

cess is going on, as it were, underground. In June 1863 a young monk was riding in a diligence from Palermo to a neighbouring village, where he held the office of sacramental chaplain. In his hand was a book which he was reading with eager and startled avidity—Dr. de Sanctis' Treatise on the Mass—which he had purchased at Palermo, believing that he had bought some Romish manual of devotion, which would help him in the performance of his functions. He had hardly arrived at his lodgings, when he rushed to his library, and seized there a book which lay covered with dust upon the shelf, a copy of Diodati's Bible, which he had purchased in 1860, but had never read. All that night he passed in eager and careful verification of the passages cited by De Sanctis in his treatise, confronting them with this translation of the Holy Scriptures. The morning approaches; in a few hours he must stand at the altar, and there celebrate that function with regard to which such a new and terrible light had now for the first time dawned upon his soul. Permit me to give you the sequence in his own words translated from a letter in which, some time after, he narrated the story of his conversion:—

"What was I to do? I dressed myself for the Mass, ascended the altar, and God only, who numbers our human agonies and sighs, knows what I experienced in that terrible hour. I arrived at the preface; the moment defined for the act of transubstantiation came; I took the wafer in my hands; tried to dominate my will, and to recall my old faith in the power of the priest to bring down with five words Jesus from heaven to earth. . . . but an inward voice replied to me: canst thou believe that the Lord of the world, the Holy One, will place himself at the disposal of a sinner like thee? Dost thou not see that the bread remains bread? How often hast thou had to cast into the *sacrarium* the putrid, maggoty particles which thou hadst preserved to communicate to the faithful? And with these thoughts I pronounced the consecratory words, uplifted the host and the cup, anguish-stricken at having committed and caused to commit by some dozen poor women who were listening to the Mass, an idolatrous act." A day or two after, horrified at the inconsistency of his position, the young curate left his parish never to return, and went again to Palermo, with his Bible for his sole companion and guide. There he remained a long while in the utmost anguish and perplexity of mind, utterly ignorant that there was any one in that city or elsewhere to whom he could apply for comfort or instruction.

"For seven months," he writes, "I wept over the Word of God; every night (by day he had some employment in a school)—every night I meditated upon that sacred volume, and besieged with prayer the throne of my God, who seemed deaf to my entreaties."

One day, as, utterly heartbroken, he was pacing the streets of the city, he came upon a news-vendor, who offered him a journal entitled *The Mirror of Truth*, saying, "Reverend father, this is a paper you ought to buy!" He bought it; it was an evangelical journal published at that time by the Waldensian Church at Palermo, and on the fourth page he read:—In the Palazzo Sambuca is opened the Evangelical Church: Sunday morning, from 11 to 12; Sunday evening, from 7 to 8; Thursday evening, from 7 to 8.