

tioned the name of Christ at all. From this time I learnt to rationalize everything. I used to argue in this way: "If one man has as good a right to teach religion as another, why may not women, if they wish it? Then why go to church at all? I can read prayers and a sermon at home; and have as good a right to give myself the Sacrament, as the minister to give it to me." But I soon gave up all belief in Sacraments. The Quakers were right; there were no such ordinances in Scripture; I was, in fact, everything by turns, and nothing long; and the result of this wretched state of instability and folly was, that I sunk down in complete and avowed infidelity.

I had been in this state of mind, alas! for some time, when I met with a Roman Catholic priest. He was evidently a man of talent, a Jesuit, with all the mildness and insinuation of the followers of Loyola. We happened to be in a steamboat; and in passing the ruins of an old monastery, the conversation naturally turned upon the monastic system. He of course lauded it up to the skies, abused Henry VIII., whom he called a Protestant, and Anne Boleyn, whom he called by a harsher name. I was not well read upon the subject, then; that is to say, I knew nothing about it, so that he had it all his own way.

One thing led on to another; ignorance on my part led to boldness on his; so that he asserted many things to be true, which I now know to be false, though, from ignorance, I then assented to them. I was ripe, indeed, for the arts of a Jesuit; having wandered *ad libitum* for so long, from sect to sect, and found no rest for the sole of my feet, is it to be wondered that I was overcome with the mixture of truth and falsehood which he poured into my ear? He had evidently been sent over from —, for the purpose of making converts, and with me he succeeded for a time. I will mention the way he went to work, in order to put you on your guard. But before I do so, I must tell you, that with all my infidelity, I still had a lurking reverence for the word of God, which I could not shake off; and also a vague sort of idea floating in my mind, that the Roman Catholics must be in the right, as they so boldly asserted that every one else was wrong; it was their worship of images, transubstantiation, &c., which made me think that they could not be right, and that consequently there was no such thing as the Catholic Church; for it never entered my head that any Protestant (so-called) Church, could be Catholic; and about the Greek, Syrian, Armenian, and other branches of the Catholic Church, I then knew nothing.

He first proved from the Bible that out of the Church there was no salvation; and that, if I wished to be saved, I must belong to the Catholic Church (assuming always that the Roman Church was the Catholic Church.) He then went on to prove the apostolical succession, without which there could be no valid ministry; if no ministry, no sacraments; if no sacraments, no salvation. He then asserted that the English Church separated from the Catholic Church at the Reformation, and broke the apostolical succession; and went on to show that if the Church of England had no succession, no other Protestant body in Great Britain could have it, for none of them had any bishops.

All this made a great impression upon me, and not the less because it was new; all my objections about image-worship, transubstantiation, &c., he got rid of, by saying that the Catholic Church was infallible, and could not err; according to our Saviour's promise, that the Holy Ghost should lead the Church into all truth; and that if I did not belong to it I was sure to be damned:—all this I say, made a great impression upon me, whose life had been none of the best. With the threats of eternal damnation on one side, and the certainty of salvation on the other, can