

composed of vegetables, dressed in an unsavoury manner, and some household bread. They use cider at dinner. During the rest of the year they have two meals a day of much the same quality. They rise at two o'clock every morning, and on festivals at twelve at night. From two till four they sing that part of the office called matins. Those who sing the whole office, work in the fields about half the day. The lay-brothers work longer, but these perform their devotions where ever they are, when apprised by the ringing of the bell, that God ought to be worshipped. It has been disputed whether their mode of living be not calculated to shorten the time of human existence. I certainly think habit undoubtedly lightens the burden in time; but a debilitated constitution is, I fear, too often the result. I cannot however, take upon me to ascribe to their lives undue and ill regulated zeal. Good sense cannot be denied to those who, renouncing the pleasures of this world, by law I means accelerate the possession of the next, the happiness of which they ever have before their eyes. Whoever visits them may not indeed approve of their rigorous treatment of themselves: but his labour will be well repaid, as he can hardly do so without enlivening his faith, and invigorating his virtue.

On meeting the superior a second time, I expressed the pleasure I derived from witnessing the order and regularity which pervaded his house, and the zeal with which its members seemed to be actuated in whatever they performed. Such, he said, was the constant and undeviating tenor of their lives. Himself he thought the lowest in the scale of merit in the whole

assemblage. "Yet," he observed, "whatever is my own state in the sight of Heaven, I feel a great satisfaction in seeing those over whom I am placed, comply so exactly with what they have undertaken. The happiness I derive from this reflection, makes all my labours appear as nothing." These, surely, were the remarks of a zealous pastor, of a kind and benevolent father, whose chief comfort lay in the welfare and prosperity of his children.—To pretend that I did not feel the full force of such disinterestedness, would be saying, in other words, that my heart was cased against every impression which religion, humanity, and the most exalted virtue could inspire.

I was about to take my leave, and conclude my visit, when the abbot informed me that, if I thought proper, I might be accommodated for the night. To this invitation I gladly assented. The next day, after breakfast, I departed, impressed with sentiments of reverence and regard for a people of whom I had frequently heard, and the description of whose pious and edifying lives falls infinitely short of the reality. The abbot accompanied me part of the way; I learned from him that he officiated in the parish church, the great scarcity of priests rendering this necessary. We crossed the river in a boat belonging to the monastery, and I parted from him on the high road leading to Abbeville, where I took my seat for Calais, perfectly satisfied in having come a little out of my way, to visit a set of men who exemplify in their persons the practice of the greatest austerities, joined to a supereminent degree of gentleness, meekness, and humility.