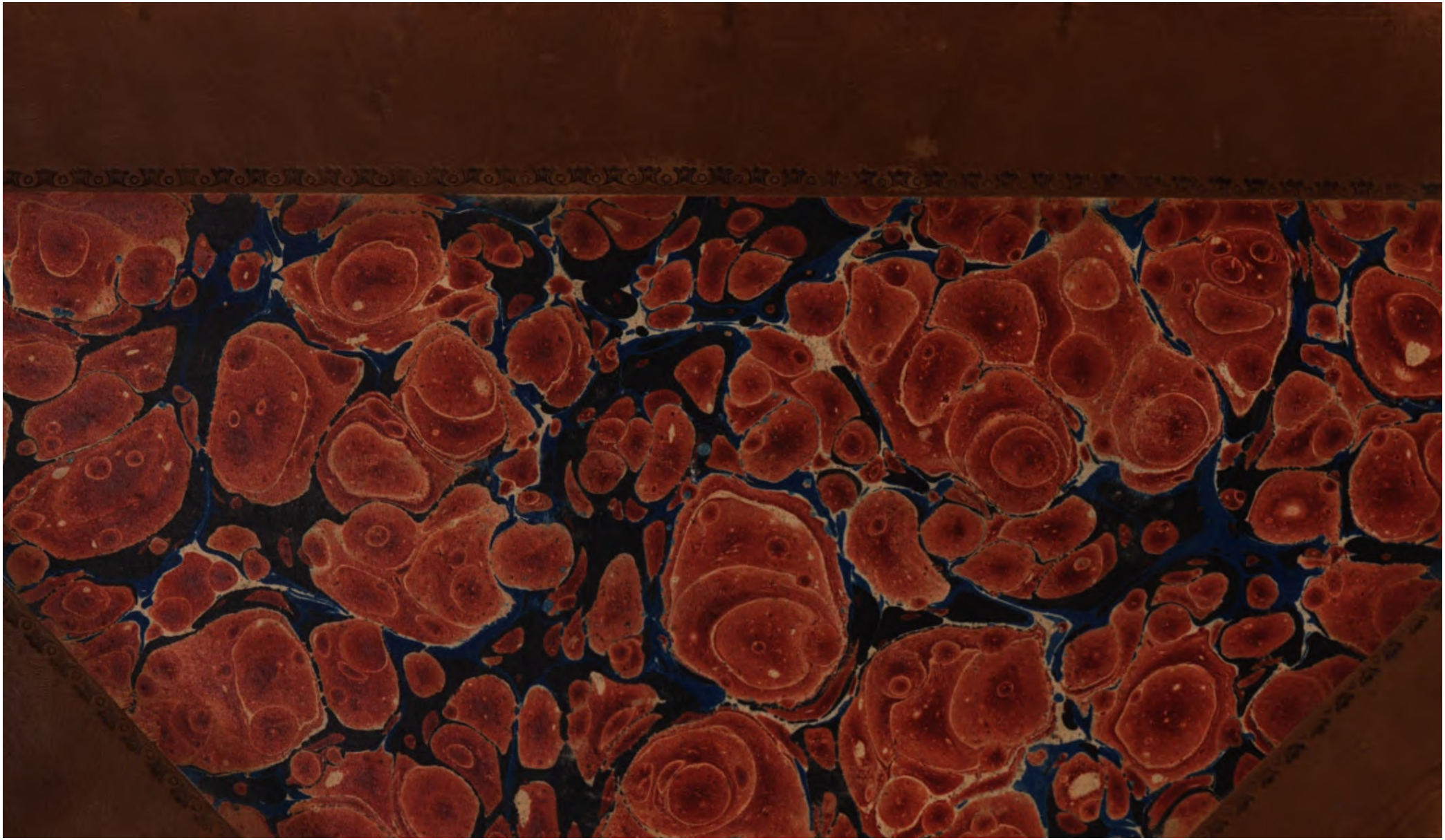

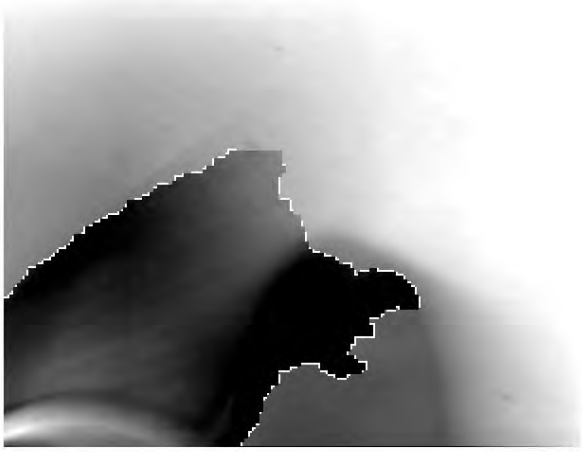

FIRST IMPRESSIONS.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE is no department of knowledge, perhaps, which is at once more difficult, interesting, and important than that of human nature as exhibited in the varied forms of character, which under different circumstances it is found to assume. While in every age, throughout every clime, and under every political and social economy, man is distinguished by certain broad and universal features, intellectual and moral, as well as physical, which are sufficient to identify him with the race of beings to which he belongs, it is evident that in all these respects he is susceptible of a great variety of modifications. The elements which may be considered as forming the combined aggregate of his character, are as numerous as the influences to which he has been exposed. It is, however, a mistaken and most dangerous theory, that he is a mere creature of circumstances, and that all his habits of thought, and feeling, and action,

are the necessary and invariable result of external impressions, over which he can exercise little or no control. Such a notion is at variance with the whole scheme of moral government, and is entirely destructive of the nature of man as a rational and responsible agent. In the enlightened study of mankind, it must be assumed as a first principle, that in the present, which, as we learn from the highest authority, is a fallen and degraded state of existence, there are original germs of moral and accountable character, common to the whole species; and the object of such inquiry is to ascertain the influence of the various circumstances and conditions of life, in developing these inherent susceptibilities—to notice the most prominent effects to which they may give rise, and thus to discover the most efficacious means of obviating the dangers or remedying the evils, with which they may be attended. So numerous and complex, and in many cases so recondite, however, are the influences, which contribute their share of force to the formation of the general character, that it is often one of the most difficult processes of moral analysis to determine the ingredients of which it is mainly composed, and the laws by which it is habitually governed. And if this be difficult in the case of individuals, it is a still more embarrassing and arduous undertaking, to ascertain the result of all these varied and frequently discordant

influences as embodied in the character of a nation. But although national character cannot in any case be reduced to a standard of absolute and undeviating uniformity, it may, and unquestionably does, present features sufficiently marked and decided to identify the various communities comprized within its range.

In no country has human nature been more severely put to the test,—no where has it been tortured, if we may be allowed the expression, by a greater variety of bold and searching experiments, than in France, during the last fifty years. It has passed through almost every ordeal, which a daring and reckless ingenuity could devise, for the avowed purpose of developing its capabilities and of ameliorating its social condition. No form of government has been left untried—no philosophic theory has been unattempted—no imaginable combination of prejudices and passions has not been brought to bear with full and unrestrained effect upon the solution of the great problem of national tranquillity and happiness. The fabric of society has been successively demolished and reconstructed with as much levity and wantonness, if not as much coolness and indifference, as if it had been but a house of cards. A dynasty enriched with the glories and entwined with all that was venerable in the recollections and associations of a thousand years, was trampled in the dust, in order to be succeeded by a

reign of anarchy and bloodshed, unparalleled in the history of civilized humanity. Towards the close of a decade of years, during which human nature seemed to have been abandoned by every principle, and bereft of every influence, except that of its own selfish and unhallowed passions, roused to the highest pitch of fury by mutual exasperation and collision—an era of iron despotism arose, which, while it dazzled men with the splendour of its achievements, destroyed every vestige of liberty, and turned the whole nation into so many living automata, which dared to move and act only at its own bidding. Soon was this terrific and bloody sway followed by a resuscitated form of royalty, which reluctantly submitted to the restraints which it had consented to impose on its own prerogatives, and wielded a feeble sceptre over a murmuring and restless population. Within a short period the scene was again shifted, and a member of the deposed family was carried, amidst renewed tumult and slaughter, on the shoulders of a successful insurrection, to a throne, which he has been constrained to surround, not, as was vauntingly promised, with republican institutions, but with enactments, which, however, mild in their present administration, and however necessary under existing circumstances, embody all that is restrictive to the free expression of political opinion in the most coercive and arbitrary despotism.

Nor has religion undergone a less variety of transformations during the same disastrous eras. Popery, in its most intolerant forms—Atheism in its most naked and undisguised deformity—Infidelity—Scepticism—Latitudinarianism, have alternately held the ascendant, and have reflected their respective colourings in the prevailing habits of the people. At one time Catholicism alone was legally maintained. At another, no religion whatever, except what in the absurd jargon of the day was termed the worship of Nature, a term, which might quite as well have been exchanged for any other combination of the same six letters, was tolerated. At present, the system is to recognize and even to maintain the teachers of all the forms of religion, which prevail to any extent among the people.

In the view of such multitudinous changes and experiments, it is assuredly a question not a little interesting, what has been the actual result? —as it affects the existing state and the future prospects of society in this great country. It must be acknowledged by every enlightened, unprejudiced, and well-informed observer, that this phrenzied turmoil,—continued with few and brief intervals of cessation for nearly half a century, direful as have been the calamities which marked its successive ebullitions, deep and broad as have been the torrents of human gore, with which, at various periods of its duration, it deluged the streets of almost every

considerable town throughout the kingdom, and the plains of almost every country in Europe, —has not been unattended with some beneficial effects. To what extent and through what instrumentality, the good might have been attained without the counterbalancing evil, it would now be useless to inquire. Comparing, however, France in 1835, with France in 1785, it is impossible not to recognize a variety of most important and salutary changes. Obnoxious, absurd, and oppressive privileges—those insignia of nobility, which had been handed down from ages of darkness, rapine and blood, were swept away by the first outburst of the revolutionary tide. Popery—that Popery, against which the blood and groans of the millions sacrificed to its intolerance, in the massacres of St. Bartholomew, in the wars of the league, and in the exterminating dragonnades of a later period, had been crying to heaven for vengeance, received a shock, which has left it powerless to persecute, though, unhappily, still mighty to delude. Religious liberty, notwithstanding the existing anomaly, not of tolerating nor even of simply protecting—a duty which every organized government unquestionably owes to all its peaceful subjects, but of actually supporting the most discordant systems, has been established upon a firm and, it may be hoped, indestructible basis. These are undeniably objects of vast and incalculable importance to the well-being

of the community, and the attainment of them might well have been purchased at no ordinary expense of transient and temporary suffering. The general character of the people, as quick of apprehension, and keenly susceptible of impression—as vain and volatile, gay and sprightly, courageous and dissolute, appears to have undergone little or no alteration. Nature in these respects seems to have cast it into a mould, which renders it almost entirely independent of the ordinary influences springing from political and economical arrangements. To the eye of a casual and transient visitant, especially if his moral sensibilities are not distinguished by any peculiar acuteness, there is much on the surface of society in France, which must appear in a high degree fascinating and engaging. There is a gaiety of heart—a buoyancy of spirits—an elasticity of nerve, which unitedly give an expression of riant exultation to the whole aspect of life. The men appear to be all frank, and the women all cheerful. Their characteristic follies and even vices are often curiously and almost inseparably interwoven with some imposing quality. Their vanity imparts a tone of amenity and politeness to their conversational intercourse, which is calculated to convey the impression of the most perfect cordiality, and mutual respect; and their very profligacy seldom fails to hide its deformity beneath the garb of a spurious and yet modest decorum. To one

who does not look much beyond outward forms and ceremonies, and expressions of countenance, as indicative of religious feeling, there is also much among them, which must convey the idea of the most fervent and profound devotion. To the crude and short-sighted politician above all—to one, who is accustomed to speculate on the institutions of other countries, in order to be enabled to perceive and declaim on the alleged inferiority or injustice of those of his own—there is here much of what is attractive and imposing. There is an uniformity in the character and application of the laws, as they affect the various classes and members of the community, which it would certainly be difficult to attain in the same degree, without resolving the whole mass of society into its first elements; and, in contempt of all the complex interests and relations, which for ages have been more closely combining with the existing system, re-adjusting its component parts with all the regularity and accuracy of the law of definite proportions. In the affairs of morality and religion, so far as they fall under the cognizance of the law, there is manifested an attempt, and to a certain extent a successful attempt, to adapt the economy to the propensities and prejudices of human nature, rather than to raise human nature to one pure and authoritative standard; there is a freedom from all interference with habits and opinions, except so far as they may be

deemed dangerous to the stability of the existing government, which must strike one, who cannot pursue these principles beyond their palpable and immediate bearing on the political condition of society, as exceedingly philosophical and profound.

But, notwithstanding all the advantages, real or imaginary, which France has derived from the convulsive struggles and ever-shifting mutations of half a century, from the schemes of social perfectibility, which it has been attempted to embody in its institutions, and the ultimate success, which has attended every effort to remove the impediments which were supposed to impede the generous expansion of the moral and self-ameliorating energies of the people—notwithstanding all the light, which speculative philosophy, directed, applied, and, where it was deemed necessary, corrected in its aberrations by the results of practical experience, has thrown over every department of its economy, its condition at this moment is very far from being either enviable or secure. There is perhaps no civilized country upon earth, in which the state of opinion is more utterly chaotic and undefinable—in which there are fewer elements capable of being combined into a solid and permanent system of political and social administration, in which the moral principle is more lax in its operations and the religious more paralyzed and enfeebled by the antipathies of extreme and conflicting theories—producing the blindest and most bigotted intol-

erance on the one side, and the most reckless and contemptuous indifference on the other. What avails a constitutional charter among a people, who will be content to be governed by no laws except the capricious impulses of the moment? What moral regimen can controul a community, a large proportion of which derives its notions of the tendency of the marriage relation from the mysteries of St. Simonianism? What ideas of religion can be expected in a nation, which, with the exception of a small but doubtless increasing body, is divided between the adherents of the Pope on the one hand, and the followers of Voltaire on the other? Even religious liberty, in such a condition of things, though inestimable in itself, and under God the best hope of the country, becomes practically little else than a liberty to dismiss all serious concern about the subject.

These remarks, which the following letters tend further to illustrate, are not intended to depreciate the real advantages, religious and political, which are doubtless great and important, now enjoyed in France, but to convey a correct impression of the true position of the case, as compared with that of our own country. If, however, it were deemed expedient to trace to their most prolific sources the multitudinous evils prevalent in the former, with a view at once of exhibiting their malignant influence, and of directing attention to the means by which

alone they can be ultimately remedied, they might perhaps be mainly referred to the following four leading causes, Popery—Scepticism—Libertinism—and Political Disaffection.

(1.) When we attribute to the influence of Popery a large proportion of the moral and political disorders, under which this distracted country still labours, every one acquainted with the workings of that mystery of iniquity, wherever it is either embodied into the institutions of the state, or exercises a dominant authority over the prejudices and passions of a considerable number of the people, will at once recognize the statement as only asserting what might naturally have been expected. It is true that Catholicism is not—it feels with bitter mortification that it is not—what it once was, and what within a very recent period it fully expected ere long to be again in France—it is true, that stripped of its wealth and reduced to a very modest competency, it no longer walks abroad in the gorgeous pomp, nor revels in the luxurious indolence of days that are past:—it is true, that the only recognized ascendancy it now enjoys is that of being the religion of the majority of Frenchmen, though it would, doubtless, be more correct to say, that the majority of Frenchmen have no religion at all; and that by the larger proportion of the educated community it is treated rather with the contempt due to a detected imposture, than with the

prostrate submission once awarded to its decrees; but in spite of all this, Popery, as an instrument of powerful, though for the most part silent and indirect influence, is still in active and vigorous operation over the length and breadth of this benighted land. After the horrible massacres and disgusting impieties of the revolutionary era, which, though avowedly directed against itself, were the natural growth of its corrupt deposits, it arose under the fostering wing of Napoleon, to whom all creeds and forms of religion were alike, with a strong reaction in its favour. The great mass of the common people looked back with horror and shame upon the scenes of barbarity, blasphemy, and persecution, which, had been enacted during a protracted season of national delirium. Many of them had sympathized with their pillaged, proscribed, and exiled pastors, and they now hailed their restoration and received their religious ministrations, which in fact, were the only ministrations which were offered to their acceptance, with increased veneration and delight. Protestantism, on the contrary, which at this period lost a golden opportunity of extending its salutary conquests, had sunk into a cold and lifeless form—occupying a kind of midway position between the absolute negations of Deism, and a cognate system which deprives christianity of all that gives it a character of energy and importance. Apostate Protestantism thus neglecting the high and

honourable mission of attempting to evangelize a long abandoned population, and contenting itself with being merely recognized and salaried by the state,—Popery had the whole land again before it, and although it could not achieve the conquest of the scepticism and hardened infidelity of those, who would not be subjugated to the yoke of any religion, it very soon assumed a complete ascendancy over the mass of the rural population, and over the great majority of the females of all the gradations of society.

The priesthood, having thus gained the ear of these numerous and in some respects influential classes of the community, have not been backward to avail themselves of the various advantages it has afforded them. Without adverting for the moment to that mixture of good, which unquestionably attends their labours, they never fail to turn their ascendancy to the account of more firmly rivetting the chains of superstition—of closing every avenue against the access of pure and unadulterated truth,—and of fomenting a spirit of the most bigotted and rancorous hostility against a dynasty and a system of government, which they consider to be at variance with the paramount interests of their own ecclesiastical dominion. It is altogether a mistake to suppose that Popery, because it is stripped of its ancient insignia of secular authority, and has been forced to retire from the throne, the camp, the legislative chamber, and the institute

of science, is extinct or powerless in France. Though it has been chased, amidst the horrors of intestine conflict, by a still more reckless, heartless, and sanguinary rival, from the high places of wealth, and dignity, and command, yet, like Marius amidst the marshes of Minturnæ, it still keeps its head above water, and from those thick fastnesses of ignorance and superstition, over which it holds sway, only awaits the opportunity of putting forth a vigorous effort for the re-establishment of its pristine supremacy. It is true, that it exhibits every symptom of having reached its grand climacteric—that it has arrived at the era of its decrepitude, and that it will not be very long, before it will fall prostrate, like Dagon before the ark of the covenant, not indeed by the hand of human violence, but by a more efficacious and resistless energy issuing from the shrine of the Eternal. In the mean time it is working incalculable mischief throughout the whole length, but more especially at both extremes of the social scale. It cherishes all the pride, and bigotry, and morbid disaffection of the noble—it blinds the understanding in the same proportion as it ferments the passions of the peasant, while it affords a plausible excuse to the scoffer and the infidel to reject the claims of the gospel, in that grotesque and fantastic play of mimic phantasmagoria, by which it intercepts from the eyes of the people the beams of eternal truth.

(2.) To those, who are at all acquainted with the natural workings of the human mind, and with the history of religious opinions, it can occasion no surprize that Popery and Scepticism —diametrically opposed to each other as they are in all their direct and ostensible tendencies— should co-exist to a most influential and overwhelming extent in the same state of society. This, by universal consent, is the actual position of the case in France at this moment, and it requires very little attention to perceive that they not only co-exist, but that the latter is the natural effect of the former. Popery requires men to believe every thing—Scepticism, pushed by the force of reaction to a proportionate extreme in the opposite direction, believes nothing! Popery discards evidence as unnecessary—Scepticism, equally absurd, rejects all evidence as inadequate. Popery commands men to shut their eyes, and to believe on the authority of those, who have been appointed to see in their behalf—Scepticism, with its eyes open, but with a proud determination not to be constrained to recognize what it cannot acknowledge with delight, regards the whole scene of its contemplations as a mere illusion—a random congeries of effects without a cause, of adaptations without design. Popery calls upon men to make a sacrifice of their reason, as an act of homage due to their faith—Scepticism readily makes a victim of its faith, in order to satisfy the

fictitious and extravagant demands of its reason. Which of these systems is the most puerile and preposterous, it were difficult to say. Never is a greater injury done to faith, than when men are commanded to believe what scripture does not assert, and reason pronounces to be incredible; nor is there ever a greater outrage offered to reason, than when, as once was openly and literally and is still virtually done, in the metropolis of France, she is set up, in contempt of a higher authority, as an object of idolatrous adoration. Hostile, however, as these two systems are in their apparent bearing to each other, they would find, like Sin and Death in Milton's famous allegory, that on more intimate acquaintance, they are much more closely allied to each other than they might at first have supposed.

It is a melancholy consideration, that of these two mighty delusions the great mass of the people of France are at this moment the willing subjects, and that to their respective influences the greater part of the miseries of that country is owing. It is a fact too palpable to escape observation, and too certain to admit of denial, that the vast majority of Frenchmen—especially in the middling and better educated classes of society, have no fixed religious principles whatever. Of the Bible, they are for the most part utterly ignorant, or if they know anything of its contents, they know them only to treat its awful

announcements with indifference, if not contempt. Unhappily identifying in their own mind Christianity with Popery, they discard the whole as a grand scheme of imposition, once palmed on the ignorance and credulity of mankind, but now totally expunged from the category of rational opinions. This spirit of infidelity pervades and impregnates almost the whole mass of that portion of society which is most distinguished by intellectual and physical energy, and which consequently exerts the most commanding influence in the regulation and propulsion of the whole machinery of public and private life. It tinctures the national science—it accompanies the march of discovery—it deposits its countless spawn in the shallows of light literature—it is the very life and essence of all the most popular and distinguished productions of the stage—it passes from the arena of public commerce, into the circles of social intercourse, and like a volatile, though often latent poison, insinuates itself into every vein of the body politic.

In these general remarks, it is not intended to be asserted that there are not numerous and valuable exceptions, or that infidelity assumes that bold, forward and disgusting port, which once characterized its advocates in this country. The infidelity of the present day greatly differs in this respect from that of the concluding part of the last century. That of the existing generation does not display itself in violent attempts to

overthrow Christianity, and to prove revelation to be false or absurd, but exhibits itself rather —to use a phrase of recent application—in a kind of, passive resistance, to the claims of the one, and the great truths of the other. In reference to the fundamental principles of revealed religion it is scepticism, rather than absolute and dogmatic infidelity; and as it relates to the whole progress of human affairs, it is rather a species of fatalism, as absurd and unphilosophical as unchristian, which assumes that blind nature must have its course, rather than a direct and positive denial of a superintending and all-governing Providence. It is, in fact, a contemptuous assumption that Christianity is either false or worthless, without taking the trouble of inquiring what foundation there is for a supposition involving consequences of such vast and overwhelming importance. The spirit of the present era of the infidel reign, it must be allowed, is not a spirit of terror and of direct persecution. This would be unphilosophical. This would be a reflection on the intellect of the persecuting party. This, moreover, would imply that correct opinions on the subject of religion are of some real importance, to render it worth while to persecute on account of supposed errors. Not to think or speak at all about the question, at least beyond the precincts of the church or the temple, which infidels rarely frequent—to leave it altogether out of the field of contemplation as

a matter which has any real connection with the progress of society and the welfare of mankind—this is the beau ideal of the philosophy of modern scepticism. The adherents of this very condescending system, in the fulness of its liberality, will *concede*, indeed, any form of religion to the multitude, not because it is true, not because man cannot attain the great end of his existence without its influence, but because the infirmity of nature requires some such illusive support. "Il faut de la réligion"—there must be religion, said a gentleman once to the author of the following letters, just after he had returned from a most imposing exhibition of the mummeries of Popery; while his whole bearing afforded every indication that his idea of the necessity of religion rested not on a sense of its inherent truth and excellency and importance, but on the assumption that the people can neither be governed nor live in comfort without some object upon which they can exercise a kind of native religious sense.

Neither is it the fact that the French banish all ideas of futurity from their minds and habits. No people, indeed, talk more frequently and pompously of "l' avenir"—the future. But it has been frequently a matter of astonishment to the writer, that they who appear to feel so deep an interest in the "avenir" of time, should be able so completely to banish from their minds the more awful "avenir" of eternity. The

French, in fact, are much too vain a people to allow it possible that their great men should altogether cease to exist as soon as the present fleeting scene of being is past. Even Voltaire, in his poetic rhapsody, addressed to the Marchioness du Chatelet, whom he describes as the Minerva of France, represents Newton as floating aloft in some vague ethereal region, which he calls heaven, and looking down from thence on the jarring scenes which he had left.[1] Nothing is more common, indeed, than to find their poets, orators, and painters transporting their heroes into some such region as this, but if we calmly inquire what this means, we shall discover that instead of the glorious reality of the christian's future abode, it is nothing but a sport of fancy—a sort of pagan elysium—or rather a paradise of fools, with which the vanity of a grovelling scepticism endeavours to indemnify itself for the narrowness of the boundaries, to which it reduces the span of human existence.

(3.) In a country in which Popery and Infidelity, the first of which claims, and on the prescribed conditions is too ready to exercise, the power of granting indulgence to the passions, and the second abjures the very principles which alone can form the basis of a system of pure morals,—rule with a paramount, though divided, sway, it might naturally be expected that liber-

[1] Tranquille au haut des cieux, que Newton s'est soumis
Il ignore en effet s'il a des ennemis.

tinism of conduct would prevail to an appalling extent. The fact, as established by incontrovertible evidence, is precisely such as might have been anticipated. As superseding the necessity of all other proof, it is sufficient to mention what stands publicly recorded in authorized statistical documents, that, to say nothing of conjugal infidelity, more than one-third of the births at Paris are actually illegitimate. When it is added that gambling and prostitution are literally legalized, or, which amounts to the same thing, are distinctly recognized by the constituted authorities of the state—that within the precincts of the same focus of iniquity, suicide, almost invariably the result of ruined profligacy or mortified vanity, is calculated to amount to the average number of one for every day in the year, and finally, that the Sabbath is chiefly distinguished as a day of more than ordinary frivolity and dissipation, few persons, it is presumed, will maintain that the French can advance any extraordinary claim to morality. It is true, indeed, and it ought in justice to be allowed, that the provinces are by no means sunk to the same level of moral degradation as the metropolis, and it must also be allowed that even within the precincts of that vast temple of debauchery and vice, as well as of elegance and refinement, there are cases, and these, happily, by no means rare, in which all the relative obligations of domestic life are observed with

as much propriety, purity, and affection, as in any family in Britain. But these in France, or at least in Paris, which claims to be France, are rather the exceptions than the rule; and while such is undeniably the prevailing state of morals in that country, it is hopeless to expect that society should attain to a sound and healthy condition. There is a disease at the core, which no outward and artificial coating can remedy. There is a taint in the blood, the effects of which no flush of transient and florid beauty can obviate; and while it may, perhaps, be conceded, as has often been maintained, that in France, owing chiefly to a most vigilant and effective system of police, there is less *crime*, meaning by that term a violation of human laws—than in England, it may be safely asserted that in the former there is incomparably more *sin* than in the latter.

(4.) Among a people, the great mass of which is so utterly destitute of sound religious principles —those principles, which all experience has shewn to be the only firm and lasting cement of the social union, what can be more natural than that political disaffection should prevail to a most alarming and perilous extent. 'Who can be surprised at such tumults,' remarked an eminent commercial gentleman to the writer of the following letters, at the time of the last disturbance at Paris, 'when it is considered that nearly all the young men of this vast capital are brought up without any principle whatever as the basis

of character, and the guide of virtuous conduct.' This question, in fact, involved the whole case, and afforded a correct insight into the real political condition of the country. The French are naturally a fickle and volatile people—fond of novelty and excitement, and ready to rush upon any scheme which appears likely to gratify their vanity, or elevate their social position. And when this native, or as it might more properly be termed, national propensity, instead of being directed, modified, and controlled by a christian education, and by the combined influence of moral and religious principle, is rather excited and confirmed by every element with which it comes in contact, and by every association with which it blends, a feverish restlessness of habit, marked by frequent paroxysms of political delirium, can hardly fail to be the result. No one, who is at all acquainted with the moral and intellectual aspect of society can deny this to be the state of France, especially of what is vauntingly called "young France" at this moment. To whatever section of the eager, active, and stirring portion of society the eye is directed—whether to the impetuous and refractory youths of the polytechnic school, scarcely one of whom, probably, thinks himself inferior to Napoleon, except in the position which fate has assigned him, or to the ferocious and reckless operatives of the manufacturing towns—whether to the shoal of idle and discontented supernumeraries

of the legal, medical, and other professions, who are scattered over town and country, or to the crowd of aspiring literates, who procure their own daily bread by providing their diurnal supply of novelty and information, and frequently of political slander and detraction for the stimulated and diseased appetites of their readers, the same general phenomenon presents itself. Disquietude of spirit—a restless aspiration after some new, theoretic form of social existence, which, while it proposes to give to all an equality of rights aud enjoyments, is notwithstanding to crown the individual himself with all the honourable distinctions which the vanity of a Frenchman can desire—a turbulent dissatisfaction with the existing order of things, and a determined resolution to subvert it, whenever the opportunity may present itself; these are unquestionably the habits of political feeling, and the springs of political movement, which characterize a vast number of the most energetic and enterprising spirits of France. These, combined in various proportions, constitute a species of foul air, which floats through almost every department of society, and is ready to explode with destructive violence, whenever the torch of open rebellion may come in contact with it. Where, in fact, the faith of the christian has been rejected, the practice of the christian, which is that of peace and order, industry and subordination, humility and contentment, combined however, with a

becoming regard to liberty and social right, cannot be expected. Where the charter of salvation is despised by one party, and withheld from the eyes of the people by another, the charter of constitutional polity is little better than a dead letter.

Nothing can afford a stronger and more decisive evidence of that spirit of turbulence and discontent, which pervades and exasperates large and formidable masses, if not the main body of the population of France, than that system of coercive administration, which a government, itself the offspring of a revolution, has been almost uniformly constrained to adopt. There can be no doubt that the existing sovereign is naturally a man of liberal feelings and popular habits. As he ascended the very steps which conducted him to the throne, he declared, and there is no reason to question the sincerity of his declaration, that theoretically he was more of a republican than a royalist. But not many suns had thrown their lustre on the diadem which now encircles his brows, before he found that the very same agency, which not without a more plausible pretext, had succeeded in wrenching the sceptre from the tremulous hand of his predecessor, was busily plotting against himself. After vainly trying the arts of flattery and concession, and finding that these only increased the audacity of the multitude, supported by a

chamber, which directly represents less than one hundreth part of the population, and commanding an overwhelming military force, he commenced, and has hitherto maintained, a course of administration, which in its deadly struggle with faction has crushed almost every element of real liberty and independence. Nor has the contest been yet brought to a close. Though the streets of Paris have been more than once deluged with blood—though the city has been more than once turned into a vast military encampment, and forts have been commenced with a view of more effectually quelling the attempts of insurrection—though twelve hundred prisoners, the remains of the sanguinary conflicts of Lyons, have just been conducted to be tried within the walls of the metropolis, yet so far is the spirit of rebellion and discontent from being dissipated, that the minister of the interior has just demanded a large vote of money for the avowed purpose of counteracting the machinations of the factious; and so essential does he regard this material for the safety of the government and the tranquillity of the country, that he stakes the very existence of the ministry on the alternative of its being granted or refused.

Such appears to be the real condition of France, as subject to those various influences, which, however they may mutually intersect the course of each other, all powerfully contribute

towards the production of that complex mass of intellectual, moral, and political phenomena, which that country now presents. That this is a state of society, which notwithstanding its exemption from some of the offensive and unjustfiable anomalies usually attached to a more fixed and antiquated form of the body politic, is in a high degree melancholy and unsatisfactory, no one who is capable of appreciating the nature of man, and the great ends of his existence, can for a moment deny. That the causes which have led to it, the influences which form its dominant elements, and the habits which result from it, are rather to be dreaded than desired—rather to be shunned than cherished—rather to be viewed as affording a lesson of salutary admonition, than a pattern deserving of imitation, few persons of competent information and correct judgment will be inclined to question. That a country containing a population of thirty-two millions of immortal beings, a vast and overwhelming majority of whom are either sunk in superstition, or blinded by the still more withering and malignant influence of a reckless infidelity—a country, whose capital is reeking with impurity, and whose provinces heave with political tumult and disaffection—that such a country presents a spectacle rather to be pitied than envied, it would assuredly require a state of moral insensibility, considerably lower than en-

lightened and philosophic heathenism, not readily to acknowledge. There are persons, indeed, on both sides of the channel, who seem to consider religion and morals as matters altogether secondary and subordinate in estimating the condition of a people—who appear to be even so much charmed with the result of the varied principles already specified as to be unwilling in the slightest degree to interfere with their spontaneous action.

The great mistake under which such persons labour, is, that they view virtue and vice only in connection with their apparent effects and immediate consequences; or that following the mischievous error of Montesquieu, they regard these qualities in a great degree as the result of climate and other physical circumstances. They have, consequently, no fixed rule by which they can correctly estimate—no infallible test by which they can analyze national character and habits. Hence, because vice does not at once stand out to the view in its own isolated and naked deformity, but appears to drag behind it a trail of some gaudy and imposing virtues, which seem inseparably attached to it, they treat it with an indulgence bordering upon admiration. This consideration peculiarly applies to the state of society in France. There good and evil qualities blend together in almost every form of moral combination. To this are, doubtless, owing in a

great degree, the very different estimates formed by different persons of the moral condition of the people. There is an enormous amount of vice practised in that country without any serious reflection, or even deliberate conviction that it is vice, and thus practiced it can unquestionably coexist with a variety of qualities in themselves, noble, generous, and amiable. Hence, some men are almost afraid to proscribe vice, lest they should at the same time banish some attendant and redeeming virtue, and one would be really led to suppose from the language they sometimes employ, that they consider the former as a kind of elixir, in which alone the latter can be *preserved*. In reference to such fallacious views, it is of the utmost importance constantly to bear in mind the absolute immutability of moral obligations and distinctions, and to view them, independently of the ever-varying complexion of national habits and pursuits, as authoritatively established by the will of God, as indelibly inscribed on the page of inspiration, and indestructibly embodied in the whole economy of the universe.

But it would not be just to conclude these observations without remarking that notwithstand- the sombre coloring, which characterizes the preceding sketch, there is much in the present aspect of France and other continental states, at once to excite admiration, to encourage hope,

and to animate benevolent exertion. At no former period in the history of these countries, was there actually enjoyed through the indulgence of the government a larger measure of religious liberty. Popery, though still true to its character as an infallible, and therefore unchangeable system, and though animated by the same spirit, is no longer sustained in the same exclusive domination by the great, nor regarded with the same blind and superstitious veneration by the vulgar. Infidelity, though still walking to and fro through the length and breadth of the land under the guise of a mild and tolerant scepticism, has been constrained by the experience of half a century of bloodshed and crime, to acknowledge the absolute necessity of religion, as that which alone can cement the social union and satisfy the restless cravings of the collective national mind. Education, literature, and science, though wanting much that is wholesome, and combined with much that is deleterious, are, notwithstanding, gradually breaking down the barriers of ignorance and prejudice, and thus opening new channels of communication, by which the streams of eternal truth may reach the domains of darkness. Above all, the Bible, which until very recently had in France been virtually a prohibited book, begins to be widely circulated. Disregarding the fictitious lines of demarcation, which bigotry leagued with indif-

ference had thrown between the protestant and catholic population, the volume of inspiration now goes forth unshackled, and only requires additional means to travel over the whole extent of the land. Temples of pure and spiritual worship are rising, though still more slowly than could be desired, in various parts of the country. To whatever quarter the eye is directed, encouraging facts present themselves to the view. At the two great naval arsenals of France—Brest and Cherbourg, situated respectively at extreme points, protestant congregatians have been recently organized, and authorized ministers have been settled. At Bourges, in the very centre of the country, a protestant church has also been erected. At Paris, numerous institutions have been established, and are actively engaged in the various departments of the same great work of spiritual illumination, and for this purpose are holding communications of cordial sympathy with similar institutions in England, in Germany, and still more in Switzerland. From all these points, the lines of light are spreading, meeting, and delightfully blending. A power, more than human, has evidently been brought to bear upon the moral chaos, into which society had sunk. The spirit of the Eternal appears to be brooding with vivifying influence over the face of the abyss, and amidst all that is dark and confused and cheerless in the present conflict of

opinions, the christian is justified in confidently anticipating the period, when the Sun of Righteousness shall shine in cloudless splendour over this hitherto benighted land, and then, but not till then, will peace and harmony and order universally prevail among the people.

April, 1835.

CONTENTS.

LETTER IV.

LETTER V.

LETTER VI.

LETTER VII.

LETTER VIII.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS:

&c. &c.

LETTER I.

Avranches, Normandy, May 1, 1833.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

ENGAGED in pursuits, and overwhelmed with occupations, from which I saw little prospect of being able speedily to escape, I had often been led, in the course of the last few years, to feel, and sometimes to express, a wish that something might occur, though I never went so far as to form any distinct idea of the peculiar nature of such an event, which would, if not absolutely necessitate, at least facilitate and justify, a temporary suspension of my labours, and thus afford me an opportunity of a short residence on the continent. I was little aware, at those moments of blind and indefinite desire, of the painful circumstances, under which this plan, a plan occasioned by an utter prostration of health and

strength, and attended with greater sacrifices than I had ever anticipated, was so soon to be carried into effect. As these however are matters with which you are already well acquainted, and in which you have taken so characteristically kind and sympathizing an interest, and are moreover of too personal a nature to command such a feeling, beyond the circle of my own immediate friends, I shall dismiss them with the single remark, that if any one had told me a very few months since, that I should now be addressing you from this place, few events in the tissue of a romance would have struck me as more improbable. So utterly—and with reference to many events, so happily—incapable are we of penetrating the veil, which hides futurity from our view. It has sometimes indeed been with me a matter of curious speculation, to what extent human enjoyment, according to the ordinary current of events in the present state of being, would be lessened or increased, if we could take a prescient glance at all the most important and influential circumstances, that were to befall us during the whole period of our earthly pilgrimage. It has however doubtless been wisely ordained; that the case should be otherwise. The system of moral government, under which we are placed, is one which calls upon us to meet the occurrences of every day, with a cheerful acquiescence in the dispensations of a supreme Disposer, while

we are to look forward with utter uncertainty indeed, but if we are faithful to our obligations, and are enabled to realize our privileges as Christians, with serene and tranquil confidence, to what the next may bring forth.

But I am not going to write a philosophical essay, or theological dissertation. My present object, in accordance with your kind suggestion, is to give you a cursory view of the *First Impressions* made on my own mind on my arrival, and during my proposed stay, in this interesting country. In endeavouring to comply with this hint, so far as health and circumstances may permit, I shall at least have an opportunity, even in this remote and sequestered spot, of combining in some degree the gratification of personal friendship, with a habit of useful, and, I trust, impartial observation. In offering these fugitive sketches and occasional narratives to your notice, I shall generally confine myself to the moral and religious aspect of the scenes which may claim my attention, and rarely touch upon matters of literature or politics, except so far as they may tend to illustrate the present state and the future prospects, in this country, of the great principles of Christian truth. Independently of the vast importance of such a question at all times, and under all circumstances, it assumes at this moment a character of peculiar interest, from the fact that the habits of friendship, mutual intercourse, and assimilation between

Great Britain and France, appear daily to strengthen and extend, and the bond of alliance between their respective governments to be consolidated by more cordial and intense sympathies. How long such a community of sentiment between the executive authorities of these two great countries may last, it is not for human blindness to foresee, nor for human ignorance to predict. The history of the world, even in the most enlightened and civilized condition of human nature, has sufficiently shown by what insignificant causes, by what trifling collision of interest or passion, the most plausible and imposing fabric of federative policy has been shivered to its base, and every element of which it was composed, scattered by the hurricane of war. During the present season of friendship and repose, however, it is certain that there is a powerful radiation of religious influence, and still more of political, passing and repassing from one country to the other—a tide as palpable and uniform in its effects, as the ebb and flow of the intersecting channel. Under these circumstances, it is of the utmost importance that we should have a correct knowledge of the religious, moral, and social habits of a people, whose destinies in many respects appear to be so intimately connected with our own. When the condition of France, as apparently beginning to emerge into comparative liberty, purity, and light, after a long era of transition from the

corrupt stagnation of popery and despotism, amidst the frightful convulsions of anarchy and infidelity, is viewed in connection with the habits and institutions of more enlightened and favoured communities, the survey becomes still more interesting and impressive. In the contemplation of such a scene, while we cannot fail to welcome with delight the indications of a brighter epoch, as speedily about to mark the history of this long-benighted and distracted country, we shall also learn to watch against the contagion of the false principles, which have been the source of all its evils, and more highly to estimate, and more correctly to appreciate our own privileges and correspondent obligations.

In the remarks, which I may from time to time be led to offer to your notice, you will only find a few rapid glances at passing scenes, as they successively occur to the view. It is not every traveller that has the talent of Ulysses to make himself acquainted with the *mind*, as well as to survey the cities and outward manners of the different people he visits.[1] But although my observations are intended to be merely a description of the First Impressions made on the mind of one little accustomed to the contemplation of the customs and habits of foreign climes, a mind therefore well qualified by ignorance, as Dr. Johnson expresses it, for the effect

[1] Πολλων δ'ανθρωπων ιδεν ασεα, και νοον εγνω.

which novelty is calculated to produce on it, they may be sufficient to convey some general idea of the present condition of our continental neighbours and allies, and possibly to suggest to those, who like yourself, are possessed of an ampler store of information, such reflections as, without adding to the stock of their knowledge, may give occasion to the exercise of some of their best and noblest sympathies. As, however, I propose throwing my remarks into the form of a regular narrative, interweaving with it such considerations as occurrences may suggest, rather than of discursive speculation, I shall, in accordance with the historic maxim, commence 'ab ovo.' In the present letter, I shall therefore endeavour to give you a brief detail of the various circumstances which have fallen under my notice, from the time of our leaving home, until our arrival at this place; and if, as in all probability will be the case, some of these circumstances, and the thoughts suggested by them, should appear somewhat trivial and insignificant, I beg it may be remembered that I engage only to give First Impressions, and those the impressions of one, to whom a sojourn on the continent was not only new, but in all its accompaniments and effects, an affair of no ordinary magnitude and importance.

I shall not attempt, nor is it necessary that I should attempt, to describe, the feelings with which, early on the morning of the 17th of April last, I left a scene, which was interesting to me

from numberless associations, which the experience of similar relations and sympathies alone can adequately appreciate. They were the feelings which would naturally spring up in the mind of any man, whose heart was not an utter stranger to the impressions of gratitude and kindness, on leaving a flock, to which he had every reason to be attached, and friends whose affection he had never fully known, until affliction had given occasion to its manifestation. It was said by some one, Rousseau, if I am not mistaken,—that we never thoroughly love any one until we have made some sacrifice in his behalf. Without going the full length of this assertion, there is no doubt that suffering, and the sympathy to which it gives rise, tend in a high degree to quicken and raise the temperature of the social and relative affections, just as the genial flame seems to derive an accession of warmth and brightness from the chillness and gloom of a winter's evening. Amidst the varied feelings suggested by our peculiar circumstances, we pursued our journey without any remarkable occurrence, until we had embarked on board the packet which was to convey us from our native shores. Our passage across the channel was peculiarly favourable and expeditious; and without one untoward circumstance I was on deck early the next morning, in better health than I had expected, and in full view of Havre de Grace. On coming close to land, my first feeling, next,

I trust, to that of gratitude for our preservation from the dangers of the deep—for however placid its surface, I can never dissociate the sea from some idea of danger,—was that of surprise and some disappointment at finding the general aspect of the town and people differing so little from our own. In almost everything which presented itself to the eye and ear, indeed there was a palpable difference, but the contrast was not in all respects so absolute and complete as my imagination had led me to expect. It seems to me indeed, that we are generally apt to expect a greater degree of difference between people who are separated from each other by territorial or other lines of demarcation than experience proves to be the fact. If I was asked philosophically to account for this error, I should be inclined to say that it arises from the circumstances of our being always accustomed to contemplate foreign nations with reference to the points in which they really differ from ourselves ; such as their language, their religion, their form of government, their intellectual and social habits, and the distinguishing traits of their physiognomy, rather than with respect to the common features and characteristics of all civilized humanity. One circumstance however struck me on the first moment of our landing, and every thing I have since seen, has tended to strengthen the impression, that in France the female part of the population appeared to take a far more active and

laborious part in the external business of life than the same sex in England.[1] We had been kindly supplied with a note addressed to a Madame M. of Havre, who was represented to me as more capable, through her intelligence and activity, of removing all difficulties that might lie in our way, than any other person. I was told, in fact, that she was a species of wise woman, before whose magic power and influence, provided this power and influence could be effectually engaged, no impediment could stand. The vessel had no sooner taken its position, than this personage, whose presence was instantly proclaimed by the penetrating glances of her eye and the ubiquitous rapidity of her movements, was on board. After the delivery of my note, she took me and my numerous party under her special charge. Myself and the seniors of the expedition were immediately conducted to the proper office, to have our persons and our passports examined. By this time the immense heap of our luggage had been carried into the custom house; and here a scene of mixed vexation and amusement presented itself, which it is easier to conceive than to describe; and I confess, that during this process of official scrutiny, I was frequently led to regret, with some feeling of chagrin, that the golden age of free trade and unrestricted international exchange of commo-

[1] The effect of this system on the general habits and interests of society must be left to future observation.

dities, as seen in vision by Adam Smith, and since frequently exhibited in glowing colours by the minor artists of his school, had not yet arrived.

Only one person of a party was allowed to enter the kind of iron cage, in which this search for prohibited goods was carrying on; and as I was never a great adept in the art of managing matters of this description, I readily relinquished this post of honour to Mrs. D. and contented myself with an occasional peep through the grating at what was proceeding within.

As we were the largest party, and some of our luggage was the first which they examined, we were honoured with the appellation of 'la première famille;' and whenever any article of ours came under review, this appellation was shouted aloud. Most of our paraphernalia were allowed to pass without much difficulty, until they came to some pieces of carpet, somewhat the worse for wear, and these articles, neither the ardent rhetoric of Madame M., whose talents had been retained in our behalf, nor the cool logic of Mons. C. aided by all the indignant expostulation, which myself could command, was of the least avail in securing for us. One of these pieces had, by a little practical subtilty, been metamorphosed into a bag, but French sagacity was an overmatch for the contrivers of this scheme, and we were literally obliged to empty the contents of one of these receptacles into

another, in order to be able to convey them with us. Mons. C. kindly accompanied me to the office of the head-inspector, but, having gravely viewed the article, with all the surliness of a Diogenes, he replied to our expostulations and intreaties, by simply remarking that it was 'prohibité;' and that unless I paid a duty of two or three pounds, for what was scarcely worth more than so many shillings, it could not be allowed to pass.

The men engaged in this most ungracious office seemed to me—and I have been struck with a similar reflection in some instances in our own custom-houses—to afford a remarkable illustration of the effect, which peculiar duties and habits have on the prevailing cast of the thoughts—the intonations of the voice—the expression of the countenance, and the general bearing of the conduct. All the sentiments and ideas of these men seemed to be what Lord Bacon quaintly, but with his usual depth and accuracy of discrimination, called so many 'idola tribus,' so many meagre phantoms of pugnacious technicality, which are usually found to haunt the head quarters of fiscal regulation and exaction. In connection with this effect, you no doubt remember the felicitous severity, with which Bishop Lowth retorted the sneers of Warburton on the education of the universities, by reminding him of the statement of Clarendon, respecting the tendency of being trained up in an

attorney's office to render a man 'pragmatical.' I am inclined to think that a French Douane would be a better school for perfecting the pragmatical character than even the lawyer's office.

During my absence, Mrs. D. and the children were greatly amused in seeing one of the douaniers open my razor-case, and taking out one of the instruments, exclaim with the most fantastic attitudes, 'pour Madame.' They were still more amused when, having opened another packet, he fell upon certain articles of food, which happened to have been wafted across the channel; like a genuine 'fasting Monsieur,' he eagerly began—at the same time helping his companions,—to try their quality himself. At the close of the scrutiny, however, we were happy to find that we had not been losers to any great extent.

We were now all quietly, and so far as the term is applicable to French accommodation, comfortably quartered at the Hotel de Londres. My first duty after our affairs had been a little settled and arranged, was to call my whole party together, and to endeavour to direct their thoughts and feelings into a suitable train of gratitude towards Him, whose protecting care we had experienced during the night past. With this view I read the song of Moses; accompanying this beautiful and sublime portion of scripture with a few practical remarks, after which we all knelt down for the first time in our lives in a

foreign land, and offered our united thanksgivings for the past, as well as poured out our hearts in expressions of fervent supplication and humble confidence for the future. Knowing to whom I am writing, and knowing moreover what ought to be, and what I trust habitually is at once the deepest and most prominent feeling in the mind of the writer, I have no apprehension that the mention of this circumstance at this period of our little history, will be regarded as a departure from that rule of silent and modest retirement, which unquestionably ought within due limitations to regulate all the exercises of devotion. If there was one feeling more strongly impressed on my mind than another on visiting France, it was the apprehension of that chillness and spiritual blight, which there is so frequently reason to lament as the result of the insidious influence of foreign manners and habits, and of the want of those ordinances, which in the present condition of our nature appear to be closely connected with the vigorous exercise of the religious principles and affections. And if there was any one determination on which, in dependance on Divine aid, I was more firmly and absolutely resolved than another, it was that in matters of religious observance and in the various habits of social and domestic life, I should deviate as little as circumstances admitted, from those to which I had adhered in England. In fact I know not under what circumstances a man has a more decisive

opportunity of shewing whether those habits, which in their aggregate constitute the ostensible part of his character, be the produce of deep convictions and fixed principles, or a loose appendage, accidentally thrown around him—a mere conventional costume adopted for times and occasions, than when he is removed from the atmosphere which tended to give a peculiar colouring to his conduct, and is thrown, so far as external and supplemental influences are concerned, on the unaided energies of his own conscience.

In the course of the afternoon of this day, we walked out through the streets, and the first extraordinary object that met my eye, was a female bearing on her head an enormous species of cap, lengthening out on each side like two muslin flags, which literally floated over her shoulders in the wind. I did verily believe for the moment, that it was an intentional kind of fool's cap, worn by some female mountebank, who had happened to visit the place at the time; and was surprized that she was not followed by a crowd of astonished gazers. So impossible did it appear to me, that any rational being could wear a thing so singularly absurd and grotesque, as an article of ordinary apparel. I soon learnt, however, to my no little astonishment, that this was the regular costume of the place, in the class of life to which she belonged. I could not at the time reconcile myself to the philosophy, which teaches that there is nothing *really* more ridiculous in this species of

head-dress, which exhibits a female moving forward with two immense sails floating from each side of her neck, than in a close quaker's cap, in which I can at least discover some use,—and that its appearing so to me was altogether the effect of association. But I am giving impressions—not philosophical deductions. Having proceeded a little further in our perambulations, we espied a gentleman dressed in a long black flowing kind of frock, and wearing a pair of black bands edged with white, receiving and returning, with much apparent cordiality and respect, the salutations of those who passed him. In this case I could not be mistaken. I instantly recognized in this personage a Roman Catholic Priest, the first in this professional attire I had ever seen in my life. I confess that the tide of feelings and recollections, which rushed into my mind at the sight of this individual—mild and graceful as he was in his person and bearing—was varied and conflicting. On the one side I saw in him a professed, and for any thing I could ascertain to the contrary, nay, I was for the moment willing to believe, amidst all the superstition of the ecclesiastical system to which he belonged,—a sincere and devout minister of Jesus Christ; for in my moments of bitterest abhorrence of popery, I could never believe such a case impossible. I saw in him moreover, one who belonged to an order, which at successive periods of the last half century in France, had endured the most implacable and malignant per-

secution from the apostles of an infidelity, if possible, still more withering, blasting, petrifying,—(I am at a loss for an appropriate word in describing the character of a new race of monsters) in its influence, than the Inquisition in its most palmy days. On the other hand, I seemed involuntarily to behold in this interesting looking young man, a representative of all the bigotry, tyranny, and imposture, which in their combined energy and influence, had for so many ages deluded and enslaved the nations of the earth; and at their first efforts to spring to liberty and light, had loaded the bodies of hundreds and thousands among them with chains; and when all other means of torture had failed, had employed the cannon, the sword, and the faggot, as the instruments of their capricious and sanguinary decrees. But amidst such reflections I hastened to the church of Notre Dame, which is certainly a very fine building; and in the interior appeared to me, it being the first Catholic Parish Church I ever entered, very splendidly ornamented. I saw nobody within, except a few children and aged females, kneeling down and muttering, I presume, some forms of prayer.

Next morning at seven o'clock, we were all on board the packet for Honfleur. The distance is about eight miles, and we accomplished it in little more than an hour. The view, on approaching towards Honfleur across the river, is peculiarly beautiful and picturesque. We had been fore-

warned by the clever Madame M. that on our arrival we should, in all probability be assailed by a set of men, who whether asked or not, would take upon them to convey our luggage to the inn, and to prevent gross imposition, I was cautioned to make a previous agreement with one or more of them. The moment the vessel came up to the quay, there jumped on board a gang of as ferocious and unmannered-looking ruffians as I had ever encountered in the whole course of my life, and without the ceremony of even demanding permission, began to drag out our luggage. I immediately ordered them to desist, and in a short time entered, as I supposed, into a regular and legal contract with one of them for the removal of the baggage to the inn just across the road. He readily acceded to my terms, and pledged himself to be responsible for the whole business. No engagement or remonstrance, however, could prevent the other harpies from sharing in what they doubtless considered their just and lawful prey. They had no notion of this kind of niggardly interference, with what they conceived to be their prescriptive rights. I can really compare the scene to nothing else than what you may conceive to be that of boarding a vessel on the high seas by a gang of pirates. As soon as the luggage had been transferred across the road to the Auberge, I proceeded to pay the man, whom I had engaged, and intending to be very liberal, in order to save annoyance, proposed to give him five francs.

Before, however, I had uttered half a sentence on the subject, I was surrounded and beset by nine as savage-looking creatures as ever wore a human form, fiercely demanding a franc each. I told them I had never employed them, and would give them no such thing. Determined, I suppose, in consequence of a more than ordinary developement of the organ of combativeness, not to be wantonly imposed upon, I sat down upon the luggage, while the rest of the party were engaged at their breakfast, and the nine barbarians still stood at bay, uttering the loudest clamours, and occasionally putting themselves into an attitude little short of menacing. At last an English gentleman kindly offered to accompany me to a very useful and important functionary in this country, entitled 'Le Commissaire de Police,' whose business it is to arrange all matters of this description. When we had arrived at his office, we found that he had already repaired to the inn. On our return we found him there, and on the appeal being made to him, he announced with much gravity and dignity, that the sum to be paid was six francs, fifteen sous; apparently on the principle of dividing the difference. At the sight of this formidable personage, my assailants had become perfectly silent and tranquil, and received with the utmost contentment, the sum which I now as readily paid them—satisfied that, to whatever extent we were overcharged, it was now at least done under the sanction and authority of

the law. This officer is of great service in settling trifling disputes, and in preventing such petty impositions as that attempted to be practised upon me. Indeed, from all that I have heard and have been enabled yet to judge, the whole system of French police, including an establishment of more than 40,000 gens d'armes, works with admirable promptness and effect. But we now turned our minds to the subject of proceeding on our journey, for the specimen we had just witnessed of the manners and morals of Honfleur, did not impress us with any strong desire of prolonging our sojourn there. By the kind assistance of the same English gentleman, I was enabled speedily to engage two voitures for the conveyance of ourselves, and another for that of our luggage to Caen. According to the recommendation I had previously received, we had the agreement regularly written out and signed. At eleven in the forenoon we set off in due style—the proprietor of the carriages and horses, with his cotton night-cap on his head, supplying the place of a hat, running for some miles by our side to see that all went well. As we ascended the hill from Honfleur, the scenery was transcendently rich and lovely. On each side of the road the country was richly wooded, and was interspersed at frequent intervals with neat and romantic villas. The whole scene was absolutely enchanting, and if the moral associations connected with it had been at all analogous to its physical and picturesque beauty, I should have regarded

this magnificent sloping terrace as a perfect paradise. But amidst this display of amenity and rural loveliness, I could not banish from my mind the melancholy reflection that darkness covered the land, and gross darkness the people; and I was ready to exclaim, as my eye gazed in rapture on this profuse exhibition of the Creator's goodness and beneficence, in the exquisite language of one, the star of whose brilliant and hallowed genius shed a bright, though unhappily transient lustre over the firmament of our eastern church—

> 'What tho' with lavish kindness
> The gifts of God are strewn,
> The *Papist* in his blindness
> Bows down to wood and stone.'

For a considerable part of our journey we proceeded very comfortably, notwithstanding the homely character of our vehicles, and more especially of the harness, being somewhat inferior to that in which a pedlar's horse in England is arrayed, when he drags his owner and his goods to one of our country fairs; and yet I believe we had the very best, or rather let me say the *only* travelling vehicles which Honfleur, a town of eight or ten thousand inhabitants, could command. Our drivers during the earlier part of the day appeared to be steady and careful; but after dinner my postillion soon began to shew unequivocal proofs of having indulged rather too freely in the use of eau de vie. In one part of the road,

while he was amusing and disporting himself with a merry companion, we found our horses suddenly turning aside, and descending close by a very steep and dangerous precipice. We were not, perhaps, at that moment in very great actual peril, but we were certainly in a very awkward, and not altogether comfortable position. The ladies and servants from the preceding vehicle caught a sight of us, and began to shout in dreadful consternation, while our man found himself utterly unable to manage and turn back his horses. Hearing the screams from the other carriage, I put out my head at the window and requested them to be tranquil, which, however, I did not find them at all disposed to be. By this time the other driver was come to our aid, and both having mounted the box, they at last succeeded in regaining the road. The scene, if it had not been attended with some danger, would have been in a high degree ludicrous. I confess that during the remainder of the journey, especially as it now began to get dark, I was not by any means without uneasy sensations, for the man was evidently quite unfit for his business, and in addition to the darkness, the road, as we drew near towards Caen, on account of the approaching fair, was exceedingly crowded. Through the divine goodness and protection, however, for which I trust we all felt truly thankful, we arrived at that place in safety, between eight and nine o'clock in the evening, and were delighted to find our friend

Dr. V—— there awaiting our arrival. In order to obtain accommodation for the night, our party was here under the necessity of being divided—our friends taking up their quarters at the Hotel de France, and ourselves at the Hotel d'Angleterre. After a somewhat arduous and vexatious, if not actually dangerous day's journey, we were delighted and thankful in finding ourselves safely, and not uncomfortably lodged in this commodious inn.

Next morning, April 20, after arranging matters for the conveyance of one division of our party to Avranches, we sallied forth in quest of sights. The first place of any importance that we visited, was the church of St. Peter's, a noble and very ancient edifice; but we were shocked and disgusted beyond measure with the disfigurement occasioned to it by some dirty old buildings, employed for shops and other similar purposes, which were literally huddled against it, and in one direction completely destroyed the whole effect. Whether these wretched hovels—and I understand that such appendages are very generally attached to cathedral and other churches in France—were thrown up as a kind of outworks for the defence of the sacred edifice I know not, but as a violation of all taste and refinement, and even of common propriety, where architectural beauty and effect were at least originally consulted at vast labour and expence, they are perfectly odious and intolerable. We next visit-

ed the church of St. Etienne, in the chancel of which the tomb of William the Conqueror is shewn. In a corner of the church we found one or two priests engaged in catechizing some children. Among other questions I distinctly heard one respecting heretics. After the examination I took the liberty of accosting one of the priests, for the purpose of ascertaining the spot where the remains of the renowned conqueror lay. As I was not very prompt with the French language, I proposed Latin, as the medium of conversation, and was glad to find that my guide had a very tolerable knowledge of it. Thus each of us being to a certain extent "doctus sermones utriusque-linguæ," we were able to carry on our conversation with considerable facility. He shewed me the conqueror's tombstone, but assured me that only his 'femur' rested there. What foundation there is for this statement I know not. All that I remember at this moment respecting the end of the conqueror is, that in consequence of a fall from his horse at Mantes, he died shortly after at Rouen, and as history has usually recorded it, was buried at Caen. Our friend, the priest, amused us much with shewing how the English stamped upon the place when they came to visit the spot. After we had seen all that appeared worthy of curiosity in the church, we were dismissed by this courteous functionary with much urbanity and politeness—qualities in which he was not inferior to Cowper's 'bowing, smirk-

ing, smart Abbé,' who, meeting in a similar situation with a certain 'gosling pair,'

> 'With much compassion undertook the task,
> To tell them more than they had wit to ask.'

Immediately contiguous to the church is a noble educational institution, originally founded by William the Conqueror, and now forming one of the Royal Colleges of France. On a future occasion I shall probably give you some account of the footing upon which education is now placed in this country. At present I shall confine myself to the few points of information which I obtained respecting this immediate institution. There are now six hundred pupils from the age of eight to twenty years. Among the senior pupils, law is the principal object of study. There are between twenty and thirty English boys. One of them I saw. When I asked him how he liked the place, he replied, 'not at all—we are a great deal too much confined.' Whether this was a schoolboy's impatience of control it is not for me to say, but the arrangements are clearly made with a view to the prevention of any undue freedom in the movements of the pupils. Their dormitories consist of a long corridor, divided into closets, each containing a single bed, with a door, which is locked every night; these closets are abundantly airy, but I should imagine are somewhat cold in the winter. There is a beautiful chapel attached to the institution, in which a chap-

lain regularly celebrates mass. Before the revolution of July, all the pupils were constrained to attend and to receive religious instruction as Catholics, but since that event it is optional.

I looked forward to my first Sunday in France with feelings of deep, but not altogether pleasureable interest; the First Impressions of that sacred day were those, I trust, of fervent gratitude, adoration and praise. I awoke very early after a delightful night's rest. The sun poured its beams most beautifully and resplendently through my large chamber windows, and to complete the tranquil and elevated enjoyment of such a moment, required only the additional and still brighter beams of the Sun of Righteousness to illumine, to invigorate, to cheer and refresh the soul. At six o'clock I walked out, and I should find it difficult to express the shock of surprize and indignation which I felt at the appearance of the street, as I first went out at the court-yard of the hotel. Throughout the whole length of it there was not one symptom of a considerate recollection that this was a day on which a character of sacredness, marked by a tranquil repose from the ordinary occupations of life, had been fixed by the inviolable decree of Heaven. In direct and wanton defiance of this high behest, every species of business seemed here to be carrying on with the usual, or I should be inclined to think, with more than the ordinary activity. I know well the contemptuous sneer, or perhaps

the affected compassion, with which some persons would treat the simplicity which can be shocked by exhibitions of this description. But I would beg to tell such persons that I am not yet quite prepared to sacrifice my veneration for one of the most positive and express of all the commandments of God at the shrine either of British impiety or of Gallic scepticism. It is surely no proof of largeness of mind to melt down every thing which may contravene our own will in the law of God in a kind of philosophical crucible, which dissipates all that is vital and authoritative in that law, and leaves a soft and ductile residuum, which may be cast into any mould, and shaped into any form, which individual caprice or national propensity may dictate; nor do I regard it as any indication that the wilful and habitual desecration of the Sabbath is not an offence against God, that through his forbearance and long-suffering, the thunderbolt of his indignation does not instantaneously descend upon the nation, of which this appears to be one of the most distinguishing characteristics.

After walking down the street, about a hundred yards from the hotel, I came to the church of St. John, at the door of which there were stationed a considerable number of beggars, urging their claims in the most pitiful and clamorous tones. On entering the church I found only a few persons, principally aged women, who were muttering over their prayers as usual. I was

surprised to find scarcely any pews at all in the church, but a vast number of chairs, with which I was very much struck, as affording a remarkable convenience both for sitting and kneeling. Having advanced towards the altar, I there found a priest, attired in an outer habiliment, very like what in England we should call a round frock, reaching just below the middle of the body. This garment reminded me of an imperious menace of good Queen Elizabeth addressed to a certain 'proud prelate,' that if he did not submit to her orders she would soon 'unfrock him.' The gesticulations of this personage, as he alternately or sometimes simultaneously bowed, and knelt, and muttered, somewhat like the "wizards" mentioned by the prophet, appeared to me, I confess, extremely ludicrous. I am, at the same time, aware that matters of this kind are very much affairs of habit and association. Some ceremonies, we all acknowledge, there must be; and there are very few observances of this description which can be distinctly shewn to be either commanded or forbidden in Scripture. Outward ceremonies and 'bodily exercises,' so far as they are not contrary to the express commands of God, must obviously be left—in their mode, their number, and their degree, to the decision of common sense and enlightened reason, and must be modified to a considerable extent by national character and habits. A stiff puritan of the days of Elizabeth, who would have submitted to suspension,

imprisonment, and death, rather than put on a white surplice, which, wrapping the person of a Nonconformist, as is now very frequently and unscrupulously the case, good old Thomas Scott called a 'white lie,' would doubtless have been as much shocked with the supposed absurdity, or even superstition of the ceremonies of public worship as conducted in some of our own churches and cathedrals, as a Protestant English Episcopalian, or Nonconformist of the present day, is with the party-coloured attire and the endless grimaces and genuflexions of the popish service. And yet he, the rigid puritan, was not without peculiar modes and attitudes for expressing his feelings of adoration, from which the member of a community still simpler in its habits—the Society of Friends—would turn away as foolish and unmeaning, if not offensive and profane. As I stood near the altar watching the operations of the priest, one woman came forward and knelt down by the railing. Within a few seconds, the priest approached her and put a wafer into her mouth, after which both immediately retired. I had never before seen the sacrament publicly administered in the church to one sole communicant. One or two other priests apparently of a higher order speedily made their appearance, and after a few gesticulations retired, dipping their fingers in the holy water as they passed. They were followed by two women, one of whom rather amused me by taking the water at second hand from the tip of the finger of her companion.

I scarcely know of any subject of investigation which would be more interesting, and might be made more useful, than a calm and unprejudiced estimate of the real effect of all this combination of observances, viewed as component parts of the great system of popery, upon the individual and national character. That it is attended with many most injurious and fatal consequences there can be no question. But that it in no case and in no degree tends to cherish a genuine, devotional feeling, it would, I conceive, be presumptuous and uncharitable to maintain. I can conceive it possible, and even not improbable, that, odious and pestilential as the system of Roman Catholicism, properly so called, is, yet as engrafted upon and as retaining beneath this corrupt and fantastic incrustation, some of the most valuable and salutary ingredients of pure Christianity, it may, even in some of its most groundless and preposterous rites, be the means of maintaining a most sublime and elevated communion with God. This, however, supposing it to be the fact, is not for a moment to be considered as justifying the ludicrous puerilities—much less the monstrous enormities of the popish economy. An enlightened and philosophical estimate of popery, as a corrupt modification of Christianity, with respect to its influence on character and the general habits of society, would be interesting in proportion to the vast importance of the questions which it involves, and difficult in proportion to the rare endowments

which it would require. Such an inquiry, in order to lead to any definite result, must obviously not be confined to the bare domains of popery, but it must embrace a comparison of what that domain would have been in the total absence of Christianity in any form, and of what it was likely to become under a pure and enlightened administration of Christianity as contained in the volume of inspiration. When we speak of popery as in any measure good, we mean that it is better than no religion at all: when we speak of it as evil in terms as strong as language supplies, we mean that it has corrupted, debased, and perverted the sublimest and most glorious system of truth ever communicated from heaven to earth. The two views are not inconsistent. To a traveller dying with thirst, a stream, though polluted with all the dregs of an idolatrous sacrifice, is better than none. We are disgusted with its corrupt impregnations, but there may be life in the source whence it emanates.

After breakfast, as there was no English service, we went to the church of St. Peter, where we understood grand mass was to be performed that morning. I endeavoured myself, and urged on my companions, the duty of endeavouring to enter it, not in a spirit of levity, nor even of mere curiosity, but with a sincere desire to join in such part of the service, at least, as we could conscientiously join. With this feeling I entered the church, and the scene which immediately pre-

sented itself was certainly in a high degree imposing. I got a place close to the altar, and was thus enabled to see the whole of the ceremonials. As I had never before been present at a public catholic worship, I was quite lost in astonishment at the strange combination it exhibited of the plausible—the entertaining—the fantastic—and the absurd. There were at least not less than twelve or fifteen persons of all ages—half of them probably priests—engaged in the service. These persons, according to their respective functions, were dressed in every variety of costume. Those who seemed to take the lead frequently changed their habiliments. Taken altogether, a scene more perfectly theatrical, or rather mountebankish, I never witnessed. I know not that there was a single circumstance wanting to realize the poet's description of what he considered as the degenerate theatre of the Romans—for there was a boy, who at particular parts struck together the wooden lids of a kind of book with both hands, and thereby occasioned a most obstreperous noise:

> Tanto cum strepitu ludi spectantur et artes
> Divitiæque peregrinæ, quibus oblitus actor
> Cum stetit in scena, concurrit dextera lævæ.

When I had taken my place, I found two or three of the elder functionaries muttering and performing various gesticulations and genuflexions before the altar-piece. This was followed by music and singing, and a regular procession round the church. During one of these circum-

ambulations, a priest carried about holy water and with a small brush sprinkled it over the congregation, as if he meant to re-baptize the whole multitude. After the holy water, came the opposite element of holy fire, in the form of burning incense, swung up most ludicrously in a small censer by an urchin, who seemed amused at his own performance. Soon after, some cake or bun, broken into small pieces, was carried round the church. As the basket was extended to me as well as the rest, I of course helped myself to a piece, and as I supposed there could be no harm in it, and that it must have been intended to be eaten, I at once put a part of it into my mouth; but I soon observed my neighbours, instead of eating it, carefully wrapping it up in a piece of paper and putting it into their pockets. Still willing to conform, I did the same with the remainder. This, I afterwards understood to be 'pain bénit'—bread blessed by the priest. The taste of it was by no means agreeable to me, and I confess my conscience was not altogether at ease in the matter of this idolatrous bread.

During part of the service, as I was anxious to see and hear every thing; while the priests were making their rounds, I ascended two or three steps of the altar, and looked towards the body of the church. An old gentleman sitting near, said to me with a smile, 'Vous êtes un prédicateur—' You are a preacher. Alas, how many ages have elapsed since the gospel has been faith-

fully preached in that place. Oh when shall the glad tidings of redeeming love, in all their richness, freedom, and extent, be proclaimed within these walls, and be re-echoed through every part of this rich and variegated vault? I doubt not the time will come, and I trust it is not far distant, when not a material cross, but a moral, a spiritual cross will be uplifted to the view of every eye beneath this sacred dome—when the incense, not of burning and smoking pastiles, which are offensive to the nostrils both of God and man, but of heartfelt gratitude and ardent praise, will be offered around this altar; and when priests adorned, not with a gaudy garniture of crimson and gold, but with the more appropriate robes of purity and holiness, will minister in this house of prayer.

Just after the circumstance above mentioned, I observed a certain functionary mounted in a pulpit in the body of the edifice, and, as I supposed, preparing for some species of oration. When I had got near the pulpit, however, I was grievously disappointed, on finding there was to be no sermon. This occupant of the pulpit was engaged in publishing a succession of banns of marriage, which were followed by one or two brief prayers. After a good deal of incense-throwing, and bell-ringing, and other performances, the import of which I was not adept enough in the mysteries of Romanism to understand, the service ended, which I knew only from the general

stir among the crowd, as preparatory to their departure.

And now, after such a detail, which I fear must have been very tedious to one who has doubtless often witnessed similar scenes, I am tempted to ask my own understanding and conscience, what is the value, when estimated by the unerring balances of the sanctuary, of this mass of grotesque and noisy pageantry? With an unreserved readiness to allow that sincere devotion, in particular cases, may not be absolutely incompatible with this preposterous congeries of will-worship, must it not on the whole, be pronounced a solemn mockery, if indeed it can be said to be solemn,—for during the service, I observed much of levity, and of a tendency to occasional mirthfulness even among the priests themselves? Oh, if the Saviour of the world was to have presented himself here, as he once did in the temple of Jerusalem, with what indignation would he scourge away out of his house, the mercenary mountebanks who so grievously pervert his gospel, and thus degrade the sublime majesty of his worship, as preeminently characterized by spirituality and truth. If I was asked to give a definition of Catholicism in a few words, I should say that it is 'The religion of the five Senses.' For that of sight, it has paintings, crosses, images of gold, and silver, and wood, and stone; gorgeous dresses, with all the other visible insignia of its authority. For that of hearing, besides all the rattling and bell-ringing

already noticed, it has music, sometimes I believe of the most exquisite kind. For the smell, it has its incense, though to me not very fragrant. For the taste, it has its 'pain bénit,' and other viands. For the feeling, it has, on certain prescribed conditions, a ready indulgence in every carnal gratification. It is Judaism, instead of being sublimated and spiritualized into Christianity, degraded and carnalized into Heathenism. It is my firm conviction, that a well-instructed Christian might have been present at the service of that day, supposing him utterly ignorant of Catholicism, and have found it difficult to determine, whether this was worship offered to a heathen idol, or homage done to the true God. There never was a system perhaps, better contrived, to operate as an everlasting barrier against all communication with the mind of the worshipper. It really must have required no ordinary effort of satanic ingenuity, to elaborate such a master-piece of pious fraud. I often thought during the service, what must have been the faith and courage of that man, who conceived it possible to demolish such a massive structure of organized and well-compacted superstition. When it was first resolutely assailed by the German reformer, so far as the eye of man could see, it reposed on the deliberate conviction, and was intertwined with the very heartstrings of the great mass of the population. If Christianity had been really such as it was here represented,

well might a pope once exclaim, What a profitable speculation has proved, 'illa fabula Christi!' At the close of the service, I could not help crying out with the venerable Jew, whom Mr. Jowett saw in one of the streets of Jerusalem, then and still polluted by Mahometan idolatry and imposture—Κυριε, εως ποτε?

From the Catholic church we hastened to the French Protestant service, which is conducted in a very neat chapel, capable of holding at least three or four hundred persons. The minister is a Mons. Rollin, a kinsman, as I understand, of the celebrated historian and author of the 'Belles Lettres' of that name. The congregation was small, and if I could judge from appearance, was in no danger from enthusiasm or undue excitement. The preacher's manner in the pulpit, however, was serious and devotional. I was glad to read on the wall at the lower end of the chapel, the following inscription just over a small box, 'Tronc de la Societé Biblique.' In the afternoon I attended the English Protestant service in the same place. The congregation was larger, and apparently more respectable, being, of course, entirely composed of English people. The service was performed with great regularity, propriety, and simplicity, and I could not help contrasting the whole scene with the gorgeous, but withal, childish pageantry, which I had so recently witnessed in the worship of the professed disciples of the same lowly Saviour.

On taking a short round through the town, on my way from the Protestant temple to the hotel, I was again shocked beyond measure to find the ordinary business of the great annual fair held at this time, such as buying and selling cattle, proceeding as regularly as I had ever seen a similar traffic carrying on at any market in England. In fact, every thing in the form of business, pleasure, and amusement, which generally attends such assemblages, was here exhibited in shameless and disgusting violation of that hallowed institution, with the observance of which is more closely connected, perhaps, than with almost any other positive enactment of heaven, all that is devotionally pure, and all that is morally elevated and excellent in national and individual character. Who can be surprised at the transactions of the public fair indeed, when in the very area fronting the church which I attended, within the sound of the very voice of the priests themselves, the business of the market was conducted with all the tumult and eagerness of any other day of the week? It is true indeed that the clergy could not *now* prevent all this; but to what is this loss of power and influence owing, but to their abuse in time past? Of what is the present universal desecration of the sabbath in this country the effect, but of the impious elevation of numberless saints' days to a level with, and even above, the day of God itself?

On the Monday following we visited several

public places, of which the principal was the Hospital of Caen, or, as they call it, the 'Hotel de Dieu,' one of the noblest, and apparently best conducted institutions of the kind I ever saw. There are now four hundred patients of all kinds, a considerable number of them being soldiers. No less than fifty officers of all descriptions are attached to it. Among those who attend the sick, are a considerable number of those useful and excellent women, called 'Sisters of Charity,' one of whom we saw performing the friendly office of washing the feet of a poor man just brought in. Among many monstrous and abominable appendages of the Romish Church, it must be acknowledged that some of its institutions, when directed to their legitimate objects, are calculated to be eminently useful, and among these, is doubtless to be accounted, the appointment, or at least the recognition, of this most meritorious and self-denying class of women. I believe they were the only order of demi-ecclesiastical persons of this kind, whom the utilitarian policy of Napoleon spared. You may perhaps remember, that several years ago, a much valued friend, explaining to us the character and functions of these Sisters of Charity, and suggesting whether it was possible to institute a somewhat similar class of persons in England.

In a kind of little chapel belonging to this institution, repose the remains of Queen Matilda,

at whose tomb we were allowed just to peep through an iron grating. But I must stop my pen, which has already run to a much greater length than I had intended. Early that afternoon we left Caen, and after a journey characterized by nothing very remarkable, arrived at four o'clock next morning at Avranches, the scene of our intended sojourn in this country. It may be somewhat amusing to mention, however, that in a discussion I had at Vire, with a French gentleman, to whom of course, we were utterly unknown, on the comparative difficulty and uncouthness of the pronunciation of the French and English languages, he brought forward the combination, *Chichester Church*, as a decisive proof of these qualities belonging in a greater degree to the latter. I have now given you, so far as I am capable of retracing them, the most direct and immediate impressions made on the mind of a very inexperienced traveller, during a journey of some length. If these fugitive remarks should at all interest you, or any member of your circle, I shall be happy if a moderate share of health is allowed me, to continue them on any striking circumstances or events that may occur, and with reference to any little tours I may have an opportunity of making, during our residence on this beautiful and romantic spot.

In the mean time, with every sentiment of affection and esteem,

I remain, &c. &c.

LETTER II.

Avranches, Aug. 14, 1833.

My dear Friend,

It is now more than three months since we have been resident in this place. To one who was well acquainted with the habits of the people, and with the usual course of events, as modified in a considerable degree by those habits, it was not likely that the history of a small country town, situated in the midst of a rural district, and removed by its very position, from the immediate and direct agency of the whirlpools of political agitation, would present anything very striking or extraordinary. You will bear in mind that I am writing from the country of Descartes, and therefore will not be surprised that my language should be a little tinged with his philosophy—a philosophy, which was once not only universally received throughout France, but was even taught, for some time after the publication of the Principia, in our own chief seat of mathematical learning. But the very distance of this sequestered little town from the great central

vortex, and its consequent exemption from the ever-varying changes and the factitious influences, which distract and confound the observer, in places of greater resort and of more tumultuous activity, render it perhaps more favourable to a calm and undisturbed view of the effect of national principles and institutions, in the developement and formation of character; and to one who arrived here an utter stranger to all the practical exhibitions of the prevalent religious, political, and social condition of the people, many things must occur, which would strike him at least as new, if not altogether wonderful. Such only are the impressions which I can have to record. If I had been writing to a different person, they might perhaps possess some interest; for, as Dean Milner, if I mistake not, once remarked, with more indeed of caustic severity than of rigid truth, in reference to a course of lectures delivered by a very learned and now Right Reverend writer,—the value of a discourse may sometimes arise almost exclusively from the ignorance of those for whom it is intended. Notwithstanding however the disadvantage under which I lie on this score, I am inclined to address you at least another letter, in continuation of my former remarks, and referring to certain circumstances, which at different intervals fell under my notice in the course of the last few months.

But before I proceed to events, you may per-

haps be desirous of learning a few particulars respecting the place in which our tent has for a while been pitched, and which appears destined to be the centre of my movements, while we sojourn in this country. The first thing with which I was struck, as I approached the town, at the grey dawn of a beautiful spring morning, along a broad and noble road, was its romantic and picturesque position—resting, like an eyrie, on the summit of a steep and rocky elevation, and commanding in a north-western direction, a most noble and extensive prospect. This situation was evidently selected with a view to security against military assault, and the more central part of the town, the origin of which is lost in the mist of a remote antiquity, affords obvious proofs of its having been once a place of very considerable strength; as in addition to its natural advantages for defence, it had a castle, and was surrounded with a wall of great dimensions, part of which still remains. The inhabitants of this part of the country, in the time of Cæsar, were known by the name of *Ambialtes*, and are recorded to have been remarkable for their military prowess. Ptolemy, the celebrated astronomer and geographer, who flourished one hundred and fifty years after Cæsar, speaks of this town under the name of Ingena Abrincatuorum, a combination of Celtic terms, expressive at once of the beauty of the situation and of the martial spirit of the inhabitants. It appears from some

monumental remains, discovered during recent excavations, that after the ancient Druidical superstition, which once universally prevailed through these regions, had been overthrown, a Roman temple was here erected, and that consequently the worship of the Roman divinities was maintained for a very considerable period. Towards the close of the fourth century, however, after Christianity had been authoritatively recognized throughout the Roman empire, it is recorded that the renowned Martin, Bishop of Tours, denominated from his zealous and successful labours among that barbarous people—the apostle of the Gauls, was the means of introducing the knowledge of Christianity into this district. In the year 400 St. Leontius is mentioned as the first Bishop of Avranches. After a series of sixty-nine bishops, among whom, as I remember your once reminding me, was the illustrious Huet, the pupil of the no less illustrious and erudite, but more orthodox Bochart; this renowned episcopal see was demolished by the hurricane of the revolution of 89. The last of this long line of prelates was M. De Belbœuf, who, retiring from the storm, sought an asylum on English ground, and died in an obscure retreat at Hampstead, in the year 1808.

It is impossible not to cherish the hope, that after witnessing such a terrific bouleversement, and exhibiting in his own person, the vanity and uncertainty of earthly dignity, affluence, and

power, this exalted functionary may have been enabled so to improve his retirement, as to have secured unto himself, through the exclusive merits of his Redeemer, a brighter and less perishable crown than the mitre, which had been so rudely snatched from his brow.

After the re-establishment of the Catholic religion under Napoleon, the See of Avranches, containing about one hundred and eighty parishes, was incorporated into that of Coutance. The cathedral, which was the second belonging to this diocese, and was dedicated as early as the year 1121, must, from its situation, have been a most noble and impressive object. It was erected on the very edge of a lofty platform, on which the town stands, and from the site which it occupied, it must have been a very splendid and magnificent structure. The imagination can hardly conceive anything more superbly striking than the view that this edifice must have presented, when its ample western window was illumined with the last beams of the sun just sinking beneath the distant horizon. The only remnant of it now visible, is one solitary pillar of forty or fifty feet high, standing in melancholy sadness, as a witness of the effect of ecclesiastical corruption resulting in revolutionary madness. The immediate cause of its destruction, as I have been informed, was, that being already in a somewhat dilapidated condition, it was still further weakened by the removal, during the revolutionary era, of some

of its pillars, in order to render it a more capacious receptacle for military stores. Soon after, it became a perfect ruin, and its materials were gradually removed and employed in the erection of other buildings, until at last, not one stone was left on another, and the very ploughshare might be drawn over the soil, which was once the site of one of the proudest temples in Christendom. Within a few feet of its northern wall, there is still visible a large flat stone bearing the figure of a chalice, where it is said that our Henry the Second received absolution on his knees, after submitting to a variety of the most humiliating ceremonies within the church, in the presence of a vast assemblage of bishops and other dignitaries, for the murder of Thomas á Becket.

Nor is it simply with reference to its ecclesiastical annals, that this little town, though small among the thousands, which in this country, and in the present day, exhibit a more imposing exterior, is associated with feelings of deep and varied historical interest. It is also rich in recollections of civil and military events. Here kings have met in peace, and heroes have bled in war. During the long era of the possession of Normandy by the English, the citadel of Avranches was frequently an object of violent and bloody contention, and in the sanguinary struggles for religious liberty in the sixteenth century, in which the renowned Montgomery, the proprietor of the

splendid neighbouring castle of Ducey, led the Protestants, the whole of this district was a scene of the most dreadful, protracted, and vindictive conflicts. But time and space will not allow me to dwell on these points. It is lamentable to reflect however, on the little fruit, which these vigorous efforts have left in the form of real, or even nominal protestantism in this quarter. But I fear, the truth is, that the blood shed in these contests was not the blood of the martyrs of religion, properly so called, but of the martyrs of one demi-political, demi-religious theory, struggling against another; and therefore it is that in so small a measure in this country it has proved to be the seed of the church.

Let me, however, proceed to my own narrative. After a few days spent in the house of the friends, on whose account we were more particularly induced to select this spot for our residence, during which I was enchanted with the beautiful views, the rich and varied scenery, and the numberless sequestered walks, which abound in the neighbourhood of this place; we took a house belonging to an English officer, married to a daughter of the Duc de C——, one of the old French noblesse, situated most beautifully and romantically on the northern wall of the town, and almost adjoining the site of the cathedral. And what adds still more to the interest of this little cottage, for it is nothing more, it was formerly occupied by some ecclesi-

astical functionary belonging to that edifice. You may now conceive us therefore, comfortably settled, so far as the idea of comfort can be associated with the accommodations usually afforded in this country, in a little mansion standing like a hermitage on the summit of the rock, and commanding one of the richest rural prospects I ever witnessed. On a rustic seat, placed at one corner of our little garden, embowered by an arbour, which is intertwined with the tendrils of an overhanging vine, you would often find me on a summer's evening, sometimes alone, and sometimes surrounded by those who are dear to me, now gazing on the rich and variegated prospect that spreads itself before me, and now

'Ruminating much, as much I may,'

on scenes of historic recollection, which the imagination at such moments delights to conjure up in forms of dim and shadowy grandeur to the view, or on the now past and vanished circumstances, which marked the successive stages of my own brief and comparatively insignificant career, up to the present date; the mysterious, though doubtless wise and gracious evolutions of that great providential scheme, which has so unexpectedly removed me to this distance from so many of

'My former partners of the peopled scene,'

while the future inclosing within its ample folds,

events of still deeper and more anxious interest, lengthens out before the eye, until it closes in a horizon, which, whatever clouds may intervene, is gilded with the radiance of a hope full of immortality.

Such have been frequently my meditations as I sat on this beautiful and elevated spot, watching, among other objects of interest, the softened sublimity of the sun just sinking beneath the remote horizon, or gazing with undiminished admiration on the glowing splendours, which its vanished disk still radiated over the brow of the western hemisphere. To my right was spread a vast amphitheatre of richly cultivated and thickly wooded land; presenting at a distance the appearance of one immense grove, interspersed at intervals with villas, cottages, and churches, just peeping out of the dense sylvan scenery, in which they appeared to be embowered. Immediately in front was the site of the fallen cathedral, still rising before the eye of fancy, in hoary grandeur, with its massive pillars, its rich tracery, its vaulted roof, and its solemn pomp of priests and prelates, moving, with slow and measured pace amidst the undulating notes of the full-voiced choir, along its spacious aisles. The vivid recollection of all this, combined with the present solitude and desolation of the spot, could hardly fail to give rise to a train of pensive reflections, something better, I trust, than a dream of sickly sentimentality. Soon, however, the imagination was roused

from her reverie, and the most prominent object, which in this direction presented itself to the eye, was an immense cross, erected a few years ago on the centre of the floor of the ancient cathedral, planted on a base of granite, and bearing, at an elevation of fifty or sixty feet, a wooden image of our adorable Redeemer, in the very attitude, and under the very process of crucifixion. I confess that I always viewed this object, especially when I saw, as I frequently did, men, and still more, women and children, prostrating themselves before it, and kissing the steps of the rocky platform on which it was fixed, with a strange mixture of feeling. It was in fact a struggle between the irreconcileable elements of veneration and abhorrence, of sublimity and meanness, of honour and contempt, severally clustering around this mystic emblem; veneration, which could not fail to be in some degree excited by what was intended to represent the dying agonies of the most gracious, the most compassionate, the most transcendently amiable and excellent of all beings;—abhorrence, which was inevitably roused by the view of what was delusive and degrading in itself, and expressly prohibited by Him, to whom it offered the mockery of an idolatrous homage;—sublimity, because it was immediately associated with an event, in which were concentrated in unrivalled lustre, all the attributes of the Eternal, and which will ever stand forth to the view of created intelligences,

as the most stupendous in the annals of the universe ;—meanness, as it was a vulgar and uncouth piece of materialism, presented as a substitute for the highest and purest exercises of the Spirit ;—honour, which is ever due, to what I was bound to believe to be, at least in many cases, sincere, though mistaken piety ;—contempt, which involuntarily rises in the mind at the sight of an ignorant and grovelling superstition.

But, turning the eye a little westward, I saw rising in solitary grandeur out of the midst of an immense plain of sand, a large rocky elevation, the summit of it crowned with what appeared to be a church. This was no other than the celebrated Mont St. Michel, so famed in the annals of Romish pilgrimage, as well as of Norman warfare. To give anything like even a brief history of this remarkable mass of granite, dedicated in the days of superstition to the special honor of the Archangel Michael, would take a whole letter. From the first ages of traditionary record, it seems to have been associated with ideas of peculiar and extraordinary sanctity. Before the Roman conquest, it is said to have been occupied by Druidical priestesses, and to have been a place of great resort to the inhabitants of the surrounding country, who were bound by the spells of these mercenary Saganas. After the subjugation of the country by the Romans, these priestesses of Baal were succeeded by the priests of Jupiter, who consecrated

it to the worship of that divinity, and called it Mons Jovis, as it had been previously called Mons Beli, or Beleni. In the fourth century, however, the altar of Jupiter was in its turn overthrown, and that of Jesus Christ erected in its place. Not long after, the great apostle of Normandy, St. Paternus, placed some hermits there, who built a monastery on the summit of the rock, under the name of Tumba. It continued to be known by this name until the beginning of the eighth century, when according to ecclesiastical history, St. Aubert, twelfth bishop of Avranches, in consequence of frequent visions and intimations to that effect from the Archangel, built a church on it, which he dedicated in the year 708 to St. Michael, by whose name the place has ever since been known. Within a short time it became celebrated throughout Europe, as the chosen seat of the Archangel, and the ancient Delphi was scarcely more renowned as the residence of the oracle of Apollo, than this naked rock as the rendezvous of those who solicited the protection of St. Michael. The wealth heaped on it, and the pilgrimages made to it by persons of all ranks, and from all countries, are almost incredible. Among other royal personages, by whom this renowned shrine was visited for purposes of devotion, were our Henry II. in company with Lewis VII. of France; and subsequently, Lewis IX. or St. Lewis; his son and successor Philip III. and Lewis XI.

Nor is this renowned abbey less remarkable for the wonderful alternations and vicissitudes which it has undergone, both as a temple of religion, and a fortress of war. For a period of more than nine hundred years, not a century elapsed, during which it did not experience some formidable disaster. The earthquake—the lightning—the conflagrations of war, as well as the more silent, but equally destructive hand of time itself have each of them visited it, at successive periods, with their dreadful and desolating effects. But every renewed devastation seemed only to stimulate the zeal, and augment the liberality of its votaries. From every catastrophe it seemed to rise on a broader and firmer base, and to mount with prouder battlements, until at length it was transformed into a state prison; and since the revolution of July, it has been occupied by a goodly number of Carlists and Chouans. In such a situation, and within view of such a variety of objects, each of them clustering with such a mass of interesting and affecting associations, you may easily imagine that it required no extraordinary susceptibility to be carried, if not beyond 'the flaming bounds of place and time,' at least a little beyond the line of the visible horizon, and the date of the passing moment. It is not, however, the visions of fancy, even if I had the power of realizing them in a far greater degree than I do possess it, that I am desirous of recording, but the simple

impressions resulting from actual circumstances and events.

Among these the first in the order of occurrence since I last addressed you, which seems entitled to any notice is, perhaps, the Fête of Ascension, which took place on the 16th of May. I mention this festival, not as by any means the most remarkable or imposing of those with which the Romish calendar is so thickly interspersed, but as the first of the kind which fell under my own observation. Two days before, indeed, I had been roused as early as five o'clock in the morning by the voices of a large company of singers, and on looking out at my window, I saw the procession slowly marching, with two or three priests at the head of it, along the platform, on which the cathedral once stood, and which was now further consecrated by being transformed into a Calvaire, with the lofty cross already mentioned erected at one end of it. The priests and people loudly chanted as they moved along, and I confess that viewed abstractedly, and apart from the system of which it formed a component part, and from the feeling with which such exhibitions are now generally regarded, aided as it was by all the reviving and elevating emotions peculiar to a beautiful May morning, there was to me something very imposing, soothing, and impressive in this matinal display of choral harmony. I find, on inquiry, that this is an annual practice, and that the object, excellent

and appropriate in itself, is to supplicate a blessing on the various productions of the earth, as they now hasten towards maturity. In how many of the popish ceremonies do we encounter this species of incongruous aggregation—a substratum of profound devotional purpose in the original intention, but so overlaid with a mass of superstitious and heretical appendages, as to hide the primitive design almost entirely from the view—a vein of gold running under ground, but incrusted in the progress of ages, and through the ceaseless action of the muddy torrents of human pride and sensuality, with such a coating of corrupt and pestilential alluvium, as impregnates the surrounding atmosphere with the elements of sickliness and death.

But it is the Fête of Ascension on the 16th, to which I was now going more particularly to allude. We had been informed by our Catholic servant, that on this day there was to be a grand procession. We were therefore prepared at an early hour to meet the pageant. It was composed of all the priests of the town and neighbourhood, amounting probably to forty or fifty, in their clerical robes, and ranged according to their respective grades of seniority or dignity. They were accompanied by a party of boys, also dressed in white surplices and each carrying a censer filled with burning incense. These functionaries were followed by a considerable crowd of persons, principally, however, females and

children belonging to the lower class of society. The whole multitude moved in this order through all the principal streets—the boys who carried the incense, turning round at the corner of every street and flinging around them copious volumes of this odious vapour. The morale of this ceremony, I understand, is, that this smoke is to purify the street from any spiritual contamination, which may have been generated in it. After the whole town had been thus perambulated—the priests, and some of the people, still chanting appropriate anthems—we joined the procession at the Plâce and accompanied it to the principal church—that of St. Gervaise, where grand mass was celebrated. At one stage of the service a basket of flowers, intermingled with bread, severally blessed by the priests, was handed about for sale. I bought a couple of flowers—the produce of the sale, I presume, was for the benefit of the poor. One of the silliest, among many very silly and absurd things in this piece of pantomime, was surely that of lighting an immense number of tapers in the church amidst the broad light of a fine summer's day—kindled up, as it were, in mockery of the glorious orb, which was in the mean while illumining the wide arch of heaven with his rays. What, indeed, is this incongruity, but an emblem of the whole system? Equally preposterous and unmeaning are the columns of smoke scattered on this and similar occasions. You remember the somewhat con-

temptuous, but not inappropriate expression of Bishop Horsley, in reference to those christian divines, who treat their hearers with dissertations on heathen morality, unsupported by evangelical truth, and are hence described by that prelate as "Apes of Epictetus." I confess that when I have seen popish priests swinging about a smoking censer, I could not help regarding them with perhaps still greater reason as "Apes of Aaron."

On the 9th of June, we had another of these exhibitions, called the "Fête Dieu,"—considered, I believe, as one of the most imposing and important in the whole course of the year; and simply assuming the truth of the doctrine of transubstantiation, which one of the most eloquent of British protestant statesmen a few years ago asserted, with much gravity, to be so very similar to that of our own church on the subject as to be hardly worth opposing, it would certainly be justly so considered. But viewing that piece of mixed impiety and absurdity in the light of scripture, common sense, and of the real principles of the Church of England, I could not regard the whole scene otherwise, than as in a high degree blasphemous and idolatrous. The peculiar and characteristic appendage of this fête, was, that a long line of white sheets was spread before almost every house through all the streets, most of them embellished with a rich display of flowers. If you were a stranger to these mummeries, you

would be shocked to learn that the avowed object of these sheets is to hide the rubbish and other unseemly sights of the shops and private houses from the view of the Deity as he passes by in the form of the consecrated wafer. I cannot very easily express the horror, indignation, and abhorrence, which I felt, when my little boy asked our catholic servant that morning, why the sheets were nailed in that manner before the houses, and she replied with perfect simplicity, that it was because God Almighty was presently to be carried along that way. I could hardly reconcile myself to the idea, that not only such notions, but even such a practical exhibition of such notions could prevail in a land, where certainly it is not through want of liberty that the streams of celestial truth do not overflow its whole length and breadth, and sweep before them such disgusting and blasphemous puerilities. Under the influence of the strong feeling with which I regarded the whole of this scene, I could not help defining the system of popery, properly so called, in my next address to my little audience, "A white sheet spread over the Devil's work-shop." If one could have divested himself of his religious feelings and principles on this day, however, and contemplated the whole as a mere display of holiday embellishment in honour of the imaginary goddess Flora, it must be acknowledged that it was calculated to afford much gratification and delight. The

streets in many places were literally strewed with flowers and garlands of the most beautiful and elegant description. At certain points there were rich and variegated arches thrown across the streets. In a little narrow street just above the Calvaire there was a most splendid "Reposoir" —a kind of platform with several steps all covered with fine cloth and richly adorned with festoons in the form of regal diadems. In front was the following inscription, in letters blazing like burnished gold.—

> "Cantibus acclines, gratum testemur amorem
> Sanctaque testemur gaudia, Christus adest."

About 10 o'clock, the procession passed across the Calvaire. On each side of the street there was an immense line of boys, prostrate on their knees before the procession came up. The priests all moved in front; and just behind the rest the senior priest—being the Bishop's vicar general—a venerable looking old man, who sought an asylum in England, and lived there some time after the breaking out of the first Revolution, moved forward under a rich and splendidly adorned canopy of a square form, bearing in his hands the little box containing the wafer now supposed to be transformed into a God! The rear was brought up by a train of boys scattering flowers as they advanced. During this ceremony as well as on some similar occasions, I confess, I experienced some conflicts between curiosity and

conscience. Those who lined the streets or accompanied this pageant in its movements, were expected, as a matter of devotion, or at least of conventional propriety, to uncover themselves. In times past indeed, and even now in some countries, it would have been dangerous to do otherwise. But I felt a scruple on the subject. On the one hand, I felt it to be improper, in the mere gratification of curiosity, to insult the feelings of the people and still more of the priests, by a conduct which would necessarily strike them as affronting, if not impious. On the other hand, as Addison somewhere says, that he would not sacrifice his creed to his latinity, so I did not feel it to be quite right even to appear to sacrifice my principles as an act of homage, of politeness, or expediency, and to bear the most indirect part in what I could not view otherwise than as one of the most blasphemous mockeries, which superstition has ever palmed on the ignorance and credulity of mankind. I am in frequent difficulties on this score, and I have found it by no means easy to satisfy conflicting emotions without abandoning such scenes altogether. But I must have done with such fêtes, which would scarcely deserve so much notice, if they had not been raised by the Romish church to a rank coordinate with, and even in some respects superior to the sabbath itself.

The next event, which I shall briefly notice, is the celebration of the three immortal days of

July, as they are generally denominated. These days, which witnessed the sanguinary struggle which was carried on between the handful of soldiers employed by Charles X. in defence of his far-famed ordinances, and the populace of Paris, are regarded by the Liberals of France as a kind of political Saints' days. There is a royal order issued annually at this season, requiring the clergy to celebrate mass in the churches for the repose of the souls of those who fell in this conflict; and I confess I can hardly conceive anything more revolting—anything more insulting to the well-known principles and feelings of the French clergy than this service—a service, in which they are called on to witness the vaunting exhibition, within the walls of their churches, of the various insignia of triumph over a cause and a system of government, which they consider as identified not only with their avowed opinions, but with the best interests of the religion they profess. They are required on pain, probably of forfeiting their salaries, to embalm, as it were, with the affectionate prayers of the church, those, whom they can only view as the bitterest enemies of that church and of all legitimate government. On political grounds, I give no opinion respecting those unfortunate victims of civil discord. Whether they are to be regarded as heroes or ruffians—martyrs or criminals, it is not for me to say. There is no

doubt that the Edicts, against which they rose, were tyrannical and illegal, and that the nation was entitled to meet them with constitutional resistance; but however just and legitimate may have been the principle of the revolution which overthrew once more the government of the long and illustrious line of the house of Capet, and established the present dynasty, there is no question respecting the light in which it is regarded by the great mass of the clergy in this country, and it must certainly be considered as not a little degrading to their character, as offering something like a gratuitous outrage to their feelings, to employ them as so many mercenary mourners on these occasions, and to oblige them to chant their ecclesiastical Nænia over the tombs of these mortal enemies of their "realm and race."

The first notice I had of this grand festival, was from a printed handbill, announcing the banquet, with which it was to be celebrated, and bearing the signature of the Mayor. You may easily imagine, that little document was not very sparing in the use of that figure called hyperbole. Judging from the language employed to denote the achievements of the heroes of July, we should be led to expect, that on the page of future history, Leonidas and his 300—Miltiades and his patriotic band—Themistocles and his wooden walls—and the names of Thermopylæ, Marathon, and Salamis, will be inscribed in very minor and insignificant characters. The object

of it, however, was to announce that a grand banquet would be celebrated in a public place, called the Jardin Evéché, in honour of these unparalleled achievements; and what day do you suppose was selected for this tumultuous and obstreperous carnival? Knowing the habits of the country, you will at once reply, and rightly reply, that it was no other than the sabbath, which happened to be one of the three days. The appointed place was garnished with every species of gaudy, but for the most part tri-coloured exhibitions; and I understand that, about 400 persons, principally of the lower class of society, dined there, and sung and spouted to their hearts content on this holy day. In the evening I walked out and was shocked by the scenes of disgraceful intoxication, which the streets presented at almost every step. The irregularity on this occasion was greatly increased by one of those unseemly merry-meetings—somewhat resembling our wakes—called an "Assemblé," which was held on the same afternoon at a neigbouring village. As I witnessed these scenes, I could not help saying to myself, "After this, let no one talk to me of the sobriety of the French people and of their innocent mode of spending the sabbath." It must be conceded, however, that this was an extraordinary occasion, and it is probable that the celebration of similar orgies in England, would have been attended with still more of gross and brutal excess. Of

the state of morals generally in this place and neighbourhood, I think it may be fairly described as a species of "Juste Milieu;" neither rising so high as among that large and influential class in our own country, whose conduct makes at least some approximation to a level with the high and holy principles of the religion which they profess; nor sinking quite so low in the scale as among those, in whom the depravity of corrupt nature is aided by the effort necessary to resist the effects of the light by which they are surrounded. We have here a specimen of what a sense of honour —a general prevalence of social courtesy and the pride of national refinement, combined with the influence of christianity operating through the depressing and frequently perverting agency of popery, is capable of effecting. But the standard, composed of these materials and upheld by these principles, while it is further strengthened by a most admirable and well-directed system of police, though it serves as a tolerably effectual barrier against the crimes of gross brutality and violence, affords abundant scope for the indulgence of the sensual and less revolting passions. The generality of the French, so far as I have had an opportunity of judging, are men of decorous and fashionable—not of christian morals. The national character may present to the superficial and indiscriminating eye, a structure of fair and goodly exterior, but if the chambers of imagery were to be inspected, I fear that the moral furni-

ture, for the most part, would be of a very indifferent description. "Content to dwell in decencies for ever,"—the inhabitants of this country, in general, seem to have as little notion or desire of rising to the lofty purity and spirituality enjoined by the gospel of Christ, as they are above those savage and grovelling vices, which are incompatible with the habits of refined and civilized society. When there is any disposition to elevate the mind and character above the ordinary and conventional level, instead of finding its element in the exercise of those graces and in the zealous discharge of those duties, which are adapted to the present blended and complex condition of human existence, and thus directing the glowing energies of the love of Christ shed abroad in the heart to the promotion of all that is holy and beneficent in the designs of the Eternal; it too frequently leads its subject to abandon the scenes of useful and strenuous exertion—to retire from the arena of salutary conflict—to assume the garb of the meditative recluse, and to hide the talents, which might have been profitably expended in the cultivation and improvement of the ample territory, desolated by sin and sorrow, within the solitude of some cloistered retreat.

Of this grievous perversion of christian feeling—supposing it to be, as it doubtless frequently is, the commanding motive of such conduct—I shall now proceed to give you a striking example,

which has recently fallen under my own personal observation. On the 6th instant we had an opportunity of witnessing the curious and affecting ceremony of four young females taking the veil in a convent still existing in this place. These institutions were utterly destroyed at the revolution—their revenues seized—their edifices demolished, or converted to other uses, and their inmates either murdered or dispersed. But subsequently they have been in some degree restored, and there are, I believe, few towns of any size at this time in France, where there is not an establishment of this description, conducted, however, on a much milder and less rigid plan than under the old regime. The rite of public admission into this sisterhood, was so entirely new to me, that when I heard of its being about to take place, I felt a considerable eagerness to see it. And as it is possible that you, and those around you, may not have had an opportunity of witnessing this imposing ceremonial, I wish I could give you a more vivid delineation of it than I am capable of affording. But I was never good at a scene, as the author of that philosophical romance, called Tremaine, frequently remarks in apology for the dryness of his descriptions. I must, therefore, content myself with a simple statement of such circumstances, observed on this occasion, as my memory can accurately recall.

On the morning appointed for this important

event, we hastened to the spot, and arrived at the door of the convent chapel as early as eight o'clock. The ceremony did not commence however, till considerably past nine. The chapel of the institution was divided into two parts, separated by a grille, or kind of iron railwork. Beyond this partition, no persons, except those belonging to the convent, were allowed to pass. The inner sanctuary was occupied by the nuns, attired in the dress with which they contrive to disfigure, and almost entirely to hide their persons; and by the little girls belonging to the school which they keep, all dressed in white, each with a basket of flowers suspended from her neck, and a tiara of the same materials, tastefully inwreathing their heads. These elegant little creatures were thus ornamented in order to represent the angels. Soon after nine the service commenced with singing, —the nuns all walking slowly round their division of the chapel, and chanting as they moved, with large lighted tapers in their hands. The priests in the meanwhile stood by the altar, at the other end of the chapel. The four candidates for the veil stood facing the congregation—just opposite the passage, between the two portions of the chapel. Two of them were of a respectable rank in society, and appeared to be from twenty to twenty-five years of age. They were both dressed in full bridal attire; and one of them was certainly a fine young woman. She appeared to be in the enjoyment of high health and spirits—looking per-

fectly cheerful, though there was nothing light or trifling in her demeanour. The two other females belonged to the lower class of society, and were not so interesting in their appearance. Within a short time, the senior officiating priest approached towards the door, and presented each of them with a large wax candle, which they reverently held before them. After mass had been celebrated, the chaplain of the convent, a Mons. Dubois, mounted the pulpit, and with very considerable fluency and force delivered a discourse appropriate to the occasion. He had no book or notes of any kind before him. Having commenced with a few general remarks, bearing on the subject, he selected for his text the account of our Saviour's transfiguration. I acknowledge I was a good deal shocked at the manner in which he proceeded to compare our adorable Redeemer's change of appearance, when the celestial radiance glowed on his countenance, with that which these deluded young women were about to undergo. He assured these—his chères soeurs however, that it was the Holy Spirit alone, who could have excited in them the desire thus to devote themselves to the Lord, and frequently exclaimed, in a kind of oratorical rapture,—"Changement sublime!" Having pointed out to them the peculiar dangers and difficulties incident to the honourable condition which they had chosen, the preacher forcibly exhibited to their view, the consolations

and supports, which they were entitled to expect, and the ecstatic joys which they would often experience amidst the aspirations of their secret orisons. He then directed his address to the worldly part of his audience, and depicted with great force, the trials, temptations, and miseries, attendant on a life of secularity and earthly occupation. At this part of his discourse he repelled, or attempted to repel, with vehement indignation, the "calumnies" heaped on these institutions, and took occasion to pour out a somewhat violent philippic against those who had abandoned the unity of the church, alleging that Christ had established but *one church*—not two or more churches, and therefore that they who refused to listen to *the* church, refused to listen to Christ himself. This discourse, which, with a considerable proportion of Romish infusion, really contained much excellent matter, concluded with an earnest appeal to the audience, that they would advance towards heaven with fidelity and perseverance—frequently reiterating the spirit-stirring exhortation, "Marchons avec le flambeau de la foi—avec le flambeau de l'eternité." These flambeaux, I presume, had reference to the numberless blazing torches with which the sun was aided in giving us light on this fine summer's day.

After the sermon was over, the four candidates were successively conducted by the abbess to the senior priest, at the door of the inner chapel,

when he questioned each of them, according to the appointed form—asking them first—"Ma fille, que demandez vous?" When the candidate had suitably replied to this question, he proceeded to demand of her the usual vows of—chastity—poverty—deadness to the world—conformity to the rules of the house, &c. When all had taken the vows, they retired, and exchanged their white bridal dresses for the proper professional costume. In the meantime the priests were employed in consecrating and blessing the veils and other articles, which I shall not attempt to name, forming, however, different parts of these vestal habiliments. When the candidates returned, arrayed in their new attire, it was quite astonishing to observe the complete transformation, which they seemed to have undergone. But I thought it anything but a "changement sublime." The white veil was then put on them, and a leathern girdle fastened around their waist by some of the sisterhood, in the presence of the audience. When these matters had been arranged, the four new nuns simultaneously threw themselves prostrate on the ground, with their faces downward, and their arms spread out at full length. Here they lay for some time, perfectly still and motionless—while twelve little personified angels, already mentioned, walked around them, strewing them all over with flowers, and the other nuns were chanting a sweet and plaintive melody. This was the ceremony of

being buried to the world! But I fear that old Adam was not to be thus smothered by flowers. To use an expression of a late extraordinary friend of ours, he was "only buried alive"—soon to rise again, possibly like another Antæus with renewed vigour, from coming thus in contact with his mother earth. Perhaps, indeed, he was never more actively alive—it is probable that his ear was never more charmed than with the echoes of the funeral dirge chanted over him—that he was never more delightfully regaled than with the fragrant rose-buds, which fell so lightly over his frame, as he lay under this process of mock-sepulture. After they had lain for some time in this death-like position—only one of them appeared to me to evince any signs of life by some little restlessness—they all started up—shook off their odoriferous burden, and after a little more singing, the new nuns went round and cordially embraced each of the sisters in succession. This was the conclusion of the ceremony, and the company retired—each individual occupied with such thoughts and feelings as his previous habits, and the general cast of his character would, in connection with such an imposing ceremonial naturally suggest. My own, with some mixture of satisfied curiosity, inclined to pensive and melancholy reflection; directed to this channel, as well by the deplorable recollections associated with this wretched appendage of the papal system, as in some degree, by the loud

sobs of the mother of the most interesting of these four sad victims of mistaken piety. This female stood close to me during the ceremony, and appeared very deeply to feel this act of voluntary seclusion on the part of her daughter. It should be observed, however, that no young person can now be put into this state of ecclesiastical imprisonment against the will of her parents, and the inmates have the option of leaving the institution at the end of one year and a day from the time of their taking the white veil. If, after this probationary period, they proceed to take the black veil, it is an intimation that they never mean to leave the establishment. Since the great revolution, however, they have a legal right to leave when they please. Not very long since, one of these runaways came to this place, and called on a protestant gentleman—a friend of mine. She was apparently in a state of partial derangement, as her avowed object was to obtain information on the subject of her projected marriage. Such instances are, however, very rare, and I do not think that in this country any oppressive or compulsory methods are employed to detain those who are desirous of regaining their liberty.

The state of education, especially among the middling and higher classes of society, must always be a subject deeply interesting to those who would contemplate the moral and political phenomena of any country, and from a survey of

these objects would form an estimate of its present condition, and future prospects. On another occasion, when additional time and opportunity may have enabled me somewhat to extend my observations and inquiries, I may probably give you a brief account of the result. In the meantime you will, perhaps, be a little interested with the description of a rather imposing ceremony, which a few days since I witnessed in connection with the general question of education. As a preliminary remark it may be observed that, in France, education is by no means placed on the footing of a free trade. It was one of Napoleon's most effective strokes of state policy to centralize and control, and thus to modify to his own views and wishes, the instruction of youth, by reducing all the schools of learning throughout the kingdom, to a dependence on the University of Paris. In acknowledgment of this dependence, every pupil in the provincial colleges, which are somewhat similar to our public schools, is obliged to pay a certain sum annually for the benefit of the University, and no one is allowed to open a private seminary on any scale without a regular authorization from this body. Under the restoration, the heads of these institutions were, I believe, universally Romish priests. But when the last revolution broke out, expecting, or at least hoping, that the dynasty of Louis Philippe would be of ephemeral duration, and that the

sovereignty would soon be re-established in the legitimate line, these personages refused the oath of allegiance, which they have since greatly regretted. They were consequently displaced, and were succeeded by laymen of a liberal, and, in very many cases, I fear, of a sceptical cast of thought. In these colleges it is the practice, at the breaking up for the long summer vacation, to have a public distribution of prizes. This ceremony took place in the college belonging to this place, on the 12th of the present month.

On the morning of that day we went to a public breakfast, given by an English gentleman, in a most beautiful and romantic spot, within about half a mile of the town, where there is a powerful mineral spring, and where the French are accustomed to meet in large numbers, during the summer season, early in the morning, for the purpose of dancing, after they have taken liberal potations from the spring. This amusement was pursued on this occasion for a considerable time, under a fine umbrageous canopy of trees; and when a lady, judging, I presume, from something in my physiognomy, that I was rather jealous of this recreation, asked me whether I thought there was any harm in dancing, I replied that if it was always practised before breakfast, and in the open air, with only a glass of water to exhilarate the spirits, it would certainly very much alter the question. A little after one o'clock we hastened towards the college, where the annual

prizes were to be distributed. At the lower end of the quadrangle there was a large platform erected, surmounted by a lofty canopy, bearing in conspicuous characters the inscription—"A l' emulation." At two o'clock I was admitted to a seat under this canopy, and within a few minutes the civic authorities, accompanied by a large detachment of the national guards in their respective uniforms, advanced through the crowd with a full chorus of military music. The business of the day commenced with a long and, so far as I could judge, well-written dissertation on the general plan of education pursued at the college, from one of the junior professors, who were all arrayed in the proper professional costume. This was followed by another similar address from the mayor's premier adjoint, an advocate, who represented his worship on this occasion. This oration was extremely well read, but was abundantly saturated with the spirit now dominant in France—that of a wild enthusiasm about liberty and the rights of men. Proud derision directed against the fallen Colossus of despotism—the sovereignty of the people as the basis of national education—these and other analogous topics constituted the chief seasoning of this civic address. Such rhapsody, to say the least, was very much out of taste on such an occasion, as the mortified countenances of the ecclesiastical functionaries and other friends of the fallen dynasty, by whom this frothy lawyer was surrounded, abundantly

testified. The dissertation of the premier adjoint, however, who is understood to belong to what in England would be called the low radical class of politicians, was not without some pleasing remarks on the influence of education, with respect to the domestic habits of youth. When this was over, the process of distribution commenced. One of the professors called in succession the names of the pupils, who presented a curious medley of all classes, from the cobler to the noble—if France can exhibit anything, which, in respect of rank and property, can be called noble—and of all ages, from ten to thirty and upwards. Those, to whom prizes had been awarded, amounted to forty or fifty in number. The boys, who were called, came forward in succession, and some gentleman—generally some relative or friend, took up a green chaplet of the usual diameter of the human head, wreathed with flowers, and having kissed both his cheeks, placed this "crown" on his head, and one or two prize books in his hand, after which the youth retired amidst a loud flourish of drums from the band of the national guard. This was the first honor, and some boys had two or three of these crowns. The second was simply a laurel branch, presented with the same ceremony, and was characterized by the term "accessit"—intimating that the bearer approached towards excellence. The whole of this scene, which lasted till five o'clock, appeared to me peculiarly

characteristic, and as it combined, in a remarkable manner, the recollections of classical antiquity, with all the petitesse of Gallic vanity, it presented a strange mixture of the sublime and ridiculous. I believe, however, that this annual exhibition operates with considerable effect in maintaining a spirit of emulation, and so far as this spirit is admissible into a system of christian education, it must be allowed to produce a salutary effect.—For the present I must conclude my remarks, and if I am able to procure an adequate supply of materials, I shall probably at no very distant period forward you another series of First Impressions. Few impressions, however, can be more deeply engraven on my mind than that, with which I am

&c. &c. &c.

LETTER III.

Avranches, December 16, 1833.

My Dear Friend,

To contract an obligation with the future, especially when the engagement appears to involve the communication of facts or sentiments not altogether devoid of interest, independently of all the uncertainties of life, and health, and opportunity, is an arduous and responsible undertaking. When I first conceived the idea of forwarding you something like a periodical record of the events, which might fall under my notice during our sojourn in this country, and of the primary impressions to which they might give rise, I was not fully conscious of the difficulty of accomplishing such a plan in a manner that could be at all satisfactory, useful, or entertaining. When my last letter was concluded, I had spent nearly four months on this spot, and appeared to myself to have surveyed with some care, the moral and physical scenery with which

I was surrounded. I began therefore to be apprehensive that my materials were now exhausted. Like a young clergyman I once knew, who, after he had finished his first sermon, containing as he conceived, a comprehensive, if not a complete view of all the great principles of the evangelical system, was almost in despair of ever being able to produce another; I began to fear that my resources were now at an end, and that if I attempted to indite another letter, it would only be an insipid chronicle of a species of mental meteorology—a dull and monotonous iteration of the same phenomena, without variety and without incident. I had no desire indeed, that the "otium" for which I had so long sighed, and which I had come here mainly to enjoy, should be disturbed by political convulsion for the mere sake of diversifying the pages of my journal with the record of it; and the aspect of ecclesiastical and religious matters seemed to be too stagnant and quiescent, or at least to be too steadily rolling in the channel of its fixed and established course, to render it probable that any powerful and salutary re-action would very speedily offer itself to view. Between that date and the present, however, several circumstances have occurred, which, though not very remarkable in themselves, you will perhaps not regard as altogether unworthy of notice in a familiar communication, such as I profess to make. But, even though these letters should

be more meagre of information and more destitute of interest than, as coming from one who is still comparatively a stranger in a foreign land, they might be naturally expected to be. I find at least one benefit attending the preparation of them, that they lead me to observe with somewhat greater closeness the moral phenomena, which fall under my notice, and to watch the impressions with which they are attended, with rather more vigilance than I should otherwise perhaps have been inclined to do. This, if I recollect aright, is the chief advantage which one of the most distinguished writers of the present, or, indeed, of any former age, represents as connected with the habit of a "man's writing memoirs of himself." Mr. Foster, indeed, would have his self-memorialist to record his feelings and ideas as they successively evolve in his mind, principally for his own use, and therefore he expects him to enter into a somewhat minuter analysis of his emotions, than is consistent with the plan or the habits of one, who deems it more suitable in these brief sketches to catch the colour and complexion of passing events as they immediately present themselves to the eye, and thus provide materials for future reflection, than enter on processes of abstruse and complex inquiry in religion or philosophy, in morals or politics.

In prosecution of this plan, I now proceed to give you a brief account of a little circuitous tour

I took, very soon after the date of my last letter, embracing successively as the principal points of observation, Granville, Coutance, St. Lo, and Ville-Dieu, all towns of some importance in this department of Normandy. On Tuesday, August the 20th, I set out with my two young friends for Granville, situated about eighteen miles to the north of Avranches, and arrived there at ten o'clock in the morning. Granville is a sea-port town of considerable commercial wealth, and in time of war, deemed, I believe, valuable as a fortress of great strength. The greater part of the town is straggling and dirty, but it is a good deal frequented in the summer as a bathing place by the inhabitants of the neighbouring country. The most remarkable and interesting feature of the place, is an immense and elevated platform of solid rock, on which a portion of the town is built, and the base of which is washed by the sea. At the beginning of the thirteenth century, there was only a small oratory, surrounded by a few houses erected on this huge promontory. The Lordship of this place was granted by Philip Augustus to the Marquis of Gratot, by one of whose descendants it was transferred, in the year fourteen hundred and thirty-nine, to an English nobleman. On this, it was seized by our Henry VI. by whom it was strongly fortified. After the abandonment of Normandy by the English, it underwent a variety of demolitions and repairs. In the wars of the great French revolution, it

became remarkable for a vigorous but unsuccessful attempt of the last fragments of the heroic Vendean army to take possession of it. The day I spent in this place was distinguished by nothing, but by a most gross and wanton piece of imposition practised upon us by the proprietor of the Diligence, running between this place and Avranches. We had taken places and paid half the fare for the return of a portion of the party, which accompanied us; but on meeting the vehicle, we found it completely filled, and the places were not only lost, but the proprietor refused to restore the money. Having in vain remonstrated at the office, we went to the Juge de paix. He with much politesse declined acting, as it was a case out of his jurisdiction, and referred us to the President of the Board of Commerce. To the Board of Commerce we went, full of honest English indignation, and I asked Mr. President, what sort of justice he would be pleased to give us. He replied, with great suavity, that there was the same justice for "tout le monde," but that this was a case out of his functions. I mention this instance of vexatious shuffling, not on account of its inherent importance, for as a pecuniary matter it was but a trifle; but, as an illustration, not only of the want of honest principle on the part of a public servant, but of the decided indisposition of official persons—an indisposition, which, I believe, occasionally manifests itself in matters of greater

importance—to take up the cause of a foreigner against a native. National antipathy has unquestionably diminished to a very great extent, in the course of a few years past, but, it is more than can be expected that, after such a long and sanguinary struggle, terminating to the mortification of the most prominent feeling of the French character, it should at once totally disappear. The sympathy, by which the two nations are now carried forward in the pursuit of the same general line of policy, has certainly done much to obliterate past recollections, and to heal the wounds which had been inflicted on the field of honour. I am convinced, however, that nothing but the soothing and tranquillizing influence of true religion, can ever produce a solid and permanent friendship, and form a bond of union stronger than political sympathy can cement, between countries, which have long been contemplated under the revolting aspect of natural enemies.

On the morning of the next day, we set off for Coutance in a small voiture, capable of holding just six persons. For companions, we had one plump good-tempered Frenchman—an extensive proprietor of vines from a remote part of the country; and another gentleman and his daughter, whom I soon recognized, by their dialect, as belonging to my own country. Interested and pleased by this unexpected rencontre, I maintained perfect silence for some time, in order to witness a more unreserved disclosure of my

countryman's views and feelings, on any subject that might be introduced. I soon discovered that there was a very high degree of sympathy between my French and English companions in their political opinions. The former, was an adherent of the *extréme gauche* in the circle of French politics, and declaimed with great warmth against Louis Philippe and his ministers. The latter, evidently, approached to radicalism in his general opinions, and manifested the most decided hostility to our ecclesiastical establishment, as now constituted. In his religious opinions, he appeared to be what is usually called a Unitarian; and the young lady joined her papa, very cordially, in the most unmeasured charges against the English clergy—declaring them to be a most worthless order of men—incomparably worse, even, than the popish priests. I endured all this, as long as I could with any patience, but at last, like Addison at the university, and contrary, as you know, to my usual habit, having distinguished myself for a long time by profound taciturnity, I felt bound to break silence. Having discovered that I was a countryman of theirs, and shrewdly guessing that I was one who felt some sympathy with my calumniated "order," it was curious to observe the look of modest bashfulness, somewhat approaching to foolishness, with which the young lady and her papa now began to smooth down their former asperity of remark. I felt obliged by this kind consideration, but could not help expressing some

surprise at the sweeping and unqualified condemnation which they had pronounced, on a class of men, with whom, it was now generally conceded, that the greatest proportion of the learning, and at least, a very large share of the talent, and piety, and moral excellency of the kingdom was identified. A friendly discussion ensued, and I found that my companion was by no means so much at home in fair argument, as when he had the matter all to himself. I found that, differently from the majority of modern dissenters, he did not so much object to the Church of England, as a national establishment, the expediency of which he was quite ready to concede, as to its Articles of subscription. When I reminded him, in opposition to the usual sophistry on this subject, that the Church of England, really differed nothing, in this respect, from other sects; all of which have, and must have, some test or other as an intelligible bond of union among its members; and that the apostate Arians of Geneva are at this moment enforcing their doctrinal test on their more evangelical brethren, with a rigour scarcely known in the Church of England; it is enough to say, that he had nothing to urge in reply, which seemed to be satisfactory even to himself. It gave me pleasure to be able sincerely to assure him, however, that while I firmly maintained the great principle of a scriptural and orthodox, but at the same time, tolerant establishment; I maintained, with as much firmness as he could possibly

do, the other great principle of the right of private judgment in matters of religion—the right of every man to be allowed to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience. In the course of our subsequent journey from Coutance to St. Lo, I discovered my intelligent, though somewhat heterodox companion, to be a respectable and well-known London tradesman, who had just been making the tour of the Loire.

The view of Coutance—resting on the brow of a rich and well-cultivated soil—presents a beautiful and striking coup d'œil as you approach it. On arriving we lost no time in visiting its celebrated cathedral, which is justly considered one of the finest and most beautiful in Europe. The Bishop's palace in its immediate vicinity, is a handsome and appropriate residence. Next to the cathedral, one of the finest and most interesting objects to me at Coutance was the Diocesan Seminary for the education of the priesthood. It is unquestionably an admirable part of the French system, that attached to every cathedral, as far as my information extends, there is an establishment of this description, for the express purpose of training up, by an appropriate course of professional education, all the clergy of the diocese; and it surely cannot be long before something is done to remedy the grievous, and almost intolerable defect of our own ecclesiastical system in this respect. I need not say that I feel assured of your entire concurrence in reference to this point.

I visited the Institution at Coutance, and was exceedingly struck with the suitableness of the accommodations, and the general excellency of the plan. It was vacation time, and no students or professors, with the exception of a few habitual residents, were now there. The number of students is about three hundred. They usually enter at the age of eighteen, and are admitted into orders at twenty-four. I could not, of course, ascertain much respecting the leading subjects of study, but I was informed that ecclesiastical history, polemical theology, and exercises in homiletic oratory formed very prominent parts of the system. Among the economical arrangements, that which struck me most was the scale on which cider was prepared for the use of the Institution. The machinery appeared to me quite stupendous. Some of the casks contained as much as eighteen tons; I could really compare them to nothing else than a species of cylindrical wooden houses. If Diogenes' celebrated tub resembled one of these cider casks, he certainly need have felt no want of accommodation.

Another object of great curiosity at Coutance is the remains of a Roman Aqueduct. This must have been once a most magnificent structure. I counted eleven arches yet remaining. Its source is supposed to have been a spring still existing in the court of the house now belonging to the sous-prefêt of the Arrondissement, about half a mile out of the town. We walked to this

spot with the hope of seeing the retreat of the gentle Naiad, who had been accustomed to pour the stream of her pure and salubrious bounty along this lofty canal. When we rang the bell at the gate, a young woman came out, who in reply to our inquiry respecting this "fons Blandusiæ," remarked with great simplicity, that she was sorry the cook was from home, who, she had no doubt, would have been able to give us any information on the subject.

On the following morning we renewed our visit to the Cathedral, and were still more struck with its beauty and majestic symmetry. Just over the sounding board of its fine pulpit, was an angel with outspread wings, blowing a trumpet—a most significant and appropriate emblem!—Would that its sublime import was more fully and correctly realized beneath that rich and hallowed canopy! On our way back I called at a small bookseller's, who informed me, that besides a few English, there were only two other protestant families in the place. One of these was that of a Swiss confectioner, on whom I called. He told me that he was accustomed to attend the preaching of a Wesleyan minister from Jersey, who generally had a service here every Sunday. He said, however, that he could not altogether agree with this gentleman, as he wished him to shut his shop on the Sunday. He showed me a fine copy of the bible in French and German, the latter being his native language. He appeared

to be a sensible and amiable man, but evidently had very obscure views of religion.

After breakfast, accompanied by my London friend and his daughter, we set off for St. Lo—the chief place of the department—and reached it early in the afternoon. Here we visited a very fine and sequestered piece of burying-ground, which contains some beautiful monuments with very touching and affectionate inscriptions. We then examined the churches of St. Peter, and Notre Dame. The latter is a large, though irregular structure. The most remarkable appendage belonging to it, is a large pulpit attached to the wall on the outside, surmounted by a rich and gorgeous canopy. From this commodious rostrum the clergy were, in time past, doubtless, accustomed to address the people in the open air, as Bishop Hall and others were once in the habit of preaching to the assembled Londoners at St. Paul's cross. I have been informed—you are, of course, aware whether it be a fact—that there is a pulpit of this kind attached to the outer wall of the cathedral church of Chester at this day. It would be a remarkable sight to see the accomplished and pious chancellor, or the learned and devout bishop of the diocese—as may have once been the case—addressing an attentive throng from this elevated position. In the afternoon I took a walk along a most beautiful and romantic glen, watered by the river Vire, which winds in

a north eastern direction from this ancient and venerable little town.

The next stage in our course homeward, was the small country town of Ville-Dieu—celebrated from time immemorial, for the manufacture of every species of brass and copper work. The town bears every appearance of being exceedingly ancient, and for a succession of centuries, and in spite of all the changes and revolutions which have swept over the face of this country, it has retained its staple manufacture in all its exclusive vigor to this day. Nearly three hundred years ago, it is amusingly remarked by Bourgeville, that most of the inhabitants are workers in metal, and that they are annoyed when any one asks them the hour of the day, as it is impossible they should ever hear a clock strike. In truth, the scene is singularly striking from the one universal clatter of perhaps three hundred hammers descending at the same instant, upon some mass of hoarse resounding brass. I mounted the sloping hill, which skirts the town, in order to enjoy the rough music of these countless Tubal-Cains, and I could hardly conceive a greater noise would be produced, if Vulcan and his host had been employed in manufacturing new suits of armour for all the warriors in Europe. It is a remarkable combination of labour, that while the men, with few exceptions, are engaged in the fabrication of every species of utensil in brass and other metal, the women are almost universally employed in the manufacture

of rich and delicate lace. In religion and morals, I fear, the place affords very little which it can give any pleasure to contemplate. In the course of the same day I returned, through divine protection and care, to the spot which I had left, delighted with much that I had seen, but grieved that the intellectual and moral should be so little in unison with the rich and variegated physical scenery, which had marked every step of our little tour.

On the 30th of the same month—a few days after our return from the little excursion of which I have just given an account, we had an opportunity of witnessing a scene of very considerable interest—a scene, which, for the time, in fact, threw the whole of this part of France into commotion. You will probably recollect that at this time Louis Philippe—the citizen king, visited the great naval arsenal of Cherbourg. On his way thither, he was prevailed on to make a detour—in order to honour the loyal inhabitants of Granville with his presence for a few hours.

This was considered by all an event of no ordinary occurrence, and I was myself not without some desire to see a man, who, though not distinguished by any very extraordinary intellectual endowments, had undergone such wonderful reverses of fortune—commencing his career, if I may so speak—with the bloody baptism of the revolution, in which his father, from being the "mob-executioner of to-day, became

the mob victim of to-morrow"—proceeding through successive stages of persecution, poverty and exile, and now occupying the proud position of the "king of the French." Through what varieties of untried being he is destined yet to pass, before he has reached the close of his earthly pilgrimage, it would probably baffle the skill of his illustrious diplomatist—the profound Talleyrand himself to conjecture with any certainty. But there can be no question, that he is a man of strong natural sense, and great firmness of purpose, and that he has hitherto kept down the revolutionary monster in spite of a restlessness of convulsive effort, and successive eruptions of fury and discontent, to which a man of less sagacious judgment, or more tremulous nerve, must long since have given way. As such I was desirous of seeing him, and of observing the manner in which he would be received by those whom he governed, though their pride will not allow them to acknowledge themselves as his subjects.

On the morning of the 13th, we set out for Granville, where his majesty was expected in the course of the day. By an arrangement, necessitated by the difficulty of procuring conveyances, we had for our companion on this journey, an elderly lady—the widow of an officer of high rank in our naval service. I had often heard that this personage was of a somewhat sceptical turn of mind, and, much against my wish, she appeared determined to give full scope

on this occasion, to her more than sceptical propensities, for the benefit, as it might be presumed, of the young persons who accompanied me. She began by expressing her surprise that human nature should prove so extremely depraved, as it too frequently evinced itself; and when I referred to the partial solution of the difficulty, which divine revelation affords, she somewhat broadly expressed her doubts, and in fact, maintained that nothing short of actual and ocular observation of the things asserted in the bible could command her assent to its statements. I asked her—"pray, madam, have you ever seen the king of France?" She replied in the negative;—and yet, I remarked, you believe his existence; and I will venture to affirm, on less varied and accumulated evidence you allow your conduct to be influenced by the belief of his coming on this day to the place where we propose to meet him; while you treat the awful announcement of the existence of God as stated in scripture, and of a future judgment, affirmed and authenticated by the most irrefragable proofs as unworthy of the slightest regard. She became in short, so profane and irreverent in her remarks, and evinced such credulity, or something still worse, in some ludicrous tales she repeated respecting the effect of religious opinions on her own friends and relatives, that I felt constrained to rebuke her with a severity, which, under other circumstances, would have been chargeable with rude-

ness, and concluded the discussion with declaring that, independently of higher considerations, after all which was exalted in genius, profound in science, and respectable in character, had yielded the homage of a cordial and combined attestation to the truth of christianity, it was high time that pert and shallow infidelity should hide its head and blush at the insolence and recklessness of its own unhallowed daring.

At eleven o'clock we arrived at Granville, and the town certainly presented a most lively and animating scene. As we descended along the heights, it seemed to be one vast mass of active and joyous hilarity. The tricolored flag floated gaily in the breeze, from the front of almost every house. Companies of national guards from every town, and village, and parish within twenty miles round were arriving in all directions—some arrayed in rich military uniforms with their officers at their head—others in their every-day dress, like so many poachers with their guns on their shoulders, not having yet made that proficiency under "the sergeant's care," in consequence of which the raw hero of "awkward gait and introverted toes," learns to stand erect, and changes his slouch into a walk. The peasant women in their clean holiday attire, and their huge white Norman caps moved to and fro through this crowded assemblage with all the light-hearted gaiety, which is so characteristic of their sex and nation. The view from the Cal-

vaire, on the summit of the rock, as the whole of this extensive platform seemed instinct with life and motion, was peculiarly striking and impressive. On one side of this bleak spot—a few hundred yards from the edge of the rock, a temporary ball-room and dining-room were erected for the reception of his majesty and suite. After some difficulty we were allowed to enter these short-lived habitations. The ball-room, in which it was fixed that there should be a grand assembly that night, was very tastefully arranged. Its sides were decorated with hearts inscribed with the names of the most celebrated French characters, embracing indiscriminately, philosophers, statesmen, heroes, and poets. Close to the royal canopy I was sorry to notice the name of Voltaire. The only ecclesiastic, whose name I observed among those, whom it was supposed that, on this occasion, the king would be delighted to honor, was Huet, Bishop of Avranches. As I walked along the verge of the rock and surveyed these frail tabernacles, I could not help remarking to a friend on the feebleness and fugitiveness of these works of man, compared with the lasting and massive solidity of the works of God, as suggested by this remarkable scene. Various carriages and couriers arrived in the course of the day, announcing that the king was on his way. The vastness and extent of the equipage of every description, with which his majesty travelled on this occasion, appeared to me perfectly enormous.

He took with him not only a vast number of servants and horses, but I was told that he was actually accompanied by a moving kitchen—every necessary culinary utensil forming a part of his multifarious baggage. I confess that such a boundless apparatus did appear to me a little more like that of an oriental piece of royalty than of a citizen king, who is represented by a French political writer [1] as having been raised to the throne principally on account of the simplicity of his manners—accustomed, before that event, to walk the streets of Paris with his umbrella in one hand, and the other ready to be held out to any of the bourgeois, whom he might happen to know. It was the amount, however, not the splendour of the equipage, which was remarkable. The very best of the carriages appeared to be nothing but a clumsy box, carried on wheels, scarcely equal to the meanest of our mail coaches. After very long and tedious waiting, during which the loyal multitude nearly lost their patience, it was announced that his majesty was rapidly approaching. Immediately about ten or a dozen horses, the chief of them belonging to some English gentlemen, who had come from Avranches, were dispatched to meet him, and between seven and eight o'clock, in company with his suite, all on horseback, his majesty entered the town, and was received amidst enthusiastic cheers, under a high triumphal arch,

[1] Cabet.

reared for the occasion, by the civil authorities, and national guards, by whom he was immediately escorted to the dining-room. About ten o'clock a most tremendous storm of wind and rain arose and continued all night. The company had scarcely assembled at the ball-room, and the king and his two sons had barely shewn their faces, when the whole tenement began to shake over their heads, and within a few minutes, hardly giving them time to escape, the whole was blown to pieces. Thus ended the gaieties of the festive dance, in which it was intended that many a sylph-like form should thread the maze of joyous revelry before the eye of royalty. When I heard of this catastrophe, I was forcibly reminded of the reflection, which had been suggested to my mind on the preceding afternoon.

There was one circumstance connected with the king's visit to Granville, which afforded me unfeigned satisfaction. A deputation from Cheffrêsne, a small protestant community, situated some miles distant, headed by the Baron de Pirch, waited on his majesty, with the view of urging their claims for a minister. His majesty most cordially received them, and assured them that if their case could be brought within the provisions of the charter, it would give him the greatest pleasure to comply with their wishes. Early the next day the king left Granville—presenting a considerable sum of money to the civil authorities, as an indemnity for the ex-

pences with which his visit had been necessarily attended.

In my last letter I gave a short account of the ceremony of taking the veil, by four young females, in the convent belonging to this place. One of these I mentioned as having something peculiarly interesting in her person, and general appearance, and as presenting altogether a superior air of health and vigour in her bearing, and of elegance in her bridal attire. Just on that day four weeks—it seems to myself almost like a melancholy incident in a romance, while I write it, but it is the simple fact—it was announced to us that a death had taken place in the convent on the day before, and that we might, if we chose, see a part of the ceremony of interment. We hastened to the place. On entering the chapel, we at once observed the corpse, dressed in the costume of a nun, reclining on a kind of bier in a half-sitting posture, just behind the iron railing, with the face towards the door—on the very spot where that day month the four candidates for the veil were stationed. Though the countenance bore the usual pallor of death, we all instantly recognized her as the very young lady to whom I have alluded. Just one month past we had seen her undergo on that identical spot of ground, the process of fictitious burial! She was now resting in the real stillness of death, in order to be carried out to her actual interment! The funeral service was performed by eight or ten priests. It con-

sisted almost entirely of singing, and appeared to me grievously and awfully unworthy of the occasion. Not a single word, in the form of consolation or admonition, was immediately addressed to the attendants. I could not help bitterly lamenting that such an important opportunity was lost, to press upon the consciences of those present, the uncertainty of life, as exhibited in this solemn spectacle, and all the awful verities connected with that fact. The scene forcibly recalled to my mind Robert Hall's description of Popery, as "religion lying in state, surrounded by the silent pomp of death." After the service was over, the corpse was carried out by the nuns, to be buried in the ground attached to the institution.

Of late, it has been frequently discussed, whether the Romish Church has undergone any real change in her character and spirit. This question appears to me to resolve itself entirely into a consideration of circumstances. That an infallible church, while she retains this pretension in all the fulness of its claims, should experience any change, is indeed an absurdity in thought, and a solecism in language; and I believe that wherever she is possessed of the power, she is as ready at this moment to give a practical demonstration of her maintenance of this notion, as at any former period in her history. In this country, however, this is the case only in a very partial and mitigated degree. The position of the Catholic religion in France, is in

fact, especially since the last revolution, of a very singular description. It is perhaps the most mortifying and humiliating of all others. Popery, in France, is barely maintained as one out of several other communities, equally favoured by the state; and enjoys at best, only the distinction of being the religion of the majority, and this for the most part, a cold and indifferent majority. She neither rides in the car of triumph, as in the palmy days of her long line of Capetian protectors, nor is she crushed under the wheels of a barbarous and bloody persecution, as in the days of Robespierre, during his brief reign of terror. She neither wears the insignia of victory, nor is she adorned with the martyr's crown. She thus neither assumes the haughty bearing of a stern and relentless domination, nor displays the elastic energy supplied by real or imaginary oppression. I do not now enter into the question of the anomaly, and even absurdity, of maintaining as stipendiaries of the state, as is done in this country, the teachers of so many forms of religion; not excluding even those of the hereditary blasphemers of the very name, and character, and office of the great founder of Christianity. My own opinion on this point has always been the same, and in this you will probably agree with me, that the duty of a christian government, is to maintain that form of religion, which, on the whole, it regards as most consonant with the records of inspiration, and to afford its subjects of every

denomination, unreserved liberty of conscience, so long as they confine themselves within the bounds of decency and propriety.

But while the Romish Church, in consequence of its peculiar position in this country, has laid aside all that is persecuting and overbearing, it has lost none of its eagerness for proselytism. She has changed her weapons indeed, in her warfare with alleged error, but she has lost none of her zeal. She no longer goeth forth in her full armour of anathemas and excommunications—of fiery darts and galling fetters. Her logic is now usually composed of milder arguments, but I am sorry to find that it does not always exclude a considerable share of chicanery and fraud from among its instrument. Before I arrived at this place, there had been two or three cases of female servants, owing, I have no doubt, in a great degree, to the want of suitable instruction and example, who were decoyed into a profession of popery. But a short time since, a very remarkable case of pseudo-conversion took place here in the person of a young lady of very respectable connections; and as the case appears to me to be one of considerable interest, I shall give you as briefly as I can, all the leading circumstances connected with it.

On the 7th of September, a lady, whom I had never seen before, called on me in company with a friend well known to me, and expressed a wish for a short interview. She appeared to be

greatly agitated, and, having stated who she was, told me that she had just found that her eldest daughter, a young lady of about seventeen, had gone without the knowledge of her parents to a catholic priest, and had actually been baptized by him. It appeared on inquiry, that this young person had been sent at a very early age to a catholic school, kept in a convent, and that very strong impressions had been made on her mind in favour of catholicism. She was subsequently influenced, in a considerable degree, by some young catholic friends with whom she had become acquainted. In the evening, at her mother's request, I met her at the house of a friend, and had a long conversation with her on the subject of the momentous step she had just taken. I found her, as I expected, exceedingly ill-informed on the great doctrines and principles of protestantism. What appeared to have influenced her in a great measure, was, that protestants acknowledge that catholics *may* be saved, while, if the catholic be right, the protestant cannot be saved. She therefore had chosen, as she expressed it, at least the safest side. She had also been impressed with the difference she had observed in the conduct of the two parties. The catholics, in many cases which had fallen under her observation, were full of zeal and ardour for their religion—the protestants in general cold and indifferent to theirs. In the course of conversation, I requested her to point out to me, some of the distinguishing tenets of

the catholic faith, which had made the deepest impression on her mind. She specified that of the real presence, and adduced the usual expression, "This is my body:" I remarked in reply, that, speaking with reverence on a subject so sacred and awful, with reference to a term so evidently and palpably figurative, she had the same ground to believe that our blessed Saviour's body was changed into brick and mortar, because he had spoken of it under the figure of a temple, "Destroy this temple." She mentioned also, that of praying for the dead, for which she could advance no scriptural proof whatever, and therefore required no answer. We then went, successively, but of course very superficially, through the questions of purgatory, the refusal of the cup to the laity, and the celebration of divine worship in an unknown tongue; for which the subtilest controversialist has never pretended that he could produce any scriptural warrant; and therefore, it can be no matter of surprise, that a young lady of seventeen, who was yet but a novice, should not attempt to argue in their defence. When we had disposed of these questions, I requested her to mention any peculiar doctrine or practice of the protestant church, of which she disapproved; she specified none. In the course of the afternoon, I had learnt that her baptism had taken place several weeks, if not months, before. After frequent interviews with the priest, without the knowledge of her parents, for the purpose of

receiving his instructions, he at last arranged that she should attend at the church, as early as four o'clock in the morning, in order to receive baptism, which accordingly took place. A catholic servant of her father's accompanied her to the church. Although she now perceived and acknowledged the utter impropriety of such a rash act, at so early an age, and in such a clandestine manner, she did not as yet appear by any means prepared to retrace her steps. She was willing, however, to leave the matter in abeyance, until her judgment was somewhat more matured, and she was arrived at an age which would justify her in acting for herself. She was obviously in earnest on the subject; and I was greatly pleased with the frankness and openness of her manner. Her mind, however, in all its views and feelings, seemed to be strongly tinctured with the romantic.

On the next day, being Sunday, in accordance with the request of her friends, she attended twice at my house, and I endeavoured to give such a direction to my remarks, as appeared calculated, with the divine blessing, to meet the peculiarity of her case. On the Monday following, the affair became universally known; and it is astonishing what interest it excited for the time, in every quarter. Among catholics and protestants, however, there was but one feeling of indignation directed against the priest, who, in his zeal for proselytism, had allowed himself, in so discreditable a manner, to inveigle a young

person of this description from the religion of her parents and her country. Some of the circumstances to which it gave rise, were in a high degree ludicrous. It became generally rumoured, and was in many cases fully believed, that the father of the young lady, a powerful and muscular man, was regularly parading the streets, furnished with a suitable weapon, with a determination to inflict summary chastisement on the first priest whom he might happen to meet. It is an unquestionable fact, that the brotherhood were for some days in considerable apprehension, and the mother of the officiating priest, told a friend of mine that her son dared not leave his house for fear, as it had been hinted to him, in no very gentle terms, that his "bones" might not be quite secure in the event of his being found out of doors. It is also a fact, that when I called, myself, on a priest, who had some connection with the business, he did not open the door until he had used the precaution of throwing up the window, in order to ascertain who I was. It is needless to say, that there was no foundation whatever for this kind of apprehension; but it afforded a striking illustration of the change of feeling in a country so eminently catholic. A priest, in actual, though groundless apprehension of bodily chastisement from a stranger, whose daughter he had rescued from heresy and admitted into the bosom of the church!

In the mean time Miss B. the young lady, who was the cause of all these terrors, and her parents, were in great distress and agitation. I continued, at their united request, my visits, and by degrees, though amid considerable fluctuations of feeling, I perceived some disposition in the former, as her views were gradually enlightened, to renounce the errors and to abandon the communion of the church, into which she had so inconsiderately allowed herself to be admitted. I took pains to press upon her, however, that it was worse than useless to abjure the catholic communion, unless she was fully convinced of its unscriptural character, and that it mattered little, to what church she outwardly belonged, unless she was really united unto Christ, and sincerely devoted herself to the service of God. While she was passing through this course of catechetical discipline, it was communicated to one of the priests, a Mons. D. whom I have formerly mentioned as chaplain of the convent, and a young man of very considerable talent and eloquence, as well as of great zeal for his mother church—that Miss B. was very harshly treated by her parents, in consequence of her assuming the catholic profession. Early in the week, therefore, assuming, without much foundation, that I had become the father confessor of the family, he addressed me the following letter:—

'Reverend Sir,

'You will, no doubt, feel much surprised at receiving a letter from me. I hope you will excuse my boldness when you are acquainted with the pressing motives by which I am actuated. Miss B. in consequence of the deepest conviction, thought it necessary to embrace our holy, catholic, Roman religion, and, persuaded that it was impossible for her to be saved in any other, has given up entirely and for ever the Protestant religion, which she had hitherto professed. This fact she has declared to her parents, and violent fits of anger have been the sad result of the declaration—a declaration which caused her to be confined to her room and shut up exactly like a prisoner in a jail, or a ferocious beast in its iron cage. I am not acquainted with Miss B., but my heart is moved with pity and grief when I reflect on the painful state she is in, and on the bitter tears she is continually shedding. Pray, tell me, Reverend Sir, is this an instance of the admirable Protestant *tolerance?* Miss B. from her infancy, and almost from the cradle, wished to adopt the catholic Religion; she put off the execution of her design until she was old enough to be perfectly well aware of the consequences of the important action she had in view, and when upon mature reflection she obeys her conscience and sets up the standard of Catholicism, her parents intervene, and in

the name of parental tenderness and of their religion's holy *tolerance*, seize upon the flag held by their daughter, and tear it to pieces. Little satisfied with this, they lock her up in a room—take from her her catholic books—the only comfort left her—burn them and replace them by protestant ones. This is not all: I am told that on the 22nd instant they are to send her to England, hoping, I suppose, that influenced by the English atmosphere, or rather by some relations' advice, she will throw herself back again into the bosom of the Protestant Church. Would it not be in your power, Reverend Sir, to put an end to these severe and almost cruel vexations? I can assure you that Miss B. is firmly and invariably determined to live and die a catholic, in spite of all her parents, or any other person may do to thwart her designs. I am sure even, that the more they will force her to abjure our holy religion, the more firmly, determinately, and resolutely she will adhere to it. Martyrs were far more resolute *during* than *before* their torments. Therefore, if I beseech you to hush this storm, it is not because I am afraid of Miss B. turning her religion again, but merely because it grieves me to the heart to know the many sufferings and bitter sorrows she is a prey to. As I know—though deprived of the honor of your acquaintance—that you have an excellent heart, I hope that you will most willingly interpose your authority, or at least

influence, to allay Miss B.'s parents' anger, and that, thanks to your ingenious goodness, the door of her jail will be thrown open in a very short time, and her tears wiped away.—This service I would have begged of you vivâ voce, had I known where you lived, and you cannot have an idea of the pleasure it would have afforded me to seize that opportunity of becoming acquainted with you.

'With the greatest respect, I am, Reverend Sir, your most humble, obedient Servant,

P. D.

'*Avranches, September 9th*, 1833.'

On the receipt of this curious epistle, I hastened to the house, to ascertain what, if any, foundation there might be for such a statement. And having found that there was none whatever, I thought the best mode of soothing the wounded senbilities of my benevolent correspondent, and at the same time of vindicating the distinguishing principle of the Protestant religion, was to procure a note from the young lady herself, in denial of the slanderous report which had been conveyed to him. I therefore obtained one to that effect, and sent it to Mons. D. accompanied with the following letter of my own in reply to his—

'*Calvaire, Sept. 10th, 1838.*

'Reverend Sir,

'This morning I received the letter which you did me the honor to address to me in reference to the case of Miss B., and I lose no time in endeavouring to remove the grievous and painful misapprehension under which you labour, respecting the treatment she has received since the fact of her baptism has been made known to her parents. I had good reason to believe indeed that the statement of her being imprisoned 'like a ferocious beast in its iron cage' was not exactly correct, as I had myself seen her at large on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, without any constraint whatever. Anxious to ascertain, however, what ground, if any, there was, for the representation you had been led to make, —immediately on the receipt of your letter I called at Mr. B.'s, and on enquiry found that the only circumstance in the conduct of her parents towards Miss B. which could possibly be construed into anything like a constraint upon her movements, was that of her mother's locking the outer door of her chamber one night, not for the purpose of shutting her in, but for the purpose of preventing the entrance of two most deceitful and unprincipled servants into her room. As however you appeared to feel so deeply for the supposed mal-treatment of this young lady—a feeling undoubtedly creditable to your kindness and benevolence of heart—I

thought the best mode of allaying that feeling was to procure a brief statement from herself, contradictory of the alleged severity, to which she had been supposed to be subjected. I take the liberty of enclosing her note, which, I hope, will have the effect of entirely setting your mind at rest on that score.'

'While, however, the parents and friends of Miss B. abhor, as much as you can possibly do, such barbarous persecution as you have been led to suppose has been exercised towards her, it would be disingenuous in me not to state to you, that among them there is but one feeling respecting the conduct of the gentleman who, without the consent or even the knowledge, nay, against what were known to be the strongest sentiments of her parents, was instrumental in enabling her to take the rash and awful step of changing her religious profession. That feeling is, that it was in the highest degree, unchristian and unworthy. Nor is this impression confined to the Protestant community. It is shared in its full force by every individual to whom it has been named, in his own ecclesiastical communion. Even the young lady herself has now the strongest possible conviction of the impropriety of her own conduct. Until Saturday last I had not the pleasure of being in the slightest degree known to herself, or any of her family. On that afternoon, at the request of her mother, I had a short interview with her,

and found her mind to have certainly a strong bias towards Catholicism; but that it was most exceedingly ill-informed with respect to the scriptural evidence of the tenets of either the Protestant or Roman Catholic community. At present she is evidently too young and too scantily supplied with the materials of a sound judgment upon the question, to be able to form anything like a firm and permanent opinion upon the momentous subject which has so strongly agitated her mind. I believe it is the wish of her parents as well as herself, for the present to leave it in abeyance, until longer time and calmer consideration have given some solidity to her impressions. No enlightened protestant can fear the result of a serious examination of the question, in the light of scriptural truth; nor can he be so ignorant of the distinguishing principle of his profession as to expect any beneficial effect from the application of coercive measures. Under the influence of feelings quite excusable as connected with the erroneous impressions, under which you laboured, you ask me whether the alleged treatment of this young lady is 'an instance of the admirable Protestant tolerance.' You also undertake to assure me that martyrdom has rarely had the effect of shaking the constancy of christian confessors. I may be allowed, perhaps, without any violation of courtesy, to remark in reply, that tolerance and martyrdom were not terms of peculiarly felici-

tous reference, in an appeal from a minister of the Roman Catholic Church to a minister of the Protestant Church of England. I beg to assure you, Sir, with every feeling of personal respect for yourself, that if I wanted an 'instance' of tolerance in the sense you probably intend, or wished to investigate the effects of martyrdom on a mind deeply impressed with its religious convictions, there are experiments upon record—I need not say what ecclesiastical community bore the most conspicuous part in them—which render it but little necessary to renew them. Wishing, however, to avoid entering into needless controversy, I beg to assure you that I receive the expression of your wish for a personal acquaintance with feelings of unfeigned satisfaction. If, as a stranger in this country, you should be disposed to honor me with a call, I shall be most happy to see you, and in the mean time beg to remain, Reverend Sir, your very faithful and obedient servant,

J. D.

Immediately on the receipt of this letter and its accompaniment, Mons. D. called on me for the purpose of explanation. He behaved with great urbanity, and though we had a good deal of discussion, we parted with mutual expressions of respect and goodwill. The next day he sent me the following note, in further exculpation of his former mistake and interference.

"Reverend Sir,

On returning home quite satisfied with your kind proceedings, I hear with the deepest sorrow that Miss B.'s parents are angry with me in consequence of the letter I addressed to you yesterday. I am told they have made publicly known a letter which I intended to be as privately and secretly kept as possible. I had been led into error by a person who was not, it seems, thoroughly acquainted with the matter. But now, being perfectly well aware of that person's having exaggerated the treatment exercised towards Miss B. by her parents, I retract with the greatest pleasure what I said in my letter, and beg you to assure Miss B.'s parents that I am exceedingly sorry for the trouble I have given them against my own will. I do not entertain the least doubt at present of their kindness towards their daughter, and wish to believe that in all they have done with respect to her, they have not shewn anything like harshness or extreme severity. If any people have been acquainted—and I am told it is so—with the particulars contained in my letter of yesterday, I beg you, if possible, to shew them this, in order to disabuse them, and prevent them from giving any credit to the exaggerated statements of my preceding letter. I should feel particularly obliged to you, were you kind enough to send this note to Miss B.'s parents, that they might not suspect any longer that I look on them

as severe parents. Indeed it would grieve me to the heart to increase the sorrow with which they are overwhelmed, and I wish sincerely it was in my power to afford them ease and comfort. They may rest assured that if any body speak to me about this business, I will undeceive them if I perceive that they have been led into error by any false report. I have already shewed to some persons the note which Miss B. has addressed to you, and I felt very happy to prove by that note, the falseness of the reports that had been related to me. For the rest, I repeat what I said yesterday, I do not know Miss B. at all, I never spoke to her in my life, and as for Mr. S. (the clergyman who has baptized) I do not remember to have spoken to him these twelve or fifteen months. In a word, I am quite a stranger to this deplorable business, and if I took the liberty of writing to you yesterday, it was only because I thought it the best way of appeasing Miss B.'s parents supposed anger; being well aware of the powerful influence to be exercised by a wise, prudent clergyman in those circumstances. But it is evident that I meant not to divulge that business or else I would not have communicated it to a single person, and especially to one so venerable and discreet as I know you to be in every respect.

'I remain, Reverend Sir, your most humble and obedient servant, P. D.'

'*Avranches, September,* 11*th,* 1833.'

Within a few days Miss B's mind appeared, under the divine blessing, to have undergone such a change, at least in reference to the respective claims of the popish and the protestant churches, that she expressed, to the great joy of her parents and friends, her readiness to sign an unqualified recantation of her recent errors. I therefore drew up, at her request, the following form, which she herself translated into French, and signed in the presence of two English gentlemen and myself.—

'Actuated solely by a sense of duty, and uninfluenced by any consideration, but that of a sincere desire to please God and to promote the salvation of my own soul, I wish to make it known to all, whom it may concern, that for the present, I renounce all connection with the Roman Catholic Church. I have come to this resolution, the result of the spontaneous and unconstrained exercise of my own judgment, aided by such means of instruction as I have recently enjoyed, chiefly on these grounds:—

1st. 'Because, on calm and deliberate reflection, I feel that the step, which I was led to take, in receiving baptism into the Roman Catholic communion, was an act, not only utterly unjustifiable at my early age, as undertaken without the knowledge of my parents, but also as unsupported by adequate inquiry and information respecting the distinguishing tenets, as well, of the church,

which I abandoned, as of that into which I was admitted.

2nd. 'Because, on further and more serious examination, I find that many of the leading principles of the Roman Catholic Church, such as that of praying for the dead, that of worshipping the saints, that of bowing and kneeling before images, and others, have no foundation whatever in the canonical scriptures of the old and new testament.

3rd. 'Because, the Protestant religion, where its doctrines are sincerely believed, and its duties uniformly practised, contains every thing necessary to salvation, and therefore, that I had no adequate and enlightened reason to renounce it.

'Influenced by these convictions, and fervently praying that I may be led by divine guidance into the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ, I wish to consider the profession, which in a moment of excitement, I was inconsiderately induced to make, as practically null and void, and that to all the purposes of church membership, I consider myself in exactly the same condition, as that which preceded the rite, which I recently underwent.'

Avranches, September 17th, 1833.

A few days after, she left this place to visit her friends in England; and I was gratified, shortly after her arrival, to learn by a letter received by her friends here—that she was becoming daily

more and more convinced of the purity and excellency of the protestant religion. In reference to this remarkable and interesting case, I can only pray, and in this I am sure you will fervently join me, that she may be enabled to prove the sincerity of this conviction, by a life of consistent piety and holiness, and thus evince the superiority of her present profession, by the superiority of her future conduct.

But, to proceed to another subject—one of the first circumstances, which strike a stranger on visiting France, is to find all the churches in the towns, for it is not always the case in the country churches, open at all hours of the day, and generally until a very late hour in the evening. When he looks around him and sees so many massive pieces of plate of various kinds, exposed to the view and quite unguarded on the several altars of these edifices, he is apt to be surprised that they are not more frequently pillaged than experience proves to be the fact. Some have found great fault with our system of keeping our churches closed, except when they are opened for worship. I confess that, independently of the danger of robbery, I am very doubtful, whether any beneficial result would spring from the opposite practice. We consider our churches, not as places, which can give any additional efficacy to the prayers offered up within their walls, but simply as edifices solemnly devoted to the service of God and adapted for the accommo-

dation of the multitude when uniting in his worship. Rare, however, as is the crime of sacrilege; and branded as it is by the concurrent judgment of all nations, as one of the most horrible in the whole catalogue of human delinquencies, in the French churches it is by no means unknown; and to mark its extreme malignity and impiety a law was passed under Charles X. which made it capital in all its gradations; a law which, I have been informed, contributed in a high degree to his unpopularity among the liberals of the day, as indicating a disposition to return to the old regime.

Since we have been in this place, there have been two most atrocious instances of church robbery, besides some others of which we have recently heard. About nine o'clock, on Sunday morning, November 3rd, I was surprised, and somewhat astounded, to see through one of my windows, the Mayor's adjoint, with his tri-coloured sash, accompanied by an officer of the national guards in full uniform, and holding up his naked blade, advancing towards the door; while a large detachment of his comrades, similarly equipped, were standing behind at the gate. As soon as I could muster courage to meet this formidable party, I hastened down stairs, and as they were just entering the passage, asked Mr. Adjoint, what they could possibly want at my house in such accoutrements. He politely replied, that they were come to pay a domiciliary visit, in conse-

quence of a most dreadful robbery which had been committed the night before in the church of St. Gervais, and that the national guards were now engaged in different companies in searching the whole town and neighbourhood. I was of course quite satisfied with the explanation; and having looked into one or two rooms, they quietly retired. On further inquiry, I found that plate and property to the value of 20,000 francs—£800. had been stolen. The former robbery, which took place about three months before, was not quite to so great an extent. It seems that the thieves had broken into the church very early in the morning, and while the robbery was committed, actually arrayed themselves in the priest's robes, that in case of any one passing by in the mean time, they might be supposed to be the priests themselves, taking out the consecrated wafer for some sick person, as they are often accustomed to do at all hours of the night. In fact, one of them was observed about four o'clock in the morning, standing in this garb at the door of the church. In the course of the Sunday, three priest's cassocks were found about two leagues from the town under a bridge. These had unquestionably been used by the thieves, the leader of whom is supposed to have been a young man who had been partly admitted into that sacred office himself. The whole of this horrible transaction forcibly reminds me of Spencer's description of one of his heroes—

'He was too weete, a stout and sturdy thiefe,
Wont to robbe churches of their ornaments,
And poor men's boxes of their due reliefe,
Which given to them was of good intents;
The holy saints of their rich vestiments
He did disrobe, when all men careless slept,
And spoiled the priests of their habiliments.
Whiles none the holy things in safety kept,
Then he by cunning sleights in at the window crept.'

The venerable Curé of the parish was, naturally, most deeply afflicted with this disaster. When he spoke of it to the people during mass, his tears were described to me in a style of ludicrous exaggeration, as equalling the dimensions of half a finger, as they rolled down his cheeks. After all the efforts that were made, I have not learnt that the authors of this impious sacrilege have been identified or brought to punishment.

It has been not unfrequently adduced as one feature in the social and domestic habits of the French, in which they have an advantage over us, that at their entertainments, it is not the practice, as among us, for the ladies to retire into the drawing room after a reasonable time, and to leave the gentlemen to converse over their wine. As a security against coarseness and intemperance, there may be some advantage in the French custom, but where there is no danger on this score, and considering that individuals of the one sex, have frequently matters to discuss among themselves, in which those of the other can feel no very deep interest, I am inclined to think that on

the whole, the balance of good lies on the side of ours. When the prevailing character and mental habits of French ladies are borne in mind, I am not sure that something of the airy frivolity of the French gentlemen is not to be laid to the account of this habit of constant association with those of the other sex. I feel that I am here treading on tender ground. I am convinced, and universal experience indeed has proved the fact, that nothing is more calculated to humanize, soften, and refine the character, than the seasonable society of sensible, enlightened, and well-educated females. But unless we choose to amalgamate and confound habits and pursuits, which nature has made to differ, it cannot be denied that the one sex may become too deeply tinctured with the peculiar and appropriate characteristics of the other. I never wish to see that state of social and domestic life, of which the result would be, as it strikes me is the case in an undue degree in this country, that the men should be effeminate and the women masculine. Entertaining these general ideas in reference to the practice to which I have just alluded, I was rather desirous of having an opportunity of observing the mode of conducting a private dinner in respectable French society. A few days ago, I was abundantly gratified in this respect, and I shall conclude this long letter with a brief account of what took place on that occasion. On the 28th of last month, we were invited to a large dinner

party, at the Baron de P's. This gentleman is not a Frenchman by birth, but entered the French service, as I have understood at an early age, and having been taken prisoner, resided some years in England, where he married an amiable and accomplished lady of large fortune. At the conclusion of the war, they passed over to this beautiful spot, where they have generally resided ever since, and where they are deservedly held in the highest estimation. Of the Baron himself, who is a protestant, and president of a neighbouring Bible Association, it is impossible for me indeed to speak in terms at all adequate to my sense of his kindness to myself, and of the uncommon excellency of his character. If I did not feel that, in reference to one side of the parallel, at least, the comparison would border on the absurd, I should be inclined to say of him, as Fox declared in his memorable recognition of his obligation to Burke—that if I placed all the information and instruction which I have derived from books and all other sources respecting the laws and institutions of France, in one scale, and that which I have derived from his conversation in the other, the latter would more than counterbalance the former.—But I must proceed to the dinner party. Among those present, there were several nobles, the Compte De M., his brother—Chevalier De M., and one or two others, with their respective ladies. There were also two young Polish officers, be-

longing to a detachment of the unhappy refugees, who had recently been sent by the French government to this place. The dinner, which was certainly splendid, was all served up in the French style, the master and mistress of the house taking their seats, not as with us, one at each end of the table, but at the middle just opposite to each other. It would be as absurd, as it would be impossible for me, who am no connoisseur in such matters, to attempt to give any account of the materials of this sumptuous banquet. We sat down at five; and at eight, ladies and gentlemen all rose together, and retired to the drawing room, where, in compliment, probably, to the English who were present, tea was introduced in the English style. Nothing could exceed the kindness, attention, and hospitality of the host and his lady; and the French noblesse of both sexes, with whom I had a great deal of conversation, behaved with all the urbanity and politeness characteristic of their nation. They were all evidently of the Carlist class of politicians. Before the revolution of July, indeed, the Compte De M. was an officer of the guards in Charles X.'s army. While I was conversing with this gentleman, a ludicrous mistake took place, which strongly marked the most prominent idea in the mind of each of us at the moment. When I remarked, in answer to a question, that we occupied the house of Madame A.; well knowing this lady's high pedigree, he silently

muttered—"très bonne Maison." Vulgarly supposing that he alluded to the quality of the house, I replied, that I was sorry to say, that on the contrary it was a "très mauvaise maison." Amused with my mistake, he good humouredly explained, that he referred to the genealogical stock of the owner, one of the most ancient in France, and not to the condition of the house, of which he knew nothing.

After tea, I contrived to get near one of the Polish officers, to whom I have just referred, as I was anxious to obtain some information respecting the moral and spiritual condition of a country, which is now an object of so much general interest. I found him a pleasing and very ingenuous youth, apparently little more than twenty. He acknowledged that the present political feeling in Poland strongly inclined to republicanism. Of the Emperor Nicholas, he spoke with great bitterness, expressing his belief, though avowedly without the slightest evidence, that Deibitch was poisoned by his order. Education he represented as being in general in a very low state:—the people, for the most part, extremely ignorant, but naturally endowed with "beaucoup d'esprit." On the subject of religion he himself evidently knew but little; and by his account, his countrymen in general still less. On such matters, said he, putting his hand to his ear, what goes in here—suiting his action to the word—goes out there. On my asking

him, whether they were at all furnished with the scriptures, he answered, that some had a Bible, "mais ils le n'aiment pas,"—they do not love it. The prevalent form of religion is the catholic, though all religions are tolerated; and one gentleman present remarked it as a proof of great liberality, that frequently the officers actually did not know to what religion their comrades belonged. I concluded the conversation, secretly sighing—"If such be the spirit of the people, and such the instruments employed in the attempt to effect their deliverance—alas, for the political regeneration of Poland!" Fearing that on this occasion, I have drawn most unreasonably on your patience,

I remain, &c. &c. &c.

LETTER IV.

Avranches, April 5th, 1834.

My Dear Friend,

Since the last letter was concluded, few events of any importance have fallen under my notice. The present communication, which will most probably be my last from this place, will therefore be devoted to circumstances and observations of a somewhat more miscellaneous character than those which have preceded it. Most of these remarks, however, I will endeavour to deduce from facts, which I have in some degree had an opportunity of witnessing, or at least will be connected with what I have attempted to survey with some attention, during a residence of nearly twelve months in this country. I propose subjoining to these observations a short account of a most delightful and interesting visit, which, in company with my estimable friend, the Baron de P., I paid at the beginning of the last month, to the little protestant community

of Cheffrêsne, for which the King had so graciously promised that he would use his best exertions in procuring a settled minister.

Next to the state of religion and morals, and closely connected indeed with these paramount questions, the subject, which a christian philosopher and philanthropist, would probably regard with most eager and anxious interest, in the condition of the people of this country, is that mass of important circumstances and considerations, comprised under the general term of Politics. Neither my taste nor opportunities, indeed, have led me to enter very deeply into these matters. But quite independently of the ephemeral violence and collision of party feuds and animosities, no man of enlightened and comprehensive views can regard with indifference the dominant principles and feelings of a great nation, with reference to the laws and institutions, under which it lives. These sentiments and emotions, however they may be repressed, controlled, or diverted from their objects, cannot fail ultimately to become embodied in an economy of congenial character, and are, in reality, the prolific germs of the future social destinies of the people. The spirit of the laws, and of the civil administration of France, cannot, I think, be more accurately expressed than in the first article of the Constitutional Charter;—"Les Français sont egaux devant la loi, quels que soient d' ailleurs leurs titres et leurs rangs."—All Frenchmen, are equal,

in the eye of the law, whatever in other respects may be their titles and their rank. This broad level, into which the sanguinary tumult and elemental strife of a quarter of a century—a strife, in which the Apocalyptic vision of a mountain of fire thrown into the waters, and converting them into blood, seemed to be realised—settled down at the restoration, has never since been materially disturbed, and it certainly presents, at the first view, an aspect remarkable, if not for varied beauty of moral and social scenery, at least, for uniformity and exemption from gross and revolting inequality of position. But, although this levelling principle stands so prominently forward on the tablet of French liberty, and as a species of state fiction seems to be recognised as a component part of the great social system, it is altogether a mistake to imagine that the mass of the people possess any measure, whatever, of direct political power.

The form of government, consisting of King, (responsible only through his ministers,) Peers—nominated by the Sovereign, but within certain fixed categories,—and Deputies, or Commons, elected by those who have the right of voting, is evidently a copy of our own. As compared with the three analogous branches of our own legislature, it appears to me that the King, especially since the accession of his present Majesty, who generally sits as president of the council of his own ministers, exercises a much more direct

power than is usually the case with us. The French chamber of Peers is little more than nominal. The real and effective legislative authority, though the consent of the Peers is necessary to the force of the laws, is divided between the King and the Deputies. After all that has been heard, however, of the successful struggles of the French people for the attainment or confirmation of their liberties;—one is somewhat surprised to find that the elective franchise, which is the only direct instrument of political power, is, comparatively, so confined in its exercise. The Chamber of Deputies, the present counterpart of our house of Commons, consists of four hundred and fifty-nine members, chosen by so many electoral colleges. It was the maxim, if I remember rightly, of the great American patriot, that taxation and representation ought invariably to go together, and this dictum has since been frequently re-echoed on this side of the Atlantic. The French constitution, professedly recognises the rule, but the extent, to which it has deemed it necessary to carry the exception, has almost neutralized its application. Although all Frenchmen are equal in the eye of the law, no one is eligible for the function of Deputy, who does not pay taxes to the amount of five hundred francs—£20. a year. The qualification for the exercise of the elective franchise is the payment of two hundred francs—eight pounds direct taxation; so that an individual, as is the case with myself at

this moment, who rented a house of £40. per annum, would not on that ground, supposing, which is my own case, that he did not pay two hundred francs in taxes, be entitled to a vote. In a country like France, where property is so widely sub-divided, I was, I confess, astonished at the amount of this qualification. The consequence, as might have been expected, is, that the elective franchise is confined to a very small number, and these composed almost entirely of those, who stand rather high in the middling rank of society. The department of Manche, in which we reside, contains a population of between six and seven hundred thousand, and sends eight Deputies, and this appears to be about the average rate. The Arrondissement of Avranches, including the large sea-port town of Granville, sends one member, elected by less than five hundred persons. Taking this as the basis of a general calculation, it would appear that all France together, containing a population of thirty-two millions, does not possess more than about [1] two hundred and fifty thousand electors, not more than half the number which it was calculated the Reform Bill alone would add to the constituency of England. In other words, there are not in all France, with its thirty-two millions of inhabitants, more than two hundred and fifty thousand persons who have any direct voice in

[1] The present state of property has reduced those who possess the elective franchise to a much smaller number than this—less even than two hundred thousand.

the enactment of the laws. I am far from saying, or even thinking, that the extension of the franchise, in the present state of the country, would add to its prosperity, security, or happiness; and I verily believe, that the French people enjoy quite as large a share of liberty, as is essential to their social and civil welfare; and I think it is in a high degree probable, that any immediate attempt at enlarging the basis of the representation, would, from the prevailing prejudices of the common people, have the effect of impeding the progress of rational, enlightened, and above all, of religious freedom. This opinion, if well founded, shews how unsafe a guide the mere theory of political rights would prove in the difficult and complex scheme of practical legislation and government.

Bearing in mind the number and position of the electors, we might naturally have expected that an election would be a very different thing in France from what it usually is in England. In the month of December last, one of these events took place in this town, and I was perfectly astonished at the peace and quietness with which the whole was conducted and brought to a conclusion. Although the polling—for it was a contested, and warmly-contested election—was carried on at the Mairie within three-hundred yards of our own door, I should literally not have known that there was anything unusual going on, if I had not been informed of the fact.

The great mass of the people took no interest whatever in it, and some of them in fact, told me that they knew nothing about it. It was occasioned by the promotion of the member, M. Abraham Dubois, a lawyer, and the mayor of Granville, to a situation under government. As this gentleman belongs to the Juste Milieu, or government party, he was violently opposed, on his offering himself for re-election, by a small party, which may be relatively identified with our lowest radicals. Mons. D. however was returned by a great majority. During the election, which lasted two days, a few hand-bills were issued, bearing much the same character with the usual election squibs in England. The opposition was headed by a somewhat turbulent lawyer, who was also the mayor's adjoint, and this personage published one very grandiloquent paper with his own name and official designation attached to it, as a proof of the respectability of the party.

It was to me a somewhat curious and interesting point of inquiry, of what materials the present Chamber of Deputies is really composed, and I was surprised to find that out of four hundred and fifty-nine members, which constitute that assembly, so many as eighty are professed protestants. The whole protestant population barely amounts to two millions, while the catholic, at least nominally such, is thirty millions: —the proportion of the former to the latter is

therefore scarcely one to sixteen, and yet the ratio of their representatives is very nearly one to four. I fear that the conclusion which would seem to be suggested by this fact in favor of religion, would by no means be warranted. The reason assigned for this apparent anomaly is the hatred and dread of Carlism and Jesuitism prevailing to a great extent among the middling class of society. Such persons usually regard Protestantism in France, and I fear that with a few valuable exceptions with too much truth, not as a badge of any peculiar principles, much less of any peculiar zeal for religion, but of liberalism in politics. It is, however, generally expected that there will be a much larger infusion of Carlism in the next Chamber. The constitutional duration of the Chamber is the term of five years.

Another circumstance which I was anxious to ascertain on my arrival in this country, was, what real and practical change in the general system of government took place at the time of, or subsequently to, the occurrence of the last revolution; and I was given to understand that in fact very little change had taken place except in the persons of the public functionaries of the government. Hitherto, in reality, it has been more a change of men than of measures. The whole scheme of administration, with a few trifling alterations in church and state—in the military and civil administration of the kingdom,

is precisely such as it was under Louis XVIII. and his successor Charles X. The revolution of July, therefore, so far as its effects have been hitherto developed, must be considered rather as the triumph of a principle—as a great experiment in the science of government, tending to modify the views, feelings and habits of all classes of the community, than as the immediate instrument of a new order of things. In an advanced state of civilization, such events are germinant of slow and progressive changes, rather than direct agents of a total overthrow of the frame-work of society.

But leaving the subject of politics, of which neither opportunity nor inclination has allowed me to attain more than a very general idea, allow me to direct your attention for a moment to a subject in which I know that in common with every christian philanthropist you feel a deep interest—that of popular education. Of late years, particularly since the accession of the present king, great efforts have certainly been made to extend this inestimable blessing among the people. From a recent report of a Parisian Society for the promotion of primary, or elementary instruction, I learn that at this time the number of children of both sexes, who are taught to read, is two millions, forming about one sixteenth of the whole population, a proportion, which if correctly stated, struck me as very considerable. The whole expense at-

tendant on this process of elementary instruction is calculated at ten millions of francs, £400,000 —not quite half a million sterling. About one twentieth of this sum is paid by the state, and is supplied through the minister of public instruction. The remainder is paid by the departments and communes or parishes. The schools most generally supported by these means are those conducted on the plan of mutual instruction, and bear somewhat of a liberal cast. In those places, however, where the influence of the priesthood is predominant, the schools are for the most part taught by a class of persons called Frères Ignorantius. In this case the children are trained up in the most rigid principles of Catholicism. In this town there is a school of each kind. That supported by the priests and their adherents, is by far the most numerous, and I am inclined to think on the whole best conducted.

Immediately connected with the state of education is that of literature, philosophy, and science. This subject, as it relates to this country, assumes a character of peculiar interest, whether we view it in reference to the past, the present, or the future. With respect to each of these eras, who can adequately estimate—what process of calculation, short of the awful evolutions of eternity, can unfold and sum up the amount of the evil, which has been done, is still doing, and will long continue to be done by the pestilential literature, which, like a flock of ill-

omened birds, rose about the close of the last century out of the corrupt and stagnant pools of popery, tainted the atmosphere as it flew, and defiled with its contaminating touch the altars of eternal truth. It is a lamentable fact that the progeny of these intellectual harpies—the Voltaires—the Diderots—and the Helvetii of that period are still numerous and prolific over the length and breadth of this unhappy country. The fruit of the moral cockatrice has in too many instances been a fiery flying serpent. In other words, infidelity and scepticism, under some of their numberless shades and modifications, still continue to infect, in a great degree, the mass of the literature, and even science of France. Even its highest mathematics—witness the well-known attempt of La Place to demonstrate, by means of his nebular hypothesis, the adequacy of the laws of nature, without any aid from nature's God, to account for all the phenomena of the universe—and its profoundest physiology, to say nothing of its metaphysics, are not free from this poisonous infusion. Its works of fiction, both in prose and verse, are still more deeply charged with this destructive virus. I do not profess to have inquired very deeply into the prevailing character of the present literature of France, but from the little I have seen and read—I have seen and read enough to convince me that in general it is grievously impregnated with infidelity, impurity, and blasphemy. The

two most remarkable poets of the present day are, I believe, Scribe and Victor Hugo. The first of these is described, by an able French critic, as a mere reflector of the corrupt egoisme of the age—the second as a vivid imaginist of all that is vile and debasing, in murder, treason, and incest. The intellectual and moral philosophy of France is described by the same discriminating pen as having undergone, in the course of the last thirty years, a variety of transformations, marked, however, by more of change than of solid improvement. Under the empire, or during the sway of Napoleon, it was the cold and artificial system of Condillac, originally transferred in a perverted state from Locke, and subsequently somewhat modified and advanced by Royer Collard. Under the restoration, abjuring the levity and gross profaneness of Diderot, Grimm, and Volney, it assumed what may be called a social form, consisting chiefly of the utilitarian speculations of Bentham, filtered through his disciple and admirer Dumont. Just at this time it is a mass of crude and incongruous theories, each professing to have discovered the great principle of social perfectionnement—numbering among its leading votaries—besides the heroes of St. Simonianism and the knights of the new order of Templars,—Guizot, Thiers, Fourrier, Mignet, Chateaubriand, and numerous others.

In a reading age, the number and character

of its periodical journals and other fugitive publications afford a tolerably correct index of the taste and temper of the times. With these sybilline leaves France abounds. The whole atmosphere indeed seems to be afloat with them in some form or other. Of the newspapers I say nothing, as, with a few rare and creditable exceptions, they are in every country a mere echo of the passions and prejudices of the parties by whom they are respectively supported. In this respect France is a mere counterpart of England. Of publications designed to promote the cause of pure religion and sound morals, however, there is a deplorable dearth. There is in Paris, indeed, a Society for the Promotion of Useful Knowledge, similar to that in London, and such of its publications as have fallen under my notice, appear to be extremely well conducted, combining at once extensive information with sound judgment. This remark particularly applies to the periodical journals of this institution. Of journals expressly designed to promote the cause of religion through the medium of the protestant faith I know of only three, the Archives du Christianisme, the Libre Examen, and the Semeur. The first of these, which is also the most ancient, having existed for nearly twenty years, is edited by the younger Monod of Paris, and is distinguished by a vein of simple and ardent piety, as well as pure and uncompromising orthodoxy of doctrinal senti-

ment. The last—the Semeur, is a more recent journal, advocating the same evangelical principles with still superior ability, but entering somewhat more into the politics and philosophy of the age. This journal is frequently enriched with articles from the masterly pen of M. de Felice of Bolbec, and I believe also of M. Vinet of Bâsle. The second—the Libre Examen, formerly entitled the Protestant, is conducted by Mons. Coquerel, and takes, perhaps, a higher stand than either of the others in a philosophical and intellectual point of view; but is, I am sorry to say, sadly deficient in accuracy and fulness of evangelical sentiment. Its circulation is understood to be very confined. Compare these three solitary wanderers over a country containing a population of thirty-two millions—with the almost countless host of winged messengers that issue forth weekly or monthly from the periodical press of our own country, each of them substantially charged with the tidings of the everlasting gospel, and you will appreciate the dearth or rather the want of demand of spiritual food among a people as fond of reading probably as our own countrymen. It is almost needless to say that other sound protestant publications are proportionably rare. The larger number of those that occasionally issue from the press seems, indeed, to be little else than translations of English treatises.

But from the consideration of the intellectual

and literary wealth and nourishment diffused among the people of this country I would pass for a moment and take a transient glance at another species of property, and the extent to which it is distributed as well as the rate of enjoyment, which it is the means of procuring to the various classes of the community. With reference to the possession, and the most salutary mode of utilizing wealth, no more influential experiment was tried—no practical innovation involving considerations of a graver character was introduced amidst the sweeping tide of the great revolution, than the abolition of the law of primogeniture, and the substitution of an enactment, which made it obligatory that the property of parents should be equally divided among all their children. The enormous masses of wealth which had accumulated during a succession of ages in the families of the noblesse, combined as the hereditary system was with the odious and inequitable exemption from contributing towards supporting the burdens of the state, had unquestionably thrown the two great divisions of the community into a most injurious and unnatural position with respect to each other. It left, in fact, no middling class, which by touching the extremes of both, might maintain some feeling of sympathy among these respective constituents of the body politic. When the great crisis arrived, the parties which had hitherto co-existed but could not coalesce—which

had breathed indeed the same air, but had hardly been considered as made of the same blood, at once flew apart and took their sides as Aristocrats or Democrats, as Royalists or Republicans —as those, who had hitherto regarded each other as little else than masters or slaves. Yielding to a storm, the force of which they felt themselves to be incapable of resisting, the noblesse almost universally deserted the country—leaving their mansions and lands to be disposed of as the caprice of revolutionary madness might dictate. Their houses were in general burnt to the ground —their estates, left without a visible possessor, were sold to any needy adventurer, in many cases for what a distinguished countryman of ours would call "old rags" in the shape of assignats—their patents of nobility were melted down into instruments of republican warfare, and the very law by which through a long line of ancestry they had been enabled to rise to such wealth and power, was totally abrogated and annulled. It was this last circumstance which in reality gave the death blow to the hereditary aristocracy of France. It is true that Napoleon attempted to raise a nobility as a species of Corinthian pillars, at once to support and to adorn the colossal structure which he had embodied in his own person. It is true that every effort compatible with the endless complexities and combinations of existing claims, was made by the Bourbon princes at the restoration to re-

instate the nobility in their ancient rights and possessions. But the new order of things had now taken too firm a root—the law of an equal distribution of property had become too intimately associated with all the feelings and expectations of the present generation to render it safe to attempt the revival of the former system. With the power of transmitting their estates in one unbroken mass to the representative of their families, the political weight of the Aristocracy may be truly said to have passed away. With the natural operations of the existing law, the continuance of great wealth in one family, and consequently of great power, is almost incompatible. Of the proudest title in the roll of the ancient noblesse, when exposed for less than a century to the action of this resistless solvent, it may be safely announced as of Pompey, "stat magni nominis umbra," and that is all. Let the present king of France be taken for an example—considered to be the richest man in Europe. Let him be supposed to possess a personal revenue of a million sterling a year. In the very next generation, with his family of eight or ten children, among whom this mass of wealth is to be broken up, his son and heir can have lawfully little more than one tenth of the sum. Supposing the progeny of the next Louis Philippe to be equally numerous, the wealth of the present European Croesus, will be so subdivided as scarcely to leave

a trace of that deep channel, through which this golden tide is now pursuing its course.

But, while the effect of the equal distribution of property is undeniable, both from theory, and experience, so far as time has hitherto allowed it to operate, as it affects the wealth and power of the Aristocracy—the great question is, how it is calculated to act upon the general welfare of the community. With numerous inconveniences, not yet perhaps fully developed; it evidently has its advantages. When I first arrived in this province, a department of France, peculiarly rich in agricultural produce, I was exceedingly struck with the minuteness of the portions, into which the soil, including fields, gardens, orchards, and every species of land, was divided. Very frequently a garden might be seen thus parcelled out by fences just set up, into portions of a few yards square. On inquiry I found that this was the result of the law of sub-division, brought into operation by the recent decease of the proprietor, whose land was now thus lotted out for his children. One very palpable evil, attendant on this plan, struck me at once, that a very considerable portion of the soil is necessarily occupied by these numberless intersections; but it must be allowed that it has the effect of inspiring the great mass of the people, very few of whom are without some slip of ground which they can call their own, with an interest in the welfare of their country, and a sense of attachment to their native

soil, which can hardly be expected of those, who float loosely upon the waves, without being able to descry a single green spot, with which they can identify all that is soothing and satisfactory in the idea of personal and individual possession.

But descending to what may be considered as the lowest extremity of the social scale, though by no means the most unimportant, it has been to me a matter of interesting inquiry, what was the relative rate of comfort, in which the great body of the population of this country lived, as compared with those of our own. This question assumed a character of additional interest and importance, when considered with reference to the absence of all legal provision for the poor. I had often heard it asserted, that scarcely in any country were the great body of the labouring population in so depressed and wretched a condition as in England, and that in France especially, that numerous and important class of the community lived in comparative ease and comfort. There is a sense, in which this representation is unquestionably true. It is a fact, that there is much of misery arising from scanty food, and still scantier clothing in that department of society in England, and that according to the usual, and what may be called the conventional mode of living, it is exceedingly difficult for a labouring man to rear up a family in tolerable comfort, without a considerable amount of parochial or elemosynary aid. It is also a fact,

that less difficulty, less pressure from poverty and want is generally experienced by persons of the same rank in this country. I will, notwithstanding, venture to assert it as another fact, that, at least in those parts of the two countries, with which I am acquainted, the rate of wages, as compared with the price of the necessaries of life, is decidedly higher in England than in France. The usual pay of the labouring men in this part of the country, is ten-pence per day, of women—seven-pence half-penny without their food. If they are boarded they receive little more than half the sum. The man who occasionally attends to our garden, receives fifteen-pence per day, and this I believe is the usual price for this species of labour, and every other kind of mechanical occupation seems to bear the same proportion. You will at once perceive that this is little more, in many cases indeed much less, than half the rate of remuneration generally paid in England, and yet I think it would be a liberal allowance if it was conceded that the price of the same species of food, clothing, and household accommodation, was one third cheaper in France, than it is in England. How then, does it happen, that the poor of the former country, suffer less from poverty and destitution than those of the latter? It appears to me that it is mainly to be explained on two grounds, first—that the people of France, in general conscious as they are that they have no legal resources beyond the produce

of their own exertions, exercise a much larger share of prudence and foresight in all their relative, domestic, and economical arrangements; and secondly—that from habit, as well as necessity, they are satisfied and consequently can easily supply themselves, with much inferior articles in food, clothing, and furniture. Another important feature in the case, is, that they usually exercise a most wise and salutary precaution in the most important of all domestic arrangements, that of entering into the marriage relation. It is a very rare occurrence in this part of the country—an occurrence, which takes place only among the most reckless and inconsiderate of the species—for a couple to be married until, on both sides, there is a considerable sum of money, the produce of a series of years of laborious and active industry, provided not only to meet the immediate exigencies of the occasion, but to be laid up against the dark days of future suffering and multiplied demands, and no prudent female thinks of marrying until, (besides the fading finery of a bridal dress) she has treasured up a stock of clothing of various kinds, sufficient in many cases to sustain the wear and tear of a long life. Hence the very rare phenomenon, among the poor of this country, of the want of warm and comfortable bedding, and I have heard a medical man assert, that in the whole of his experience, he had never known a case, in which there appeared to be an urgent deficiency on the score

of this essential requisite to health and comfort. The other advantages, affecting the adjustment of the difficult question of the correspondent demand and supply of labour, arising from this habit of prudential calculation, it is needless to point out. When you connect with these most important and influential considerations the palpable fact, that in every thing which ministers to luxury or even sober enjoyment in the various departments of social life, the French are content with a much lower grade in the economical scale, there can be no difficulty in understanding how with a scantier relative rate of remuneration, they are far less liable to be harassed by still recurring seasons of overwhelming embarrassment and distress. It is but fair to add, that this system of prudent economy, seems to rise through all the gradations of society. Perhaps, indeed, as the result of the uncertain tenure of property during a long period of anarchy and convulsion, the habit of hoarding money prevails to a greater extent among those who possess it, than is quite compatible with those liberal and generous notions of expenditure, which prevail among ourselves, and which within due limitations, are unquestionably favourable to the general welfare of the community. It is a well-known fact, that a few years ago, there were few houses in this country without a cachét, or secret hiding-place, for depositing hoarded wealth, in case any sudden revolutionary movement should

take place; and I am credibly informed, that of the men in easy circumstances, at this moment, residing in this town, few expend more than half their income.

But the most important of all questions, as being that which exercises the most weighty influence on the welfare of individuals, and of nations, is the state of Religion and Morals in this country, and this is the last subject of a general nature, which I shall be able to comprise within the limits of this letter. In the course of my former communications, many incidental remarks, bearing on these paramount interests, have been offered. But I was desirous of somewhat extending the range of my observation and inquiry, before I ventured to pronounce a general opinion respecting matters, which vary so widely in different places and under different circumstances and on which it is therefore so easy to fall into an inaccurate judgment. Of the external economy of religion in this country, so far as it is connected with the state, and with respect to the numerical proportion of its several professors, it is unnecessary that I should enter into any detailed notice. On a very vague and general survey, the population amounting to thirty-two millions, is considered as composed of Catholics and Protestants; the former, claiming nearly thirty millions, and the latter, variously estimated from two to three millions. Of the Jews, whose teachers are paid by the state, and of Infidels,

who, I fear, constitute under various disguises, a very large proportion of the male population, especially in the middling ranks of society, no account is taken in this calculation. For these thirty millions of nominal Catholics, there are thirty thousand priests—one priest for every thousand, partly paid by the state, and partly by fees received for the various offices of religion, the most productive of which is that of saying masses for the dead. For the two or three millions of professed protestants, there are between four and five hundred churches, and somewhat more than three hundred pastors, who receive from the state, a sum which averages £25,000. per annum. These rough calculations exhibit merely the palpable and economical statistics of religion. Rough and general as they are, however, they evince a melancholy inadequacy of provision for the spiritual wants of the Protestant population—presenting, as they do, little more than the average of one pastor for ten thousand souls. But for one who would wish to obtain a correct knowledge of the real state of religion and morals in France, independently of mere nominal designations and ecclesiastical distinctions, these sectional enumerations would afford but very delusive and unsatisfactory information. The question of real importance, in the view of every candid and enlightened mind, is to what extent the people of this country are illumined, penetrated, influenced, and controlled, by

the great fundamental, doctrinal, and practical truths of Christianity; whether, as professed Catholics, they receive this celestial effluence through the distorting, and in many respects debasing medium of an erroneous creed and a superstitious ritual; or, as professed Protestants, through the channel of the purer faith and more scriptural observances of the reformed religion. Estimated on these principles, I fear that the religion both of Catholics and Protestants will be reduced to a narrow scale, and that without taking into the account the numbers, who here, as well as in other countries, profess a correct faith, but fail to vindicate it by a consistent practice, there will be found a vast and overwhelming residuum of those who—occupying every grade, and presenting every variety of intellectual and moral colouring in the school of Infidelity—have no fixed principles of religion whatever; except indeed, a fixed determination to reject, without adequate examination, the claims of the christian revelation. An intelligent Frenchman once remarked to me, that, if you took a hundred of his countrymen, at this period, and inquired into their religious opinions, you would find ninety-nine out of the hundred differing from each other.

It must not be supposed, however, from this melancholy representation, that there is no religious feeling in France among Catholics, and still less must such an opinion be formed of the Protestants.

Next to, and closely connected, indeed, with the prevailing practice of the people, I thought the best mode of ascertaining the real bearing of Catholicism on the character, would be, to notice the general tone of preaching adopted by the priesthood. With this view, I attended the whole course of the Lent Sermons, delivered twice a week in the different churches of this place. I have also had occasional opportunities of hearing Catholic preaching, in other places—in two or three instances in Cathedral churches before the Bishop and Dignitaries of the Diocese. I confess, that French pulpit oratory was associated in my mind with ideas of no ordinary interest and enthusiasm; and I was anxious to ascertain, besides the more important point of doctrinal purity and accuracy—whether the mantles of the renowned Gallican preachers of the last century, had fallen on any of their successors. With the pulpit eloquence of France are connected, and in a manner, identified, the illustrious names of Bossuet, characteristically styled the eagle of Meaux, and whose funeral orations have been pronounced by no mean critic, the master-pieces of modern eloquence;—of Fenelon, the elegant, the devout, the pathetic, and the meekly christian prelate of Cambray;—of Mascaron, whose energetic addresses are said to have been the means of bringing back twenty-eight thousand out of thirty-thousand Hugonots, whom he found in his diocese, into the bosom of the Catholic church;—of Bour-

dalone, who was deputed for the express purpose of aiding, by the bloodless, but more effective weapon of his resistless oratory, the sanguinary dragonnades of Louis XIV. after the revocation of the edict of Nantes; and above all, of the bold and uncompromising, yet modest, Massillon, whose faithful and penetrating appeals elicited from one of the most haughty and dissolute of monarchs the remarkable testimony, that when he heard other preachers, he retired much pleased with them, but when he had heard Massillon, he withdrew very much displeased with himself; and whose thrilling announcements, on more occasions than one, absolutely shook his hearers on their seats. Such specimens of intellectual power, animated by the most elevated of subjects, and employed in the noblest of services, it would indeed be absurd to expect as of ordinary occurrence in any church. But I am bound to acknowledge that from the comparatively few opportunities I have enjoyed of attending the Catholic preaching of this country, it is superior in almost every point of view, to what I had anticipated. With respect to the matter and doctrinal sentiments of the sermons I heard, I have no hesitation in saying that with the exception of a few peculiarities, principally bearing on the point of Auricular confession, and an occasional superstitious appeal to the wooden cross, suspended below the cieling; many of them were sound and practical, and some truly excellent, such in fact as I

should be glad to hear from any pulpit in our own church. In style, they were generally popular and familiar, full of short sentences and personal appeals. In manner, as they were always delivered without notes, but for the most part, I believe, memoriter, they were marked by great earnestness, and occasionally, the most impassioned gesture, but from the rapidity of the preacher's utterance, sometimes a little intricate and involved. But with all the inconveniences of this method, if it be a legitimate object of preaching, to touch the heart as well as to inform the judgment, there can be no question, that it has infinitely the advantage over the more correct, indeed, but withal, the more phlegmatic and inanimate system, which is usually adopted among ourselves.

Of the state of Protestantism generally in this country, all the information which I have been able to obtain, compels me to say that until very recently it has been awfully and deplorably low. Numbers who were outwardly distinguished by that profession, were totally ignorant of all the leading articles of the reformed faith, and in many districts they differed in nothing from their catholic neighbours, except that they did not attend mass, and would on no account change what they called their religion. This state of things is indeed no more than might have been expected from the deficiency already specified, both of churches and ministers, and still more, I fear in many cases, from the heterodoxy, apathy,

and secularity of many of the teachers whom they had. In the course of the last few years, however, a better spirit has arisen among this important and interesting community. They have now bibles, for their right to the perusal of which, their fathers perished at the stake or pined away in the dungeon, widely circulated among them. They have ministers full of zeal and energy, combined with wisdom and discretion, and from these promising circumstances it may be expected, in dependence on the divine blessing, that France, which, in escaping from the grasp of the "false prophet" of popery, fell into the foul embrace of the monster of infidelity, will ere long renounce the alliance of both, and attach herself, under the banner of pure and scriptural Protestantism, to the majesty of celestial truth. How soon, and through what instrumentality such a transition will be effected, it is not for me to offer even a conjecture. There can be no question, however, that the mind of the nation—feeling a void, which neither the hollow forms of popery nor the cold and barren negations of infidelity are capable of filling—is ripe for some great change. Among the greatest obstacles to the adoption of the protestant profession among the more intelligent people of this country appears to me to be the fact that almost every attempt to introduce the reformed faith has been associated with some violent political movement; and the erroneous notions which they entertain

of the real nature and requirements of that faith —notions to which the personal character of the abandoned prince who first established it in England, and the conduct of many of those who represent it before their eyes, have in a great degree contributed—as if it was nothing but a system of exemption from the more rigid demands of religion. Not very long since, the Principal of the College in this place spent an evening at our house—a man of very considerable acquirements, but by no means remarkable for his attachment to the Catholic system. I appealed to him as a man of intelligence and reflection, and asked him how long he thought it would be before France would cast off the mask of popery—a mask too superficial and transparent to conceal the real infidelity which lay beneath; I shall not soon forget the gravity and apparent earnestness with which he replied—"This will take place whenever France shall have become sufficiently *irreligious* to wish to exchange the burdensome duties enjoined by Catholicism for the easier and more indulgent forms of Protestantism." I felt perfectly confident indeed that just the reverse of this is the real desideratum for accomplishing such a change. Until the nation, in fact, is profoundly penetrated with the vast and overwhelming importance of correct views and habits in religion and morals, a mere change of outward profession would be of little importance, and it is

entirely through the want of this feeling that numbers at this moment—deeming it a kind of point of honor to call themselves Catholics, because they were brought up as such—linger on a species of neutral territory, which seems to afford them a shelter from the debasing bondage of the one system, without bringing them under the influence and control of the purifying and elevating dominion of the other.

With respect to the state of morality—forming as it does when rightly based a component and essential part of religion—in this country, it is too much varied by circumstances and localities to admit of being described by any terms universally applicable. So far as my own observations and enquiries have enabled me to form any opinion, however, I should be inclined to say that the morality of France is the morality of civilization rather than of religion—the morality of a sense of honor rather than of a sense of duty —the morality of conventional habits rather than of authoritative and unalterable principles—a morality calculated rather to facilitate the movements of the social system than to regulate and controul the machinery of the inner man. Hence with much of outward decorum it has little of genuine purity, integrity, and strength. Guarded as it is by an imposing array of external proprieties and refinements, it has little power to resist temptation. Not growing out of a firm and lively root of christian principle, it

is liable to be scattered, like the leaves of a garland, by every wind of seductive influence. Independently of other considerations, we are irresistibly led to this conclusion by the frightful statistics of one species of immorality, when contrasted with a comparative exemption from the more brutal and degrading vices, in reference to which it may perhaps be allowed that the French have the advantage over ourselves.

But I must hasten to conclude this letter—embracing a greater variety of topics than within such limits could be adequately discussed—with a brief account of my visit to the interesting little protestant community of Cheffrêsne. I stated in a former letter that the present king had kindly promised to use his best endeavours to procure a resident and settled minister for this isolated band of Protestant professors. Many difficulties have arisen in the way of carrying into execution this generous engagement. I trust, however, that ultimately they will be surmounted, and that the ardent and long-cherished desire of this very interesting body of people for a fixed pastor will be accomplished. In the meantime the excellent Baron de P. who is an elder of this little church, proposed to drive me over for the purpose of visiting them, and spending a Sunday among them.

On Saturday, March 22nd, we accordingly set out on this pleasing expedition. At Ville-Dieu, situated about fifteen miles from Avran-

ches, and within about five miles of Cheffrêsne, we accidentally met one of the people, who was quite delighted with the sight of my excellent and kind-hearted companion. About three miles on this side of Cheffrêsne we were met by a fine elderly peasant—quite such in appearance, though he was, perhaps with one exception, the principal landed proprietor belonging to the Protestant church. His name I soon found to be Duchemin. It was really quite delightful to witness the glow of honest pleasure which lighted up the countenance of this frank and open-hearted old man, when the carriage stopped, and he offered his cordial salutation to the generous Baron, and your poor friend, the "pasteur," whom they had been prepared to expect for the following Sunday. I was immediately informed that either the Baron or myself was to be the guest of this good man during our stay at Cheffrêsne. He had gone to the neighbouring town of Ville-Dieu on that day, partly to procure suitable provisions for his expected visitants, and partly to be our guide through a rather difficult part of the road. He walked, or rather ran—such was the spring of delight which seemed to animate his frame—by the side of the carriage during the remainder of the journey. When we arrived, about seven in the evening, at the door of his rustic and modest dwelling, we found a considerable number of his friends and relatives awaiting us in front of his house.

Among the rest was a very fine old man of the name of Daniel Vilaine—the neighbour and brother-in-law of Duchemin. These were the two principal men of the place, belonging to the Protestant community, and from their comparatively superior rank and influence might justly be considered as the chief pillars of the church. My kind friend and companion had forewarned me of the homely character of the accommodation we were to expect, and from a regard to my comfort had taken with him the necessary appendages of an English breakfast. When that common utensil called a tea-kettle was brought out, it was examined with intense curiosity, and it became a matter of amusing interest, what could possibly be the name of so singular a piece of furniture. The daughter of the good Duchemin, who had gone over to Jersey some years before for the purpose of being married, at once with much apparent satisfaction pronounced it to be a *Teacle*. Not to dwell, however, too minutely upon various amusing circumstances connected with our evening's repast under the hospitable roof of this generous villager, as soon as it was over we entered into conversation with Duchemin and his brother-in-law Vilaine, respecting the present state and past history of Protestantism in that neighbourhood.

These worthy men were evidently quite delighted to narrate the horrible persecutions

which their forefathers had encountered during a long series of years—during, in fact, the whole period intervening between the infamous revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV. in 1682, and the partial recognition of the civil rights of Protestants by Louis XVI. in 1787. Our host shewed us with deep and reverential interest an old Bible, which had been in the family for very many years, and which must have been carefully concealed during the century of persecution, because in those days it would have exposed any one to the most imminent peril even to possess a Bible. Duchemin told me that during that era it was a very common practice to burn Protestant heretics with their Bibles fastened to their backs. It was also common to tie large bundles behind them to give them the appearance of monsters. I was forcibly reminded by this statement of what is well known to have been the strange notion of the Romish persecutors respecting the Waldenses;—that their children were little monsters having black teeth, and other unnatural deformities.

On Sunday morning, having slept at the house of Vilaine, I rose early and walked out into the fields. It was a beautiful spring morning. The country, which was rich, woody, and well-cultivated, looked lovely, and the whole atmosphere was literally vocal with the music of the innumerable feathered songsters, which were chanting their early carols. In returning

to the house I met Duchemin, accompanied by his guest, who came to breakfast with me at the house of Vilaine. When I referred to the charming melody with which our ears were delighted, Duchemin instantly took up the remark and with a glowing countenance exclaimed that these little warblers were all employed in celebrating their Maker's praise, and thus afforded us an instructive lesson of gratitude and love. A little before ten o'clock we set out for the Temple, as all the Protestant places of worship are called in France. Here I must tell you that in consequence of some misapprehension, the Baron de P. had communicated to these good people, that he would bring with him a minister who would give them a sermon. Of this I had not the least idea until within two or three days of our proposed journey, and when it was then mentioned to me, I was at first disposed to shrink from an attempt for which I felt myself, especially with so short a notice, to be very inadequate. Unwilling, however, to disappoint a people who appeared to be literally hungering for spiritual food, I prepared a short and hasty discourse founded on the Apostle's reply to the Jailor of Philippi—"*Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ*, &c."—endeavouring to embody in terms as simple and concise as possible the great doctrine of salvation through Christ. What some of my ecclesiastical brethren might have felt I know not; but I confess that any scruple about

the regularity of this proceeding never for a moment entered into my mind. In fact I felt a secret satisfaction in forgetting my episcopalianism for this day, and identifying myself with the polity founded by one, whom Hooker describes as "incomparably the wisest man the church of France ever produced." Having robed myself in the usual vestments kept there for the use of occasional visitors, and not greatly differing from our own, I was conducted into the pulpit. The chapel is a very neat, plain little building, capable of holding about two hundred persons. The congregation was already assembled—men, women, and children, all cleanly, though very plainly attired—the women on one side with their high Norman caps, and the men on the other, all clad in short blue cloth jackets. The service had been already begun by one of the elders reading the established Genevese Liturgy, in which I was delighted to recognize the same great doctrines of our common faith—the same simple humiliating confession of guilt—the same simple reliance on the merits of the Saviour, and the same prominency given to the volume of inspiration, as so strikingly characterize our own. On this occasion two chapters of the Bible, with Ostervald's Reflections, were read. Here I may be pardoned the expression of a sentiment which forcibly struck me on the survey of this scene, and after the service a similar remark was made by my benevolent companion;

—that whatever inconveniences—and I do not wish to deny them—may attend a uniform and authorized and public formulary of devotions —yet in circumstances like the present it is of inestimable value. Deprived, as these people have been for nearly one hundred and fifty years, of any regular ministry, how could the worship of God have been conducted among them without such a provision. It is in such circumstances that the value of a devout and scriptural liturgy is most distinctly seen. At a given signal your unworthy friend "Mons. le pasteur" pronounced his discourse, which with all its imperfections of style and pronounciation, was heard with the most profound attention, and he was never nearer being unduly elated in his life, than by the cordial and affectionate gratulations with which these poor people crowded around him after the service was over. When the Benediction had been pronounced, my excellent friend distributed among the people a large packet of Burder's Village Sermons translated into French, and it was delightful to see with what heartfelt pleasure these simple villagers received this valuable boon, which they seemed to know so well how to appreciate. When this was over they shewed us a new piece of burying-ground, which they were on the point of enclosing, and in which they appeared to take a deep interest.

In the afternoon—having dined at Daniel

Vilaine's, and heard the children sing some beautiful little hymns—we had another service, and the Baron de P. read a most admirable sermon by a modern Swiss Divine. The sermons usually read are those of Saurin and Durand. After the service, the subject of the expected pastor, as promised by the government, was brought forward, and I cannot easily express the pleasure I felt when I observed the cordiality, approaching to acclamation, with which these poor villagers expressed their readiness to aid in the support of a minister appointed by government under the sanction of the consistory. I have since taken the liberty of recommending this case, through Messrs. Wilks and Pyt of Paris, to the notice of the Continental Society.

In the course of the evening we had a great deal of very interesting conversation, and Daniel Vilaine brought out a variety of curious documents illustrative of the vexations and persecutions which his forefathers had endured, on account of the fidelity of their attachment to the cause of Protestant truth. Among others he shewed us a Dispensation authorizing his grandfather to receive his son—the father of Daniel Vilaine himself—into his family. At that time it was the common practice to carry off by violence the children of the protestants in order to bring them up in convents in the principles of popery. I believe there are some persons now living at Cheffrêsne who remember

cases of this horrible system of child-stealing. When the emissaries of government entered the village for this purpose, parents endeavoured to hide their little ones as from the assaults of so many beasts of prey, and there were frequent instances in which catholic neighbours, moved by the voice of nature, assisted them in their endeavours. Vilaine's father had thus been carried off in his infancy to be reared up in the convent of Caen, where, however, it is fair to state that it does not appear that he was ill-treated, and at the age of twenty-one he was restored to his father on condition, as this document specifies, that regular certificates should be sent of his attending church and receiving the instructions of the priest. Another very curious old record he shewed us, was a Pope's Bull, authorizing the marriage of Vilaine's father, without which his children would have been illegitimate and incapable of maintaining any civil right. He also shewed us a copy of the famous edict of Louis XVI. issued in 1787—which may be considered as the first, though yet very obscure and glimmering dawn of religious liberty in France. The worthy old man dwelt upon these and other matters connected with the former state and the present more favored condition and more animating prospects of the religion he professed, with a calm and chastened enthusiasm, in which it was impossible not to sympathize; and which, in

my estimation, really gave a character of sublimity to the whole train of his reflections. With information comparatively limited—though by no means unacquainted with the leading features of the history of their country since the era of the reformation—with views of the great doctrines of religion marked by considerable obscurity and indistinctness, these interesting people are evidently actuated in general, not only by a fervent zeal for the Protestant profession, but by deep devotional feeling; and it seems only to require the fostering influence of an enlightened ministry, in concurrence with the divine blessing, to render this isolated part of the spiritual vineyard an oasis in the midst of a desert—verdant with the streams of life, rich in the fruits of righteousness, and fragrant as the garden of the Lord.

On the following morning we returned home, dismissed with the cordial salutations and benedictions of the good people. My excellent friend and companion was not less delighted with the visit than myself, and I verily believe that the emotions I experienced on the occasion, as they are among the most interesting of my mental associations, will be among the last of my earthly recollections.

I am, &c. &c. &c.

LETTER V.

My dear Friend,

My former letters were addressed to you from the spot which we had selected as the scene of our more settled residence, during our sojourn in this country, and had principally reference to objects and events, which I had an opportunity of surveying through the medium of that "loop hole of retreat." But now I invite you to accompany me through a more remote excursion, and to partake of the Impressions suggested by more exciting and diversified phenomena. Previously to our return to England, I was strongly recommended to make a somewhat extended tour. Having therefore made the necessary arrangements, and taken leave, on the evening of the preceding Sunday, of my little domestic congregation, we set off very early on Tuesday, the 8th of April, from a spot where we had now sojourned for nearly twelve months, and which will be associated in my mind, not only with the circumstances of a remote and venerable antiquity, and with views

of beautiful and romantic scenery, but with many personal and ministerial recollections in a high degree interesting and affecting. About six o'clock that evening, we arrived at Caen, a place which for its size,—the population being about forty thousand,—contains perhaps as large a proportion of men of talent, and especially of historical and antiquarian research, as any town in France. The prevailing tone of politics among the bourgeois or middling classes, as I had on a former occasion an opportunity of ascertaining, is unquestionably of the *juste milieu*, or the present government cast; but among the higher classes, there is a considerable proportion of Carlists and bigotted papists. Their respective interests are maintained with equal vehemence, and, as is usually the case with such organs, with equal disregard to candour and sound principle, by two journals, which have undertaken to represent them. The Protestant interest is here in a deplorably low condition. Although there is a temple and even a consistory, of which, M. Martin Rollin, a man of talent, and a relative, I believe, of the celebrated author of the Ancient History and the Belles Lettres, is president; there is, I fear, very little else of protestantism than the name, belonging to the majority of those who are attached to it. Neither time nor space will allow me to enter on the historic recollections of this town, intimately interwoven as they are for a long series of years, with those of our own country. The most interesting monuments of antiquity, are

doubtless its churches—one of them, founded by the Conqueror, and containing his remains—and its castle erected by the English. I walked around this massive fortress early on the morning after my arrival, and few minds, in such a situation, could have been so insensible as not to be roused into some degree of activity at the view of the crowded scenery which a single glance at its mouldering turrets seemed to call into existence.

On our journey from Caen to Honfleur, we had two very intelligent companions, apparently of the mercantile class. As they were discussing the political and religious condition of France, and acknowledged the almost universal prevalence of scepticism and restless unbelief, one of them remarked—"Les ames ennuyées ont besoin de croire,"—implying that the human spirit, however gaily it may float for a while on the tide of reckless and tumultuous passion, or however it may sport amidst the swellings and foamings of a vain, arrogant, and short-sighted philosophy, can find no place of repose for its jaded faculties—no place of security from its compunctious misgivings, except in the cordial belief of that scheme, which, besides the provisions which it involves for human wants, affords the only satisfactory solution of the otherwise inexplicable enigma of human existence. 'Oui'—said his companion with a sigh—'et il est un besoin cruel!'—'Yes, and it is a cruel want!' Seldom have I seen more strongly depicted in the human

countenance the struggle, which had evidently been carrying on in his breast, between that pestilential brood of false principles 'of blackest midnight born,' which is poisoning and desolating some of the finest minds in France, and the claims of that religion, the evidence of which he had never fairly examined—than in the face of this young man. It is needless to say that I endeavoured, so far as time and circumstances admitted, to exhibit the truth to him in such a manner as appeared calculated to replenish that painful void, to satisfy that 'cruel want,' which no accumulation of sophistry and error had hitherto been capable of supplying. Having arrived at Rouen, you may easily imagine that I lost no time in visiting the celebrated cathedral of this town. This magnificent pile is built, I believe, in a style of pure gothic, and the richness of its architectural decorations, amidst all the mutilations of time and comparative neglect, is still exceedingly striking. It was commenced under Rollo, first Duke of Normandy, and grandfather of William the conqueror. This renowned Norwegian chieftain, having been banished his own country by the King of Denmark, landed in Normandy, and having married the daughter of Charles the Simple, received christian baptism at the hand of the archbishop of Rouen, in the early part of the tenth century. The noble edifice begun under the auspices of this illustrious convert, was not completed, however, until the beginning of

the fifteenth century, under the Duke of Bedford, son of Henry IV. and governor of Normandy. Among the numerous tombs and monuments contained in this church, the most remarkable are those of Henry, the brother of Richard, Cœur de Lion, of the Duke of Bedford, and that containing the heart of the brave Cœur de Lion, himself. The second of these celebrated persons added a rich and splendidly decorated niche on the south side of the building. These memorials of the illustrious dead, as well as various others, were destroyed at the time of the revolution. Scarcely a monument, indeed, escaped some mutilation during that carnival of wanton and frenzied barbarism, a barbarism which did not satisfy itself with the atrocious horrors which it perpetrated on its living victims, but seemed eager to wreak its savage and impotent vengeance on those bloodless masses of marble and other stone, shaped by the magic hand of genius and art for perpetuating the memories of the dead. Nor were the ravages of this rapacious monster confined to the destruction and mutilation of monumental remains. The noble library belonging to this cathedral, founded by the fore-mentioned Duke of Bedford, was totally destroyed during the same period, as if the savages were determined to immolate all that was illustrious, elegant, and refined, all that was calculated to instruct, dignify, and adorn human nature, in one vast and promiscuous holocaust to the demon of revolution-

ary fury. In accordance with the republican decree, which passed at an early stage of the revolutionary drama, that the church bells should be converted into cannon, the great bell belonging to this cathedral, weighing, if I remember rightly, forty thousand pounds, was cast into one of those pieces of what Milton calls 'devilish enginery.' As I was on my way to the church of St. Ouen, I came to a large archway, which clearly indicated it to have once belonged to some great building, and on entering I found that behind it there was a considerable mass of edifices, which were now occupied by the great schools of the town, conducted by the frères ignorantius, a species of lay schoolmasters of an inferior grade. After some preliminaries, I was admitted, by permission of the superior, to see the different classes. I was informed by the amiable and polite young friar who conducted me, that this edifice was originally a convent; that at the time of the revolution it became a prison, and is now hired from the prefecture for these schools. This establishment contains between twelve and thirteen hundred children, generally from seven to twelve years of age. Attached to it is a Normal school, for the purpose of training up schoolmasters. The frères all teach gratuitously, and the expenses of the building, books, and other necessaries, are paid by private subscriptions. The two junior classes went through their various exercises of reading, wri-

ting, geography, designing, and French grammar, in my presence, which were all really executed by them in an admirable manner. The superintendents of these classes informed me that these schools derived no assistance whatever from the Commune, because they could not comply with the required conditions, which according to his statement, amounted to the total exclusion of religion. From what I know of the Communal schools in other places, however, I am inclined to question the accuracy of this statement, and to think that the required exclusion does not extend beyond the external and distinguishing peculiarities of the Catholic church. In consequence of this, another school, supported by the civil authorities of the town, something similar to our Lancasterian schools, was established, where, said my zealous companion, they profess to teach *Morality* without religion. But morality, added he emphatically, without religion for its basis, cannot exist. In this I entirely agreed with him, but I was forcibly reminded by his train of remark on this subject, of what I heard an excellent and valued friend of ours, now gone to his rest—the biographer of Henry Martyn, state some years ago of a conversation, which took place between the late venerable and eloquent Mr. Wilberforce, and a Romish priest. When this distinguished christian philanthropist inquired into the state of religion in France generally, and especially among the priesthood; the Abbé

replied, that, the priests were very religious; and when Mr. W. observed, that he had heard a somewhat different account, and that according to his information, even licentiousness and personal profligacy prevailed at that time to a considerable extent among them; the catholic answered, without the least perturbation, that they were certainly *very* religious, but as to 'de morale,' he had nothing to say about that. With respect to the personal conduct of the great majority of the French priesthood of the present day, I certainly do not think that they require such a confession, as the charge could not be fairly adduced against them; but still I fear that the church of Rome, wherever she has possessed unbounded power, however she may have held the dogma of the necessity of religion, in her sense of the term, as the basis of morality, has by no means maintained with equal rigor the necessity of morality as an indispensable accompaniment, or an essential part of religion. After the Church of Rome,—and I am afraid some other churches and communities are not altogether exempt from the charge,—had tried for some centuries what religion, a form of religion without the life and power, could do without sound and substantial morality; it is scarcely a matter of surprise that the pseudo-liberals, of the day, on either side of the water, should be disposed to try, whether morality, as the produce of legislative enactment, and intellectual culture, can be sustained without religion.

The connection between these two great elements of national character, is, however, absolutely indissoluble, and vain will ever be the attempt to embody the one in the habits of the people, without placing it in its due and divinely appointed relation to the other. In a spirit of candour, which really surprised me, the kind-hearted friar proceeded to say, that 'the English have more religion, than we in France,' and 'I have no doubt,' said he, 'that they, as every nation ought, teach the children the religion professed by the people.' While, I could not fail to be pleased with this candid admission on the part of a catholic friar, I could not help wishing that it were still more emphatically true, with respect to the state of religion in our country, than fact will justify us in assuming it to be. The master of one of the classes, in compliment to me, ordered a little boy to say all he knew of the geography of England, and I was quite surprised at the accuracy and ease, with which this little fellow went through the different counties, rivers, mountains, and other localities of Great Britain. You would have been amused with the facility, with which he enumerated, amidst other hard names, *Merionnet*, and *Shester*, among the first of these divisions. Amidst this gratifying scene, however, Popery could not help shewing its daring impiety in trifling with the word of the Eternal. The class which performed its exercise, was directed to read that part of the book, entitled 'Les Com-

mandements de Dieu,' the Commandments of God; and, as in former instances, I was shocked to find that the Second Commandment was made actually to disappear, and the Third substituted in its place, which explained the taking of God's name in vain, to include speaking ill of *Saints* as well as of God himself.

From this place, we passed to the church of St. Ouen, one of the lightest and most elegant structures I ever saw. I had heard that it was in this church, the celebrated illuminated church-book was kept, and when I inquired of a lady whether this was the case, she told me that it was in the library adjoining. She then requested me to look at the Benitière, and I was astonished to find, that the whole length of the beautifully fretted vault of this fine edifice, was reflected from the surface of the water contained in this broad marble basin. I was then directed to the Library, forming part of a magnificent building adjoining, formerly the Convent of the Benedictines, to whom the church belonged. The librarian instantly shewed me the illuminated book, exhibiting in the most splendid style of illumination, most of the important events, to which reference is made in the evangelic history. Near the end of the volume, is a view of the Last Judgment—the blessed, seated aloft around the Saviour—the wicked, plunged into a vast gulph below, presenting every horrible and uncouth form, and pursued by armed demons.

Such an exhibition I could not regard otherwise than as a grievous and disgusting burlesque of a most awful and solemn reality. This wonderful production of perseverance and skill, is the performance of a single individual, named Daniel d'Eaubonne. It was made for the use of the church of St. Ouen, and cost him the labour of thirty years.—It was begun in the year 1652; and finished in the year, 1682. The author died in the year 1714. The librarian, a very civil and communicative old gentleman, asked me whether I knew the great Bibliomaniac, Mons. Dibdin, whom he described as a man 'bien instruit.' He told me that at the time of the Revolution, both the cathedral and the church of St. Ouen were used for forging arms, and that every tenth day festivals, consisting of singing and dancing, were there celebrated in honour of the Goddess of Reason! In the centre of an open area, surrounded by buildings, is a fine statue of the celebrated Joan of Arc, surmounting a public fountain, and holding her sword in her hand in the most heroic and military style. In a corner of this place, called the Place de la pucelle D'Orleans, is pointed out the projecting angular point, where it is said she was condemned to be burnt for witch-craft, after the sentence of the university of Paris. Not far from this place, is a fine old church, given at the time of the revolution to the Protestants, and it has continued in their occupation ever since.

It is capable of containing two thousand persons, but the number attending is generally from three to four hundred. The whole professedly Protestant population amounts to about two thousand. At the entrance of this church, just outside of the door, there is a large flat stone with an English inscription, stating it to be in memory of William Shuttleworth. The remainder of the letters is scarcely legible. Having paid another visit to the cathedral, and gazed with renewed admiration and delight at

> '——its high embowered roof,
> With antique pillars massy proof,
> And storied windows, richly dight,
> Shedding a dim religious light'—

We set off early the next morning for Paris. As you ascend the lofty eminence, with which Rouen is skirted on the south-east, leaving the elevated and noble peak of St. Catherine to the left, the appearance of the town, spread in a thick and variegated cluster, over the extensive plain on the opposite side, while the turrets of the cathedral rise in venerable grandeur above every other building; and the calm and quiet Seine, studded with beautiful islets, softly meanders through the valley, certainly presents a very fine and picturesque scene. On matters of mere description or literary landscape however, exquisitely alive as I know you to be to all that is beautiful and sublime in nature and art, I shall not expend

much time or labour. It is in the moral and intellectual scenery of the various districts through which I passed, that I felt the deepest and most lively interest; and it is my first Impressions on these and other collateral subjects, that I endeavour to record in these fugitive communications. Without any very extraordinary adventure, though you seldom travel twenty miles in a French Diligence without meeting with some disaster or other, we came within sight, amidst the reflected radiance of a fine setting sun, of the metropolis of the 'Grande Nation'—of what its inhabitants proudly regard as the capital of modern Europe, the centre of civilization and refinement. With all these boasts in its favour, and after all that some of my friends had endeavoured to impress upon me respecting its unparalleled beauties, I confess I did not approach Paris with any extraordinary interest or expectation; and I verily believe, that if it had not lain in my way towards more interesting scenes, I should not, as a matter of personal gratification, have gone twenty miles out of my course, for the sake of seeing it. With Paris, so far as I am acquainted with its history, there is very little associated, which is calculated to kindle that lofty enthusiasm, or to touch those deeper sympathies, which are inseparably linked to the cities of the ancient world. It does not stand forth to the view amid the haze of a venerable antiquity, while a train of poets,

philosophers, heroes,—or, what is still more, of saints, martyrs, and confessors, passes in solemn and indistinct grandeur before the eye of the imagination. It is true, indeed, that it was known under the name of Lutetia in the time of Cæsar, who records it to have been burnt, and its bridges demolished, in expectation of an attack from the forces of Labienus. But it does not appear to have been remarkably productive in ancient any more than in modern times, of men, whose virtues and endowments throw a halo of sacredness and chastened sublimity over the scene of their birth or subsequent achievements; and it would really seem that the sagacious monarch—Philip Augustus, as I have been informed, who gave the city its present name—must have taken a prescient glance at those habits which were so long and so eminently to characterize this celebrated rendezvous of sensuality, frivolity, and fashion, that he should have selected Paris above all others as a kind of patron-saint for the child he undertook to re-christen. It is true indeed that Paris has not been wanting in changes and excitements, but they have been nearly all of the dark and ferocious, or the vain and frivolous kind. What are the events which stand out most prominently to the eye in the history of this city for the last two or three centuries? What is the moral colouring which it presents to the view of the philosopher and the christian?

Is it not that of superstition and impiety—of tyranny and lawlessness—of slavery and political licentiousness—of the insolence of rebellion and the abjectness of submission, respectively struggling for the mastery, or characteristically acting their part? Witness the horrors of St. Bartholomew—the assassination of Coligny and Henry IV.—the shameless profligacies of the courts of Louis XIV. and Louis XV.—the countless massacres of the revolution, its crop of sanguinary pikes and bayonets having naturally sprung from the poisonous dragon's teeth sown by infidelity, and nurtured by a soil prepared and fitted for their reception by ecclesiastical and political corruption. In writing thus I would not be supposed for one moment to deny the existence, at different periods in its history, of most excellent and enlightened men in this great focus of irreligion and vice. I rejoice to believe that the case is totally otherwise, and it is delightful to think, as I shall have occasion to remark in the course of this letter, that the number of such persons is rapidly increasing. This gratifying consideration, however, does not invalidate the melancholy fact that hitherto Paris has been more distinguished by the qualities and events above specified, than by those more immediately connected with the diffusion of the light of knowledge, truth, and christian morality throughout the world. It is far from my intention, as it would be alto-

gether out of the range of my purpose, habits, and investigations, to enter into any account of the public buildings, and the numerous institutions for the promotion of the various objects of science, literature and art, with which Paris now abounds. This, besides that it would be almost endless, is scarcely necessary in the present state of intercourse between the two countries. I cannot help just alluding, however, to the remarkable exhibition of the works of living artists, which was open at the Louvre at the time that I was in Paris, and which I was strongly urged to visit. This was certainly by far the most splendid scene of the kind, which I had ever witnessed. The picture which excited the greatest interest among the visitors was evidently that intended to represent one of the most affecting and tragical events which mark the annals of our history—the execution of Lady Jane Grey. Without pretending to be a connoisseur, I could not, however, regard it by any means as the most successful effort of the graphic art in this noble assemblage of the works of genius. Independently of other defects, it did not appear to me to be true to the character of that illustrious young personage.—There was a shrinking—a timidity—displayed in her whole bearing and attitude, utterly inconsistent with that calm christian resignation combined with that heroic dignity and intrepidity which history has recorded to have pre-emi-

nently marked her demeanour to the last moment of her earthly existence. The finest piece appeared to me to be that, in which certain members of the Chamber of Deputies, headed by Lafitte, are represented as offering the Throne of France to the Duke of Orleans at the Palais Royal, after the revolution of the three days. The look of melancholy indifference with which that prince, surrounded by his whole family, seems to turn away from the paper presented to him, beautifully expressed that reluctant solicitude with which a wise and reflecting man would, under such circumstances, accept a trust, however splendid in itself, of such awful and overwhelming responsibility.

The main inducement of my visiting Paris just at this time, was to have an opportunity of attending the great annual religious meetings in this city. And having been enabled to be present at most of them, I shall endeavour to give you a brief but accurate account of the various services connected with these interesting 'reunions,' as they are called on this side of the channel. They may be considered as having commenced on Sunday, the 13th of April, as some references were made to them at all the Protestant places of worship on that day. I will, therefore, first give you a few particulars respecting the services which I attended on that day. Early in the morning I hastened towards the Protestant Church called then

"Oratoire," which you know is a large, commodious building, long since devoted to the reformed worship. On arriving there I found myself at the Sunday School, consisting of about eighty boys, and a considerable number of girls. At eleven o'clock the children were examined by the assistant minister of the Oratoire, in that part of scripture which relates to the Witch of Endor. During this examination, when the minister asked a little boy, *whom* the Christian is to consult when he is at a loss how to act, the latter replied with great naiveté and apparently much to the amusement of the rest, "He must go to a priest." This led to a somewhat elaborate disquisition on the subject of confession. At half-past twelve the public service began at the Oratoire—commencing with the baptism of an infant by the suffragan minister. The ceremony differed very little from that used in our own church, except that there was no sign of the cross. The sermon was preached by Mons. C—— one of the four Protestant ministers belonging to this church, and editor of a weekly Protestant periodical, entitled "Le libre examen." The subject was the Transfiguration; and although there was considerable oratorical talent, and frequent gushings of that species of eloquence, which is calculated to open "the sacred source of sympathetic tears," it appeared to me equally defective in manly vigour of sentiment, pointed appeal

to the conscience, and clear exhibition of Evangelical truth. Mons. C—— is, in fact, well known in France to belong to, or rather to be the leader of that class of Protestants, which has a great dread of the religious movement that has recently been excited in that country, and, without professing the Arianism of England, or the Neologism of Germany, for the most part confines itself to the most indistinct generalities as connected with the distinguishing tenets of the christian faith. In the afternoon we attended the English chapel at Marboeuf, established some years ago by that distinguished and highly gifted Christian philanthropist, the Rev. Lewis Way. If any error was committed in the arrangement of this place, it was in excess of elegance and refinement. Places of worship ought to be assuredly rendered comfortable, but any thing which can be considered luxurious is here out of place. It was delightful, however, to find so many of our countrymen, though the chapel was not full, listening to the glad tidings of salvation, and "hearing in their own tongue the wonderful works of God," in this centre of frivolity, profligacy, and vice.

In the evening I went to the Oratoire again, in expectation of hearing the younger Monod —another of the ministers of that place, decidedly Evangelical in his views, and editor of a very useful periodical, entitled the "Archives du Christianisme." On my arrival I found all

the doors, with the exception of one at the side, closed, and when I made my way up stairs, though it was considerably beyond the appointed time, I found only three or four persons assembled, apparently in considerable agitation. On making inquiries into the cause of all this, I found there was a great tumult in a neighbouring street—the Rue St. Martin—and it appeared doubtful whether there would be any service at all. A young man present told me that he had just been on the spot where the tumults had commenced, and that he had seen a Diligence overturned, and a great mass of stones piled together for the purpose of erecting a barricade. A great deal of firing had taken place, and one man had just been killed on the spot. All this was certainly no very agreeable intelligence to one like myself, who had not been accustomed to such deeds, especially as no one could tell to what length the matter might be carried. It was certain that the government was in expectation of an attempt at insurrection in connection with the dreadful scenes which were carrying on at Lyons at the same time. I endeavoured, however, to compose my mind, and to rest in cheerful dependence on Him who can not only command the physical elements, but also control the more terrific movements of popular and insurrectionary violence. Within a short time, although there was scarcely any congregation, the service began,

and we had a sermon, simple and unpretending both in matter and manner, but redolent of the very spirit of the gospel from a young minister of the name of Blanche, in the employ, as I understood, of the Continental Society. As we returned to the hotel there was considerable confusion in the streets. When we had reached our quarters I was shocked and disgusted beyond measure at the light and jocular manner in which some foolish and thoughtless young Englishmen were talking of the murderous conflict which had just commenced. During the whole of the night there was occasional firing, but no one could tell the extent to which human life might be sacrificed. On the following morning I walked towards the Tuilleries with a view of ascertaining the state of things, but on approaching found the whole space fronting the palace, filled with cavalry, and a line of infantry guarding the entrance. A crowd of persons, among whom I found myself, was soon driven back into the streets, and a large artillery force began to fill the Place du Carrousel, immediately opposite the Tuilleries—presenting altogether a very imposing and somewhat formidable scene. Just at this time I heard a brisk discharge of cannon within the court of the palace, which appeared filled with soldiery, and I really thought for the moment that the king's palace was attacked; which, in fact, had formed a part of the plan of the insurgents, and hence the great concentra-

tion of military force at this point. But on inquiry I found that this discharge took place during a review of some regiments of artillery by the king. At eleven o'clock Louis Philippe, accompanied with the Dukes of Orleans and Nemours, and a crowd of military officers, again reviewed various corps of cavalry, endeavouring to rouse their martial ardour by many a touching appeal to his "dear comrades." Having occasion to go to the other side of the river, I found every bridge for a considerable distance strongly guarded, and not an individual was allowed to cross. I was therefore obliged to go a long round in order to pass over, and during the whole of the way we met large regiments of national guards, headed by the municipal authorities, marching towards what appeared to be the point of rendezvous. About twelve o'clock the united forces of the line and national guards, amounting at least to seventy thousand men, marched through the different quarters of the town. The government took these precautionary measures in evident expectation of a violent conflict, and this imposing display of force tended, doubtless, in a great degree, to quell the spirit of the insurgents, and to establish, as they express it, "the dominion of the law." In the course of the day I learnt that after a straggling fire kept up during the whole of the night, early in the morning, the troops of the line and national guards combined, made a

vigorous attack on the insurgents—carried the whole of their barricades, and pursued them into the narrow streets and houses, where they took refuge, and where some of them defended themselves with the most obstinate resistance, and that in less than two hours, the matter was completely at an end. The number of victims in this wretched struggle could not be accurately ascertained. Besides the wounded on either side, it has been, however, certified, that between sixty and seventy persons were killed. Among these was one very melancholy and affecting case. Very early on the Sunday evening at the commencement of the tumults, a M. Baillot, an officer of artillery belonging to the national guards, and the only son of a deputy, received several shots, of which he died the next morning; and what rendered this base murder peculiarly affecting, this fine young officer was to have been married on the very day he died to the daughter of a general in the army. During the attack in the morning, the Duke of Orleans, heir apparent to the throne, had a very narrow escape, as a ball from one of the windows passed between him and one of his aid-de-camps, and struck the cap of a soldier close by him.

Thus the conflict, for the present, ceased, but it is to be feared that it was only adjourned; for as an intelligent and excellent tradesman of Paris remarked to me, just after he had laid down his weapons, and put off his uniform as

a national guardsman, a few fatal musket shots may quell the tumult for a moment, but this "ultima ratio regum" has little effect in stifling the convictions, or in eradicating the deep-rooted habits of thought and feeling belonging to those whom these *coups de fusïl* may for the present have repressed. There are three principal causes which are eminently unfavorable to—if not absolutely incompatible with the continuance of solid peace and tranquillity in this city. The first is the utterly irreligious and unprincipled character of the great mass of its inhabitants—especially of the young men of all grades and conditions in society—persons who may be justly described as those who neither fear God nor regard man. When I walked down towards the English chapel on the Sunday afternoon through the Champs Elysées, and beheld the scenes of vanity, revelry, and reckless folly that were there enacted, I could not help reflecting—how is it possible that such a people should either enjoy the blessing of God, or be restrained from any mad excesses to which their inclinations may prompt them, by any consideration which ought to influence a rational and immortal being. The whole city appeared to me absolutely to be "wholly given to the idolatry" of pleasure and amusement in every form, which a lawless ingenuity could devise. On the very evening of this holy day, the scenes, of which I have just spoken, began to

take place, and twenty-four hours had not passed from the time I had yielded to these painful reflections, before the blood of a considerable number of human beings had been shed within a very short distance of that very spot by the hands of their fellows, and apparently with the same heedless levity as characterized their sabbath-breaking amusements. When will kings —when will governments—when will purblind statesmen—when will nations learn that without religion—without the fear of God—without the influence of the gospel, there can be no permanent security, tranquillity, and order? The second cause of the almost ceaseless agitation and convulsion, by which the peace of society is disturbed in France, is the extravagant notions of liberty and political equality which are entertained by a great proportion of the people. An enlightened love of liberty, combined with sound principle, is an essential element of national prosperity and independence. It is the germ of civilization, and one of the noblest and most appropriate accompaniments of genuine christianity. That there is a considerable proportion of this sound constitutional spirit animating the middling rank of French society cannot be denied; but when the mass of those who form the broad base of the column is in a state of constant fermentation, actuated by passions and theoretic impulses utterly incompatible with the continued stability of the social fabric in

any fixed and definite shape—when it is added that the component parts of this mass consist in a great degree of the most corrupt materials, combining the loftiest political pretensions with the lowest moral claims—it must be acknowledged that the peace and safety of individuals, and the institutions of the state, rest upon a very precarious foundation. The third circumstance which appears to me to lour rather ominously on the continuance of tranquil freedom in France, is the arbitrary and despotic character of some of the recent enactments of the present government, especially the law of associations, which perhaps was the immediate cause of the last tumult in Paris. These may be necessary for anything I can tell. But they come with an ill grace from an administration which was unquestionably carried into power, and fixed on the debris of a former system, by very much the same kind of factious combination and brute violence which itself is now endeavouring to crush. It is a political blunder to suppose that rulers can avail themselves of the aid of a mob to deplace their antagonists, and that the popular minotaur, having devoured one party—having thus learnt the secret of its power, and enjoyed for a while the luxury of success, will allow the other to rest in peace. Milton, the greatest modern champion of liberty, felt, with bitter indignation, the failure of his endeavours to diffuse correct notions of freedom among a

multitude which did not know how to appreciate or enjoy it, when he exclaimed,

> "But this is got by casting pearl to hogs
> That bawl for freedom in their senseless mood,
> And still revolt, when truth would set them free.
> Licence they mean, when they cry liberty;
> But who loves that must first be wise and good;
> But from that mark how far they rove we see,
> For all this waste of wealth and loss of blood."

I would only say further on this subject, that I am decidedly of opinion that the French system of national guards, and of turning quiet and industrious tradesmen and mechanics into a species of mock soldiers has a bad effect on the minds of the people, as it has unquestionably a tendency to destroy that salutary horror of fire-arms and other weapons of destruction, which would prevent their trifling with the use of them. I have heard of some West Indians taking their gun and going into the woods to shoot a runaway negro for amusement, and I am persuaded that there are thousands of men in France at this moment who would feel very little uneasinsss in trying their skill as marksmen on a Carlist or a juste milieu man. I do not believe that they would lose one hour's sleep from having by this means, as Hume expressed it, turned a few ounces of blood out of its course.

On Monday evening the religious anniversaries commenced with a prayer meeting at the Swiss Church in the Rue Taitbout, in order to implore a blessing on the approaching re-unions. There

were eight or ten ministers present, and the service consisted in reading several chapters of the Bible bearing on the subject, singing, and prayer. A spirit of fervent piety seemed to pervade and animate the whole proceedings. It is at this church that the excellent Duchess de Broglie, daughter of Madame de Stael, and wife of the late minister of foreign affairs usually attends.

On Tuesday, April 15th, having obtained an order for a seat in what is called the basse tribune, as most convenient for hearing, through the kindness of a friend, from one of the members, I went at half-past one to the Chamber of Deputies. I was there some time before the sitting commenced. The chamber, otherwise called Palais Bourbon, is certainly a very noble and magnificent edifice, and exceedingly commodious for the purpose. The rostrum, which the orators mount, who mean to make a lengthened address to the chamber, is raised four or five feet above the level of the floor, and stands just before, and considerably lower than, the President's chair. A little before two, a loud flourish of trumpets announced the arrival of Mons. Dupin, the president. After he had taken his seat, there was a very long paper read, to which, however, no one paid the least attention, called the procés verbal of yesterday's proceedings. When this was finished, a most pertinacious but apparently not very gifted radical, of the name of L'herbette,

mounted the rostrum, and uttered a very long philippic against the government proposal of making a certain allowance to the household officers of the late government. Neither I, nor, I am confident, any one else, could distinctly hear one sentence that he spoke, as all the members were engaged in loud conversation, during the whole of his speech. The president had a large bell, something like one of our dinner bells, by his side, which he occasionally rang as a call for attention; very little notice, however, seemed to be taken of the bell or the orator. In fact, every body seemed to think that the latter, as well as the former, was 'vox et præterea nihil.' If I am not mistaken, no less a man than Edmund Burke, the greatest orator and statesman perhaps the world has ever seen, was at one time called in our House of Commons, the dinner bell; because his rising to speak seemed to act as a general intimation to retire, on many of the members of the house. The more sonorous instrument of Mons. Dupin, however, is intended to serve a different purpose, and to invite attention to a more intellectual treat. After L'herbette, Charles Dupin, brother of the president mounted, and to him some attention was paid. He spoke with amazing rapidity, as indeed did most of the speakers, though some of them held their speeches in their hands, and it was amusing to see the bustling embarrassment, into which they were occasionally thrown

by losing their place. The style and manner of the French *Orators*, as they are always called, if they utter but two colloquial sentences, are the most remote imaginable from lofty and dignified eloquence. There is, however, an earnestness of voice and gesticulation, a throwing of their whole soul and even body into every thing they say, which, if not eloquence, is certainly something very like it. If Cecil's definition of eloquence be correct, that it is 'earnest simplicity,' then certainly some of the deputies are entitled to the credit of it. Whatever estimate may be formed of the intellectual part of their oratory, it is impossible not to acknowledge with admiration the astonishing volubility of their tongues, the elasticity of their muscles, and the lubricity of their joints. When they speak, however trifling and insignificant the subject, every fibre seems to be in vivid and active play, and it sometimes requires a considerable power of abstraction to be able to withdraw the attention from these physical evolutions, and to fix it on the thoughts, which keep in motion such an extraordinary piece of machinery. Among the distinguished orators of the present day, Thiers, the author of a large and well-written history of the Revolution, and now minister of the Interior, is perhaps the most fluent, sprightly, and diffusive, in short, the Canning of the Deputies:—Guizot, a protestant, and late a professor in the university of Paris, and now minister of public Instruction,

the most philosophical and commanding, the Mackintosh of France:—Persil, late Procureur du Roi, and now minister of Justice, the most vehement and impassioned—shall I call him, the Brougham of French Law?—Bignon, the most statesman-like and comprehensive; all on the present government side. Berryer, the advocate, and a Carlist, is, I think, the most thoroughly eloquent of them all. He occupies a position in the Chamber, somewhat analogous to that of Sir Robert Peel, in the house of Commons. Mauguin and Odillon Barrot, violent oppositionists of the 'extrême gauche,' are clever speakers, and might very well take their place by the O'Connells and the Sheils, and some other flowers of the Emerald Isle.

On the evening of the same day, April 15th, the Meeting of the Tract Society, was held at the Swiss Church, Rue de Taitbout. It commenced with a fervent and devout prayer, by the younger Monod of Paris. This was followed by an admirably written introductory address, by Mons. Stapfer, the chairman. The great object of this dissertation was to point out the necessity, in the present intellectual and political condition of France, of supplying the craving minds of the people, with wholesome and appropriate aliment. In the course of his illustrations he referred very impressively to an expression employed not long since by a distinguished infidel deputy; that there was

unquestionably something wanted at this moment to fill up the void occasioned, as he expressed it, by the *disappearance of Christianity*, affording another instance of the mistake so frequently committed in France—that of confounding Christianity with Popery. The Report of the society, which contained a great variety of interesting anecdotes, was read by a lay-gentleman, as I understood, of great respectability and piety; and after several brief but interesting addresses, the whole was concluded with prayer. The most remarkable difference characteristic of this anniversary, a difference, still more marked in the subsequent meetings, I had an opportunity of attending on the continent, as compared with similar meetings in England, was the much larger proportion of written addresses, in the form of reports, and consequently the narrower compass, to which the speeches are reduced in the former than in the latter. Besides the report of the committee, read by the secretary, the chairman of the meeting, and the treasurer of the society, on the continent, have in general, each a long written address to be read on the occasion. This renders the meetings certainly less animated. But I do not know whether the defect is not more than compensated by the superior solidity and maturity of the sentiments thus brought forward, than can be expected from mere extemporary effusions. With us the reading of reports is generally considered as the ringing of the bell

for service :—in France it constitutes the great business of the day.

On the following day, April 16th, the anniversary of the Bible Society was held at the church of the Oratoire. This was the meeting of the Old Bible Society of France, for you are probably aware that, recently, another society has been established at Paris, entitled 'The French and Foreign Bible Society.' The principal difference between this and the original society is, that the latter according to its fundamental constitution, is bound to confine its exertions to the protestants of France, whereas, the new institution, like the British and Foreign Bible Society, professes to embrace the whole human race within the range of its benevolent efforts. It may be remarked in general, that the old society is principally supported by the more moderate, or rather, latitudinarian party, while the new rallies around its standard all, or nearly all, the more zealous and active of the protestant ministers both in Paris and in the Departments. There are, however, many most valuable and excellent men, still attached to the original institution, although its constitution, necessitated by the circumstances of the time, in which it was first established, must unquestionably be regarded as too exclusive and confined to meet the present opportunities and exigencies of France. The meeting on this occasion was respectable but not numerous. There were present about fifty ministers, and

the attendants appeared to amount to four or five hundred. The chair was taken by the Baron ——Lozêre, who opened the proceedings with a very pleasing and devout address. This was followed by singing a hymn, composed by Mons. Coquerel, one of the ministers of the Oratoire. Then an excellent prayer, bearing on the general object of the society, was offered up by Mons. Goep, one of the Lutheran ministers. The report was read by Mons. Cuvier, of the same communion, and cousin of the celebrated naturalist of that name. This document was pervaded by a spirit eminently christian and affectionate. It entered at considerable length into three points, proposed by the friends of the new society, previously to their separation from the institution, and stated the grounds, on which the committee had thought it right to decline acceding to these measures. The first of these was the addition of Ostervald's Notes, which was rejected as inconsistent with the fundamental principles of the society. The second was the distribution of the Bible among the Catholics, against which, I confess, there appeared to me no valid reason; and the third, the abandonment of the Apocrypha. While, however, it was remarked, the committee had thought it right to decline pursuing the course adopted by the British and Foreign Bible Society, in reference to this point, the warmest feeling of gratitude and attachment towards the London society was expressed. After the Report had

been read and adopted, there was a most admirable and eloquent discourse, written by Mons. Sabatier, of Toulouse, and read with great feeling and effect by Mons. Vermeil, of Bordeaux, on 'The Unity of the great object of the Bible—being the discovery of the glorious scheme of Redemption through Christ—amidst all the diversity of outward forms, ceremonies, and successive economies.' Mons. Vermeil followed his noble dissertation, with a very pleasing and evangelical address, pointing out Christ as the only foundation of a sinner's hope. After several other addresses, the chairman rose, and, referring to the murderous conflict of which Paris had so recently been the scene, remarked in beautiful and appropriate illustration of the subject, that the Bible appeared to him to be the Caduceus—the Mercury's wand, by which alone the serpents of opposing factions could be effectually prevented from fighting with each other. The business of the day was concluded with singing, and an impressive prayer by the pastor of Dieppe, and I confess, that seldom, if ever, have I attended a religious meeting more strikingly and deeply characterized by a spirit of devotion, unity, and love.

On the evening of the same day, the Evangelical Society of France, analogous in its character and objects to the Continental Society of London, and the Evangelical Society of Geneva, held its anniversary at the Rue Taitbout. There were

present about thirty ministers, and a very respectable assembly. The Report stated, that the society had now ten labourers engaged in its service; and some very gratifying extracts from the correspondence of these agents were given. The first address was delivered by Mons. De F— protestant pastor at Bolbec, near Rouen. I had read an essay of this gentleman, to which a prize had been awarded about ten years ago, on the object and character of the Bible Society. Although, as I have since learnt, the author was no more than twenty years of age, when he wrote this dissertation, it is without exception, one of the noblest and finest pieces of composition on the subject I ever read. I had also recently perused an ordination sermon of his, of which it is enough to say, that I consider it worthy in all respects to be placed side by side with that of Robert Hall, on a similar occasion. My anticipations were raised, therefore, to a pitch bordering on enthusiasm, in expectation of hearing this eminent individual. I once undertook a journey of more than one hundred and fifty miles, one of the main objects of which was to see and hear Hall; and though I was abundantly gratified in the former of these purposes, I missed the opportunity of the latter. In the present instance, my curiosity indeed was gratified, but my expectations, so far as they embraced any thing beyond the simple and often embarrassed expression of evangelical and devotional senti-

ment, were utterly disappointed. Instead of the rich and golden periods which seemed to have fallen spontaneously from his pen, as he traced the brilliant track of an imagination, glowing with native energy and chastened by the finest and blandest spirit of devotion, I found nothing but inharmonious and sometimes unfinished sentences, struggling for utterance through the medium of an organ which seemed ready to be choked at every renewed effort. Instead of an eagle, floating with out-spread pinions, aloft in 'its pride of place,' I found indeed a bird of paradise, certifying with sufficient distinctness the blessed land to which he belonged, but with his wings clipped, with difficulty sustaining himself above ground, and in all his movements seeming to be weighed down by 'sheets of lead.' Instead of a Paul, to whom in the character of a Mercury, I had been prepared to offer the incense of a blind, and I fear, idolatrous admiration! I found a Moses, 'not eloquent, but slow of speech, and of a slow tongue:'—thus affording another illustration of the various manners and degrees, in which the gifts of God are dispensed to individuals, all wisely designed to promote at once the edification of the church and to hide pride from man. To lessen, however, in some degree, my surprise, and perhaps to soothe my disappointment, I subsequently learnt that this was probably the first occasion on which Mons. De F— attempted to address a public assembly

in an unprepared speech. After various other addresses more or less interesting, the whole was concluded with a fervent and appropriate prayer, by Mons. Pyt, agent of the Continental Society at Paris.

On Thursday, April 17th, was held in the same place, the Anniversary of the French Missionary Society. At this meeting, which was very respectably attended, there were not less than four reports read—each of considerable length. The first was a well-written introductory address by Mr. Stapfer, giving a cursory view of the progress of religion on the continent during the last century. The next was the Report of the Committee, properly so called, by M. Grandpierre. The third was read by the Treasurer, Mr. Waddington, an English Gentleman, who has been long resident in Paris, and takes an active part in all that relates to the cause of religion in that place. His address contained some striking facts illustrative of the zeal with which the cause of missions had been taken up in some of the departments. But the most remarkable circumstance perhaps connected with this meeting was the attendance of Col. Phipps in behalf of the Church Missionary Society for the purpose of conveying the expression of the sincere sympathy and good-will of the members of that admirable institution to their brethren of the Paris Society. That pious and gallant officer was most kindly and cordially

received, and you would have been delighted to observe the glow of pleasure and satisfaction with which his appearance was greeted by the meeting. The mission of such an individual was so much the more remarkable, as in France there are, unhappily, but few respectable laymen —especially of those belonging to the military profession—who feel any lively interest in the cause and progress of religion. His fine soldier-like bearing, combined with the obvious manifestation of profound devotional feeling and enlightened piety, produced a very deep impression on the meeting. To myself, also, I confess that the appearance of a fine veteran officer, influenced by these noble sentiments, was peculiarly refreshing, especially after having my ears assailed, and my heart grieved by the profaneness and shallow impiety of some young Englishmen, with whom I had been obliged, in some degree, to associate at the hotel for a few days past. It is surely a sad mistake—a mistake, however, which the improved feeling of society is gradually rectifying—when persons of this description imagine that it strengthens the impression of their courage or respectability, when they attempt to vaunt these qualities by profusely garnishing their discourse with the flowers of a dialect, in which the most thoughtless, and often the most worthless of their companions is generally the best proficient, and which no one but those who have sunk to the

same level of moral insensibility and degradation can hear without disgust. When Col. Phipps announced that in England the Church Missionary Society alone had raised in the course of the last year, considerably more than one million of francs, the meeting seemed to be perfectly electrified with amazement at the magnitude of the sum, and I was certainly not a little gratified in finding my country presented in this noble attitude of christian liberality to the view of our neighbours. The fourth of the Reports which I mentioned, was that of the Ladies' Association, read by M. Monod the younger, and the meeting having been subsequently addressed by Mr. Cook, an English Wesleyan minister, labouring in France, who spoke with considerable effect, and amused the audience a good deal by a saying of the celebrated Dr. Carey, just as he was going out to the East—"it is true we descend into the well, but remember you hold the ropes"—and also by M. de Felice and others, the whole was concluded with prayer.

Such is a very brief account of the most interesting circumstances which fell under my observation during this portion of my journey. I regret that I was obliged to leave Paris on Friday, and was debarred the opportunity of attending the meeting of the New Paris Bible Society, and of one or two other institutions. But I have no doubt that their main features

were similar to those which I have already detailed, as they are in general the same individuals who take the most prominent and active part in the management of all the societies of this description. With the hope of changing the scene, therefore, and of avoiding undue tediousness, I propose in my next to give you some account of our journey from Paris to Geneva, and of the principal objects which attracted my attention during our stay in that renowned city—a city which has perhaps a stronger claim than any other of the same magnitude to the title of the Modern Athens, and is unquestionably entitled to the higher honor of being the cradle of the French reformation.

I am, &c. &c. &c.

LETTER VI.

My dear Friend,

Without needless exordium I enter at once on my narrative, as promised at the conclusion of my last letter. Throughout the remainder of these communications, indeed, I shall confine myself more strictly to First Impressions than in some of the preceding, especially as every step of the ground over which I now intend to conduct you, was previously to me an unknown land. On Friday, April 19th, we left Paris to pursue our proposed journey to Geneva, and many as were the interesting scenes which I had an opportunity of witnessing in this renowned capital since our arrival, I confess that I left it without any regret. The everlasting bustle and tumult of its streets and places of concourse—to say nothing of what I had seen of its impiety and political disaffection—suited neither my taste nor health. Our road, for some time, as you doubtless will remember, ran along the western

bank of the river, and the line of houses with which the opposite margin of it was skirted for a considerable distance, had certainly a very pleasing effect. But from Charenton to Joigny, a space of nearly one hundred miles, it is hardly possible to conceive any thing more dull and uninteresting. It is in fact one dead flat, neither diversified by the slightest undulation, nor enriched by wooded scenery. As we approached towards Tonnère we found ourselves already entered on the territory of the ancient Burgundy, so famous for its wines, and at the proper season I have no doubt that its vine-clad hills would present a very rich and agreeable prospect. At this time of the year, however, nothing could look more wretched, barren, and unpromising; and as I looked at the vast tracts that were covered with the low, grovelling, branchless, leafless, and sapless stumps of the vine, I could not help being greatly struck with the meanness of the present appearance, as compared with the loveliness and fecundity of the future crop. Who—if he was previously ignorant of the fact—from the existing aspect and condition of these shrunk and withered stalks, could conjecture that from them, within a few months, would spring up a profusion of wide-spread foliage, which would clothe the hills as with one vast mantle of beauteous verdure, while every bough would be pendant with clusters, whose rich and generous juices might

contend with the choicest productions of the Falernian or Formian hills. To pursue the train of association, to which this reflection naturally led, would require time and space such as I cannot now command, and to minds like that to which these communications are primarily directed, I am sure that the analogies are so palpable and obvious as to render it altogether needless to suggest them.

During the journey from Paris to Tonnère, where we had planned to halt for the Sunday, we had no considerable rest any where except at Joigny, where we arrived very early in the morning, and where, miserable as were the accommodations, we were obliged to wait for another Diligence. At this place I found that we had for fellow travellers a pair of young emigrants from the Emerald Isle—a gentleman and his wife, who were exceedingly indignant apparently that I recognized them by their dialect to be my fellow-subjects at least, if not strictly fellow-countrymen; and the lady found it very difficult to condescend to reply to my offer of some trifling accommodation in plain honest English. I was the more amused at this embarrassment, as I had just heard her—while endeavouring to impress upon her French companions the superior advantages enjoyed by persons travelling in their own carriage—declaring that it was attended with "beaucoup plus de comfort." But sometimes amused and some-

times annoyed as I was with the combined ignorance and pretension of these personages, nothing occurred during the remainder of this tedious stage of our journey which it would be either profitable or interesting to detail. At one o'clock we arrived at the town of Tonnère, which is a subprefecture, and contains a population of about four thousand.

Besides the necessity of resting somewhere for the Sunday, I was not sorry to have an opportunity of staying for a day or two at a place which, from its situation in a retired and central part of the country, would afford me a good opportunity of seeing the French character as unalloyed by foreign intercourse, as perhaps in almost any place in the kingdom. Tonnère is a little old town, situated at the foot of a range of hills, with a rich valley, watered by a fine stream, stretching to the north of it. Formerly it appears to have been a place of great importance, as the church of St. Peter's, romantically situated beyond the southern verge of the town, once occupied the centre of it. There are the ruins of a fortress, which doubtless was a place of great strength in the time of the illustrious and warlike dukes of Burgundy. The people here appear to live in considerable physical comfort. In no place in France have I seen a greater appearance of competence without any exhibition of wealth. The people of both sexes look healthier and stronger than those I have seen in

any other part of France. They are entirely dependent on the cultivation of the vine; but when this fails they are subject to the most appalling distresses and privations.

But it is in the intellectual and moral condition of the people I always feel the greatest interest, and I am sorry to remark that in no part of France was I more struck with the low and degraded state of the community, in reference to these all-important questions than in this. I spent a Sunday at Tonnère, and nowhere even in this country, have I seen the duties of that day more entirely neglected, and its sacredness more wantonly trampled on than in this little rural town. The day was, in fact, entirely given up to business and pleasure. There was no attempt even at the maintenance of an ordinary degree of decorum. The streets were filled with men. women, and children playing at cards, and amusing themselves with various other games of chance, with a full share of the usual accompaniments of cursing and swearing; and in the evening the public-houses seemed to be very fairly filled with brawlers and drunkards. This I presume, is that continental mode of spending the Sabbath, with which some of our travellers and public men are so much enamoured, and which they are so eager to introduce under the specious title of innocent recreation among our own people. But let us mark the effect of these recreations on the habits of the community, with

respect to the public worship of God. I attended the two churches—one in the morning and the other in the afternoon. The services were hurried over in both cases with very little apparent devotion on the part of the priests or people. The attendance also was exceedingly small. I do not believe, in fact, that out of a population exceeding four thousand, so many as four hundred entered a place of worship in the course of the day. It may in some degree account for this deplorable state of things that, so far as I could learn, not a single Protestant is to be found in the place. It is a remarkable fact that as we advance in the direction of Rome the influence of the clergy appears decidedly to decline. As we passed through a town of some size between this and Paris, I asked a decent looking man, who was standing at his door, how many priests there were belonging to that place, he answered, "One, and that is quite enough." He informed me, moreover, that he had not been at church for six months, nor attended confession for thirty-six years. So far as I could rely on his authority, the majority of the people were of the same character as himself. In the church of St. Peter's at Tonnère, several inscriptions which had been effaced at the time of the first revolution, presented a very curious appearance. During that bloody carnival, this church was used as a gunpowder manufactory. Does not this read a very solemn and impressive warning to the super-

intendents, ministers, and functionaries of all religious communities—not excluding our own comparatively excellent and still-improving and reforming church? Indeed I never witness the melancholy sight presented in almost every town of France, of sacred edifices, once rich in gorgeous architectural decorations and choice specimens of art, now converted into stables, workshops and store-houses, without being conscious of this reflection, instantaneously rising in my mind—"Behold the effect—immediately indeed of frenzied impiety and ferocity, but remotely, and still more culpably, of clerical ambition, indolence and vice—of heresy, priestcraft, superstition, tyranny, and licentiousness, all accumulated during a series of ages into one vast mass of ecclesiastical abomination, fit only to be swept away by the rude and ruthless hand of the demon of popular anarchy. How easily might all this have been prevented, if men had carefully studied the great authoritative charter of their ecclesiastical rights, privileges, and obligations, and honestly followed its directions. The present state of France, however, too clearly testifies that revolutionary violence is not the proper—much less an adequate remedy for ecclesiastical abuses. It would be well if some political theorists bore in mind that destruction does not necessarily involve reformation—nor the removal of what is evil, the substitution of what is good.

On Monday morning, April 21st, we left Tonnère, and travelled eighteen hours incessantly over a country which, in a perpetual succession of hills and valleys, forms a perfect contrast to that which we had left behind us, and arrived at midnight at Dijon, the capital of the ancient Burgundy. Having sallied forth at an early hour, I wished to find my way to the cathedral of this place. Turning just across from the hotel, and walking down the street, I noticed the corner of a magnificent church. I instantly said to myself—this is doubtless the cathedral—you may conceive my astonishment and chagrin, therefore, when on coming round to the front, I saw indeed the arch of a noble church, but over the entrance was inscribed in conspicuous characters, "Magazin de fourrages militaires." I went in at the side door, and according to the announcement I found the interior filled with hay, and a man employed in cutting some of it. It was not, however, the cathedral. The ancient episcopal palace is partly now turned into what we should call a coach-office, in which I took my place. In the course of the morning I visited the museum, erected on the site of the palace of the old dukes of Burgundy. In one of the rooms there are two magnificent tombs—one of Philip the Hardy, first duke of Burgundy—the other of his son. The figures of each are exhibited lying horizontally at full length. In his repertory of curiosities there are various very

remarkable pieces of ancient armour. At Dijon there is a Protestant church, and, as I have been informed, a very zealous and useful minister, but I am sorry that I was too much pressed for time to pay him a visit.

At twelve o'clock we left Dijon for Dôle. Our principal companions through this part of our journey were a young man, apparently of the middle rank of life, who soon discovered himself to be a furious republican, and an old artillery officer of Buonaparte. This young republican asserted that the "Society of the rights of man" —a species of political union professing the wildest and most levelling principles of the revolution —was multiplying and extending itself in all directions. He assured me—though some allowance must doubtless be made for the exaggeration of a zealous partizan—that in that quarter of France there was scarcely a town of 3,000 or 4,000 souls, in which there were not 500 or 600 leagued in this frightful and destructive combination. When I asked him what specific object they had in view in thus uniting, he frankly replied that their primary object was to effect a change of government. On my further asking why they were so eager for the overthrow of a government, which they had themselves so recently established at the price of so much tumult and bloodshed, he answered that it was because Louis Philippe and his ministers did not *march with the revolution*, but had leagued themselves

with the Holy Alliance. And pray, I ventured further to ask—for I was amused with the emphatic use of the word *march*—in England it is the march of intellect, in France it is the march of revolution—whither would you have them march? To this question he was at first rather puzzled to make a reply, but after a little consideration he answered that the very first point, to which the revolutionary movement would conduct, was to make the king personally responsible for his conduct. It is not for me to say whether, under this somewhat ambiguous phrase, it was the same kind of practical responsibility as was exemplified, at an earlier stage of a similar march, in the case of the unfortunate Louis XVI. With ineffable contempt towards his majesty of the barricades, and with infinite complacence as he pointed to his own bosom, he added—" What is a king, but a man like myself; that he should not be called to account for his conduct?" I certainly could not deny the truth of his metaphysics, nor could I maintain in a moral point of view, the political axiom so well known, and doubtless sometimes indiscreetly asserted as a part of our own constitution—that the king can do no wrong. But the propriety, or the necessity, under a monarchical form of government, of sheltering the person of the sovereign under the shield of ministerial responsibility is a totally different question. And if this substitutional, instead of personal, respon-

sibility be at the same time essential to the system, and be found, by experience, most conducive on the whole to the liberty, peace, and prosperity of the community, then the abstract and metaphysical fact of the original equality of the species is found too narrow, in the application, to support the conclusion intended to be reared on it—

> "Such reasoning falls, like an inverted cone,
> Wanting its proper base to stand upon."

Leaving, however, the question of the universal equality of the species, I would only remark that the present French government certainly does appear to me very unpleasantly, if not insecurely, circumstanced. It is composed of men, some of whom were once leading members of political, if not revolutionary associations, and were unquestionably carried into power on the shoulders of the very class of men whom it is now endeavouring to crush by enactments, perhaps necessitated by the elements by which it is menaced, but assuredly arbitrary and despotic in the highest degree. No one who knows any thing of the history of the late revolution can deny that the dynasty of the elder branch of the Bourbons was overturned mainly by the hands of the very men who are now clamouring with equal violence, and many of them ready to fight with equal desperation, for another revolution. It is the unquestionable fact

that a few men of talents and comparative respectability, by the aid of a little dexterous flattery, directed to the most sensitive organ in the craniological system of the Parisian populace, succeeded in arresting the progress of the revolution, and in shutting out the republican monster, which was known to be at the door, and that this was the real agency, by which his present majesty was established on the throne. With this part of the conduct of Louis Philippe and his supporters, no fault can perhaps be fairly found, but it has necessarily placed the government in that false and dangerous position, which obliges it in self-defence, and probably in defence of public order, to shed torrents of that blood, to the boiling impetuosity of which it is really indebted for its own elevation. I am, moreover, strongly inclined to think that it has hitherto maintained its ground, not so much by means of the general attachment of the people, as by means of that mutual dread of each other, by which both the extreme parties are prevented from attacking that *tertium quid,* which constitutes the government of the juste milieu. From this embarrassing position of the French government statesmen and politicians may at least learn one important lesson—that it is a dangerous thing to profess opinions too wild and visionary to be carried into effect, or to hold out extravagant expectations to a people in order to gain a present object in the prostration of the occupants of power and the

destruction of existing institutions. In thus acting they may be only preparing a pillory—as a member of the Chamber of Deputies lately described the bench of ministers, on which they are themselves to be suspended to the eye of popular scorn. I hardly need say that these remarks are not intended in the slightest degree to reflect on the frank and honest avowal of conscientious and rational convictions or the manly expression of that abhorrence, which is inevitably excited by gross and palpable abuses. They apply only to those indiscreet and often factious professions, which are designed to effect a momentary triumph over one class of antagonists, while they kindle feelings and expectations in another class, the frustration of which will hereafter be resented with an intensity of indignation proportioned to the enthusiasm, with which they were previously hailed. In this view of things how far the well-known declaration of the present king of France in his interview with Lafayette, that he, as well as the general, was a republican in principle, and that, if owing to peculiar circumstances, he mounted a throne, it should be a throne surrounded with republican institutions, is liable to such a censure may be matter of serious consideration to his majesty. It is a melancholy fact, however, that in cementing the materials of this throne, and in consolidating the institutions with which it is guarded, no ordinary portion of republican blood has been

shed. But I shall proceed no farther with these remarks, hoping that by returning as soon as is safely practicable to a more constitutional and liberal system of government, and above all, by the divine blessing on the means now so zealously employed for the diffusion of true religion and knowledge throughout the country, peace and tranquillity will long prevail among this fine-spirited, but somewhat vain and inconstant people.

I now resume my journey. About six o'clock in the evening, we began to ascend a series of elevations, and from the summit of one of those hills I caught a prospect, not without some feeling of enthusiasm, of the distant Alps, among which, Mont Blanc towered aloft in conspicuous and gigantic grandeur. The air, as we slowly advanced along the lofty acclivities, was intensely cold. The glorious and animating prospect, which unfolded itself like a vast panorama before the eye, a prospect embracing a circle, which could not be less than two hundred miles in diameter, made us for a while forget the severity of the mountain blast. But I must stop my pen. I left home with a pretty strong resolution, not to attempt to describe scenery, however beautiful and sublime, or to write verses, however tempting the occasion. You will perceive, however, that in the latter part of this determination, I failed. Descending along the fine slope, on which rests the little town of Dôle, with the chain of the Alps and Mont

Blanc rising to my view, as they were irradiated by the glowing splendour of the setting sun, I felt the temptation very strong. I retired to rest, however, without attempting to indite a single line; but next morning, by a mistake, I was awoke between three and four o'clock, and unable to compose myself to rest, while I was tossing on the bed in a state of feverish excitement, I thought it might not be amiss to employ myself in composing a few lines relating to the magnificent object, which I had contemplated with so much interest on the preceding evening. I give you the result, and I am not sure whether you will consider it to be poetry, or prose a little beside itself:—

TO MONT BLANC.

Mountain of matchless size and towering crest,
That seem'st to look disdainfully on each
Aspiring cliff, which impotently strives
To rival thee—and sinks beneath thy shade!
How shall I name thee?—Giant?—Monarch? These
Are terms beneath thy peerless majesty.
Should I not rather name thee the chief dome
Of God's terrestrial temple, curtained round
With clouds, and lighted with a countless host
Of stars—heaven's inextinguishable lamps?
Vast pinnacle! not reared by human hands,
Nor destined to re-echo with the strains
Of human melody, but there aloft
The Great—the Mighty One, who circumscribes
His dwelling by no mortal masonry,
Has other worshippers, who chant His praise
In music not ungenial to his ear—
Music of roaring wind, and snow, and hail,
Of rolling Avalanche and the Cataract's rush,
Varied full oft by thunder's louder peal—
Each element combining its dread voice,
To swell the awful chorus to the skies!

Mountain of bold emprize, whose frowning height
The traveller's foot has rarely dared to scale!
At each ascent of thy proud battlements,
Legions of dangers guard thee, and warn off
With petrifying glance, the hardy wretch
Who wantons with existence, periled thus
To please his fancy, or indulge his pride!
While on thy cloud capped summit, Terror sits
In snowy state pavilioned, to receive
The distant homage of the wondering throng!

Mountain of strength, that seem'st to rest secure
On everduring base, and to defy
Th'effects of time and change! Yet thou art doomed
To perish, and ere long, thy rocky pile
Will burst in shivers, and dissolve in flame.
And there are those, who on that day of dread
Will wish thy falling mass would crush their frame
To comminuted atoms, or thy flood
Of fiery flame ingulph them quick; and why?
To hide them from the glance—the glance of whom?
Of Him—the Meek, the Gentle, and the Mild,
The Lamb for sinners slain—of Him, whose voice
Of bleeding love they now despise and scorn.

Mountain of views sublime—o'erwhelming—vast!
Descriptive prose has oft essayed to paint
Thy scenes of grandeur, and oft too the Muse
Has plumed her eagle wing for bolder flights—
To mount thy summit and to skim thy crags:
While on thy stern magnificence her eye
Gazed awe-struck, and her raptured ear imbibed
The solemn music of the torrent's roar.
But vain each weak attempt of prose, or verse,
Or bold adventure—to explore—to scan
Or pencil forth thy dread sublimities
And horrid chasms; and thou must still remain
Mysterious, indescribable, unknown!

And yet proud promontory, what art thou
In all thy peerless altitude of form!
What but a puny point, scarce visible
To eyes that view thee from a loftier sphere,
Emerging from the fathomless abyss
Of being's ocean! Nought, or great, or small,
Is rightly deemed but by comparison.
Brought to the level of a higher scale,

Alps are but molehills, and yon massive heaps
Of catenated rock, which skirt the wide
Horizon, but minute component parts
Of that great chain, which ranged in countless wreathes
Of multiform existence, circles round
Jehovah's vast, eternal, central throne!

After a most fatiguing journey of nearly thirty hours, relieved however, in the day time by some striking and magnificent scenery, as we passed along the deep gorges, or ascended the lofty elevations of the Jura, we arrived at Geneva. I cannot here omit noticing the insufferable annoyance of the Passport system, as it is maintained in the Continental states of Europe. We were obliged to bring out ours at least six times within a few miles of Geneva. To proceed with anything like freedom from interruption in these countries, travellers should literally fix their passports on their arms—like a species of Jewish Phylactery. I have often thought that Hobbes's theory of human nature as illustrated by locks and bolts would receive a much stronger confirmation in the insulting assumption that every man is a rebel, a thief, or an assassin, unless he can prove the contrary by means of this official document. It was certainly a just and revelant argument recently advanced by the Duke De Broglie, in support of the law of Associations, that in France such a law could not unduly restrain the liberty of the subject, because there was already a law in full force there, which permitted no man to exercise the

powers of locomotion, without leave from the authorities. It is remarkable that this degrading system is not in any degree characteristic of any particular form of government, as it is, if possible more rigidly enforced in the little Republican Canton of Geneva, than under the Constitutional Monarchy of France. When an individual is allowed after much formality to enter at the gates of this mighty city, he is even offered the indignity of a card, granting him permission to sojourn within its walls, and to be carefully returned when he wishes to leave the place. But I must endeavour to overcome the feelings of vexation and repugnance excited by this department of the continental economy. If the inhabitants of the country are themselves satisfied with its operations, a stranger has no reason to complain. He must at least, while in a foreign land with Polynices submit to existing regulations, however harassing and absurd.—

Τας ἰῶν κραιουνιῶν αμαθιας φερειν χρεων.

April 25th.—We are now quietly lodged within the walls of Geneva. At the first view of this lovely spot, I have no hesitation in saying that it is beyond all comparison the most beautiful and interesting, which I have seen since I left England. In every respect it far surpasses any French town of a similar size, which I have had an opportunity of seeing. In its surrounding

scenery—in its blue, beautiful and translucent lake—a smooth, calm, and unruffled watery mirror, reflecting every hue of heaven from its surface—in its magnificent girdle of mountains, whose summits, mantled with eternal snows, seem literally to touch the skies, in the comparative regularity of its buildings, and in the superior elegance and cleanliness of its streets, in the apparent comfort and content of its inhabitants—in the richness of its villas, skirting both sides of the placid Leman—in every thing, in short, which, as far as I can judge, (but my experience is yet short,) can render a place eligible as a residence, it is by far the most agreeable I have yet seen on the Continent.

In Geneva and its vicinity, there are so many things to interest me, and which indeed must be interesting to every man, who is at all conversant with the religious and political history of this renowned little state, that I am quite at a loss how to comprise all that I wish to say within the remaining space of this letter. Before I proceed however, to the few remarks which I propose to offer on the state of religion and the efforts now making towards reviving its influence among the people, I may just remark that Geneva is one of those Swiss Cantons—for in this respect they considerably differ from each other—which are purely representative in their form of government. Each of the twenty-two Cantons has a specific and peculiar system of

administration, while all are united by common ties of sympathy and interest to the great federative body. Geneva, which contains a population of somewhat more than fifty thousand—of which, the city itself contains nearly thirty thousand, and is bound by the federal treaty to supply a contingent of eight hundred and eighty men towards the military defence of the states, is governed by a representative council of two hundred, of which thirty members retire annually. They are elected by such of the citizens as pay taxes to the amount of fifteen Florins per annum. This general body elects from its own members another supreme council of eighty, who are styled syndics—somewhat analogous perhaps to our house of Lords. Purely elective as this form of government is—without any defect in the principle, and without any gross abuse in the administration, that I could learn, I was notwithstanding surprized and somewhat amused to find that in this temple of popular liberty—on this classic soil of republicanism—in this chosen asylum of persecuted freedom and independence, radicalism—meaning by that term a violent abuse of government, and a clamorous demand for some imaginary reform—is as rampant as in the days of Tory administrations and their alleged machinery of rotten boroughs in England. In no column of an English diurnal vehicle of acrimony and invective, have I ever read more furious vituperation directed against an existing administration, than

in a Genevese journal, which has just fallen under my notice. Leaving however, the Genevese magistrates to settle their quarrels with these gentlemen of the Press, I proceed to matters, which are more interesting to me, than forms of government and even their merely secular administration. I would only just observe as we proceed, that in a small state, like those of Ancient Greece, or Modern Switzerland, where there is less danger of violent conflicts, the republican may be no undesirable form of government, but in an extensive range of dominions where there is need of a concentration of authority, and a momentum of power capable of promptly reaching its remotest extremities, constitutional monarchy appears to be unquestionably the most salutary and effective.

The first, and in reality the most important question, connected with the character and condition of a people, is the state of religion and morals among them. Of Geneva in this respect much might have been fairly expected. A place, which at a very early period was brought to embrace the protestant reformation, under the influence of the preaching and writings of one of the most learned and illustrious of the promoters of that glorious and memorable revolution—a place, which enjoyed the benefit of the stated or occasional ministry of Calvin, of Farel, of Viret, and of Beza, could hardly fail, even at the distance of nearly three centuries, to

exhibit some of the fruit of the indefatigable labours of these noble champions of Christian truth. Such appears to have been the feeling of the last of these eminent men, as expressed in his beautiful and characteristic epigram, composed on the three first men, whose varied endowments, if united in one man, he justly considers as calculated to form what the world has never yet seen, a perfect preacher. If indeed, the unrivalled learning of Calvin, *quo nemo docuit doctius*—the thundering eloquence of Farel, *quo nemo tonuit fortius*—and the persuasive sweetness of Viret, *quo nemo fatur dulcius*—had been united in the same individual, it might have been said with more truth perhaps than of Milton, as a personification of the combined excellencies of the two great poets of antiquity, that he would have displayed an assemblage of endowments of the highest and most valuable order compatible with the present condition of humanity. Enlightened by the instructions, animated by the zeal, and guided by the sound judgment, and devout example of such men, Geneva may be regarded as a cradle, in which one of the eldest and healthiest children of the Reformation was rocked amidst the storms of internal discord, and the fulminations of Transalpine fury. Its renowned ecclesiastical chief, whatever may be thought of a few peculiarities in his theological system, must be acknowledged by all reflecting and well-

informed men, as one of the most remarkable and influential characters of his age—and that an age, in which intellect rising in all the freshness of its might out of the sleep of a long night of ignorance, and arraying itself in the massive panoply of the recovered literature of antiquity, walked forth with a firmness and a majesty of bearing, and displayed an energy of grasp, rarely known in times of tamer thought and more chastised emotions. It was this eminent man, who not only consolidated the great work of the reformation in this city—the chosen scene of his personal exertions, but also gave its platform of church goverment, and what is still more important, its scriptural liturgy to the whole protestant church of France. It was he, whom Scotland recognized as its great instructor in doctrine and ecclesiastical discipline. It was he, whose aid was invoked by the venerable founders of the church of England, in the original preparation of its inestimable formularies. It was he, in short, who during a series of years, and those perhaps the best years of our church, taught theology in our universities, and not in ours alone, but in all the protestant seminaries of Europe. A man thus illustrious for his erudition—eminent for his wisdom, and venerable for his piety—a man, who, while in learning unrivalled, was in labours more abundant, who can fail to reverence? I feel indeed, that the memory of such a man

is as much above my praise, as it is above the detraction of those, whose prejudice may lead them, in the language of Bishop Horsley, 'to level their shafts against him.' It is quite needless to say that the feeling of veneration and respect for the memory of this great man, which I openly avow, by no means involves an approbation of every act of his conduct, nor an acquiescence in every peculiarity of his theological system, which, with equal openness, I disavow.

Under the influence of these emotions, I visited the house, in which, though some uncertainty rests over the fact, tradition says that he lived and breathed his last; and while I looked at it, the scene of the magistrates of the city visiting him on his dying bed and receiving his dying advice, rose vividly before the eye of imagination. With similar feelings I entered the Cathedral, from the pulpit of which, he was accustomed to dispense out of his well-stored treasury of sacred learning the principles of eternal truth: I visited in company with the excellent Missionary Hartley, whom I met here, the spot, where his remains are supposed to repose beneath the shade of two aged willow trees in the public cimetière—he expressly forbad any monumental memorial—and I could have knelt upon the turf, which, on the morning of the resurrection will surrender the precious deposit, over which it has rested for nearly three hundred years.

Passing for a moment to another character, perhaps equally illustrious in his own line of pursuits, and more intimately connected with our own country, I was much interested on observing unexpectedly on this hallowed spot, a handsome monument erected over the remains of Sir Humphry Davy, at the expense of the Republic of Geneva. That eminent philosopher and amiable man died in this city, in the month of May, 1829. The monument bears the following appropriate inscription:—'*Hic jacet Humphry Davy, Eques, Magnæ Britanniæ Baronettus: Olim Regiæ Societ. Londin. Præses. Summus arcanorum naturæ indagator: Natus Pewyantiæ, Cornubiensium.* 17, *Decemb:* 1778, *Obiit Genevæ, Helvetiorum,* 29 *Mai:* 1829.' But my business at present, and that in which I am sure you feel the greatest interest, is with the existing state of religion in this place. My notice of it must however, be very brief and limited, and that it may be correct, it is necessary to present it to the view under a two-fold aspect. The religious condition of Geneva, above most other places, at this moment, may be represented as a medal, the two sides of which are respectively marked with very decided and unequivocal characters. In common with the reformed Church of France in general, that of Geneva appears in the last, and throughout the earlier part of the present century, to have fallen into a state of almost universal Laodicean-

ism—retaining indeed, the forms of a cold and barren orthodoxy, as embodied in the authorised articles of faith and liturgical services, but retaining little of the life and power of religion. At length however, the company of Genevese ministers, not only ceased to feel and inculcate the great truths of Christianity, as a system of spiritual and vital influences, but gradually fell into a species of doctrinal heterodoxy, which appears to be a compound of English Arianism, German Rationalism, and French Scepticism. If I am required to give a more distinct analysis of this destructive heresy, I confess my inability to afford it. The most marked element of it seems to be of a neutral or negative character—that of keeping out of sight—that of binding from all intercourse with the mind and conscience under a vow of eternal silence, and of hiding, as it were, within some esoteric shrine of the church, the great mysteries of our religion, rather than that of positively denying them. This, at least, was the most marked feature of this frightful apostacy at the earlier stages of its development. By degrees, however, it became more audacious, and undisguised in its movements, and presuming on the general indifference—resulting from ministerial neglect—to the great peculiarities of the Gospel, it threw off the mask, and its most prominent champion in the course of the last few years has published a series of works, the professed object of which is to sap

the very foundation of those doctrines, which not only form the basis of the Genevese and every other orthodox Church in Europe, but constitute in fact, the essence of all, for which it is worth while to contend in the whole theory of Redemption. But these reckless innovators, supported for a while by the civil authorities, went beyond this. They did not satisfy themselves with abandoning the principles of the venerable fathers and founders of their church, but they instituted, as you well know, a most virulent and malignant persecution against some of their own brethren, who still adhered to the truth These, however, are matters too familiar to the christian public in England, as well as on the Continent, to require further notice. Although, indeed, persecution properly so called, has ceased, the controversy is still carrying on with equal zeal, if not with equal violence. A few days before I arrived at Geneva, another bulky pamphlet from the pen of Mons. Chenevière, appeared; the professed design of which was the refutation of the distinguishing points of Calvinism. In this renewed manifesto, the author has the hardihood—shall I call it the effrontery to assert that it is absurd in the present day to refer to the opinions of Calvin as carrying any authority. Those opinions, it is true, were the opinions of a great man, and were not amiss in their day, but if that powerful 'athlète' were now alive, there is little

doubt that he would have embraced more enlightened views—in other words, it may be presumed, those of the lifeless and shrivelled Arianism or Semi-scepticism of the writer himself.

But "tournez la médaille." In the midst of this almost universal apostacy, the church of Geneva, in the course of a few years past, has experienced a most wonderful and gratifying revival. At this moment there is not only a considerable number of zealous, faithful, and able pastors here, but among the most respectable class of the laity there has also been a most remarkable change. During the few days I spent in this city I met with various ministers who are not only full of orthodoxy, but also full of piety, energy, and activity in the cause of their divine master—most of them, proh pudor!—ejected or excluded from the bosom of the national church, the original principles of which they most cordially recognize. Among these I need only mention Gaussin, Merle, and Galland, with whom I had an opportunity of becoming personally acquainted, and one of whom at least is well known to you—men, who differ in nothing from the most faithful and devoted of the ministers of our own church, except in what is circumstantial and accessary. In the principle of a national establishment they entirely agree with ourselves, and in fact with most of the venerable puritans and non-conformists of the

sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. And with regard to ecclesiastical discipline, they regard it as a matter in which scripture has left great latitude—as an affair indeed to be in a great degree decided by considerations arising from time and place. When I heard these noble and scriptural sentiments expressed by some of these enlightened and persecuted men, I could not help secretly exclaiming with a reference to violent partizans on both sides of the question—O si sic omnes!

One of the most important and influential means which these good men have recently adopted with a view to the promotion of the cause of pure and genuine religion, is the establishment of a most noble and comprehensive institution, called "The Evangelical Society of Geneva." The leading objects of this society, as they were stated to me by the secretary—may be ranged under the following heads—(1) The maintenance of a theological seminary for training up young men for the ministry, to which is attached a preparatory school somewhat analogous to the "petit séminaire" belonging to most of the catholic ecclesiastical colleges of France. This department of the institution is already in full and efficient operation. You are aware that M. Merle occupies, and I doubt not most efficiently, the chair of ecclesiastical history. (2) Colportage, by which is meant the circulation of Bibles and Tracts, through the agency of

Colporteurs in aid of the Paris, Basle, and Lausanne Missionary Societies, and also of the society "des amis d'Israel." (3) The more direct work of evangelization by means of missionaries stationed in various parts of France and other countries; several of whom are already most actively and usefully engaged at various posts of labour. (4) The maintenance of divine worship and an extensive Sunday school at the Oratoire—a very neat and commodious church recently erected in connection with this institution. By a providential and unexpected coincidence of circumstances I had the singular satisfaction of being present at the first day's anniversary of this great society. The meeting was held on the 30th of April and the 1st of May. On the evening of the first of these days, I had the happiness to attend, and never, I may truly say, was I present at a meeting of this description which afforded me more unmingled gratification. The audience, though not very numerous, was respectable, and appeared deeply and solemnly interested in the proceedings of the evening. There were three reports, one read by M. Tronchin—a very wealthy and pious lay gentleman, who occupied the chair, another by M. Gaussin, the secretary, and a third by his excellent brother the pastor Gaussin, as presiding minister of the Oratoire. The address of the last of these gentlemen was one of the finest, and occasionally the most elevated specimens of christian elo-

quence I ever heard. The historical recollections to which it powerfully directed the attention of the audience, and the animated strains in which it called on Geneva to roll back on France that tide of light which just three hundred years ago it received from that country, were eminently impressive and affecting. In the course of the evening many gratifying allusions were made to the christian efforts put forth in England, and the meeting appeared to be, in a high degree, delighted and encouraged by the document forwarded a little time since to the Genevese orthodox pastors expressive of their sympathy and cordiality by so numerous and respectable a body of the English clergy. The audience was a little startled and amused when Mr. Hartley remarked that the sentiments expressed in that document were not merely those of—I forget the number of hundreds—who signed it, but were absolutely held, or at least in consistency ought to be held, by every member of the body—in fact by the totality of the church of England ministry. After the meeting was over we assembled at the elegant villa of M. Tronchin, by whom all the pastors present, amounting at least to forty or fifty, were most kindly and hospitably entertained. After supper we retired to the drawing room, where a great variety of matters, intimately connected with the advancement of the kingdom of Christ at home and abroad were discussed in a spirit of kindliness,

simplicity and devotion, which it was most delightful and refreshing to witness. The father of our host is a fine, venerable old man, who told me that in his younger days he was for some time in England, and had heard Pitt, Fox, and many others of our most distinguished parliamentary orators. The son also, who now appeared to be so entirely absorbed in the glorious enterprize of extending the influence of eternal and saving truth, was once accustomed, as I have understood, to mingle in the chace with some of the most elevated of the nobility and gentry of our own country.

Such, in brief, is what I had an opportunity of witnessing respecting the operations of that important revival of true religion, which has commenced for some years at Geneva. I deeply regret that I was obliged to leave for Lausanne the next morning, and thus was debarred the pleasure of attending the second day's anniversary of the Evangelical Society, when the state of the seminary, which I understood to be very promising, was to be particularly brought forward. In literature and science, though time did not allow of my inquiring much into these matters, Geneva still stands pre-eminent for its size and population. The birthplace of Rousseau is still prolific of philosophy and genius—philosophy based upon sounder principles, and genius directed in many instances at least to nobler purposes than in the case of that illustrious but

profligate wanderer, who like another Prometheus, was tortured for his impiety by the restless gnawings of his own unsubdued passions. So far as my opportunities allowed me to judge, the state of morals is comparatively respectable in Geneva. According to the indications of a test—which I have never yet known to deceive me—the observance of the sabbath, it has immensely the advantage of any continental town of similar magnitude, which I have yet seen. The shops were all closed on the Sunday, and the churches appeared to be generally well attended. I should not omit noticing that there is a very neat chapel belonging to the English, who have for some time enjoyed the privilege of the ministry of Mr. Hartley—the well-known missionary. At his request I occupied his pulpit on the Sunday morning, and was much gratified both with the number and the apparent devotion of the audience. It was a phenomenon somewhat rare in Republican and Calvinistic Geneva, and therefore exciting some interest, that at this time the lady of an English Bishop —a prelate, whose praise is in all the churches— was staying there on a visit to her friends.

Before I close this letter, and leave a spot on which I delight to linger, I must give you a short account of one or two visits I made to neighbouring villages rendered remarkable by the illustrious names associated with them. The first of these was Cologny, beautifully situated on

the south side of the Lake, and invested with classic interest in the eyes of the admirers of eminent though wayward and ill-directed genius, by having been the scene of the temporary residence of Lord Byron during the summer of 1816. Here it was that the living personification of Childe Harolde, after his capricious and ungovernable passions had wrecked the ark of his domestic happiness, paused for a while, as it were, to slake the thirst and calm the perturbations of his feverish and panting spirit. It was on this spot, and inspired by the combined softness, beauty and magnificence of the surrounding scenery, that he penned some of the finest stanzas of the wild and vivid rhapsody, in which he embodied the imaginings of a mind, which seemed capable of identifying itself with all the elements of creation, and of combining them into every form of life and loveliness and energy; and which yet, through the want of a firm hold on the great truths of revelation, could find a home and a resting-place in none. On arriving at this village I was fortunately directed to the local schoolmaster as the most competent to give me the information I desired respecting its topography and history,—a personage apparently not less accomplished in his profession than the celebrated rustic luminary, who has been immortalized by the genius of Goldsmith. The first place to which I requested him to conduct me, was the village church, a neat

and commodious building, on the reading desk of which I was delighted to find a very excellent State Prayer on the occasion of the recent troubles excited by the attempted irruption of the Poles into Savoy. My guide informed me that they had two ministers, who preached alternately one sermon every Sunday. When I asked him the object of this exchange of duty, he replied with more consideration for the labours of the clergy than usually falls to the lot of the laity,—that to prepare a sermon every week would be too laborious an undertaking for any man, and that their ministers therefore never officiated more than once a fortnight in the same pulpit. What would these worthy men think of two and, in some cases, even three sermons regularly every Sunday, preached by the same individual in the same church? He then conducted me to the top of a very fine rustic tower attached to the country mansion of a wealthy citizen of Geneva, which commanded a magnificent view of the chain of the Alps, surmounted by the snowy summit of Mont Blanc on one side, and of the Jura range on the other. After regaling our eyes with this fine panorama, we hastened to visit the house formerly occupied by Lord Byron, which his companion remembered well. This [illegible] stands on the slope of the hill, separated from the verge of the beautiful and romantic [illegible] by a narrow slip of ground planted with the vine. Viewed in connection

with the varied physical scenery, and the rich intellectual associations which cluster so thickly around it, it is hardly possible to conceive a place better calculated for poetic musing, or calm contemplation. The northern balcony presents to the eye, at one glance, the lake of Geneva in all the loveliness and tranquillity of its blue expanse, and beyond it, skirting the horizon, the lofty and snow-capped majesty of the Jura, sheltering beneath its awful form, spots which have gained a lasting, though for the most part, indeed, melancholy celebrity, as the retreats of Madame de Stäel, of Voltaire, and of the philosophic Charles Bonnet. It was in all probability from the floor of this balcony that Byron contemplated with such intense and commingling emotions, the midnight storm, which was so much in unison with the existing condition of his own spirit—a condition which, in all its elements of thought and feeling, he so bitterly laments—to use his own language—that he could not "wreak upon expression"—in some one word of adequate significancy and energy.

The house at this time was under a process of repair. It belongs to a Mons. Diodati, one of the pastors of Geneva, and a descendant, I believe of the celebrated and excellent Italian Biblical Commentator of that name. There was nothing in it particularly to attract attention, except a most nauseating exhibition of a series of portraits of the female favorites of different

profligate monarchs, but principally of Henry IV. the apostate king of France. How a christian minister could allow the walls of his house to be polluted by the pictures of such abandoned wretches—however endowed with the fascinations of natural beauty—is to me utterly unaccountable. It is no wonder that the reformation made so little progress in France, when such men as Henry IV. were among its most prominent public champions. But who can be surprised or offended that Henry the Great—great he unquestionably was in genius and military prowess—should be ranked among reformers, when it was gravely announced in a French journal, which a few days since I happened to take up, that *Luther and Robespierre* were the two greatest reformers the world has ever seen.

But I must hasten to conclude this letter, and for the present to take leave of Geneva with some account of a day's pilgrimage I made to Coppet and Ferney—the former a small village, situated on the northern border of the lake—the latter on the same side on the plain, between the lake and the Jura mountains. The Chateau of Coppet is of a very ancient date, and is situated just north of the village. The present building is of a quadrangular form, not unlike some of our smaller colleges. It was within the walls of this house that Bayle resided as tutor to the sons of Count Dohna. Here subsequently lived the illustrious Necker and his still more

illustrious daughter, Madame de Stäel, whose children were educated under the same roof, by William Schlegel the renowned German philologist—now, if I am not mistaken—a professor at the University of Bonn. The premises now belong to the widow of Auguste de Stäel, and sister-in-law of the excellent Duchess De Broglie. I was first ushered into the library, which contains a very fine bust of Necker. Among the various family portraits, that of Madame de Stäel herself claimed particular attention. The countenance of this illustrious female, as here exhibited, is neither very handsome, nor the reverse. It presents, however, much more of a masculine cast than is usual or agreeable in her sex. I thought I could trace something of a likeness in her expression to that of our celebrated countrywoman, Hannah More—greatly as these distinguished females differed from each other in all their principles, feelings, and habits —in every thing except a commanding vigour of intellect, though the latter, as might have been expected from the immense superiority of her moral and religious character, appeared certainly to exhibit far more of benignity, tranquillity, and repose in the general cast of the countenance. Among several curious and interesting engravings, I noticed particularly that of the American Declaration of Independence, and that of the celebrated Oath of the Jeu de Paume, at the time of the French Revolution,

in which Bailly, the Mayor of Paris, Gregoire, Robespierre, Mirabeau and others are seen occupying a prominent and commanding position. But what amused and interested me most was a print of Louis Philippe, the present king of France, instructing a number of boys in the use of the globes, during the days of his adversity, and while obliged to earn his daily bread as a kind of professor or schoolmaster in the Canton of the Grisons, after his expulsion from France. He is here exhibited as an interesting young man with a large globe before him, with three or four boys carefully attending to his explanations of it. About eight years ago Louis Philippe himself, as Duke of Orleans, after his restoration to his honors and possessions, was on a visit here with his friend the Duc de Broglie, and I was told that he was much affected and amused on unexpectedly finding himself in this curious predicament suspended on the wall of his apartment. To myself, who had so recently seen something of the splendours of the Tuilleries, this little print, exhibiting the young hero of Jemappe, and the present sovereign of one of the most powerful nations in Europe, forced by political convulsion to sustain himself by teaching the elements of geography among the wilds of Switzerland, suggested reflections which it is scarcely necessary to express. Facing the northeast, and commanding a noble view extending to Lausanne and Neufchatel, was the apartment

in which Madame de Stäel wrote most of her works. Contiguous to it was her bed-room, in which, reposing on her couch, she composed, amidst debility and suffering, a considerable proportion of her later productions. It is a lamentable proof of the vanity—if not something worse—of this eminent woman, that after the death of her first husband, the Baron de Stäel, with whose name her fame as a writer was linked, she was secretly married to another gentleman, with whom she lived, but whom she never publicly recognized as her husband. She died in the year 1817. Immediately opposite the house, just beyond the gardens, is a piece of ground inclosed by a wall, and planted with trees, containing a fine mausoleum, in which repose the earthly remains of Necker, his illustrious daughter, her son, the late Auguste de Stäel, and several other members of the family.

From Coppet we walked along a beautiful road—for some time running near the banks of the Lake—towards Ferney, situated two or three leagues distant. After a dull and rainy morning the weather now at once broke out into a scene of brilliant sunshine. It seemed as if some vast amphitheatre had been instantaneously thrown open to the view. The cloudy curtains which had enveloped the chain of the Alps on one side, and of the Jura on the other, were rent in sunder—leaving only a few scattered patches here and there, over the bosom of these

gigantic ridges—while their summits, which seemed literally to touch the skies, glistened with the purest and most effulgent lustre. The effect of this noble scene was for awhile indescribably enhanced by a most magnificent rainbow, which completely over-arched the whole valley of the Rhone, and whose iridescent hues gradually melted away into a beautiful girdle of blue, reflected from the bosom of the Leman. Having arrived at Ferney, we were conducted to the chateau once occupied by Voltaire. The situation is beautiful—commanding one of the finest views of the Alps and of Mont Blanc rising in snowy majesty above the rest. The house is an elegant and comparatively modern mansion. It is now occupied by an aged nobleman. On making our appearance, we were immediately ushered into the apartment generally occupied by the philosopher. It is kept as nearly as possible in the same state as he left it. The small couch on which he was accustomed to repose is still to be seen at the upper end of the room. There is a drawing of this apartment sold to strangers for the benefit, as it is said, of some neighbouring charity. In entering this chamber I had the same sort of feeling as if I had been entering the den of some grinning monster; one which combined in a pre-eminent degree the ferocity of the tiger with the buffoonery of the ape, and whose endowments were employed for a long series of years in decoying mankind

into his power in order to sap their best principles, mar their purest enjoyments, and extinguish their brightest hopes. The walls of this den of moral darkness are suspended with the portraits—besides that of the Marchioness du Chatelet, his profligate companion in guilt—of most of his infidel collaborateurs. On a small mausoleum, which once, I believe, contained the philosopher's heart, is the preposterous and unmeaning inscription, "Mes manes sont consolées parce que mon coeur est au milieu de vous." Besides, however, these appropriate penates exercising their guardian care over such a hearth, I was ashamed to observe in such company the portraits of our own immortal Newton and Milton. I could imagine that these illustrious men looked indignation and abhorrence on the shadowy forms of the sceptics and profligates around them. I at the same time felt a secret satisfaction in reflecting that these two great men, both of whom studied the book of nature in all its varied characters only as illustrative of the sublimer truths of the book of revelation, were as much superior to these their unworthy associates in genius as in piety, though Voltaire had the audacity to say of Newton, that he gave proof of his dotage in writing a commentary on an obscure portion of scripture, and to ridicule Milton on his significant allegory of Sin and Death, for which he was rebuked by Young in the caustic epigram—

"Thou art so witty, profligate and thin,
Thou seem'st a Milton with his Death and Sin."

Amidst such lamentable perversions of powers as this group presents, it was indeed refreshing to fix the eye on men of whom it may be truly said that their "genius had angelic wings, and fed on manna"—men, who after performing, as it were, the tour of the universe in the investigation of the manifold works of God, returned with fresher and purer taste to the fountain of supernatural truth.

I am, &c. &c. &c.

LETTER VII.

My Dear Friend,

My last letter was closed with some account of a visit I paid to Ferney. On our return from that place to Geneva in the evening, we encountered the most awful and terrific storm of thunder, lightning, and rain, which I ever witnessed. Indeed, in every element of its power, it was incomparably superior to any such phenomenon I had ever known in England. The rain descended for some minutes literally like a water-spout. I will not pretend to say what was the appearance of the lake under the vivid coruscations, to which it was exposed, because from the asylum, in which I was glad to shelter myself during the period of the highest violence of this elemental war, it was not visible. I believe that on such an occasion most persons would have been satisfied with imagining what it must have been, rather than expose

themselves to the danger and inconvenience of personal observation. The sound of the thunder as it rolled, and reverberated alternately between the Alps and the Jura, displayed on a most magnificent scale the power of this mightiest of nature's artillery, or rather the power and controlling influence of Him, of whose voice the loudest thunder is but a whisper. Under his fatherly care and protection we arrived in safety at Geneva, and early on the following morning, the 1st of May, I was exceedingly sorry to be obliged to leave that place. On that day there was to be a second meeting—forming a part of the general anniversary of the Evangelical Society, relating more particularly to the Theological School of that great Institution. This was specially a matter of regret to me, because it debarred me the opportunity of hearing the report of the excellent and learned Merle, the superintendent of that department, whose conversation and noble bearing greatly impressed me in his favour. I learnt from him as well as others however, that this very important and interesting division of the general scheme, is in a very prosperous and flourishing condition, and promises under the divine blessing to supply a number of useful and efficient labourers in the vast and comparatively neglected vineyard, for which they are destined. On this first and beautiful morning of May, we set off by the steamer for Lausanne. Among other objects of

curiosity and interest, which were pointed out to me as we skimmed along the northern side of the placid lake, were the houses respectively occupied by two Ex-kings, brothers of Napoleon, Joseph, once King of Spain, and Louis, King of Holland. During this delightful little voyage, I had an opportunity of becoming slightly acquainted with Mons. Gautier, the professor of Astronomy, of Geneva—a man who presents the gratifying spectacle of profound scientific attainment, combined with great simplicity of character and genuine christian piety. He is a leading member of the Committee of the Genevese Bible Society, and expressed to me the great delight he had experienced at the meeting of the Evangelical Society on the preceding evening. He also mentioned to me some striking facts, recently observed at Geneva—tending to confirm the theory of Central fire. This gentleman has been in England, and is acquainted with most of our distinguished men of science. Among our theologians, he expressed his particular regard for Mr. Simeon, and Dr. Chalmers, two luminaries, though fixed at different points, and shining with a somewhat varied lustre, of no ordinary magnitude in the firmament of the christian church.

On arriving at Lausanne, a place renowned at once in the annals of reformed christianity and literary infidelity—a place consecrated by the labours of Viret and Farel, and desecrated

by the sneering and half-disguised scepticism of Gibbon,—I hastened to visit the Cathedral, the present ministers of which were described to me as men of sincere and devoted piety. The stalls here, as well as at the Cathedral of Geneva, have been turned out of their original and natural order of position, and are, I believe, devoted to the use of the civil functionaries of the town. It was after the celebrated discussion of eight days, carried on within these walls, and conducted on the Protestant side, chiefly by Farel and Viret, that the Reformation was embraced in the year 1536, by the people and government of Lausanne. The scriptural passages inscribed in the vulgar tongue all around the walls, appeared to me strikingly expressive of the spirit and leading principles of the Reformers. But I ought to apologize for attempting to bring before you scenes, with which you are much better acquainted. My apology must be, that I do not aim in these communications, so much to convey information to one already familiar with many of the objects to which I refer, as to record the primary Impressions, which they suggest to the mind of one, who visits them for the first time.

After a transient examination of the Cathedral, and admiring the picturesque beauty of its situation, I proceeded, as in duty bound, to visit the house in which Gibbon—the Roman Eagle, as his friend Hayley used to call him—prosecuted

his historical researches, and in the volumes which embody these researches, bequeathed a legacy of doubts and sneers, which will influence the character and opinions of generations yet unborn, and, there is reason to fear—affect the destinies of a multitude of immortal spirits throughout the countless evolutions of eternity. Eager and intense indeed, must be his aspirations to a perpetuity of fame, who can envy the lot or emulate the achievements of one, whose monument of renown is at once based in a great degree upon the rubbish accumulated in an attempt to undermine the foundations of the Temple of Truth, and cemented, there is little doubt, with the blood of many, who have fallen victims to the means employed in its construction! The house, as you know, is situated just behind the church of St. Francis, and in its exterior front has nothing to attract attention. On passing through to the other side, however, it is found to command a most noble view of the lake, the fine valley beyond it, and the glorious Alps remotely skirting the horizon. It is impossible to imagine any situation more favourable to literary labour, than this silent and sequestered spot. Just beyond the corner of the house we were shewn a kind of little grotto, in which it is said that the historian was accustomed to prosecute his studies. Just opposite to it is a fine tree, said to have been planted with his own hand. Deeply impressed

as I was with the mischievous tendency of a large proportion of Gibbon's great work, and perfectly exempt from any feeling of veneration for his character, yet considering the extraordinary powers of his mind, and the immense mass of literary and historic lore, which is piled with so much symmetry and skill, and illumined with such occasional splendour of diction in the Decline and Fall; I could not tread without some considerable emotion the walk, which, in the pride of his lofty anticipations, soon softened down, however, into melancholy forebodings, he trod on the memorable night, on which he records his having written the last line of the last page of his work in the little grotto or summer-house of his garden. Leaving this scene of varied, though for the most part, painful associations, I found my way to the house of Mons. G., where I had the gratification of a short interview with a youth, with the rapid and promising development of whose mind and character, I well know that your most affectionate and fondly cherished hopes are entwined. My visit was necessarily short, but all that was elicited during that visit, was calculated to encourage the most pleasing expectations. It was at the same time amusing and affecting to hear the account he gave of the nocturnal siege by a large mob from Vevey, to which the house was subject a few months before, under the supposition that a worthy and excellent christian

minister, who was the object of their furious and senseless animosity, was harboured there. I had met this good, but perhaps not peculiarly discreet man himself at Geneva, and he related to me all the circumstances of the brutal persecution to which he had been exposed, on no other alleged ground, except that he had remonstrated rather severely with some young people for the part they had taken in an old heathenish and profane ceremony recently celebrated in that village.

Next morning, at five o'clock, we left Lausanne, and set off for Vevey. The narrow road along the precipitous bank, skirting the lake, while the rising ground on the left was beautifully terraced and covered with vines now just beginning to put forth their leaves, was inexpressibly striking and picturesque.

Vevey is a very ancient and interesting little town, situated on the very edge of the lake. It is of this town that Rousseau speaks with such rapturous admiration. So much transported was that vivid painter of nature in all its forms, with the scenery of this place and neighbourhood, as to make it the specific scene of the several heroes and heroines of his romance. 'Allez à Vevey,' says he, as quoted by Lord Byron, 'visitez le pays, examinez les sites et promenez sur le lac, et dites si la nature n' a pas fait ce beau pays pour une Julie, &c.' Here also there is a very fine old church, in Catholic times,

I believe, a cathedral. It is certainly the best calculated for divine service of any of the reformed cathedral churches I have seen. It is of moderate size, and is all covered with seats. In this church, I was much struck with two monumental inscriptions—one of Andrew Broughton, the other of Edmund Ludlow, the two celebrated regicides, who at the restoration fled to Switzerland, and resided at this remote little town under the protection of the Bernese government. Of Broughton, the first of these worthies, his epitaph says that, among other honours enjoyed by him in England, he was 'dignatus regis regum sententiam profari,'—intimating, I believe, that he had the special privilege of reading the sentence, which condemned to death the unfortunate Charles, and was therefore obliged subsequently to leave the country. Of the second, Ludlow, who made a much more prominent figure in those troublous times, times in which it was no easy matter to distinguish between patriotism and selfish ambition—between loyalty to the throne and blind attachment to a party—between fervent piety and frenzied zeal, a long catalogue of honours is given—concluding with the announcement that he died at Vevey, in the year, 1693, after living in exile there for the long period of 32 years. Such was the end of the man, who once rode so triumphantly on the storm of political convulsion, which swept with such devastating fury over the length and breadth

of the British isles. Such are the instructive and overwhelming reverses incident to human affairs, especially when those affairs are abandoned to the capricious sway of impetuous and conflicting passions. At Vevey, and indeed throughout the Canton du Vaud in general, there has recently been a great religious movement. This salutary excitement, not unaccompanied perhaps with some wild notions and grotesque manifestations of feeling, was at first met with a violent counter-movement of popular and even magisterial persecution. I was happy to find that the disgraceful and frantic ebullition, which had been directed against the excellent Mr. R., with a view to whose destruction, the populace literally besieged the house of Mr. G. of Lausanne, had now settled down into perfect tranquillity, and the people seemed to be ashamed of their own ferocious conduct. Since that event new laws have also been enacted by the legislative assembly, designed to secure the peaceable enjoyment of religious liberty, and to prevent the future recurrence of outrages, not less at variance with the interests of truth and the inalienable rights of humanity, than hostile to the whole spirit of the federative constitution of the Swiss States.

From Vevey we set out on a walking excursion as far as Ville-neuve, situated at the extreme boundary of the lake. The scenery along the whole of this delightful route, passing successively Clarens, Montreux, and Chillon,

and combining, as it does, every element of softness, richness, and sublimity, is absolutely enchanting. To myself, who had an opportunity of leisurely surveying it for the first time, it was interesting, not only as surpassingly beautiful in itself, but also as immortalized, so far as genius is capable of such an effect, by two of the most remarkable men of modern times. We first passed the little village of Clarens—renowned as the principal scene of Rousseau's Heloise. While we were making inquiries on that subject, a gentleman, who was walking in his garden in front of a small house, informed me that in the year 1816 Lord Byron had actually resided four or five days in a little room in that very house. We of course availed ourselves of his permission to see the little nook in which so distinguished a nobleman and poet had sojourned during his pilgrimage to this renowned spot. It was a very small chamber upstairs facing the road, and the occupant told me that while he was there he sat up the whole of one night writing. It was here probably that he wrote his poem of the "Prisoner of Chillon."

Passing on a little farther we turned up a short distance from the road to visit the beautiful and romantic little village of Montreux. The church, to which we could not gain entrance, is situated on a rocky elevation, which projects from the mountainous slope, which rises to an immense height just above it, and presents a

most beautiful and picturesque object. Montreux, I understand, is celebrated as the resort of consumptive invalids. I was informed that there was a very valuable English clergyman residing with his family here at this time for the benefit of his health. A distinguished Swiss female writer, Madame Necker de Saussure, a near relative of Madame de Stäel, and author of a most admirable work, recently published under the title of 'L' Education progressive, ou Etude du cours de la vie," was also staying here for the same purpose. Proceeding onward about a mile along the side of the Lake we came to the celebrated castle of Chillon, which was once a place of great importance as a military fortress, and an object of frequent and sanguinary conflicts between the Swiss patriots and the neighbouring dukes of Savoy. It may be said to be built actually in the lake, as the lower ground is considerably below the surface of the water. The principal object of curiosity in this now useless and half-tottering old fortress was the subterraneous chamber, in which the renowned Bonivar, Prior of a Genevan Convent, was so long confined by the duke of Savoy, in consequence, it is said, of having attempted to introduce a reformation among the clergy of his order. I saw the huge massive pillar, with the iron ring attached to it, to which, if fame be true, this illustrious confessor was enchained. The assertion that the traces of his footsteps are still

visible on the stone floor of this hideous dungeon, is, to use the most lenient term, nothing more than a poetic fiction. A host of names were observable on this coarse and time-worn column, each testifying the eagerness of human nature to link itself with all that is interesting in the recollections of the past, and with all that is durable in the accumulating sympathies of the future. Among the rest I noticed, and was somewhat surprised to notice, that of "Byron" rudely scratched on the stone. This was a proof to me, if any proof was wanting, that the poet's proud isolation from his species, and his avowed contempt of all community of feeling with the rest of mankind, the constant obtrusion of which he blames in Napoleon, whom he regarded, in many respects as his great prototype, were more affected than real. After pacing for a short time with melancholy steps along the floor of this monument of human depravity and cruelty, we were conducted through the various departments of its upper stories, and on leaving, cast a mournful glance at the horrible oubliette, which had doubtless often re-echoed with the last "groans and sighs of miserable men."

From Villeneuve we immediately set off for Martigny. The most remarkable phenomenon which marked this part of our journey, though we had not an opportunity of seeing it, is the celebrated cascade of Sallenche. In the morning at sun-rise there is a most beautiful

rainbow formed by the vapoury spray of this magnificent rush of waters meeting the orient rays as they first shoot over the horizon. It reminded me of the melody said to have been elicited by the same agency from the ancient statue of Memnon.

At St. Maurice about three leagues from Martigny, where there is a terrific pass and a bridge of a single arch is thrown over the Rhone, we crossed the boundary line which separates the two Swiss Cantons of the Pays de Vaud and the Vallais.

At this pass I was particularly struck with seeing an immense quantity of sticks two or three feet long, and an inch or two in diameter, rolled down along the river, and I found on inquiry that they were purposely thrown in about Martigny, and thus were transported free of expense until they were intercepted at the mouth of the Lake of Geneva, by means of a chain stretched across, and then sold for vine supporters. I was exceedingly struck with the ingenuity and economy of this contrivance—converting, as it does, the torrent of the deep and fast-flowing Rhone into a kind of vast timber float. Having passed from this Protestant Canton of the Pays de Vaud into the Catholic Canton of the Vallais, I observed a marked difference in the prevailing appearance and habits of the people. The former certainly impressed me with the idea that they were better educated, and enjoyed in every respect a much greater degree of

comfort. It seemed, in fact, as if at St. Maurice I had crossed a gulf, separating two regions—the one of comparative light, the other of darkness. How far this manifest difference is to be attributed to the difference of the soil and other physical considerations, it is not for me to say, but it is impossible that the intellectual, moral, and religious cultivation universally prevalent in the one department, and very generally neglected or discouraged in the other, should not form a most important element in the account. Nowhere have I seen a greater appearance of ignorance and superstition than at Martigny. Early in the morning I entered the church, and never in my life have I witnessed a more hideous and disgusting figure, than here presented itself, of our adorable Saviour suspended on the cross. Close to the church is a convent, in which eight monks belonging to that of the great St. Bernard, usually reside. As I came out of the church, I heard a confused noise of singing, and of something very like what the apostle describes as 'sounding brass and tinkling cymbal,' in the other street, and in an instant, there appeared a priest bedizened in all sorts of colours and shouting as loudly, I presume, as his lungs could bear, followed by a ragged multitude, chiefly women and children—one man carrying a huge picture, and two boys, one on each side of him, incessantly tinkling their bells. I found that this was a procession

and that the object was to recognize the goodness of Providence, in the prospect of a plentiful harvest. What could be more proper—more excellent than the design? What could be more puerile and degrading than the mode of carrying it into effect? I will not hesitate to avow, however, that even this wretched exhibition of a feeling, which, I trust, may have been realized by some of those engaged in it, is infinitely better in every respect than the stupid and headstrong impiety, which refuses any acknowledgement at all of the benevolent agency of a superintending Providence. During the movement of this noisy pageant, I observed many of the men at their doors, evidently aiming their ridicule at the grotesque appearance of the whole scene. What a melancholy and even mysterious fact it is, that this little province refused at the time of the Reformation, to cast off the depressing and degrading yoke of Popery!

The village of Martigny, situated in the midst of a long and winding valley, inclosed on both sides by mountains of terrific height, which literally seem to menace the houses, still presents evident signs of the dreadful ravages occasioned by the inundation of 1818, when the waters of the Drance, intercepted by the fall of an enormous glacier, at last forced their way and swept through the valley with a tremendous and destructive rush. A great number of houses were overwhelmed by the torrent, and some hundreds

of lives were at the same time lost. I was anxious, if it was practicable at this early period of the season, to pass over from Martigny to the valley of Chamouni. This was considered a rather hazardous experiment, as it was known that there was yet a great deal of snow on the mountains, which were to be crossed in such an expedition. Finding, however, from an experienced guide, that there did not appear to be much danger, we commenced our way up the lofty Foreclas, early on Saturday morning, intending to take the route of the Tête Noir. The view of the valley of Martigny, with the Rhone rapidly pursuing its meandering course through the middle of it, as we ascended this commanding eminence along a little winding path, by which no quadruped but a mule seemed capable of finding its way, was exceedingly noble and magnificent. The Swiss Chalets, or wooden houses, perched on every accessible point along this precipitous and woody breast, presented a singular appearance of rustic and antique simplicity. On the opposite side, about half way up the mountain, on the summit of a green little spot, a small chapel dedicated to St. John had a very striking, and certainly to me, very gratifying effect. During the whole time of our ascent, the sun was intensely powerful, and the snow, which was thickly interspersed among the trees, appeared to be rapidly melting away. But when we reached the top of this lofty range,

I was astonished to find such an entire and almost instantaneous change of temperature. All at once a keen and sharp breeze swept across our path, and though a few minutes before I had been ready to melt with heat, I now literally felt chilled with cold. This was not owing to any sudden change of weather, but I understood from the guide, that a vigorous and cutting breeze of this kind is invariably felt at this elevation. After descending by a tremendous declivity, and passing a deep gorge on the other side—while nature in every direction presented the wildest and most sublime phenomena—we arrived at the hotel of the Tête Noir, which hotel, if you have never traversed this route, you are to understand is a hut, thrown rather than built, against a large rocky crag, and occupied by a man, who, as his wife told me, is himself carpenter, mason, and in fact a man of all trades, necessary to provide such accommodation as can here be obtained. In the chamber where we dined, I found an old sermon book, and a little girl, a relative of our host, read to me very prettily a small portion of it. I understood from the mistress of the hotel, that the Curé of the parish, residing at the village some distance off, teaches the children to read. Instances of this kind occasionally presenting themselves, while we traverse Catholic countries, tend powerfully to impress me with the conviction that even Popery itself, unscriptural and detestable as

it is, in its general character and bearing, is by no means without its redeeming qualities in the exemplary conduct of some of its functionaries and professors. Descending a little farther along a narrow path cut out of the sloping rock, we arrived at the 'veritable Tête Noir' as our guide expressed it, which gives its name to the whole mountain. This Tête Noir is a huge black craggy cliff, with a large projecting point, forming a kind of nose, standing out from the front of this gigantic head. Through this nasal protuberance, a hole has been literally bored, to enable travellers to pass. A little beyond the Tête Noir, there is a very remarkable grotto, overhung by an immense concave stone, which two noble English travellers, Lord Porchester and Lady Georgiana North, while returning from Italy, on the 10th of May, 1821, were tempted to buy, as I was informed, for four hundred francs. On the stone there is an inscription of doggrel poetry in French and English, intended to commemorate this event, and to express the feelings of enthusiastic admiration, with which the purchasers viewed this scene of wild and romantic beauty. It is impossible, however, that these noble personages should have intended their names to be associated with the wretched and even profane fustian now ignominiously attached to them.

After crossing a variety of defiles, rocks, and cataracts, we now ascended the lofty and narrow

neck, which separates the Aiguille Rouge, from the Col de Balme, and stands just at the north-eastern extremity of Chamouni. Here it was that we first encountered any serious inconvenience from snow. The sun was intensely hot, and the snow was rapidly melting, and this in reality made it far more dangerous than if we had crossed while it was yet harder. There was not the least appearance of a road, and the mules sunk at every step, I thought it therefore safer to alight, and leaving the animals and luggage to the care of the guide, we made the best of our way on our own feet, and as I had the advantage of not being very heavy, I was enabled to make my way without any serious inconvenience. The greatest danger I encountered, perhaps arose from an act of imprudence. After travelling for some hours under a burning sun, I became intensely thirsty, and as no drink of any kind could be obtained, as soon as I reached the snow I instantly took a large handful of it and put it into my mouth. The sensation of cold which it instantaneously produced even to the very extremities, as it melted down my throat, was such as I had never before experienced, and for the moment, I confess, that I apprehended serious consequences. By immediately commencing a brisk walk, however, a reaction was produced, and providentially I suffered no harm. But in this part of our passage another awkward disaster befel us. As

we were floundering through the snow, we looked back and found that our guide was out of sight. For a considerable time we loitered, utterly at a loss what could have become of him. At length, however, he came up again, and on inquiry, we found that he had unfortunately lost his passport, and had gone back, though in vain, to search for it. My indignation against this most odious passport system was excited afresh in all its vehemence. Here was a poor man habituated to pass and repass between Martigny and Chamouni, and because he had accidentally dropped this permission to exercise his powers of locomotion, he must not only encounter much present annoyance, but must immediately supply himself with another at an expense of at least seven or eight francs. At length under divine protection we reached the other side of this snowy acclivity; and the valley of Chamouni below—and the chain of Mont Blanc to the left of it—and the glaciers of Argentiére and of the Bois—with the Mer de glace beyond it—at once burst on our view. The whole of this animating scene, together with the grateful consciousness that we had now escaped whatever of real danger might have attended our journey, produced in me a joyousness of spirits and an elasticity of nerve and muscle which I had not known for a long time, and I literally ran down the descending slope with an exhilaration, for which I was at the

moment at a loss to account. When we had reached the bottom of this descent, a little girl of nine or ten years old seeing us, ran out of a hut almost buried in snow, and plucking a beautiful flower from her little garden presented it to me with a grace and a kindliness of manner, which, I confess, affected me exceedingly. I was powerfully struck with the reflection that even in these wild and desolate regions of frost and snow, human nature vindicates its claims to native kindness and sympathy,—that as the Alpine blast does not prevent the flower from developing its foliage, displaying its tints and exhaling its sweets, so neither does it prevent the human heart from unfolding the fairer bloom, and diffusing the softer fragrance of its social and relative affections. I indignantly spurn the notion of anything mercenary connected with the presentation of this little offering, as when I made some reference to such an acknowledgment, my little donor instantly assured me that she had no idea of any such thing. Seldom was my poetic fancy more strongly tried than in reference to this little flower with all its agreeable associations. Despairing, however, that 'E'er posterity should see verse of mine," I have satisfied myself with this prosaic record—not doubting that the impression on my own mind at the moment, was greatly aided by recollections connected with home—and those thoughts of 'ὁμηλικια,' which so powerfully in fluence ou

feelings, and which the illustrious father of poetry knew so well how to appreciate. We reached the village of Chamouni early on Saturday evening, and I was delighted with the prospect of spending a sabbath within the granite walls of that vast temple of nature, while Mont Blanc rose like a magnificent tower at its south-western extremity.

As we are now arrived, however, within the territory of Savoy, at present annexed to the dominions of the king of Sardinia, who resides usually at Turin, in Piedmont, it may not be amiss to give a brief account of the political and ecclesiastical condition of this interesting and romantic region. We crossed the line of separation between the Swiss Vallais and Savoy, near the little village of Barberine. There was only a single soldier guarding the pass, who allowed us to proceed without any vexatious search. Since the fall of Buonaparte, and according to the arrangements of the Congress of Vienna, the Duchy of Savoy has been united, as already stated, to the kingdom of Sardinia. The present monarch, Charles Albert, is a descendant of the ancient family of the Counts of Maurienne—a family which has given this province seventeen Counts, fourteen Dukes, and seven Kings. He succeeded to the throne in the year 1831, and generally holds his court at Turin. He has the character, at least among the continental radicals, of being somewhat despotically

inclined, which perhaps excited the hopes of the handful of foolish Poles, who in February last, attempted to penetrate into his dominions, and thereby occasioned so much trouble and even danger to the generous people, whose hospitality they enjoyed only to violate.

Savoy is divided into eight provinces, and contains a population of somewhat more than half a million. A seventh part of the Duchy consists of wild forests, and a sixth of rocks, mountains, glaciers, and beds of rivers. Although the monarchical form of government, with most of its attendant institutions, has prevailed since the restoration of the royal family, yet the hurricane of the French Revolution, with the subsequent tyranny of Napoleon, has left an indelible impression on the political--and still more on the ecclesiastical condition of this mountainous region. Before that event, the clergy were in the receipt of the tithes as in other countries. Since that period, they have been paid by the state. Before the year 1792, there were in Savoy alone, seventy-three religious houses of both sexes, and in the diocese of Annecy alone as many as thirty-six. In that diocese at present there is only one. Education seems to be here more general than might have been expected. The Duchy contains a great number of literary and philosophical institutions. The College Royal is fixed at Chambery, the capital of the Duchy, and is principally directed by the

Jesuits. This fraternity, or rather paternity, for they are always called fathers, has ever been remarkable for the part it has taken in the education of youth; and the sentence recorded by Lord Bacon to have been addressed to a distinguished member of this body, might doubtless be well addressed to many of them at the present time.—'Talis cum sis, utinam noster esses.' Protestantism is utterly unknown in this province.

I now return to Chamouni. The little village, which bears this name, is situated in the midst of a valley of considerable length, traversed by the river Arve, and enclosed on one side by the magnificent chain of Mont Blanc, terraced by successive ranges of snowy peaks and icy plains, and on the other by the lofty and unbroken elevation of the Brevent and Aiguille Rouge. Within this vast and glorious amphitheatre, we spent the Sunday following our arrival, in many respects one of the most interesting of my life. Deprived as we were of all outward privileges, except what was afforded in the adjoining Catholic church, I had never yet an opportunity of contemplating the great object of adoration, under circumstances better calculated to impress the mind with a sense of his majesty and power. I arose early and left my chamber for the purpose of pacing, as it were, for a while, the area of this stupendous temple. It is impossible to conceive any situation, the outward

scenery of which is more eminently fitted to elevate the feelings and to fill the soul with emotions of mingled admiration and awe. I looked and looked again at the massive walls with which I was surrounded, and could not help being struck with the littleness and insignificance of the proudest structures of man's erection, many of which I had recently an opportunity of witnessing. Compared with this building of God, what mere cabins, thought I, are the most stupendous of modern churches and cathedrals, or of ancient palaces, temples, and amphitheatres. If the largest of these was placed on the summit of Mont Blanc, it would be proportionally little more than a marble attached to the top of the spire of St. Paul's, or St. Peter's at Rome—utterly invisible to the naked eye of those who would attempt to view it from below. Intense emotions, however, of whatever kind, cannot last long. The mind either sinks under their weight, and seeks relief in the contemplation of other objects, or it becomes so familiarized with the view of those scenes of grandeur by which it was at first excited, as to regard them with comparative indifference. I therefore withdrew from the broad platform walled with these everlasting hills—illumined as their pinnacles now began to be by the resplendent sunbeams of one of the loveliest of May mornings, and turned my attention to what under present circumstances

I might consider as the appropriate duties of this hallowed day. I retired to my room in company with my young friend, and read with peculiar feelings our blessed Saviour's sermon on the mount, and having subjoined a few remarks, concluded with prayer. After breakfast we went to the beautiful little village church, situated a short distance from the hotel, and which an inscription informs us was built in the year 1602. I was delighted to find assembled there, a very considerable and apparently attentive audience, and I was told that the inhabitants of the valley in general are very regular in their attendance on divine worship such as is here conducted. I fear, however, that our countrymen and other foreigners, who in such numbers visit this beautiful spot, by no means aid in encouraging and confirming this habit. Immediately after breakfast on the Sunday morning I received a message from one of the guides, inquiring whether I should want his assistance in ascending any part of the mountains on that morning, as he wished to know before he went to mass. I of course answered in the negative, but the very inquiry seemed to imply what I afterwards learnt to be the fact, that such excursions on the sabbath day, were very usual during the season. Since I have been abroad, utterly as I abhor popery as a system, I have always thought it right to attend the Catholic church on the Sunday, when I had

no opportunity either of a domestic service or joining public Protestant worship. In the present case I did not hesitate for a moment, as I was particularly desirous of knowing how the Catholic service was performed in this remote and sequestered spot. When mass appeared to be nearly over, the Curé mounted a small pulpit, and having announced the several Fêtes or holy-days of the ensuing week, began an impassioned harangue illustrative of the duties of the various classes of society. The relative obligations of husbands and wives—parents and children—masters and servants—ministers and people—were successively urged on his audience, and in reference to some of these points, there was really a great deal of what was useful, striking, and impressive. There was, however, an air of dry and sarcastic humour in his manner, while he enforced some of these duties, which seemed exceedingly to affect the risible faculties of his hearers. In inculcating those of husbands and wives he remarked—'You may say, 'I have such an impracticable and unmanageable partner, that it is absolutely impossible to maintain my patience and forbearance under such trials and provocations.' You ought to have considered all that,' said he with a kind of sardonic grin, 'before you married.' When he had explained the duties of ministers, which with a slight tinge of Romanism, he did with very considerable propriety and feeling, he

proceeded to those of the people towards their ministers, and among other obligations he did not fail to enforce pretty strongly that of paying their dues. At this part of his discourse, he observed some of his hearers apparently inclined to dose, and he instantly aroused them from their slumbers, by a very loud and pointed remonstrance. This was irresistible, and the whole congregation literally broke out into an open laugh. They soon, however, recovered their gravity, and the address was concluded with a recapitulation of the various points previously inculcated. On the whole, this singular piece of moral rhapsody—though occasionally coarse and uncouth, appeared certainly to contain much which was of a very useful and salutary tendency.

After the morning service, we walked up to a considerable height along the precipitous breast of the Brevent on the north side of Chamouni, and had a fine view of the chain of the gigantic mountainous ridges and glaciers on the opposite side. I do not think, however, that Chamouni is by any means the best situation to see Mont Blanc to advantage. It places the observer too near the foot of the mountain, to enable him to bring more than the mere summit of it within the range of his vision, and that pinnacle appears but one among several others, which on account of their greater proximity seem little, if at all, inferior to the veritable

giant himself. During the whole of the morning, I heard at frequent intervals, loud and tremendous sounds resembling that of distant thunder, or the discharge of heavy artillery, and I concluded without the least hesitation, that though the day was exceedingly fine, it must have been thunder; but in the evening we walked up the valley close to the glacier de Bois, immediately below the Mer de glace. As we approached, we found that these noises were occasioned by the almost incessant rolling down of huge avalanches in that direction. While we stood at the foot of this astonishing aggregation of ice, several of these terrific masses of frozen snow rolled down with a tremendous crash. These glaciers form themselves into a great variety of shapes, sometimes leaving vast hollows, resembling subterranean grottos. There was one of these in the glacier de Bois, at this time, and as every thing appeared to me to be very tranquil and firm just at that point, I felt strongly inclined to enter into it. I was cautioned, however, by a native of the valley, who was present, as it might happen that a fragment of an avalanche would unsettle some part of the curious roof. I was informed that some years since, a gentleman caused the fall of an avalanche in this very spot, by merely firing a pistol, and one person was actually buried beneath its ruins. Sometimes huge fragments of rock and immense

stones accompany them in their descent. One of these stones was pointed out to me, which at a comparatively recent period thus 'thundered impetuous down and smoked along the ground.' A very remarkable circumstance attending these glaciers, is, that sometimes they are found to recede for a series of years, and again to advance for a term of greater or less duration, and to threaten destruction to the neighbouring houses or villages. One of the glaciers of Chamouni, I understand, has been for some years thus advancing, and occasions very serious apprehensions to those whose houses are nearly contiguous to it. In returning to the Hotel, from this scene of wonders, I entered a wretched looking cottage, not far from the glacier, and found the family at supper. They had literally nothing but soup and a few potatoes, and they assured me they had nothing else for breakfast, dinner, and supper, and yet they appeared to be content. The man was a chamois hunter, and his family entirely depended on the precarious produce of the chase. He acknowledged, however, that his family was one of the poorest in the valley. This scene of poverty and wretchedness—considered as a part of the moral phenomena of the universe—was assuredly not less instructive, and in many respects more affecting and impressive, than the stupendous mass of physical scenery which I had just witnessed. It is needless to say that I

endeavoured during the few minutes I spent under their roof, to direct the hopes of this destitute household towards another and better world. They appeared to be well inclined in reference to matters of a spiritual nature, though, as might have been expected, exceedingly ignorant.

On Monday morning, May the 5th, I was informed as soon as I was down stairs, that at ten o'clock that day, there was to be a grand muster, just opposite to the Hotel, of all the mules in Chamouni, which, I think, may be denominated 'a review of Alpine Cavalry.' It appears that at the beginning of May, every year, there is a regular examination by competent judges on an appointed day, of all the mules and harness employed by the licensed guides for the accommodation of visitors during the season, and no man is allowed to use for this purpose an animal which has not undergone this scrutiny. This arrangement has been adopted with a view to the safety of travellers, whose lives would frequently be endangered, if this salutary precaution had not been taken. I do not think that on Hounslow-heath, or any where else, was a regiment of horse ever viewed with more interest, or its evolutions performed with a more anxious regard for the approbation of the surveyors, than was displayed on this field-day exhibition of Alpine Chivalry. Soon after ten o'clock, the several detachments

of this numerous squadron began to assemble at the Place—an open space immediately opposite our Hotel, and our host was one of the three judges appointed to examine the quadrupeds and their appurtenances. In a short time, there mustered about one hundred mules, many of them with their riders mounted in gallant style, and presenting altogether, a most grotesque appearance. The caparison of almost every animal differed from that of his neighbour. The saddles, bridles, and other articles, were of every fashion, and seemed to have been collected from almost every European nation. The French, English, and Savoyard form of these vestments, thus curiously brought together, exhibited a strange variety of equestrian costume. Besides other trappings, some of the gayest of the troop had a collar of bells, forming a kind of necklace suspended from their shoulders, and performing very sonorous if not very melodious music, during the various evolutions through which they passed. On this occasion I understood that all these animals passed muster, with the exception of one unfortunate creature, which was pronounced unfit for service, and the owner was required to supply himself with another. It is to be observed, that all the mules had well-known names. Some of them bear very elevated titles. The portrait of one of them was shewn to me, bearing the title of 'La Marquise,' from having had the

honour, I presume, of carrying on some occasion, a personage of that rank. Ludicrous, however, as many of these circumstances appear to a stranger, the process must be acknowledged to evince a very commendable care on the part of the government, which regulates the whole system for the security of travellers. It seldom occurs to strangers to witness this scene, because it always takes place before the commencement of the visiting season.

After the review was over, I took the liberty of paying my respects to the Curé, whom I had heard on the preceding morning. He lived in a small house very near the church, and when I entered, he was superintending some alterations which were carrying on in it. The honest Curé was a rosy, good-humoured looking man, and he very kindly received me. Referring to the service of the day before, he apologized for the homely character of his address, and remarked that he did not consider that as a sermon, but merely a little advice adapted to the capacities of the people. He told me that he very rarely preached—only on great festivals, as he did not think the people in general capable of understanding a sermon. From him I learnt that at Chamouni there was formerly a large convent of Benedictine Monks, of which establishment his present house was the only part remaining. He gave me a very pleasing account of his parishioners—assuring me

that he felt himself quite happy among them—as they were honest and industrious during the week, and on the Sunday joined, with few exceptions, in serving the 'Bon Dieu.' This account was the more remarkable, as a little more than half a century ago the valley of Chamouni was generally supposed to be a sort of fastness, principally occupied by brigands and assassins; and an English gentleman, who wished to visit it, thought it necessary to arm himself and his companions in expectation of an attack from this gang of banditti. Finding me apparently so much interested in the state of his church and people, Mons. le Curé naturally thought that I must belong to some fraternity or other, and knowing by my accent that I must be a foreigner—put me the amusing question, whether I was not an Italian. When I was obliged to decline the compliment, and acknowledge that I was an English protestant, he was evidently a little chagrined. His good humour and complaisance, however, did not for a moment forsake him, and we parted with an expression of our mutual good wishes—in all probability no more to meet until—awful thought—we meet at the last tribunal to give an account of the charge, with which we have been respectively entrusted.

In the afternoon of the same day we left Chamouni—having seen all the curiosities animate and inanimate within our reach—with a view of

returning to Geneva. The road from Chamouni to Sallenches, where we stopped for the night, is exceedingly wild and romantic. The best view, beyond all comparison, which I have had of Mont Blanc in his unique, solitary, and snowy majesty, was that which burst on the eye between two rocky elevations on this road. The baths of St. Gervais, a little to the left of this route, occupy a most beautiful and sequestered spot. We turned aside to visit them, and I never witnessed a scene of more varied and enchanting loveliness. The lofty cascade, just behind the buildings, tumbled down from a rock of terrific altitude. The establishment itself, situated at the extremity of a winding and romantic dell, and the beautiful panorama of the rising ground on the opposite side, dotted with cottages, and now illumined with the richest tints of the setting sun, threw over the whole a colouring of magic, which for the moment seemed to compel a doubt of the reality of the scene. The waters are strongly sulphureous, and of a very high temperature. I partook of a glass, and it was quite as hot as I could drink.

Having arrived late at night at Sallenches, we rested there, and left early next day for Geneva, as we could not at this period of the year reach Chambery by any other road. Our journey from Sallenches to Geneva was interrupted at every little village by processions, to which it appeared that this day was peculiarly devoted.

These senseless perambulations differed in nothing perhaps, except in a greater concentration of ignorance and superstition, from those I had before witnessed. But while man thus presented a deplorable spectacle of the noblest of principles degraded by the meanest and most absurd of its professed exhibitions, nature throughout appeared in all her native sublimity and grandeur. Rocks, mountains, and cascades, successively or simultaneously claimed our admiration and astonishment. The most magnificent of these cascades was that of Arpenaz, which rolls down an almost perpendicular rock of eight hundred feet high. The stony surface over which it rushes literally smokes with the spray of the impetuous torrent. It leaves, however, little or no impression upon the rock. The view of it presented vividly to my mind the inadequacy of the mere outpouring of human talent and eloquence to produce any deep and permanent effect. What in fact is the mightiest torrent of pulpit oratory, unaccompanied by a still mightier influence, but an Alpine cascade rolling over hearts of stone. There may be much noise—some few tears, like the misty spray rising from yon beaten rock; but there is no abiding contrition. I know not whether the analogy is correct. I only express the ideal association as it arose in my own mind.

On the morning of the following day we mounted the diligence with the intention of at

once proceeding to Chambery, the capital of Savoy. We had supplied ourselves, as I supposed, with the requisite *locomotive licence*, as the passeporte might more properly be called. But we had no sooner reached the little border town of St. Julien, about two leagues from Geneva, where the Polish expedition in February last was stopped, than our passe-porte was demanded. I handed the document to Mons. le Conducteur, signed by the Sardinian Ambassador at Paris, which I had been taught to think would be a safe conduct throughout his Sardinian majesty's dominions. But I was mistaken. This instrument was of no more use to us than that of the illustrious martyr, John Huss, who was burnt in spite of his safe conduct, by the perfidious order of the council of Constance. The fate of the heretical reformer did not await myself and my companion on this occasion indeed. But notwithstanding the most urgent appeals in every style of remonstrance and entreaty, which an uncourtly scholar, as Dr. Johnson expresses it, could command, we were literally obliged to leave the diligence with all our 'Effets,' and return again to Geneva, in order to have this scrap of paper counter-signed by his excellency the Sardinian consul in that place. You may conceive my vexation and chagrin—pressed as we were for time—at this most harrassing and preposterous interruption. The cry of an Englishman, which is supposed to command respect and awe

throughout the civilized world, as Cicero represents that of a Roman citizen, was here of no avail. We were constrained to return, and having at a considerable expence, obtained the necessary signature, mounted the diligence the next day again for the same place with quite as much power, and perhaps a little more inclination, to do mischief among his majesty's liege subjects. In sober earnestness nothing has struck me as more extraordinary in my continental travels, than that the governments—monarchical and republican alike—for in this respect there is no difference—should continue to enforce, and that the people should tamely submit to a system which has the effect of turning the states of Europe into so many cages of greater or less extent, severally inclosed and intersected by the entanglements of a political wire-work, which no man, woman, or child, without permission, must presume to pass. The money extorted from travellers in the form of various fees—covered as the moral deformity of the system is by the sanctions of law, I can only view in the same light as those compulsory presents demanded by Turkish Bashaws for allowing strangers to pass through their territories, and so far as the state partakes of the plunder, I can consider it as nothing else than an organized scheme of legal highway robbery.

Another circumstance of a fiscal nature—though this is an affair of much more difficult

arrangement—and in defence of which much more is to be said—struck me exceedingly in the course of this day's journey as not only vexatious, but as having a most injurious influence on the moral feelings of the people—that of the duty demanded on goods carried across the frontier of two contiguous states, and the constant effort to evade the impost, to which they give rise. We had for our companion from Geneva to Aix a female apparently of the middling rank in society. As we drew near the frontier town where the 'Effets' were to be examined, I found she became exceedingly uneasy, frequently changed color, and was evidently in great distress. I soon found, and she did not wish to make any secret of the fact, that she had bought several articles at Geneva, which she was desirous of carrying home without exposing herself to the payment of the duty. She frequently exclaimed, These custom-house examinations are terrible things. I confess that I so far sympathized with her, and perhaps shared her delinquency, as to allow her to hide a cloth cap which she had bought for her little boy, within my own hat, which was suspended from the roof of the Diligence. I had no idea, however, at that moment, of the extent to which she had carried her scheme of vectigalian depredation. On the score of this scrutiny I had no great apprehension for ourselves, as we had few things of which they could justly lay hold. My principal anxiety was about my

English Bible, especially as a Protestant waiter at the hôtel at Chamouni had told me that when he left Geneva for that place, they took every book from him, except an English and French phrase-book, and among the rest his French Testament, which was to be sent to Turin. I was happy to find, however, that the officers on this occasion behaved with great politeness and forbearance, and gave us no trouble. Our female companion was equally fortunate, and as soon as the scrutiny was over, she exultingly said that she had goods of various kinds wrapped about her person, which would have exposed her if detected to the payment of at least twenty francs. This struck me at once as a gross and direct fraud, but neither herself nor any of our other fellow-travellers seemed to have the least notion that there was anything of moral impropriety in this proceeding, and they all had evidently the impression of the Spartan boys, that the fault would have lain not in the act, but in the want of adroitness which would allow of its being discovered. It is impossible that such notions should almost universally prevail among a people who occupy contiguous territories, without being productive of a most deleterious effect on the general character and habits of the community. In the process of examination, on this occasion, I was struck with observing among the books taken out of the trunk of an old gentleman, several copies of the "Nursery Rhymes" and

"Hymns for Infant Minds" and other similar publications. He did not know a word of English, and I suppose they must have been intrusted to him to be carried to some English family residing at Turin, to which place his luggage was directed. When we reached Aix—the celebrated bathing place—the whole street was crowded with people, some lounging in idleness, others just coming out of church. I found this was Ascension day, and I learnt from these persons that this and similar days were far more strictly observed in this country than the Sabbath—thus realizing the old Pharisaic habit of making the commandment of God of none effect through their own traditions.

Early in the evening we reached Chambery, a considerable town, situated in a most rich and beautiful valley. It is inclosed on both sides by high and rocky acclivities. The population is estimated at fifteen thousand. The number of soldiers, both infantry and cavalry, quartered within its walls, was larger than I had ever seen in a town of the same magnitude. In fact I should imagine that nearly that every third man to be met with in the streets was clad in military attire, and all appeared to be exceedingly well appointed. All the soldiers stationed in Savoy are Piedmontese. The standing army of this kingdom amounts to nearly 50,000 men, which as compared with the population—a little more than 4,000,000, is enormous. It is very nearly half

of that of England, while the population is little more than one-sixth. It is a remark, if I am not mistaken, of the profound Thomas Adam of Wintringham, that it is an awful proof of the depravity of human nature that war should be lawful, if, as he suggests, it really be lawful. I confess that I seldom witness an imposing exhibition of military force—the prancing and richly caparisoned steed, and the soldier in all the pride of his lofty bearing, and accoutred in the firm panoply of offensive and defensive armour, without reflecting—to what a deplorable condition is human nature reduced, that governments should have either the pretence or the necessity to keep so many men in absolute idleness, without any avowed object or occupation, but that of being ready to shoot or stab their fellow-beings, whenever occasion may require it. It only renders the thought still more melancholy, that to this dreadful provision we are all, perhaps, indebted for the daily security of our life and property. My feeling on this subject involves no reflection on the military profession, nor, within due limits, on the system of existing governments, but it certainly does involve a sad and humiliating reflection on the present state and character of a race, which came forth from its Creator's hand in all the unsullied excellence of essential purity and love.

The most interesting, though not agreeably interesting associations connected with the neigh-

bourhood of Chambery, arise perhaps, from the fact that for a considerable period the celebrated Jean Jacques Rousseau sojourned in its immediate vicinity. In the course of the morning after our arrival there, I visited the little village of Charmette, situated in a woody elevation about half a mile above the town—remarkable as the scene of the residence of the philosopher and his patroness and paramour, Madame de Warens. The house is beautifully situated on the breast of the hill, and commands a fine prospect of the vale beneath, and the lofty range of mountains on the other side. The cottage is now uninhabited, but is preserved, with a few old articles of furniture, for the purpose of being shewn to strangers. In the first room is a portrait of the philosopher himself—apparently somewhat advanced in age—with the volume of the "Contract Social" resting on one side, bearing the inscription so monstrously false as applied to this writer—"Vitam impendere vero." On the other side are his "Emilie" and other works. The expression of his countenance is totally different from that of his great associate in the work of disorganization—Voltaire. That of the latter is a kind of malignant grin—that of the former is one of deep and pensive wretchedness. On the opposite side of the room is a picture of the woman, who first employed him as her gardener, and afterwards admitted him to an intimacy, which the philosopher has taken care

should not be a secret. In the next room is Rousseau's sofa, on which I did myself the honor of reposing for a few seconds. Up stairs we were shown the Oratory and bed-room of Madame de W.—The former is a small closet containing various images of our blessed Saviour on the cross. In front there is a large picture of the Virgin, headed with this inscription, "*Sub tuum præsidium confugimus, O Dei genitrix.*"

The strange combination of the confused and incongruous elements of profligacy and superstition, displayed in this congeries of moral associations, affords a curious illustration of the manner in which the human mind sometimes contrives to bring into union the most irreconcileable principles and habits, as embodied in practical conduct. In the room below there is a book kept, in which visitors write their names and add any remarks they may think proper. This register of opinions presents one of the most remarkable medleys of moral criticism which ever fell under my notice. The observations, penned for the most part by Frenchmen, are in general, extravagantly eulogistic. The name of Rousseau is simply written by some, followed by a long series of notes of admiration, deeming this expressive silence, doubtless, as alone capable of adequately speaking his praise. Two English records, however, particularly struck me —the first apparently of a young lady, who, after much fulsome frippery, states her having

visited this "Holy shrine" in happier times. Some gentleman, a little more gifted with common sense, immediately after records the following good wish on her behalf:—"Mayest thou be as happy as sentimentalism will permit thee, poor girl!"—The temptation thus to immortalize one's-self was irresistible. I also left my record. I do not recollect the exact words. They were probably somewhat more strongly expressive of detestation at the abuse of perverted talent, and all the awful consequences of that perversion, than I should choose deliberately to adopt. They implied, I believe, that, in such a view of the case, with all the splendour of his unquestioned genius, and in spite of the far-beaming halo of celebrity which encircles his name, I would rather have animated one of the lowest reptiles of creation, than be identified with the spirit of Rousseau. You, who can sympathize with my feelings, will excuse the warmth of these expressions. But I must check my pen. The disastrous effects of what are called the aberrations of genius, in this and other similar cases, are, however, too awful to be left on such an occasion altogether unnoticed. On such a theme—*si natura negat, facit indignatio versum.*

I remain, &c. &c. &c.

LETTER VIII.

My dear Friend,

On this occasion I take up my pen with a peculiar feeling, because I am conscious that it is to trace the last of a series of communications, which have successively afforded me an opportunity of renewing and recording some delightful, and, I trust, useful Impressions, which otherwise might have vanished from the view with the scenes which originally gave them birth. Chambery, with a brief account of which, and of the most interesting of its environs, my last letter was concluded, is a rapidly increasing and improving town. One fact, as illustrative of this progress, particularly struck me. When the present Bishop of Calcutta visited this place in the year 1823, he remarked, that there was only one bookseller's shop in the whole town. In the year 1834 I found not less than three of these storehouses of intellectual food in a single street, one of them of very considerable magnitude, and

containing a large collection of recent publications, and it appeared to me a singular, and somewhat encouraging circumstance, that in this focus of concentrated Popery and Jesuitism, I literally found a French Bible.

But I must hasten on my journey, which, considering the space I have to traverse in the course of this letter, I must pursue with greater rapidity than has hitherto marked our progress. We left Chambery for Lyons about midnight, and between four and five in the morning, as the dawn of a beautiful day began to melt into a scene of clear and brilliant sunlight, we commenced the celebrated pass of Les Echelles. This is considered one of the finest and most sublimely beautiful of all the passes of the Alps, and I confess that it was mainly for the sake of crossing it that we took the circuitous route of Chambery, instead of proceeding at once from Geneva to Lyons. In this respect our wishes were abundantly gratified. It is, indeed, impossible to have a finer and more favorable opportunity of contemplating it in all its stupendous sublimity and grandeur than we enjoyed. The scene has been described, I understand, with a liveliness—a glow—and a graphic accuracy of delineation peculiarly and inimitably his own, by the pen of Rousseau, and therefore I may well be excused from attempting a lengthened description of it. The distinguishing features of this renowned pass may however be expressed in

very few words. The road across this terrific gorge was commenced more than one hundred years ago by one of the dukes of Savoy, and was nearly finished by Buonaparte. It begins at a little distance from the village of Les Echelles, and is, I should think, about a mile and a half in length. Throughout its whole extent it is literally cut out of the solid rock. In some places this craggy elevation seems to be absolutely perpendicular from its base, at an enormous depth below, to its summit, at a dizzy height above, so that the road resembles a pathway cut along the breast of a lofty and massive wall —a proportion of the mountain equalling the breadth of the road necessarily hanging over the head of the traveller; and yet so perfect is the work as accomplished by the hand of man, and so solid and compact the sublimer workmanship of nature, by which this noble achievement of labour and art appears to be guarded rather than endangered, that I never proceeded along a level plain with a more entire sense of security. On our left, as we leisurely advanced, was a gorge of frightful depth, along which an impetuous torrent, issuing from the mountains of the Chartreuse, rising to an enormous height to the south of the pass, rushes with headlong and sonorous rapidity; and disdaining every impediment which may occasionally resist its course, it "boils and whirls and foams and thunders through." The parapet wall, which lines the

edge of the road at some points is level with, if it does not even project beyond the very bed of the torrent. On the right the rock rose to an elevation apparently equal to that which separated us from the bottom on the other side—reminding me of Virgil's description of the tree—"*quantum vertice ad auras Æthereas, tantum radice in tartara tendit.*"

I dismounted from the diligence at the commencement of this extraordinary terrace, and walked through the whole length of it, and although it thus meandered along the rock, occasionally retiring, as it were, into a chasm, and occasionally spanning a bold and awfully projecting point, it was everywhere broad enough for two carriages to proceed abreast with perfect security and ease. Just at the extremity of the pass there is a huge projection of the rock, which completely closes on the view, but the instant you cross that point, one of the finest and most extensive prospects bursts on the eye, which I have ever had an opportunity of seeing. Altogether this pass certainly affords one of the most striking exhibitions that can well be imagined, of what the skill and industry of man are capable of effecting among the sublimest and apparently the most impracticable of the works of nature. It is a noble practical illustration of the great Baconian axiom, that knowledge is power; for without knowledge carried to a great extent in a considerable variety of its branches,

this wonderful and important work, which on a distant view looks only like a narrow line drawn along the side of the mountain, could assuredly never have been carried into execution.

In approaching the famous city of Lyons, the mind was of necessity variously, but could hardly fail to be eagerly and intensely, exercised. To the many important and affecting circumstances connected with its early and successive struggles for the pure religion of Jesus Christ, was now added the melancholy interest arising from the recent disastrous political conflict, which had deluged its streets with blood, and reduced many of its finest edifices to ruins. It required but the merest sprinkling of ecclesiastical history to remind me, as I drew near towards it, just at the sunset of a beautiful evening, that Lyons furnishes one of the most important and interesting of all its narratives. Under such circumstances, during the few days I was able to remain in it, the eye of the imagination frequently ran, rapidly and indistinctly indeed, but at the same time with deep and affecting interest over the successive epochs of its Christian history, and marked out with peculiar vividness and veneration some of its most distinguished prelates, martyrs, reformers, and confessors. In taking this cursory retrospective view, we are led back to the very first, or at least to the very beginning of the second, century of the Christian era. We see the

Christian merchants of Asia bringing in exchange for the perishable commodities of the west, the pearl of eternal truth. We witness the erection in this famous city of the first christian church among the Gauls. We pass on to the horrible persecutions so pathetically recorded in the letter of its illustrious and early bishop Irenæus, containing an account of the dreadful sufferings of the Christians of Lyons and Vienne, addressed to their brethren in Asia. We see the merciless governor—the ferocious rabble—and the sanguinary Roman soldiery, combining together to harass, to torment, and if possible, but all in vain, to exterminate from the face of the earth this infant community. Amidst this scene of general insult, violence, and carnage, the names of a few distinguished champions of the cross, against whom the ferocity of their persecutors was peculiarly directed, stand out to our view as objects of pre-eminent admiration and regard. Among these the venerable Pothienus, now past the age of ninety, and probably the first Bishop of Lyons, cannot fail to strike us with special reverence, by the fearless dignity with which he replies to his adversaries, and the patient perseverance with which he lived and died. We mark out in succession the noble-minded Epagathus, who by his intrepid claim to maintain the innocence of the accused, gained the illustrious surname of the Christians' Advocate. In close connec-

tion with him stand Maturus, Sanctus, and Attalus, while the youthful Pontinus, and the tender and delicate Blandina—names embalmed in the memory of the faithful of every subsequent age of the church—bring up the rear, as it were, of this glorious army of martyrs. We kindle with an indignation, which almost makes us forget that we are christians, while we behold the remains of these devoted followers of Christ—mutilated and maltreated by every species of indignity, which the most frantic malignity could suggest—scattered over the place of execution—refused the rites of burial, and, in derision of their hopes of a resurrection, their ashes thrown into the Rhone—ashes, which in the believer's eye consecrate the very stream with which they mingled, and form an infinitely more precious deposit along its banks, than the golden sands of the Pactolus. After a dark and dismal chasm of seven centuries, during which the abomination of desolation was gradually widening its range and augmenting its power, in the ninth century the eye is refreshed with the view of Bishop Agobard, raising his voice and employing his pen against the worship of images, which the Pope was then attempting to enforce. Passing on to the twelfth century, we see the illustrious Peter Waldo, the rich merchant of Lyons, and one of the brightest of the morning stars of the Reformation, rising in all the might of

his character, learning, and influence, against the revolting tenet of transubstantiation and its attendant superstitions, which, like a cloud of darkness, charged with the elements of spiritual death, then rested over the face of Europe. The sixteenth century presents Lyons in the noble attitude of sealing its testimony to the great doctrines of the Reformation by a crowd of martyrs. Among these illustrious confessors, the five students burnt within its walls deserve honorable mention. We see it, at this memorable epoch in the history of the church, enjoying for a series of years the blessing of the persuasive and mellifluous eloquence of Viret, until he was forced to quit it by a persecution, which reached its climax of unrivalled ferocity in the bloody tragedy of St. Bartholomew, in the year 1572, when the rivers of Lyons were again choked—not with the ashes, but with the mangled bodies of the saints, whose remains at a remote distance from the city were seen floating on the stream. These epochs are past away, and their fruits had in a great measure withered and decayed. But I trust there is another commencing at Lyons, which, marked as it has already been, by a more unseemly and inconsistent persecution, as arising from professing Protestants, will, it may be hoped, under the divine blessing, be more remarkable in its results, more extensive in its influence, and more

lasting in its duration than any of the preceding.

To explain this last statement, it is necessary that I should briefly refer to what has occurred at Lyons in connection with an important revival of religion, which has taken place there in the course of the last three or four years. This city may be considered to have been always one of the strong holds of professed Protestantism in France. It became consequently the seat of a consistory, and numbers not less than ten or twelve thousand souls outwardly bearing that designation. But until very recently true and orthodox christianity had fallen there, as well as throughout France in general, into a state of grievous and lamentable decline, and had become in fact, little else than a species of half-disguised and half-avowed Arianism. Under these circumstances, a few years ago, M. Adolphe Monod, son of the elder Monod, of Paris—a man, who soon displayed in his ministrations the most fervent piety and the most uncompromising maintenance of the established doctrines of the church, combined with the most splendid powers of oratory, became President of the consistory. Such a commotion excited among those waters of indifference, which had so long been the quiet reservoir of so much heretical pravity and practical impiety, at once roused the hostility of his associates in the ministry, and of those whom they had hitherto lulled

into this state of dangerous security; and in consequence more especially of a sermon on the subject of particular communion, which M. Monod preached in the month of March, 1831, he was, with the concurrence of the existing French Administration, deposed from his presidency. He has since established a separate church, the members of which principally consist of those who seceded with him from the national reformed church. He now preaches to this congregation in a large room, fitted up as a chapel, and he contemplates erecting a church as soon as the necessary arrangements can be made. I carried a verbal introduction to this gentleman from a friend at Geneva, and I had the pleasure of spending some time with him during my stay at Lyons. He is evidently a man of superior talents and ardent piety, and I was happy to learn from him that his secession from the national church, was the effect of the persecuting measures adopted towards him by his associates, rather than of any difference of opinion respecting the principle of such a church. Although I had not an opportunity of hearing him preach on the Sunday, I have no doubt, from three masterly and eloquent discourses, which he some time since published, and which he had the kindness to present to me as a 'souvenir,' that the tone of his ministrations is eminently scriptural and useful, and there is every reason

to hope that the small society to which he now ministers, will become the nucleus of a numerous assemblage of faithful and devoted christians, in this once favored but now benighted city. It was a fine testimony, borne to the character and tendency of his preaching, with respect to its bearings on the social and political habits of the community, mentioned to me by M. Monod himself. A little before the recent troubles of this place, the sister-in-law of the Prefèt of Lyons—both of them catholics—went to hear Monod, and when she returned she told her brother-in-law—'Instead of one, I wish we had a hundred Mons. Monods here, and if we had I am sure you would have much less to do in the preservation of public order.' The French government in fact well knows, that the gospel properly administered is essentially favourable to tranquillity; or, as Robert Hall truly expressed it—that the pious are always the peaceful of the land—and therefore it finds it to be its policy to encourage rather than to repress the diffusion of scriptural truth. 'The government well knows', said Monod, 'that it can always calculate upon christians.' Hence the curious fact, as recently stated in the public journals, of Louis Philippe writing an Autograph letter to our distinguished and eloquent countryman Dr. Chalmers, for the purpose of obtaining his view of the best mode of diffusing the bless-

ings of a scriptural education among the people.

In the course of the day I spent with him, M. Monod introduced me to two of the agents of the Continental Society, who were now stationed in this place and who appeared to be labouring here with great diligence, and not without some success. One of them, named Moureton, was once a soldier and belonged to the imperial guard of Napoleon. He seems to be a man of great simplicity and piety, and he expressed to me the happiness he felt in being now engaged in a different warfare. In the evening, I accompanied Monod to a kind of social meeting held in the school-room, and while he acknowledged the dangers and even positive evils incident to such conferences, he felt with many good men among ourselves, that something of this kind appears to be necessary to meet the natural craving for brotherly communion generated in the Christian's breast; and that under judicious management the best results may be expected to flow from them. On this occasion the general interest was greatly increased by the presence of a very pleasing and pious young man from the vallies of Piedmont, who gave a most delightful and encouraging account of the present state of religion among the Waldenses. He stated that several young ministers in that interesting community, now preach the gospel with great energy and zeal. One of

them in particular, named Blanc, who was converted through the instrumentality of the devoted Felix Neff, sent his christian regards to the church of Lyons, and desired to be remembered in their prayers.

Having thus given a brief account of the state of Protestantism at Lyons, I must not leave the city without slightly referring to the frightful and sanguinary struggle which in the preceding month had spread such ruin and devastation—such destruction of life and property over its whole extent. It was indeed a melancholy and sickening sight, which presented itself to our view on first passing its suburbs. It had, in fact, all the appearance of a place which had just been sacked by an enemy and abandoned for a considerable period to the desolations of fire, the cannon, and the sword. This process of horrible and combined devastation indeed was incessantly carried on in different parts of it for six successive days. In fact, its troubles, though outward violence and direct resistance to the law had at least for a while been repressed, could hardly be said to be over, for on the very night of the Sunday we spent there, two soldiers were murdered, and a ball fired by some concealed assassin, passed close by the master of the hotel where we lodged, as he was quietly returning to his home in the evening. It was, however, from the 9th to the 16th of April that the whole of this fine and wealthy city was in a state of

civil war of the most obstinate and savage description. During the conflict, those who were not actually engaged in the struggle were literally imprisoned in their houses, and it was at the peril of his life that any individual appeared at his door or his widnow. In fact, hundreds of lives were sacrificed from the imprudent curiosity, or the unavoidable necessity of persons thus exposing themselves. The family of Monod was thus besieged, and several balls actually entered his house. It was indeed perfectly astonishing to me—what showers of these deadly missiles must have been flying in all directions, as there were whole streets in which there was not a single house which did not bear the obvious marks of having been battered by whole volleys of them. Here and there the signs attached to shops and other houses, penetrated and mutilated by a multitude of these balls, presented a most singular and grotesque appearance. Over the doors of some of the houses you might observe the figure of a kind of John Bull, with his nose or his chin struck off, or pierced through by a musket ball.

Having witnessed these and other indications of the deplorable effects of this disastrous conflict between the military and the insurgent part of the population, I was anxious to ascertain, so far as I was able, the more immediate and direct causes of it. These, I think, may in a general view be reduced to the following three.—

(1.) *Moral.* In illustration of this head of causation, I have no hesitation in saying that I never visited any town in England or France which appeared to be so utterly abandoned to every species of irreligion and vice. Out of the immense population of Lyons, the only persons in fact who appear to have any clear and correct notions of the principles and doctrines of christianity, are the small community belonging to the church of Monod already mentioned. It is almost needless to say that the Sabbath had hardly any appearance of a day devoted to holy purposes. The shops were open as on other days, and the streets were echoing with profane and ribald songs. The merchants, who constitute nearly the whole body of the wealth and property of the place, are entirely given up to the pursuit of gain. The workmen, who were the immediate authors of this bloody catastrophe, and the remnant of whom are eagerly awaiting the opportunity of engaging in another with better success, are, as I have been assured, and as I can easily believe, the most reckless and unprincipled race of men on the face of the earth. Covetousness, impurity, pride and ambition, seem, in reality, to be the demons which rule the place. This, I have not the least doubt, is a correct description of the prevailing and predominating habits of the community—with a reserve in favor of a small band who, like Lot in the midst of Sodom, have ever been preserved as faithful witnesses for God.

(2.) *Political.* Under this head must be prominently placed the attempt of the French government, to put down by means of the recent law of associations and other strong measures, the numerous popular combinations with which the whole country, but more especially the large manufacturing towns swarm, and which unquestionably threaten the very existence of social and civilized society. The two most powerful and best organized of these confederacies are the "Societé des droits des Hommes," owning Robespierre for its founder and patron, and that "Des amis du Peuple." Dangerous to the peace of the community as is the permanent existence of all such combinations, though it is not to be denied that emergencies may arise which may justify such concentration of strength—it is enough to stamp the real character of the first of these unions, that it should recognize as its tutelary saint, a man who cannot be more accurately described than as the most ferocious of cannibals—the most savage of the revolutionary purveyors for the lantern and the guillotine —the quintessence, in short, of the most infernal malignity, barbarity and impiety. (3.) The *occasional* cause of these tumults was the trial of some workmen belonging to the Society of the Mutuellites, or the Trades' Union, which produced a complete riot in the court of justice, and ended in the horrible and sanguinary devastations already noticed. Independently of the

almost utter annihilation of the trade of Lyons, and the improbability of its ever being able to recover it former commercial greatness, this event is estimated to have been attended with an immediate loss of at least twelve or fifteen hundred lives, and of property amounting to no less than sixty millions of francs. Who can contemplate such a catastrophe without feeling with emphatic force the declaration of the inspired writer, even in reference to the affairs of this life and the security and welfare of the social system, that righteousness exalteth a nation, while sin is a reproach to any people.

On Tuesday, May 13th, we left Lyons, and on the morning of the following day, arrived at Moulins, an old straggling town, situated in the department of Allier. The most interesting object, which fell under my notice in this place, was the splendid Mausoleum of the last Duke of the illustrious family of the Montmorencies, who was executed under the ministry of the celebrated Cardinal Richelieu, against whom he entered into a conspiracy in the year 1632. His body was brought into this place, by his illustrious and devoted wife, who at her husband's death retired into the convent, in the chapel of which this noble work of art, and monument of conjugal affection, was erected. On the surface of the tomb are two fine figures intended to represent the Duke and Duchess. On one side is an emblem of Religion hold-

ing a cross. Below her is that of Generosity. On the other side are Mars above and Hercules below. There is indeed a palpable want of taste and correct keeping in thus associating heathen deities with the sublime personifications of Christianity, but it is generally allowed that, Religion perhaps excepted, the unfortunate nobleman whom they are intended to characterize, and who fell a sacrifice to what he doubtless conceived to be the claims of honour, was in a high degree distinguished by the qualities they are designed to represent. Over the centre is a beautiful marble urn, closed by two angels and containing the heart of the Duke.

In this town, I found an excellent and extremely well-regulated school of mutual instruction. It is entirely supported by the Commune. The priests, as is usually the case with schools of this description, vehemently oppose it, and have another conducted by the Frères Ignorantins, under their own immediate influence. The master—a very gentlemanly and intelligent young man—remarked to me that although prior to the Revolution of July, education was not altogether neglected in that neighbourhood, subsequently to that event it has occupied a much larger share of public attention, and has been conducted in a much more liberal spirit. The number of boys in this school was about one hundred. On entering the room I

observed on one side inscribed in large and conspicuous characters, the words 'Silence, Obeissance, Respect.'—On the other side in similar characters—'Religion, Morale, Patrie.' In connection with the term Religion, I inquired of the master, whether Religious Instruction formed a part of their system? He immediately replied in the affirmative, and I was certainly not less surprised than delighted to find that in spite of the priests' opposition, the New Testament in the vulgar tongue, literally formed one of the books regularly read by the children. It was not without grief and some indignation that I contrasted the conduct of the French municipal body, supported by the existing government in reference to this important question, with a recent enactment of our own government, which in obedience to the demands of the turbulent priests and agitators of Ireland, has actually sanctioned and even enforced the exclusion of the Holy Scriptures from the schools supported by its grants.

Leaving Moulins, we passed on to La Charité, a small old town beautifully situated on the Loire. Here it is evident from its effects that the Revolution was not sparing in the work of destruction as applied to churches and convents. Early next morning we set off for Bourges—the chief town of the department of Cher. This department—formerly the province of Berry—is rich in agricultural produce,

and is distinguished as having given birth to Louis the XI,—to the celebrated French merchant James Cœur, once the richest citizen in Europe, but subsequently imprisoned, degraded and robbed by the perfidious monarch, whom he had enabled by his gold to add one of the richest provinces of France to his dominions—and to the illustrious Bourdaloue. Bourges is a very old town, and the present population is estimated at 20,000. It is the seat of an Archbishop, and the cathedral, which is rich and splendid, is kept in better order than any edifice of this description I have seen on the continent. The Archiepiscopal palace also, situated almost contiguously to it, is a fine and venerable building. The whole ecclesiastical regime seems indeed to be here maintained, more in the spirit and character of the ante-revolutionary period, than in any place I have visited. Here there is also a neat little protestant temple. There are not many protestants, however, residing in the town, but nearly all the inhabitants of a neighbouring village are such. I have often been struck with the singular phenomenon of an isolated oasis of this description presenting itself in the midst of the surrounding darkness of popery and superstition—itself alas! in many cases, but little, if at all more enlightened. But who knows whether, when the spirit of illumination has been poured down

from on high, these are not destined to be so many central points, from which the beams of truth and holiness are to be radiated over the circumambient space, until these rays meeting together in all directions, shall overspread the whole face of the country with a flood of celestial light. It appears that formerly many Jews lived in this town, as I observed one street inscribed with the title of 'Rue des Juifs,' from the circumstance of its being once entirely occupied by these people. But at present I could not find that there was an individual of that nation residing here. The house once occupied by James Cœur was pointed out to us as a great curiosity. The splendid palace of the ancient Dukes of Berry is almost in ruins and is now occupied as barracks. In this province is also situated the castle of Aubigny with its annexed domain, belonging to the Duke of Richmond, and in virtue of which, that nobleman claims, I believe, the rights and privileges of a Peer of France.

We were constrained to leave Bourges at eight o'clock in the evening, and late on the following day, being Saturday, arrived at Tours, so remarkable for rich historical and ecclesiastical recollections. This celebrated town—some years since the principal resort of the English, who visited France and passed beyond Paris, is situated in the midst of a fine rich plain near the confluence of the Cher and the Loire. The road which

leads to it in the direction of Bourges is inclosed to a considerable distance from the town by lines of lofty and umbrageous trees—thus forming one of the finest avenues I have ever seen. On the Sunday morning, being Whitsunday,—as the service in the English chapel did not commence till half-past twelve—we went to the Cathedral. The church, with which the name of the celebrated Martin of Tours is so intimately connected, was by no means so splendid as I expected. Associated as it was, however, in the imagination, with the name and character of Martin—at first the rude soldier of Pannonia, and afterwards the indefatigable and sainted apostle of the Gauls, it had a charm surpassing that of almost any other continental cathedral I had visited. The service in the interior on this grand day was exceedingly imposing, and, if I had not known the real position of Romanism in France, this scene would certainly have conveyed the impression of its still reigning there in all its antique and palmy glory. I believe that I am speaking quite within compass when I say that there were present at least seventy or eighty persons of all ages and gradations belonging to the order of priesthood. The archbishop, who is said to be a mild and benevolent old man, was not present. The congregation, consisting as usual at least to the amount of three-fourths of women and children, was very numerous, amount-

ing apparently to not less than three thousand persons. This was in fact considered a sort of grand review-day, and all who were accustomed to frequent the church at all, were, doubtless, present on this occasion. But just proportioned to the superior splendour of this exhibition, was the clearer insight it afforded into the buffooneries and absurdities of Popery. As this pantomimic performance was successively evolving and shifting its scenes, I was often irresistibly reminded of Juvenal's assertion respecting the Greeks, 'Natio Comœda est.' Truly may it be said of the Church of Rome, 'Ecclesia comœda est.' At twelve o'clock, we attended the English chapel, where I was happy to find a respectable and attentive congregation under the ministry of a brother of the pious and devoted Lewis Way, the praise of whose unparalleled munificence towards the cause of Christ is in all the churches.

On Monday morning, May 19th, we set off for Angers. The road from Tours to this celebrated old town, beautifully and romantically winds along the banks of the Loire. For several miles beyond Tours I was exceedingly struck with the appearance of the subterranean abodes dug into the sloping bank, forming a kind of curious gallery rising from the verge of the river. Very few of these houses had any windows. Many of them had not even a chimney. Of others literally nothing could be seen, but a

door and an aperture intended to answer the purpose of a chimney appearing at some distance above on the breast of the sloping bank. The people who occupy these strange abodes did not appear unhappy. The children were playing along the river-side, and seemed perfectly cheerful and healthy. The scene strongly reminded me of the half-excavated ruins of Herculaneum and Pompeii, with this, however, among other important differences, that the occupants of these subterranean mansions are living beings, and not the crumbling skeletons of the departed. The calm and gentle Loire, throughout the whole of this part of its course, is certainly beautiful and lovely in the highest degree—sometimes spreading out into a smooth glassy lake, reflecting a rich azure sky from its surface—then dividing itself into several minor streams, and thus forming groups of rich and verdant islets; again collecting its whole force into a narrower compass it rolls its majestic tide in one deep channel, while the inclosing banks on either side present a rich, fertile, and variegated landscape. As I surveyed its calm and yet mighty current thus meandering through a soil so much enriched and embellished by its influence, I was frequently led involuntarily to exclaim, in reference to various functions I might be called to discharge—

'O that I flowed like thee and made thy stream
My great example, as it is my theme :
Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull;
Strong without rage; without o'erflowing, full.'

About half way between Tours and Angers is the town of Saumur, celebrated for its cavalry school. It was in this institution, I believe, that the hero of Waterloo—the conqueror of Napoleon received his early military education. On the height which commands the town on the south-side of the Loire there is still a very strong castle, which is now used as a magazine and for other military purposes. A surly soldier stationed at the entrance prevented our admission into its interior, and evidently felt uneasy when he saw me inspecting, apparently with great care and interest, but with much less knowledge of the subject than he imagined, the several outworks of this noble fortress.

About midnight we reached Angers, and very early next morning were under the necessity of leaving a place so rich in historic recollections, without any opportunity of surveying its various edifices and localities. After a delightful aquatic ride down the Loire, we arrived at Nantes soon after mid-day. The most interesting and remarkable object which presented itself during this journey, was the noble monument of Beauchamp, so deservedly celebrated as one of the most generous and heroic chieftains of the Vendean war, reared on the height of St. Florent,

where that war first broke out. Whatever may be thought of the object of that fierce and protracted struggle, as designed to check the torrent of republicanism and to re-establish the dynasty of the Bourbons, it is impossible that any candid reader of the elegant and interesting memoirs of Madame De la Roche Jacquelin should refuse to Beauchamp, De l' Escure, and other chiefs, as well as the peasant bands by whom they were followed, the honor due to the most chivalrous and devoted fidelity to what they deemed to be the cause of their religion, their king, and their country. Influenced by this consideration, I confess that I viewed this splendid pillar with emotions very different from those with which I should have regarded the monument of some reckless military adventurer, whose sword, though victorious, was drawn only to gratify his thirst for fame, or to cement with human blood the fabric of his lawless ambition. On entering Nantes it was delightful to observe the contrast it exhibited with Lyons, which we had so recently an opportunity of witnessing—the former apparently calm and prosperous—the latter, as the result of insurrectionary violence and outrage, exhibiting the aspect of almost universal ruin and desolation. Not long since, indeed, I had read and been somewhat amused with an account of a 'banquet' of the operatives of Nantes; in which one of the toasts was, that whatever other factitious distinctions may be made

in society, there are in reality but two classes —the labourers and the idle—'Les travailleurs et les oisifs.' From this and other circumstances I was led to inquire, with some attention, respecting the general conduct of the workmen at this time, and whether there was any apprehension of tumult or mischievous combination. We were lodged in a house of which the old landlady was a 'relic' of the great revolution—one who had witnessed the massacres and Noyades of that horrible and long-protracted tragedy, and who seemed to feel, in referring to them, that she was speaking of things in which she had been no uninterested spectator—things 'quorum pars magna fuit.' This venerable personage among others assured me that at present there was nothing to be feared, for that the workmen of Nantes were very prudent—'bien sages.' Well had it been for Lyons, for France, for England, for the civilized world, if all workmen had been equally 'sages.' You have it doubtless in your recollection that it was in a small closet or cachet behind the fire-place in a room of a house in this town that a certain famed, but not very discreet heroine, the Duchess de Berri, was discovered, on the information of the treacherous and infamous Jew, who sold himself to betray her confidence. On a former visit to Nantes, I saw and entered this famous hiding-place of royalty, which has, ever since the capture of the mother of the youthful aspirant to the throne of his

ancestors, been a place of not less veneration and interest to the devoted legitimists of France, than the oak, which more effectually concealed the second Charles, long continued to be to the cavaliers and royalists of England. The house is situated directly opposite the castle. It was then, and still continues to be, occupied by two elderly ladies. The fidelity of the two female servants of these ladies, who resisted every attempt on the part of the authorities, by means of the most enormous offers of pecuniary remuneration, to elicit from them any information respecting the hiding-place of the illustrious inmate of the house, excited universal admiration; and an immense subscription was raised throughout France to reward the noble spirit which they had displayed, greatly as it was to be lamented that their attachment and devotedness had not been displayed in a better cause.

Circumstances obliged us to hurry away from Nantes on this occasion, after a very cursory survey of its more remarkable edifices, and I must leave it to your own vivid imagination to call up the train of interesting and affecting associations, which the very name of Nantes cannot fail to suggest to every well-informed mind. I refer, of course, more particularly to the celebrated Edict of Henry IV. in favor of the Protestants, and its disastrous and unprincipled revocation by Louis XIV;—with the various effects of that infamous measure, not

only on the religious condition of that community in France, but, as connected with their compulsory emigration into our own and other countries, on the commercial wealth and prosperity of England at this hour.

From Nantes we took our departure for Rennes. Since I was at this place about six months before, the steam vessel, in which we went up as far as Nort, had been burnt by an incendiary, and we had now to travel up the river in a very curious kind of machine. It was literally no larger than an ordinary fishing boat, and could accommodate scarcely more than the passengers of the Diligence, and yet it was propelled by steam. The necessary machinery was placed on the deck—all exposed to view, and the smoke passed out by a small orifice in the side of the boat. In this remarkable vehicle we travelled in perfect safety about twenty miles up the river, and taking the Diligence at Nort we passed on by Melleray, celebrated as the scene of a great Trappist Establishment. Since the revolution of July, however, it has been in a great measure dissolved, as all foreigners, many of whom were Irish, have been obliged to leave the Institution.

The surrounding country is rich and beautiful in the extreme, and for many years the members of this silent fraternity, though as a friend once told me, they sturdily maintained that all discoveries in science have been injurious rather than beneficial to mankind, were long considered

the best agriculturists in all the country. Passing, a little farther on, the small rural town of Chateaubriant, we reached Rennes—a beautiful modern town, and once the capital of the dukedom of Bretagne—between nine and ten in the evening.

Here, just as we alighted from the Diligence, I was met by intelligence which afforded a most striking and melancholy illustration of the frailty of human life, and of the uncertainty of all earthly plans and purposes. I had designed to meet the whole of the party whom I had left behind at Avranches, on the following day at Dinan, and to spend some time with them in enjoying the delightful scenery of that place and neighbourhood, and then to return by St. Malo to England. But here, with the suddenness of a thunder-clap, it was announced to me by a young friend who had been awaiting our arrival for some days, that the gentleman who had accompanied us from England with his family, and whose only son had been the companion of my tour, had breathed his last a few hours previously to the departure of the bearer of these melancholy tidings, and that his distressed widow was anxiously looking for our arrival, for the purpose of attending the remains of her departed husband to his native land. After the shock, which such unexpected intelligence gave to my own feelings, had a little subsided, I gradually broke the subject to my young friend and com-

panion—the only child of the deceased, and without an hour's delay took a voiture for the purpose of travelling by post, and early the next morning reached that spot, now become a scene of lamentation and mourning and woe, which a few weeks before, I had left a scene of apparent health and cheerfulness and delight. It was gratifying to learn, however, that he who was gone, had, during his brief and severe illness, displayed the genuine spirit, and had experienced the peculiar consolations of the religion he had professed and exemplified. As he approached his end, his faculties seemed to quicken and unfold in a very remarkable manner. Laying aside his great natural reserve, he spoke with a freedom, and referred to appropriate passages of scripture, with a fulness and distinctness which astonished those around him, and he died full of peace, calling upon his Saviour to "come quickly." We had intended to enliven our return by a short stay at each of the channel islands, of the religious condition of which I had often received most gratifying accounts. All such schemes were now necessarily abandoned, and the remainder of our progress became a funeral procession. After a rough and stormy passage we safely reached Southampton, and scarcely allowed ourselves any rest, until we had deposited the remains of the departed companion of our sojourn in the sepulchre of his fathers.

For the present, I stop my pen and close my

communications. The period, to which they refer and over which they extend, I shall always consider as one of the most important and interesting eras in the brief history of my earthly existence; and the review of past events, and of scenes and objects not likely ever more to fall under my personal observation, has given occasion to the revival of impressions, which time with its ceaseless agitations, anxieties, and pursuits would otherwise have speedily obliterated from the mind. In glancing over what has been written in the confidence of a friendship, in which affection is exceeded only by respect and esteem, I cannot but be conscious that many circumstances are detailed, which could be properly introduced only as filling up an outline, to the accurate completion of which, the great and the minute, as forming component parts of the general design, are equally essential. When the moral taste is formed on sound and healthy principles, no object can be seen, no action can be contemplated, no event however trivial, can happen, which may not be linked with some valuable reflection and thus be rendered subservient to the general effect, which the enlightened observer of human character and conduct, must always be desirous of producing. In the course of these fugitive sketches, I have been led by circumstances to glance at a much greater variety of topics, than could be fully and adequately discussed

within so narrow a compass. In those numerous references to living persons and passing events, with which a running narrative of this description necessarily abounds, so far as my means of accurate information extended, the most scrupulous regard to truth has been maintained. The object of these letters has not been to produce an interesting—much less an exciting tale of fancy, but to give a record of impressions suggested by phenomena which actually occurred to the view. While I have endeavoured to represent the character and condition of our continental neighbours, in accordance with the real facts of the case, in reference to the several points, which have fallen under review, it has certainly been my anxious wish to abstain from exciting any unkindly feeling towards a people—I mean more particularly those of France—who are united to us not only by those common ties which unite the whole species, but also by those bonds of amity and peace, which on suitable conditions, it is not less the interest than the duty of both nations to consolidate and extend. While it is right that we should know, in order to guard against, whatever is seductive and injurious in the prevailing principles and habits of those, who are separated from us only by a narrow frith, we should assuredly indulge in no jealous and unsocial antipathy. Let these two great divisions of the human family on the

contrary proceed in a career of cordial and generous emulation in the pursuit of all that is noble, enlightened, and philanthropic.

It is impossible, indeed, on an impartial survey of the past history and the present condition of both countries, not to feel the superiority of our own in almost every thing which is most conducive to the honour, the dignity, and the happiness of man. In commerce, in arts, and in arms, we stand confessedly pre-eminent. Our science, while equally bold and vigorous in its researches, is more cautious in its inductions, more guarded in its speculations, and above all, more reverential in its acknowledgments to a system of revelation incomparably brighter than human sagacity could have ever disclosed to the view. Our literature, while equally imaginative and discursive, is less tainted by impurity. Our liberties, while more stable and extended, are less stained with blood. Our religion is at once more pure and more tolerant—our morality more solid and uniform in its operations. Our domestic virtues—the ornament of one sex and the pledge of the purest happiness to the other, and forming by their combination the well-spring of all the endearing charities of life—are too palpably and avowedly superior to admit of a comparison. With such advantages in our favour, let us claim, and claiming, let us wisely exercise the privileges of the just and salutary ascendancy, which they establish.

Instead of yielding ourselves to the seductive influence of a lax and baseless system of conventional principles and habits, let us aim to stamp on surrounding nations the impress of all that is wise, and great, and good in our own character and institutions; and not confining these inestimable benefits within the narrow circle of our own shores, be it ours to render them co-extensive with the range of our authority, our alliance, and our example. Conscious at once of their value, and of the responsibility which they involve, to us it belongs—

> '———to spread them wide,
> And let them circulate through every vein
> Of our vast empire, that where Britain's power
> Is felt, mankind may feel her *blessings* too.'

In these wishes in behalf of our privileged and honoured country, so finely expressed by one of the most admired of our poets, I am sure that you will cordially unite with one, who has the happiness to subscribe himself—ever most faithfully

And affectionately yours,

&c. &c.

THE END.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

I.—AN ESTIMATE OF THE HUMAN MIND.

Two volumes octavo, 18s. boards.

"The subject is highly important, and the discussion of it has fallen into able hands. Not only will persons conversant with such studies, find in Mr. DAVIES's volumes much that is striking and original, but even those to whom metaphysical pursuits are new, will be gratified, as well as informed, by the mass of powerful argument and apt illustration which he has brought to bear upon his various topics."

Christian Observer.

"The perusal of such volumes as these, acts as a sort of gymnasium upon the mind, by which all its powers are strengthened, and all its moral qualitics improved."

Evangelical Magazine.

"A great variety of topics of vast interest are ably and eloquently discussed. The reader, who only looks for dry argumentation, will be agreeably disappointed, as the work abounds with beautiful, and frequently splendid illustrations."

Congregational Magazine.

II.—THE ORDINANCES OF RELIGION PRACTICALLY ILLUSTRATED AND APPLIED.

One volume octavo, price 7s. 6d.

"It is something to say, that Mr. DAVIES has treated these Ordinances in a way not altogether unworthy their high importance, with much of intellect, of genius, of eloquence and, above all, with a genuine christian spirit. It were easy to present our readers with passages which would furnish abundant proof of this, but we content ourselves with a hearty recommendation of the volume itself, which will not fail to interest and delight and profit every genuine disciple of Jesus Christ, every man who wishes to be in reality, what he is in profession.—"*The Pulpit.*