

he listened as an oracle, but whom he afterwards rendered an object of laughter, at table and during his excursions throughout Germany. "This poor devil," said he in his Tisch Reden, "never knew any thing; he is a pitiful sophist, an ignorant rhetorician, who would count the degree of doctor in theology for two gouldes; although he knew that the 'nolite vocari Rabbi' of the sacred text deprived him of the right to do so." On that day Luther pronounced the ordinary formula of obedience to the church and its canons. To justify his subsequent revolt, he said, "I was then in the swaddling clothes of the papacy: God had not as yet opened my eyes."

Luther, for a moment, exchanged the duty of public preaching for other occupations which were imposed upon him by Staupitz who was obliged to absent himself for some time and who charged his young friend to visit the convents of the province. This visit was for Luther an occasion for moral reflections on the interior life of the cloister. If we believe him "the Bible was a book but rarely found in the hands of the religious, who knew much more of St. Thomas than of St. Paul." This is, however, the greatest reproach he makes of the monks.

His powers were very extensive, he could name priors and depose such as scandalized their brethren. At Erfurth he made John Lange superior of the convent; this man was, subsequently, one of the first to cast away the monastic habit and take a wife. The monastery of Neudstadt was distracted by divisions, which destroyed all observance of rule. This Luther restored, by prevailing on the prior, whose feeble administration had convulsed at these disorders, to resign his office. His letter on this occasion is an admirable specimen of mildness and firmness; if he opened wounds he had balm wherewith to assuage their painfulness. Humility and charity are the virtues he especially recommends: "humility," says he, "is the mother of charity,"—and as his decision might afflict the prior he hastens to console him, by attributing the troubles of the convent to the multiplicity of his occupations, which did not permit him to separate the tares from the wheat, in this field of the Lord. Perhaps, also, because he had not prayed before the Lord, our Father and Creator; "because," he writes, "with joined hands you have not asked of Him to direct your ways, and to enlighten you with his justice."

Our poor monk, who, shortly before, reckoned the days he had to live—who was terrified at the immense responsibility of the ministry of the word, to which Staupitz condemned him—who knew not where to find money to pay for his doctor's cap,—was now overwhelmed with business.—In a letter to Lange, he draws an amusing picture of his occupations. "I have need of two secretaries, as I am not able, by myself, to keep up my correspondence. Compassionate my unhappy lot. I am preacher at the convent, lecturer at table, parish preacher, rector of the studies. I am vicar, that is to say, a species of factotum; conservator of the ponds at Liackau, pleader and assessor at Torgau, expounder of St. Paul and commentator on the Psalms. Add to all this, the temptations of the flesh of the world, and of the devil!"

All kinds of temptations simultaneously assaulted him. This was what he gained by the glory which sought him even in his cell; he could not purchase the fame he was to acquire in the world, but by mental and corporal sufferings. But what will it be when he openly rebels; with what tempest will he not then be agitated? Glory is his first chastisement, and he now suffers so much that he can no longer sustain it. He is forced to beseech his friend Christopher Scheuri, to have pity on the monk of Wittenberg;

to give over exposing him to the allurements of that seductress of youth, mentioned by Solomon in his book of proverbs, whose poison ferments in the veins, and whose name is—worldly vanity. He begs of him to close his lips; and not to praise one who is nothing but misery and sin,—the unhappy Luder, who rejects the praises which force themselves upon him.

These delightful details form a page which we would not tear out of the biography of the Reformer. Timid as he was before the glory that thickens around him, he was no less courageous before another enemy, that kills only the body: this moment in the life of Luther is still more beautiful. The pestilence raged at Wittenberg. The friends of the doctor conjured him to accompany them in their flight. "Fly," said brother Martin, "no! The world will not be lost, if a monk dies: I am at my post, and I will remain here through obedience, until I shall be ordered hence. I cannot say with St. Paul that I have no fear of death; but the Lord will deliver me from fear."

This was the language of a Catholic priest. When Luther laid aside his habit, he spoke not in this manner. When the pestilence appeared once more among his flock, he repelled those who approached the holy table to strengthen themselves against fear. "It is enough," said he, "that they publicly receive the body of Jesus four times in the year: the church is not a slave. To give the sacrament to whoever approaches the holy table, especially in time of pestilence, would be too great a burden to impose on the minister."

#### ENGLAND AS IT WAS AND IS.

Towns still bear no other name but that of the saint or martyr who first gave them renown,—a St. Alban, a St. Neot, a St. Ives, or a St. Edmund. Our lonely mountain sides still have crosses, whose rude form attest their Saxon origin, and still are there pious hands among the simple people of those wild hills, to guard them from profanation. The sweet countenances of saintly kings and holy abbots, carved in stone, are still remaining over the solemn gates of venerable piles; and by the side of the pompous inscription, in more than pagan vanity, the antique slab is often discernible, which humbly invokes the prayer for a soul's rest. There too still flow the same dark waters, o'er whose wave so often swept at midnight the peal of the convent bell, or was heard faintly chaunting the man of blessed order, as he hastened on the errand of charity. Lo, yonder are the shattered arches of some abbey, on a river's bank, more lonesome than the roads that traverse desert wilds. It is Crowland, and at that calm and solemn hour

When near the dawn, the swallow her sad lay,  
Remem'ring haply ancient grief, renews;  
When our minds, more wand'ring from the flesh,  
And less by thought restrain'd, are, as 'twere, full  
Of holy divination.

You approach and kneel upon the spot, and the long deserted walls of the ruined sanctuary wonder at the pious stranger, who seems to bear alone, through a benighted world, the torch of life. Where is now that devout assembly for the early sacrifice; where that rich and varied order, the gorgeous vestments, and the bright gems, and all

The brauteous garniture of altars on a festal time?

Our old historians dwell with delight upon the glory of this place. They de-

scribe at length the altars of gold, the richly painted windows, the solemn organs placed on high over the entrance, the candelabras of solid silver and the processional cross, the splendid presents of the Mercian kings, of the emperors of Germany, and princes of France, the beautiful buildings, the great hostel for the poor, and the hall for noble guests. They leave us to picture to ourselves the benign countenance of meditative age, the cheerful grace of angelic youth, the innocent joys of study, the delights of unity and peace, the psalmody, the sweet entonation of sublime prayer, the silence, the charity, the faith so oft attested at St. Guthlac's shrine, the lives of the saints, and the death of the just! Alas! all are gone, and nothing remains but a desolation, the mere view of which, chills the heart; some mouldering arches, which each succeeding winter, threatens to lay prostrate; a line of wretched cabins, which shelter some wild people, that seem ignorant of God and Christ, untaught and sensual, like those who know not whether there was such a thing as the Holy Ghost, prepared to assure the stranger that these walls were once a gaol, or a place built by the Romans, while all around you lies a dark and dismal fen, where a gibbet is more likely to meet your eye than a cross, the image of death and not of redemption! The very earth seems to mourn.—"Terram tenebrosam, et operam mortis, caligine terram miserie et tenebrarum, ubi umbra mortis, et nullus ordo, sed sempiternus, horror inhabitat." Alas! what remained for the sad pilgrim, but to smite his breast and continue the accustomed chaunt. "Quid faciam miser? ubi fugiam? Anima mea turbata est valde; sed tua, Domine, succurre ei. Ubi est nunc prestolatio mea? et patientiam meam quis considerat? Tu es, Domine, Deus meus."

Yet he who hath made the nations of the earth curable leaves no man without the sustenance which is required for the peculiar wants of his soul, and without the means of salutary exercise. In the worst of times there are redeeming features, and objects of imitation, such as what the Roman historian specifies "ipsa necessitas fortiter tolerata; et laudatis antiquorum moribus pares exitus."

And though our pomp must needs admit the pale companion, though in desiring the return of the reign of truth, we have but "wishes and tears, poor fancy's followers;" yet still are left some of those that have St. Thomas for a guardian, to comfort and direct us on our way.—We may not be able to enjoy the lot of Samuel, who departed not from the temple; but there are chapels on the distant hills from before whose bright altars, setting forth into the darkness of night, having the stars for companions, and no other solace but to chaunt again by the way some of the sweet melodies which seem still to linger around us, we may travel homewards, and hope that each step has been reckoned by an angel. We may not be able to frequent the assemblies of the holy people who worship in vast cathedrals, and repeat with innumerable voices the solemn hymn which marks the

yearly return of some most holy time, but we can walk alone in the woods and sing the Stabat Mater, while the nightingale will lend her long and plaintive note to deepen and prolong the tones of that sweet and melancholy strain, and then our tears will fall upon the wild flowers, and we shall feel in communion with the holy dead; with those who so oft had sung it, sad and sighing, like the Beatrice of Dante, in such a mood "that Mary, as she stood beside the cross, was scarce more changed." Yes, beloved land, that would so smile on gentle, lowly spirits, land twice converted, too fair to be for ever lost, thou art still dear to all thy sons, but doubly so to such of them as lament thy sad destiny; for thy sweet meadows would cover themselves with the enamel of flowers to grace the progress of Jesus Christ in the victim of the altar; thy solemn woods would give shelter to the lonely eremite, and thy bright streams would yield refreshment to the tabernacles of the just;—thy gardens would give roses to scatter before the adorable sacrament, and thy towns and hamlets would send forth their cheerful youth, children fair as the race of primeval creatures, to commence their flowery sprinkling. Thou art still a noble instrument, though now mute or discordant. Ignorant and unskilful hands have played upon thee till they broke thee into a thousand parts; but, though thus broken and disarranged, let but the master arise who can revive the Catholic chord, and thou wilt again send forth the sweetest music.

It is the remark of Frederick Schlegel that a love for the romantic world of the middle ages, and of their chivalry, has continued to characterize the poetry of England, even while the negative philosophy of her sophists has maintained its ground. And though, at the same time, for reasons which do not require a Sphinx to explain, the complaint of learned foreigners is most just, that the literature and antiquities of our ancestors have been no where throughout the civilized world more neglected than in England; yet it is equally true, and still more remarkable, that in this country several old Catholic customs of the middle ages have been transmitted down to us, as if protected in ice, to be the astonishment of other nations. It is true they have lost all the qualities of life; there is no spirit to vivify, no mind to direct them, but still the form, though dead and motionless, has something in it imposing and majestic; nay, even pleasing and amiable. Indeed, a book might be composed on the latent Catholicism of many natives of this country, where every thing solid and valuable is, after all, either a remnant or a revival of Catholic thinking or institution. Methinks it would not be too much to suggest, from general principles, that youth, at least even in such a country, can never be essentially opposed to Catholicism. Cold, dry negations, and that disdainful mood, however well it may suit the beasts that wear it, are not congenial with its warm and generously confiding nature.

If it has heard the words of the blessed Gospel, which children can understand better than proud scholars swollen with