

For the Second Week in Lent.

SAUL.

THE REPENTANCE OF POLICY.

"Then he said, I have sinned : yet honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel."—1 Sam. xv. 30.

When from the broad full blaze of dazzling noon,
Where floods of sunshine fill the glowing air,
Descending into subterraneous gloom,
By some dark crypt's abrupt and devious stair,
Chill'd is the heart, bewilder'd is the brain,
Confused with sudden night and anxious doubt ;
Unable through the maze to find again
The way of entrance, or the passage out :
Phantoms look forth from ev'ry lurking place ;
Reason grows weak :—death stares us in the face.

Thus royal Saul forsook the light divine
That beam'd so brightly on his youthful days,
And plung'd into the dim and tortuous mine
Of worldly policy's bewild'ring ways.
His soul, once bright with inspiration's fire,
Now has not even pure repentance torch ;