

Poetry.

My Prayer Book.

THE COMMINATION

"Is much to be wished . . . to the intent that being admonished of the great indignation of God against sinners, ye may the rather be moved to earnest and true repentance."—Prayer Book.

As Time grows old, the earth from heaven recedes
More distant far;
No conscience bleeds
To feel the burnings of that inward scar,
Which so discolours o'er with sin
Th' apostate soul we bear within.

A period was, when God and angels came
So near to thought,
The Church's name
With the fine strength of holiness was fraught;
Her frown cast midnight where it fell,—
Her blessing wove a guardian spell.

But now, we boast an intellectual blaze
That scatters all,
Cold reason says
Before the majesty of mind should fall:
Dazzled with light, but dark in love,
Sin loathes the truth which looks above.

Sensual and proud, a Belial age is ours,
Drunken with pride
And grasping powers
By which the godless will is gratified;
Greedy of gold, athirst for pelf,
And seeking heaven in worship'd self.

Thou fond admirer of a holy time
When earth touch'd heaven,
And thrills sublime
Were to heroic saints and martyrs given
Of something purer than blind sense,
Can to a course rude age dispense,—

Marvel no more that Discipline lies dead:
SELF-WILL reigns now;
Laurels, not ashes, crown the christless head
And wreath man's brow:
For sackcloth, singing-ropes are worn,
And none but saints now seem forlorn.

When God was fear'd, due fasting calm'd the blood;
With naked feet
Then Penance stood
Low at the porch, the pastoral band to meet,
Sackcloth'd by shame, with downcast eyes,
Sprinkled with ashes, heaving sighs:

Severely gracious, thus the Church's rod
Wielded o'er sin
The claim of God;
And o'erawed penitents to weep within,
Driving them forth with scalding tears
To feel the pangs of righteous fears.

So, with mount Ebal's menace Zion's song
Was well combined;
And true as strong
The healing power with which it calm'd the mind:
Indulgence then was not in vogue,
Nor framed its pleasing decalogue!

But, with her holiness, the power departs
A Church can wield
O'er chasten'd hearts,
Led by subduing love themselves to yield
To mild correction's lawful charm,
Which keeps the soul from sinful harm.

Too oft our church is self-election now;
Our creed the will,
And few avow
That Christ is throned in christian temple still,—
A Presence and a Glory there
Receiving praise, and hearing prayer.

Awake! awake! thou Arm of God, awake:
Put on thy strength,
Thy fear forsake
Church of our fathers! be thyself at length;
Bride of The Lord, a mother kind,
Watchful, but not to error blind.

Spirit divine! in this her trial-hour
Of sinful dread,
In breathe a power
That shall to glorious duty lift her head,
Whose panoply is ardent prayer,
Which more and more each gift should bear.

And we, as children of our Mother dear,
In evil days
Oh, let us fear;
And in our lentine gloom on Ebal gaze,
And, as the tenfold curses roll
Let each, O God! subdue the soul;

For, art Thou not a sin-consuming fire,
Awful as pure
In Thy dread ire?
Never may sense our credulous mind allure,
To think that hell alone can burn
In fictions, which dark fancies learn.

Mercy, Lord Christ! most infinite Thou art:
But, judgment true
Will cleave each heart
That will not dread Thee in some darker hue,
Before Whom prostrate worlds must fall,
And worship Him who sways them all.

So, when the priestly comminations roll
In thunders deep,
Till each awed soul
In the hush'd centre of pale conscience weep,
Our sackcloth let repentance be
Remorse, the ashes God can see.

So will lost penance in such hour revive;
Sorrow for sin
In prayer will strive;
Till, wash'd and whiten'd by the Lamb within,
The heart renew'd God's word decries
Piercing and pure as angel-eyes.

Back to the world, in penitence and prayer
Then may we speed:
If wounded there,—
Then look we upward, while our spirits bleed;
For, on The Throne there beats a Heart,
In all true grief that takes its part¹.

THE IRISH CHURCH.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THE LORD JOHN RUSSELL.
MY LORD,—You hold, perhaps, the most respon-
sible office in the empire; deem not an humble

minister of the Church of Christ presumptuous in addressing you, on subjects intimately connected with that responsibility. I approach you with the respect which your high position demands, and though I cannot write the language of a courtly sycophant, but the simple and honest language of unvarnished truth—be assured my motives are pure; they are a deep feeling of individual responsibility, the good of my fellow countrymen, and the glory of my God.

My lord, I have often been told, you are a religious man, if so, how can you permit your government to deal so tenderly by Romanism—so hardly by Protestantism? How can you continue to cherish error, and discountenance truth?

My lord, sooner shall fire and water, night and day mingle, than the true members of Christ's Church with Antichrist, and because faithfulness to God and love for souls constrain the loved and honoured ministers of the Church of Ireland to obey God even before you, and prevent their countenancing your system of education, and giving the hand of fellowship to Rome—because of this the powers that be are against them, and English policy seems bent on trying to destroy what it cannot effectually corrupt.

My lord, Ireland wants the Bible. The mass of the people are ready to receive it—multitudes sigh for it—but the daring, impious priest of Rome withholds it; and what is called the National Board of Education sanctions such dishonour to God—such treason to the souls of men. No wonder ours has been a land of sorrow, and covered with the shadow of death.

Does it ever occur to your lordship's mind—“How is it that, notwithstanding pious bishops, forced on us either to endeavour to bribe us from our consistency or oppress for faithfulness to our God and his blood-bought Church—notwithstanding your system of education, which darkens and hardens instead of tending to enlighten and spiritualize—notwithstanding all the support the Church of Rome receives from your government—notwithstanding nearly 3,000 priests of a foreign Potentate whom you have sworn has no jurisdiction within these kingdoms, but which usurped authority you have permitted him to exercise—in spite of all the efforts of priests to withhold the Bible from the people and keep them in ignorance, knowing in their hearts that, could their deceived flock read God's Holy Word, their priestly craft; and merchandise of souls would be gone—in spite of priestly Bible-burning, and priestly cursing, and priestly persecution—often permitted by those whose duty it is to suppress it—in spite of priestly blandishments and priestly bribing—in spite of all these efforts to obstruct the truth, the cause of God advances, and instead of Ireland becoming Popish, as the demented police of our rulers would make her, she is fast becoming not only Protestant but Christian. Though destitute, afflicted, tormented, thousands have cast off the bondage of Rome, and with a certainty of terrible persecution and deprivations, thousands more, under the teaching of the Irish Society and other kindred societies, are preparing, through the reading of God's Word in their own language, to come out of that false Church—that they be not partakers of her sins, and receive not of her plagues.” A colonel from Scotland having heard of this work of controversy from Romanism, lately visited the districts from Donegal to Cork, along the western shores. He described it to me as perfectly marvellous in his eyes. He met above one hundred clergymen of the Church of Ireland, and he declared such men of God he never saw before, and believes that even the early Church had not such a band of faithful, self-denying, and faithful men. Many of them in poverty, some in want, of even necessities of life, all oppressed with many perplexities, and surrounded with the awakened and maddened priestly Hosts of Rome, coldly looked upon by the ruling powers, almost denied the protection of British law; and yet these ministers, though overlooked by a government that ought to cheer, support, and glory in them—yet these are the men, and hundreds of like stamp, who are now the favourites of the government of Heaven, and who are gathering in a wonderful harvest of thousands upon thousands to God, and proving themselves the regenerators of Ireland. My lord, come over in private, and judge for yourself, and then you will conclude that God is with the Protestant Church, and that earth and hell shall not prevail against her. If, then, the great reformation in the religion and character of the people, now going on, manifestly proves it is God's will that Popery shall fall in Ireland, have not you and your government placed yourselves in the awful position of “fighting against God.”

O, my Lord, in mercy to your own precious soul, and mercy to the souls of millions, reverse this infidel policy towards a country which ever faithfully resisted the Pope's arrogant and blasphemous pretensions, and yielded not, till England forced the galling yoke of the Papacy upon it—never forget that our Church is the ancient and national Church of the Irish people—we are no mere branch of the English Church—ours is the Bible faith—which under God gave my country the glorious title of “Island of Saints,” and what is she now after centuries of British connection and government? For

nearly 1,200 years after Christ the Irish Church and the Irish nation would have nothing to do with Rome, and where is there a Church with all her discouragement and obstruction from professional friends and open foes—where is there a Church so faithfully protesting against Romish errors and Tractarian apostasy?—and God is so honouring her faithfulness that for one Tractarian apostate in England, we can show many converts in Ireland whom God hath called out of Popery, rich in faith and in the spiritual knowledge of those Scriptures that make them “wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” May it not be that this growth of Tractarian Popery in your own England is permitted by God as a judgment for the wicked encouragement given to Romanism here, and to show you how impotent are men's devices against his will, he is now casting down Popery in this kingdom through the Church of Ireland—the very Church your government oppress and try to corrupt.

Mr lord, the Church of Ireland is here the faithful garrison of truth and loyalty—try no more to corrupt her; did you succeed she would be shorn of her strength and be no longer a defence against mischievous and dishonest agitation—a bulwark for spiritual freedom, and national glory.

God's judgments are abroad, and is there not a cause?

Only two months after the education bill passed, confiding the Irish poor to a board, of which the Roman Catholic archbishop of Dublin was, practically, the leading member, the cholera came—the first pestilence in England for 150 years.

One month after the awful Maynooth bill passed came the potato blight, and then followed famine, commercial ruin, and insurrectionary movements in Ireland.

One week after the passing of the diplomatic relations bill, by which the Pope became an ally of England, after a breach of three hundred years, re-appeared the cholera in London and swept off its thousands. My lord, are these mere casual coincidences—or followed they not from cause to effect; and, if so, do they not speak as in a voice of thunder—do they not warn you, with other signs, that God has a controversy with this nation, and for what? For backsliding from Him and for setting up idols in the land.

This empire to be glorious and prosperous must be Protestant. Every concession to Popery has brought trouble in our days. They, no longer yield to the daring menaces of false-hearted professions of a priesthood who never can be faithful to a heretic ruler. Their own books, as taught at your Royal College Maynooth, abundantly prove that no faith is to be kept with us. Take two or three short extracts from Maynooth Standards of Divinity, and then judge of the spirit of Popery, and the utter impossibility of appeasing it by concessions. Maldouatus says of Calvinists and Lutherans—“There never was an heretic, there never can be a heretic, if they are not heretics. They who deny that heretics are to be put to death, ought much rather to deny that thieves—much rather than murderers ought to be put to death. For heretics are so much the more pernicious than thieves and murderers, as it is a greater crime to steal and slay the souls of men than their bodies.” “Undoubtedly they are to be burned.” Our only hope of mercy from such doctrine and teaching is when they are weaker than we are; for Cardinal Belarmine asserts—“If they are stronger than we are, and there is danger if we attack them in war, that more of us shall fall than of them, then we are to keep quiet.” My lord, the dreadful Popish persecution in Dingle, and other parts of this island, proves this spirit still exists; and if they do so much under the eye of British authority, what would they not do, if they had power equal to their Church's will? And yet, you, and a Majority of England's senators, give about £30,000 a year to teach such Satanic principles, and to manufacture multitudes of priests, who uphold the Pope's authority as superior to our most gracious Queen's in these realms and whose endeavour is to bind the people in the slavery of a religion which you know in your heart to be false, idolatrous, and destructive.

£30,000 a year to manufacture a continued succession of men who, while you give them authority will never let the government have control over their flocks, and will never let there be peace between the Romanist farmer and the Protestant and loyal landlords of Ireland.

It is said by some “they are too strong for the government.” O, listen not to such false assertions—be just and fear not.

England and Ireland swarm with Jesuits, driven out of the Roman Catholic countries of the world; they surround the palace, and their spirit pervades even our own council chamber of state: Drive them from our shores, or they will eat as a cancer into mighty England's constitution, and, like a vampire, fatten on her very life blood.

Oh, if you had been faithful to your God and your royal mistress, no haughty boastful prelates would dare the Majesty of Britain—no unlawful Synod would have sat at Thurles under the special patronage of the great goddess of Popery, hurling defiance at your authority, and framing laws to be established by a foreign prince, binding on the people of Ireland, irrespective of, and in opposition to, the laws of our constitution, and the prerogative of

our Queen. The Romish cabinet of Turin has set the professed Protestant cabinet of England a lesson worthy of their imitation: and if such a spirit was once known to actuate your councils, the exiled Archbishop Franzoni, of Sardinia, would read a lesson to our rampant archbishops of Rome at home they would not forget, and which would tend much towards the peace and welfare of Ireland.

The Earl of Arundel and Surrey honestly declared before your lordship the Church of Rome would not cease the struggle till it destroyed the Church of these kingdoms; and we as honestly declare we never will cease the controversy till we put down or change that of Rome. But the Protestant Church is a merciful one, like the Lord Jesus Christ, its great head. It prays continually for its enemies, persecutors and slanderers, that God would turn their hearts. “Our weapon is not carnal;” it is God's Bible which is the sword of the Spirit; and that Bible will drive Romanism from Ireland, and then my distracted country will find rest. My lord, as you would be approved in that great day when we shall all have to give an account, forge no longer chains to bind the Romanist and his poor children, by exalting his false religion, and by multiplying its priests. Give Roman Catholics the Bible, and the poor converts protection and encouragement, and soon you shall see the masses of Ireland, and hundred of Priests fleeing from Popery, and gladly ranging themselves under the Bible teaching and loyal Church of Ireland.

Then your Irish difficulty will be removed—the sun of the empire's prosperity will shine again, and liberated Ireland will bless the day—when, under your guidance the plausible, but sinful expediency policy of the nation was changed, to that which brought God honour, and ensured the peace, happiness, and national greatness of these kingdoms.

My lord, these are the sentiments of tens of thousands in this misgoverned land, including thousands of faithful converts, who in the beautiful language of our scriptural liturgy, pray that it may please God to endue the lords of the council and all the nobility with grace, wisdom and understanding.

May that heavenly grace, wisdom and understanding, be vouchsafed to you, is the prayer of Ireland's Church, and of your lordship's very humble and obedient servant,

JAMES PERKINS GARRETT,
Oct. 10, 1850. Incumbent of Painstown.

EARLY MISSIONS.

(From the Rev. G. Trevor's “Brief Sketch of Missions to the Heathen in the 18th Century.”)

“An opinion extensively prevails among the supporters of Missions in our day, that little or nothing was effected for the conversion of the Heathen during the last century. The Society for the Promoting Christian Knowledge, and its twain Association, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, which were the first (and for 100 years the only) Christian Societies in this country, are supposed to have limited their exertions to the circulation of religious writings, and the provision of Ministers, among our own countrymen at home and abroad. That those exertions would indirectly extend the Gospel among the heathen tribes adjacent to our foreign possessions, is perceived and acknowledged; but here, as many friends of the heathen believe, their debt to these Societies, and to the Church of England in that century, is at an end. They suppose that the founding of Missions directly for the conversion of the Heathen was delayed till its close, when the London and Baptist Societies were established with that specific object in view, and almost immediately followed by another within our own communion, which bears the title of the “Church Missionary Society to Africa and the East.”

“The following brief sketch is designed to expose the fallaciousness of this idea, and so to rescue our beloved Church and its more active members in former years, from the reproach of indifference and apathy till the zeal of others provoked them to exertion. It will be seen that direct missions to the heathen were not only always contemplated, and frequently pressed upon the English people, by the Societies which have been named, but had been actually founded, upon their patronage and direction, in both hemispheres, and carried to a surprising amount of success. So far from the later Societies having originated this important work among us, their praise is to have taken up and pursued a line of Christian exertion indicated, and persevered in for many years before; and it may with far greater truth be said, that they themselves own their origin to the missionary spirit fostered among us by the labours and reports of the elder institutions. I undertake to prove of this, as a debt of justice and gratitude to those who were in Christ before us: and I shall not be sorry if the result be in some degree to moderate the self-complacency, with which we are all too apt to regard the work of our own hands.”—pp. 3, 4.

Instructions delivered to the Missionaries of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

“That before their departure, they wait upon His Grace the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, their metropolitan, and upon the Lord Bishop of London,