

## **Christian Miscellany.**

### **MERCY FOR THE CHIEF OF SINNERS.**

**I**N this year's Report of the chaplain of Pentonville Prison, he gives an account of a young man who some years ago was in the condemned cell in Newgate. He had a few books at hand, and one day he glanced at a footnote in "Lady Wake's Commentary on the Gospels," which intimated "that even a murderer may look for hope and mercy," and he began an earnest searching of the Scriptures. On what was expected to be his last night he heard clearly every stroke which the erection of the scaffold required; and the tolling of St. Sepulchre's bell in the morning announced the near approach of his end. But a message of royal clemency intervened. As soon as it reached him he dropped on his knees, and devoted to God the new life given to him; and there is reason to hope (says the chaplain) that from that hour he has not swerved from his resolution. He recorded his feelings—before and at the trial, and while lying under sentence of death—in a small poem, entitled "The Agony of Murder," which was written in Pentonville Prison, and prepared for publication by the late Ordinary of Newgate, and by him dedicated to the late Alderman Wire. Copies of the book are now very scarce. The chaplain goes on to say that the reprieved young man, being in process of time transported to Western Australia, and sent there in the ship which took out Bishop Hale, discovered a conspiracy of convicts on board to mutiny, and by tact and energy was the main means of preventing the execution of the plot. Arrived at Freemantle, he was rewarded with a considerable amelioration of his condition; and eventually, at the end of twelve years, he obtained a ticket-of-leave, and, embarking in business, by literary ability and useful lectures to the rude community around, he became eminently serviceable. "He is now," says the chaplain, "with a young family, settled in a distant part of the country, and prospering; and I have had recently, as continuously before, communications from him, proving that he is holding on in the right path."

Of our gold and our silver most of us are careful, but of time, which, once lost, can never be recalled or regained, we lavish a large portion, even while we are uttering complaints of the quantity allotted to us.