

vish reproaches of the new religionists, who only venture to characterise the affluence of good deeds which they are so reluctant to imitate, as too "profuse" and "prodigal!"

The following little narrative, in illustration of the contrast to which we have referred, cannot but be interesting to many of our readers. We received it from the mouth of one of those simple but venerable men, who, after the lapse of so many centuries, have relaxed not a tittle of the exact rule which St. Stephen Harding proposed to his disciples, and which the reformed Christians still maintain, in all its integrity, even in the centre of Protestant England.

A few weeks ago a poor man, exhausted with sickness and long travel, and bleeding at the mouth from a grievous internal complaint, presented himself at the gate of a certain union workhouse, and asked for relief. He was admitted into the presence of the charitable functionary, who presides over these hospitable mansions, but he was not so fortunate as to attract his sympathy or excite his compassion. He was presently dismissed with a scanty alms and a most disproportionate abundance of admonitions, and retired under the oppressive burden of threepence and a shower of oaths. That night he slept, or tried to sleep, under a hedge; and if he murmured a little at his rude repulse, and entertained hard thoughts of Protestant benevolence, let us confess that at least he had some excuse for the sin. The next day he was advised to apply at the Priory of St. Bernard, and in due time he reached the porter's gate, knowing little what sort of greeting awaited him, yet hoping perhaps that this time he might obtain at least a meal or a pittance, which should be seasoned with a benediction and not a curse. In a few minutes after his arrival he was occupying a comfortable apartment, supplied with such nourishment as his condition required, and by his bedside stood one in the long white habit of the Cistercians, who must have seemed to the poor outcast almost like some angelic messenger conveying him for a while to a voluntary exile from Heaven that he might perform deeds of mercy on the earth. It was one of the brethren of the community, who had been appointed by the Prior to watch over the sick man, and to supply his wants. The charity, which had thus carefully provided for his bodily needs, was soon occupied with more urgent necessities, for it was evident that he was dying. The lay monk who had first waited on him retired, and his next nurse was a Priest. It was soon apparent that his worst disease was not that of the body, and that he so many thousands of his class in a country which boasts of what it calls "the blessings of the Reformation." He knew nothing more of religion than that there

were a number of "gentlemen," commonly called "ministers," who were supposed to teach it in its most approved form. He had profited, however, so little by their valuable labours, that on the eve of departing out of the world he was almost as ignorant of the *quatuor novissimæ*, and even of the existence of his own soul, as when he first entered it. He had lived, like the house of his parents, as a heathen, and but for the fortunate proximity of the workhouse school, which saved him from the infernal walls, he would have died as a heathen. It was a happy chance (as men speak) which carried him to the Priory of St. Bernard. From the moment of his admission he was never abandoned, for his gentle benefactors knew that in the person of this poor sufferer they were ministering to Him who had said, "Beatus qui intelligit super egenum et pauperem, in die malæ liberationis eum Dominus." They taught him to know that God from whom he had been alienated so long, and before whom he was so soon to appear, and to comprehend the provisions which "the largeness of Divine love" had made for the restoration of a sin-doomed soul. He was admitted by baptism into the True Fold, and then his sick soul was purged by Confession and strengthened by Holy Absolution. He lingered for nine weeks; but the patience and charity of his generous benefactors was never wearied. They diligently gave to him those needful instructions which come so well from such lips—he received the Holy Viaticum—and then that last sacred anointing which our Divine Redeemer has ordained for the final purification and hallowing of the bodies His have designed to inhabit. At length he died, with the crucifix in his hands and the last blessing of the Church in his ears. But the Charities of the Monks were not yet exhausted. They reverently carried the corpse, which "enlightened Protestantism" would have regarded as only the worthless remains of a dead pauper, into the Church, solemnly recited the Office for the Dead; Masses were said, and the Acceptable Sacrifice offered, for the repose of the departed soul; and then, having performed the last functions of charity, they praised God who had thus afforded them another opportunity of ministering to Him in the person of one of His despised and afflicted members.

Lest it should be thought that this was a solitary or unusual act of costly benevolence on the part of the brethren of the community of St. Bernard, we will just add, that besides upwards of 1000 thousand poor received into the house for one or more nights, nearly nineteen thousand were relieved at their doors during the past twelve months, while they themselves abide in a permanent and voluntary poverty, and are content with such