

present and kept it five years. He gave him another which was worth to him a canonry in the cathedral church of Boulogne, near the sea. He set out, and writes thus in his first letter: "Here I am arrived at Boulogne, the question now is whether I shall remain here? That no mortal can determine; for even I myself, who ought to know more on that subject than any one else, cannot!" It is from this period that the scruples, the indecision, and the singularities of the Abbé Blanchet, went on increasing; but as he was in some sort a double man, that is to say two different characters were visible in him, we shall soon consider him in another point of view. His chapter pressed him to complete his orders; he replied as he had before done, and gave his resignation into the hands of M. de Mirepoix, who allowed him eight days to consider of it. He persisted in it. The difficulty was how to inform his friend of it; but M. de Chavannes, who respected and admired the virtue which kept him poor, accepted his reasons, as he had before done, without being disgusted. What would become of human kind if strong minds did not every now and then take pity of the weak?

Being freed from his canonry, he again took to what he used to call in joke *his Collar of misery*, and at which he was the first to laugh. "Since one must row, said he, I row with a tolerable good grace, and cheerfully enough." He always looked on the title of *preceptor* as honourable; and delighted so much in that profession formerly so highly esteemed†

† See Plutarch's life of Thæcus and the 7th Satire of Juvenal.