

The Church Guardian

OF MONTREAL.

"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."—Eph. vi. 24.
 "restly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."—Jude 3.

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THE CRUCIFIXION.

Good Friday! The name reminds us that there has dawned to-day, for Christendom, a day of clouds and thick darkness. Christ's holy bride, the Church, sits weeping and widowed to-day, and her wail is like the Magdalene's of old, "They have taken away my Lord!"

Ah! if that be true; if our heads indeed be bowed with woe; if as we recall all the terrible scenes of the crucifixion, the surging, blaspheming crowds; the mangled, bleeding Form that hangs so patiently on Calvary; the cruel nails; the crown of thorns; and if, as we think on these things, there rise up before us all our own sins by which we have "Crucified the Son of God afresh"; and if remembering it all, we learn to hate those sins, while from our inmost hearts the broken sobbing words go forth, "the remembrance of them is grievous unto us; the burden of them is intolerable"; then, ere the sun go down, we shall have felt also, by God's grace, the power of the Cross, and the meaning of those words, which confounded the Saviour's Jewish hearers—"I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me!"

"They crucified Him." And into those three words are condensed agonies which volumes would fail to exhaust, even as in those three awful hours of the crucifixion day in which a weird unearthly gloom covered the guilty land and the dreadful scene, the Saviour lived again the three-and-thirty years of sorrow and suffering which had been His earthly lot.

It is well to spend those solemn hours, in which the silence of Jesus "cried for mercy on the souls of men," in the silence of fervent prayer, and grief, and chastened thought. Good Friday is not a day for much speaking. The house of mourning is marked above all things by the silence which pervades it. Let us kneel at the foot of the Cross—let us look upon the Saviour's face; let us keep on saying, "Jesus our Lord is crucified," "Jesus our Lord is crucified."

"They crucified Him." And He prayed, "Father, forgive them." And from His bitter cross He spake those wondrous words which men and women have blessed God for these hundreds of years—which have been meditated upon, fed on, clung to, by brave, patient souls; by the hopeful, and by the despairing; by the loving, and by the timid; by great saints of God, and by those who from being grievous sinners have found at last rest in God, and peace in the Cross of Jesus; which we have heard again and again, but which are ever fresh and ever new.

Think much on those words to-day. Now the Cross is raised before your eyes. Forget all all else in the wide world save that Cross and the Crucified. Shut out the world, shut out your griefs; forget your joys. Commune with your dying Redeemer, and with your own hearts and be still. Try to grasp it—to take it all in. It is no sad, beautiful legend, only, of a God-man laying down His life for sinful men. The same sun rises in the heaven to-day that shone upon that scene, and then hid his face from it. The

very spot, sacred to the heart of Christendom, loved by angels, remains to-day.

Kneel low before the Cross—it is for thee, O child of earth, that He suffers and dies!

Lord! Lord! What is this they are saying? What is this I hear? For me, Lord, for me? Yea, I know it, dear Lord, I know it. Often have I heard it, often have I confessed it. But never before have I realized it. For me! And wherefore, O dear Lord? What have I ever done for Thee? I have grieved Thee, hurt Thee, shamed Thee—denied Thee.

O, my Saviour, my heart aches now. How can I ever offend Thee again. Keep me close to Thee, "leave me not, neither forsake me" while life shall last, and when "Thou bid'st me come to Thee."

"Dying, let me still abide
 In Thy heart and wounded side."

Selected.

"THE CRUCIFIXION."

A MEDITATION ON THE SACRED PASSION OF THE HOLY REDEEMER, BY J. STANLEY, THE WORDS SELECTED AND WRITTEN BY THE REV. J. SPARROW SIMPSON.

It is arranged for two solo voices—tenor and bass—and chorus, interspersed with hymns to be sung by the choir and congregation. This is a first and a very successful attempt to supply an easy and short form of Passion music suitable for use in ordinary parish churches. It is about forty minutes in length, and suitable addresses, or brief instructions, could be introduced. It is quite within reach of most church choirs, while the choral provision for the congregation assures its acceptance with the people. The selection of hymns certainly might have been more suitable and felicitous, as the rhythmic movements are often rugged, and the third, No. 15, "The Mystery of Intercession," is almost, if not quite, beyond reach of satisfactory melodic interpretation. The second, No. 10, "Litany of the Passion," and the fourth, No. 15, "The Adoration of the Crucified," will be found quite up to the level of the composer's admirable conception. A study of the hymns and tunes presented will at once illustrate the choral impressiveness of the work.

These four are the best and sufficiently illustrate the scope of the hymns:

THE MYSTERY OF THE DIVINE HUMILIATION.

Cross of Jesus, Cross of Sorrow,
 Where the blood of Christ was shed,
 Perfect man on thee was tortured,
 Perfect God on thee has bled!
 Here the King of all the ages,
 Throned in light ere world's could be,
 Robed to mortal flesh is dying,
 Crucified by sin for me.
 O mysterious condescending
 O abandonment sublime
 Very God Himself is bearing
 All the sufferings of time!
 Evermore for human nature
 By His Passion we can plead:
 God has borne all mortal anguish,
 Surely He will know our need.

LITANY OF THE PASSION.

Holy Jesu, by Thy Passion,
 By the woes which none can share,
 Borne in more than kingly fashion,
 By Thy love love beyond compare:
 Crucified, I turn to Thee,
 Son of Mary, pray for me.
 By Thy look so sweet and lowly,
 While they smote Thee on the Face,
 By Thy patience, calm and holy,
 In the midst of keen disgrace:
 Crucified, I turn to Thee,
 Son of Mary, pray for me.
 By the path of sorrows dreary,
 By the Cross, Thy dreadful load,
 By the pain, when, faint and weary,
 Thou didst sink upon the road:
 Crucified, I turn to Thee,
 Son of Mary, pray for me.
 By the spirit which could render
 Love for hate and good for ill,
 By the mercy, sweet and tender,
 Poured upon Thy murderers still:
 Crucified, I turn to Thee,
 Son of Mary, pray for me.

St. John iii. 14-17.

THE ADORATION OF THE CRUCIFIED.

I adore Thee, I adore Thee!
 Glorious ere the world began;
 Yet more wonderful Thou shinest,
 Though divine, yet still divinest
 In Thy dying love for me.
 I adore Thee, I adore Thee!
 Thankful at Thy feet to be:
 I have heard Thy accent thrilling,
 Lo! I come, come, for Thou art willing
 Me to pardon, even me.
 I adore Thee, I adore Thee,
 Born of woman yet Divine,
 Stained with sins I kneel before Thee,
 Sweetest Jesu, I implore Thee,
 Make me ever only Thine.

St. Luke xviii. 39-43.

FOR THE LOVE OF JESUS.

All for Jesus— all for Jesus
 This our song shall ever be.
 For we have no hope nor Saviour
 If we have not hope in Thee.
 All for Jesus— Thou wilt give us
 Strength to serve Thee, hour by hour,
 None can move us from Thy presence,
 While we trust Thy love and power.
 All for Jesus—at Thine altar
 Thou wilt give us sweet content:
 There, dear Lord, we shall receive Thee
 In the solemn sacrament.
 All for Jesus—Thou hast loved us;
 All for Jesus—Thou hast died:
 All for Jesus—Thou art with us:
 All for Jesus Crucified,
 All for Jesus—all for Jesus—
 This the Church's song must be;
 Till, at last, her sons are gathered
 One in love, and one in Thee.

St. John xix. 28, 30.