

the next business was to carry them before the king, and set them at full liberty with all the forms of law. All this, no doubt, brought on Eligius expense greater than poor-rates and more terrible than taxes. But he knew it was more blessed to give than to receive; and, though in the dark ages, worked on. His next step was, to build a monastery large enough to receive a hundred and fifty monks. And it is pleasant to note, among the goods and chattels necessary for the poor brethren, many copies of the Holy Bible, because, in those dark days, (say many learned Doctors and writers of modern history) the people had no knowledge of the Book of Life; and it was *with the utmost difficulty a single copy* could be procured. But friend Eligius, in spite of all expense and all toil, (both great), had caused many volumes of the Holy writings to be prepared for the use of the poor brothers, as among their most necessary possessions in their new home. And into this quiet home, where they might learn to read and study these goodly books, and to serve God in works of charity, many a captive slave, freed by the hand of its founder, found his way, and there learned to live and to die. *How different were such monasteries as these to the Popish abuses of later ages!*

Of such works as these was the life of our Goldsmith made up; a life of self-denial, of humble, patient toil, in the station appointed for him by the Lord of the vineyard wherein all men work. He had passed his fiftieth year when yet another change awaited him. The people about him were chiefly idolaters; but the few among them who were christians now seemed to have desired that he who had done so much for them should do yet more, as their teacher, and priest, and Bishop.

Some perhaps will here say, yes, that was, of course, what he was aiming at, station and power. But surely if our goldsmith in those dreary and dark days wished for station he might have had it at court, for his wealth would, if hoarded, have become vast, and commanded station; if for power, he was a great favorite with the king, and a rich favorite has great power. Moreover, when the proposal was made to him to be their bishop, he insisted on a delay of two years, during which he worked among them simply as a missionary priest.

On all these grounds, therefore, it seems most

unlikely that he had any flagrant desire to become a Bishop, or was influenced by any sordid or selfish motives.

Such was the life of Eligius, such his preparation for the office of the ministry in the Church of Christ, in those dim and distant times, the dark ages; long years of humble and Christian toil and charity. He was not, indeed, exactly the type of a Bishop of our own so-called enlightened days. But still he was, without doubt "called of God, as was Aaron; having a good report of those without," as becometh a Bishop. His sound is gone out into all lands,—some of his words remain even unto this day.

He did indeed become a Bishop, but it were truer to say that he turned missionary, and, forsaking all that he had, and all the world had to offer, went to preach the Gospel among pagans and barbarians. These at first received him with anger and scorn, but by degrees, touched by his preaching, a great part of them renounced their idols, and became Christians.

His errors have been condemned, and the age in which he lived ridiculed as dark and benighted, full of superstition and depravity.

Meanwhile, reader, some of his words remain for us. Let us note how Eligius, the poor Bishop of Noyon, in those dreary days, sought to teach men to become less ignorant and less depressed, less what their enemy the devil, more what their Fathers and God, would have them become. "Consider, therefore, what a covenant you have made with God, and examine yourselves whether after that promise you have been following that wicked devil whom you renounced. Remember in whom you promised to believe, God the Father Almighty, Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, God also the Holy Ghost. Without doubt, this your covenant and confession then made will never be lost sight of by God. Keep, therefore, in your memory, this your own vow and promise, that so your Christian name, instead of rising in judgment against you, may be for your salvation."

Again, "it is not enough for you to have received the name of Christian, if you do not Christian works."

"Above all things, have charity, for charity covereth a multitude of sins; be hospitable, humble, casting all your care on God, for He