

THE WEEKLY OBSERVER:

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THE GARLAND.

We have been lately favoured with a perusal of Pollok's *Course of Time*, a Poem in ten Books, of which the spirit and the style remind us partly of Milton—partly of Cowper. The author of it is said to have died at the early age of twenty-eight years—but not without giving to the world a most precious legacy, in this admirable Poem, from which we beg leave to present our readers with a few extracts. The following passages are very tender and breathing a spirit, in which all most sympathize, may induce our readers to open a volume where they will meet with strains of moral and divine wisdom and eloquence—scarcely inferior to those of Milton himself.—*Canadian Miscellany.*

But these apart, in sacred memory lives
The spirit of life, first form of endless days,
Most joyful moments now yet for aught the joy,
A being of eternal date commenced.
A young immortal then was born, and who
Shall tell what strange variety of bliss
Burst on the infant soul, when first it looked
Abroad on the radiant scene of things?
The glorious earth and glorious heaven, and face
Of man sublime, and saw all new, and felt
All new: when thought awoke, though never more
To sleep: when first it saw, heard, reasoned, willed,
And triumphed o'er the warms of conscious life!

Nor happy only, but the cause of joy,
Which those who never tasted always mourned,
What tongue—no tongue shall tell what bliss it
enjoyed.
The mother's tender heart, while round her hung
The offspring of her love, and lapped her name,
As if her jewels dropped sustained from heaven,
That made her father fair, and sweetly seem,
Than every ornament of costly hue.
And who hath not been ravished, as she passed
With all her playful head of little ones,
Like Luna, with her daughters of the sky,
Walking in matron majesty and grace?
All who had heard, here pleasure found: and oft
Have I, when first with heavy task, for tasks
Were heavy in the world below, relaxed
My weary thoughts among their blissful sports,
And led them by their little hands a field
And watched them run and crop the ruffling lawn,
Which, oft, unasked, they brought me, and bestowed
With smiling face, that waited for a look
Of praise,—and answered curious questions, put
In childish simplicity, but ill to solve;
And heard their observations strange and new,
And settled whiles their little quarrels, soon
Ending in peace, and soon forgot in love.
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These were the rays that radiated through the gloom
Of mortal life; wells of the wilderness,
Revealing features in the face of Time,
Sweet drops that made the cup of Earth,
A palatable draught—too bitter else.

THE MISCELLANEOUS.

HISTORY OF CONSTANTINOPLE.
Byzantium was founded, according to Diodorus Siculus, during the time of the Argonauts, by Bysus, who settled in Thrace with a colony of Megarians. It became, in the course of time, the greatest and the most populous city of Thrace. Subsequently it fell into the hands of the Persians, from whom it was taken by Pausanias, King of Lacedaemon. Afterwards it became subject to the Athenians, and lastly to the Romans. The first great importance it is denominated by Severus, in revenge of the opposition of the inhabitants to his claims. At this time it was fortified with high walls and numerous towers, seven of which were so artfully constructed that the least noise made in one was communicated to all the rest. The Byzantines defended themselves with wonderful resolution for three years, till famine compelled them to open their gates to the conqueror who reduced the city to ashes, and levelled its walls to the ground. Severus subsequently rebuilt the city, and called it Antoniana.

In the year of our Lord 325, CONSTANTINE resolved upon building a city that should rival if not surpass, the Roman capital. According to Zozimus, this resolution was founded on his hatred to the Romans, by whom he was so often persecuted, and his desire to introduce a new religion, while Eusebius tells us that his whole object was to display his power, by showing that he could, in a few years, build a city of equal magnificence with immortal Rome. He first chose a site between Trajan and ancient Ilion, on the Asiatic Coast. His determination was altered by a vision from Heaven which pointed out to him the city of Byzantium. He extended the walls from sea to sea, built a capital, an amphitheatre, a circus, a vast number of churches and public buildings, and divided the whole city into fourteen wards. On the 11th May, A. D. 330, he caused the new city to be solemnly consecrated to the God of Martyrs. This ceremony was performed by the Fathers of the Council of Nice, and lasted forty days. CONSTANTINE named the city New Rome, and also Constantinople, and declared it the metropolis of the Eastern Empire.

CONSTANTINE adorned and improved the favorite city of his father, with fountains, baths, and stately palaces. The Emperor Julian (who was born in Constantinople) enriched it with many privileges, formed a large harbor to shelter the ships from the South wind, and built a magnificent porch leading to it. In the year 401, the city was shattered by violent earthquakes, which lasted for three days, on which occasion numbers of Pagans asked for and received the sacrament of baptism. In the year 404, on the day of St. George's festival, the great Church was consumed by fire, together with the Senate Palace, and other great buildings. The fire is said to have originated with the friends of the exiled Bishop. In the year 430, during the 14th Consulate of Theodosius, a dreadful fire broke out, which lasted three days, and consumed a great part of the city. In 447, another earthquake prostrated the walls, and fifty-seven towers, and in 476, a six-days fire reduced to ashes eight of the fourteen wards. In 532, another earthquake destroyed a great part of the city, with the library of 120,000 volumes, and the works of Homer.

In 558, the Huns passed the Danube in midwinter, and marched in two bodies directly upon Constantinople, but were repulsed on the 10th of August, and fled to Belissarius, the renowned hero whose services met with such black ingratitude at the hands of Justinian. In 611 the first siege was laid to this place by Chosroes of Persia, who succeeded in his attempt, but was not long driven off by Heraclius, the great Emperor, besieged by the Saracens. This siege lasted seven years, during which Callinicus (a native of Heliopolis, Egypt) invented the famous Greek fire, which proved so fatal to the fleet of the besiegers. In 718, the third year of Leo's reign, the Saracens invaded the city, and while two mighty fleets blockaded it up sea; but the Greek fire again proved a protection, and after thirteen months the siege was abandoned. In 724, another earthquake visited this city. Some years after, Arabians were besieged by Constantine, the son of Leo, who after some time gained the capital. The Greek patriarch Anastasius, was publicly beaten with rods by Constantine's orders, and carried about the city on an ass, his face towards the animal's tail. In 763, a most extraordinary frost commenced on the 10th of October, and lasted to the end of February. The Proponis and the Bosporus were frozen for a hundred miles from the shore, so firmly as to bear the heaviest carriage. On the breaking up of the frost, mountains of ice and snow were carried by the wind through the streets, and dashed against the city walls. Theophanes gives a spirited account of this; he together with thirty friends sailed through the Bosporus on one of these ice-lands.

In 790, another fire consumed a great part of the city, together with the Patriarch's palace, in which was the manuscript of St. Chrysostom's comments on the Scriptures. In the next year, another earthquake forced the inhabitants to quit their houses for the open fields. In 1081, Alexius Comnenus made himself master of Constantinople, the gates being opened at night to his troops. During the reign of Isaac Angelus, Brianus Alexius, the greatest commander of that day, revolted and laid siege to the city, but was repulsed by Conrad of Montferrat, who heaved the Imperial army. In 1202, the French and Venetians made a combined attack by land and sea, headed by the celebrated Henry Dandolo.

The Ottoman Chief, Byzantium's conquering foe, who planted the Lion of St. Mark on one of the city towers, and restored Isaac Angelus to the throne. In 1203, some Latin soldiers set fire to the city, and a great portion was burned down. In 1205, John Ducas, (surnamed Martynopolus, or Mourzele, from his thick and meeting eyebrows), having usurped the throne, the Crusading Princes besieged and captured the city, and chose Baldwin, Earl of Flanders, Emperor of Constantinople. This celebrated usurper (Mourzele) had been Grand Chamberlain. He rubbed at midnight to the bedside of Alexius, told him that the Crusaders were forcing the palace, and urged him to escape by a private staircase. Alexius was murdered in the passage. During the minority of Baldwin II. John of Brienne, formerly King of Jerusalem, and a most valiant Captain, was Regent of the Empire. During his regency in 1236, Alexius, King of Bulgaria, and John Ducas, the Greek Emperor, invested the city, but were compelled to retire. In 1261, Alexius Strategopoulos, the Greek General, surprised Constantinople, expelled the Latins, and placed Michael Palaeologus on the throne. In 1288, Andronicus having revolted against his grandfather, entered the city gates in triumph, and was proclaimed Emperor. In 1348 John Cantacuzenus entered in a similar manner.

In 1392, we see this great city invested by Bajazet, with his Turkish followers. When the besieged were reduced to the last extremity, the attention of Bajazet was called off by his enemy the victorious Tamerlane. About the year 1426, Amurat the Second laid siege to this place and compelled the Emperor, John Palaeologus, to pay him a yearly tribute. In 1453, at last the destined hour arrived. In 1453, Mahomet II. left Adrianople with an army of three hundred thousand men, and soon covered the hills and plains which adjoin the imperial city. He encamped before it on the 6th of April, and on the 29th of May the Ottoman standard floated for the first time on the dome of St. Sophia.—*New York Morning Courier.*

REMEDY FOR THE POVERTY OF IRELAND.
No man who has travelled through any province of Ireland can have seen, without surprise and regret, the mountain-sides and valleys, that are given up to the range of a few sheeps, or left in a state of utter barrenness. The hogs are with scarcely any exception, capable of being turned into arable land; and when once so turned, they are actually and inexhaustible fertility. Of course, there must be a vast deal of trouble and discomfort in the exertion, and also considerable delay, but the result would be so successful, and the peasant would soon have solid possession for his pains. The only true remedy for the pressure of population and pauperism in Ireland is to distribute those wastes among the peasantry; to give from ten to twenty acres to a family, without the power to alienate the farm for the next twenty-five years; and to give the possession for fifty or a hundred years, free of all rent or incumbrance whatever. For this purpose the land must be purchased from the present proprietors, to whom it is almost totally useless, and from whom it would be had cheap; or if the spirit of chicane should prompt them to raise their price, on the chance of government purchase, the price might be left to the decision of a jury, as in the common case of purchasing the ownership of houses in towns. A hundred thousand pounds laid out in this way would buy ground for the location of a million of people. Their freedom from rent would soon enable them to make their subsistence; the trifling advance of a few agricultural utensils would be easily repaid; and we should have, in place of the double nuisance of a host of beggars and a desert, a vigorous population and a cultivated district. The demands of the population, as it increased in means, would amply remunerate this original expense, in the employment of manufacturers and traders.—*Liverpool Albion.*

REMARKS ON THE EARLY AGES.
In the earlier ages of antiquity it was not inconsistent with the highest dignity to act in what we should now reckon the lowest of menial employments. Gideon and Abraham went and brought a calf from the flock, skinned it, and gave and ate with their guests, and a custom to this day confined among many of the Eastern nations, where nothing is more common than to see their Princes fetch home from their flocks, and kill whatever has been selected for the use of their families, while the inferior Servants, or dancing boys, prepare a fire, and perform the office of an European cook-maid. Another part of female employment in the earlier ages was grinding corn; the ancients had not, and in many countries they have not even now, mills so constructed as to grind, and the women of the East, in some countries used for the purpose, the apparatus of which was turned by the hand, a task generally performed by two women. Each were used in the time of Pharaoh, for the relation of the plagues which visited the land, and the first born of Pharaoh who was upon the throne, to the first born of the maid-servants who were throne to the mill. They were used in the time of the Servants, who says, "Two women shall be grinding corn; and they shall say to one another, 'Prepare a fire for us; for the women of the East, to enhance their corn into meal, it was likewise their province to make it into bread. Sarah was ordered by her husband, when he entertained the angels, to make cakes for the guests, and many of the ancients, were offered at the altars of the gods, and it is called the offering of the women of the East, to enhance their corn into meal, it was likewise their province to make it into bread. 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