

RECOLLECTIONS AND REFLECTIONS

CHAPTER I

FORMATIVE INFLUENCES

IT has always been a pleasure to me that I was born on St. Mark's Day, April 25th. For the story of St. Mark, as it is told in the New Testament and in ecclesiastical legend, has strongly appealed to me. The mystery, the vicissitude, the mingled light and shadow which surround it, are pleasing to the imagination. I cherish the thought that St. Mark was, as Irenaeus¹ says, the pupil and interpreter (*μαθητὴς καὶ ἑρμηνευτής*) of St. Peter, and that his is, if not the original, at all events the earliest extant Gospel. Nor do I honour his memory the less because of the cloud which fell at one time upon his relation to St. Paul. How it seems to vanish—that passing cloud—as at sunrise, before those touching words of the aged Apostle, "Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is profitable to me for the ministry": words which may not unfairly be said to consecrate the friendship of St. Paul's two young fellow-disciples, St. Timothy and St. Mark!² Never, I think, have I passed through Alexandria, often as I have been there, without recalling how St. Mark, according to a tradition recorded by Eusebius,³ founded churches there,

¹ Contr. Haeres, iii., i. 1.

B

² 2 Timothy iv. 11.

³ Hist. Eccles. ii. c. 16.