

observe in all others who voluntarily become missionaries of a new faith. Frequent, earnest, and laborious preaching, constantly conversing with religious persons upon religion, a sequestration from the common pleasures, engagements, and varieties of life, and an addiction to one serious object, compose the habits of such men. I do not say that this mode of life is without enjoyment, but I say that the enjoyment springs from sincerity. With a consciousness at the bottom of hollowness and falsehood, the fatigue and restraint would become insupportable. I am apt to believe that very few hypocrites engage in these undertakings; or, however, persist in them long. Ordinarily speaking, nothing can overcome the indolence of mankind, the love which is natural to most tempers of cheerful society and cheerful scenes, or the desire, which is common to all, of personal ease and freedom, but conviction.

Secondly, it is also highly probable, from the nature of the case that the propagation of the new religion was attended with difficulty and danger. As addressed to the Jews, it was a system adverse not only to their habitual opinions, but to those opinions upon which their hopes, their partialities, their pride, their consolation, was founded. This people, with or without reason, had worked themselves into a persuasion, that some signal and greatly advantageous change was to be effected in the condition of their country, by the agency of a long promised messenger from heaven.¹ The rulers of the Jews, their leading sect, their priesthood, had been the authors of this persuasion to the common people; so that it was not merely the conjecture of theoretical divines, or the secret expectation of a few recluse devotees, but it was become the popular hope and passion, and,

¹ "Percrebuerat oriente toto vetus et constans opinio, esse in fatiis, ut eo tempore Judæa profecti rerum potirentur." Tacit. Vespasian. cap. 4-8.

"Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis, sacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret oriens, profectique Judæa rerum potirentur." Tacit. Hist. lib. v. cap. 9-12.