

her bosom, rather than that one of the lowest of her communion should become the victim of a false doctrine.

And now I pass on to consider Burke's admiration for tradition, which I may well say is nothing if not Catholic. On that more than on any other score has the church had to withstand the assaults of her enemies. Again I call to my assistance the "Reflections on the Revolution," and from his remarks concluding his consideration of the horrible scheme on which the National Assembly would govern France, I take the following: "When ancient opinions and rules of life are taken away, the loss cannot possibly be estimated. From that moment we have no compass to guide us; nor can we know distinctly to what port we steer. Europe, undoubtedly, taken in a mass, was in a flourishing condition the day on which your revolution was completed. How much of that prosperous state was owing to the spirit of old manners and opinions it is not easy to say; but as such causes cannot be indifferent in their operation, we must presume that on the whole their operation was beneficial." He believed—and who will not agree with him?—that the manners and customs of civilized Europe had for two centuries depended upon two principles, which he called the spirit of a gentleman and the spirit of religion. They had been handed down from generation to generation. They could not be found in books; they were learnt by adhering to the old manners, the old customs and the old opinions of those who had gone before.

A little further on in the same work, after having explained the real sentiments of the English people, he said: "You see, sir, that in this en-

lightened age I am bold enough to confess that we are generally men of untaught feelings, that instead of casting away all our old prejudices, we cherish them to a considerable degree, and, to take more shame to ourselves, we cherish them because they are prejudices; and the longer they have lasted and the more generally they have prevailed, the more we cherish them." Then he proceeded to explain how necessary it was to cling to old opinions and customs, which from their very age demand the respect and consideration of all people. He explained how unreasonable are those

"Who think their fathers fools, so wise they grow;" and show no regard for the opinions and customs of their ancestors, whose wisdom has been left as a legacy to succeeding generations.

What precedes shows to some extent Burke's principles of government. We know that he was the untiring champion of kings and princes, but we know also that he did not hesitate to express his opinion that there were limits in the exercise of authority beyond which rulers were forbidden to step. He knew and admitted that the people of France had grievances; but he foresaw that, were they not too impatient, their wrongs would have been remedied as quickly as possible. He saw that the people of America were being ill-treated by the home government, and he said that it was the urgent duty of that government to hasten measures for their relief. In this case he spoke strongly against the misuse of power; in the other he was just as vehement against those who were intolerant of the authority that existed. It was his endeavour to find for a people that happy medium in which kings and people