

RESTING IN GOD.

FROM THE GERMAN.

Since thy Father's arm sustains thee,
Peaceful be;
When a chastening hand restrains thee,
It is He.

Know His love, in full completeness,
Fills the measure of thy weakness;
If He wound thy spirit sore,
Trust Him more.

Without murmur, uncomplaining,
In His hand
Lay whatever things thou canst not
Understand.

Though the world the folly spurneth,
From thy faith in pity turneth,
Peace the inmost soul shall fill,
Lying still.

Like an infant, if thou thinkest
Thou canst stand—
Childlike proudly pushing back
The offered hand—

Courage soon is changed to fear,
Strength does feebleness appear;
In His love if thou abide,
He will guide.

Fear'st sometimes that thy Father
Hath forgot?
When the clouds around thee gather,
Doubt Him not;
Always hath the daylight broken,
Always hath the comfort spoken,
Better hath he been for years
Than thy fears.

Therefore, whatso'er betideth,
Night or day,
Know His love for thee provideth
Good away.
Crown of sorrow gladly take,
Grateful wear it for his sake,
Sweetly bending to his will—
Lying still.

To his own the Saviour giveth
Daily strength:
To each Christian soul that liveth
Peace at length.
Weakest lambs have largest share
Of this tender Shepherd's care:
Ask him not, then, "when," or "how,"
Only bow.

JUDICIAL OATHS.

When a Galla of Abyssinia sits down over a pit covered with a hide, imprecating that he may fall into a pit if he breaks his word, or when in our police courts we make a Chinaman swear by taking an earthen saucer and breaking it on the rail in front of the witness-box, signifying, as the interpreter then put it in words, "If you do not tell the truth your soul will be cracked like this saucer," we have here two full oaths, which the penalty, magical or religious, is shown in pantomime before us.

The rude natives of New Guinea swear by the sun, or by a certain mountain, or by a certain weapon, that the sun may burn them, if they lie. The savages of the Brazilian forests raise the hand over the head or thrust it into their hair, or they will touch the points of their weapons.

As to swearing by weapons, another graphic instance of its original meaning comes from Aracan, where the witness, swearing to speak the truth, takes in his hand a musket, a sword, a spear, a tiger's tusk, a crocodile's tooth and a thunderbolt (that is, of course, a stone celt). The oath by the weapon not only lasted on through classic ages, but remained so common in Christendom that it was expressly forbidden by a synod. Even in the seventeenth century to swear on the sword (like Hamlet's friend in the ghost scene) was still a legal oath in Holstein.

One of the accounts from New Guinea is that the swearer, holding an arrow, calls on

heaven to punish him if he lies; but by turning the arrow the other way the oath can be neutralized.

An Abyssinian chief, who had sworn an oath he disliked, has been seen to scrape it off his tongue and spit it out. There are still places in Germany where the false witness reckons to escape the spiritual consequences of perjury by crooking one finger, to make, I suppose, not a straight but a crooked oath; or he puts his left hand on his side to neutralize what the right hand is doing. Here is the idea of our "over the left," but so far as I know this has come down with us to mere schoolboy's shuffling.

Probably to this day there may be seen in Russian law courts in Siberia the oath on the bear's head. When an Ostyak is to be sworn a bear's head is brought into court and the man makes believe to bite at it, calling on the bear to devour him in like manner if he does not tell the truth.

Among the hill tribes of India a tiger's skin is sworn on in the same sense as the bear's head among the Ostyaks. Rivers again, which to the savages and barbarians are intelligent and personal divinities, are sworn by, in strong belief that their waters will punish him who takes their name in vain.—*Macmillan's Magazine.*

THE CATACOMBS.

Beneath the ruined palaces and temples, the crumbling tombs and dismantled villas, of the august mistress of the world, we find the most interesting relics of early Christianity on the face of the earth. In traversing these tangled labyrinths we are brought face to face with the primitive ages; we are present at the worship of the infant church; we observe its rites; we study its institutions; we witness the deep emotions of the first believers as they commit their dead, often their martyred dead, to their last long resting place; we decipher the touching record of their sorrow, of the holy hopes by which they were sustained, of "their faith triumphant o'er their fears," and of their assurance of the resurrection of the dead and the life everlasting. We read in the testimony of the Catacombs the confession of faith of the early Christians, sometimes accompanied by the records of their persecution, the symbols of their martyrdom, and even the very instruments of their torture. For in these halls of silence and gloom slumbers the dust of many of the martyrs and confessors, who sealed their testimony with their blood during the sanguinary ages of persecution; of many of the early bishops and pastors of the Church, who shepherded the flock of Christ amid the dangers of their troublous times; of many who heard the words of life from teachers who lived in or near the apostolic age, perhaps from the lips of the apostles themselves. Indeed, if we would accept ancient tradition, we would even believe that the bodies of St. Peter and St. Paul were laid to rest in those hallowed crypts—a true *terra sancta*, inferior in sacred interest only to that rock-hewn sepulchre consecrated evermore by the body of our Lord. These reflections will lend to the study of the Catacombs an interest of the highest and intensest character.—*Whitrow's Catacombs of Rome.*

REPETITIONS OF THE BIBLE.

"God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not." Even children must have noticed the repetitions of the Bible. There appears no attempt to economize room, for the Book of Numbers could have been compressed into the twelfth of the space. Here every thing is related with the precision of a catalogue or legal docu-

ment. The same might be said of the Acts, where space, so to speak, is more precious. In a measure this is due to the facts that the Bible, as far as its human writers were concerned, is not one book but a collection of books covering a long space of time in their production, and without any mutual understanding, each author putting down what he considered necessary for his own purpose. Then again, reiteration was characteristic of the Orientals as seen in their poems, of which the Bible is the most beautiful specimen. The reason of all this is obvious. Are not children taught by iteration and reiteration? We impress knowledge and conviction on their mind by repeating many times the same thought in the same words. To complain of this repetition in the Bible is most unreasonable. It proves conclusively that the Bible is an old and genuine book, and that it was neither written in our time or country. The object the inspired writers had in view was to render a deeper impression. It is in the words of the text—"God speaking once, yea twice." The Lord in ancient times would send a prophet again and again with the same message to warn the people, and this heaping up of line upon line left them without excuse in the day of their trouble. It was the same in gospel times, and it is so in our own day. God sends to the people preacher after preacher, saying the same things, and there is nothing more grievous to God and to the minister than to see people growing hard under an awakening ministry. Every preacher repeats, or ought to repeat his testimony, although a skilful preacher will vary his method and language. This is rendered necessary by the very nature of moral and religious truths, and the inaptitude of the human mind to receive it in its purity. People don't like monotony and limitation, and this should be avoided; because it is not of God. The clear and faithful reiteration of cardinal truth is of God, and becomes the strength of the teacher and preacher of Jesus Christ. John the Baptist's ministry was a repetition, calling upon the people again and again to repent. But there was variety in his preaching. Paul well knew the need of saying the same thing more than once. Christ Himself, above all others, repeated His sayings freely. He did not deliver Himself once for all in a studied manner, but had recourse to the topic again and again.

THE most heart-rending of all the troubles and agonies of life is to know that some trusted friend has deceived us.

WHAT are Raphael's Madonnas but the shadow of a mother's love, fixed in permanent outline forever?

Make a little fence of trust

Around to-day;

Fill the space with loving work,

And therein stay.

Look not through the sheltering bars

Upon to-morrow.

God will help thee bear what comes

Of joy or sorrow.

"DID it ever strike you," said one, "what grand men ought to be, who have been praying so many years? If prayer to us has been a reality, if beside being petition it has been communion with God, how near Him we ought to be by this time, and how like Him we ought to have become. Communion with Christ should make us Christ-like."

DEATH.

Mary Ingram, At Orangeville, December 12th, aged 109 years, four months, and eleven days. She was a faithful and consistent member of the Church,