

Poetry.

"Miscerarius ab incho meo, ut salubris amaritudo salutem dare tunc possit, cum immaximo temperata dulcore bibi poterat." — *i. e.* planiora soremoris meo meo Beneficiorum Dei, cum dolore pro peccatis —

S. Bernardi, 8^o per. Cantic. Cantic. Ser. LX

Bring tears, we need them all to mourn
Our sinful life with sorrow deep,
For ah! the past can ne'er return,
What have we left to do but weep!

To fast, to sigh with lonely wail,
Meekly to nurse a contrite heart,—
To bid the voice of mirth be mute,
To watch, and wake, and live apart.

Gladly to welcome malice, spite,
The railing tongue—as all deserved—
To bow to persecution's night,
For rack, and death in horror nerve'd.

Such is the life that we should lead,
From early youth to latest old,
Who have in word, or thought or deed,
Proudly with open front rebell'd.

Yet happily it is well, the while
The long and bitter cup we drain,
At times to raise a chaste'n'd smile,
E'er we look down to weep again!

To lift to God a grateful eye,
For all His hidden love so vast,
With honeyed gratitude to fly
The over worn wood of the past.

With watery eye to look above,
And watch hope's arc of brilliant light,
By crystal streams to show thy love,
The while ye nurse a heart contrite.

Thus mingled shall our souls advance
In strength, and temper'd hope, and fear;
Thus may we meekly wait death's trance,
To wake in love's whole atmosphere!

LENT.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF THE VIS-COUNT DE WALSH.

When the inclement severities of winter have passed by, but before the mild warmth of spring has shed its balmy influence, when societies in cities begins to grow tired of the noisy and barren pleasures which have agitated it during the season of frost and snow, of a sudden a death silence pervades each town; folly, with its remarks and its senseless shouts, its balls and its cavalcades, its disgusting saturnalia, and its impious childlessness, becomes mute.

And what is it that has thus so suddenly restored reason to the crowds who before appeared attacked by a vertigo?—Religion. She has scattered a few ashes on all those heads which were smitten with delirium, and now they have become calm; those men who were now but more boisterous in their mirth, have heard a voice issuing from the sanctuary, and which cried to them, "Man, remember that thou art but dust, and that unto dust thou must return."

This memento, given by the Church, has been the remedy to the strange madness of the crowd. Ash Wednesday has opened the whole forty days, and the days of fasting and the days of prayer, of retirement and of mortification, have commenced. He who shall now remain in ignorance, he who shall not shake off the shadows of death, by which he was surrounded, will indeed be culpable; for religion, the mother of all mankind, offers on all sides her succor and her instruction, her peace and consolation.

See all those churches, their portals are thrown widely open. Look at those altars, tapers are burning, and incense ascends from them. Listen beneath those vaulted cells, and you will hear the priests of the God of mercy, inviting you to repentance, and announcing his forgiveness.

During the season of folly and of riot, we have all, more or less, tasted of worldly pleasure. Well, then? the day being ended, its labors and its business having ceased, now that our churches are so beautiful, so inspiring, with the last rays of daylight fading from their stained glass windows, let us enter them and see whether the priests speak truly, let us see whether the yoke of the Lord be really easy. Should there still be noise without it will not reach those who are assembled within the church, or it will be weakened and deadened. Those distant noises are lost amid the chanting of the hymns, with the faithful singing in chorus, while waiting for their priest, when, by the light of lamps, he appears in the pulpit, after the invitation, "Holy Spirit descend upon us." The attentive crowd then take their seats. Then, they in fact appear like one large family, assembled in the mansion of their Father; then, the word of the minister of the Gospel can fall with power upon that multi-

tude, prepared, by prayer and fasting, to receive them. They are the well ploughed field, prepared to receive good seed.

Oh! great and sublime subjects are not wanting to the preacher, during the forty days of preaching. Never did profane eloquence have such an arena opened to it, the expanse through which the preacher may lead his flock is infinite; his time is all eternity. Look at the gallery of pictures he presents,—the earth, hell, heaven, repentance, penitence, mercy, virtue, death!—What holy inspirations! all those of the ancient Prophets.—What consolation to bestow! all those of the Gospel.—The majestic power of Jehovah, amid the thunder and the lightning, dictating his laws from Mount Sinai! the touching tenderness of Jesus, blessing little children! Agar in the desert, Joseph sold by his brothers; Tobias accompanying the Angel; the Maccabees defending their country, the Divine Son of the Virgin consoling the afflicted, healing the sick, giving life to the dead, the people listening to the parables of the Saviour, and weeping at that of the prodigal son; such are the subjects with which the preacher can move the hearts of the crowd who flock to hear him; and if we leave them cold and unmoved, they must indeed be hardened, or he must have remained poor while surrounded by such riches.

Ash Wednesday has, like all days of penitence, lost much of its austerity. In former days, says the historian of the Festivals of the Church, this day was selected to expose in public penitence those sinners who were to be received and reconciled, or to partake the communion with the faithful on Easter Sunday, the priests, first of all, heard their confession, and covered them afterwards with a shirt of haircloth or a sack, then threw ashes upon their heads, sprinkled them with holy water, and recited to them, accompanied by all the clergy, the seven penitential psalms.

On the return of the procession, they made them walk barefooted, then drove them from the church with a crosier, and they were not again received into it until *Holy Thursday*. During the time that they were conducting them to the door of the temple, to drive them from it, the priests sang the words which God pronounced against Adam and Eve, when he expelled them from the terrestrial paradise. The door was then shut against them, and the Mass of the faithful was then commenced.

During the whole of Lent, in towns as well as in the country, in the vast cathedrals of the cities as in the humble churches of the hamlets, the words of the Gospel continually are heard; God holds his court of forgiving mercy, and all those who stand in need of pardon, may then present themselves.

The Church has assumed its world colored ornament, and flowers are no longer seen upon its altars; veils envelope the form of Christ, and the images of the saints; and when the evening sermon is concluded, it is the holy pyx which the priest takes from the tabernacle, wherewith to bless the kneeling faithful.

The *Miserere*, the *Parce Domine populo tuo* have taken the place of hymns of joy, and the greater part of those Christians who have come to listen to the word of God, have from early morning obeyed one of his commandments; they have observed the part ordered by the Church; until noon, they have taken no description of food, and unless they have given alms to the poor, to entitle them to a dispensation, they must abstain from meat during the whole of the forty days of penitence, and it is only in the evening, long after the sun has set, that they may seat themselves and partake of a frugal collation.

The origin of Fasting goes back to a very remote age, fasting is of almost as ancient date as grief. Abraham, weeping for Sarah, Jacob, weeping for Joseph, mingled fasting with their regrets and prayers. Since the time of Moses, Fasts are frequent among the Jews, but as to the Fasts which are now read in their Calendar, they are posterior to the law. The legislator of the Hebrews does not in his books order any particular Fast, excepting the Fast of *Solemn Expiation*, which is strictly and generally observed. Joshua and the elders of Israel remained prostrate before the ark, from morning until evening, without taking food. After the defeat of the Israelites before Ai, the eleven tribes, which had taken arms against that of Benjamin seeing that they could not stand against the soldiers of their enemies, prostrated themselves before the ark, and remained there without eating until nightfall. David fasted during the illness

of the first born son he had by Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah. In all countries men in their days of trouble and terror and grief have felt the necessity of imposing upon themselves privations, in order to avert the scourges or the sorrows by which they were threatened to be overwhelmed, and for long ages past, in order to arrest misfortune, man has raised his supplicating voice to God, and has placed his tears and the pleasures he has sacrificed between himself and the adversities which threatened him.

Lent is a commemoration of the fasting of our Lord, when he remained in the desert for forty days and nights. He, who had never sinned, had no reason to perform penance; but he had come to teach men to mortify their passions, and it was his will that each act of his life should be to them a model, an example for them to imitate. Therefore solitude, retirement, silence, and the throwing aside of worldly affairs, temperance and sobriety, were good things to teach mankind. Amid the noise, the turmoil, the agitations of society, there is but little room for grave and pious thoughts; the inspirations which elevate the soul come not from the public squares. Elijah was in the desert when the Spirit of the Lord caused him to ascend the chariot of fire. Solitude and silence do not resemble death—in them there is a whole life for the mind. It might be thought that God has permitted angels to remain in the desert to commune with the saints who retire there to seek repose.

When from the public walks of our cities we gaze upon the vault of heaven, sparkling with innumerable stars; when we enjoy the calmness which night and sleep have cast upon the busy haunts of man, our soul feels itself already unfettered from many of those bonds which attach it to the interest of the world. In the desert that seeling is much stronger, and the wings which raise us towards heaven, there spread themselves more freely. There if you hear some murmuring noises, it is the wind moaning through the trees—it is a torrent which is roaring in the distance; these noises are far more soul inspiring than the measured steps of the patrol taking its nightly rounds, or the obscene songs of drunkards expelled from some low taverns.

The soft and plaintive sound proceeding from the waving sound of the palm tree or the cedar, seem to you like the voices of friends whom you have lost, and who bewail your fate because your soul has not yet joined theirs. The noise of the torrent which you hear reminds you of the stormy scenes of life; your days are as the waves, they pass on hurriedly and can never return.

This truce which is ordained during Lent,—this alienation from the business and pleasures of life—this absence from festive meetings, is, therefore, good and salutary. Men living in the world, we all know the alluring attractions of the seasons of banquets and of balls; but it is with sincerity we now ask: Is it around the festive table—is it amid the throng of an assembly, that great thoughts flash upon our minds? No, we must give to every thing its due. The noisy tumult of the world, which is not without its charm, has a stunning effect upon the senses, and sometimes occasions us, momentarily, to forget our sorrows. Retirement bestows peace and holy enthusiasm; the one intoxicates, the other exalts.

In order to reach the great week, that week of suffering to the Son of God, Lent is a holy preparation. To celebrate Easter duly, we should be pure; we should put on our sandals, and take our pilgrim's staff; we should be prepared for our long journey. The instruction we receive during the forty days, teaches us that death delights in surprising men in the midst of gay festivities; and that he takes pleasure in coming like a thief in the night, to strike the heads that are crowned with diamonds and with flowers.

Religion incessantly cries out to us—"In order to keep Easter as it should be kept, you must not sit down quietly; you must be watchful, and break off from those pleasures which enervate and delay you. The Christian is a traveller; the earth is not his resting place; he should consider it but as a hostelry, which he leaves after having slept in it, or as a tent which he has planted on the road side, and which he folds up and carries off when the night is spent. We must not praise before we have reached the habitation of our father. And the habitation of our father is in heaven! And this is said, is repeated every morning and evening to Christians who come to meditate, to recruit their strength, and to obtain repose within our churches during the forty days of fasting, of prayer, and meditation. If philosophism, or rather that which in our days

is called rationalism, succeeded in giving to society those manners which it has dreamed of in its visionary ideas of perfectibility and progress, the whole year would be similar, and would possess none of those varied aspects which religion has given to it, every month, every day would be like the preceding one; there would be no festival of holy gladness, no mournful solemnities. The year from the commencement to the end, would be like a flat and monotonous country, without effects of either light or shade.

Religion is a better appreciate that which is best fitting for mankind. He knows that to our light and inconstant nature, diversity is necessary, and has accordingly bestrewn it over the Christian year.

In former days, nothing could be more striking in Catholic countries, than the advent of Lent after the series of joyous festivals of Christmas, New Year's day, Twelfth night, and Candlemas. On Ash Wednesday, society at once assumed a widely different aspect, in the towns there was no longer the same noises, the crowd bore a totally different appearance; there were no mountebanks or jugglers in the streets, but in their stead, congregations of penitents and pilgrims.—The gay songs were hushed, nor was there any dancing in the evening; but pious hymns were sung before the statues of the Virgin, or the tutelary saint of the parish. In the houses no joyous feasts, but repasts which from their frugality called to mind the love-feasts of the primitive Christians—and therefore was there among the fervently faithful the most eager impatience for the arrival of that magnificent Easter day, when all should again sing Hallelujah! Then, that sweet hilarity, the daughter of innocence and peace returned to the lawn and fields, to the presbyteries, and to the mansions, and our forefathers who had fasted with submission, broke their fast with gladness.

RELIGION IN PARIS.

In regard to religion itself, one of the most striking features of this Revolution is the universal respect shown to the Churches and to the Priests whilst the infuriated mob ransacked the Tuileries, a few persons managed to secure the Crucifix and the Hosts in the chapel. A youth bearing the polytechnical uniform took the latter in his hands, whilst the former was borne by another person, and the multitude accompanied both bareheaded and in a sort of procession to the neighbouring parish Church. At the house of the Jesuits, yea, at the house of the Jesuits, the people after visiting the establishment came to the chapel, where their leader bade them to respect the sanctity of the place and to kneel down before God. And the people knelt down, and after adoring their God, they came out in peace. This, I have from the Jesuit who accompanied him. The Abbe Desgenettes was begged, through the intermedium of his now revolutionary mayor, to reopen his Church, a thing which he had done as early as Friday last, and as the venerable Cure passed along through files of armed men in order to pay a visit to the new mayor, they spontaneously opened to make room for him, and he was greeted with many a friendly salutation. This, also, I have from himself. Priests passed and repassed through the barricades in their sacerdotal dress, and some were openly cheered by the people, whilst more encountered no insult. I should never end were I to produce the numerous examples of respect shown to the religious establishments and persons.

If you add to this that the Christian Brothers are now again seen in the streets at the head of their schools; that Nuns and Sisters of Charity do not fear to go about upon their usual duties, you will acknowledge that never was a more extraordinary revolution accomplished in so short a time.—*Correspondent of the Tablet.*

Died.

April 1—Mary Ann, daughter of Patrick and Mary Vaughan, native of Cork, Ireland, aged 6 years. 6—William Cashen, Private of 23d regt, native of Ireland, aged 34 years. 7—Bridget, daughter of Mr & Mrs Walsh, aged 25 years. 11—Thomas, infant son of Thos & Ellen Gorman, aged 12 months and 15 days; Thos Gilh, native of Galway, Ireland, aged 42 years; William Burns, native of Halifax, aged 24 years.

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