

The Church.

THEREFORE I WILL NOT BE NEGLIGENT TO PUT YOU ALWAYS IN REMEMBRANCE OF THESE THINGS, THOUGH YE KNOW THEM AND BE ESTABLISHED IN THE PRESENT TRUTH.—2 PETER, 1, 12.

VOL. I.]

COBOURG, U. C., SATURDAY, AUGUST 19, 1837.

[NO. X.]

Original Poetry.

Toronto, August 9th, 1837.

SIR:—Permit me to present to you as Editor of the Church the following lines;—they certainly cannot lay claim to any original merit, being merely a metrical paraphrase of a few of the beautiful thoughts which struck the writer in a sermon of the Rev. Mr. Grasset, delivered in St. James' Church on the last Sabbath.

"What man is he that liveth and shall not see death?"

Such was the subject of the discourse, especially illustrated by the demise of our late Sovereign.

There is mourning in the "free fair homes" of the British valleys now—

A voice of sadness on the ear—a shadow on the brow,
And gloom is o'er the hamlet hearths and the old baronial piles,
For death hath bowed their mightiest one—the Sovereign of the Isles!

Strange murmurs thro' the midnight air in hoarse dull echoes sweep,
As the chafing, on some far off shore, of the late awaken'd deep,
And a thousand torches wildly burst the gloom of the startled night,

As if some giant host were up—and arming for the fight!

Dark forms are passing thro' the shade in soft and muffled tread,
In the long array of a burial train—of the mourners for the dead;
Now veiled in night—now ghastly plain in the torches fitful glow,
And the drooping banners slowly waved in the light wind to and fro.

The island chivalry is near—the noblest and the brave,
Bearing along their mightiest one to the silence of the grave,
Where his warrior sire he monk-like kneels beneath that stately dome,
The Royal dead to his deep repose—the wanderer to his home!

Bear, bear him softly to his rest—tread lightly on your way,
Let not a voice of Earth be heard in the mourner's dark array,
For the nerveless form ye bear along in the tenure of the shroud,
Sate Kingly on the worshipp'd throne where yesterday ye bowed.

Cold is that hand whose sceptre sway'd the proudest realm of earth,
From the noble's old ancestral hall to the peasant's lowly hearth,
Whose word could bid the thunders boom o'er ocean's farthest wave,
And the war-shout of the isles be heard—the music of the brave!

They bear him to his Kingly rest, insensate, mouldering, cold,
As the lowliest of his vassal train, whose parting hour is told,
Turn to his dark but honor'd bier with sad revering eyes,
There sleeps "th' anointed of the Lord," there the fourth William lies!

Look on the dead, ye mighty ones! behold, ye warrior brave!
The regal pomp of kingly death, the splendor of the grave—
And as ye gaze, a rising voice your awe-chill'd hearts may hear,
From the shadow of the burial-vault, low breathing on the ear.

What speaks its stern-toned murmur now? of the might, the lordly power,
That shone upon the royal dead, in his proudest mortal hour—
Of the lofty throne that once was his—the diadem that bound him,
When the noblest of the land array'd their chivalry around him.

Is't of the fair and lordly realms that owned him for their King—
From the Huron's echoing forest-wilds to the Ganges' farthest spring—
Of the widest empire Earth hath spread, beneath th' o'erbending skies,
Where no slave can taint the breeze of heaven—where the sunlight never dies!

No vaunting murmur of the proud is in that sullen tone,
No echo of the worldly pomp, that man hath call'd his own;
Darkly upon the awe-struck ear a stern-voiced knell sweeps by—
"The mightiest one-hath stoop'd to earth—all—all are doom'd to die!"

"Where is the son of man whose strength can scoff at passing time,
Who knows no dimness on his hopes—no shadow on his prime—
To whom unbending fate hath given to find another doom
Than the common home of all his race, the chill and lonely tomb?"

"Ask of the past, if death were there?" 'twill point each heaving grave
Where sleep the myriads of the Earth—the despot and the slave;
Invoke the spirit of the years in Time's dark womb that lie,
And the hollow voice will mock thine ear "all worldly things must die!"

Each mourner by your monarch's bier! each proud aspiring heart!
Take one stern lesson from his fate, of *who*, of *what* thou art.
How soon each cold and barren tree, may hear the dooming sound
Of kindling wrath "Go out it down, why cumbereth it the ground!"

The torchlight glare is quenched in gloom—the mourner's long array,
With their banner'd pomp and stately step, slowly have pass'd away.
And the monarch of the isles hath found his earthly resting place,
In the silence of the burial vault, amid his mouldering race.

JUAN.

THE ENGLISH LAYMAN.

No. II.

ST. LAWRENCE'S DAY.—THE TENTH OF AUGUST.

"The memories of the saints are precious to God, and therefore they ought also to be so to us; and such persons who serve God by holy living, industrious preaching, and religious dying, ought to have their names preserved in honour, and God be glorified in them, and their holy doctrines and lives published and imitated; and we, by so doing, give testimony to the article of the communion of Saints."—*Bishop Jeremy Taylor.*

In the Calendar prefixed to the book of Common Prayer, will be found, under the date of August the 10th, the name of St. Lawrence. Previous to the Reformation, this day was kept as a festival in England, and it is now "retained in the Calendar out of that respect to established usage which marked the proceedings of those eminent men, by whom the Liturgy was settled. 'Our Reformers,' says Nicholls, in his paraphrase on the common prayer, 'having laid aside the celebration of a great many

martyrs' days, which had grown too numerous and cumbersome to the church, thought fit to retain All Saints' Day, wherein, by a general commemoration, our church gives God thanks for them all.'" So that St. Lawrence is one of those "blessed Saints," whom, in the Collect appointed for All Saints' Day, we pray to be enabled to follow "in all virtuous and godly living."

St. Lawrence, or Laurentius, a native of Spain, suffered martyrdom at Rome, A. D. 258, during the reign of the Emperor Valerian. He held the office of Deacon in the Christian church under the episcopate of Xystus, who was put to death in the very cemetery, in which he had disobeyed the imperial edict by offering up prayers to his God,—thus making the fifth Bishop of Rome, in succession, who had laid down his life for the faith, in the space of eight years. While this intrepid servant of Christ was hanging on the cross, the instrument of his torture, he saw Laurentius standing near weeping, and exhorting him to dry his tears, foretold that, within three days, his Deacon would be compelled to follow him.

Laurentius, by virtue of his office, was entrusted with the custody of the common fund, contributed by the primitive Christians for the relief of their indigent brethren. The Prefect of the city, suspecting that he held in his possession an immense sum of money, ordered him, with the severest threats in case of a refusal, to produce the treasures, the hidden wealth, the golden and silver sacrificial vessels, committed to his guardianship; adding the taunt, that it was a violation of his religion to render unto Caesar the things that were Caesar's. To this tyrannical mandate Laurentius mildly replied, that the church indeed abounded in riches greater than those possessed even by the Emperor himself, and promised to produce them, on being allowed a short time to prepare a catalogue of them, and an estimate of their total value. On this assurance, he was favourably dismissed, having previously engaged to deliver to the Prefect the treasures of the church at the end of three days.

In fulfilment of this promise, understood very differently by the contracting parties, the Deacon traversed the city, and gathered into one place the blind, the lame, the maimed, the diseased, and those who were supported by the alms of the Christian church. He then took down the name of each individual, and computed the whole number. When the given time had elapsed, the Prefect, burning with cupidity, hastened to the spot. Laurentius advanced to receive him; and, in a manner that reminds us of Phocion's mother displaying her children to the Athenian matron, with the exclamation, "these are my Jewels,"—pointed to the assemblage, with this remark, "Here are our treasures, here are the precious vessels that God has entrusted to our keeping." The Prefect, amazed and bewildered, pressed on to the vestibule of the temple, round which the crowd was gathered, and, as he was about to enter, was assailed by the deafening supplications of the needy multitude. The truth instantly flashed upon his mind, and, stung with disappointment and chagrin, he condemned the Deacon to a death of refined and protracted torment.

But Laurentius, who had anticipated the doom now pronounced against him, showed that he was not an unworthy soldier of "the noble army of martyrs." An unusual brightness, as in the case of Stephen, illuminated his countenance, and shone visible to the recent converts, who did not desert him in this trying moment. Fire, as usual, was the punishment and test of his faith. After one side had been entirely consumed, he cried out to the Prefect, from the agonizing machine on which he was stretched, "Now try the other side." His tormentor, goaded by this heroic endurance into a brutal jest, answered, "Your wish shall be gratified—try which is pleasantest to the taste, flesh raw, or flesh roasted." The Martyr, amid his sufferings, humbly followed the example of his Lord and Master, and in his dying accents prayed for the conversion of the city of Rome from her idolatrous superstitions to a knowledge of the true God, and, while interceding for his persecutors, was placed beyond the reach of their inhumanity. The heavenly courage, with which he passed through this last and harrowing trial, wrought powerfully on the minds of the inhabitants of Rome, and many of her most illustrious citizens, embraced the faith they had so recently contemned and persecuted. So great was the veneration, in which the memory of the sufferer was held, that it even degenerated into superstition. His name was impiously invoked in the same prayer with that of the Almighty—knees were bent at his tomb—and from this, and similar instances, arose that unscriptural reverence, which, in all Popish countries, has for so many ages been paid to the remains of Saints and Martyrs.*

Tradition,—most probably handed down from the early Christians, who kept a calendar, in which they registered all matters worthy of record,—has fixed the 10th of August, as the day on which Laurentius suffered martyrdom. It is also a day distinguished by the occurrence of several events, memorable in the history of the world, and still more especially in the annals of British North America. On the 10th of August 1535, Jacques Cartier, the French Navigator, "came, in the words of Hakluyt, to a 'goodly, great gulf, full of islands, passages, and entran-

* For this account of the martyrdom I am entirely indebted to a Latin hymn of Prudentius, a Christian Poet, who flourished about the year 352. Dr. Lempriere, in his Classical Dictionary, observes that "his poems are numerous and all theological, devoid of the elegance and purity of the Augustan age, and yet greatly valued." Bishop Horne, on the other hand, has introduced into one of his sermons, some lines from a hymn of Prudentius, addressed to a band of youthful martyrs, which he pronounces "elegant and beautiful." A very cursory perusal, however, of this Poet will satisfy the reader, that he was tainted with some of those superstitious innovations, which crept so early into the Christian Church.

ces towards what wind soever you please to bend.' In honor of the Saint, whose festival is celebrated on that day, Cartier gave the name of St. Lawrence to the gulf—or rather to a bay between Anticosti and the northern shore, whence the name was extended, in the course of time, not only to the whole of this celebrated gulf, but to the magnificent river of Canada, of which this is the embouchure." I trust that the Canadians will long be proud to enrol themselves under one or the other of the tutelar Saints of the Old Country; but should they ever determine on adopting a Saint of their own, no name seems so appropriate and time-honoured as that of St. Lawrence.

On the 10th of August 1557, was fought the celebrated battle of St. Quentin, in which the combined Spanish and English forces, under the Duke of Savoy, defeated the French, under the Constable de Montmorency: 3,000 of the latter, including the flower of the army, were left dead on the field, and the Constable himself, with 6,000 men, was compelled to surrender. In gratitude for this signal victory, Philip II. erected the Escorial in the neighbourhood of Madrid. To pay due honor to the Saint, whose anniversary had proved so auspicious to his arms, he ordered the building to be constructed in the shape of an inverted gridiron, the instrument on which Laurentius, in the Romish Legend, is reported to have been burned. This extraordinary pile well deserves the name of the eighth wonder, which the Spaniards have vainly bestowed on it. It consists of a Palace, a Monastery, and a Church; and the architect has represented the several bars of the gridiron, by piles of buildings, the handle by a portion of the Church, and the feet by four insignificant towers which rise at the corners. It has 1860 rooms, 13,000 windows and doors, 80 stair-cases, 73 fountains, 48 wine cellars, 8 organs, and 51 bells. It contains also, 1560 oil paintings; and the frescos, if all brought together, would form a square of 1100 feet. Its circumference is 4800 feet,—nearly a mile. In England also, there is a Church in that part of the city of London called Jewry, dedicated to St. Lawrence, which has a gridiron on the steeple for a vane.

We thus see, that three remarkable events of a very different character occurred on this anniversary,—a martyrdom—the discovery of a noble river—and a sanguinary battle. From the contemplation of the first, we may derive additional testimony to the truth of the faith we profess, and thankfulness, that we live in an age when neither the cross, nor the flame can tempt us to swerve from our God. To the second we owe it, that at this present moment, we dwell in a land, fertile in soil, free in government, and christian in religion. The third should lead us to reflect with gratitude, that war, with all its horrors has long been a stranger to this happy colony, and that, under Providence, the outstretched arm of Britain, and our own love of freedom, fostered by the constitution under which we live, promise to secure us a continuance of that inestimable national blessing,—peace without the sacrifice of honour.

And to conclude with an allusion to a bloody massacre, which had almost escaped my notice as having been perpetrated on this day,—let us not, when, in the words of our beautiful and stirring Litany, we pray to God to deliver us from "all sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion," forget his mercy in having so long defended us from these fearful scourges. On the 10th of August 1792, the faithful Swiss Guards of Louis XVI. to the number of 800, were massacred by Revolutionary fiends, and he, and his lion-hearted Queen, with difficulty escaping the same fate, threw themselves on the protection of that Assembly, by which they were afterwards murdered.

ALAN FAIRFORD.

Toronto, 1st August, 1837.

[Authorities from which the preceding article is compiled.—Companion to the British Almanac, 1830, p. 34—Dr. Burton's hist. of the Christ. Church, p. 373—Prudentius, Valpy's Delphin ed.—Hawkins' Picture of Quebec, p. 40—Mackintosh's hist. of England, II. 338—Saturday Magazine, VI.—Hones' Every Day Book, I. 1085.]

HORÆ BIBLICÆ.

No. v.

THE PATHETIC.—(CONTINUED.)

David's Lamentation over his son Absalom.

The narrative of David and his son Absalom presents us with an affecting instance of the pathetic, equal in feeling, though not drawn out to so great a length, as that which formed the subject of consideration in my last paper.

It will be remembered that Absalom, having been justly offended by his brother Amnon, had sought redress in a method the most unjustifiable, and had pursued the crime of his brother to the utmost limits of vengeance, by causing him to be murdered in cool blood, and in direct violation of all the rights of hospitality. In consequence of this he was banished by his father from Jerusalem, and after having lived some time in exile, was restored by the ingenious policy of Joab. The only requital which he made to the most indulgent of parents for this restoration of his forfeited enjoyments was, that he endeavoured, by all the arts of which he was master, to supplant his royal father in the affections of the people. He assumed great state, and possessing considerable personal attractions, he industriously made use of these, to render himself popular at the expense of his aged parent. He placed himself in the way leading to the gate at which justice was administered, and enquired into the causes which were about to be brought forward; and, in order to produce dissatisfaction with the administration, said to those who were coming for justice, "see thy matters are good and right: but there is no