#### MEMOIRS OF THE RIGHT REVEREND SIMON WM. GABRIEL BRUTE, D.D., FIRST BISHOP OF VINCENNES: WITH SKETCHES DESCRIBING HIS RECOLLECTIONS OF SCENES CONNECTED WITH THE FRENCH REVOLUTION, AND EXTRACTS FROM HIS JOURNAL

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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 by James Roosevelt Bayley

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### JAMES ROOSEVELT BAYLEY

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# SIMON WM. GABRIEL BRUTÉ, D.D.,

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AND

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RT. REV. JAMES ROOSEVELT BAVLEY, D.D.,

DISHOP OF NEWARK.

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### PREFACE

I T 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 Sec 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,"

#### Preface.

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-

#### Preface.

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,' but in none

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Barruel—Histoire du Ciergé pendant la Révolution; 2 vol. 12mo, Londres, 1792. Carron—Les Confesseurs de la Foi dans l'Egilse Gallicane, à la fin du XVIII Siècle; Paris, 1820, 4 vol. 12mo. Walsh—Journées mémorable de la Révolution Frauçaise, par M. Le Vicomte Walsh; 5 vol. 8vo, Paris, 1840. Tresvaux—Histoire de la Persécution Révolutionnaire en Eretagne, par l'Abbé Tresvaux; Paris, 2 vol. 8vo, 1845.