

the long corridors leading from the chapel, I prefer to draw a veil, as I wished I could have done then. If I had not committed myself by repeating the orthodox answer, *Voi istenny voskrès* perhaps I might have escaped more easily.

Of the supper and its national dishes and customs, I have no space to speak. I have already filled more than my share, and I have yet to reach the end of my journey at the monastery of Troitsa.

(To be concluded in our next.)

EARLY CONVERSIONS AT ST. GREGORY'S.

ONCE more does an old Gregorian put pen to paper to place before the readers of the "Downside Review," some early recollections of years now long since departed. In my last communication I wrote respecting the old chapel, now a parlour, on the right hand of the entrance to the old house. I propose now recording a few circumstances relating to the early converts to our holy faith.

Catholicism may be said to have been unknown in these parts in those early times. Rumour ever ready with reports, had gone abroad with the intelligence that Downside House, Stratton on the Fosse, had been taken by the papists for a college. Shortly afterwards it was known they had arrived, and many remarks were made. Their English was so different to the ordinary language that they must be foreigners. They were to tall to be French, therefore they must be Germans. The most absurd things were spread abroad, regarding their person and their conduct. They were supposed to be a sort of wild animal, destructive of children, who from fear, would show the greatest dread and horror on seeing them at a distance, while taking their walks. However, gradually the people's curiosity overcame their fears and alarms, and the labourers employed on the farm and grounds reported well of papists as masters and employers. The people were informed that on Sundays, those who chose might come to the chapel, and gradually many satisfied their curiosity by coming at times to see the sight, and hear the grand music of a piano and two bass voices, aided by the serpent, for effect. The attractions of music and the sermons brought however no converts. Two years and more had elapsed, and yet no impression had been made. In the autumn of 1816, one of the neighbours, was

the wife of John Ashman, whom many may recollect, for he worked for many years on the Downside farm. His widow afterwards married Snooks the lime burner, a very worthy and marked character. Mrs. Jane Ashman was a Methodist, and often prayed for salvation, and that if her religion was wrong she might be brought to the truth. As was her custom she, one Sabbath day, attended the meeting house, praying as usual for enlightenment. That night she had a vision, in which she saw three black men riding on black horses, and noticed that the last in the procession was the minister who had preached that evening. At the same time a voice was distinctly heard saying, "Him you must not follow!" three times. This seemed to indicate to her that Methodism was not the right road. On the next Sunday she went to the Protestant church at Chilcompton. That same night she had another vision of three black men on black horses, and there sat on the last one, the parson she had heard and seen at the church. Again a voice repeated three times, "Him you must not follow!" She knew not what to do, as the only other chapel in the neighbourhood was the *papish's* at the great house. She continued however, her prayer, and was enabled thereby to obtain victory over her fears. She had heard that they worshipped idols; however she would go once and see if it were true. On this Sunday there was a more numerous attendance, as something grand was to take place. It so happened that Bishop Poynter of the London district had come to Downside to confer ordinations for Bishop Colingridge. Mrs. Ashman was in the crowd and had reached the narrow doorway of the chapel, when she sees a figure seated with a queer cap on his head, and a long golden stick in his hand. This evidently must be the idol the papists worshipped. She tried to retire, but the crowd prevented her doing so. Presently the figure stood up, and she saw it "were a mon," and not an idol! She did not understand what was taking place, but seemed pleased and comforted. There was one person there on attendance on the bishop that she particularly noticed. At night Mrs. Ashman had another vision, but this time it was of *white* men on *white* horses, and on the last one sat the individual whom she had particularly noticed during the function, Prior Lawson. Again a voice is heard three times declaring, "Him you must follow!" This highly respected and holy man taking a constitutional walk on Mog hill early in the same week was met in the path by Mrs. Ashman, who addressed herself to him saying that God had revealed to her that his religion was the right one. She afterwards went through

a careful course of instruction, and became the first convert at Downside, in 1816.

The next converts were a family named Moons, who after their visit to the chapel heard the angels singing the same music, and came therefore to the conclusion that the angels were of the same faith as the papists.

Individual converts were received into the church from time to time, but no great progress was made till a church was provided in the village of Stratton. The latter days are modern and well known to most.

AN OLD GREGORIAN.

OLD DOWNSIDE MEN.

HAS it ever occurred to the dwellers in the college, as they strolled about the beautiful lawn or rambled over the picturesque country in the neighbourhood, to inquire what those old inhabitants were like who were born, lived, worked, and died in the midst of these self-same scenes, who hunted over these same Mendip Hills and whose dust is scattered every where around? Possibly but to few: still a most interesting inquiry it is. It opens out the whole question, raised by Mr. Darwin, of the "Descent of Man," and presents us with a palaeolithic study, full of fascination which well repays the time expended upon it. Much learning and research have been devoted of late years to searching out the native habits and history of these men of old, our fathers in their generation. A brief summary of the result, to which the discoveries made on the Mendip Hills have contributed not a little, may be of interest to some of the readers of the "Downside Magazine."

No traces of the existence of man on the earth, can be found in Britain or in fact anywhere, before the middle of that portion of the Tertiary period called the Pleistocene. The Pleistocene period immediately precedes in geological chronology the Pre-historic, after which we reach the period of History.

In 1872 a flint instrument was discovered by the Rev. Osmund Fisher in the lower brick earths at Crayford embedded in the *fauna* peculiar to the mid-pleistocene period. In 1872 another was found at Erith in the same bed of deposit. Both had never been disturbed and they show that man was present in the valley