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## ART. IV.—RICHARD WALDO SIBTHORP.

*Richard Waldo Sibthorp; a Biography told chiefly in his own Correspondence. With Appendix, containing Fragments of his Earlier Teaching.* By the Rev. J. FOWLER, M.A., Chaplain-Warden of St. Anne's Bede House Charity, Lincoln. Skeffington and Son. 1880.

FEW and far between are those who can recall the early days of Richard Waldo Sibthorp's ministry in the Church of England, when he took rank among the most popular of the Evangelical clergy. He died at Nottingham last year at the ripe age of 86, having spent the last thirteen years of his life as a Roman Catholic priest in that town. Thus he was scarcely known, except by name, to the Churchmen of this generation. Mr. Fowler's biography, however, will be read with deep interest by all who study the workings of the human mind in matters of religion. Mr. Fowler has executed a very difficult task ably and conscientiously. But notwithstanding all the light which his book casts upon the problem of Sibthorp's strange career, it will still remain an unanswered question in the minds of many how it was that Sibthorp became a Romanist, and how it was that, having become a Romanist, he assumed and maintained a position so inconsistent with the spirit and character of the corrupt Church of his adoption. We can hardly resist the impression, indeed, that, had he not been a clergyman of good family connections, of popular talents, and of independent fortune, he would never have been admitted to Roman orders, or, at any rate, that he would not have been allowed to exercise his ministry a second time, when, after more than twenty years of separation, he again sought reconciliation with Rome. Mr. Fowler, viewing his subject from the standpoint of a decided High Churchman, thinks that Mr. Sibthorp's instability is traceable to his not having been properly instructed in Church principles in early life. He grew up to regard the Church of England, we read, merely as "the Establishment," and not as his spiritual mother to whom he owed dutiful allegiance. He was saturated with the anti-Popish literature which was current in those days, but he was never well grounded in the independent claims of the Church of England as a primitive branch of the Catholic Church. It may be admitted that Lincolnshire squires of the type to which his father, Colonel Humphry Sibthorp, belonged, did not usually take high views of the spiritual character and functions of the

Church of Christ; and that Lincolnshire afforded, at the beginning of the present century, but few examples of fervent piety among the upper classes within the pale of the English Church. But we doubt whether that Church, in whatever light it might have been presented to him, could ever have satisfied Mr. Sibthorp's mind. When a mere boy he was once found "kneeling at his prayers before a crucifix; and William Wilberforce, a friend of the family, is reported to have said to Colonel Humphry (with some other words of warning), 'That boy will become a Roman Catholic.'" Colonel Humphry certainly committed a grave mistake in receiving under his roof the Rev. Abbé Beaumont, a learned French priest, an exile, whom he met with when travelling in Germany. For although Richard "was but an infant at the time of the Abbé's stay at the Hall," it appears that "some years later, during his school vacations, he studied French under this distinguished professor;" and Mr. Fowler thinks it highly probable that the youth instituted mental contrasts between the saintly life of his tutor and the worldliness of the fox-hunting clergy in the neighbourhood of Canwick. Richard, it is true, "always denied" that the Abbé had been "in any way the cause of his Roman proclivities," but such was not the Colonel's opinion.

Richard's schooldays, in a private school at Eltham, in Kent, and at Westminster School, passed uneventfully. But in 1811, when a demy at Magdalen College, Oxford, "he used to attend the Roman Catholic chapel at St. Clement's surreptitiously;" and in the October term of that year, "he suddenly disappeared from Oxford, neither the college authorities nor the members of his family knowing for some time the place of his concealment." He spent two days at Wolverhampton with Bishop Milner, the author of that mischievous book, "The End of Controversy;" and from this place he wrote to his father: "If you or my mother wish to see me, you shall instantly;" "an offer of which Colonel Humphry took advantage on the moment, and sent his eldest son, Coningsby, with a detective, to bring home the wanderer." A correspondence which ensued between Colonel Humphry and Dr. Routh, the President of Magdalen, shows that the young man was duly penitent. In January, 1812, the restored demy wrote a letter of apology to Dr. Routh, in which he says:

Allow me to assure you of the total change in my opinions, and of the entire eradication of every error in religion that I had suffered to take root in my mind; and, as I cannot recall what is past, permit me to hope that a steady continuance in the doctrines of the Church of England, in which I was first made a Christian, may prove the sincerity of my return to it.

Mr. Fowler observes, however, that "his feelings *at the time* are perhaps better described in his own words thus: 'I fled to

Bishop Milner in 1811, and was brought back a prisoner, sighing for St. Clement's."

In 1815, only four years after this flirtation with Rome, Richard Sibthorp began his clerical career as a decided Evangelical.<sup>1</sup> He was ordained by Dr. Tomline, Bishop of Lincoln; and he was successively curate of two Lincolnshire villages (Waddington and Harmston) in 1815; curate of St. Mary's at Hull, under the Rev. John Scott,<sup>2</sup> son of the Commentator, in 1817; vicar of Tattershall, in Lincolnshire, in 1819; minister in charge of Percy Chapel, St. Pancras, in 1825; assistant minister at St. John's, Bedford Row, with the Rev. Baptist Noel, in 1826; and incumbent of St. James', Ryde, in the Isle of Wight, in 1830. During the first five-and-twenty years of his ministry he seems to have enjoyed unbounded popularity as a preacher, accompanied by many tokens of spiritual success in the conversion of the careless and the building up of true Christians.

One still meets (says Mr. Fowler) with old persons, gentle as well as simple, who tell how that Richard Sibthorp had not merely crowds of admirers, but that among these were not a few individual souls whom he was the means of bringing back to God. . . . Obligations are freely acknowledged by the individuals themselves of the benefit derived from some never-to-be-forgotten sermon, the subject of which has been their soul's comfort and stay during half a century of temptation.

Testimonies of the value of his ministry, from no mean judges, appear in this book. The venerable Vicar of Islington, referring to Sibthorp's sermons at St. John's, writes: "I remember well going to hear him when a young man. His sermons were always most able and full of thought." During the interval between his leaving London and his acceptance of the church at Ryde it appears that he resided at Oxford on his fellowship. Mr. Gladstone was then an undergraduate, and he furnishes the following reminiscences:—

In the years 1829 and 1830 I used to be invited by a Mr. Hanbury, then a gentleman commoner of St. Mary's Hall, to prayer meetings in his rooms, at which I have, if memory does not deceive me, met Mr. Sibthorp. I used frequently in summer to walk out from Oxford to

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<sup>1</sup> Concerning his spiritual state from 1811 to 1815 little seems to be known. He was biassed, says Mr. Fowler, "towards the views of the more serious clergy," and he flung "himself on the crest of the rising wave of the Evangelical movement." It was his mother's wish that he should labour "under highly Evangelical guidance."

<sup>2</sup> "His popularity in the neighbourhood of Lincoln made rapid strides both among devout Churchmen and not less certainly with the religious Dissenters. 'The common people heard him gladly;' not so the Scribes and Pharisees of that time." . . . "Wherever he preached the crowds followed; and one good vicar objected on this very account: 'such a throng of people' he said, 'made the church dirty.'"

a small chapel [Kennington Church] under Bagley Wood, to hear him preach in the evenings to a purely peasant congregation. . . . I may mention an anecdote not without interest. For some purpose Mr. Sibthorp preached on a Sunday morning to the crowded congregation who attended the parish church of St. Ebbe's, under Mr. Bulteel. I heard the sermon, an Evangelical sermon of a genial type. Mr. Bulteel himself preached in the afternoon; and I well remember hearing at the time that he rebuked the error of saying that Christ died for all men, as in the morning his "brother Sibthorp" had mistakenly taught them.

I have nothing more of the Oxford Sibthorp than a soothing general recollection, a venerable visual image in the mind's eye, and a moral certainty that the preaching was, at the least, of singular grace and charm, which drew me again and again to walk some miles out of Oxford, where preaching was abundant, and *good* preaching was to be had.

It was during his ministry at Ryde, 1830-1841, that Mr. Sibthorp reached the height of his reputation and usefulness, and gradually underwent that downward and backward change of sentiment which led to his first formal secession to Rome. His preaching there exercised great influence, not only over the inhabitants of the Isle of Wight, but also over the many visitors who came annually to Ryde. His eloquence in the pulpit gained additional force from his assiduity in pastoral visitation and the consistent holiness of his life. "One speaks of his preaching as a real 'ministration of the Spirit,' it was so wonderfully set forth;" adding, however, that his own holy "walk and conversation" was, perhaps, even "more profitable than his preaching." "I was certainly much impressed with his earnestness and clearness," writes a clergyman, "in setting forth Gospel truth; and consider that I owe more to him than to any human teacher for what I hope I know of Evangelical religion." Mr. Fowler thinks that the year 1837 may be fixed on as being the time when the sad change began. A venerable friend of Mr. Sibthorp, who took a house at Ryde in order to have the benefit of his preaching, writes as follows:—

As regards Mr. Sibthorp's change of views, which led ultimately to his joining the Church of Rome, I do not feel competent to say much. They came upon him, I think, very gradually. Those who attended his Friday evening meetings were privy to his changing sentiments before they were made public from the pulpit. The first notice that I can remember of it was in his advocating very earnestly the unity of the Church, and insisting upon its necessity. "For how," said he, "could an Epistle be sent to the Church in Manchester? to whom could it be addressed?" I feel sure he had no idea that these views would lead him to Rome, for once, when he was maintaining some of them, I said to him, "If, sir, you honestly hold these views, they must lead you to Rome." He smiled and said, "You are much mistaken. I believe from prophecy that Romanism is to make head again, and that

this (the Puseyite) party is raised up to put it down." With his adoption of these views he began an expensive adornment of his church, and the establishment of a surpliced choir, &c. &c.

About this time, also, he began to grope his way towards the fundamental error of Romanism—namely, that the Gospel of Christ is a republication of the Mosaic law. While engaged in a series of lectures on the Levitical law and institutions, he persuaded himself that "the Church under the Old Testament was a close type of the Church under the new." Accordingly, as might be expected, he was brought to the conclusion that "the Catholic Church, in communion with the see of Rome, stood forth the close and perfect antitype of the Church under the Old Testament." Secession was of course inevitable. How it came to pass Dr. Bloxam, his attached friend, thus narrates:—

About the middle of October, 1841, Mr. Sibthorp came suddenly to Oxford, and told me that he wished to consult Dr. Wiseman respecting a member of his congregation who was already, or was about to become, a seceder from the Church of England to that of Rome; and begged me to write and ask Dr. Wiseman to give him an audience. I did so, little suspecting what the result would be. The answer came, dated St. Mary's College (Oscott), festival of St. Peter Alcant (19th October), 1841. "Rev. and Dear Sir,—I shall be most happy to receive Mr. Sibthorp on the day you mention." Mr. Sibthorp went to Oscott, and returned to Oxford in a few days, looking worn and agitated, and no longer a member of the Church of England.

After hastily winding up his affairs at Ryde, he returned to Oscott to study for orders in the Roman Church. The eagerness with which he was welcomed by his new friends is shown by the rapidity of his promotion to orders. Having been received in October, 1841, by Bishop (afterwards Cardinal) Wiseman, he was ordained acolyth in December of the same year, and sub-deacon, deacon, and priest in the year following. But though outwardly a member of the Church of Rome, he was far too much of a Protestant to satisfy his co-religionists. When ordained in 1842 he was attached to the Cathedral Church of St. Chad's, Birmingham. An old friend who lived at Edgbaston at the time writes:—

He refused to live with the clergy, and took a small house, and spent his time chiefly in visiting the poor. He preached a great deal (taking into the pulpit with him a pocket Bible), and generally without a trace of Romanism; and he joined in few ceremonies. He was spoken of as the "spoilt convert," to retain whom much must be conceded.

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Fowler quotes from Mr. Gladstone's sketch of the Evangelical movement (in the *British Quarterly Review*, July, 1879) as to the "secret affinities which connected the Evangelical and the Oxford schools." Upon this point, we may remind our readers, Canon Garbett made some remarks in *THE CHURCHMAN*, October, 1879.

It is evident that he failed to find in Romanism the peace and contentment which he longed for. "The mental disquiet continued; and, to the dismay of his Roman Catholic friends, he finally left Edgbaston in June, 1843, and bought a cottage near St. Helen's (Isle of Wight), at which place and at Springfield he lived for about eighteen months." His rupture with Rome soon followed, and in a letter to the President of Magdalen, dated October 2, 1843, he expresses his regret for the step which he had hastily taken in joining the Church of Rome, and declares that he "verily regards" her as "an adulteress." In a letter addressed to the Rev. E. Bickersteth about the same time he says: "The conviction I am come to, after most painful deliberation, is that the Church of Rome is the harlot and Babylon in the Apocalypse. I believe her to be an adulteress, and idolatrous church, especially as it respects Mariolatry." Commenting on these assertions, Mr. Fowler says:—

The almost arrogance of the *liberum arbitrium* which he allows himself is astonishing and unintelligible in a person of his childlike humility; till one recollects (what we have all along insisted on) that having at no time really recognized in the Church of England his *spiritual mother*, he had been, during his most active years of Christian growth, under influences which presented Christianity too much under the aspect of individualism, private judgment being the sole court of appeal.

After three years of retirement, Mr. Sibthorp sought from Bishop Sumner re-admission to the functions of a clergyman of the Church of England in the diocese of Winchester, but withdrew his application in consequence of that prelate's natural hesitation to admit him without some guarantee of his soundness in the faith.<sup>1</sup> At length, however, in December, 1847, the Bishop of Lincoln (Dr. Kaye) informed him that he was "at liberty to officiate and preach in the English Church as previous to his quitting her for that of Rome." The city of Lincoln thereupon became his place of abode, and he continued in Lincoln seventeen years. At the request of Bishop Kaye "he undertook the morning duty at St. Peter's-at-Arches, and for a short time added to this the single evening service at St. Martin's. His old popularity at once revived, and not a few citizens still remain under the spell of particular sermons preached by him." But his great work at Lincoln was the founding and endowing of St. Anne's Bede-House Charity," in memory of his mother. The objects of the charity "were to

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Sumner had heard that Mr. Sibthorp was in the habit of frequenting Roman Catholic services; his informant was a Roman Catholic priest. Dr. Bloxam, Fellow of Magdalen (now Vicar of Beeding, Sussex) mentions that Mr. Sibthorp did attend mass more than once.

be poor honest Lincolnshire folks (thirteen women and one man), communicants of the Church of England, and natives or twenty years residents in Lincoln" and the neighbourhood. To this undertaking he devoted the greater part of his fortune. The Bede-houses were completed in 1848, and the chapel was consecrated by Bishop Jackson in 1854. After alluding to the beauty of this chapel, Mr. Fowler proceeds :—

But if the chapel was much, the chaplain himself was more. No one who ever attended a service there, conducted by Richard Sibthorp, could easily forget it. His marvellous reverence showed a man surrounded, indeed, by others, yet alone with God. It was not merely recollectedness, it was *absorption*. He breathed an atmosphere of prayer which attracted into it the colder devotional feelings of his fellow-worshippers. It was indeed a privilege to hear him pray our beautiful liturgy. . . . But some came chiefly to hear the sermon, and they, too, had their reward. The fire of his youthful eloquence may be said, at least after 1858, to have died out. His sun in this respect had gone down, or was kept permanently under cloud; but there remained the soft tender lovely after-glow,—the pensive pleading persuasive style so well adapted for those among whom he ministered.

Nevertheless, Mr. Sibthorp was not happy at Lincoln, though "he seemed outwardly happy." He had known "Rome experimentally. He had seen her errors and excesses, and he had recoiled from them. But he had also tasted the sweets of her attractiveness—to him, rightly or wrongly, they *were* sweets—and the savour of these clung to his devout heart." But the chief cause of his unsettled state of mind while at Lincoln is best described in his own language :—

I am actually an ordained priest (and this my last ordination) of the Roman Church, with all her obligations on me; excommunicate, not actually but virtually, every time that I officiate at the Holy Table in the Church of England; before God engaged to read her offices daily, an engagement not sunk into a mere verbal declaration, as that in the Prayer-book, but carried out to the letter by every one in her priesthood, the Pope himself not excepted.<sup>1</sup>

Thus it came to pass that in January, 1865, when he was seventy-two years of age, Mr. Sibthorp was received again, and for the last time, into the Church of Rome.

The final sphere of his labours in which, old as he was, he ministered for thirteen years, was the Roman Catholic cathedral of St. Barnabas, Nottingham. In that town he died. His

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<sup>1</sup> From his constitutional tendencies, says Mr. Fowler in one passage, Mr. Sibthorp was always "prone to a religion of *fear*." Again, he says (p. 95), Mr. Sibthorp "lived and moved alone." At Lincoln "his morbid feelings greatly increased."



strange vacillation continued to the end; for when on his deathbed he received the Romish rite of extreme unction, and yet, by his own desire, he was buried in Lincoln cemetery, and the burial service of the Church of England was read over his grave by Mr. Fowler, who succeeded him as chaplain of St. Anne's.

Ably and faithfully as Mr. Fowler has executed his task, the devout reader will put the highest value on that part of this biography which sets forth the correspondence of Sibthorp. Half the volume consists of letters which he wrote during the years spent at Nottingham. These letters—written mostly to correspondents of “thoroughly Evangelical principles”—shine in the beauty of holiness. They show that, amid the melancholy and distracting changes of religious belief through which the writer passed, his heart was right with God. They bear out his own words, “I only want to get to Jesus.” Few who read them will hesitate to concur with Bishop Jackson, who, on hearing the tidings of his last secession, wrote thus: “Well, in whichever communion, Richard Sibthorp will live and die a simple loving disciple of the Lord Jesus, and a saint of God.”

It would be a pleasant task to dwell at large upon the testimony which these letters bear to the fervent piety of the writer; but we wish rather to regard them as illustrating the peculiar and exceptional character of Mr. Sibthorp's Romanism.

On a perusal of the letters, and indeed of this biography throughout, one thing that strikes us very forcibly is Mr. Sibthorp's utter lack of sympathy with the common type of a pervert to Rome from the Church of England, and with the Ritualistic party in general.

The only persons [says Mr. Fowler] whom he met at Oscott (before or after his ordination) of whom he allowed himself to speak at all disparagingly, were the “verts,” as they have been called, who soon began to arrive from Oxford. He marvelled at these men coming fresh from the profession of Anglican beliefs, but more Roman than the Romans themselves. They came prepared to teach, he thought, rather than to learn. His own mood was quite other than this. It was not the Rome of controversy which *he* sought; it was not the Rome of functions and ceremonies which was dear to him, but Rome appealing to his devotional instincts and drawing his soul nearer to God.

Writing to his friend Dr. Bloxam, he thus speaks of the vestments:—

Copes and chasubles seem to be getting all at once into high favour. Nurse Gamp would have gloried in this fashion, and have enlarged her umbrella to protect the folds of her investiture. At York the exhibition of church decorative dress created quite a sensation, and

helped to send divers Protestant clergy to attend high mass at our chapel, to see, I suppose, how they looked on living shoulders and not on wooden frames.<sup>1</sup>

A second remarkable feature in Mr. Sibthorp's Romanism is, that he never showed any desire to make proselytes. At the time of his first secession a lady said to him, "Now you are in the Roman Catholic Church, I suppose you would wish us to follow you?" "No," he replied, "if you find peace where you are, do not leave your Church." The truth is, that Mr. Sibthorp's conception of the Church continued to the last to be Protestant rather than Romish. The correspondence furnishes abundant evidence that he held fast the distinction between visible churches and the mystical body of Christ, and that he recognized in all who loved his Lord members of the one true Church. Thus, in a letter to Mr. Fowler he writes:—

Our blessed Lord did not overlook or put out of sight the distinction of the Jews and the Samaritans; but he even seemed to love to elevate the latter out of the prejudices against them, by his frequent introduction of them in his parables, &c. And I can say truly that a Wesleyan, or Baptist, or Independent, who loves Christ in his heart and life, is as dear to me as a Roman cardinal or an Anglican bishop, though I don't put out of my mind the differences by which one and another are separated, or look on them as immaterial.<sup>2</sup>

A third point to be noticed is the respect and affection with which Mr. Sibthorp regarded the Church of England, not only as a true Church, but as the Established Church of this land.<sup>3</sup> In a letter to Dr. Bloxam he writes:—

I believe the existence of the monarchy, constitution, and welfare of England, is dependent on the continued Church Establishment. I care not who hears me say so. I am quite alive to the defects of that Established Church; but I am also alive to her excellencies. And I will not coquette with any who are seeking, overtly or covertly, to overthrow her. She is a national and grand—not faultless—but still a very valuable witness to Christ and Christianity. . . . And

<sup>1</sup> Concerning the notorious Mr. Tooth, he writes: "Foolish Church of England! to be tearing her own bowels while beasts of prey are waiting to feed on them. I refer to such men as Tooth."

<sup>2</sup> To Dr. Bloxam he writes: "Whatever makes us cherish union with Jesus cannot but be a blessing. It is on this account I so much value the writings of Baldwin Brown (an eminent Nonconformist minister). They are, in my poor experience, helps to this, in the beautiful view they give of God as our Father in Christ. I am not at all ashamed or afraid to seek and get good from Dissenters."

<sup>3</sup> In a letter to an old Ryde friend Mr. Sibthorp says: "Democratic fancies have, I fear, sunk deep into our manufacturing and even agricultural districts. The Nonconformists, ignoring the better principles of a past generation, . . . are madly intent on pulling down the Established Church."

the High Church clergy are fools if they do not see that in positive clear Church-conservatism is their own security.<sup>1</sup>

A fourth peculiarity to be noticed in Mr. Sibthorp's Romanism is that he encouraged the members of his flock at Nottingham to read the Scriptures. He writes thus: "Catholics, frightened by the Protestant abuse of the reading of the Bible, don't read it at all, comparatively. I warn against this error, and give away the Douay New Testament; and many value it much." And again, alluding to his last literary undertaking, on which he was then engaged—namely, "Daily Bread; being Morning Meditations for a Year, for the use of Catholic Christians"—he writes: "The little publication I am preparing gives me some work for the mind. I mean it as a sort of daily bread. I want to lead our Catholic people into some knowledge of, and reflection on, Scripture truth; and not to be content with saying over the rosary and being present at mass and benediction: but to cultivate that knowledge of which St. Paul so marvellously instructs us in 1 Cor. ii."

The last peculiarity which we shall mention in Mr. Sibthorp's Romanism, as clearly manifested in these letters, is his grave divergence from the Church of Rome on the subject of purgatory and the intermediate state. The catechism of the Council of Trent declares purgatory "to be a *place*, not merely a state, of suffering — not merely, therefore, of internal suffering, but also of external inflictions. The same catechism also tells us that it is a fire, *ignis purgatorius*, so called to distinguish it from the eternal fire or Gehenna, the place of punishment of damned spirits."<sup>2</sup> Had Mr. Sibthorp been in harmony with Rome on this subject, he could not have written as he did with respect to the many deaths of friends, "heretics" be it remembered, mentioned throughout this correspondence. For example, in a letter of condolence addressed to the sister of Dr. Maurice, he says:—

I don't suppose that I am forgotten by him, and I do not forget him.

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<sup>1</sup> The following extract will be interesting in its bearing on the present movement to remove the Bishops from the House of Lords:—"I consider the Ritual party in the Anglican Church to be infatuated men, wrenching, if it be permitted them, the Anglican Church to pieces, and trying to foist upon her much to which she is repugnant altogether. And I too much desire her good to take part with those who, without designing it, are imperilling her. As all states, governments, and kingdoms are of God's appointment, and under the rule of Christ, so Christianity should superintend and influence all that such states, governments, and kingdoms do. Therefore, I would have the heads of Christ's Church in Parliament. If the Church of England is disestablished, this their voice in State matters is silenced; as to which position of things, I say, God forbid it!"

<sup>2</sup> "Philpot's Letters to Butler," p. 60.

If we are both members of the Lord's body, as I sometimes—not always—hope that I am, we still meet in Him, and continually; but the evils that affect and disease me do not and cannot touch him: Milman's beautiful hymn applies to him—

“Brother, thou art gone before,  
And thy saintly soul hath flown  
Where tears are wiped from every eye,  
And sorrow is unknown.”

Is it so? Then we need not mourn for him. But we need to magnify that Saviour to whose dying love for us all this grace and blessedness are owing.

In like manner he writes of Dr. Jeremie, late Dean of Lincoln, as being “while I write, in a close intercourse with the blessed loving Saviour;” of Mr. Quilter as having “entered into *rest* ;” and of another old friend as having, “at the ripe age of eighty-two, passed beyond the porch into the building, the ‘house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.’”

With such sentiments as these we are not surprised to learn that Mr. Sibthorp's life at Nottingham was to a great extent separate and solitary. The clergy of the Church of England, not unnaturally, stood aloof from him, while the growing Ultramontaniam of his own communion,<sup>1</sup> which received so great an impulse from the promulgation of the dogma of infallibility in 1870, caused a widening breach of sentiment and sympathy between himself and his co-religionists. The last letter which we shall quote is also the last which Mr. Sibthorp addressed to his frequent correspondent, Dr. Bloxam:—

I wish to express to you my entire and decided disapproval of Dr. Newman's last step, “the Cardinal's hat.” Oh! it is a very sad step. I don't mince the matter. You may let him know it. “Whatever you do, do not be tempted to leave your present position,” is the closing advice of your old friend. I see how the wind blows, but do not blow with it. Grace be with you.

Mr. Fowler's comment on this letter is so weighty that we give it in full:—

“Whatever you do, do not be tempted to leave your present position!” These are the strongest words which Mr. Sibthorp ever used on this subject. And they show most touchingly that the disillusion was—shall we not say it?—complete. That which he had sought, and fancied he had found, in Rome, fails him at the last. For in truth the Rome he had loved, and so persistently sought after, was really no

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<sup>1</sup> He objected strongly to popular Mariolatry, finding Cardinal Manning's arguments unsound, “that Catholics don't put the Blessed Virgin on an equality with Christ, because they teach their children to say, ‘Jesus Mary.’ Who does not see that one name must be pronounced first? And it would be monstrous to put Mary first.”

more. Even post-Tridentine Rome had passed away, and given place to the Rome of the Vatican dogma. And now Vaticanism hangs like a cloud over his dying hours, and, as regards churches and systems, he feels every prop and stay falling away from him. To accept all that he understood by Ultramontaniam would have cost him his soul; but he finds that, without such an article in his creed, he must be content to die, as he had lived, apart, and without much active sympathy. And yet, perhaps, we ought not to feel surprised at such a result. The Ultramontanes teach that without the absolute prostration of private judgment and opinion before the decisions most recently arrived at by the Roman Court and the Roman Pontiff, there is, to say the least, great peril as regards salvation. Mr. Sibthorp never did believe this, and yet, led by liturgical and devotional preferences, he had deliberately chosen to be a Roman Catholic. Now, then, he has to learn, even at the gates of death, that Rome was not the place for such converts. And hence he who, during life, had refused to make proselytes, appears now, at death, warning his oldest friend against a step which, now at all events, *he* seems to repent of.

The perusal of this painfully interesting biography will lead many to magnify the grace of God which prevented and followed his true-hearted but erring servant amid his repeated wanderings from the truth; but such will also sorrowfully reflect how much more happy, how much more useful he might have been, had he adhered to that pure faith of the Gospel which he preached in the days of his early ministry.

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#### ART. V.—THE JESUITS AND THEIR ASSAILANTS.

1. *Die verderbliche Moral der Jesuiten.* O. ANDREA. Ruhrort. 1865.
2. *Doctrina Moralís Jesuitarum.* Celle. 1873.
3. *Der Jesuiten-Orden.* J. HUBER. Berlin. 1873.
4. *The Jesuits.* W. C. CARTWRIGHT. (Articles in the *Quarterly Review.* 1874.)
5. *Remarks on a Late Assailant of the Society of Jesus.* London: Burns & Oates. 1875.
6. *Discours devant la Chambre des Députés.* P. BERT. Paris. 1879.

**T**HE expulsion of the Jesuits from Germany in consequence of the Falk Laws, and the more recent action of the French Government in the same direction, offer very instructive material to the student of ecclesiastical history. Examining, one by one, the various counts in the indictment against the Society of Jesus, and eliminating those which do not survive the test of dis-