



Religious Miscellany.

EXTRACTS FROM "NOTITIA PAROCHIALIS," ST. ARMAND WEST.

Dr. Young says.
"At thirty man suspects him-self a fool; Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan"

And some one remarks, perhaps with more severity than good taste, "Every man is either a fool or a physician at forty." Be this as it may—though not one in a thousand can equal Jared Elliot, of Connecticut, who "was, at the same time, a Clergyman, a Physician, a Naturalist, a Philosopher, an Agriculturist, and also a member of the Royal Society of London"—I have long been of opinion how desirable it is that every Divine should be a Physician, and every Physician a Divine, since both, professionally, visit the sick and dying, and may officiate reciprocally with good effect, as George III. did, when, separated by some means from the Royal hunting party, he met a poor girl in the forest, who, asking him for a clergyman to visit her dying mother, got her to lead him to the cottage, where, in the person of King, he acted the part of Priest, leaving the poor sufferer comforted in mind by the blessed promises of the Gospel and suitable prayer, and a handsome present for her bodily wants. I have always lamented that I did not know more of diseases and their cure, in order to greater usefulness among the people in the absence of a doctor. It so happened, however, that in the presence of four doctors in consultation on a case of obstinate continued constipation, which had resisted all means that could be thought of to afford relief. I solicited a private interview with the senior physician—Dr. Calvin May, a kind-hearted amiable man—and recommended the exhibition of *quicksilver*, if his professional brethren, on consulting with them, should agree. He said, there is danger of its forming a *sack*—granted; but there is danger without it. I learn that you have exhausted pharmacology with no effect; and if the poor sufferer does not obtain relief soon, inflammation will increase to such a degree, when it will be too late! Prayers had been offered up for the sick, in the presence of his relations and a number of friends. The sick man also prayed most earnestly, and tarrying all night at his particular request, I was rejoiced to be told, in the morning, by one of his sisters, that the *quicksilver* had effected a passage. It was sufficient reward to be told by one of his brothers the next time we met, "Mr. W. you saved my brother's life." No, no, it was not I, but the blessing of God upon the mineral recommended; to Him, therefore, be all the praise.

As the Church is established and furnished with means for the purpose of sending forth her ministers of various grades "to turn sinners from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God," as well as "to build up saints on their most holy faith." It must afford pleasure to the friends of Christ to peruse, and prove a grateful task to the missionary to pen draw any such instances of the display of Divine Grace among the people of his spiritual charge. The paucity of such records in the Venerable Society's Reports, may be readily ascribed to the backwardness of many to communicate what the Lord has been pleased to work by their means, and not from a want of such proofs of their usefulness: neither from a desire in the Society to avoid expense by swelling the Report in size. Such testimony in favor of Missions has, I believe, been of greater service to the cause, and brought over more converts from the ranks of opponents, than all the splendid speeches at Anniversaries. What a blessed influence, for instance, had the success of our Missionaries in the East Indies, several years ago, as given in the English "Ecclesiastical Gazette," upon the minds of their brother Missionaries in this and other Colonies, as well as upon the thousands of our Clergy, yes, and dissenting ministers also at home! cheering them on in their labors and exciting them to new zeal and activity in their Great Master's Service.

Among the instances of success in my present charge, the only one I shall now refer to, among many others, occurred in the family of a farmer seven miles off, which shows the necessity of ministerial visits, and the importance of conducting such visits with caution and judgment. His wife, an amiable but very timid woman, had been confined to her bed several days on the conclusion of Divine Service in a neighbouring school-house. On arriving, I found her very low; and, conversing with her, as on former occasions, upon the subject of personal salvation, I found her mind upon the whole comfortable with a sense of the Divine favor and a hope in Christ, at the same time humble and child-like. Finding she

had enjoyed for years a knowledge of salvation by the remission of her sins, I expressed my surprise and regret that she had not come forward long before and confessed her Saviour before men by joining His Church. She replied, "I always intended to join your Church ever since you came to the parish, but was prevented, first, by a fear lest, after joining, I should disgrace my profession; and second, from observing many who had gone forward not living as they ought to do afterwards." After administering suitable advice and consolation, and offering up prayers and supplications with thanksgiving, concluding with the Lord's Prayer, in which she feebly joined, I left her able to rest and quietude. I readily complied with an invitation to stay over night, both from the lateness of the hour and the appearance of approaching dissolution in the poor woman and an arrangement also, made for administering the Eucharist the next morning, after a little wine should be procured. As there were no fewer than four families in the house, all connected, and two or three neighbours, they formed a little congregation, and the time, I hope, was profitably occupied. I held special conversations with the afflicted husband and one of his daughters on the subject of uniting themselves to the Church along with the dying wife and mother, who herself requested they would. They finally concluded to take the solemn step. I had, therefore, the satisfaction of admitting all three, by administering to them and six others "the most comfortable Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ." It was a solemn and affecting season. The parents were confirmed some years ago. The daughter will be presented at the next Confirmation, if God permit. The mother calmly breathed her last within three hours after I left her, so that the same day she joined the Church militant, we humbly believe she also joined the Church triumphant. Her funeral took place on Wednesday, the 28th May, 1845, during a heavy thunder storm. At the very time the dreadfully destructive conflagration was devastating the city of Quebec, I was reading the funeral service and preaching her funeral sermon in the M. Chapel, Pigeon Hill, to as serious and attentive a congregation as I ever beheld. Many were deeply affected, some apparently alarmed, while a solemn awe was visibly on every countenance. May the fruit of the service "remain" to the glory of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Amen.

THE LABOURER'S PRAYER

Make use of me, my God!
Let me be not forgot;
A broken vessel cast aside,
One whom Thou needest not.

I am thy creature, Lord,
And made by hands divine;
And I am part, however mean,
Of this great world of Thine.

Thou usest all Thy works
The weakest things that are;
Each has a service of its own,
For all things wait on Thee.

Thou usest the high stars,
The way drops of dew,
The giant peak and little hill;
My God, O use me too.

Thou usest tree and flower,
The rivers vast and small;
The eagle great, the little bird
That sings upon the wall.

Thou usest the wide sea,
The little hidden lake;
The pine upon the Alpine cliff,
The lily in the brake.

The huge rock in the vale,
The sand-grain by the sea,
The thunder of the rolling cloud,
The murmur of the bee.

All things do serve Thee here,
All creatures, great and small;
Make use of me, my God,
Though weakest of them all.

BISHOP COLENSO'S BOOK.

The tremendous explosive shell, of which we have heard so much as being about to be fired against the sides of the Church, has at last descended; not, indeed, upon the Church's dock, nor yet against her hull, neither of which are likely to sustain much damage from the operation, but into the water, where it has burst, and is making a horrible hissing noise. In its character and effects it bears a strong resemblance to Captain Werner's famous long range; which after being before the public a long while raising expectations of the most extravagant kind, has quietly sunk into oblivion. That such will be the fate of Dr. Colenso's pretentious performance, we venture confidently to predict; and we should be quite willing, for our own part, to let it die a natural death, but for the alarm industriously excited by the manner in which it has been ushered into the world. The object of the various and contradictory intimations which preceded its publication has no doubt been thus far answered by a rapid and extensive sale: whether in the long run, the result

will prove equally satisfactory, admits, we think, of considerable doubt. The fact is, that after examining the contents of Dr. Colenso's volume, we experience a feeling somewhat akin to disappointment. We expected from all that had been bruited about and circulated in newspaper paragraphs, that the Bishop of Natal had made some fresh discovery; which however small might be its intrinsic importance, was yet calculated to startle the world by its novelty, and to raise, in reference to the authority of Holy Scripture, questions which had never been raised before. Instead of this, we have nothing here but the *crambe bis repetita* of the cavils of the crudest rationalism, the credit of which has long since sunk below zero in the country of its birth. What is really extraordinary in the whole affair is, that any man should have risen to the position of a Bishop in the Church of England who not only does not seem to be aware of the fact that attacks of this kind upon the truth and Divine Inspiration of the Holy Scripture had been both made and refuted, but appears to have been so ill-grounded in the evidences of the religion of which he is an authorized teacher and guardian, that on being confronted by them he at once fumbled and hauled down the flag of his faith.

That this is really Dr. Colenso's case, we do not for a moment doubt. We cheerfully acquit him of all evil intent or mischievous design in the business. We accord the fullest credence to the assurance he gives us that at so recent a date as January of last year "he had not the most distant idea of the results at which he has now arrived." He is, simply, the victim of his own ignorance; a melancholy illustration of the weight that attaches to St. Paul's wise caution, in selecting men for the responsible office of "taking care of the Church of God," to avoid choosing "a novice," "lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil." Had Dr. Colenso not been a "novice" in theology, when he was raised to the Episcopate, he would have been cognizant of the fact that objections such as those which he propounds in his book have long been kept in store in Satan's armoury for the purpose of supplying the enemies of the Church with weapons against the truth. He would have known, moreover, that these objections have been fully considered by men of undoubted piety, and love for the Truth quite as Dr. Colenso's own, and eminent, moreover, for their Biblical scholarship; and that these men, after bestowing on those objections a careful examination, have deemed them utterly unworthy to come into competition with the weighty evidences, in favour of the Divine origin and authority of the Sacred Volume.

Thus far we are prepared to make every allowance for Dr. Colenso, and to regard the book to which he has committed himself as his misfortune rather than his fault. Nothing was further from his thoughts, assuredly, than to constitute himself an Apostle of Infidelity. He became so unconsciously, imperceptibly to himself, through the want in his own mind of a solid foundation for his faith. He was overpowered by arguments which he did not know how to meet or to handle. What he really deserves to be blamed for, is the overweening self-confidence which led him to look upon the conclusions of his own mind as unanswerable, and to cast upon the die of opinions which he had scarcely given himself sufficient time to form, much less to consider them in all their bearings, the fearful stake of his own future usefulness, and, more than that, the tremendous responsibility of shaking the faith of thousands, and becoming a stumbling block in the Church of God.

Viewing the matter in this aspect, we must say, and we say it with regret, he is altogether without excuse. He might surely have given himself time to reconsider his conclusions, some of them most hastily formed, and on most insufficient grounds; he might, before blurring out his unbelief before the whole world in a tone of unbecoming triumph and defiance, have sought for advice and instruction at the hands of men better informed and more competent than himself; and he might have thus spared the Church a great scandal and himself an indelible disgrace.—*Nottinghamshire Guardian.*

SCRIPTURE WRITERS.—The rhetorical and poetical beauties of Scripture are merely incidental. Its authors wrote, not for glory or display—not to astonish nor amaze their brethren—but to instruct them, and make them better. They wrote for God's glory, not their own; to let it die a natural death, but for the alarm industriously excited by the manner in which it has been ushered into the world. The object of the various and contradictory intimations which preceded its publication has no doubt been thus far answered by a rapid and extensive sale: whether in the long run, the result

A SONG OF PRAISE FOR THE HOPE OF GLORY

(By J. Mason, a poet of the 17th century.)

I sojourn in a vale of tears;
Alas, how can I sing?
My harp doth on the willows hang,
Distuned in every string,
My music is a captive's chain,
Harsh sounds my ears do fill;
How shall I sing sweet Zion's song
On this side Zion's hill!

Yet lo, I hear a joyful sound,
"Surely I quickly come!"
Each word much sweetness doth distill,
Like a full honey-comb,
And dost Thou come, my dearest Lord!
And dost Thou surely come?
And dost Thou surely quickly come?
Methinks I am at home.

Come then, my dearest, dearest Lord,
My sweetest, surest friend;
Come, for I loathe these Kodar tents,
The fiery chariots send.
What have I here? My thoughts and joys
Are all peaked up and gone;
My eager soul would follow them
To Thine eternal home.

What have I in this barren land?
My Jesus is not here;
Mine eyes will never be blest until
My Jesus doth appear.
My Jesus is gone up to heav'n,
To get a place for me;
For 'tis His will that where He is,
There should His servants be.

Canaan I view from Pisgah's top;
Of Canaan's grapes I taste;
My Lord, who sends unto me here,
Will send for me at last.
I have a God that changeth not,
Why should I be perplex'd?
My God that dwells in this world,
Will own me in the next.

Go fearless, then, my soul, with God,
Into another room;
Thou, who hast walked with him here,
Go see thy God at home.
View death with a believing eye,
It hath an angel's face;
And this kind angel will prefer
Thee to an angel's place.

The grave is but a fading spot
Unto believing eyes;
For there the flesh shall lose its dress,
And like the sun shall rise.
This world which I have known too well,
Hath mock'd me with its lies;
How gladly could I leave behind
Its vexing vanities!

My dearest friends they dwell above,
Thou wilt go see—see—
And all my friends in heaven below
Will soon come after me.
Fear not the trump's earth reading sound,
Dread not the day of doom;
For He, that is to be thy Judge,
Thy Saviour is become.

Blest be my God that gives me light,
Who in the dark did grope;
Blest be my God, the God of love,
Who causeth me to hope.
Blessed the Word's signet, Comfort's staff,
And here is Grace's chain;
By these Thy plights, Lord, I know
My hopes are not in vain.

HOW TO HEAR.

Much is said and written of the importance of preparation for public worship, for taking our part in the prayers and praises of the sanctuary. We can say no less of the importance of preparation to hear the sermon.

Whoever may preach, Christ is to speak to me. Some portion of Divine truth is to be brought before me; and needing, as I do, "line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little," I am to have another opportunity to receive the Saviour's message, by the hands of one of that order of men to whom he has said, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." It is not to hear a particular preacher that I enter the house of God. I see the white-robed priest in the chancel, and I inquire not whether he be one upon whose lips thousands are wont to hang with delight at the beauty of his diction, or whether he be among the weakest of Christ's ministers. Enough for me that this is the house of God, and that the Holy Spirit has some message to be delivered by the preacher, by which my soul may be awakened, or nurtured and strengthened! Oh! were this the preparation of heart with which we were wont to enter God's holy temple, how would the seed sown in weakness drop forth fruit to the glory and praise of God. And unless there be this preparation of heart, and unless there be this correct understanding and appreciation of the divine authority of the preacher, and of the attention which is due him simply for the sake of his Master, in how many cases must a sermon fail to accomplish the only object for which it has been preached!

The most brilliant or the most able sermon is not always the one most blessed. In the infinite variety of minds to be found in a congregation, with their individual doubts and fears, and views of divine truth, and of the claims of the Gospel, we can never tell to whom the Spirit may bless the sermon. We read in the life of one of our clergy, who, while he lived, was not only one of the most faithful, but in the ordinary sense of the word, one of the most popular preachers, that he "once had a sermon

which he thought so poor that he determined not to preach it. But he felt that this was pride, and the thought came to him that here was a good opportunity to humble his pride. He therefore preached the poor sermon, though he had what he considered a far better one prepared. What was his surprise and gratitude, when he returned to the vestry-room, to have one of his congregation come to him, and tell him, with deep emotion, that the sermon had been greatly blessed him. The preacher says that it taught him a lesson which he never forgot. It was, indeed, a lesson of man's weakness, and of the power of God to use the most feeble human instrumentality in the conversion of souls and the upbuilding of his Church. How painfully would a depreciating criticism upon the ability, or style, or manner of that sermon, have fallen upon the ear of that awakened man, while his only thought was of the momentous truth which the preacher had delivered!—*Church Monthly.*

"BURN YOUR NETS."

Two years ago there lived in the little village of S— a very wicked man. His lips were full of oaths and cursing; his passionate temper was the misery of his family; while his understood occupation was that of a poacher.

Some eighteen months ago, the sexton of the parish being ill, this man was employed to dig a grave. It was that of a young lady, out of suddenly, though not unprepared. Often had she spoken to this man of his sins, and of the sinner's Friend—often had she longed and prayed that the hearts of many in that village might be touched by the Spirit's power. Whilst digging the grave the thought crossed his mind—"She is safe, I know; but what am I? If my grave were being dug this day, where should I be?—in heaven or in hell?" The thought which came to him thus suddenly, was a nail in a sure place; the man could not escape from it; and a dangerous illness which followed, made him feel still more his sin and danger. Nothing for a time could give him comfort—he feared that his sins were beyond pardon. Could such a one as he ever be saved? By and by the light dawned. The promise "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out"—brought him in faith to Jesus; and now his very look told of the peace he had found. For a time his life hung in the balance; but in answer to prayer, God restored him to health, that he might bear witness by a new life, to the grace which had sought and found him. His former practices he can no longer follow. He becomes an epistle read and known of all men. Morning and evening he has prayer in his family. He loves the public means of grace, and is now a regular communicant. The change in his home, too, is very apparent—his children are sent regularly to school—his wife attends church, and declares she has now a happy home. One incident deserves special mention. As a poacher, he had nets worth some thirty shillings. What should he do with them? Should he sell them? He resolved not to do this, lest others should use them as he had done. Though but a poor man, with seven children dependent upon him, he burned the nets which had been the instruments of his unlawful gains.

Reader! learn from this simple but true story two or three lessons.

1. *The sight, by anticipation, of our own grave may be of use to us.*—In the case of this man, it was the first step to conversion. Does the thought ever cross your mind "where shall I be when my grave is being dug? When my body lies cold and still within the chamber of death, will my spirit be at peace, or entering an eternity of woe?"

"Set this house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live" (2 Kings xx. 1). "Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge in the grave whither thou goest" (Eccles. ix. 10).

2. *The Saviour's free promise is the sinner's surest comfort.*—Here is the promise—"Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37). This man tried it and it did not fail him. Why should not you? Cast yourself entirely on Christ, as a bankrupt, for free pardon through his blood—as helpless, for the strength and power of his Spirit. Say thus to thyself:—

"Al! wherefore do I ever doubt!
Thou wilt in no wise cast me out,
A helpless soul that comes to thee,
With only sin and misery."

HUMAN LIFE.—Hope writes the poetry of the boy, but memory that of the man. Man looks forward with smiles, but backward with sighs. Such is the wise providence of God. The cup of life is sweetest at the brim; the flavor is impaired as we drink deeper; and the drops are made bitter, that we may not struggle when it is taken from our lips.

If you would not have affliction make you a second visit, listen to its teachings at the first.

VISITING THE POOR.

Many good Christians neglect an important Christian Duty—visiting the poor. They excuse themselves by the plea of a great pressure of duties and cares, or by their regular contributions to societies which have in view the relief of the wretched and suffering. But they lose much by their neglect, in their own spiritual enjoyment, in their love of the poor, and in the favour of God. A lady contributor to one of our exchanges, says:—

"Go amongst them. See their misery, and study their wants. But go not as a fine lady among inferior creatures, and talk and act as if you regarded it as a condescension; but go as a simple and sympathizing woman among her poor unfortunate sisters. As Lord Shaftesbury (who is intimately acquainted with the character and wants of the poor) said, in a speech in Parliament, last Winter, 'What the people want is sympathy—is that heart should be brought to heart; and that persons of all conditions and of all degrees of wealth should show that they regard the poor as persons of like passions, like feelings, like hopes with themselves. If this sympathy were shown, the difficulties of governing the masses of society would be materially lessened.'

"And the rich need such intercourse as well as the poor. It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting; says the wise man, for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.' At one of the great meetings in Home Evangelization, lately held in Edinburgh, Rev. Mr. Robertson said, 'He would tell the most refined and instructed people, that there was no place on earth where they would learn more useful lessons than in the humble dwellings of the poor, and the wretched homes of the profligate.'

"Go, then, my sister, go into the bye-ways and byways, into the lanes and alleys, and crowded, filthy streets, and dark courts. Go and seek them out; go and see where and how they live. Go and breathe the air which they must breathe day after day, and month after month, till they can breathe it no longer. Go and see what they eat, and how and where they sleep. Go and see the little child pining away, day after day, like a delicate flower, gradually fading and dying for want of the pure air and sunlight of heaven. And then come back to your comfortable, or perhaps luxurious home, and say, if you have the heart, that it is right for you to fritter away the time and talents that God has given you for good, in selfish pleasures—in the luxuries and superfluities of the table or the toilet."

Men wrangle in assertion and argument; and quiet truth disappears amid the noise and confusion.

WATER INSTEAD OF WINE IN THE LORD'S SUPPER.—The following extract from a letter of the Bishop of Nelson, New Zealand, is published as having been read at a Meeting of his friends lately at Merton College, Oxford:—"I came purposely to administer the Holy Communion (to a dying native), but I looked round in vain for the means—there was no wine nor any bread; but I could not go away without an endeavour to show 'the Lord's death' in some way as near to the Lord's own appointed way as circumstances permitted. I, therefore, made vessels of the beautiful musk shells, which abound on the sea beach, filling one with water, and laying on the other a piece of travelling biscuit, softened with water, and in this way I proceeded to celebrate the Holy Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our crucified Saviour, not doubting, but earnestly believing, that He was pleased to grant to that truthful partaker as full a share in all the benefits of His Passion as if a Cathedral had been over our heads, and golden vessels on the altar."

Gleanings.

"The witness of the Spirit" is a thing that we cannot express; a certain inexpressible assurance that we are the children of God; a certain secret manifestation that God hath received us and put away our sins. No one knows but they that have it. I confess it is a wondrous thing, and if there were not some Christians that did feel it, and know it, you might believe there was no such thing; but it is certain there is a generation of men that know what the seal of the Lord is.—*Preston.*

"It is the office of the Holy Ghost to assure us of our adoption as sons, to create within us a sense of the paternal love of God towards us, and to give us an earnestness of our everlasting inheritance. As, therefore, we are born again of the Spirit, and receive from Him our regeneration, so we are also assured by the same Spirit of our adoption, and because, being sons, we are also heirs, heirs with God, and joint heirs with Christ by the same Spirit, we have the pledge, or rather the earnest of our inheritance."—*Bishop Pearson.*