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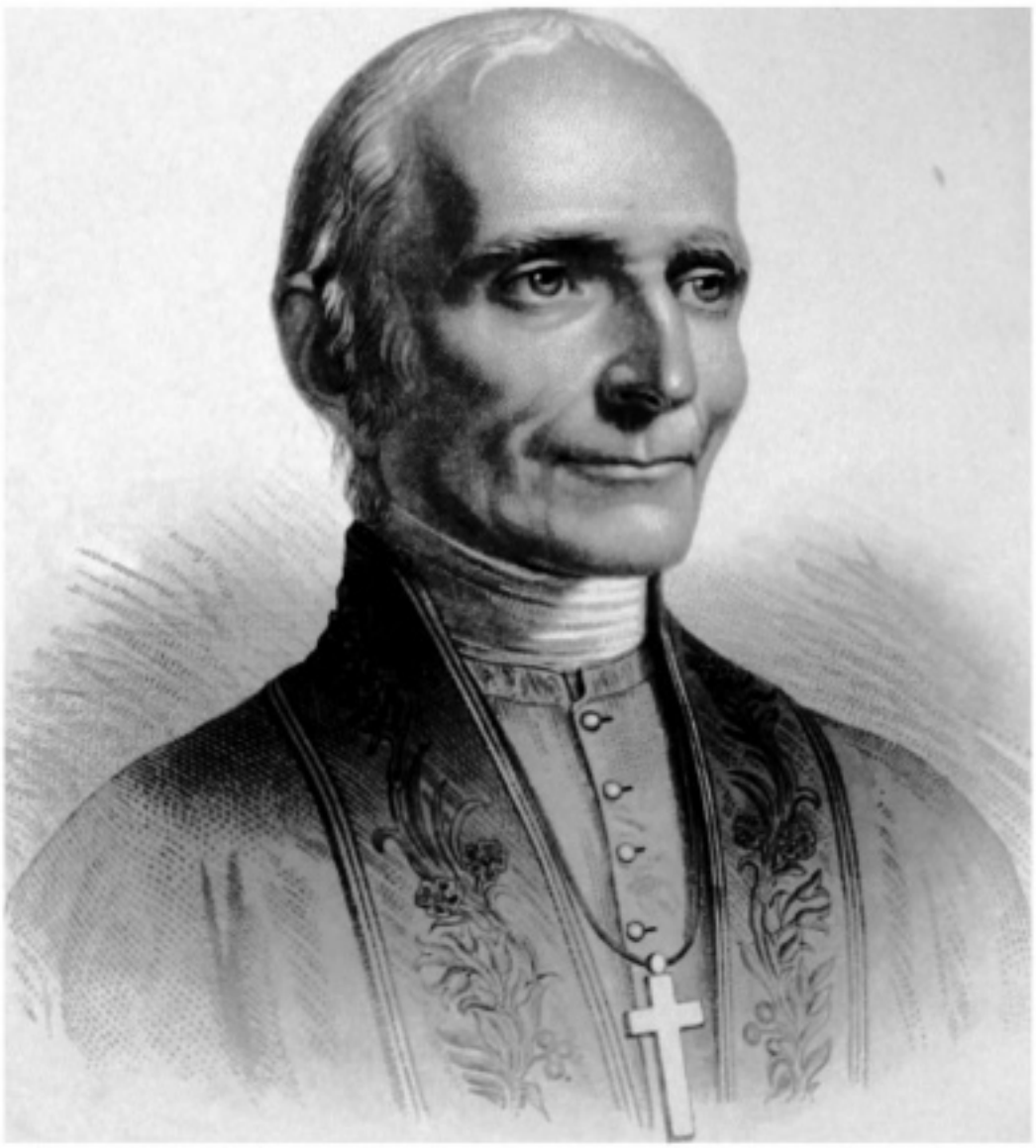

RIGHT REV. S. G. BRUTÉ.

FIRST BISHOP OF VINCENNES, INDIANA.

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MEMOIRS

OF THE RIGHT REVEREND

SIMON WM. GABRIEL BRUTÉ, D.D.,

FIRST BISHOP OF VINCENNES;

WITH

SKETCHES DESCRIBING HIS RECOLLECTIONS OF SCENES CONNECTED WITH THE

FRENCH REVOLUTION,

AND

EXTRACTS FROM HIS JOURNAL.

32257

BY THE

RT. REV. JAMES ROOSEVELT BAYLEY, D.D.,
BISHOP OF NEWARK.

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Fig. 1 marks the site of the ancient Jesuit Chapel.

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PREFACE

IT may be proper for me to state in what manner the following Papers came into my possession, and the reasons which have induced me to publish them. In 1847, Monseignor De la Hailandiere, the successor of Bishop Bruté in the See of Vincennes, presented to the Most Rev. Archbishop (then Bishop) of New York a large number of MSS. which had belonged to his predecessor. In examining them, I found amongst them a small MS. volume of Notes and reminiscences of the French Revolution, which, with the approbation of the Bishop, I determined to prepare for publication. My first idea was, to embody them in a "Life and Times of Bishop Bruté,"

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to contain a contemporaneous History of the Catholic Church in this country, and a Selection from his extensive and valuable correspondence. In this view I collected a large number of Letters and Documents, and made many notes. But such an undertaking, as the son of Sirach says of wisdom, "cometh of opportunity of leisure," and my constant occupations then, and since, have never permitted me to carry out my design. They would probably have caused me to abandon it altogether had not some friends, to whom I had shown the Notes on the French Revolution, and who were struck with the light which they threw upon what may be called the interior or domestic scenes of that dreadful Tragedy, urged me to prepare them, at least, for publication. Having done so, I found that it was necessary to preface them by a brief Sketch of Bishop Bruté's Life. In preparing this, from the memoranda in my possession, it will be perceived that I have not attempted a Biography, properly so called, but have merely drawn out a thread of narrative to string the notes on, particularly such as illus-

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trate the period in question. They will be found, when read in connection with the Sketches and Journal, to bring into relief a portion of the picture of the Revolution which has been too much overlooked. Historians have dwelt upon the crimes and horrors of that period, and the dark colours with which they have painted it have overlaid and hidden those scenes of Christian charity, and patience, and heroism which would have done so much to relieve the picture. The crimes of the oppressors were open and known to all men; the virtues of the sufferers were for the most part hidden, and known only to God. Even those works which were written with the intention of preserving the memory of the victims have become scarce, and are little known. I had much difficulty in obtaining a copy of the Abbé Carron's "Confessors of the Faith." I have read those which I was able to get,[1] but in none

[1] Barruel—Histoire du Clergé pendant la Révolution; 2 vol. 12mo, Londres, 1792. Carron—Les Confesseurs de la Foi dans l'Eglise Gallicane, à la fin du XVIII Siècle; Paris, 1820, 4 vol. 12mo. Walsh—Journées mémorable de la Révolution Française, par M. Le Vicomte Walsh; 5 vol. 8vo, Paris, 1840. Tresvaux—Histoire de la Persécution Révolutionnaire en Bretagne, par l'Abbé Tresvaux; Paris, 2 vol. 8vo, 1845.

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of them have I found anything so fresh and homelike as the papers here published. The only regret those who read them will have, is that they are so few and brief.

It is indeed to be regretted that Bishop Bruté did not write an autobiography. His life until he came to this country was passed among the most exciting events that ever occurred—he was personally acquainted with a large number of the actors in them—his memory was strong and accurate, and he might have written a book of great historical value. His notes and memoranda show that at one time he contemplated something of the sort, but on this account they are often less useful to others, being merely hints and memoranda to assist his memory. "There is no sort of Literature," he writes in a note on "Spence's Anecdotes," "which has afforded me more pleasure than Biographies and Memoirs. I sometimes think of amusing myself by writing an account of my life. There is a quantity of anecdotes and observations which occur to me, and which if they were written down would amuse and

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interest my associates and friends, and might remain '*en depôt*' in the Library."

In writing his Sketches, Bishop Bruté was accustomed to illustrate the subject by drawings made with his pen. A few of these have been engraved on wood, and inserted in the work. I have selected such as are of an historical value, representing scenes which have long since passed away.

To complete the work I have also translated such portions of his Journal as are of general interest, and printed them in the Appendix. Though very brief, they are interesting as affording glimpses behind the scenes, and indicating the changes in public opinion, as the people gradually returned to their senses.

In looking over the work, now that it is finished, my only regret is, that the preparatory Biographical Sketch is not more worthy of the holy man who is the subject of it. Those who knew him, I am afraid, will be particularly disappointed at my poor *Silhouette* likeness of him. But if so, they must distribute the blame among themselves, for some one of them should,

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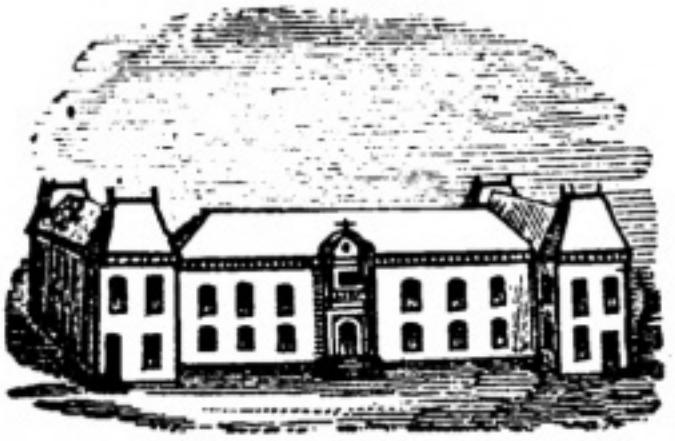
long before this, have written a Biography of one whom they remember, and so often speak of, as the model of every ecclesiastical virtue, and whose memory for piety and learning is so justly in benediction among them.



Palais de Justice, Rennes.

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MEMOIRS.

THE subject of this sketch was born in Rennes, the capital of the ancient Province of Brittany, in France, on the night of the 20th of March, 1779, and was baptized [1] early the next morning in the Parish Church of St. Germain. His father, Simon William Gabriel Bruté de Remur, who belonged to an ancient and very respectable family, was born at Paris in 1729, and was at the time of his son's birth [2] Superinten-

[1] Extrait du Registre concernant l'état civil de Citoyens de la ci-devant Paroisse de St. Germain de Rennes pour l'année 1779: "Simon Guillaume Gabriel, fils de Simon Guillaume Gabriel Bruté de Remur, et de Renée Jeanne Le Saulnier de Vauhelle, né et baptisé le même jour vingt mars mil septcent soixante dix-neuf. Parrain, François Pierre René Vatar de Jouanner; Marraine, Victoire Françoise Bruté de Remur, etc. Le Valler, Curé.

"Soussigné a Rennes le quatorze Thermidor, an sept de la Republique Française, une et indivisible. Dubreil."

[2] His father was twice married; first to Mary Jeanne Le Chat, at Paris, the 28th February, 1756, by whom he had seven children; and, second, to Madame Vatar at Rennes in 1778, by whom he had two children, the subject of this sketch and his brother Augustine, born in 1789. "The mother of my mother, Claudienne Elienor Robert, died in 1791 aged eighty-one

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dent of the royal domains in Brittany. His mother, Jeanne Renée Le Saulnier de Vauhelle, born at St. Brieux in 1736, was at the time of her marriage with Mr. Bruté the widow of Mr. Francis Vatar,[3] Printer to the King and Parliament at Rennes. Their place of residence was in the Palace of the Parliament,[4] in which his family, on the mother's side,

years. My grand-uncle, her brother Peter Robert, Prior of Etables of the order of the Prémontrés, died the 7th February, 1795, in the hospital of Guingcamp, prisoner for the Faith." *MS. Note.* Mr. Bruté's first marriage took place in the parish church of St. Eustache, and was performed by the Abbé Bruté, his uncle, Doctor in Theology and Curé of the parish of St. Benoit.

[3] "My mother has often told me that the Vatars were of English origin, and had pursued the occupation of printing since its invention in the fourteenth century. The books printed by Mr. Vatar were chiefly those on the jurisprudence of the Province, the customs, collection of ordinances, 'Les Principes du Droit' de Du Parc Pouillainge. There were 130,000 francs worth of these Books in store, when the Constituent Assembly abolished all local laws and customs, and thus entirely destroyed the value of those which my mother, who had the reversion of his title of Printer to the King and the Parliament, had on hand." *MS. Note.*

I may mention as indicating the manner in which a particular profession or occupation often continues in a family, and is handed down from father to son, in the old world, that the History of Rennes in my possession, that of De Villeneuve & Mallet, Rennes, 1845, was printed by J. M. Vatar.

[4] The fire of 1719, during the time which was made so calamitous by the System of Law, destroyed 850 houses in Rennes, a fifth of the whole city, and was considered of sufficient importance to find a place in the Abridgment of the History of France by d'Anquetil. In rebuilding that portion of the city a very beautiful Square was formed, of which the "Palais du Parliament" formed one side.

This conflagration, which broke out on the night of 22–23d December, 1719, was caused by a drunken Joiner; it burnt for five days and five nights with great activity. Although most of the houses were at that time built of wood, there seems to have been but one fire engine, and that was old, and out of order. In 1722, they obtained two new "machines" from Holland. Hist. of Rennes, 1845.

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had occupied apartments in one of the wings since 1660. The position occupied by his father, as Superintendent of the Finances of the Province, with the anticipation of succeeding to the first Brevet of Farmer-General of the Revenues at Paris, which had been promised to him, seemed to open the most brilliant worldly prospects. "'You were born to live in opulence,' my good mother often said to me,"[5] he remarks in one of his notes.[6] "My earliest recollections," he adds, "are connected with the entertainment given by my father, at his residence in the city, and at his country house of Fricot, in the Faubourg St. Helier, to the Deputies, the Military Officers, and the Nobles, at the time of the meeting of the 'Etats de la Province.' I remember seeing no less than five of our Bishops at his table at one time. We children were placed at a little side table, where our pride, and our love for good things, were alike mortified." "God ordered it otherwise," he goes on to say, alluding to his mo-

[5] "Opulence pour le coup, mais quel danger pour le salut de ses enfans." *MS. Note*, written on the margin of the above memoranda, many years after.

[6] After his birth he was sent into the country to a nurse, according to the general custom of those times. "I remained with my nurse 15 months. She lived at a small village about two leagues from Rennes, on the road to Brest. There were three villages or hamlets, one was called Hell, another Paradise, and the third Purgatory. My nurse lived in "Hell." She sometimes lent me to another poor woman who used to beg, and made use of my presence on one of her arms to excite compassion. This thought has often afforded me pleasure. I always remained much attached to my nurse; her name was Riaedet, and she used to come and see me sometimes, when I was at the Seminary of Rennes in 1808 and 9." *MS. Note.*

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ther's words, "my father died (27th February, 1786) a few days after a very painful operation which had been rendered necessary by a fall from his horse—and instead of a succession of opulence, left his affairs in the greatest disorder. Your father, my mother often said to me, could never be made to distrust any one; he believed every person to be good and honest like himself—and the state of his accounts at the time of his death showed it, for not only were all his affairs in confusion, but it was found that he had allowed persons to run in debt to him upwards of a million of francs. The friends of the family, the most eminent lawyers of the city, advised my mother to renounce the succession; but she, very justly, regarded an honourable name as of more importance than wealth, and in order to preserve this to us, she determined to take upon herself the management of his affairs, even at the sacrifice of her own property.[7] She accordingly addressed herself to the task, and with the assistance of two accountants, Messrs. Jourdain and Henaut, for whom she has often charged me to preserve feelings of lively gratitude, she worked day and

[7] I find a similar preference of a good name to wealth, in the admirable Memoirs of the Marchioness De La Rochejaquelein:

"I had been destined in infancy to be the wife of the Marquis de Lescure. His father dying in the year 1784, left him 800,000 francs of debt. Although advised by lawyers to renounce the succession of his father, he had the delicacy, as well as the Countess de Lescure, his grandmother (his mother was dead), to become answerable for the whole."—*Memoirs of Marchioness De La Rochejaquelein.*

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night until she got my father's accounts in order; and owing to her diligence and management, the losses were much less than they would otherwise have been, and his debts were all paid."

It is evident, not only from the circumstances here related, but from her conduct during the Revolution, her Letters to her son, the manner in which he always alludes to her in his Memoranda and Letters to others,[8] that Madame Bruté was a woman of more than ordinary intelligence and strength of character. This was regulated and directed by a fervent and devoted piety. There can be no doubt that, under God, the eminently religious character of her son, which caused, we may say, every thought, word, and action of his whole life to be guided by Faith, was owing to the instructions and example of his excellent mother.

He was happy also in enjoying, during those tender years, when the character is formed, the guidance of one of the best of Priests, the Abbé Carron,[9] so well known for his labours in England, and

[8] "My mother," he says in one of his memoranda, "was a woman of strong mind (forte tête), understood the world and had great experience in business matters, but always faithful to her Religion, hid the Priests and assisted them in many different ways, during the Revolution; the respect of all classes of people was a great protection to her and her family in the worst of times."

[9] Guy Toussaint Julien Carron, born at Rennes, 1760. Having distinguished himself by his zeal, and particularly by his charity towards the poor, he was imprisoned in 1792, for refusing to take the civic oath. Exiled the same year, he founded several churches and schools in England. Returned to France in 1814. Died in 1821. He was author of a large

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the admirable books of piety which were written by him. "My first confessor," he says in 'Some Remembrances, before my first Communion,' "was Mr. Carron, Vicar of the Parish of St. Germain, then a very young Priest, but already so remarkable for his exemplary life, and most fervent piety, that he was called 'The Abbé Térèse,' in allusion to St. Teresa. This was soon after the death of my father, when I was about eight years old. I remember well that the first time I went to confession to him, he gave me, as I withdrew from his confessional, which stood in the Chapel of the Blessed Virgin, a little Book in French, entitled 'The Death of Abel.' As I was retiring, he came out of the Confessional, and gave me the Book. I remember his face, as it appeared at that moment, with such an expression of amiability and piety upon it. I was his penitent for several years, until 1791, the last year of the free exercise of Religion in France, during which

number of works of piety. Bishop Poynder preached a funeral Sermon at the service celebrated for him at London. The celebrated Lamennais, who in his better days lived with him, and revered him as a Saint, had collected materials for a biography of the Abbé Carron, but never wrote it. The Baron D'Eckstein, in an article in the Rambler for May, 1859, on the Abbé de Lamennais, whom he had known intimately, says: "In contrast with Lamennais, I may mention a Priest who had a heart of gold united with a true knowledge of men, the Abbé Carron, the only Priest to whom Lamennais always did justice, and whose death was an irretrievable misfortune for him. This man had the *genius of goodness.*" In a letter to Ep. Flaget from the Mountain, dated June 9, 1821, Mr. Bruté mentions the news of the death of M. Carron at Paris: "my first spiritual Father—so often called the Saint Vincent de Paul of our days."

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year I had the happiness of making my first Communion. I went regularly to Confession, but up to that time, thanks be to God, my excellent mother, and I must add excellent teachers, I had little to confess. Although I had attended the public schools for four or five years, I was an entire stranger to all improper notions—and my chief matter of reproach, at the time of making my general Confession for first Communion, was the having taken[10] an apple from the stand of an old Fruit-woman. During the same interval, I learned my Catechism at School, though at times I attended the public Catechism at the Parish Church, to recite portions of the Holy Scripture, which we learned by heart. I remember, that on one occasion, having repeated the History of the Sacrifice of Abraham, I obtained, as a reward, quite a large print of the 'Annunciation' pasted on a board with a margin of gilt paper around it. It hung for long years by the side of my bed, and I can still call to mind the strange, vivid associations of the Blessed Virgin and good Father Carron, in my childish impressions of piety and holiness of life. My first Prayer Book also made a great impression on my mind. It was

[10] I need not say that these notes were written without the least expectation of their ever being seen, except, at any rate, by the eyes of intimate friends. I have taken it upon myself, however, to publish them, not only because they afford a pleasing picture of Bishop Bruté's early life, but also as throwing light upon the state of education and religion in France immediately previous to the Revolution.

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a 'Paroissien,' bound in green morocco, with gilt edges, and was given to me on the very day of my father's funeral, February 28, 1786. I had long desired to have one, and I presume there was not a little vanity mixed up with the devotion with which I followed the Mass and Office in my beautiful Prayer Book, at the College and the Parish Church. I had it in my possession twenty years afterwards, with its broken covers, defaced binding, and some torn leaves, but I lost it somehow or other in my many journeyings. I made my first Communion, as I have said, in 1791. There were about 200 of us, of the first or second Communion, for it was the excellent custom of those times to make the second Communion with the same preparation as the first, after a short spiritual retreat. I thank thee, O my God! for the state of innocence and piety I was in the day I performed this most important act."

The place in which this Retreat for first Communion was conducted seems to have been a very strange one. From an allusion to it, in one of his memoranda, I would infer that it was what might be called the Hall of the Charnel-House of the Cemetery near the Church. He speaks of it as "a long narrow room filled with benches, with the skulls and bones of many generations of those who had preceded them, piled, according to the custom of our cemeteries, in a sort of upper story over our

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heads, so that we could see them through the lattice work which surrounded them. This sight made us very serious and devout, especially on the first day of the Retreat. I do not remember anything in particular in regard to the instructions that were addressed to us, except that they were, as usual, on sin, death, judgment, the divine Sacrament, the happiness of serving God, &c.—and that they made upon us the impressions they were intended to produce. I walked among the tombs during the intervals with some of my companions, and I remember that we were very much in earnest, and animated one another by our remarks, and by our expressions of respect towards the good Priests who conducted our Retreat, especially Mr. Carron and Mr. Desbouillon—this last a saint of goodness, and penance, and zeal, and charity towards the poor, and a heavenly preacher—but a small, ugly, odd looking man, so that some of us burst out into a laugh at a curious comparison which he made,[11] and the strange gesticulation by which it was accompanied. Oh! how sorry we were, and when the instruction was over, we went to him and asked his pardon, which he so kindly and cheerfully gave us. He is dead long since, and I have no doubt a Saint in Heaven. Whilst other particulars have

[11] Bishop Bruté was naturally of a cheerful disposition, and had a strong sense of the ridiculous, as is attested by many little pen and ink sketches amongst his papers; some of them would do honour to Hood or Cruikshank.

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vanished, the general impression it made is still strong on my memory. I remember, however, the many sittings by the Confessional of Mr. Carron, in the Chapel of the Blessed Virgin, in our huge Gothic Church of St. Germain; the small Statue of our Blessed Mother, in a white and blue mantle on the altar—and the last evening when I received absolution; the effort to make a good act of contrition, and the earnest desire for a good Communion, a good death, and heaven—and then going to say the 'Miserere' on my knees, on a huge tomb near the High Altar, where we were to receive our Lord the next morning. The events of the next day it would indeed be hard to forget; the early rising—the prayer for the soul of my dear departed father —the benediction asked from my mother on my knees — the spirit of recollection and devotion which I cherished, in view of the important act I was about to perform; somewhat disturbed by the anxiety of our good Mr. Leblanc, in regard to my dress and 'frisure,' and the huge Candle I was to carry. I remember singing the Canticle of Fénelon, 'Mon bien aimé ne paroit pas encore'—the departure for Church—seeing our friends coming from all sides—the entrance of the Church—all seated in rows so near one another, yet such good order and silence—so much fervour in singing the Canticles—such an indescribable suspense and delight of the

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heart until the moment should come to receive: but before doing so, reciting, in front of all, the act of Consecration, with Térèse Champion for my companion, as the representative of the girls. Twenty years afterwards when I returned to France, I found her, still so faithful in her perseverance, so devoted to our blessed Lord. It seems strange to me now, that all distinct remembrance of the act itself is lost. I am sure it was all Faith, and pure desire of union with God, and of the Thanksgiving afterwards, I only remember the sincerity and ardour of the offerings . . . the return home, with poor Lamirel, the lad put to the charge of my mother, who for many years after that, until he had got his trade, fulfilled towards him that happy duty, imposed that day upon all the young communicants belonging to the more respectable families, of choosing from amongst the poor a 'brother of Communion,' to be taken care of and brought up as a member of the family. My heart is full, when I think of that day—thanks! thanks, O my God."

The above memoranda show how lively were Bishop Bruté's recollections of the events and persons of his youth. His papers afford abundant evidence how closely his heart clung, at all periods of his life, to the memory of his native City and Province. Sometimes it is a little sketch of a build-

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ing or Church,[12] within the City, or in the suburbs, done with his pen, with a few words of affectionate remembrance, or some circumstance which occurred there, written under it.[13] Sometimes a fuller description, recalling the ancient religious glories of his much loved Brittany and his own recollections of the place and the persons who dwelt on the spot described in his time. It is to be regretted that his memoranda upon these subjects are of so fragmentary a nature—being generally merely hints, or words to assist his memory, rather than detailed descriptions which would now be so interesting. From one of these pages of jottings, as they may be called, it appears that at the time of his father's

[12] The drawing and notes on the opposite page will give an idea of these sketches, of which there are several among the Bishop's papers.

[13] The following notes are written under sketches of the places referred to—

"*St. Cyr*, a Priory before the Revolution, where I used to go sometimes for a walk with my good mother—a military depot from 1792 to 1814—then an asylum for penitents, under Mother Eugénie—said Mass there when I was in France.

"*Paimpont*—the ruins of the Abbey—the woods and ponds—so calm and solitary.

"*La Chapelle Bouexie*—the abode of my sister—the Chateau—the Chapel—the woods—the immense masses of Rocks—a mile beyond, the ancient Chateau de la Harlai, and on the other side, to the right, the still more ancient Chateau de la Roche—the animals feeding in the narrow valley between them—the little shepherds—and above all the chapels—the masses—the good old Priests—and the peasants, 'ces bonnes gens' who used to welcome me to their Cottages, with so much cheerfulness and kindness—all is present to me, and the recollection brings back to my mind the days and feelings of my youth, and the places I shall never see again—O my God, thou art my only good, and the only true life is that which is eternal."

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1. The Cathedral—formerly the Abbey Church—St. Melanie, founded by St. Melanie in the 6th century, possessed his reliques, and also those of St. Amand, like him one of the early Bishops of Rennes. I remember seeing the Benedictines there in their habit, and was present several times at the services in 1787-1788. The impression made upon my mind by the majestic simplicity of their ceremonies and the divine chant is still fresh in my mind, and the sound of their voices as they chanted the psalm, " Cum invocarem, &c.," in the office of Complin, still echoes in my ears and in my heart—and then the benediction and the sound of the big bell of the Abbey at that moment. In 1791 the Church and Abbey were usurped by the Revolutionary clergy, in 1792 they became the prison of the Catholic clergy who remained faithful to their vows and would not take the new oath. I visited them twice whilst they were confined there, disguised as a baker's boy and carrying a big bread basket on my head. In 1793-94 the Church was turned into a stable for the cavalry, in 1795 into the City Hospital, that having been taken possession of for an Arsenal, in 1802 restored to divine service as the Cathedral of the Diocese.

2. The Bishop's Residence—a more modern building—the " pavilion" on this side changed into a Picture Gallery, that on the other into a Botanical School in 1799, restored to the Bishop 1802. The Duke of Angoulême lodged there in 1814.

3 The Gardens of the Evêché, and [4] their extension, forming a beautiful Botanical Garden, opening upon the country towards St. Michael and the magnificent prospect of Belle-vue [6], two miles eastward, and towards St. Lawrence [7], three miles.

5. The Garden of the Abbey.

8. The Promenade, called " Thabor," belonging to the Abbey, with its superb terraces, made by the Benedictine Novices during their times of recreation. How often have I walked there alone or with my good Mother, the prospect most extensive, including the Château de Caillé, belonging to the virtuous and charitable house of Montluc-Cicé. I revisited all these beloved spots in 1815. I have made this sketch and written this note during recreation, Evening of Palm Sunday with little hope of ever seeing them again.—Eternity.

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death in 1786, he was at a boarding school, kept by Madame Badier, in the Parish of All Saints, which was as he mentions one of the largest Parishes in Rennes—he alludes to the narrow street, opposite the Church, through which they were accustomed to pass, when they took their promenade on Wednesday of each week—the Church itself—the entrance—the high Altar—the "Eternal Father"[14] over it, the Chapel of Mr. Rebulet—the procession of Corpus Christi—the Assumption, with the grand Statue of the Blessed Virgin—of Palm Sunday, &c. He adds, "I note down these remembrances in 1821, on the Feast of All Saints, 34 years after; everything is still fresh in my mind and present to me; I could describe everything—the street—the signs of the shops—the shops themselves—the fruit stalls—the bells on the Vigils of the Feasts—the Glas (the passing-bell for the dead) during the whole evening before the Feast of All Saints." In a memorandum headed "Places where I have studied"—which, from its minute details, seems to have been written as an exercise of local memory, it appears that his first school, where he learned to read, was kept by a certain Mademoiselle Rosé in the "Rue aux Foulons," and that the "Pension" of Madame Badier, above alluded to, was his second

[14] In a note he speaks of a mason who was killed by a fall in 1794, while attempting to pull down the "Eternal Father." The Church was burnt this year (1794), with 40 houses; the ruins were afterwards removed, and the spot left open.

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school. With his lively imagination, tenacious memory, and excellent disposition, he must have been an apt scholar from the commencement, and seems to have won the affections alike of his Teachers and fellow students. He attended the College [16] at Rennes from 1788 to 1791, under the

[16] The following memoranda are written on the back of a "Sketch of Mr. Sorette going to Class:"

"As usual all the Establishments of Instruction, below, were gratuitous, under the patronage of the Bishop, the parliament, and the mayor and echevins.

"*The College of Rennes.*

"M. FAJEOLE, Principal; retired—

"M. DUBOIS, his successor, died; most worthy priests.

"M. BOURGES DE BLERY, Principal; died as a saint 1805 or 6.

"M. SORETTE, priest; martyr.

"M. MILLAUX, priest; Superior of the Seminary since 1810.

"M. ROSAYS, simple layman or tonsured.

"M. DUFOUR, ditto.

"M. DE CHATEAUGIRON, Priest; died at London, author of many pamphlets. I have his picture.

"M. GERME, Rhetoric; Layman, since rector of the Academy.

"M. LE BRETON, Moral Philosophy; excellent priest, afterwards curate at Chateaubourg, since his return from England.

"M. MAYNER, Natural Philosophy; excellent priest of great talents; After him

"M. CABRYE, died I think in England, also a most worthy priest

"M. DAMON, Vice principal; Priest in England, curate of Erbrée since his return; a modest, holy, and very well informed priest.

"M. DUCHESNE, Academy.

"M. MERIEL, Fencing.

"This college formerly under the charge of the Jesuits; then from 1500 to 2000 Students; much less after their expulsion; yet in my time between 5 or 600 Students; besides a school of Law, one of Medicine. The Seminary for ecclesiastical Students, and another for the candidates, both under the Eudists MM. Morin, Blanchard, Beucher; between 2 or 300 Students together. The school for the young nobility, above 100, under those excellent priests, too, MM. Leforestier, Perdriel, &c.; another school for the young ladies of the nobility—l'Enfant Jesus."

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particular supervision of the Rev. Mr. Sorette, of whom he has given so touching an account, in one of the following sketches.

During this year (1791), in which as we have seen he made his first Communion, the Legislative Assembly passed the most severe laws against all the Clergy who refused to take the oath to the "Civil Constitution of the Clergy,"[16] and as almost all refused to do so,[17] the open and public

[16] The Constituent Assembly having (Nov. 4, 1789), confiscated all the Ecclesiastical property, and (March 19, 1790) suppressed all Religious orders and congregations, proceeded (Aug. 24, 1790) in its work of "de-catholicising" France, by enacting the famous "Civil Constitution of the Clergy," which virtually abrogated the Catholic Church, in that country, so far as it was in the power of man to do it. By this famous Law, the State assumed to itself the power of conferring ecclesiastical jurisdiction; the Bishops and Parish Priests were to be chosen by the electors, in the same manner as the members of the Assembly; they were forbidden to apply to the Pope for Confirmation, but were permitted to write to him as visible head of the Church in sign of unity. As soon as it became a Law, the most violent measures were taken to oblige the Bishops and Clergy to take the oath to it. Out of 135 Archbishops and Bishops in France four only took it, Loménie de Brienne, Card. Archb. of Sens; Talleyrand-Périgord, Bishop of Autun; de Savines, Bishop of Viviers; and Jarente, Bishop of Orleans; the great majority of the Clergy also refused to take it. Hence the distinction of 'Prêtres sermentés et insermentés' so common at that time. Pius the VI. condemned the Civil Constitution of the Clergy by several briefs, and Monseigneur de Boisgelin, Archbishop of Aix, drew up in opposition to it an "Exposition des principes sur la Constitution Civile du Clergé," which was signed by all the Bishops except the four above mentioned. The Civil Constitution is now remembered only as a specimen of the folly of those days and as a lesson for the future, if men ever learn anything from such lessons, which is very doubtful.

[17] The following Letter, a copy of which, evidently taken at the time, I found among the Bishop's papers, is interesting, as having been written by an eye-witness:

"Letter of the Abbé De Pierre, ocular witness of what occurred at St. Sulpice last Sunday, on the occasion of administering the civic oath.

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exercise of Religion may be said to have ceased in France. The College at Rennes was broken up, and from this time Mr. Bruté pursued his studies under private teachers. In the list of "places where

"MONDAY, January 10, 1791.

"You are right, my dear friend, in thinking that the great majority of the Curés of Paris, and especially the Curé of St. Sulpice, would not take the oath. Since the publication of the decree, the emissaries of the Jacobin Club have been constantly going from Curé to Curé endeavouring to persuade them to take it. Mr. Bailly was particularly charged to look after the Curé of St. Sulpice, whose adhesion the Jacobins were especially anxious about, on account of his personal merit, and his great influence over his numerous assistants, and the Clergy of the city in general. But all the philosophy and eloquence of the mayor have failed before the piety and devotion of the Pastor. On Sunday, the day fixed for the presentation of the oath, more than ten thousand persons, two-thirds of them parishioners, and the rest understrappers (gagistes) of the Palais Royale, filled the Church of St. Sulpice. The Curé had been forewarned by more than twenty Letters that they would proceed to the greatest extremities, if he would not take the oath, pure and simple, with all his Clergy. They informed him also of the bloodthirsty declarations which had been made against him and against us in the Clubs and Coffee Houses of Paris. Nevertheless he preached a discourse on Christian Charity, before the High Mass, as usual, and with that force and eloquence which you know so well. As soon as he had finished a thousand voices were raised, demanding him to take the oath, under pain of being dragged out of the pulpit, and hung up to the lamp-post with all the priests belonging to the Church. All sorts of imprecations, menaces, and a frightful tumult on one side, the most calm, but firm and immovable countenance on the other. Already the cohorts of the Palais Royale were pressing forward toward the Pulpit, and the Curé and all the Clergy who surround him would infallibly have become victims of their refusal to take the oath, if it had not been for the prudence and courage of a body of the Grenadiers of the National Guard, who had been placed at the foot of the pulpit, to protect our lives in case of necessity. The sixty *Vicaires*, the Superiors of the four religious communities of St. Sulpice, and all the good Priests residing in the Parish, surrounded the Pulpit during the Prone. As for me, my dear friend, I was at the side of our good Curé, and at the approach of the phalanx I seized him in my arms, and would have carried him in this manner, in the midst of the Clergy and good Soldiers, to the grand Sacristy; but just then, several

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