

Poetry.

My Prayer Book.

THE ROYAL MARTYR.

"Blessed Lord, we magnify thy name for thine abundant grace, bestowed upon our MARTYRED SOVEREIGN."—Service for King Charles the Martyr.

Oh, burning plague-spot on the brow of Time, The withering curse of regicidal crime!— Mock'd and betray'd by treason-bands And massacred by murderous hands, On this day soar'd to endless fame, Ascending in Emmanuel's name, True to his creed, above man's impious charter, Charles the revered,—the Church's royal martyr!

Who has not read, till heart and brain were fired With holy wrath against self-will inspired, When Loyalty, inert and cold, Parley'd before the bad and bold; When faction, treason, falsehood, all In one combined on heaven to call, Baptized religion into murder's cause, And sanction'd regicide with sacred laws!

Alas, for country, church, and crown, and creed, When martyr'd Principle must burn and bleed; Or else, a regal conscience die Into a mean and miscreant lie, Forswearing all the truths that shine With radiance drawn from truths divine, Because Democracy would dare to sing Her psalm of blood o'er England's sainted king!

Oh! Thou, from Whom both king and kingdom draw Their source, their wisdom, and undying law, Now let our church's sighs and tears Soften the Empire into hallow'd fears; For, on her rests the curse of crime, And sacrifice which burden'd time, And tinged our soil with that horrid stain,— The blood of monarchs, when by God they reign.

Who sign'd his warrant with an impious glee Proved how satanic blinded souls can be: As christian, monarch, husband, friend, Can time to us a nobler send? His failings rose from junctures bad Which might have turn'd an angel mad: Passion ran high; and lust for lawless power Raged like a fiend in that chaotic hour.

Ruler Divine! Whom heaven-born souls obey, At least Thy Church on this remorseful day That murder'd prince may well recall, Who prized her glories more than all; For whom his royal spirit strove With anguish of exceeding love: True to her martyr'd king, this day be kept, And weep for him, who oft for her had wept.

Nor be forgot, that crimes historic teach Warnings profound which may the wisest reach. Dead sins are living preachers now; And weeping hearts of prayer avow That, Lord, except Thy grace prevent, Men still are on some madness bent: Wisdom they want, and meekness more to own The sceptred lordship of Thy boundless Throne.

SIR ROBERT PEEL UPON THE ROMAN CATHOLIC RELIGION.

The following passages are extracted from a speech of Sir Robert Peel's, delivered March 6, 1827, in a debate upon the Roman Catholic claims:

"He would own, fairly and candidly, that he entertained a distrust of the Roman Catholic religion. He objected not to the faith of the Roman Catholics; it was a matter of utter indifference to him whether or not a party professed the doctrine of transubstantiation; but if there were super-added to that doctrine a scheme of worldly policy of a marked character, he had a right to inquire into its nature, and observe its effect on mankind. Could any man acquainted with the state of the world, doubt for a moment that there was engrafted on the (Roman) Catholic religion something more than a scheme for promoting mere religion?—that there was in view the furtherance of a means by which man could acquire authority over man? Could he know what the doctrine of absolutism, of confession, of indulgence, was, without a suspicion that those doctrines were maintained for the purpose of establishing the power of man over the minds and hearts of men? What was it to him what the source of the power was called, if practically it operates as such? He held in his hand a bull of Pope Pius VII., issued in 1807 to the (Roman) Catholics of Ireland, granting an indulgence of 300 days from the pains of purgatory to those who would devoutly recite at stated times three short ejaculations, of which the following is the first:—'Jesus, Maria, Joseph, I offer to you my ardent soul.' The other two ejaculations began with the same sort of invocation. When he saw such a mockery of all religion as this was, resorted to in order to prop up the authority of man over man,—when he saw such absurdity as this addressed to rational (Roman) Catholics, and received by an illiterate and superstitious populace, it was in vain to tell him that such things could be ineffective. Whilst the privilege of free discussion was allowed by law, nothing would prevent really pious persons from doing all in their power to counteract and undermine such influence as was attempted to be exercised over the minds of the multitude. ... He would view the effect of the Roman Catholic religion as it existed in the present day in various countries; in some where it luxuriated in undisputed growth; in some where it was only struggling for supremacy; and in others where it was subordinate to a purer system. Under these different aspects he

had contemplated the Roman Catholic religion, and the result of his investigation was, that it was expedient to maintain in this kingdom the mild predominance of the Protestant Church. He contended that the consideration of the influence which the Roman Catholic religion exercised on political affairs ought not to be lost sight of. It was the natural desire of every man to promote the religious faith to which he was attached. If Roman Catholics were admitted to Parliament, what could be more natural or just on their parts than to attempt to improve the condition of their religious system, to extend its influence in this country, and to bring it into closer connexion with the Government? The consequence of the admission of (Roman) Catholics to Parliament would be, to bring the (Roman) Catholic and Protestant religions into collision in such a way as might lead to the destruction of the latter; and he considered the disorders and confusion which must prevail for ages during the conflict before that event took place, as a greater evil than even that event itself.... Believing, as he did, that the admission of Roman Catholics to Parliament and to offices of State, would endanger the constitution, yet if he were satisfied that such a measure would have the effect of restoring peace and tranquility to Ireland, he would sacrifice his apprehensions of the ultimate result to the attainment of the present immense benefit. He could not, however, believe that there would be such a consummation. If the friends of the (Roman) Catholics should propose to make the religion of the great majority the religion of the State, and transfer the emoluments of the Protestant Church to the Roman Catholics, and to open to them all the great offices of the State, he could understand that; but if they proposed to maintain the Protestant Church Establishment as the religion of the State, then he would say there would still exist a barrier between the Roman Catholic and the attainment of his wishes.... How many were the objects which would still remain to be attained by the Roman Catholics? How would it be possible hereafter to deny the propriety of Roman Catholic priests exercising their spiritual authority for temporal purposes? Might not the priests, after the proposed measure of relief was granted, claim to be the best judges of what was patriotic, and for the best interests of their Church? It was not to be endured that an appeal should at once be made to the generosity and to the fears of the English people. On the other hand, they were told that the (Roman) Catholic prelates had done every thing in their power to promote peace in Ireland, and, of course, discouraged the Association; and on the other, that the whole Irish nation, from the Peer and the priest to the lowest peasant, were banded together to obtain emancipation. He was perfectly satisfied that nothing would have such an effect on the people of England, as fair dealing on the part of the (Roman) Catholics. The very first objection which he would always take to the conduct of any individual, or any party, was where it evinced any want of manly candour or sincerity. He instanced the exclusion from Dr. Milner's authorized 'Catechism' of the second commandment.

The (Roman) Catholic bishops had stated in a formal declaration, that they had framed it in the 'simplicity of their hearts,' and their declaration set out with stating, 'that the (Roman) Catholics, in common with all Christians, received and respected the entire of the Ten Commandments, as they were found in Exodus and Deuteronomy; whereas he found in this Catechism the first commandment given, 'I am the Lord thy God; and the second commandment was, 'Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.' It was true there were ten commandments in all, for one was divided into two, to make up for the second, which was omitted. The ninth was, 'Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife; and the tenth was, 'Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods &c., nor anything that is his.' Let them reject the second commandment if they would; but do not let them come down and state, 'in the simplicity of their hearts,' that to the House and the public of England, which it was difficult not to perceive was not borne out by the fact.... He believed in his conscience, that if the House of Commons ever consented to admit Roman Catholics within its walls, the only effect would be that of increased discord and dissension.... He thought it right to retain all the existing disabilities. He had no choice but to state with firmness, but without asperity, the principles which his reason dictated, and his conscience and honour compelled him to maintain. It was a matter of consolation to him that he had now an opportunity (after the Duke of York's death) of showing his adherence to those tenets which he had formerly espoused." —Times, June 10, 1825.

* In the authorized Catechism published in Rome in 1836, not only the second but also the fourth commandment is suppressed, and in place of the latter another is substituted, namely, "Remember to keep holy the festivals."

CHARITIES IN LONDON.

Taking the whole of London, and not exempting from the district, such as may correctly be classed as metropolitan institutions, as Greenwich Hospital, &c., there are no less than 491 charitable

institutions exclusive of mere local endowments and trusts, parochial and local schools &c. These charities comprise—12 general medical hospitals; 50 medical charities for special purposes; 35 general dispensaries; 12 societies and institutions for the preservation of life and public morals; 18 societies for reclaiming the fallen and staying the progress of crime; 14 societies for the relief of general destitution and distress; 12 societies for the relief of specific description; 14 societies for aiding the resources of the industrious (exclusive of loan funds and saving banks); 11 societies for the deaf and dumb, and the blind; 103 colleges, hospitals and institutions of alms-houses for the aged; 16 charitable pension societies; 74 charitable and provident societies, chiefly for specified classes; 31 asylums for orphan and other necessitous children; 10 educational foundations; 1 charitable modern ditto; 40 school societies, religious books, church aiding and Christian visiting societies; 35 bible and missionary societies; showing a total of 491 (which includes parent societies only and is quite exclusive of the numerous "auxiliaries," &c.)—These charities annually disburse, in and of their respective objects, the extraordinary amount of £1,764,735; of which upwards of £1,000,000 is raised annually by voluntary contributions, the remainder from founded property, sale of publications, &c.

THE SERVICES FOR LENT. (From Townsend's Christian Year.)

The Catholic Church enforces upon her children a system of moral training. Her holy solemnities, in their alternate round of fast and festival, present an admirable mixture of severity and love. Her external institutions, silent but effectual monitors to impress upon the mind great and holy truths are admirably adapted to the weaknesses and infirmities of man. The soul of man by reason of the corruption of its nature, is averse to the important duty of self-examination, contrition, and repentance. In compassion to this weakness, and conscious of this unwillingness, the Church supplies a remedy for the express purpose of impressing upon every member in her communion the necessity of these duties. A fast is enjoined. A curtailment of bodily enjoyments is recommended, in order to promote that work, to which, when unassisted by Divine grace, the soul of man entertains so manifest a repugnance. No season could be appointed more peculiarly suited to the institution of this fast, and to the enforcing the necessity of reflecting upon the sins of the past life, and hearty resolutions to forsake them, than the days preceding the annual commemoration of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Jews ate the bitter herbs of repentance during the week preceding the celebration of their annual Passover. The Christian should come up to the much greater feat, by the more earnest observance of the same preparation. The fast preceding the resurrection was universally observed in all the societies, which formed in the various countries of the world, the one Catholic and Christian Church. The length of this fast, at first, much varied, according to the customs and institutions which obtained in the different Churches. The two days or the forty hours immediately preceding the festival of Easter were observed by the Apostles themselves, and this at least was the extension of the fast from their time to the present hour. The fast soon came to be observed during one whole week by some, while, by others, it was kept for a longer or shorter period. There is a passage extant from which many writers warmly argue that the fast of forty days was established as early as the days of Irenæus, A. D. 150. This Bishop, however, must only be supposed to speak of the customs of his Church. The incidental mention of the subject in the contemporary disputes of Victor, Bishop of Rome, and of Polycrates, Bishop of Asia, proves that no fixed period was as yet universally assigned for the duration of this fast. We must believe, therefore, that at first, the length was different in different Churches; while the custom of the Jewish Church fasting forty days, (the real prototype of this fast,) and the examples of Moses, Elias, and of our Lord himself, most probably soon induced an agreement in this matter; and caused forty days to be assigned in most Churches, as the right duration of this solemn season of humiliation; no longer, least the faithful should despair rather than mourn; not shorter, least they should fail sufficiently to mourn. In support of the early origin of the forty days fast it may be mentioned that the Quadragesimal fast was recognised as a known date of time in the Nicene Council, A. D. 325, and that it is alluded to in the sermons of the Fathers, in the Eastern and Western Churches, in the third and fourth centuries. The observance of this fast, during a period of forty days, may for these reasons be supposed to have received the assent, and to have been adopted into the practice of the Catholic Church at the end of the fourth century. It was certainly the universal custom of the Church before the formation of her litanies, in the Sacramentaries of Gelasius and Gregory. The Church of England, at her Reformation, wisely retained the observance of this season, derived from the Jewish, into the Christian Church consecrated by the example and instructions of Christ, recommended by the exhortations and usage of the Apostles, and from their day to the present time, most religiously observed in the Latin and Greek Churches. The abrogation of this solemnity would have been an infraction of the essential principles of the Reformation, as it would have sanctioned an unnecessary departure from the communion and customs of her sisters, the other members of the Catholic Church of Christ. The first day of this Quadragesimal fast is called the "Head of the Fast" or "Ash-Wednesday." From the very first institution of the Quadragesimal fast, this first day was always celebrated as a day of humiliation and repentance. In the latter ages of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, its observance was attended by many outward tokens of the most extreme sorrow and self-abasement. The members of the various Churches who had been guilty of any known, or notorious sin, were accustomed to go on this day barefooted to the Church. After having received the admonition of the Bishop, they were reminded of the sentence passed upon Adam, and with lighted tapers in their hands, were driven out of the Church, until the Thursday in Passion Week. This godly discipline of putting notorious sinners to open penance had degenerated at the time of the Reformation, through indulgences, dispensations, commutations of penance for money, into a vain and idle ceremony, of sprinkling ashes upon the head as emblems of outward sorrow, and of a formal confession at this period, of all persons, whether they were real penitents or the contrary. The Salisbury Missal contains a service for the benediction, and rubrics for directions, in using these ashes. These ashes were designed to remind the penitents of their mortality, and to teach them that they must return to the dust, and that they deserved to be burnt to ashes. The Church of England, unwilling to retain a vain and idle ceremony, and unable, through the emergencies of the times, to return to, and to restore the primitive and godly discipline anciently used at this season, has prepared from the old services of the day, a new form of penitential devotion. The Church of England renits nothing in theory of the rigour of the ancient fast, nor resigns any claim to that power which is necessarily inherent in her, of expelling those who transgress the laws of her communion, from all participation in the privileges which, as a society, she confers. The Church of England, by the expression of a wish, for its restoration, maintains a claim to the exercise of this power of excommunication, or of depriving all notorious offenders from all benefits to the privileges of fellowship and communion. In the main, while a service of Communion is appointed, that while notorious offenders cannot be put to open penance, they may be led to flee from such vices, to which, by their own mouths, they proclaim the curse of God to be their due.

APPEARANCE OF THE TOWN OF WASHINGTON.

(From a Lecture at Leeds, by the Earl of Carlisle, late Lord Morpeth.)

From Baltimore I transferred myself to Washington, the seat of government and capitol of the American Union. I never saw so strange a place; it affords a strong contrast to the regularity, compactness, neatness, and animation of the trans-Atlantic cities I had hitherto visited. It is spread over a very large space, in this way justifying the expression of some one who wished to pay it a compliment, but did not know what attribute to select so he termed it a "city of magnificent distances;" and there it extends, or rather sprawls; it looks as if it had rained houses at random, or like half a dozen indifferent villages scattered over a goose common. Here and there, as if to heighten the contrast with the meanness of the rest, there are some very handsome public buildings; and the American Capitol, the meeting place of the legislature and the seat of empire, though not exempt from architectural defects, towers proudly on a steep ascent, which commands the subject town and the course of the broad Potomac, which makes the only redeeming feature of the natural landscape. In short, while every other place which I saw in America gave the impression of life and progress Washington not only appears stagnant but retrograde. No busy commerce circulates in its streets, no brilliant shops diversify its mean ranges of ill-built houses; but very few equipages move along its wide, splashy, dreary avenues. I saw it too, in the prime of its season during the sitting of congress. When it is not sitting the members of the legislature and officers disperse themselves over the breadth of the Union, and leave the capitol to the clerks of the public offices and (does it seem profanation to say it?) the slaves who are still permitted to inhabit what should rightfully be the metropolis of freedom. It is at least gratifying to know that, in the last session of congress, the slave trade has been abolished in the District of Columbia, the small portion of territory immediately annexed to Washington. When they are here, the members of congress are mostly packed together in large and inferior boarding houses, a great portion of them not bringing their wives and families over the immense distance of country they have to traverse.—Hence it also happens that Washington will appear to the stranger not merely one of the least thriving but also the least hospitable of American cities.