in reality the triumph could have been as complete as it appears. It seems to violate likelihood — to be more than Providence, which is jealous of human pride, is wont to allot to man. And this natural suspicion is not without grounds. Pascal was by no means always fair, especially in the detail of his proof.

Pascal's Letters have the exaggeration, inseparable from an able, earnest, passionate attack,—the exaggeration of a clear statement and lucid arrangement of the case *on one side*; the exaggeration of ridicule and irony; the exaggeration of strong and indignant feeling. Further, they leave unsaid how the system which they attacked grew up; how long custom, and a general use, not confined to the Jesuits, if it had made this system dangerous, had also in all probability, in a measure, corrected it, as it certainly in a degree excused it: and they leave the impression, that *that* was a distinct *intention*, which was mainly a *result*, not very coyly accepted and followed up. Further, he leaves unsaid, for he did not on principle acknowledge them, the practical necessities of a popular, and much more, of a fashionable religion — much the same under all circumstances, whether resisted as temptations, or accepted as facts.

As to his quotations, the Letters, we think, will bear favourable comparison with any work that deals as largely in controversial citations. He solemnly declares that he had looked into text and context of every passage that he used;

and we can see no reason to doubt his belief that he was dealing fairly. Still it is undeniable, we think, that he is at times really, and still oftener, apparently, unfair in his use of passages. We say, apparently, where in quoting, he omits restrictions and conditions which in the context accompany some startling decision, because he feels them to be mere surplusage. Where the point of a passage really remains unaltered by qualifications, which seem put in simply for verbal show, Pascal makes little ceremony in sacrificing limitations which he thinks unmeaning or trifling, to the convenience of his own statement. And besides, it must be confessed, that it was an unlucky chance for his victims, clumsy writers, singularly confident in their formal methods and their own authority—coarse and technical about refinements which almost defy words, and not dreaming of any opposition but that logical one which was the delight and business of their lives,—to fall into the hands of Pascal. The skilfully chosen, and skilfully exhibited passage, which looks so monstrous in his pages, not seldom subsides in their own into mere grotesque absurdity; often too, what really illustrates the mischief of the whole system, seems to bear hard in each separate instance when pointed against individuals. But there are cases where he is substantially unfair; we will give an instance or two.

The following is a case which has been more than once quoted against Pascal. He is speaking of the *jolies questions* which Escobar and others have framed on the subject of fasting: it may be remembered how, as they proceed, they become more and more delicate and thoughtful for the penitent, who wishes to have a good conscience and not to fast. These questions and answers are not disputed by M. Maynard. He only sneers at Escobar, or else backs him with S. Thomas. As to the man coming of age an hour after midnight, and thus having a right to be let off, he dismisses it with "*c'est subtil, ridicule, si on le veut, mais c'est vrai. Puis, en quoi cela va-t-il à la corruption de la morale?*"—there being no harm apparently in a director of conscience,

or his penitent, being shufflers. At length, Pascal comes to the following climax : —

“O que cela est divertissant !’ lui dis-je. ‘On ne s’en peut tirer,’ me répondit-il ; ‘je passe les jours et les nuits à le lire ; je ne fais autre chose.’ Le bon père, voyant que j’y prenais plaisir, en fut ravi ; et continuant : ‘Voyez,’ dit-il, ‘encore ce trait de Filiutius, qui est un de ces vingt-quatre Jésuites ; — Celui qui s’est fatigué à quelque chose, comme à poursuivre une fille, *ad insequendam amicam*, est-il obligé de jeûner ? Nullement. Mais s’il s’est fatigué exprès, pour être par là dispensé du jeûne, y sera-t-il tenu ? Encore qu’il eût ce dessein formé, il n’y sera point obligé.’”  
— Vol. i. p. 233.

On this M. Maynard begins his note with a triumphant chuckle : —

“Oh ! pour le coup, voilà Pascal pris en flagrant délit de falsification. D’abord, Filiuci n’est point l’inventeur du problème. La question avait été traitée bien avant lui par S. Antonin, Sylvestre, Médina, Sancius, et beaucoup d’autres auteurs étrangers à la Compagnie. De plus, la question n’était pas oiseuse. ‘Si vous vous souvenez,’ dit à ce propos M. Sainte Beuve (*Port Royal*, tom. iii. p. 59.), ‘qu’il se présentait souvent au tribunal de la confession des pénitents bien étranges, comme Louis XI. par exemple, ou Philippe II., ou Henri III. (je parle des plus connus), pour qui c’était une affaire sérieuse de jeûner le lendemain d’un meurtre ou d’une course libertine, vous trouverez moins étranges les précautions et distinctions que Filiutius prescrivait à la date de 1626, et qu’on retrouverait plus ou moins chez les autres Casuistes de ce temps.’ Et maintenant abordons le texte de Filiuci, et traduisons-le littéralement. Ce sera moins joli que chez Pascal ; mais dans toute cette longue discussion, ayons le courage de prendre pour adage le vers de Boileau :

“Rien n’est beau que le vrai, le vrai seul est aimable.’

‘Vous demanderez en second lieu,’ dit-il, ‘si celui qui se fatiguerait à mauvaise fin, comme à tuer un homme ou à poursuivre une fille, ou à quelque chose de semblable, serait tenu au jeûne. *Je réponds, qu’il pêcherait, il est vrai*, par la mauvaise fin qu’il se propose ; mais que la fatigue en étant résultée, il serait exempté du jeûne : à moins, disent quelques-uns, qu’il n’eût agi en fraude de la loi ; mais les autres répondent mieux, que la faute con-

sisterait à apporter une cause de rupture du jeûne, mais que, la cause posée, il n'y serait pas tenu.' Qu'a fait Pascal? Il a arraché au texte de Filiuci le milieu et la fin, pour faire croire que le Jésuite exemptait de toute faute dans les singulières circonstances qu'il décrit. Mais non, le Jésuite, comme tout le monde, *enverrait bien un pareil homme en enfer*; seulement ce ne serait pas pour n'avoir pas jeûné, ne le pouvant faire, mais pour sa crime, et pour s'être mis dans l'impossibilité de jeûner. *Et il a raison, le bon Filiuci*; car Pascal nous dira-t-il qu'un homme qui se serait fait saigner aux quatre membres pour ne pas jeûner, y serait obligé encore, malgré son épuisement complet? Allons donc, ce serait absurde! et il faut avoir un front Janséniste pour chercher à excuser Pascal comme a voulu le faire Nicole en répondant aux accusations du P. Nouet."— Vol. i. pp. 233, 234.\*

We will not excuse Pascal. He has left out what "*le bon Filiuci*" could ill afford to spare; the worthy man certainly does *admit* that this "strange penitent" would sin, though not about fasting, and Pascal takes no notice of the *admission*.

\* We give another specimen of the very subtle distinction between *what leads to a necessity*, and *what follows from a necessity*, or quasi-necessity. Lessius says, "adulter se debito moderamine defendens, maritum interficit; *non est reus homicidii, sed occisio illa censetur fortuita.*" For he says, "the original crime is only the remote cause and occasion; and every man when he is hard pressed, is not bound to let himself be killed, but may defend himself." Then after maintaining his view, he proceeds in the following, in which we cannot help thinking of the *bonté* and *douceur* of Père Bauny's *brûleur des granges*:—"Adverte tamen, si suspicabatur adulter, *talia incommoda* [*i. e.* that he should kill the husband,] ex adulterio secutura, *tenebatur ex charitate abstinere.* Unde volendo adulterium committere, peccat non solum peccato adulterii, sed etiam *contra charitatem proximi*, quatenus per adulterium *constituit se in necessitate damni proximo inferendi*; . . . quando *tamen constitutus est* in tali periculo, *non peccat*, etiamsi se defendendo, occidat alterum; quia jus habet se defendendi. Idem dicendum, si imminente marito *poterat fugere*; tenebatur enim *ex charitate*, si videbat inde marito periculum: unde non fugiendo peccat contra charitatem proximi. *Non tamen peccat*, si postquam *non potest amplius fugere*, se defendendo, occidat invasorem: occisio enim illa, non est peccatum, sed effectus per accidens secutus ex peccato."—*Lessius, de Just.* l. ii. c. 9. dub. 15. pp. 106, 107.

The sin *lasting on till a certain moment*, and then metaphysically vanishing, is singular enough. Still it may be taken as a philosophical analysis, whether right or wrong, yet purely speculative, of the action. But on the other hand, we are told that these were not "*questions oiseuses*," that they were *practically* necessary for delicate cases, for "strange penitents" like Louis XI. and Philip II.

But the considerateness, which remembered that to such very "*strange penitents as Louis XI., Philip II. and Henry III.*" it was "*a serious affair*" to fast after a murder, or a day of debauchery, and the "precaution" which anxiously guarded against laying on their conscience under such circumstances one sin more, and was so careful to clear the murderer from the guilt of fast breaking, are really curious enough phenomena, to deserve a little more notice than M. Maynard thinks necessary.

We will give another instance. In the Seventh Letter, Pascal quotes Lessius (de Just. l. ii. c. 9. dub. 12, 19.) as saying that a man may resent a blow with the sword, not from vengeance, but to clear his own honour. He makes Lessius responsible for this doctrine. He does not say that Lessius qualifies it, doubts about it, puts it as a matter of any question whatever, or does anything but lay it down simply as a safe and practical rule of action, as Escobar may be fairly said to do. But in fact it turns out that the real state of the case is this:—1. Lessius quotes it from some one else. 2. He gives arguments, by which it, and some other maxims of the same sort, may be supported. 3. He ends by saying, in the scholastic formula, that though "it is speculatively probable, it does not seem to be easily allowed in practice." That is, whether mildly or not, he does distinctly condemn the maxim; first, from the danger of hatred or vengeance in the agent: second, because likely to lead to other bloodshed.

Certainly, no one reading Pascal's account would imagine that Lessius had said anything of the kind. Accordingly the Jesuits made the most of it against Pascal's good faith, and Pascal answers them in his thirteenth Letter. They said that Lessius quoted it from some one else, and quoted it to "combat" it; Pascal, that he quoted it to "follow" it. Lessius's style of "combating" is of a very mild order: but Pascal is unfair nevertheless. His reply to the Jesuits, who quote *certain* words of *condemnation*, is that *these* words refer not to this case, but to another; which is true. But Pascal himself persists in shutting his eyes to the fact that Lessius

had spoken against it, in some words, and in refusing him the benefit of what he *did* say:—“*Il ne se trouve pas,*” he maintains, “*une seule parole de condamnation en ce lieu-là ; mais il parle ainsi : ‘ Il semble, qu’on n’en doit pas facilement permettre la pratique : in praxi non videtur FACILE PERMITTENDA.’ ”* This he will not admit to be any sort of real condemnation.

He further suppresses the fact, that he himself had originally taken no notice, except in a *general way*, of this limitation. And he tries very unfairly to weaken the force of the words themselves, a technical form of disapproval. Thus he begins with charging Lessius with inventing and maintaining a maxim, and he ends by really proving against him only that he discountenanced it in too mild language.

This is unfair. But in this, as in most other instances, if we criticise the accuser’s fairness, the case of the accused is not much mended. An inspection of the text only conveys more vividly the cool way in which Lessius entertains and has difficulties about the doubt, whether we may kill a man for a blow. M. Maynard is still better, and gives us the reason for Lessius’ hesitating and faint rejection,—*videtur non facile permittenda*. “If,” says he, “Lessius does not speak more expressly, *it is out of respect for Victoria* (from whom he quotes); when he treats of murdering for *calumny*, he absolutely condemns the practice, *n’étant gêné-là par aucune autorité.*” (Vol. ii. p. 135.)

We will add a third case, where unfairness seems to arise from the two parties being at cross purposes. The Roman system is a great system of external legislation, yet bearing intimately on conscience. On the one hand, it must wear the technical form of ordinary law. The crimes it denounces have to be defined; the rules which apply to all penal enactments must govern and abridge its severity. But, on the other hand, it appeals to more than outward obedience; it claims the submission of the Christian in his conscience, as it is meant to provide for the good direction of his religious life; its penalties are assumed to touch his soul, even though



applied by the rules of human punishment.\* This was the long-established system in the Church to which Pascal, as well as the Jesuits, belonged. But in several of the questions between him and his answerers, each drops one side of this double system. He assumes solely its *moral object*; that Pope's Bulls, for instance, when they denounce, and enact punishment against, some particular crime, are to be taken in a broad and common-sense view, as intending as hard a blow as can be given against the crime in all its forms; and so he quotes, as specimens of explaining away authorities, in order to favour crime, cases where terms are defined, or penalties restricted. The Jesuits and their friends bring for answer, the necessary *method and practice* of such a system as the Canon law. Thus Pascal shows from Escobar, that a man who murders, not for money, but to oblige his friend, is not to be called an assassin:—

“Le Pape Grég. XIV. a déclaré que les assassins sont indignes de jouir de l'asile des églises, et qu'on doit les en arracher. Cependant nos vingtquatre vieillards disent, que ‘tous ceux qui tuent en trahison ne doivent pas encourir la peine de cette bulle.’ Cela vous paraît être contraire; mais on l'accorde, en interprétant le mot d'*assassin*, comme ils le font par ces paroles. ‘Les assassins ne sont-ils pas indignes de jouir du privilège des églises? Oui, par la bulle de Grég. XIV. Mais nous entendons par le mot d'*assassins* ceux qui ont reçu de l'argent pour tuer quelqu'un en trahison. D'où il arrive que ceux qui tuent sans en recevoir aucun prix, mais seulement pour obliger leurs amis, ne sont pas appelés *assassins*.’” — Lett. VI. vol. i. p. 254.

Now the result of this interpretation certainly is, either that *real* assassins get off, or that people may with truth think that he who is not *canonically* an assassin, is not a *real* assassin. Yet it is fair to remember, as M. Maynard reminds us, that it is primarily a question of legal definition. “The pri-

\* “Idem pontifex refert, quod Innoc. X. et Innoc. XII. *excommunicationem* inflixerunt, in eos qui in Ecclesiâ Vaticanâ *tabacum sumerent*; et eandem imposuit Urban VIII. pro ecclesiis Hispanicis: sed Bened. XIII. omnes istas prohibitiones abstulit.” — *Liguori, Hom. Ap. Tr. xv. p. iii. No. 38.*

vilege of sanctuary," he says, "has always been regarded in Italy as very important."\* Abuses occurred, and were restrained by bulls and censures; and the extent of these restraints gave further occasion to disputes between Churches and magistrates. This had to be settled, like the interpretation of other legal terms—who were *assassins* in the view of the bull? And in penal matters, the maxim is, "*odiosa sunt restringenda et rigorose applicanda.*" The effect of the mixture of civil and spiritual perils—of excommunication and hanging—in this system, is a fair question. But it is not the question that Pascal is here dealing with.

We might add other instances of summary and unfair ways of dealing with what he attacked. Pascal was often as unceremonious or unscrupulous as powerful and earnest minds are apt to be, in dealing with what they not only detest, but thoroughly despise. When he had made up his mind that he must be unsparing, he did not stop to think whether he made his victim too absurd. But the main question still remains. Pascal may have been guilty of more or less unfairness; under the disguise of a man of the world, he may have had in him a good deal of the partizan, and something of the Puritan. Still it is a question, whether the state of things he alleges to have existed was substantially true; and if so, we may be excused for being curious to see, how a modern French ecclesiastic volunteers to deal with it, especially when he presents his labours with considerable pomp, in all the luxury of typographical elegance, and introduces it to the world with the "favourable opinion of the highest ecclesiastical authority in France." We take it up not to go over the quarrels of the past, but to learn the principles and views of the present.

We shall find, that, first, as we have intimated, he denies the existence, as a fact, of this corrupt moral teaching among the Jesuits, or indeed in the Church; and next, that he supports his assertion by absolutely identifying the teaching of the Jesuits at that day with the teaching of the Church at this.

\* Vol. i. pp. 254, 255.

The question then remains, as to the view which he presents, of the nature of this teaching. These three points we shall attempt to illustrate as we proceed, and in this order.

First, as to the fact on which Pascal's attack rests, the existence and influence of a system of easy Casuistry. M. Maynard, as we have said, broadly denies it. There was nothing, he maintains, in the morals or the teaching of the period to warrant it; far less in those of the Jesuits. "It is absurd," he says, "to suppose of the Society of Jesus that they taught bad 'doctrine.'" . . . "Never was there a society, perhaps, which takes more precautions to maintain the purity of its doctrine and morality, and which, with this view, has recourse to rules more severe, and, it may be said, more exactly observed." Nor will he allow of the distinction between the earlier and later Jesuits. They strike him, on the contrary, by their unity of purpose and character. He quotes instances of their boldness and severity in the court of France:—" *En un mot, les Jésuites transigèrent-ils une seule fois avec l'immoralité dans la voluptueuse cour de Versailles?*" They harassed Louis XIV.,—P. Annat, especially, it is said in Bayle\*, " *le chagrinait tous les jours*"—" *lui permirent-ils jamais de conserver le dehors de la religion et de s'approcher des sacrements, tant qu'il était livré à ses scandaleuses amours?*" . . . " *Courage autant plus digne d'éloge, que chacun était pris d'admiration, ou du moins se taisait devant ces brillants désordres.*" . . . " *Toutes les courtisanes eurent les Jésuites pour persécuteurs.*" † "All the efforts," he observes, "which they made at the time of the *Provinciales* to refute the slanders of Pascal, prove clearly that the doctrines ascribed to them were not those which they applied to the direction of souls. One only among them, Père Pirot, wanted to defend them, and he was disavowed by his brethren." ‡ And what inducement had they to do otherwise? " *Eh! mon Dieu,*" exclaims their defender; " *quel intérêt auraient donc*

\* "Il est dit dans Bayle." M. Maynard weighs his words; in Bayle, not by Bayle, but by the writer of a "fabulous and satirical" work, from which Bayle quotes the passage referred to, for the purpose of showing up its anachronisms.

† Vol. i. pp. 178—180.

‡ Vol. i. p. 209.

*eu les Jésuites à favoriser de tels crimes, eux si purs, qu'ils pourraient presque dire à leurs ennemis, avec l'auteur de toute innocence: Quis ex vobis arguat me de peccato?"* \* There was, in reality, "as has been so well observed by Comte de Maistre, *no parti de la morale relâchée* in the Church." †

Now, the report of history and the common belief is, that there was,—and that it was found among the Jesuits. Not, as Voltaire puts it, and the Abbé after him, a party with the deliberate plan to corrupt morals,—which, as Voltaire observes, and might have recollected before he fathered absurdities on Pascal, "no society ever had, or can have,"—but a party formed for the purpose of directing morals, and which, in directing them, allowed them great liberties; a party which urged virtue where they could, but compromised, on principle, with disobedience, where they could not. Pascal has made no improbable charge, and has taken care to state it in terms which keep clear of the desirable exaggeration. He has but described, in the most exquisitely organised specimen of a party, the natural malady of all parties, and its effects, when exhibited on so large a scale.

"Sachez donc que leur objet n'est pas de corrompre les mœurs; ce n'est pas leur dessein. Mais ils n'ont pas aussi pour unique but celui de les reformer; ce serait une mauvaise politique. Voici quelle est leur pensée. *Ils ont assez bonne opinion d'eux-mêmes pour croire qu'il est utile et comme nécessaire au bien de la religion que leur crédit s'étende partout, et qu'ils gouvernent toutes les consciences.* Et parceque les maximes évangéliques et sévères sont propres pour gouverner quelques sortes de personnes, ils s'en servent dans ces occasions où elles leur sont favorables. Mais comme ces mêmes maximes ne s'accordent pas au dessein de la plupart des gens, ils les laissent à l'égard de ceux-là, afin d'avoir de quoi satisfaire tout le monde. C'est pour cette raison qu'ayant affaire à des personnes de toutes sortes de conditions et de nations si différentes, il est nécessaire qu'ils aient de Casuistes assortis à toute diversité. . . . C'est par cette conduite *obligéante et accommodante*, comme l'appelle le Père Pétiau, qu'ils tendent les bras à tout le monde."—*Lett. V. vol. i. pp. 218, 219.*

\* Vol. i. p. 264.

† Vol. i. p. 185.

Pascal may be elsewhere carried beyond this, in his disgust or indignation; and here he speaks as a partizan, when he implies that their "severe directors" were but few—merely enough for a bait. M. Maynard has a right to remind us of the bright side of the Jesuits—of what they did for literature and piety—how, when Pères Annat, and Pinthereau, and Bauny were speculating or calling names in Paris, their brethren were dying at the stake of the Hurons, or under the sword of the Chinese—how the very Père Garasse, the buffoon of the *Provinciales*, asked, as a special favour, to wait on the plague-stricken people at Orleans, and died among them and one of them. But Pascal is not unfair, if his facts are true, in making the society, whose boasted excellence was its perfection of government, and absolute control over the very thoughts and will of its members, responsible for all that it sanctioned. The world heard a good deal, from itself, of its singular merit in this matter. It was only taking it at its word, if Pascal fixes on it what its superiors allowed their subjects to print, and obtrude with no little ostentation on the church; if he assumes that "*un si grand corps ne subsisterait pas dans une conduite téméraire, et sans une âme qui le gouverne, et qui règle tous ses mouvements.*"\* Once for all it must be said, that even in his hands the charge was not, that the Jesuit institute had not great virtues, but that it had also great vices: "*neque virtute propriâ tantum profuerunt, quantum in hoc nocuerunt, quod aliorum virtutem corruperint et perdidierint.*"†

\* "Outre," he proceeds, "qu'ils ont un ordre particulier de ne rien imprimer sans l'aveu de leurs supérieurs." "Pascal," answers M. Maynard, "donne à l'approbation à laquelle sont soumis, en vertu des constitutions de S. Ignace, tous les ouvrages de ses membres, un valeur et une signification chimérique. D'abord, cette approbation est imposée communément à tous les ouvrages religieux. Quant aux Jésuites, ce n'est pas le général qui lit les ouvrages . . . mais le provincial, aidé de deux ou trois examinateurs, qui se conforment dans leur jugement aux doctrines des divers pays où ils se trouvent. Ce jugement en conséquence n'est pas plus l'impression des idées de la Société, qu'il n'est irréfragable."—Vol. i. p. 210. It hardly does for M. Maynard to call this, giving "*une valeur et signification chimérique*" to the licensing of books, when in the next page he argues from the rigour and practical success of the precautions taken, the absurdity of supposing that bad doctrine could have found its way into the Order.

† Nov. Org. *Præf.*

As to the evidence, we will only say that others of great name and authority, besides Pascal, spoke, at the time, as strongly as he did, both of the existence and dangers of this accommodating morality, as a feature of the time; and further we will venture to engage that no one at this day, except be felt his position already compromised by it, would any more dream of saying a word in its justification, than he would of committing himself to the physics of the schoolmen or the political maxims of Machiavelli. It was not Pascal who said,—“*Certes, je ne vois rien dans le monde qui soit plus à charge à l'Eglise, que ces esprits vainement subtils, qui réduisent tout l'Evangile en problèmes, qui forment des incidents sur l'exécution de ses préceptes, qui fatiguent les casuistes par des consultations infinies, qui ne travaillent, en vérité, qu'à nous envelopper la règle des mœurs. Plus malheureux encore les docteurs indignes de ce nom, qui adhèrent à leurs sentiments, et donnent du poids à leurs folies. Ces sont des astres errants . . . ils confondent le ciel et la terre, et mêlent Jésus-Christ avec Belial; mélange indigne de la piété Chrétienne; union monstrueuse qui déshonore la vérité, la simplicité, la pureté incorruptible du Christianisme.*” Pascal never said anything stronger: yet it was no Jansenist who wrote these words, but Bossuet, who goes on in the next paragraph to condemn with equal severity the rigour of the Jansenists: Bossuet, the man of strong good sense and impartial justice—Bossuet, in his panegyric on the very theologian, who first extracted and denounced the *Five Propositions* of Jansenius, the Grand Master of the College of Navarre, Nicolas Cornet—Bossuet, himself a director, and not an extravagantly severe one, celebrating the praises of another director, “whom all France knew, for he was consulted by all France,”—a theologian of the “ancient mark,” as hostile to impracticable and “affected” rigour, as to laxity and “affected ignorance.” It was Nicolas Cornet, the enemy of Jansenism, who, according to Bossuet, showed himself equally implacable to those maxims, “*moitié profanes et moitié saintes, moitié Chrétiennes et moitié mondaines; ou plutôt toutes mondaines et toutes profanes, parce qu'elles ne sont qu'à demi-Chrétiennes et à demi-saintes.*”

“Nicolas Cornet,” he goes on to say, “n’a jamais trouvé belles aucunes des couleurs de la *Simonie*. . . . Il a condamné *l’usure* sous tous ses noms, et sous tous ses titres. Sa pudeur a toujours rougi de tous les *prétextes honnêtes des engagements déshonnêtes*, où il n’a épargné le fer et le feu pour éviter les périls des *occasions prochaines*. Les inventeurs trop subtils des *vaines contentions et questions de néant, qui ne servent qu’à faire perdre, parmi des détours infinis, la trace toute droite de la vérité*, lui ont paru, aussi bien qu’à S. Augustin, des hommes inconsidérés et volages — ‘*sufflantes pulverem et excitantes terram in oculos suos.*’ Ces *chicanes raffinées, ces subtilités en vaines distinctions*, sont véritablement de la poussière soufflée, de la terre dans les yeux, qui ne font que troubler la vue. Enfin il n’a écouté aucun expédient pour accorder l’esprit et la chair, entre lesquels nous avons appris que la guerre doit être immortelle.”\*

So wrote Bossuet in 1663. After an interval of many years, we find him still in the same mind. In the General Assembly of 1700 we find him urging, with all the earnestness and force of his character, the condemnation by the authority of the whole French Church of those “monstrous opinions, which had so long caused scandal to the Church and to Europe, and which offended the sanctity of Christian morality in its purest and most certain maxims;” and he adds that, “*Si, contre toute vraisemblance, et par des considérations qu’il ne voulait ni supposer ni admettre, l’Assemblée se refusait à prononcer un jugement digne de l’Eglise Gallicane, SEUL, il élèverait la voix dans un si pressant danger; SEUL, il révélerait à toute la terre une si honteuse prévarication; SEUL, il publierait la censure de tant d’erreurs monstrueuses.*”† Could Pascal have said more?

Bossuet saw a “*parti de la morale relâchée*” in the Church. He talked, as M. Maynard tells us, of “two dangerous maladies which had afflicted in his days the body of the Church—one an extreme severity; the other, *une malheureuse et inhumaine complaisance, qui a pris quelques docteurs, une pitié meurtrière, qui leur a fait porter des coussins sous les*

\* Bossuet, “Oraison Funèbre de Nicolas Cornet,” 1663, vol. xi. pp. 201. 203.

† Bausset, “Hist. de Bossuet,” l. xi. No. 7.

*coudes de pécheurs, chercher des couvertures à leurs passions, pour condescendre à leur vanité, et flatter leur ignorance affectée.*" And where did he find these doctors, whom, at the close of his career, he thought it his duty to impeach before the assembled Clergy of France? M. Maynard shall interpret Bossuet's words, for he named no one.\* It was among the Jesuits—the Jesuits, whom as an order he honoured, and among whom he had many friends.

But was it fair to lay all this on the Jesuits? It is true that Pascal attacked as peculiar to the Jesuits a system of casuistry run to seed, which was pursued by theologians of other orders; and which was at least highly respected by the authorities of the Church. But it is true also, that no order did so much with it as the Jesuits. No order pursued it so systematically, with so much zest, and such unintermitting purpose.† It was one of their instruments in gaining that reputation of which no order ever made such parade,—the reputation for skill in directing consciences. They had no right to complain that the "*Praxis secundum Societatis Jesu,*" should be presented in as prominent and strong a light by others, as the boasts of the "*Imago primi sæculi*" had been by themselves. They had no right to decline the odium of representing casuistry, who had claimed its first honours.

M. Maynard starts, as we see, with denying *in toto* the

\* "These ideas prevailed in the Assembly of 1700—a great number of propositions were there denounced as being the doctrine of a party dangerous to Catholic morality. This was, on the part of the Jansenists of the Assembly, a lie; a mistake, and blind acquiescence, on the part of the rest, and even of Bossuet. How could Bossuet have said, that, if people spoke against Jansenism, without at the same time repressing the errors of the other party, the manifest iniquity of so visible a partiality would make men despise such a judgment, and think that there was the wish to spare half the evil? . . . What was this *other party*? Bossuet talked, indeed, of *priests and religions, of all orders and all habits*, but he used the words as a blind; and, in spite of this prudent generalisation, no one could be understood but the Jesuits, who alone had been the subjects of discussion for half a century, and whose authors had furnished nearly all the propositions submitted to the censure. It is true that Louis XIV. forbade the mention by name of the Jesuits in the censure, but all the world understood perfectly well who was meant."—Vol. i. pp. 185, 186.

† Ste. Beuve, vol. iii. p. 67.



historical fact of the corruption either of doctrine or morals. But we shall understand him better when we know the principles which guide his judgment. What Pascal thought once of putting into the mouth of his "*bon père*,"—"Accordez-moi ce principe, que la Société et l'Eglise courent même fortune, et je vous prouverai tout,"\*—expresses without irony M. Maynard's view. That the Jesuits could not have been wrong, he maintains, follows from the broad fact, that their doctrines were simply those of the Church. He states it as indisputable that what the Jesuits held, and their opponents attacked,—making allowance for open questions and individual mistakes, corrected as soon as noticed,—was but what every good Catholic now takes for granted. He lays down in strong terms, that in reality the "*Jesuits have no doctrine of their own*. They attach themselves *immovably to the decisions of the Church*; for the rest, either they follow the doctrines which are *most commonly authorised*, or, in case of a divergence of opinions, they embrace the sentiment which pleases each, in all the liberty of thought."†

Thus with the famous doctrine of Probability. As Pascal represents it, it is a curious perversion of the principle of authority—the application of it to legitimatise doubt and licence. M. Maynard states, as its characteristic rule, that you may follow the *less* probable, as well as the *less* safe side, provided it is *really* probable. Such a rule is obviously vague enough to admit any application, from the baldest truism to the most barefaced quibble. As expounded by Liguori, the S. Thomas of the modern school, it seems to be simply a theory to provide for and justify the natural and legitimate liberty of individual acts. It does not seem to come to more than that when a *law* is uncertain, a man is not bound to its most rigid sense, but is left freely to other guidance. It is a poor and clumsy theory, based on the application to human life in general, of the maxims of equitable interpretation of *law* between man and man, or subject and ruler. But it does not present the singular features of

\* Faugère, Fragments, vol. i. p. 297.

† Vol. i. p. 211.

Pascal's representation. It is otherwise, however, when we turn to the Casuists from whom he drew. There we recognise what he describes; there, what is prominent is, not the scope and purport of the theory, but the *practical idea and test of what is probable*, and its value in settling questions of conscience. There, the common sense rule of following a wiser or better man than ourselves when we can do nothing better, is turned into a universal and exclusive basis for conscience, and expanded into logical consequences. There we find it argued, that since it is prudent to trust those who are *in arte sua periti*, and to submit to the judgment of the wise and good, therefore it is prudent to follow Sanchez, and seventeen wise and good authors, whom he quotes, to prove the general maxim, that it is lawful in conscience to leave the *more* and follow the *less* probable opinion, even if it is less safe; that an opinion is *probable* which rests on a reason of some weight; that therefore the opinion of one good and learned doctor is probable, because such authority is not light but weighty; that one learned man may make his opinion, even to the unlearned who trusts him, more probable than the common opinion;—that the general opinion of the more recent authors cuts off, in general, appeal to older ones, as their vigilance is a sufficient guarantee that no error would be allowed to creep in;—that the same person may judge two opposite opinions equally probable.\* Many common sense ways of acting might indeed come under these rules; but it is equally plain, that thus broadly stated, as exclusive or leading rules of any man's mind, they will lead him a long way, at least from common sense. They *may* mean anything; and their writers take no trouble to show that they *do not* mean the "leaden rule" which they seem.

What does M. Maynard? He tells us that it was not a Jesuit but a Dominican invention, in 1598, which immediately was adopted universally in the Catholic schools, where all theologians were "*tenants passionés du Probabilisme.*" † He

\* Filliuc. Tr. xxi. c. 4. nn. 128—137. ("*Pénitencier du Pape à S. Pierre, et Casuiste en Chef du Saint-Office,*" Mayn. ii. 456.)

† Pascal might have seen a new illustration of its principles in the fact, that,

gives his own exposition of "Probabilism," guarding it by cautions as vague as its rules. He admits Pascal's quotations. He makes no attempt to disprove his inferences, or allow us to judge by extracts whether the tone and spirit of the originals seem against them. But he charges him generally with misrepresentation, and tells us that his own, the Jesuits', and Liguori's view are all one with that of the Church. It is rather hard upon Pascal, considering that the very "abuses" which the Church had to condemn were those which some Jesuits had allowed to pass current, and he had attacked.

"True Probabilism, which Pascal has so strangely misrepresented, confined within these limits, the Church has not condemned, nor will ever condemn; and recently she has yet further placed it out of the reach of any censure, by placing on her altars *S. Liguori*, who has, nevertheless, carried out its consequences to the very utmost.\* In fact, apart from certain propositions condemned in some Jesuit writers, who had themselves borrowed them from older authors, there is the greatest analogy between the theology of *S. Liguori* and that with which Pascal reproaches the Society; since both one and the other are based on Probabilism, regard the diversity of opinions as allowed, useful, and even necessary; and since, moreover, the holy bishop draws from these common principles, in the way of inference, a great number of the propositions condemned in the '*Petites Lettres*' as subversive of all morality. The Church has confined itself to restraining the abuses of Probabilism, by condemning those propositions which reduced to nothing the conditions of true probability, or extended the application of the system to matters to which it is inapplicable, or drew from it forced consequences. . . . But the Church has

according to *M. Maynard*, "there was no religious order from whence issued such solid dissertations against it," as from the Jesuits; yet when *Gonzalez* wanted to publish his, so warmly was the company in general attached to the opinion, that they would not permit him; and *Innocent XI.* interposed his supreme authority in vain, *pour vaincre les opiniâtres*; and even when *Gonzalez* became General of the Order, he had to publish not as General, but as an individual doctor.

\* "It is well known that in the process of canonisation all the writings of the person are examined with the most minute and most severe attention; and if there be found in them one single proposition contrary to the faith or sound morality, the cause proceeds no further, and is stopped for ever."—(*Maynard's note.*)

never touched Probabilism itself; and if the Assembly of 1700 has disapproved of it, it did not pass any censure on it."—Vol. i. pp. 197—199.

The Jesuits, M. Maynard maintains, never were,—never *would* be mistaken, except in the very best company in the Church. If they are wrong, he always takes care to say that they had *borrowed*. There is something quite amusing in the eagerness with which he transfers to the Church or her great doctors the responsibility of what Pascal attributes to the Jesuits. You cannot point out a reproach against the Jesuits,—seems to be constantly his language,—but I will find its match elsewhere, and that in the highest quarters. If the Jesuits are reproached for extravagant self-laudation in their book, "*Imago Primi Sæculi*," M. Maynard tells us that Franciscans and Dominicans were not only equally absurd, but impious, in the same way. After apologising for the legitimate enthusiasm and poetic feelings of the young Jesuits who composed it—a family trophy of the Order—and reprobating the "*cruelty*" "*qu'il y avait à se moquer de cette tendresse filiale des enfants pour leur mère, à flétrir ce bonheur de famille, à étouffer cette ardeur juvénile qui s'élançait avec tant de confiance vers le bel avenir*," &c., M. Maynard observes that Franciscans and Dominicans did worse without exciting remark:—

"Comment les Jansenistes ne voulurent-ils pas se souvenir des '*Conformités de la Vie de S. François à la Vie de Jésus-Christ*,' par F. Barthélemy de Pise, *ouvrage extravagant et même impie*; de l' '*Origo Seraphica Familiæ Franciscanæ*,' du Capucin Gonzague; des '*Entrailles de la Ste. Vierge pour l'Ordre des Frères Prêcheurs*,' du Dominicain Chouques? Mais sous ce rapport, comme sous tous les autres, ce qui était excusable, même légitime, chez les enfants de S. François ou de S. Dominique, était un crime chez les fils de Loyola."—Vol. i. p. 217.

There were Casuists, too, in the Church, he says, besides the Jesuits, and Casuists who said as strange things, though Pascal keeps it out of sight;—which, however, he scarcely did;—and the Jesuits did but follow out and perfect what

had high and abundant sanction elsewhere. The Père Daniel, says M. Maynard, was able, doubtless not without some zest, to substitute for the *Jesuit* quotations in the Fifth *Provinciale* names and extracts of *Dominicans*, their keen rivals. "*Rap-pelons-nous,*" he says, after Voltaire (and—if the question of *degree*, and of the organisation and power of the Jesuits, is set aside—with some truth), "*que les opinions reprochées aux Jésuites ne leur étaient point particulières, et qu'en leur substituant toutes les Universités de l'Europe, tous les ordres religieux qui existaient au dix-septième siècle, on aurait pu dire aussi bien des docteurs de Sorbonne, de Louvain, de Salam-panque, des religieux de S. Dominique et de S. François, tout ce que dit Pascal des Jésuites dans les Provinciales.*"\* Thus, for instance, when Pascal quotes from Escobar, how you may hear mass in a very short time, namely, "by hearing *different* portions of four masses simultaneously," M. Maynard, in reply, points out to us that we must not smile: the opinion of which this is a consequence was considerable enough to have a history and growth, and at last the honour of a special limitation. *Dignus vindice nodus.* Viewing it as he does, we shall see in it and the kindred questions, a logical following out of certain truth—mistaken, indeed, as it has turned out, but which seemed so undeniable to all the great theologians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, that no one ventured to oppose it except with the utmost hesitation. Thus Azor "*embraced with repugnance*" that "two successive halves made one mass,"—"entraîné, dit-il, par le nombre et le poids des autorités;" and those who, like the Jesuits Suarez and Lugo, resisted the torrent, looked with alarm at the array of great names against them. If it is not so now, it is because Innocent XI. proscribed it; since which time, no theologian has defended it. We may admire, in passing, the singular mode of thought which affects not to be able to see the right and wrong of such a question, except by going to the Pope's decision; and excuses the wrong opinion as quite defensible, till condemned by him.

\* Vol. i. p. 212.

“ Ces diverses décisions ne sont pas également absurdes. *Il a été longtemps reçu, parmi les théologiens, qu'on satisfaisait au précepte par l'audition successive de deux moitiés de messe ; et ce sentiment, quoique faux, n'a jamais été condamné. Puis on a prétendu que cela serait vrai quand même l'ordre des parties serait interverti. Enfin, par une mauvaise conséquence d'une doctrine certaine, qu'on peut satisfaire simultanément au précepte de l'audition de la messe et au précepte de la récitation de l'office divin, et d'une doctrine probable qu'on satisfait par l'audition d'une seule messe à une triple obligation, provenant, par exemple, du précepte ecclésiastique, d'un vœu, de la pénitence sacramentelle, on en est venu à soutenir qu'on pouvait simultanément entendre deux ou plusieurs parties de messe, ce qui détruit entièrement l'intégrité du sacrifice.* Cette doctrine a été proscrite par Innocent XI. (59<sup>me</sup> Prop.), [*Satisfacit præcepto Ecclesiæ de audiendo sacro qui duas ejus partes, imo quatuor, simul a diversis celebrantibus audit ;*] — et depuis aucun théologien ne l'a défendu. Mais elle était auparavant *fort commune, car on la trouve ainsi formulée dans presque tous les auteurs du seizième et du commencement du dix-septième siècle*, Soto, Navarre, Medina [Dominicans] et ceux même qui embrassent un sentiment contraire, comme les Jésuites Suarez et De Lugo, se montrent *effrayés* de l'autorité et du nombre de ses défenseurs. Remarquons pourtant qu'on n'en faisait l'application qu'au précepte de l'Eglise ; et que ses partisans eux-mêmes généralement en condamnaient la pratique.” — Vol. i. p. 439.

“ *O mon père !* ” cries Pascal, also *tout effrayé*, as he says, — and as a Frenchman well might be, — at the list of distinguished Casuists with extraordinary names cited by his *bon père*\* — “ *O mon père ! tous ces gens-là, étaient-ils Chrétiens ?* ” “ *Comment, Chrétiens !* ” is the tart reply ; “ *ne vous disais-je que ce sont les seuls par lesquels nous gouvernons aujourd'hui toute la Chrétienté ?* ” M. Maynard is not pleased with the joke. “ *Ces noms barroques,* ” he says, “ *que cite ici Pascal, et qu'il livre à la risée publique, sont ceux des docteurs encore estimés par tous les théologiens, de saints évêques, et même d'hommes de génie, comme Suarez.* ” There is truth and pertinence in the remark. It is Pascal

\* Lett. V,

against the great names of the Roman Church: he must be wrong, because he attacked them.

But it is convenient, in a conflict of diversified aspect, to have friends of different sorts, both too great to be attacked, and also not too great to be sacrificed; the one, to bear down charges in the general, the other, to carry them off when they become pressing, in the particular. Vasquez and Suarez may confound Pascal by their imposing authority; still there are quotations for which the other sort are useful. M. Maynard always thinks of Escobar and Bauny being obscure writers when he comes to some inconvenient quotation. "Bauny is not a *savant Casuiste*," he says testily, when Pascal's Jesuit, *ce stupide interlocuteur de Pascal*, describes him as "*pénétrant dans le pour et le contre d'une même question, et trouvant raison partout.*"\* Escobar is a *bonhomme, qui a trop, beaucoup trop écrit*. He gets quite impatient with such authorities. "*Encore Bauny! Que c'est ennuyeux.*" — "*Escobar, toujours Escobar, et rien qu'Escobar.*" What is Escobar, flanked by Bauny, to represent the society? In Escobar and Bauny, he finds all that it is necessary to give up. Not that this, after all, is very much; for the reason is always at hand, that their words are quoted by Pascal in an "*abstraction scandalisante*;" that the point of them was blunted by restrictions and conditions: that confessors knew what was meant; that they expressed themselves ill. But when Escobar decides that "a man may satisfy the Church precept by going to mass, with the intention also of indulging bad thoughts;" † or a "judge receive bribes to pay particular attention to a cause;" ‡ or "that a man may evade the law of fasting in certain cases, for the reason that no one is bound to alter the order of his meals;" § and when Bauny blunders into awkward vagueness about "*occasions prochaines*," || or says that if a man begs a soldier to beat his neighbour or burn his barn, he is not bound to compensation, because it is not his act — he not having *forced* the soldier to do it, whom nothing obliged but his own *bonté, douceur, facilité*,—M. Maynard gives up such decisions,

\* Vol. i. p. 284.

† Vol. i. p. 437.

‡ Vol. i. pp. 353. 351.

§ Vol. i. p. 231.

|| Vol. i. p. 236.

and laughs with Pascal \* at the *bonté* and *douceur* of the burner of barns,—“*for there is nothing else to be done.*” But he insists, that from such insignificant authorities no harm could ever come. The obvious answer is, that, whether absurd or not, they were popular. P. Bauny’s *Somme des Péchés*, a large book of a thousand pages †, was in a sixth edition. “*A qui la faute, si ce n’est à vous, qui lui avez donné sa célébrité?*” says M. Maynard, when Pascal talks of the many reprints of Escobar; there might possibly be some colour in the rejoinder, if we were not informed, on other authority, that, of the *forty-two* editions of Escobar, forty-one appeared *before*, and one *after*, the date of the *Provinciales*.‡

But even Escobar and Bauny M. Maynard is loth to resign to the cruelties of Pascal. “*Mon Dieu!*” he cries, “*la doctrine de Bauny fut-elle si relâchée,*” § that Pascal should risk the honour of the priesthood by revealing his eccentric decisions to the world? “*Nous avions pitié de ce pauvre père Bauny, si maltraité par Pascal, et qu’à notre grand regret nous serons obligé de condamner nous-mêmes en d’autres circonstances.*” So of Escobar, he draws a touching, and possibly a true picture, as of a man of boundless and not very accurate labour, undertaken with the kindest intentions; who, like many other good men, was perfectly unconscious that, with so much learning, he could say anything ridiculous or mischievous. It is at least a not improbable representation. Doubtless Escobar would never have written as he did, but for greater men than Escobar, who set the fashion and showed him the way. Escobar was obviously a man who would never have dreamed of going beyond the spirit or ideas of the atmosphere in which he worked, or the authorities who were his daily and nightly study, and in whom his profound admiration saw a counterpart to the Apocalyptic Vision. If he improved upon them,

\* Vol. i. p. 367.

† Vol. i. p. 293.

‡ “*La cherté ou du moins la curiosité s’y mit en effet. Escobar avait été imprimé quarante-et-une fois avant 1656 : il le fut une quarante-deuxième fois en 1656, grâce aux Provinciales.*”—*Ste. Beuve*, vol. iii. p. 52. *Hallam*, vol. ii. p. 500., speaks of forty editions, and gives the date 1646.

§ Vol. i. pp. 284, 285.



he had learned from those whom he surpassed the taste for improving on them. He could not understand what harm or what excess there could be in decisions which, in full accordance with a received system, he made in pure charity.\* He was astonished, we are told, at his *triste célébrité*. But he is none the worse a representative of what the system of speculating on morality, and that for the practical purposes of the confessional, had been allowed to come to. *He* showed the use that could be made of the Casuists, as Pascal's conversations show the use that could be made of himself, (for the *Père Jésuite* of the Letters is a dramatized Escobar), a use, which, as the historical facts of the period show, *was* made of them. And after all, even Escobar is an authority. "*Enfin Saint Liguori cite avec respect la plupart des Casuistes de Pascal, et même Escobar, l'homme aux vingt-quatre vieillards, et aux quatre animaux.*"†

In truth, it is ludicrous to suppose, that Escobar would have been allowed to go on writing, and booksellers to go on reprinting, these curious questions and answers, if he had said anything that was so very repugnant to the current notions of those in power, in the Order, or in the Church itself. Quite another account would have been given of him, if his licences and eccentricities had taken another turn, if he had spoken of the authority and sanctions of ecclesiastical precepts, as he did of the *way of satisfying* them; if he had taken the explanatory liberties with the Pope's divine right, which he did with modes of fasting and hearing mass, or had been as vague in his doctrine about transubstantiation as about "*occasions prochaines.*" Writers did not escape the censure, because they were small people. P. Bauny was, in fact, put in the *Index*. As for him, *ce pauvre Père Bauny*, "*ce bon père, si commode, dont on disait, en le voyant, Ecce qui tollit peccata mundi!*" it must be said that he snapped his fingers at the *Index*: "*Qu'a de commun,*" he said, "*la censure de Rome avec celle de France?*" a remark which, as M. Maynard informs us, "*tient à un principe Gallican, que nous n'aimons pas, mais toléré par Rome elle-même,*

\* Vol. ii. p. 454.

† Vol. i. p. 208.

que l'*Index* n'oblige pas en France." But, according to M. Maynard's view, it was mainly his Erastianism, not his laxity, that led to P. Bauny's condemnation at Rome:—

" Ici on doit remarquer qu'un livre est quelquefois mis à l'*Index* pour une simple formalité omise dans l'impression, ou bien pour quelque principe peu conforme à certaines maximes des Casuistes d'Italie, par exemple, celui du P. Bauny touchant la juridiction des officiers civils sur les clercs; et il paraît qu'on apporta ce motif pour presser la censure de la Somme des Péchés; ce qui n'empêche pas cependant que cet ouvrage ne soit condamnable à d'autres égards, et ne renferme quelques propositions relâchées qui lui valurent la réprobation des évêques de France."—Vol. i. p. 148.

Thus, according to M. Maynard, the Jesuits held nothing but what the Church holds, and therefore have a right to throw their responsibility on her. But the most important point yet remains. What does he tell us of the standard itself, to which he brings these doctrines? In the Letters, an easy theory of religion is contrasted with a strict one. Does M. Maynard mean that the Jesuit theory could not have been the easy one, because it was that of the Church; or that, though it was an easy one, it must be right, because it is of that of the Church? We must think that M. Maynard has been more resolute in ascribing the Jesuit doctrines to the Church, than successful in disproving that these doctrines were what are usually accounted easy ones.

It is suspicious at starting to find M. Maynard sympathising so strongly with the devotional works criticised by Pascal. He reminds us indeed, that the Jesuits had produced something better. But what appeared to Pascal sentimental trifling, or a substitution of childish superstition to S. Mary for real religion, appears to M. Maynard as the very counterpart of modern piety. If he had retorted on Pascal, in return for the cruel immortalising of the "*Dévotion Aisée*" and the poet of "*Delphine*," that, after all, his wit had been spent on a poor ordinary theological fop of an age of bad taste, a harmless and smirking hanger-on at tea-tables, to find them in divinity and wit, it would have been

intelligible, if not fair. Not so, however, M. Maynard. On taste and theology both, he is at issue with Pascal. P. Le Moyne, he thinks, with a little less exuberance of imagination and language, "might have become a great poet." He cannot see, what he so happily terms, the "*ton musqué et galant*" of Pascal's quotations. The "*Dévotion Aisée*" is *aimable, charmant, délicieux*; its language *ravissant*; its histories like the *doux babil d'un enfant*.\* When P. Le Moyne said, that, by the rules of true devotion, virtue had been made "*plus facile que le vice, et plus aisée que la volupté*," and "*le simple vivre incomparablement plus malaisé que le bien vivre*," he spoke of the joys of a good conscience, and the pains of vice and ambition. When he sneered at melancholy devotees, who thought of nothing but a dreary asceticism, he meant Port-Royal. We can only say, that it shows that P. Le Moyne and M. Maynard are kindred spirits.

P. Barry's book, "*Le Paradis ouvert à Philagie par cent Dévotions à la Mère de Dieu*," he gives up, in a literary point of view; but, on the other hand, its spirit, its theology, the

\* "Le livre de la Dévotion Aisée, du Père Le Moine, est un aimable et charmant petit livre; après les ouvrages de Saint François de Sales, nous n'en connaissons pas de plus délicieux, ni de plus encourageant pour la faiblesse humaine. Aussi ce livre fût-il parfaitement accueilli; et dès son apparition, le goût public lui fit une célébrité. Le Père Le Moine n'était pas seulement un saint religieux, mais un homme d'esprit, et un homme du monde. Il parlait à ceux qu'il voulait amener à la pratique de la dévotion, le seul langage qu'il convint de leur tenir. Ce langage fut entendu, le petit livre fut dévoré sans que personne se sentit du poison qu'il contenait; le Jansénisme fut jaloux de ce succès. La facilité de cette dévotion ne consiste pas à lui allier des choses coupables ou dangereuses, mais à montrer qu'elle peut s'unir à toutes les conditions honnêtes de la vie, et qu'elle n'est pas incompatible avec les joies et les plaisirs qu'avoue la vertu . . . *que la religion n'est pas essentiellement cette Thébaïde, ces terreurs, ces desespoirs que rêvait le Jansénisme*, mais que si quelques-uns sont appelés à cette *sombre perfection*, les autres peuvent se sanctifier dans des conditions communes. Pouvaient-ils dire autre chose aux gens de monde! et ce langage, n'est-il *pas plus propre à faire des Chrétiens que la morale alambiquée dans St. Cyran*? . . . Pour nous, nous aimons ce petit livre, et parcequ'il peut faire du bien à beaucoup d'âmes, et parcequ'il est un véritable curiosité littéraire; nous aimons ces histoires naïves qui ressemblent au doux babil d'un enfant s'entretenant avec son père, et nous ne songeons pas à jeter une pédante critique au-devant de notre admiration. . . . Nous plaignions les esprits revêches et farouches de Port-Royal, de *n'avoir pu goûter ce qui nous paraît si charmant et si gracieux*." — Vol. i. pp. 395—404.

devotional practices which it recommends, — some of them, says M. Maynard, of such simplicity, that they make us smile, *esprits forts* that we are, but all authorised by the example of some great saint, — are most edifying. The following shows the principle on which he answers Pascal : —

“Pascal voudrait-il dire que le Père Barry, dans son aveugle confiance, a présenté des pratiques toutes matérielles comme des moyens infaillibles de sanctification, sans qu’il fut nécessaire d’y joindre le *plus petit mouvement* de cœur, le *moindre effort* de la volonté? Il l’insinue méchamment; mais c’est une calomnie. ‘*Donnez tout le cœur à la Mère d’amour, dit Barry, avec protestation qu’aucune créature ne le possédera.*’ Et que fait-il autre chose en tout son livre, sinon inviter Philagie à consacrer à Marie toutes ses puissances intérieures? Et dans l’endroit même où Pascal est allé chercher *ce petit esclave* si attaché aux créatures, Barry s’écrie: ‘Donnez-lui votre cœur sans partage, tel qu’il est, et dites-lui ce peu de paroles:’— (suit une consécration à la Ste Vierge, où le cœur est donné sans réserve et avec une effusion charmante.)”— Vol. i. p. 391.

Undoubtedly Père Barry recommends us to consecrate our whole heart to S. Mary, — in words, it may be observed, than which no higher can be imagined to express devotion of ourselves to God; but this is no disproof of Pascal’s charge, that, in default of this consecration, something as short of it, as saluting her image, or pronouncing her name, will avail. So Père Binet’s little book is, it seems, quite an anticipation of modern ideas and feelings : —

“At the moment when the arduous and overwhelming questions of predestination were agitated in the theological world, the Père Binet thought, with reason, that he would do better to leave on one side all these disputes, in which we may lose faith without ever deriving from them a virtue, in order to point out the practical means of arriving at eternal salvation; and he composed his book, entitled *Marque de Prédestination*, which he dedicated to Cardinal Bellarmine. Among all the means of salvation he chose the devotion to the Holy Virgin. *This book seems to have been written for our age, and to contain a sort of prophecy of the wonders which we have seen accomplished in our days by the*

*devotion to Mary.* ‘When all the world was lost,’ says Binet, in his first page, ‘God sent Mary on the earth, and by her He gave us Jesus Christ, the author of all our good. Now that all the world seems rushing to its ruin, nothing can assure us so much as *that the devotion of this worthy Mother of God should begin to flourish again in the Church, and that by her intercession God should be favourable to us, and inflame our hearts again.*’ All this, it appears, did not please Port-Royal, which preferred plunging into the abysses of grace and predestination rather *than simply committing itself to the hands of Mary.* Port-Royal did not openly condemn the devotion to the Holy Virgin, but as this has something affectionate and tender, which suited not with its doctrines, it preferred a terror, a trembling before God. Consequently, *with reference to certain books which spoke of the worship of the Holy Virgin, as we all speak of it, we Christians in 1851, Port-Royal set itself to ridicule certain simple practices,* not seeing that impiety would gather up its sarcasms, to turn them against all devotion. Port-Royal it is which has torn from us that simple confidence, that childhood of faith, those sweet tears of prayer, which are to our critical minds and dried-up hearts, but a charming recollection, when they are not an object of ridicule. We have read Père Binet’s little book, and without blushing we confess that it has interested us. To prove his thesis that devotion to the Holy Virgin is a great mark of predestination, he goes through all the figures of the Bible, all the passages of sacred literature and of the Fathers, where there is allusion to the greatness, powers, and the mercies of Mary. He develops especially that thought, familiar to S. Bernard, that God has given us everything by her, and that this order is henceforth unchangeable; that she is our advocate and our patroness, and that her true servants cannot perish.”—Vol. i. pp. 391—393.

Whether there are not differences between what is childlike and what is childish in religion; whether it matters or not, *how and on what object,* the religious affections are exercised, so that they *are* exercised; whether it be right or not to encourage religious practices and belief by what is apocryphal, must still remain questions while the divisions of Christendom remain. But it can be no question whether what Pascal, as a Roman Catholic, repudiates as a degrading self-deceit, M. Maynard, as a Roman Catholic, accepts both as beautiful in

spirit, and as the acknowledged devotional idea of his own time.

From worship and devotion let us go to practice. The following is an incidental sketch, by one who had good means of observing, of the religion of the day in the time of Louis XIV. It seems to be the echo of Pascal's interpretation of the "*Dévotion Aisée*," and the "*Paradis Ouvert*," as opening to the world, "*des moyens d'assurer son salut, assez faciles, assez sûrs, et en assez grand nombre.*"

"J'ai appris avec beaucoup de plaisir que M. le Comte de Gramont a recouvré sa première santé, et acquis une dévotion nouvelle. Jusqu'ici, je me suis contenté grossièrement d'être homme de bien; il faut faire quelque chose de plus; et je n'attends que votre exemple pour être dévot. *Vous vivez dans un pays où l'on a de merveilleux avantages pour se sauver. Le vice n'y est guère moins opposé à la mode qu'à la vertu. Pécher, c'est ne savoir pas vivre, et choquer la bienséance autant que la religion.* Ceux qui n'ont pas assez de considération pour l'autre vie sont conduits au salut par les égards et les devoirs de celle-ci. C'en est assez sur une matière où la conversion de M. de Gramont m'a engagé: je la crois sincère et honnête. Il sied bien à un homme qui n'est pas jeune d'oublier qu'il l'a été."

The passage is from a letter to the notorious Ninon de l'Enclos, from Saint-Évremond, the old favourite of Ninon and of Marion Delorme, the master of gay and easy philosophy in the Court of Charles II., and of whom, in proof, we must observe, of his religion, his biographer\* writes, that "though very worldly in his morality, he had always held it as a principle to respect religion, and made outward profession of the Catholic faith. He would never allow it to be turned into a matter of pleasantry." †

\* Biog. Univ.—"*Saint-Évremond.*"

† "La seule bienséance," he said, "et le respect qu'on doit à ses concitoyens, ne le permettait pas." The writer quotes the passage we have given, as a proof of his religion, and proceeds to add, that if we could have any doubts "on the subject of his religion, his will would dispel them, in which he 'implores the mercy of God,' and leaves a pious legacy for poor Catholics;" and then cites the following verses of S. Évremond on himself:—

Whatever doubt there may be as to the meaning of making "*la dévotion plus facile que le vice, et plus aisée que la volupté,*" in the mouth of a priest, there can be little — whether it be irony or earnest — about its meaning in the mouth of a wit. Yet when M. Maynard wants to convey what he considers a just and true view of religious strictness, in contrast to the rigour and Puritanism of Port-Royal, he goes to seek it in a dialogue between Saint-Évremond and one of his friends: —

"Elles font,"—says D'Aubigny to Saint-Évremond, in the conversation between them in Saint-Évremond's works, speaking of the doctrines of Port-Royal,—"*Elles font une violence éternelle à la nature; elles ôtent de la religion ce qui nous console; elles y mettent la crainte, la douleur, le désespoir. Les Jansénistes, voulant faire des saints de tous les hommes, n'en trouvent pas dix dans un royaume, pour faire des Chrétiens tels qu'ils les veulent. Le Christianisme est divin, mais ce sont des hommes qui le reçoivent; et quoi qu'on fasse, il faut s'accommoder à l'humanité. Une philosophie trop austère fait peu de sages; une politique trop rigoureuse peu de bons sujets; une religion trop dure, peu d'âmes religieuses qui le soient long temps. Rien n'est durable, qui ne s'accommode à la nature. La grâce dont nous parlons tant, s'y accommode elle-même; Dieu se sert de la docilité de notre esprit, et de la tendresse de notre cœur, pour se faire recevoir et se faire aimer. Il est certain que les docteurs trop rigides donnent plus d'aversion pour eux que pour les péchés. La pénitence qu'ils prêchent fait préférer la facilité qu'il y a de demeurer dans le vice, aux difficultés qu'il y a d'en sortir.*"—Vol. i. p. 202.

Here is a man of the world's view of religion, and the wisdom of this world speaks in it. It was, no doubt, the view of the Court of Louis XIV. M. Maynard offers it as the view of the Church. It is a strange way of expressing the indul-

"De justice et de charité,  
Beaucoup plus que de pénitence,  
Il compose sa piété.  
Mettant en Dieu sa confiance,  
Espérant tout de sa bonté,  
Dans le sein de la Providence  
Il trouve son repos et sa félicité."

gence and condescension of religion. This, says M. Maynard, the Jansenists ignored; and we believe that it is partly true. But if the Jansenists, in reviving the old ideas about penitence, forgot that the Gospel had an indulgent side, those whom they opposed seem to have forgotten that it has a stern one; and, what is more, M. Maynard, at this day, in his defence of them, forgets it too. If the Jansenists spoke to all the world the same language, and bound weak as well as strong to counsels of perfection, most assuredly the Casuists spoke as if the mass of Christians were dispensed from all but the veriest shadows of religion, and as if it were necessary to the success of religion that the "gate" should be declared to be *not* "strait," and the "way" *not* "narrow." And the theologian of the nineteenth century tells us that they were right.

Let us take first M. Maynard's view of perhaps the most prominent feature of the Roman practical system — their system of penitence.

The great point with the Port-Royalist directors was, that penitence to be effectual must be real and searching; and that the sacraments without this effectual penitence availed nothing. Here M. Maynard sees the root of their error. In opposition to it he thus states the Jesuit principle: —

"Understanding a little better the redemption of love, the admirable economy of the Sacraments, those sacred channels which place us in communication with the source of divine graces, *the Jesuits urged men to the participation of the divine mysteries, with the same ardour as the Jansenists displayed in turning them away.* They were convinced, with the Church, that nowhere else was there succour for the weakness, or medicine for the wounds, of the soul. *Jansenism abandoned man to his own resources,* while it looked on his faculties as annihilated by sin. The Jesuits, more consistent, bade him walk with God, and borrow continually from the treasures prepared by God's mercy, the supply needed by his own powers, weakened indeed, but not destroyed. Men, gifted at once with a practical sense of life, and with a boundless charity, on the one hand *they dreamed not of a chimerical perfection, and thought not of transforming the world into a Thebaid, and driving all Christians into the desert:* and on the other, they repelled no



one, offering themselves to heal the deepest wounds of the soul, as well as its ailings and its weaknesses, making themselves 'all things to all men,' like S. Paul, and feeling themselves obliged to continue the ministry of the Master, who came not to call the righteous, but sinners.'

"Persuaded that the sinner, if no one holds out a hand, will plunge deeper and deeper into vice, and fall soon into an irrevocable impenitence, they were eager to snatch him from evil, *to interrupt, at least, his sinful habits, to give him, by some act of virtue, a taste of the virtue which he knows not. They did not demand, for admission to reconciliation, those interior dispositions, which even the most perfect do not always attain, and which consequently are to him well-nigh impossible, in his state of sin and disfavour with God; but only that he should actually place no obstacle in the way of the effect of the Sacrament, whatever might be his future miserable falls, ('quelles que dussent être ses misères futures');* and they left to grace the care of fortifying his weakness, of rendering his backslidings, at first less frequent, then rare, till he should arrive in due time at a perfect conversion, and the sinner become a saint.

"It was possible to abuse this charitable tolerance; who doubts it? Men might sometimes find in the facility of pardon an encouragement to vice; who denies it? But the evil was the exception in this system of direction, while it was the good which was the exception in that of the Jansenists. *For one sinner who changed the divine remedy into poison, a thousand found in it recovery and life; for one sinner who would consent to follow the long and painful way opened by Jansenism to reconciliation, a thousand refused to take the first step, and excusing themselves on the ground of the impossibility of virtue, fixed their permanent abode in vice, or fell into despair.*

"It is not necessary to be a theologian, nor even a Christian, to understand that: it is enough to be a man, and therefore, we leave with confidence to men of the world who may read us, the business of pronouncing between Jansenius and Loyola."

The appeal to men of the world on a question of strictness of direction is curious. But we would not have M. Maynard too sure of their verdict. They admire strictness, in theory, at least; and they might, moreover, be apt to think that, if confession and penance cannot be worked on a large scale

strictly and really, without driving the masses from the altar, or "to hang themselves,"\* they may be dispensed with on a large scale altogether. And what, in fact, was the case in that seventeenth century, when the "Jesuits had *the monopoly of direction*, which they held exclusively of the public confidence?" † M. Maynard asks indeed, "*Does any one believe that morals were more relaxed at the time when Probabilism was the doctrine of nearly all the schools, than in our own, when we hypocritically protest against it?*" ‡ and observes,— "*Quant aux hommes de bien, qu'importe un système spéculatif? . . . Nous concluons donc hardiment que ces systèmes de morale, dont on peut éternellement disputer, n'ont aucune influence sérieuse sur la conduite de la vie.*" But it is he who tells us, that this was such an epoch of licentiousness and impiety, that it is a fair argument against the reality of the feeling raised by Pascal on the subject of the bad maxims, "*that there was not sufficient moral sense left to be really revolted by them.*" § If the fact were not notorious, we should learn even from him of the steady progress of irreligion throughout the seventeenth century—of Père Mersenne's || calculation of the number of atheists in 1623,—60,000 in France, 50,000 in Paris, 12 in a single house; of the "hypocritical reserves which the severe and morose piety" of the great pupil of the Jesuits, "Louis XIV., as he grew old, imposed on profligacy;" and how to these "hypocritical reserves," and this "severe and morose piety," succeeded the days of the Regent Orleans and Louis XV.—days of blasphemy and abomination, probably never equalled since the world was made. We must add, however, that he lays this to the account of the Provincial Letters!

Such is the broad principle on which the Jesuit system of direction is defended. To make penitence a work which may alarm the half-hearted, is not only sneered at as "*transforming the world into a Thebaid*," but plainly stated to be an intentional blow at religion; and to urge on men in general the *moral* discipline of religion, is to deny the grace, and

\* As P. Caussin said; *vide* Provinc. x<sup>mo</sup>. See below, p. 536, *note*.

† Vol. i. p. 34. ‡ Vol. i. p. 200. § Vol. i. p. 203. || Vol. i. p. 61.

abolish the use of the Sacraments—to “abandon man to his own resources.” Indeed, as to what was, *in fact*, the Jesuit principle, there is little difference between Pascal and M. Maynard.\*

Accordingly the Jesuits' great boast was that they had made confession popular by their system. They had won back to the Roman Church that *prestige* of popular religion which for a time the Reformation had claimed. “We are overwhelmed,” they say in the *Imago Primi Sæculi*,—*obruimur*,—“by the number of penitents.” With a confidence only equalled by Luther's *Pecca fortiter*, and at least equally likely to be misunderstood, they protest that—singular change in this sinful world of ours!—men had become more eager to confess than to commit sin, “*Alacrius multo atque ardentius scelera jam expiantur quam ante solebant committi.*” Nothing was more common, “*nil magis moribus receptum,*” than monthly or weekly confession. Many “*no sooner contract a stain than they wash it out.*” Here is an account, indeed, of a popular religion, which M. Maynard does not except to—“*les jeunes Jésuites vantent avec raison,*” he says—though he charges Pascal, as usual, with “*falsifying*” it, not because he misquotes it, but because he gives a reason for it.†

But how was this brought about? What was that “*pie-*

\* “Take away,” he says, “from the following statement, the exaggeration, the tone of irony, the spiteful insinuations, and you will have in fact the principle of the Jesuits in the conduct of souls,”—the principle which he tells us is the principle of the Church. “Alas!” says the *bon père*, in the *Sixth Provinciale*,—“alas! it would have been our first object to establish no maxims but those of the Gospel in all their strictness: and it may be seen sufficiently by the regularity of our own morals, that if we suffer some laxity in others, it is rather by condescension than by design. We are forced to it. Men are now so corrupt, that since we cannot make them come to us, we must go to them; otherwise they would leave us: they would do worse, they would give themselves up altogether. And it is to keep hold on them, that our Casuists have taken into consideration the vices to which men are most inclined, in all conditions of life, in order to establish maxims so mild, without at the same time doing violence to truth, that persons must be hard to please if they are not satisfied with them; for the leading design, which our Society has in view for the good of religion, is not to repel any one, whoever he may be, in order not to drive the world to despair.”—Vol. i. 272.

† Provinc. x<sup>me</sup>. vol. ii. p. 10.

*tatis sollertia,*" that "*religiosa calliditas,*" of which the Jesuits boasted? "*Pieuses et saintes finesses,*" "*artifices de dévotion,*" "*adoucissements de confession;*"—these are Pascal's interpretations. "*Admirables paroles!*" on the contrary, says M. Maynard, "*qui n'expriment pas d'autres subtilités, ou d'autres finesses que celles de Jésus-Christ mêmes.*"\* What Pascal denounces as irreligious, M. Maynard accepts as necessary and Catholic.

Thus, the Jesuit authorities cited by Pascal seem only intent on removing every obstacle to the facility of absolution. Filiucci tells the confessor, among other things, that if his penitent does not show sufficient signs of sorrow for his sins, he has only to ask him, whether he does not detest sin from his heart; and if he answers *yes*, the confessor may set his mind at rest about absolving him. This sounds loose, without some further proof of the penitent's sincerity. But M. Maynard, though he quarrels with Pascal's use of the passages, and tells us, what is true, that Filiucci and his brethren say something besides this still allows that they do say this, and justifies it. "*Nothing proves that the penitent has any affection for sin. You have believed his confession, why not believe his promises?*" "*Disons enfin, que dans la pratique on est souvent obligé d'en agir ainsi. Pascal pouvait l'ignorer; mais les prêtres d'expérience, les missionnaires surtout, le savent bien.*" † So, again, Suarez and Filiuci are quoted as saying:—

"That, 'the priest is obliged to believe his penitent on his word,' and, 'that it is not necessary that the confessor should persuade himself that the resolution of his penitent will be fulfilled, nor that he himself judge that it probably will; but it is enough that he think that he has at the moment the intention in general, though he may relapse in a very short time.' And it is thus that all our authors teach: *Ita docent omnes autores.*"—(Prov. x<sup>me</sup>.)

On which the comment is:—

"It is, alas! but too certain that the confessor must often act thus, under the alternative of reconciling sinners but rarely, and leaving them to wallow in their vicious habits. But, by the grace of absolution (which is supposed to be always given, in cases of

\* Vol. ii. p. 10.

† Vol. ii. p. 19.

sufficient disposition), relapses will soon become less frequent, and the conversion finish by being complete.”\*

Even the startling sentiment, that “absolution may be given to him who avows that the hope of being absolved had led him to sin with more ease than if he had not had the hope,” is thus explained:—

“*Encore Bauny! que c'est ennuyeux!* These quotations are made up of passages taken right and left, at the interval of several folio columns. *N'importe, c'est à peu près cela.* Only Bauny adds: So that the penitent, affected with necessary sorrow, brings to confession the plan of living better: ‘*ce qui ne veut pas dire pourtant, nous l'avouons, qu'il ne soit un peu relâché.*’ But it is not less true, that absolution frequently repeated will often be the only mode of rescuing a sinner from vicious habits. *The friends of God* are much stronger than his foes against their passions. *The return to grace* is itself a first victory, which will soon lead to a decisive triumph. *There may be exceptions to this rule;* this is unquestionable; but all must be left to the prudence of the confessor.”—Vol. ii. pp. 22, 23.

A curious light, this, thrown incidentally on the actual working of one of the seemingly strictest parts of the Roman system. We shall understand this better, when we examine M. Maynard's way of dealing with the subject of contrition and the love of God. Pascal quotes from P. Pinthereau the sentiment that “all the Jesuit fathers teach, with one consent, that it is an error, and almost a heresy, to say that *contrition* is necessary, and that *attrition* alone, even conceived by the mere dread of the pains of hell, but excluding the will to sin, is not sufficient with the sacrament” of absolution. The pithy comment on this is “*C'est vrai.*” “What, almost an article of faith!” cries Pascal; “every one else has required at least some love of God to be mixed with this ‘attrition.’” “P. Pinthereau,” says the comment, “*does not deny it;* but still this will be short of *contrition.*” †

What is *contrition*, then, that a Christian may do without it and be justified? What degree of sanctity is it that makes it *more than necessary* for men in general? It is sorrow for sin, which is distinguished from the lower form

\* Vol. ii. p. 22.

† Vol. ii. pp. 27, 28.

of *attrition*, by proceeding from, and being joined with, a true and hearty love of God. This true and hearty love of God may vary in degree; but where it exists in any real sense, there is contrition.\* *Attrition* is the sorrow which springs from the fear of punishment, a disgust at sin, and, though mixed with an “inchoate love,” it is distinctly said to want real *charity*, or love of God. And the approved Roman doctrine is, we are informed, that a man whose sole motive for being sorry for his sins is the fear of their punishment, and who has nothing but the *motion* to love God, but no true love of Him, *requires* no other frame of mind to fit him for pardon, but is,—and knows certainly that he is,—when he receives the sacrament of Absolution, actually and truly forgiven and justified. The doctrine is, not that he is *in the way*, or may *hope* to be forgiven—but, that he *is* forgiven; justification is given him, not in promise or foretaste, but in actual possession.

“It is certain that attrition suffices with the Sacrament for the justification of the sinner. Theologians were still disputing on this point at the end of the sixteenth century, the Council of Trent not having decided anything. But the Jansenist doctrine on the *necessity* of contrition justifying by itself, drew afresh the attention of theologians to this important question; and at this day, *it would be almost a heresy*, as P. Pinthereau said, to maintain the insufficiency of attrition, even arising from the sole motive of the pains of hell, provided that it be accompanied by a beginning of love of God, considered as the source of all justice.”—Vol. ii. p. 29.

The reason assigned for this doctrine is a remarkable one.

\* *Contrition* is defined by the Council of Trent, as “*Animi dolor ac detestatio de peccato commisso, cum proposito non peccandi de cætero*,” and stated to be a necessary part of the sacrament of Penance. But the later Theologians—*e. g.* Liguori—hold that the word is a *generic* one, and comprehends, 1. *Perfect contrition*, which arises “*ex motivo charitatis*.” 2. *Imperfect contrition*, which is called *attrition*, “which is conceived either from a view of the foulness of sin, or the fear of hell, excluding the will to sin, and including the hope of pardon;” but having only “*amor inchoatus*,” which is different in kind, not only in degree, from the *true love of God*, “*charitas prædominans*,” which, whether more or less intensely, loves God above the creature. “*Nos non negamus requiri in attritione initium amoris, sed dicimus tantum non requiri charitatem prædominantem*.”—*Liguori, Hom. Apost. Tr. xvi. c. 2. No. 8. 14.*

It is, according to Liguori, that contrition, *loving* sorrow, justifies of itself, *without* and *before* the sacrament of Absolution \*; and that, therefore, as the sacrament does also of itself justify, it must require, as a previous disposition, *something less* than is sufficient to justify independently of it. If *contrition*, which implies charity, were necessary, the sacrament would never cause grace, or justify; for the simple reason, that those who came fitly to it, would come already justified. Contrition, he says, is a "formal act of charity," which loves God above all things, and which, therefore, according to innumerable passages of Scripture, cannot be joined with sin; "since, therefore, it is certain that the love which loves God above all things, whatever it be in degree, (*charitatem prædominantem quamvis remissam*), cannot be joined with sin, it is certain that *any sort of contrition*, being formally an act of charity, takes away sins." There would, therefore, be no room left for the proper and real office of the sacrament in justifying, if we suppose that it required a disposition of such intrinsic efficacy as contrition. And M. Maynard does not shrink from the Jesuit's startling conclusion, quoted by Pascal as the *ne plus ultra* of nonsense and laxity joined, "*Que la contrition n'est point du tout nécessaire pour obtenir l'effet*

\* "Sacramenta actualiter operantur quod significant; unde verificari debet (ex se loquendo) quod cum sacerdos dat absolutionem, eo momento peccata remittuntur. . . Si ergo in dolore necessario requiritur charitas prædominans, sacramentum nunquam causaret gratiam, quia omnes accederent jam justificati; nam quilibet dolor qui ex charitate prædominante procedit est vera contritio, ut docet S. Thomas; et hoc accidit quoties homini displicet potius gratiæ quam alterius boni amissio; et cum illa sit vera contritio, quamvis exiguus sit dolor, delet peccata." . . . "*Omnem culpam delet*," says S. Thomas; and again, "*Per solam contritionem dimittitur peccatum, . . . si antequam absolvitur habeat hoc sacramentum in voto, jam virtus clavium operatur in ipso*." The love of God spoken of in Scripture cannot, in its lowest degree, be joined with sin; and in its lowest degree is different from that "beginning of it" which may be with attrition." "Si autem in attritione desideraretur amor inchoatus, qui sit principium, amoris . . . hoc non negatur, et dicimus hoc initium jam in qualibet attritione reperiri, tum metu poenarum a Deo infligendarum ("*Timor Dei initium delectionis*"), tum spe remissionis et beatitudinis." But a "verus charitatis prædominantis actus" is not necessary. Of course, even with contrition, the "will to fulfil all righteousness," involves the desire of the sacrament. — *Liguori, Hom. Ap. Tr. xvi. c. 2. No. 16.*

*principal du Sacrement (i. e. justification), mais au contraire, elle y est plutôt un obstacle: 'imo obstat potius quominus effectus sequatur.'*"\*

The doctrine, too, is a curious case of a doctrine developing from a vagueness which gave an advantage to the stricter interpretation, to a clearness which took it away. The process, as given in Liguori, may be compared with Pascal's account of the growth of *probable opinions*.† A General Council left things in doubt. A Pope, while forbidding either side to censure or insult the other, dropped the admission that the opinion of one was the common opinion of the schools. A moral theologian, whom the Church has canonized, drew the inference, that since the Pope had attested that this *was* the common opinion of the schools, it had become the *morally certain* one, and therefore the opposite the *improbable* one, which no doctor may embrace. "The Pope's decree," he remarks, "does not forbid the opposite opinion to be called *improbable*; for improbability is not a note of censure or contumely forbidden by the decree." And, at last, the public is informed by dignified ecclesiastics, as a matter of notoriety, that it has become "*presque une hérésie*" to hold it.‡

\* No doubt, this was a technical way of saying, not that it hinders *justification*, but that it hinders justification from *being the effect* of a particular cause, i. e. the *Sacrament*: i. e. even supposing that the separate effect of these two causes could be exactly discriminated, the most startling and monstrously paradoxical way of expressing the distinction, and the one which dealt with these awful mysteries as if they were mechanical forces, the one which tempted and solicited misunderstanding in the most deeply practical matters, was coolly preferred and set down, without remark. M. Maynard's comment is, "*C'est très vrai, puisqu'alors le pécheur est déjà justifié, que le Sacrement n'a plus rien à faire sous ce rapport principal, et qu'il ne peut en augmenter la grâce sanctifiante.*" Accordingly, he charges the Jansenists with "*destroying the use*" of the *Sacrament*, for saying, that the *absolution of the priest is real, only when it follows the sentence of the invisible Judge*, and that it requires in consequence great preparation; "*Nous y voilà,*" says he, when Pascal charges the Jesuits with giving absolution indifferently to all who ask for it, without first considering whether Jesus Christ unlooses in heaven those whom they unloose on earth; "*Nous y voilà; Jésus-Christ doit d'abord délier dans le ciel avant que le prêtre ne délie sur la terre.*" Here is the secret let out of the Jansenist plan. "In such a case the priest's office was useless, for the sinner was already purified before God." — Vol. ii. pp. 3—17.

† In the Sixth *Provinciale*. "D'abord, le docteur *grave* qui l'a inventée l'expose au monde," &c.

‡ "Sed sententia satis communis, quam nos sequimur, tenet sufficere attri-



Nor is this a mere question of the schools. So practical a question is it, that M. Maynard, with Père Pinthereau, can see no mercy or advantage in the Gospel, if contrition is made identical with saving penitence, and sinners are to be told that justification cannot be had without it:—

“C’est le couronnement de cette doctrine,” says the *bon père*. “Vous y verrez donc que cette dispense de l’obligation *fâcheuse* d’aimer Dieu est le privilège de la loi évangélique par-dessus la judaïque. ‘Il a été raisonnable, dit-il, [P. Pinthereau] que, dans la loi de grâce du N. T., Dieu levât l’obligation fâcheuse et difficile, qui était dans la loi de rigueur, d’exercer un acte de parfaite contrition pour être justifié: et qu’il instituât des sacrements qui pussent suppléer son défaut, à l’aide d’une disposition plus facile. Autrement, certès, les enfants (les Chrétiens) n’auraient pas maintenant plus de facilité de se remettre aux bonnes grâces de leur Père, qu’avaient jadis ces esclaves (les Juifs), d’obtenir miséricorde de leur Seigneur.’”—Lett. X.

M. Maynard corrects Pascal, and corrects him as follows:—

“It is not the obligation of loving God that Father Pinthereau treats as ‘painful’ (*fâcheuse*), but the necessity of a perfect con-

tionem sine charitate prædominante, quæ oritur ex timore inferni, aut gloriæ amissione, aut ex horrore erga peccati turpitudinem, lumine fidei cognitam: ita tenent Gonet, Canus, Petroc., Tourn., Cabass., Wigandt, Abelly, Navarr., Suar., Tolet, Lugo, Laym., Salmer. et alii multi, cum Bened. XIV. qui asserit quod *post Trid. cum plausu hanc sententiam omnes scholæ sibi adoptarunt; unde recte dicunt* Suar. Less., Castr., Filiuc., Carden., Rainaud., Lugo, Prado, Tanner., Viva et Croix, hanc sententiam *hodie post concil. esse moraliter certam, et oppositam non esse amplius probabilem*. Et quod scholæ, saltem communius, tanquam moraliter certam habeant, constat ex decr. Alex. VII. (5 Maii, 1667), ubi sub excommunicatione prohibuit, ‘ne quis audeat alicujus theologicæ censuræ alteriusque injuriæ aut contumeliæ notâ taxare alterutram sententiam, sive negantem necessitatem aliqualem dilectionis Dei in attritione ex metu gehennæ conceptâ, quæ hodie inter scholasticos communis videtur, sive asserentem dictæ dilectionis necessitatem.’ Attestando ergo Pontifex sententiam negantem esse communioram inter scholasticos, consequenter testatur in scholis haberi communiter certam; dum quisque scit, *quod circa sacramentorum valorem alias sententias quam moraliter certas, non posse doctores amplecti*. Nec præfato decr. vetuit Pontifex, sententiam oppositam posse nuncupari *improbabilem*; nam improbabilitas non est nota censuræ aut contumeliæ per decretum vetita;” especially as we do not deny the necessity of an “*initium amoris*.”—*Liguori, Hom. Ap. Tr. xvi. c. 2. No. 14.*

trition in order to be justified. And it is certain that this act" [we have seen how Liguori defines it] "is so sublime, so difficult to degraded man, plunged in sensuality, that the sinner would have reason to tremble if he had no other means of reconciliation. Yes, the divine economy of the Sacraments is one of the most admirable parts of the New Law, one of its great excellences, compared with the law of severity and fear. The sinner, who could *never assure himself on the worth of his personal acts*, raises himself *in perfect security*, at this word of the priest, 'Go in peace, thy sins are forgiven thee.'"—Vol. ii. p. 41.

The last part of the *Tenth Provinciale*, on the love of God, reads as if it were a caricature. It seems as if, to show the radically false principle of the popular casuistry, Pascal said,—Apply this plan of weighing and measuring moral obligation, of fixing the minimum which is safe for conscience, and with which absolution may be granted, of construing rules relating to conscience by the maxim of law, that penal enactments must be interpreted strictly—"*odiosa sunt restringenda et rigorose applicanda*"—of finding out what is the *least* amount of morality and religion which is compatible with a state of grace and *assurance* of justification—apply this to the "great commandment," the obligation to love God "with all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength." If you are consistent, you are bound to find a minimum here; you are bound to answer the question,—What is enough to satisfy the obligation which the Gospel makes indispensable? On your system, men will come to you, as directors of conscience, as those who translate into practical and feasible reality the general principles of duty, as confessors who can refuse absolution if the measure of duty has not been fulfilled, and ask you, What are we bound to? not in a vague indefinite way, but in detail and fact; and you must be able to tell them with certainty or probability, so as to assure their conscience: and the weak will come as well as the strong. On your pretension, of undertaking to entertain and satisfy all questions definitely, as to how much of obedience is necessary and safe, you must be prepared for questions, as to *how often*, and *when*, God is to be loved by Christians who wish for

justification and salvation. You must not be content, as preachers, with general exhortations to love to the uttermost; you must, as practical moralists, gravely weigh, discuss, limit, and define—define, too, with practical certainty, for it is a matter for practice, and the love of God is one which concerns consciences very seriously,—*what is the least that a man may be allowed to love God.* And then Pascal might be imagined going on, with the exaggeration of a *reductio ad absurdum*, to represent the great lights of casuistry, meeting and determining exactly, what God intended, when He bade men love Him with all their heart—some opining for more, some for less, but all *fixing* the measure, and all, whether they fixed it at once in *three* or once in *five* years, allowing to their colleagues' opinion the benefit of *probability*, however confident they might be of their own; all forced by a supposed consistency to treat the most transcendent law of religious affection in the fashion of bidders at a Dutch auction.

But it is no caricature. The authorities and decisions which he quotes are real ones. The Casuists *have* found it necessary to settle, whether God *must* be loved once, or three times, or eight times in a Christian's life; Escobar gravely pronounces in favour of the moderate Henriquez, who strikes the mean between the excess of Azor, who is for *eight* times, and the defect of Sanchez, who is for *one*, and prescribes, himself, *three*—the age of discretion, the hour of death, and once every five years. It is necessary to distinguish between cases where the obligation to love God is essential, and where accidental. Vasquez and Suarez have really pondered seriously over the problem of *how often*; Castro Palao had as really "combated them, and with reason, *merito*;" and it is not Pascal, but a real Jesuit, who represents the most distinguished theologians so puzzled by this question, of how often is the love of God *obligatory*; and so discordant is their solution *when*, that he despairingly takes refuge in the answer, —*Never*.\*

\* See the passage from Antoine Sirmond, lett. x., vol. ii. p. 36. M. Maynard says, "Dans cette grande question de l'amour de Dieu, le P. A. Sirmond est le seul de tous les auteurs Jesuites qu'on pourrait abandonner à la justice passionnée de Pascal." Yet even he is excused.

But if not a caricature, it must, then, of course, we might suppose, be wrong—say, an exploded extravagance, chargeable on the age, or on a perverse love of system, but which it would be unjust, to impute to modern theologians. We might the more be led to think this, from finding very similar propositions condemned by Alexander VII. and Innocent XI. And from finding them thus censured, we might have inferred that the Popes meant to discountenance this fashion, whether scientific or practical, of beating down, under the show of *fixing*, the *obligation* of the love of God, as “at least scandalous.” But we should only have shown our haste, and our ignorance of the effect of a censure. M. Maynard, who addresses his refutation of Pascal to the intelligence of the day, is not a whit behind Escobar or Bauny, or the *bon père* himself, in maintaining the good sense and necessity and practical ends of limiting the *obligation* to love God. It is a natural problem in theological science, and necessary information for confessors and their penitents. The Popes have, indeed, condemned *some* ways of limiting it; but it is a mistake to suppose that has anything to do with *other* ways. The effect of the censure is not to condemn the method of inquiry, but definite wrong answers. From it, results the measure up to which, according to the Church, we are bound to exercise love to God. But this measure is a vague one; and though the more definite answers condemned are wrong, other equally definite ones may be right. To the honour of the Jesuits be it said, that *since* the censure, at least, they have never maintained any of *these* propositions. But the *commandment* to love God must be treated like any other precept or obligation—as we treat a civil law, enjoining or forbidding; it must be construed strictly and against itself; whatever it does not specify, we are not bound to. And here, except within the very wide limits fixed by the Church, we are not bound to any *time*. Obligatory it is, we know; but *when*, and how often, is an open question among theologians; and it is easier to say when it is not, than when it is.

“In the ‘great commandment’ there is the *negative* and *general* precept, which obliges us, under all circumstances, to do nothing against the love of God, and to observe His law; but there is besides, the *affirmative* and *special* one, which obliges us to formal acts of charity. The *affirmative* precept obliges, first *accidentally*, when *there is no other way* of returning to favour with God, and *of itself* also, not *always*, but *from time to time* in the course of life.

“It is on the precept of the love of God in this latter view of it, that theologians dispute.

“Now, there are but few points decided about it by the Church. It results, on the one hand, from the censure of certain propositions, that there is obligation to a formal act of love of God, when we have attained the age of reason (taking this instant in a certain moral latitude), at the point of death, and several times during life, so that there should not be between each act an interval of five years, nor a culpable delay; and, on the other hand that this obligation does not exist, as Baius and Jansenius hold, in all the moments and circumstances of life. The Church therefore has condemned only those, who reduced to nothing or next to nothing, the precept of the love of God, and those who extended it to all the actions of life, and regarded as vicious all that proceeded not from pure charity. All the rest is controverted, and will ever be, among theologians. It is especially impossible to assign, besides the two extreme limits of life, the precise and certain moment when the precept obliges.”—Vol. ii. pp. 6, 7.\*

And therefore all these Jesuits attacked by Pascal are so far from being wrong or even extravagant, that they say nothing but what is perfectly conformable to Catholic truth and wisdom. “One only,” Père Antoine Sirmond, who is so puzzled to find when it is ever *necessary* to love God, “may be abandoned to the passionate justice of Pascal;” and even he, well-meaning man, is more sinned against than sinning. Escobar, too, the “good old Escobar,” who never dreamt of falling into the hands of a Pascal, and was therefore incautious, vexes M. Maynard with his occasional careless slips; but the rest are blameless.

\* He goes on to quote a passage, from Bossuet against Fénelon—“Qui peut déterminer l’heure précise à laquelle il faille satisfaire au précepte intérieur de croire, d’espérer, et d’aimer?” Why then try?

“Suarez is admirable for his wisdom on this point. After having said that the precept of the love of God obliges ‘*accidentally,*’ when a man cannot recur to the sacrament, and has no other means of justification, and, further, at the point of death, he adds, ‘that it also obliges sometimes, *of itself,* like every precept, and besides, the love of God is necessary to salvation, only it is difficult to determine the time of the obligation. But the love of God may not be delayed long after the first use of reason; further, it ought to be reiterated sometimes (*quelquefois*) during life; for it is evident that it is not enough for a man to love once or twice in the course of his existence the God for whom he was created, and who is the last end of his actions. But what ought to be this time? It is for prudence to determine it.’ Vasquez says nothing more than Escobar attributes to him; but he is speaking only of the precept of contrition. Now the two precepts of love of God and contrition being *certainly* connected together only at the hour of death, Vasquez could not determine any other time. Castro Palao does indeed combat all these opinions; but we must understand him. He also distinguishes the obligation *per se* and *per accidens*. By violating this last, we sin, not against charity, but some other virtue. ‘*Pure question de mots qui ne change rien à la pratique.*’ As for the obligation *per se*, it presses from time to time during life, and it is not right to delay long the accomplishment of it; and, always submitting himself to the judgment of the prudent, he would regard as grave an omission of three years. He thus ends:—‘*It is rare that a Christian, except he be of depraved morals, makes himself guilty of this crime; for often he endeavours to dispose himself by contrition for the sacrament of Penitence; often he meditates on the benefit of God and his sovereign bounty, the consideration of which incites in him sentiments of charity.*’ *Remarkable words, which show well how all these disputes were purely speculative.*”—Vol. ii. pp. 35, 36.

The question, then, is worthy of pious Christians, solemn and laborious theologians, anxious penitents, and practical men. Up to a certain point, the illumination of the Church clears up our doubts as to how often in our lives we *must* love God; but even with the light of these decisions much remains vague. Of course it is a good thing to do so as often as we can. M. Maynard bids us remark that all the Jesuits say so, and that they wrote excellent practical books on the

subject ; but theologians and confessors require to know not only *when we ought*, but *when we must*. And within the limits fixed for the obligation by the Church, it is a charitable and profitable work to thin out as much as possible the *obligation* of specific occasion, because an *obligation* of the Church involves a definite mortal sin, if neglected. "The Jesuits," as M. Maynard remarks, though they, as a general rule, teach all the points decided by the Church, "*refute very well those authors, who, on vain reasons, pretend that the precept of charity obliges of itself on all festival days—when an adult receives baptism—on going to martyrdom—at the beginning of some difficult and excellent work—on occasion of some signal benefit of God—in temptations to hate him—at the reception of the Eucharist—after a mortal sin, in case that a man cannot or will not have recourse to the sacrament of penitence.*"\* On these occasions it is purely a question of probability, whether we are *bound* to love God ; some Jesuits, he observes, say we *are*, on some of them ; but as the Church has decided nothing on the subject, we cannot get certainty ; and yet we want guidance. Therefore to sift these *pros* and *cons* is an employment worthy to occupy their thoughts, their ingenuity, and their time ; and they have come for the most part to admirable conclusions.

Such is M. Maynard's *mentiris impudentissime* to Pascal ; and having upset his theology, he answers him as an orator and a man. Pascal is a "calumniator," a "sophist," a dealer in "false eloquence," for contrasting this system with the language of Scripture. "The theologians," says his refuter, "have never dispensed with the love of God, and *have spoken only of the time when the rigorous obligation of the precept pressed:*" "*voilà la calomnie.*" The "sophistry" consists in supposing, that the love of God is a thing which may be decreed, and which depends on the theories, more or less subtle, of the schools. "*Mais qu'y font ces théories ?*" Will men love God more or less, according as this or that decision is found in the *folio* pages of theologians ? "*L'amour de Dieu,*" he continues,

\* Vol. ii. p. 7.

“*s’inspire, et ne se décrète pas.*” Doubtless, “decrees” about affections are strange things. Who would think of “decreeing” how many times a-year a son was to love his father, or inquiring how often the obligation of loving her husband was not binding on his wife. But, then, for what purpose were these decisions? Who did make decrees about the great commandment? Or does M. Maynard think that Pascal complains because theologians had decided on once in five years instead of once a-week? “*Theories of the Schools*” — “*pages in folio of theologians,*” — is it M. Maynard who speaks so slightly of labours which he has just presented as so practically necessary and so admirably executed? Is it he who compares the natural instincts of good sense and good feeling, with the weighty maxims of Suarez and Vasquez, and takes refuge from books in the heart? “*L’amour de Dieu ne se décrète pas.*” We cannot set it up in men’s hearts by theories and decisions. True, M. Maynard, but may it not be explained away by them?

Now, these belong to a class of subjects in respect to which the Roman Church has been set before us of late in an imposing aspect; subjects in themselves of permanent interest — the principles and tone of clerical teaching, the depth and seriousness and practical reach of theological doctrines translated into systems at work among men — the discipline of Christian life, amid the passions, the confusions, or the opportunities of the world. In all these matters, great, as we very well know, is the boast of the Roman Catholic Church. She, we have been told, has the most refined and severe principles. She has had living examples of them. She, we are told continually, is uncompromising, consistent, uniform; and she only. This is her boast, and, so far as it is true, her strength. By it her defenders override, with no measured triumph, the theological or historical difficulties of her case. All other bodies, they say, are loose, have no principles, or are afraid of them; are tame in their moral spirit, compromisers with evil, shrinking from the realities of faith, systematic smoothers of the rough ascent, and wideners of the narrow way. Rome only, besides a clear and unhesitating theology, has a great



system of spiritual discipline of souls and consciences, and a moral character which results from it and corresponds with it; she only has the secret of a searching and elevating ministry — she only dares to realise that she professes. Protestants, on the other hand, proceed the Roman doctors, will have an easy religion. They want a speedy remedy for conscience. They want to be forgiven at once, every time they sin, and to feel assured that they are so; and for this they invented justification by faith. They want to get rid of the reality of repentance. They want to choose their own way of fulfilling their duty. What they rebel against in the Roman Church, is, such real aids and obligations to strictness of life as confession and sacramental absolution. Their self-indulgence shrinks from direction, because the two are incompatible. Rome, only, brings the sinner before his God. Rome, only, will not temporise and parley with the self-deceit of the will. Rome, only, secures penitence by acts. She, only, inherits the spirit of the ancient Church—its inexorable hatred of sin. Conscience cannot escape from her strong grasp, and personal questioning. She leaves it without excuse; and shrinks, as from a profanation, from offering it any relief, except what is real. Rome will give a religion of mercy and consolation, but not an easy religion, not a religion of the world.

This is one popular way of presenting the claims of the Roman Church. If Protestants, then, had objected to Port-Royal, an exaggerated notion of the sacerdotal office, and of the claims and responsibility of the director—if *they* had charged it with giving too real a sanctity to ordinances, and making religion too strict for man — Roman Catholics it might have been supposed, could have seen nothing but a consistent carrying out of the principles of the Church. When Port-Royal complained so bitterly of playing with the discipline of the confessional, or the ineffable sanctity of the Eucharist, the complaint, to Roman Catholics, we should have thought, would have had at least *meaning*. Injudiciously, perhaps, but surely not groundlessly, the Port-Royalists only wanted to take their Church at her word, and to turn the edge of that primitive and Catholic discipline, which cut so

deep in controversy with heretics without, against worldliness, and connivance with worldliness, inside the Church. They seem only to be holding up to the careless multitudes within her pale the standard of the religious depth and reality, which her divines have ever presented to Protestant opponents, as incapable of accommodating itself to what the world asks for in religion.

But, it seems, the Portroyalists were mistaken. Bossuet thought them in extremes, though he had many points of sympathy with them. But if we are to take such representations as have just been given, and with the air of authority, of the spirit and demands of the Church, their view was radically false. The system which looked so uncompromising and stern in dealing with the individual conscience, when turned towards those without, must wear quite a different aspect when turned to those within;—with whom it is no longer a question about what will best silence them, but about what they can best be got to submit to. In presenting that discipline before them, theologians are, it seems, to remember before what sort of persons it is held up; they are masses of variable character, who look with an evil eye on restraints and inconveniences—a multitude of believers, indeed, but a very mixed one; whose general good will may be trusted, but not to the extent of submitting to any very sharp pressure. Unstable, wayward, halting between right and wrong, it takes but a little to scare or offend them; their worldliness, unruliness, suspiciousness, obstinacy, feebleness, are to be lamented, but, if the Church is to control them, must be allowed for. When speaking of discipline within the Church, the standard is to be set, for the weak, the capricious, the self-willed, who form the bulk of actual living mankind. Hold up before *them* the rule of the strong and the perfect, and it is simply driving them from the altar and the confessional.\* Have, by all means, a

\* “Si l'absolution,” says P. Caussin, “doit être refusée à ceux que l'espérance d'être absous a portés à pécher avec plus de facilité, *l'usage de la confession devra-t-il pas être interdit à la plupart du monde? et il n'y aurait plus d'autre remède aux pécheurs qu'une branche d'arbre et une corde.*” — “Le P. Caussin a raison en somme; et si la doctrine de Bauny peut pousser quelquefois au relâchement par l'espérance d'un facile pardon, la doctrine janséniste sur la pénitence conduisait certainement au désespoir, et, par suite, à l'immoralité habituelle,” observes M. Maynard, vol. ii. p. 24.

high standard besides ; have it for the strictly disposed, and keep it for them ; but with the multitudes you must be easy, or they will break from you altogether.

We will venture to say that, were he in controversy with an Anglican or a Lutheran, no divine in France would insist more strongly and more feelingly on the austere sanctity of Roman Catholic discipline than M. Maynard. Not Port-Royal itself would be more absolute in statement or inexorable in logic. But he is dealing with domestic difficulties and with discipline as a system to be realised. In the former case he might have claimed for his communion the maxims of S. Augustin and S. Bernard. In the present, he puts the Jansenist rigorists to confusion by appealing to the indulgent good sense of men of the world, the *mitis sapientia* of the court of Charles II. This may be very sensible ; only, what is now the recommendation and boast of the Roman system, when dealing with the necessities of the faint-hearted and petulant multitude within, is, after all, its old taunt against Protestantism—that it is an easy religion.

Here, then, we observe *another* aspect of the Roman Church ; we do not say that it is not a practical and natural one, but it is *another*. Indeed, the truth is, that in this discussion, our feeling varies, according as we view things broadly or in detail. Look at the discipline of the Church in the gross, and the Jesuits seem to have a good deal to say. They professed to be indulgent, yet watchful and persevering. Look at the special and necessary parts of its machinery, and the way in which it affects theological questions, and Port-Royal seems irresistible. We cannot help allowing the practical common sense of the Jesuit view of mankind, and the way to get hold of them ; but it is equally obvious, that it led its holders into a most singular maze of theological entanglement, and that the intermediate steps which linked their most unbending dogmatism with the infinite wants and changes of living character, were a series of slippery and prevaricating inventions, without even the poor merit of real subtlety. Keep out of sight what absolution is held to be by the Roman Church, and we think only of the charitable condescension which

brings home to the individual penitent the prospect of mercy, and faints not, nor despairs, though ever so often disappointed. But view absolution, not as a subsidiary portion of a great practical machinery for dealing with the waywardness of man, but in itself—as it is defined and jealously exalted in decrees of councils and commentaries of divines,—as the certain channel of justification; and the condescension seems a strange one, which cheapens such a gift into a mere auxiliary and complement to the most inchoate and tentative act of improvement. Yet it may be said, what were the Jesuits to do? The Roman Church had strictly defined what absolution was, and to maintain, in its integrity, the Roman dogmatism, was the end and the pride of their institute. On the other hand, absolution in popular practice was inseparably connected with confession, and compensated for its burden; the two things went together, and could not be separated. Their theological duty to Rome led them to extend and enforce to the uttermost the unrestricted and literal interpretation of her language; their practical duty, to keep up the attachment of the masses to her discipline. They were debarred by the one from restricting the effect of the sacrament; by the other, from making difficulties in the way of its reception. In their theology, it was all, and even more than all, that any Catholic doctors had made it: in their practice, it must sink to be a solace and encouragement, not to be easily denied even to the lowest and most doubtful class of penitents. To those who objected, they had the practical argument, that nothing less than this *encouragement* would bring men to confess. Absolution, whatever it was, was indispensable. Yet Port-Royal had logic on its side, and right reason and feeling too, when it urged, that this was a tremendous price to pay for keeping up a popular system of confession; that it was sacrificing absolution to confession—a divine sacrament and supernatural gift, to moral control and moral training for the lowest of Christians. They only urged indisputable truth, when they said that, doctrinally, absolution had never been held to be the preliminary, but the end and crown of Christian repentance and amendment. As dis-

putants, they tore to pieces the flimsy refinements with which the Jesuits reconciled their theology with their practical system: as Christian divines, they raised their voice in behalf of the reality and the seriousness of Christian penitence, and denounced the fearfully short-sighted wisdom, which, for any seeming advantages, could undermine the sincerity of character, by attempting to fight self-deceit with weapons of its own.

But, however accounted for, here is *another* aspect of the Roman Church. And it is hard to see how, if it is true, the former one is not, we will not say untrue, but greatly exaggerated. We repeat, we are not undertaking to pass judgment on the internal quarrels of the Roman Church, or to say which is the true interpretation of the Council of Trent about contrition and attrition. But we observe this: that in fixing, for practical discipline, among themselves, the *minimum* of moral disposition sufficient for justification and salvation, modern Roman doctors, claiming very loudly to speak for their Church, *pronounce*, and *pronounce for certain*, on a *very low one*: the *minimum*, be it observed, not for *ecclesiastical* pardon, for long-suffering, or encouragement, or hope, but for present justification, for giving the sinner the *assurance*, on the highest earthly warrant, that God has actually blotted out his sins, and restored to him His favour. And they do it on the express ground that nothing else will work; that the mass of men must have this assurance or revolt from religion.

If this is so, however it be explained, it is not too much to say, that no Evangelical doctrine short of avowed Antinomianism, which connects instant and actual justification, over and over again, with the act of faith, can *require*, in the way of moral disposition, *less*. A religion which allows the sinner to set his conscience at rest, and feel complete assurance of pardon and justification, with no moral qualification but sorrow and fear—except in promise,—which allows its teachers to say, that contrition is so far beyond the reach of ordinary Christians, that to insist on it to them is to narrow, and almost evacuate the mercy of the Gospel,—which allows

its discipline to be controlled by theories and practical rules, which, if true, turn nine-tenths of all the sermons on repentance into mere declamation,—we do not say, must be, but certainly *may be*, in the hands of those who choose, logically and consistently, an easy religion: and has extremely little reason to taunt other systems with theories, which make too free with the terms of the Gospel, and yield too speedy a cure to the smarts and impatience of conscience.

From theological let us proceed to moral explanations. How does M. Maynard deal with the broad fact of Pascal's mass of startling extracts from the popular Casuists? We will state generally the grounds to which he appeals, before we illustrate them by instances. First, he has recourse to the counter-charge of false quotation and misconstruction—a very good answer, so far as it is true, but a dangerous one to quibble about; and no other name can be given to a very large proportion of M. Maynard's criticism. He will scarcely ever trust us with a passage quoted in full. He prefers to give what he calls analyses or *exposés* of so and so's doctrine, smooth, guarded, and pointless, which present a far more curious contrast when compared with the downright original, than any of Pascal's unfairnesses. Then, as we have already said, he complains of Pascal's always quoting Escobar and Bauny, which, if Escobar and Bauny spoke only for themselves, might be reasonable; but as they carefully inform us, and the fact is plain on the face of it, that they are servile repeaters of a method which they thought every one accepted, and simply represent the latest results of the labours of others, whose wisdom all admire, the complaint is not so much in place.\* Then

\* The following is Escobar's account of his compilation:—"At ego solummodo memoro reserationem factam ab Agno suis auctoribus Jesuitis . . . . Qualibet igitur in materia, in primis auctorum Societatis exhaurio, *Medullam Confessariorum in Examen exponendam*, indicatis generatim auctoribus. Mox circa materias singulas, speciales Doctorum meorum resolutiones ad principiorum generalium praxim attexo, jam specialiter auctorum nomina et scripta citans, jam sola nomina recensens. *Hoc ingenue profiteor, me nihil toto in hoc libello scripsisse, quod Societatis Jesu non acceperim ex Doctore.* Quas enim proprias passim resolutiones innuo, *ex scholâ Societatis aperte deductas existimarim.* Licet autem profiteor totum meum opus ex Societatis Doctoribus texuisse, *non ideo assero omnes sententias omnium esse* (ut non bene Caramuel intellexit), sed singulas

we are told that casuistry and moral theology are not popular sciences ; that they are a system which cannot be understood, except as a whole ; that questions necessarily are very different in the abstract and in practice ; that when people have to deal with the infinity of human characters, and sins, and circumstances, the questions which must arise are necessarily intricate and strange ; and that we have only to try and state in general terms any set of ordinary practical difficulties, and the ways by which we should ordinarily, in daily life, get through them, to see both how puzzling such subjects are, and how easy to make any *practical* general rules seem grossly lax. Then, it is suggested that we look differently on a crime *before* and *after* it has been committed ; that we may forbid most severely, in the abstract, what, when it comes to be realised in a particular person, we do and must judge in a very different way ; and that those very decisions which shock us so much as they stand, in naked formality, would be applied by ourselves unconsciously, in the case of an actual penitent, whom we saw before us.

singulis tribuendas, ut aperte ostendo, dum fere nunquam pro una sententia, duos Doctores recenseo. *Dum autem eorum refero dictorum varietatem, non ideo me idem sentire affirmo.* Problematum moralium volumina quæ edidi, quæ digero, post unam et alteram contradictoriam relatam sententiam, quid sentiam aperiunt. Porro licet Societati Jesu summula hæc omnem attribuit sententiam, *non ideo indico, propriam esse Societatis, nullam enim propositionem exprimo, quæ non possit gravissimis extra Societatem Doctoribus confirmari.* Quod si sæpe videar me laxioribus opinionibus adhærescere, id certe non est definire quid sentio, sed exponere, quid *sine conscientie læsione Docti poterunt cum eis visum fuerit expedire ad sedandos pœnitentium animos, ad praxim adducere.*"

This edition, Lyons, 1659, after the date of the *Provinciales*, has the licence of the Provincial to print the book (which had been *recognitus* by two fathers of the Society), for nine years, dated 1644 ; the approbation of two doctors of theology of the University of Paris, a Carmelite and a Minor, certifying that they had found nothing in it dissonant from the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman faith, and judged it worthy of publication, dated 1644 ; the licence of the ordinary in consequence of this approbation, and the consent and permission of the civil power.

He goes through, in the way of short questions and answers, the subject of Moral Theology, under seven heads, to which he applies in allegory the seven seals of the book of the Apocalypse. These are—*Laws, Sins, Justice, Censures, Virtues, States of Life, Sacraments* : each division, or *examen*, after discussing general principles, ends with a chapter of practical solutions, entitled "*Praxis ex Societatis Jesu Schola,*" on the previous subjects.

On these principles we are told that we may understand the purpose and meaning of these much vilified books. They were meant, not for lay Christians *before* the act, but for confessors *after* it; to teach the priest how to measure and deal with what could no longer be helped; — the utmost that he had a right to exact, and the least that he might accept; — not to teach the penitent the means of eluding duty, and still escaping sin. They represent not what men are to be taught to do, but only how far they may be allowed *not* to do as they are taught. “They are not *receipts* given to penitents, to sweeten for them the remedy of confession, but rules of conduct and judgment for priests.” “This simple reflection,” adds M. Maynard, “causes to fall to the ground all the accusations of Pascal.” And they are to be considered as coming first to the knowledge of the penitent, and the mass of people, when applied to their case by the confessor. They were not intended for the public; they were written in Latin, and the world has no business to know these rules, nor Pascal to divulge them. Thus M. Maynard, after asking whether there is no danger in so many “*subtle questions*” on morality, and in such speculatively bold decisions, which must necessarily “*briser bientôt les liens de l’abstraction, pour entrer dans le domaine des faits,*” thus answers: —

“*Peut être. Mais songeons bien que les Casuistes n’écrivaient que pour les confesseurs, et non pour le monde, encore moins pour les plaisants; que leur maximes, dont il peut être facile d’abuser, ne s’adressaient pas à la foule ignorante ou corrompue, mais à des hommes graves, instruits, vertueux, &c. . . . Leurs livres étaient écrits en Latin, qui n’est pas la langue de la multitude; c’étaient des énormes en folio, inabordables à la foule légère, des œuvres à formes techniques et barbares, peu attrayantes pour la frivolité. Aussi étaient-ils renfermés dans les écoles et les bibliothèques, sans que jamais une main profane eût songé à les ouvrir pour en répandre le secret et le prétendu venin sur le monde. . . . Tout cela devait rester un mystère entre le confesseur et la conscience coupable. Le poison, si tant est que les Casuistes en renfermassent, devait être exclusivement confié aux mains habiles et prudentes des médecins des âmes, qui l’auraient toujours transformés en remède salulaire. Aussi Escobar, fut-il tout étonné du rétentisse-*



ment que son œuvre avait en France. Cet humble religieux ne pouvait comprendre sa triste célébrité: cet homme, à l'âme et aux intentions si pures, *concevait encore moins qu'on détournât de leur sens et de leur but les conseils qu'il avait adressés exclusivement aux confesseurs*, pour les aider à diriger leurs frères dans la voie du bien." — Vol. i. pp. 206, 207.

No doubt. The books might be written in Latin and in folio; the confessor as careful as he could be, to keep Escobar out of "profane hands." But, besides that among people like the French, what was to be read in Latin could not long be kept secret from those whom it concerned — not to say that an indiscreet Père Bauny might publish French "*Sums of Theology*," — it does not seem to have occurred to M. Maynard, that, supposing a sufficient degree of intelligence and memory in the penitent, he might come to comprehend these rules by their application to his own case; and supposing him to be weak and self-deceiving, he might abuse this knowledge, as much as if he had learnt it straight from Escobar or Pascal. And where every Christian was supposed to come to the confessional, and the mass of them to require the benefit of these indulgent decisions, it is not easy to suppose, with M. Maynard, that it is to Pascal and the Jansenists, that the world in general is indebted for its knowledge that such decisions exist; or to imagine, that it must have waited till it learned them from such informants, before it could have taken practical advantage of them. And with respect to M. Maynard's distinction, we must add, that a simple inspection of these books is sufficient to show, that they were meant to tell the priest, not only how to judge of the past, but to advise about the future.

Thus, however, the inculcated system is defended — on the ground of its being a highly practical one. Its startling results are but the anomalies which attend all working systems. Arguments may prove them wrong, but they turn out right in practice. But besides this, M. Maynard has two more defences in reserve. Side by side, or alternately, with the plea that it is *highly practical*, is the plea that it is *only speculative*. Having proved that it is intended only for the confessional, and that the confessional cannot do without it, M. Maynard

offers us another point of view. It is, he says, the inevitable development of logical consequences; the mere course of abstract thought—subtle intellect, in the greater men; analysing metaphysically, or playing with possibilities, simple “*logomachies*” in the lesser. “*Systems of morality*,” says M. Maynard, “*about which we may dispute for ever, have no serious influence on life;*” and this casuistry was a “*veritable science, more metaphysical than moral, which, on pain of appearing incomplete, was bound to embrace all questions that were possible and even chimerical.*” \* Its startling conclusions were simply the result of “*studies purely speculative.*” † Even those about duelling, tyrannicide, and killing false witnesses, which were condemned for their practical danger by the Pope, “*were certainly,*” we are informed, “*admissible in principle and in theory.*” ‡

Finally, when, in some particular case, the general suggestions of its being practically useful, or merely speculative, or both, have been gone through, and we have been further reminded of that “*candid and charitable simplicity*, which would not impose on the weak shoulders of men anything more than the least heavy burden possible, and sometimes placed itself outside the Gospel in seeking to reconcile our duties and our miserable doings,” he treats the whole matter as a trifle not worth talking about—as something on the face of it, absurd and impossible, except as a little flourish of sportive subtlety; and turns round on us and laughs in our face, for being such simpletons as to suppose, that the inculcated casuist ever meant his words to be taken in earnest.

We are rather at a loss to describe the general effect upon our mind of M. Maynard’s way of arguing. It is, more than anything we can bring to mind, like the equestrian performer, who is carried round the ring, jumping from one horse’s back to the other. The Abbé employs two main principles, the necessities of a practical, and the liberty of a speculative system; and his argument has the appearance of invoking, as soon as he is embarrassed in the use of one, the

\* Vol. i.

† Vol. i. p. 200.

‡ Vol. i. pp. 200, 205, 303.

assistance of its apparently discordant opposite. Thus it proceeds, through a series of alternations, to its triumphant close. And at length, when it ends, we are left to reflect, whether what has so much engaged our attention is any thing more than elaborate nonsense.

M. Maynard's mode of defence will be best understood by an instance or two.

It may be remembered, for instance, that Pascal quotes a number of remarkable dicta about duelling, and homicide in general. M. Maynard deals with them at considerable length. He notices that they arose in a state of society when there was little public law.\* He reminds us that these decisions are of a *local* kind:—

“La doctrine, qu'on peut tuer pour l'honneur n'est guère admise que par les théologiens *étrangers*, en Espagne surtout, où l'honneur n'est pas une passion seulement, mais une sorte de religion. Les Jésuites inculpés sous ce rapport ne se sont pas écartés de l'enseignement reçu dans leur pays. Ce peut être un tort, mais on ne saurait leur en faire, sans injustice, un crime propre et personnel. Ces théologiens se fondaient sur ce que l'infamie est pour un homme de cœur pire que la mort: . . . Il doit donc être permis de défendre l'honneur comme la vie elle-même, et à plus juste titre que les biens matériels, pour la conservation desquels cependant, la plupart des théologiens permettaient l'homicide.”—Vol. i. p. 305.

Critical persons might think it equally strange, that so large a proportion of Roman doctors as the theologians of Spain and Italy, should be called anywhere, even in France, “*étrangers* ;” and that *local* feelings about honour and bloodshed should be a reason for their playing fast and loose with the Sixth Commandment. However, M. Maynard, after discussing the limits of what is allowable on the subject, thus sums up what he considers to be their real drift and purport:—

“Nous achevons cette discussion, sans craindre d'avoir mis le poignard aux mains des assassins, quoique nous ayons exposé, sans la frapper en général d'anathème, la doctrine des Jésuites. Nous

\* “Les maximes des Casuistes sur l'homicide et le duel se sentaient nécessairement du régime féodal et barbare, dans lequel elles étaient toutes naturelles.”—Vol. i. p. 307.

ne croyons pas que jamais un glaive se soit aiguisé à ces théories *purement spéculatives, ou qu'on ne proposait pas pour règles de conduite, mais d'appréciation d'un fait accompli.* En les offrant aux confesseurs, les théologiens ne leur disaient pas : 'Voilà ce que vous pouvez permettre, encore moins conseiller :' mais, 'Voilà où il y a crime, voilà un fait moins coupable, voilà une défense entièrement légitime. Néanmoins, sans vous arroger la mission *de vouer à l'enfer un meurtrier qui n'a fait qu'user de son droit rigoureux, ayez bien garde de le féliciter* de sa conduite, comme s'il avait accompli un acte de vertu, et engagez-le à préférer désormais à tout la divine douceur de l'évangile.'

"Telle était la seule doctrine qu'on prêchât au peuple. Les décisions de l'école, choquantes au premier aspect, moins choquantes *cependant dans les principes que dans les applications que les théologiens se croyaient obligés de donner toutes,* ne devaient pas être communiquées au public. Si elles présentent quelque danger, l'imprudence n'est pas dans les théologiens, mais dans ceux qui les ont divulguées."— Vol. i. p. 313.

This is the *general* view of the matter. The theologians wished to secure a liberal and long-suffering considerateness in the confessors whom they instructed. They were not to be hasty and sour, even with homicides. On the other hand, they were to "take care not to *felicitate them on their conduct.*" The theologians had foreseen even this contingency, and provided against it.

But when we come to the decisions *one by one,* they are defended, not for their practical good, but for their impossibility. These nice rules, so minutely analysed, these delicate balancings, so wisely adjusted by prudence and charity, finally turn, it appears, into nonsense when taken literally. The decision complained of is merely one of the *speculative* "applications, of which the theologians thought themselves bound to give all." The question is a minutely practical one; but the answer, though equally minute, is only speculative. The greatest subtlety and care are shown, for instance, in marking out when a duel may be fought; circumstances carefully distinguished, as whether "a gentleman is known '*pour n'être pas dévôt,*'" so that he will be thought to act from fear of man and not of God, and so that men will call him, *gallina*

*et non vir*; he is directed not to intend to fight a duel, but only to *walk about in a field*:—and the end of it all is, that we are informed, “that this, though probable in speculation, is extremely difficult in practice,” and that the careful Casuist himself is related to have prescribed the contrary in his book “*De Charitate*.”\*

Again, Molina names *about* the sum—four or five ducats—for *less than* which we *may not* kill a thief who is stealing, but he will not “dare to condemn” a man who kills for a crown or less; Escobar draws from Molina’s estimate, that “we may ‘regularly’ (*regulariter*) kill the thief for the value of a gold crown;” and Pascal represents Molina as estimating at *six or seven ducats* the value for which we *may* kill the thief. “*Voilà*,” says M. Maynard †, “*ce qui s’appelle une bonne calomnie*.” However, he gives up Escobar. Why is Escobar wrong?—for wrong he is, his proposition having found its way into the condemned list of Innocent XI. All that M. Maynard sees in it is excess of precision, whether over-speculative or over-practical, he does not say. It is morally impossible to fix the sum; and, he adds, “l’Eglise *n’ayant rien décidé sur ce point*,” (*how much* the thief might be killed for), “*et n’ayant condamné qu’une proposition*, (31° du Décret d’In-

\* Vol. i. p. 322. “None of our duels,” he says, “would find in these *purely metaphysical decisions*, any principle of justification.” (Vol. i. p. 325.) If Layman says, “*Je n’ose pas condamner*”—(not “*je ne vois pas qu’on puisse condamner*,”—here is one of Pascal’s “falsifications”), “a courtier, or soldier who accepts a duel, for fear of losing place or favour, through suspicion of cowardice,” it is, says M. Maynard, “a question not about a vain point of honour, but only about the right of self-defence when threatened with *considerable loss*,—which explains *the illusion of the Casuists* :” and besides, this “is only in *rare cases*, almost *chimerical ones*.” (Vol. i. p. 325.) If Jesuits are quoted, saying that “we may kill false-witnesses,” we are told that it was not they only, for “that this doctrine was then common in the schools;” but the Jesuits regard it as lawful only “*en ce qui touche la conscience, c’est à dire*, suivant le droit naturel, rigoureux, en dehors des prohibitions positives, et des inconvénients qui en sont inséparable dans la pratique.” (Vol. i. p. 327.) “The Casuists, evidently, reason almost always for men in a state of nature, obliged to do justice for themselves; this is what they call *speculation*; but in practice, that is, in the state of society, they forbid it absolutely, in conscience and before God, and not for fear of the judges and executioner.”—Vol. i. p. 334.

† Vol. i. pp. 337, 338.

nocent XI.) *qui autorisait à tuer pour un écu d'or, somme régulièrement parlant insuffisante, on doit être très-réservé à cet égard.*"\*

To take another subject, Pascal accuses the Casuists of explaining away the duty of attention in the acts of worship. The Church tells men to go to mass; it is hard to imagine for what purpose but to pray, and to pray rightly; and equally hard to imagine, how any other way of going could be prescribed, or thought of. But it was not so simple a matter, and gave rise to great questions, about how, and when, and with what intention the precept was to be satisfied. There were *pros* and *cons* on the subject; there was a severe school which exacted attention; another which maintained that the Church cannot command internal acts. As an extreme specimen of what *could be* put out to the world on this point, we will quote the following passage from Caramuel, whose name will be remembered by readers of Pascal — not a Jesuit, though a warm admirer of the order, and an enthusiastic votary of the "*generous and clement*" way of philosophising about moral questions. The Casuist Diana was said by envious rivals, "*esse agnum Dei, qui tollit peccata mundi.*" Caramuel is explaining the phrase in Diana's honour †:—

"Let Navarrus," he says, "and the old Casuists have their own glory; let them be lions and get praise for their severity; be you the lamb, praised for benignity. Let those who please follow the lions—those who distrust with me their own frailty will more wisely follow you. *Ili sunt,*" he proceeds, "*qui cum mulieribus non sunt coinquinati; virgines enim sunt, et sequuntur agnum quocunque ierit.*"

\* Vol. i. p. 310.

† It occurs in a letter to the Sicilian Casuist Diana, also not a Jesuit, in which Caramuel sets forth his friend Diana's European reputation and well-grounded claims to promotion at the hands of the Holy See. Diana was the Casuist whose "industry had made many opinions probable which were not so before." "*Tota æmulum oblocutio pervenit ad columnas Herculis cum dicunt, Dianam esse Agnum Dei qui tollit peccata mundi. Idem ego frequenter inculco ut te commendem, . . . cujus industriâ multas opiniones evasisse probabiles quæ antea non erant. Si jam sint probabiles quæ antea non erant, jam non peccant qui eas sequuntur, licet antea peccaverint: ergo si ejusmodi peccata ab orbe literario Diana sustulit, merito dicetur esse Agnum,*" &c.

Of this he gives the following allegorical exposition:—

“ *These* are the disciples and admirers of Diana. The opinions of Doctors at this day ‘*differunt genere.*’ Some are *masculine*, others *feminine*, not to speak of neuters. In the last century there were many moral opinions, defenceless, inconsistent, difficult, labouring under all the imperfection of women—they have been succeeded by others, well guarded, consistent, and very easy; and they who look with favour on these later opinions are not only warriors, but virgins. But why? I will shortly explain. Navarrus, and all who require internal attention in the Divine Office, for instance, considering the liveliness of the human mind, conclude that a man can scarcely, or not at all, satisfy the duty without some venial distraction; and so with equal solidity they philosophise about the other precepts. But we, who on the other hand take a generous view, and confirm our opinion by armed reasoning, are not only warriors but virgins: for we can so satisfy ‘the Hours,’ and also the other precepts of the Church, so as not to fall into even a light fault. For continued exercise (*prolatio*), and every external act, is most easy; and human laws of superiors, ecclesiastical or secular, do not enjoin internal ones. Then the conscience which has wrought without venial sin is a virgin, and most brave champion, which fears not to be conquered, for she cannot be, against her will. So we hold, and because hither we have been led by this ‘Regular’ Lamb\*, philosophising generously and with clemency, we follow the Lamb (that is, Diana) whithersoever he goeth. For we are sure that his doctrines are confirmed by so large a number of theologians, that it is enough, when any one asks whether this or that is lawful, to answer, ΑΥΤΟΣ ΕΦΑ, *i. e.* *Diana dixit.*”—*Caram. Theol. Fundam.* pp. 23, 24. Francof. 1652.

An extravagance of the seventeenth century, it may be said. We should say so, for ourselves. This Caramuel von Lobcowitz we should have looked upon simply as the buffoon and jack-pudding of casuistry. But we are checked by M. Maynard, who, while disclaiming all obligation to defend one who was not a Jesuit, informs us that he was a “Bishop, and a very virtuous one, though a man of ardent imagination rather than of solid judgment;” and, though allowing that Caramuel made many mistakes in his book, exerts himself

\* Diana was a Canon-Regular.

with ludicrous gravity to put a creditable construction on his famous "*conclusio conclusionum*" and its corollary, why Jesuits may *not* kill Jansenists.\* And we find, further, that, whatever we may think of him, he had a brilliant and successful career.† "His moral doctrines in theology, indeed, were so decried, that those who are furthest from rigorism would not like to be suspected of the smallest leaning towards his opinions;" ‡ but they cannot be said to have hindered his honours or promotions.

But now, let us see how, not Caramuel, but M. Maynard, speaks of the kindred decision of certain theologians, that "it was sufficient to be present at mass in body, though absent in mind, *pourvu qu'on demeure dans une contenance respectueuse extérieurement.*" On this, M. Maynard observes as follows: the diffidence of himself and his client are remarkable, in the presence of the "great theologians," whom they venture to differ from, or to follow with reluctance:—

"This decision, like the following ones, appears at least singular, in its abstract form. But it depends on a question long debated among theologians; whether the Church can command an internal act, either directly, or at least indirectly, so far as it is necessary for giving to the external act a real virtue. After a great number of authors whom he cites, Coninch maintains the negative, *out of respect*, he says, *for S. Thomas,*" (because there can be no command, but so far as there is power to *punish*, and, therefore, power to *judge*: and the Church, except in confession, cannot judge and punish internal acts.) "According to this opinion, which we do not hold, but which has been defended by great theologians, Coninch advances, 1. That the ecclesiastical precept is satisfied by

\* Letter 7th, vol. i. p. 341.

† He wrote seventy-seven large volumes. He converted 2,500 heretics. He fought against the Swedes at Prague, at the head of his troop of drilled ecclesiastics. He was the Envoy of the King of Spain to the Emperor. He shone at Salamanca, Alcalá, and Louvain. He was successively Titular Abbot of Melrose, and Vicar-General of the Cistercians in England, Abbot of Dissenburg, Bishop of Niessy, and Suffragan to the Archbishop of Mayence, Vicar-General to the Archbishop of Prague, Bishop of Könisgratz. The year after Pascal had been quoting him in Paris, Alexander VII. gave him the bishopric of Campagna, and to supply his printing expenses, the King of Spain that of Vigevano, in which he died in 1682.

‡ Biog. Univ.



hearing mass without bringing to it any interior affection, provided that one be present with external respect, so as to exercise truly an external act of religion, and be in external communion of prayer with the priest. But, 2. he adds, what Pascal has taken good care not to say,—that so a man violates the precept of natural right, bidding us to attend mass with devotion, and sins against the respect due to God and the holy mysteries. Thus understood, the sentiment may be false, and we believe it such; but it does not in any way *facilitate the use of holy things*, and does not lead either to contempt of the sacrifice, or impiety, or even to negligence in the accomplishment of religious duties. Besides, it was not common to *all the Jesuits*, and *several* of their theologians, as Suarez, Azor, Reginaldus, have supported the necessity of interior attention.”—Vol. i. pp. 435, 436.

Unless the restrictions reduce the rule simply to no sense at all, it certainly seems considerably “to facilitate the use of holy things.” A precept of the Church—to violate which is mortal sin—restrained exclusively to the external act, though about a religious duty, which, to be worth doing at all, must be an inward act,—satisfied as a precept, yet involving sin in the mode of satisfying;—the doctrine maintained stoutly by great and wise doctors, and yet, though intelligible only as a practical matter, condemned by its maintainers, except in speculation;—all this presents a curious union of conditions. The practical Escobar, however, goes a step further. He lays down, that mass may be heard “*comme il faut*,” by a person not only absent in mind, but intent on bad thoughts, and present for the purpose of indulging them: “*qu’une méchante intention, . . . jointe à celle d’ouïr la messe comme il faut, n’empêche pas qu’on n’y satisfasse.*” Very shocking, indeed, says M. Maynard; but what can you do? you may be out of temper with Escobar, but Escobar will answer you that he is simply arguing from a doctrine maintained by great authorities, about the “*comme il faut*” of hearing mass: no one can help “logical consequences:”—

“Cette vilaine proposition est inexcusable, bien qu’elle suive assez logiquement du sentiment que l’Eglise ne commande pas les actes intérieurs.”—Vol. i. p. 437.

Besides, he *supposes*, all the time, that the outward attention to the service is kept up simultaneously : “ *il suppose toujours, que l'attention extérieure subsiste.*” Then M. Maynard bids us observe that “ *il ne justifie pas ces mauvais regards dans la circonstance ; encore moins en eux-mêmes, et il y verrait volontiers un infâme sacrilège.*” But having done what was candid in admitting, in Escobar's name as well as his own, that this would be “ *un infâme sacrilège,*” and for himself, that Escobar's conclusion was a “ *vilaine proposition,*” he proceeds to express his inability to see what can be the harm of it, or what people can mean by quibbling about such a trifle : “ *Puis pour la pratique, il nous est impossible de comprendre en quoi tout cela peut nuire à la piété Catholique : ce sont de subtilités d'esprit misérables, scabreuses même, si l'on veut,*” (candid man!) “ *et rien de plus.*” Why then put these miserable subtleties in practical books ? Oh ! he says, they have their use ; practical questions for confessors may arise, which they may be wanted to answer. “ *On pourrait, cependant, ajouter, que toutes ces questions n'étaient pas absolument oiseuses, et qu'elles tendaient à décider si, quelque pût être la péché commis par le pénitent pendant la messe, il était obligé d'entendre une autre.*” So that, rather than trust the confessor's common sense, to settle whether, to comply with the command of the Church, a man who had abominably profaned one mass was bound to hear another, Escobar might “ tend to decide it ” by putting in his book that the Church's precept could be satisfied by an “ *infâme sacrilège,*” without erring, apparently, in more than judgment. Is there much difference between Caramuel and M. Maynard ?

We will take one more case ; — that of what M. Maynard terms the “ theory of equivocations and mental restrictions : ” \* a theory, which, he says, “ had been known in the schools for “ two centuries ; ” and so far from the Jesuits having been its inventors, “ at the date of the *Provinciales*, it would not have been easy to find more than three or four theologians of an opposite sentiment.” “ A doctrine so universally adopted must have solid foundations ; ” and, as it has con-

\* *Vide* Lettre IX., vol. i. p. 420.

tinued to be taught in the Church by strict theologians, even after the condemnation of certain propositions by the Pope, we must conclude that only its abuses were condemned.

How, he says, can you do without *some* theory to reconcile veracity with other often conflicting duties? and what harm can there be in *this* one, when its maintainers tell you, never to apply or use equivocation, when it is not right, or in a wrong way? The following *exposé* of its principles is stated to be but an analysis of the learned Jesuit Sanchez: —

“It is necessary,” he begins, “first, to shelter from all accusation of falsehood divers holy personages of the Bible, who appear in word and deed to have departed from the way of simple and straightforward truth, *e. g.* Abraham and Isaac, Jacob calling himself the eldest son to his father, the angel of Tobias taking the name of some high person in Israel. Several saints of the New Testament appear to have had recourse to equivocation; and certain expressions of our Lord are hard to explain in their obvious and natural sense.”

Then, after noticing that a man is often placed between contradictory obligations, he states as follows the distinctions by which the Casuists saved equivocation from the guilt of lying, and guarded its right use: —

“The objections to the ‘*system of equivocations*’ are obvious; but any other system is just as open to difficulty, especially as applied to the facts of the Bible. Nevertheless, the holders of the system of equivocation could not rest under the charge of excusing lies and deceit. So they establish two sorts of restrictions, one allowed, the other forbidden; the ‘*purely mental*,’ where it is absolutely impossible to discover the truth, and the ‘*sensible*,’ of which the sense *might be discovered* by certain signs or circumstances, though more often it must remain hidden. Again, they distinguished between the equivocation *sensible*, and the equivocation *at pleasure* (*forgée à plaisir*), of which the meaning is purely *arbitrary*.

“In this manner, say they, not only is a person without the intention of deceiving, but he does not *necessarily* deceive at all, because it is *possible* to discover the truth; and there is no injustice, for it is assumed that one party has no right to know, nor the other to reveal the truth. So there is no wish to ‘*faire accroire une*

*chose fausse,*' as Pascal says; such an intention would be condemned by all theologians. Moreover, there is no mischief done to human society, for equivocations are not resorted to under every circumstance, but in exceptional cases, where there are grave inconveniences in discovering the truth, and a real necessity and duty to keep it silent."—Vol. i. pp. 421, 422.

So far for *general* statement. If a theory were true because it is wanted, it is clear that it is often inconvenient, hard, undesirable — sometimes wrong, to state truth. But, as M. Maynard truly remarks, "the real difficulty is in its application." Does it help us out of our perplexities? The difficulties of astronomy remained after the invention of cycles and epicycles. M. Maynard admits, indeed, that in their application of the "solid" and safe principles, the theologians were occasionally mistaken; but, "why should that be made a crime in them?"

Pascal, for instance, quotes from Sanchez, "*that we may swear that we have not done something which we have done, by understanding mentally, that we did not do it on such a day, or before we were born, or with some such circumstances.*" Here is certainly a very definite way of using equivocation, and escaping, we are told, lying or perjury. M. Maynard appears to think that it only wants the rules, conditions, and restrictions, omitted by Pascal, to make it a practical solution of possible perplexities. But it seems, that all the conditions necessary are contained in the passage which we have quoted above—an analysis of this same Sanchez.\* M. Maynard is easily satisfied. Pascal goes on to another particular case, yet stronger. Filliucci is more definite even than Sanchez; and M. Maynard *appears*—we cannot say for certain more—to accept this also, as a satisfactory way of escaping from the difficulties of veracity. At any rate he will not give up Filliucci. Pascal observes, that he says that Sanchez's method of equivocation is neither lie nor perjury:—

"Parceque c'est 'l'intention qui règle la qualité de l'action.' Et il y donne encore une autre moyen plus sûr d'éviter le mensonge. C'est qu'après avoir dit tout haut, *Je jure que je n'ai point fait*

\* Vol. i. p. 424.

*celà*, on ajoute tout bas, *aujourd'hui* ; ou qu'après avoir dit tout haut, *Je jure*, on dise tout bas, *que je dis* ; et que l'on continue ensuite tout haut, *que je n'ai point fait celà*. Vous voyez bien que c'est dire la vérité. Je l'avoue, lui dis-je ; mais nous trouverions, peut-être, que c'est dire la vérité tout bas, et un mensonge tout haut : outre, que je craindrais que bien de gens n'eussent pas assez de présence d'esprit pour se servir de ces méthodes. Nos pères, dit-il, ont enseigné au même lieu, en faveur de ceux qui ne sauraient pas user de ces restrictions, qu'il leur suffit, pour ne point mentir, de dire simplement, qu'ils n'ont point fait ce qu'ils ont fait, pourvu qu'ils aient en général l'intention de donner à leur discours le sens qu'un habile homme y donnerait."

We will here quote the curiously stated decisions of the Penitentiary on "*Amphibologia*," and then our readers may judge for themselves of M. Maynard's comments on him and on Pascal. Filliucci, — after stating, on the question, 'whether, if the *amphibologia* be solely mental, it is lawful to swear?' that it is a *probable* opinion that it is *not* lawful, but a *more probable* one that it is ; 'for that, out of the word spoken and the mental restriction is made one compound speech in which is no falsehood, and that it is free for a man to compound his speech of terms spoken and mental ;' and after proving this by S. Gregory, who says that 'the Prophet sometimes joined the word which one sounded by the mouth, to the word of the mind, which is reason,'—confirms his position thus : 'It is confirmed by the example of Christ's words, "*of that day no man knows*," and "*I go not up to this feast*," in which one thing is said in the outward words, and another understood in the internal ones.' He then says that the mental restriction ought not to be arbitrary, but proportionate to the words and matter, so that, *with explanation*, the words might be understood in the intended sense ; and he gives the following rules, '*ad utendum amphibologiam*.'

"Fourthly, I inquire, with what caution must *amphibologia* be used? I answer, and say, first, besides what has just been observed, two modes may be assigned for persons endued with judgment ; the first is, to have the intention of expressing the outward words materially, and for greater security ; when the person begins, for instance, by saying, *I swear that*—to interpose in a low voice

the mental restriction, *to-day*—and then to add in a loud voice, ‘*I did not eat this or that;*’ or, ‘*I swear that*’—then interpose, ‘*I say that*’—then finish in a loud voice, ‘*I did not do this or that:*’ for *so the whole speech is most true*. The second way is, to have the intention of not completing the speech merely by external words, but, at the same time, with a mental restriction; for a man is at liberty to express his mind wholly or partially. But for the untaught, who cannot understand ambiguous expression in the particular (*pro rudibus qui nesciunt in particulari concipere amphibologiam,*) it is sufficient if they have the intention of affirming or denying in the sense which in reality contains truth; for which it is necessary that they should know, at least in the universal, that they *can* deny in *some* true sense, otherwise they could not speak in a true sense.”

He then says that this mode of expression by ambiguous words, especially where the restriction is mental, is not to be used without a “*just cause;*” otherwise a fault is committed, and if with an oath, a grave fault; and proceeds to inquire *what* sort of fault. Is it a lie? and, if sworn to, perjury? He answers, that it is *probable* that it is, and gives reasons why; but *more probable* that it is not:—

“I say, in the second place, that it seems more probable that in strictness it is not a lie or perjury. The principal reason, is, that he who so speaks and swears has not the intention of saying what is false, or swearing to it, as is presupposed; and what is expressed, in strictness has *some* true sense, which the person intends; therefore he does not lie (from Navarr. cap. *Humana Aures*, 22, 9, 5). For the intention characterises (*discernit*) the action. It is confirmed from S. Thomas, 2, 2, 9, 55, Art. 3, where cunning (*astutia*) is said to be the vice contrary to prudence; but he who uses ‘*amphibologia*’ is, at the utmost, astute; therefore, &c. . . But it is not repugnant to human truth and good faith, because it is not opposed to it by a defect of truth, but by an excessive occultation of truth. Hence it is that to confirm this by an oath is not strictly perjury, but a certain want of religiousness (*irreligiositas quædam*), and if there be scandal, from the outward semblance of perjury, it will be reduced to the evil of that; which [evil] has most place in ambiguous expression with mental restriction, as Suarez rightly teaches.”—*Fill. Moral. Quæst.* Tr. xxv. cap. xi. nn. 325—331.

Such is Filliucci's statement, little more than copied, as is the wont of these writers, even to the illustrations, from a predecessor — in this case, one of the greatest of the Casuists, Suarez. M. Maynard thus excepts to Pascal's use of it: —

“We have nearly the same thing to say of Filliucci as of Sanchez. This principle, that ‘*the intention regulates the quality of the action,*’ has been quoted by Pascal in a very dishonest way. It means merely that we must never, even in the case of mental restriction, have the intention to deceive, but only to hide a truth which our neighbour has no right to know. Such is also the sense of the general rule, ‘*to have the intention to give to our words the sense which a clever man (un habile homme) would give them.*’ This rule is for the ignorant who may use ambiguous terms (*cette règle est pour les ignorants qui useraient d’amphibologie*). As it is never allowed to speak contrary to our thought, then, if they do not understand the expedient which they use (*s’ils ne comprennent pas le tour dont ils se servent*), they ought to have the intention in general of giving to it the sense which a clever man would give it.”—Vol. i. p. 425.

There is something delightful in the simplicity with which M. Maynard disposes of the matter, by merely tacitly translating the restriction which Filliucci thinks sufficient. We must add, as we have so often had the distinction between speculation and practice, that Suarez, the original authority, assures us that this doctrine, so stated, is “*practice securissima.*”\*

These are the sort of subjects on which, according to M. Maynard, men cannot be expected to be of one mind — the subjects to which the doctrine of Probabilism applies. “If there are in morals some points which are certain, there are others which are not, which come into the domain of the probable, and of opinion. Do what we will, take up what system we please, there will always be controverted principles, embarrassing cases, through which we cannot guide ourselves by a certainty and evidence which do not exist, but only by the glimmering twilight of reasons or autho-

\* Suarez de Rel. tom. ii. tr. 4. lib. iii. c. 10. n. 4.

ities more or less plausible.”\* The men whom Pascal accuses of such diversity of sentiment are, he says, agreed, “first on all the principles which are certain or defined by Scripture, tradition, and the Church; then on all the doctrines commonly received in the Catholic schools. As for *controverted opinions*, whatever system of morals we embrace, we shall never be agreed.” †

But he treats with scorn the idea that these open questions, and, as he allows very often, singular solutions of them, could have the smallest effect on feeling, opinion, or practice. He coolly parallels them to the books of medical and legal science,—an analogy which might perhaps do for the questions, if they had not the answers to them. We must oppose to M. Maynard’s opinion, one which on this point is at least as “probable.” On a matter of fact, at least, the authority of the famous Caramuel may be of weight. An injudicious director may yet be a fair witness, especially against himself; and so great was his confidence in his favourite science, that he could afford the admission that M. Maynard shrinks from. Caramuel attests the fact, that “inconvenience” did result from many of the most probable opinions of the schools; only he thinks it a very paltry argument to infer, that therefore they are not probable:—

“You will say that from this doctrine” [he is speaking, we may observe, of the famous *conclusio conclusionum* of Pascal’s seventh Letter] “many inconveniences [or, awkward consequences] arise, and therefore it is to be rejected. And I answer, that to say, ‘From such and such an assertion great dangers and mischiefs arise, therefore it is false,’ is not a good consequence.” [He then instances, *e. g.* an assertion which might throw a whole kingdom into a revolution, yet would not be the less true, and proceeds—it will be observed that we are quoting him only as a witness to fact,] “Hence it is that I judge that the *highest inconveniences (summa inconvenientia)* follow from many opinions which are at this day in vogue in the schools, yet that these opinions are not therefore improbable. For many inconveniences arise from *mental restrictions*; many from *secret compensations*; many from *the permission to kill*

\* Vol. i. p. 199.

† Vol. i. p. 241.



*an unjust judge or witness*, which some grant; many also from the opinion, which teaches, that *of secret things the Church judges not*; many from others; notwithstanding which inconveniences, these opinions, in the terms in which they are at this day delivered in the schools, are at the very least most probable, and may not be condemned by any (*sunt ad minimum probabilissima, et a nemine damnari possunt*).”—*Theolog. Fundam.* No. 1150. Ed. Franc. 1652.

Now to all this we are quite aware that there is a summary and specious answer. It is, that the Popes, in spite of Caramuel, *have* condemned these discreditable opinions, and banished them for ever from the teaching of the Church. Whatever might be said inconsiderately in 1650, yet when Alexander VII. and Innocent XI. spoke, a few years later, Jesuits and all submitted with absolute reverence to the decision of Rome, and no theologian can be cited who has since then said these things.

To this a rejoinder might be supposed, that it was but a make-believe condemnation, or one brought about accidentally by the policy or revenge of the moment; that when Rome meant to condemn in earnest, as in the case of the Jansenists, there was no mistake in her way of doing it; that here, though she happened to fix on most of the propositions quoted by Pascal, she simply condemned them in their bare literal sense, and said nothing as to why and how she condemned them; that Casuists might still treat the censures as sullen lawyers do an Act of Parliament,—maintain that their method was unrebuked, and that the propositions were condemned, not as morally shocking, but merely verbally inexact, and that they might still hold others next door to them with impunity. It might be urged, that, apparently, they had only become wrong, *since and because* the Popes condemned them, and that the Pope's previous tolerance indicates, that it was little more than a formal stigma.

On the other hand, it might be said, that it is unfair thus to explain away the obvious purport of the Popes' act; that we ought to take it for what it looks like—the condemnation of a dangerous mode of thought or expression in

certain palpable samples of it, as Jansenism was condemned in the Five Propositions, or in the 101 of the Bull *Unigenitus*; that the propositions are nearly the same as those which Bossuet got condemned by the Assembly of 1700, and we know that he condemned in them the spirit and system which had produced them.

Now how does M. Maynard deal with this? For it is obvious that for him, in proportion as it removes one difficulty, it brings in another. Apparently, at least, if it clears the Popes, it compromises the Casuists; and in proportion as we give weight and significance to the condemnation, it seems to fix on them the load of a mischievous and at length intolerable teaching,—intolerable, even to that very authority, of which they were the champions. The fact, of course, he more than admits. “Long before 1679,” he says, “the Jesuits had been able to cite more than thirty of their theologians, anterior even to the *Provinciales*, on the necessity of the love of God in penitence. With much stronger reason, then, did they abstain, after the pontifical sentence, to teach any of the propositions condemned by Innocent XI.”\* Whether the mistake was *practical*, “these men, who were led astray by benevolent and pure intentions, to impose on weak men the least burden possible,—renounced their error as soon as it was pointed out to them *by their superiors*, and especially *by the Holy See*; and thus the evil was dried up at its source;”† or whether it was but *mere speculation*, “they renounced even their abstractions, as soon as any point of doctrine had been prescribed by the Holy See. Thus it would be impossible to cite a single theologian who has permitted the murder of the unjust judge, or of the false witnesses, since the censure of the 18th proposition of the decree of Alexander VII.; and the most celebrated authors,” it is added, with some boldness of assertion, “had not waited till then to condemn it in their works.”‡ We do not for a moment doubt their submission; yet M. Maynard seems to make more of a merit of it than is quite intelligible. The

\* Vol. i. p. 183.

† Vol. i. p. 210.

‡ Vol. i. p. 304.

sacrifice of submitting to be debarred from such propositions as that "the love of God is not necessary for penitence," or that "we may seek occasions of sin for our own good or that of our neighbour," does not seem so very hard, any more than the glory very singular of not having maintained them.

But we should, it appears, be grossly mistaken, if we saw in these censures any such condemnation, or even discountenancing, of principles, or methods of arguing or stating, as the Bull *Unigenitus* is of Jansenism as a whole. The decrees of Alexander and Innocent are, we are told to observe, censures, not of doctrines, but of *propositions*. The propositions are given up, of course; and there is an end of the matter. But the authors are not named, and are therefore untouched. What the Church *has* decided upon, is nothing but certain extreme and lax applications of a recognised way of treating moral questions. The propositions are to be taken one by one, as separate, isolated, for the most part trifling, or accidental mistakes, each to be set down to the account of him who made it: and who does not make mistakes? And as we are not to gather from the censure, that the Church meant to notice them as an aggregate and significant phenomenon, such as Pascal sees in them; so, on each subject touched by the propositions, beyond the strict letter of the proposition censured, the condemnation does not reach.

It was, for instance, as M. Maynard tells us, a *common doctrine* at the time *in the schools*\*—by no means confined to the Jesuits, and, indeed, not accepted by several of them—that it is lawful to kill beforehand false witnesses against us. "Speculatively, indeed," says M. Maynard †, "it will be legitimate, for it flows logically from natural right, general principles, and analogy with permitted cases;" and it is difficult to see, in what this "horrible consequence" "differs from the case of unjust aggression and lawful self-defence." And the theologians "added almost always," that, *speculatively only*, was it lawful. Turned into practice, "it would involve an almost inevitable sin." Therefore, and so far only, it was condemned. Practical dangers, (which for once

\* Vol. i. p. 327.

† Vol. i. pp. 303, 304.

M. Maynard admits,) "caused to be absolutely condemned by the Popes a certain number of propositions on this subject *certainly admissible in principle and in theory. But the theologians who confined themselves within the limits of pure abstraction and metaphysical precision are not touched by these censures.*" The general doctrine on homicide, which Pascal imputes to the Jesuits, is not merely unjustly made peculiar to them, but "has never been condemned by the Church."\*

So with the "*système des équivoques,*" which we have already alluded to:—

"The adversaries of this system," says M. Maynard, "point to the propositions condemned by Innocent XI. and the clergy of France in 1700. It would be singular enough," he proceeds, "that if the system of equivocations was absolutely condemned, it should continue to be taught by a great number of theologians with the full cognizance of the Church, and by theologians, too, very little suspected of relaxed moral opinions. . . . We must suppose, therefore, that it is only the abuses and excesses of the system which are touched by the censure. That this answer is founded in reason may be seen by the examination of the condemned propositions. The 26th of those censured by Innocent XI. permits, without distinction, every restriction, even purely mental, under every circumstance, with or without reason; the 27th measures the use of it only by the private advantage of him who uses it, without regard to the public interest, often opposed to private, or to the exceptions laid down by theologians; the 28th authorizes reservations in cases where the public good, law, and morality require a plain and straightforward oath, by a culpable abuse of the principle, that a man is not obliged to avow a secret crime; and in other ways it tends to favour intrigue and bad means of arriving at employments."—Vol. i. pp. 423, 424.

Again, P. Bauny asks, "*Les valets qui se plaignent de leurs gages peuvent ils d'eux-mêmes les croître en se garnissant les mains d'autant de bien appartenant à leur maîtres, comme ils s'imaginent en être nécessaire pour égaler les dits gages à leur peine?*" and answers, "*Ils le peuvent, en quelques rencontres, comme lors-qu'ils sont si pauvres en cherchant condition, qu'ils ont été obliger d'accepter l'offre qu'on leur a faite, ou que les autres valets de leur sorte gagnent d'avantage ailleurs.*" "*Voilà,*"

\* Vol. i. p. 310.

says M. Maynard, "*encore une matière fort délicate*. Innocent XI. and the Assembly of 1700 have condemned the proposition, that '*men-servants and maid-servants may take in secret from their masters, wherewith to compensate their labour, which they judge to be greater than the salary which they receive.*'" This condemnation seems absolute and clear; and M. Maynard says the doctrine is a blameable one, inasmuch as it leaves the estimation of the value to the interested party, and opens the gate to an infinity of domestic thefts. But, he adds, not even P. Bauny taught *this proposition*. For, he proceeds to ask,—"Follows it from this condemnation that in *certain circumstances*, infinitely rare if we please, servants may not use secret compensation?" Not at all. He observes that, as between creditor and debtor in general, it is "certainly permitted" to the creditor, under certain conditions, to use "secret compensation:" such conditions as that the debt is unquestionable, strictly due, irrecoverable by course of law, and that this "secret compensation" do no harm to a third party, or expose the debtor to the chance of a second payment. The principle is proved by the example of Jacob and Laban, and the Israelites in Egypt. The concurrence of conditions is rare, and therefore it is a question rather speculative than practical; but where they do concur, all theologians allow it. Now, what are servants but *creditors*, and why should they be debarred the general rights of creditors? By all means, he says, make more severe conditions for them, as they are more liable to make mistakes—"à la bonne heure — *mais doit-on les priver absolument du droit de compenser eux-mêmes les injustices de maîtres durs et impitoyables? Les théologiens, Jésuites ou non, n'ont pas eu ce triste courage.*" Now all that P. Bauny means, says M. Maynard, is this, to put servants on the footing of other creditors; "secret compensation," he thinks, is allowable to servants:—1. when agreement for increase of wages in proportion to increased usefulness is not kept; 2. when servants have been *forced* into a service for fear of starving. But even so, Bauny will not allow it them, when they have been taken out of pure compassion, or at their own request, or are not under worse

condition than others. "*Avec ces limitations, la décision de Bauny n'est pas dangereuse, surtout si le confesseur est laissé juge, et bien rarement trouvera-t-il son application.*"\* Thus Bauny is proved not to have taught the condemned proposition. The condemnation and Bauny are both right. And so the honour of both Pope and Casuist is judiciously reconciled. But it brings forcibly before us how difficult a thing it must be to "condemn" a proposition.

So much for the effect of the condemnation. It is a *fait accompli*, to be treated with all respect. But M. Maynard suggests that nevertheless its importance is diminished, if we consider its history. The condemnation by Innocent XI. was a sort of accident; when the propositions were forced on the attention of the Pope, he could not but condemn them; but that they were so forced on him, was owing to the unlucky failure of Louis XIV.'s judicious attempt to catch the Jansenist agents on the road to Rome, and stop them from getting to the Pope.

"Madame de Sevigné is too amusing," he observes, "when she affects so much pity for her '*pauvres frères,*' whom she makes into victims when they were really persecutors. . . . '*Louis XIV. was therefore wise in placing his agents on the great roads to prevent any such communications between the Pope and the Jansenists.* But he did not succeed in barring that passage to them, and the denunciation reached Innocent XI. The Pope then pronounced on the question of fact, not on that of right, and condemned, in 1679, the sixty-five propositions, as he was bound to condemn them, wherever found, to show that the Church does not approve laxities in morality. But he did not attribute them to the Jesuits, nor condemn the Jesuits as corrupters of morality."—Vol. i. pp. 182, 183.

Though it was an inopportune question, the Pope's decision, when forced, could be but one way, and was right. A modest foot-note, however, ventures further to insinuate the intrusion of a cause, which takes off still more from the weight and significance, though not the formal effect, of the act. The

\* Vol. i. pp. 294—296.

Jesuits knew the Pope's duty better than himself sometimes; but a price must be paid for helping a man in spite of himself:—

“ We must observe, that Innocent XI. did not love the Jesuits, and wished to change their Institute. He was a great and holy Pontiff, but inflexible even to harshness, jealous of his rights even to obstinacy, and impracticable when his authority was in question. In the affair of the Regale, the Jesuits had shown themselves more French than Roman. He had sent them his briefs, which the Parliament suppressed, with orders to publish them and certify their authenticity. The Jesuits remained neuter, *et ne voulurent pas se rendre impossibles en France en s'opposant aux lois du royaume.* He had even entrusted to P. Dez a brief of excommunication against Lou's XIV., but the Jesuit took care not to publish it. He kept it secret, to leave the Pope time for reflection; and in fact Innocent XI. withdrew it himself, acknowledging in the end how wise had been the conduct of the Jesuits. This, however, did not prevent him from entertaining a grudge against them; and *the condemnation of the sixty-five propositions, though just in itself, was without doubt an act of revenge.*”—Vol. i. p. 183.

From a writer who, as against Jansenism, treats the *condemnation of propositions* as a solemn judgment of Infallibility, not on the bare letter of isolated sentences, but on the spirit and meaning of a coherent system of doctrine, this is remarkable. Which is the true interpretation of the censures, must be settled in the Roman Church, between those who think most, like Bossuet, about the meaning of the propositions, and those who feel most, like M. Maynard, about the honour of the Jesuits. But it seems at least ambiguous, whether it is public feeling or the censures of Rome, which prevents Escobars and Caramuels from appearing now.

Such is M. Maynard's way of vindicating a system, whose speculations and practical decisions ranged with equal boldness and equal solemnity, and with equal arbitrariness in relaxing or tightening, from the obligation of the first and great commandment, to the problem whether chocolate were

meat or drink\*, or whether, and in what shape, using tobacco violated the eucharistic fast. † We are familiar with the gross exaggerations of its meaning and design, made for party purposes — for a Maynooth bill, for instance — on one side. Here we have equally gross shuffling and effrontery, to get rid of obvious facts, on the other. We are not going here to reduce and adjust these rival extravagances; but it seems as if, to fair examination, that the truth does not lie very deep.

If we look into the history of this casuistry, its first cause is to be sought in the inherited habits of thought, which had been formed in the middle-age schools. The extravagant licence of speculating and deciding had passed from doctrine

\* “*Quid de potione in Hispania, aut Occidentali India, dicta vulgo ‘chocolate?’* Aliquando dixi pro potu haberi, sed parum meriti jejuniu relinquare ob vires, quas jejunanti adjicit, omnino inedia sublata, aut impedita; nec absolute cuperem usum hujusce potionis, uti mortificationi jejunii ab Ecclesiæ intentæ apprimè adversantem; at magis auctoritati adherens quam rationi, potum esse assero, sed non uti condit abusus, sed quemamodum potio ab Indis ad Hispaniam pervenit. Unde ‘chocolate’ ovis aut lacte conditum potus non est, sed cibus substantialissimus. Item hujusmodi potio admodum crassa in notabili quantitate jejuniu violat. Verum ‘chocolate’ liquidum adeo, ut unicæ potioni uncia una adhibeatur saccharo necessario potus est, et absque scrupulo absumi potest. Unicam potionem appello quod capit commune vas, quod *vicara* vulgo assolet appellari. Quod si assignata proportione ea potionis quantitas condiatur, licet vas non semel evacuetur, jejuniu non solvitur, temperantia fortasse violata, quia potus est, quemadmodum de vino asserimus.” — *Escobar*, Tr. i. Exam. xiii. cap. 3. Praxis sec. *S. J. de Jejuniu*.

† “II<sup>a</sup> regula est: ad frangendum jejuniu requiritur ut accipiatur aliquid per modum comestionis aut potationis: quare *communiter* dicunt Suar. Lugo, Conc. Holzm. Ronc. Escob. Croix, Elb., *quicquid dicant aliqui pauci*, non lædere jejun. tabacum per nares sumtum, licet aliquid illius descenderet in stomachum, ratione allatâ . . . saltem ait Bened. XIV. hoc est permissum propter usum universalem inter fideles receptum.

“Pariter, tabaci fumus ore haustus non frangit jejun., ut etiam communiter docent Suar. Vill. Trullenc., &c. cum eodem Bened. XIV. qui similiter testatur hanc esse hodiernam consuetudinem, confirmatam communi DD. consensu. Limitant tamen Salmant., et dicunt frangere jejun. qui ex proposito transmitteret fumum in stomachum, dicendo quod hæc esset vera comestio, dum talis fumus etiam aliquo modo nutriret; sed hæc limitatio communius et probabilius negatur ab Escob. Præp. March. Viva, Spor. Renzi. Tamb. Diana, &c. Et ratio est, quia fumus non sumitur per modum cibi, nec est cibus in se comestibilis aut manducabilis, quem voluerit Ecclesia prohibere, juxta communem DD. sensum.” *Liguori*, *Hom. Ap. Tract. xv. p. 3. n. 38. 39.*



to questions of morality and conscience; it was the fashion and mania of the day; serious men competed in the hardihood and strangeness of their solutions, and good men seemed to take a pride in finding out how much they could allow—in speculation at any rate—to be lawful. Conditions, restrictions, distinctions multiplied of course; but so did the authorities and decisions, inventing doubts, extending liberty, and taking away scruples. It is all done in these countless folios of Moral Theology, just as if casuistical questions had no more to do with real human action than with the movements of the stars—all for the mere pleasure of speculating, with the zest of a race in avoiding a corner, and the inventiveness of a legal debate, in pressing or giving the slip to the letter of an Act of Parliament.

Its next cause was the practical needs of a system of discipline—the endeavour to fix what cannot be fixed, the limits, in every possible case, of mortal sin. Casuistry may be a natural growth of the wants of conscience, and its place in a system like that of Rome is obvious. Whether it *can* supply those wants or not, the attempt to do so may doubtless be made with fairness and soberness; and it is impossible to doubt the ability or religious mind of many, whose meditations it has engaged. Such, in spite of Pascal, were Suarez and Vasquez. But its extent and its utility are limited; and the mischief of which it may be the occasion is obvious, if it becomes formal, or attempts to supersede or overshadow the individual conscience. And its tendency to do so was plainly visible even in the best writers of the class. Doubtless moral questions are very important and often very hard ones. But there are endless questions on which no answer can be given except a bad one,—which cannot be answered, in the shape proposed, *at all*. We may think it very desirable to be able to state in the abstract, yet for practical use, the extreme cases, which excuse killing, or taking what is not our own; but if we cannot get beyond decisions, which leave the door open for unquestionable murders or thefts, or shut it only by vague verbal restrictions, unexplained and inexplicable, about “*prudence*,” and “*moderation*,” and “*necessity*,” and “*gravity of cir-*

*cumstances,*" it is a practical illustration of the difficulty of this extreme casuistry, which seems to point out, that unless we can do better, we had best leave it alone. But its professors were hard to daunt. They could not indeed trust the consciences of mankind with principles of duty, but they could trust without a misgiving their own dialectic forms, as a calculus which nothing could resist. Nothing in the feelings or actions of men was too fleeting, too complicated, too subtle to be grasped, analysed, expressed and laid up for use, by means of the verbal technicalities of their method. No question would they dismiss as insoluble or absurd. The consequence was twofold. Their method often *did* fail, and in the attempt to give exact formulæ of right and wrong action, they proved unable to express the right without comprehending the wrong with it. Then, as it was not their way to re-open and re-examine their received principles, they were driven on that strange maxim for a practical philosophy—that much might be lawful in speculation which was unlawful in practice. They did not shrink from consequences: but they, or at least their defenders, took refuge in the alleged unfairness of taking them at their word. But it is scarcely possible to believe that this scientific impotence was the only consequence of their misdirected labour. From all evil designs the leaders, at any rate, may be safely absolved; though whether they did not lose their sense of the reality of human action, in the formal terms in which they contemplated it, may be a question. But though the *design* of corrupting morality is one of the most improbable charges against any men, the *effect* may more easily follow, even where not intended. When great authorities lay down conclusions which seem to relax the strength of obligation, man must cease to be the creature of affected self-deceit and mixed character, which we know him to be, if any verbal guarding can save them from misleading him—misleading under the pretence of obedience. These Casuists would not trust the individual conscience; and it had its revenge. They were driven onwards till they had no choice left between talking nonsense, or what was worse. They would ticket, and control, and provide for the most evanescent

and mixed forms of will and feeling. They would set conscience to rights in minutest detail; and so they had to take the responsibility of whatever could not be set to rights. They claimed to lay down exactly the measure and shape of every form of stealing; so whenever the letter of their rules did not hold, there was no stealing. Nature outwitted them; it gave up its liberty in the gross, and then forced them to surrender it again in detail. Nay, it made them avowedly allow for its waywardness, in the rules they laid down, as the price of its submission to control at all. And thus, at length, under the treatment of compilers and abridgers, and under the influence of that idea of authority, which deferred to *opinions* \* on the same rule as it deferred to *testimony*,—exhibited in the coarsest brevity, and with the affectation of outbidding the boldest precedents,—grew up that form of casuistry which is exhibited in the Escobars and Baunys; which professing to be the indispensable aid to common sense, envelopes it in a very Charybdis of discordant opinions; amid whose grotesque suppositions, and whimsical distinctions, and vague yet peremptory rules, bandied about between metaphysics and real life, the mind sinks into a hopeless confusion of moral ideas, and loses every clue to simple and straightforward action.

A modern reader is more disposed to see in it stupid pedantry, than mischief. Able and serious men of the time, on the other hand, were revolted in seeing stupid pedantry pretending to be the guide of human conduct, and showing itself off as the latest invention of modern wisdom. Doubtless both views may be exaggerated. The system may have done good in its earlier and healthier state; possibly it may also have been too antiquated and worn out to do as much evil as would seem likely, in its subsequent formal overgrowth. If it is said to have been too absurd to be important, we can

\* “Une opinion probable est celle qui a un fondement considérable. Or l'autorité d'un homme savant et pieux n'est pas de petite considération, mais plutôt de grande considération. Car si le témoignage d'un tel homme est de grand poids pour nous assurer qu'une chose se soit passée, par exemple à Rome, pourquoi ne le sera-t-il pas de même dans un doute de morale.”—Sanchez, quoted in Prov. V., vol. i. p. 240.

understand if we do not accept the view. But it is asking a hard thing to beg us to believe, as M. Maynard does, *both* that these decisions were harmless, *and* that, with a few exceptions, they were very wise; both that they had a practical use and effect, and yet were not mischievous. If it can be made out that they are *only* matter for laughing, we are quite as much inclined to laugh as to be indignant: but if we are to be serious about them, there is only one way of being so.

One point more remains to be noticed. "*Cæcitatibus duæ species facile concurrunt,*" says an old writer, "*ut qui non vident quæ sunt, videre videantur quæ non sunt.*" The remark is singularly borne out here. So convinced is M. Maynard of the evil of the Jansenist doctrine and system of direction, in exacting so much and such strict preparation for absolution and communion, and insisting so strongly on their uselessness and danger without a real change of life, *that in one way only can he account for it.\** It is impossible, it appears to him, that men could state the claims of religion so rigorously, except for one object, *to drive men to refuse them altogether.* Accordingly, he comes to the serious conclusion, that Jansenius, S. Cyran, and Arnauld were *disguised infidels*; and labours to show, from a story of the time, coupled with their otherwise inexplicable severity, that Port Royal was a deistical plot, as a Jesuit of the day expressed it, "*to ruin the mystery of the Incarnation, to make the Gospel pass for an apocryphal story, to exterminate the Christian religion, and to raise up Deism on the ruins of Christianity.*"

Such is the only way in which M. Maynard can explain the appearance in the seventeenth century, in his own communion, of the austere language of the Fathers of the Church,

\* For instance, he quotes from S. Cyran,—“Pour recevoir le sacrement de l'Eucharistie, il faut être en état de grâce, avoir fait pénitence de ces péchés, et n'être pas attaché, ni par volonté ni par négligence, à aucune chose qui puisse déplaire à Dieu.” “Ceux qui demeurent volontairement dans les moindres fautes et imperfections sont indignes du sacrement de l'Eucharistie;” with passages recommending the newly converted, or those guilty of some special sin, to abstain for a time from communion. On this M. Maynard can only put the construction, “*Traduction libre mais exacte de tous ces passages; 'ne communiez jamais, car vous en êtes et en serez toujours indignes.'*” — Vol. ii. pp. 219, 220.

And this is not a passing insinuation. As P. Brisacier assured the Jansenists that he called them "gates of hell and pontiffs of the devil," not "*par forme d'injure, mais par la force de la vérité*;" so M. Maynard maintains, in a special essay \* of sixteen closely printed pages, the high historical probability of the Jansenist plot of Bourg-Fontaine, for the annihilation of Christianity. "*Si l'axiome de logique*," he says, "*ab actu ad posse valet illatio, peut trouver ici son application, on doit conclure qu'il est au moins FORT POSSIBLE que le dessein de détruire le Christianisme ait été pris à Bourg-Fontaine, car les différents points qui l'auraient composé ont été essayés par S. Cyran et ses disciples; voilà qui est incontestable.*" . . . "*Pour conclure en un mot; des preuves indirectes et retroactives semblent établir la réalité du projet de Bourg-Fontaine; des preuves péremptoires démontrent que la foi de Port Royal sur les Sacrements, sur l'Eucharistie, sur l'Eglise, et sur l'essence même du Christianisme, étaient au moins suspectes. Quand même ils se seraient trompés sur quelques points, les Jésuites n'étaient ni téméraires ni calomnieateurs dans leurs accusations.*" †—"Le croyez-vous vous-mêmes, misérables que vous êtes?" was Pascal's indignant challenge to his opponents then, and it is the only one worth giving at any time.

This reminds us that we have spent more time than enough on M. Maynard. Some of that famous order of which he has made himself the champion, might afford him precedents in deliberately arguing for moral paradoxes. P. Hardouin comprised Pascal in his list of Atheists. P. Raynauld proved a heresy in every article of the Apostles' Creed. But, one of them, at least, probably both, did it in joke. M. Maynard has forgotten Scaliger's wise saying, *Ars est etiam maledicendi*. The most determined enemy of S. Cyran or Arnauld, who at this day should affect to doubt their *Tridentine* faith about Penance and the Eucharist, would peril his character for candour; but the man who gravely pretends to maintain, and asks us to believe, that they were deliberate infidels, is far past criticism. It would be as fair to talk of a league between

\* Introd. à la 16me Provinc. vol. ii. pp. 215—231.

† Vol. ii. pp. 218. 231.

Xavier and the Bonzes of Japan, and as rational to speculate on the secret Christianity of the devotees of Juggernaut.

Here we take our leave of him. Yet he has laid us under an obligation. He has realised to us the Jesuit father of the Provincial Letters,—no longer, indeed, in an unsuspecting and communicative, but in an irritated mood—a well-meaning man, and as far as possible from purposing any harm, but dulled into a positive incapacity for perceiving that there is any harm in what is wrong, if his friends say it.

But, after all, this man is but a blind and injudicious repeater,—seduced into print by that cheap gift which Frenchmen have, a plausible and flimsy rhetoric,—of the views and assertions of De Maistre.\* He but represents that way of theorizing, now, it seems, fashionable in the Roman Church, which itself does, what is its heaviest and justest charge against many opponents of that Church—which prefers to call good evil, rather than submit to be checked and controlled by facts. He but follows the stream, and talks, as he can, the fearless sophistry which he hears admired. The French Church has still, we know, among her bishops and working clergy, and instructors of youth, names not unworthy of the Church of Bossuet and S. Vincent de Paul. But we cannot congratulate her, if Mr. Maynard is an average specimen of the men who are promoted to her titular dignities, set over the education of her dioceses†, and encouraged to publish by the “favourable opinion of the highest ecclesiastical authority existing in France.”

\* V. De Maistre, de l'Eglise Gallicane; the parallel between Hobbes and Jansenius.

† “Appelé à travailler auprès de vous à la grande œuvre de l'éducation.”—*Dedication to the Bishop of Agen.*

THE END.

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