

RELIGIOUS MISCELLANY.

HYMN.

Show pity, Lord, O Lord, forgive,
Let a repenting rebel live;
Are not thy mercies large and free?
May not a sinner trust in Thee?

My crimes are great, but dont surpass
The power and glory of thy grace;
Great God thy nature hath no bound;
So let thy pard'ning love be found.

O! wash my soul from every sin!
And make my guilty conscience clean!
Here on my heart the burden lies.
And past offences pain my eyes.

My lips with shame my sins confess,
Against thy law, against thy grace;
Lord, should thy judgments grow severe,
I am condemned, but thou art clear.

Should sudden vengeance seize my breath,
I must pronounce thee just in death;
And if my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well.

Yet save a trembling sinner, Lord,
Whose hope still hovering round thy word,
Would light on some sweet promise there,
Some sure support against despair.

CONFESSION TO PRIESTS.*

Opposed to Scripture.

And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the God of Israel, and make confession unto him: Joshua vii. 19.—Confess your faults one to another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed: James v. 16.—If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness: 1 John i. 9.—I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin: Psalms xxxii. 5.—I will arise and go to my Father, and will say unto him, Father I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am not worthy to be called thy son: Luke xv. 18, 19.

Opposed to the Fathers:

Let every one examine himself, and then let him come (to the Sacrament.) He doth not bid one man to examine another, but every man himself, making the judgment private, and the trial with witnesses: St. Chrysostom, Hom. 28.—Within thy conscience, one being present, but God, who seeth all things, enter thou into judgment and into a search of thy sins; and, recounting thy whole life, bring thy sins into judgment in thy mind: reform thy excesses, and so with a pure mind draw near to the sacred table, and partake of that holy sacrifice: St. Crys. Tom. 6. Savil. page 837.—After baptism God hath appointed the remedy within thyself; he hath put remission in thine own power, that thou needest not seek a priest when thy necessity requires; but thou thyself, now as a skillful and plain master, mayest amend thine error within thyself: Lawrence Bishop of Novara, Tom. 6, Billioth. Patr. 1. page 337. Edith. Colon.

Error when introduced.

Public confession of sins used to be made before the congregation, for the greater humiliation of penitents, till the Decian persecution; but owing to the necessity of secrecy being observed in those times at these assemblies, a discreet Minister was appointed to hear privately the confessions of those who re-

lapsed into sin. A Deacon of this Church having seduced a lady who resorted to him for this purpose, the practice of private confession to Priests was abolished by Nectarius, Bishop of Constantinople, in 140 years afterwards; when the examination of a man's own conscience and confession to God was pronounced sufficient. This usage continued. After a lapse of 70 years, we find public confession often made by penitents in Italy, who caused a writing containing a catalogue of their various offences to be read in public. Leo, then Bishop of Rome, A. D. 459, commanded this practice to be disused, and pronounced it to be sufficient that the guilt of men's consciences should be declared in secret confession to the Priests alone. From this period we may therefore date the rise of auricular confession, which by degrees acquired its present unscriptural character. [The practice was deemed doubtful, by the Council of Cabilonense, i. e. Chalons sur Snone) in France, A. D. 813; and was first determined by the Council of Lateran under Pope Innocent III., A. D. 1215. So long was it after Christ before this notion prevailed.]

PRAYERS TO SAINTS.

Opposed to Scripture.

First Commandment.—Thou shalt have no other Gods before me: Exodus xx. 3.—Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave: Deut. x. 20.—I am the Lord, that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images: Isaiah xlii. 8.—And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet and worshipped him; but Peter took him up, saying, stand up, I myself also am a man: Acts x. 25, 26.—When the people of Lystra would have paid divine honours to Paul and Barnabas, "they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, and saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you, that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: Acts xiv. 14, 15.—Let no man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels: Colossians ii. 18.—And I (John) fell at his (the Angel's) feet to worship him; and he said unto me, see thou do it not, I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: Worship God; for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy: Rev. xix. 10.—And when I (John) had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the Angel which showed me these things. Then saith he unto me, see thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the saying of this book: Worship God: Revelations xxii. 8, 9.

Opposed to the Fathers.

The Devil brought in the worshipping of Angels, envying us this honour. These are the enchantments of Devils. Though he be an Angel, though an Archangel, though the Cherubim, endure it not. For neither will those powers admit it, but reject it, when they see their Lord dishonoured. I have honoured thee, says he; and have said call upon me: and dost thou dishonour him? Chrysostom in Colos. iii. Hom. 9.—Christians ought not to forsake the Church of God, and depart aside and invoke Angels, and form assemblies (for this purpose), which are things forbidden. If any man therefore be found to give himself to this secret idolatry, let him be accursed. Because he hath forsaken our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and hath betaken himself to idolatry: 35 Canon of Council of Laodicea A. D. 364.—This vice continued in Phrygia and Pisidia for a long time, for which reason the Council at Laodicea, the Chief City of Phrygia, forbade them by a law to pray unto Angels; and even to this day, among them and their borders, there may be seen oratories to St. Michael: Theodoret in Col. ii.—That nothing created is to be worshipped by man, the Word of God has ordained by law, as we may learn from almost every part of Scripture. Moses, the Tables, the Law, the Prophets, afterwards the Gospels, the determinations of all the Apostles, do equally forbid the looking unto the creature: Nyssen, Cont. Eunom, Orat. iv. Tom. 2. p. 114.—Neither Elias, nor John, nor

Thecla, nor any of the Saints are to be worshipped. For that ancient error shall not prevail over us, to forsake the living God, and to worship the things that are made by him; for they served and worshipped the creature more than the Creator, and became fools. For if he will not have the Angels to be worshipped, how much more will he not have her that was born of Anna? Epiphanius Hæres, p. 448.—Let Mary then be had in honour; but let the Lord be worshipped: Id. 450.—The Saints are to be honoured for imitation, not adored for Religion: Augustine de vera relig. Cap. 55.

Error when introduced.

Chrysostom, Athanasius, Augustino, Epiphanius, all strenuously opposed this error, which began to arise in their days. Epiphanius particularly wrote against the worship offered to the Blessed Virgin by the Collyridians, a word derived from Collyrides or Cakes, which at a certain season of the year were offered by some superstitious women to the Virgin, A. D. 390. In the year 1030, Anselm described Heaven as being in doubt which was most worthy of honour, Mary or her son; and Peter Damian, 1050, scrupled not to apply to her what is affirmed of himself by Christ, that all power was given to her in heaven and in earth. But it was not till the time of Bonaventure, A. D. 1558, that the evil reached its height, for he substituted the name of the Virgin for that of God throughout the Psalms; calling his work the crown, or Psalter of the Blessed Virgin. To recapitulate all the blasphemies of this kind which then began to prevail, would require volumes.—To be continued.

I. PENTANCE.

Repentance is not a single act; neither can it be accomplished all at once. It does not consist in exhibitions of terror, and tumult, and confusion, and profession, which first frighten the guilty soul, and then call it peace. Such are not the true workings of genuine repentance; neither can the soul be rightly said to be made pure, or born again, or pardoned entirely, because of one exhibition of this kind, any more than the ear of corn can be ripened to the full harvest by one single ray of sunshine. No: a true sorrow for sin consists in many and repeated acts of repentance; a continuance of humility, not a presumption of pride; a tender conscience, not one puffed up and exalted by ideas of self-sufficiency; a patient perseverance in well doing, not a sudden impulse or passing flash of feeling, falsely called godliness. The truly repentant sinner, as the Psalmist says, "goes softly all his days," not presumptuous in himself or in his own ways, neither despising others, but lowly in his own eyes and earnestly coveting, and with all meekness receiving lessons of instruction, which may at length enable him to receive the end of his faith, the salvation of his soul.—Rev. W. Shepherd.

L E N T.

To those who wish to be told more precisely how they ought to observe this regulation of the Church, we may say, abstain during this season from those practices in which you are most apt to offend the laws of Heaven. Is there a passion which more than another holds dominion in your bosom? make it the subject of your particular care, to guard that pass to your heart. Is there a propensity which you are prone to follow, more than any other? let it be at this time an object of more than usual solicitude to check and conquer it. Is there any species of pleasure and amusement of which you are particularly fond? put the rein upon your desires, and resolve, through the assistance of heavenly grace, to restrain your wayward inclinations. Is there any one sin which you think you may particularly charge upon yourself before the bar of conscience? give yourself to the most hearty contrition and repentance, and seek continually for pardon.—Gos. Mess.

The guilt of one sin is a greater misery than the burden of a thousand crosses.—Heb. 11. 25.

Repentance is the greatest honor next to innocence.—2. Cor. 7. 10.—Ch. Alca.

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