

done so; and in proportion to the magnitude of the interests at stake is the scale of the miraculous interposition. In the eyes of Europe, the cause in which Becket fell was the cause of sacerdotalism as against the prosaic virtues of justice and common sense. Every superstitious mind in Christendom was at work immediately, generating supernatural evidence which should be universal and overwhelming. When once the impression was started that Becket's relics were working miracles it spread like an epidemic. Either the laws of nature were suspended, or for the four years which followed his death the power and the wish were gone to distinguish truth from falsehood. The most ordinary events were transfigured. That version of any story was held to be the truest which gave most honour to the martyr. That was the falsest which seemed to detract from his glory. As Becket in his life had represented the ambition and arrogance of the Catholic Church, and not its genuine excellence, so it was his fate in death to represent beyond all others the false side of Catholic teaching, and to gather round himself the most amazing agglomerate of lies.

The stream which was so soon to roll in so mighty a volume rose first in the humble breast of Benedict the monk. After the murder the body was lifted by