

convert, called Thais, who is said to have been dissuaded from a wicked life by one of the fathers of the Egyptian desert in the fifth century. These, together with a few chairs, a table, and a sideboard, comprehended the furniture of this little apartment.

At length the door opened, and the abbot made his appearance; he was something less than forty years old, of the middle size; his eyes were quick and penetrating, yet evincing great goodness of heart and a gentleness of disposition that seemed less natural than acquired; I rose at his approach, made my obeisance, which he returned, or rather prevented, by his immediate and kind introduction of himself; he inquired with a seeming goodness and modesty, how far I had travelled, and then entered into a familiar conversation taking care to make every incident turn to the advantage of religion, and to keep alive by continual reflection, the end of his profession. He spoke in general terms of the commendable and edifying lives of his community, and of the austerities which the rules of the order enforced. I took the liberty of hinting to him what the opinions of people in the world were, as I understood them, for and against his institute. He calmly observed, that all who leave the common track of the world are sure to be censured, because their lives are a tacit reproach to the majority, who have no notion of renouncing their pleasure or their folly.

At this moment the bell of the monastery rang; the abbot arose and intimated to me that he was going to chapel, and seemed to signify that, if I thought proper, I also might accompany him. On entering the place of devotion, I was impressed with a solemn and religious awe; I was in the company of

individuals, whose devotion and purity of intention it would be difficult to suspect. In the world, when we behold edifying and Christian conduct, we may be on our guard against false appearances; but here the most wary circumspection and the deepest penetration would find it difficult, if not impossible, to draw such conclusions. Human nature does not willingly run after such uncommon proofs of devotional zeal as are here to be witnessed; nor will the hypocrite give up the delights and pleasures of life, and become a voluntary inmate of an abode from which they are all rigidly excluded. The abbot took his seat opposite the altar, at the lower end of the little chapel, exactly in the middle between the religious, from whence he could command a view of the whole ceremony. The service was composed chiefly of the psalms, read and chanted in the Latin language, and lasted about forty-five minutes. I had frequently heard it remarked, and was myself not free from the impression, that the recital of a language unknown to the majority detracted much from the effects which prayer in the vernacular tongue produces. I know not, if all who joined in the church service, at my visit, understood what they read, but certainly there was no deficiency of what might be termed real devotional feelings, which is all that can be expected from a liturgy in whatever language it may be recited.

From the chapel I was again shown into the parlour, where was served up a repast consisting of eggs, fruit, and cyder; together with some excellent bread, and a bottle of tolerable wine; I dined heartily, and during the greater part of the time one of the members sat with me, but did not taste of the fare. He seemed quite cheerful and happy, and I