

## POETRY.

From the "Christian Keepsake, and Missionary Annual,"  
for 1837.

## PRAYER FOR MISSIONS.

Recommended to the Young.

NIGHT wraps the realm where Jesus woke,  
No guiding star the magi see,  
And heavy hangs oppression's yoke,  
Where first the Gospel said, "be free."

And where the harps of angels bore  
High message to the shepherd-throng,  
"Good-will and peace," are heard no more  
To murmur Bethlehem's vales along.

Swarth India, with her idol-train,  
Bends low by Ganges' worshipp'd tide,  
Or drowns the Suttee's shriek of pain  
With thundering gong and pagan pride.

On Persia's hills the Sophi grope;  
Dark Burmah greets salvation's ray;  
Even jealous China's door of hope  
Unbars, to give the Gospel way.

Old ocean, with his isles awakes,  
Cold Greenland feels unwonted flame,  
And humble Afric wondering takes  
On her sad lips a Saviour's name.

Their steps the forest-children stay;  
Bound to oblivion's voiceless shore,  
And lift their red brows to the day,  
Which from the opening skies doth pour.

Oh! aid with prayer that holy light,  
Which from eternal death can save,  
And bid Christ's herald speed their flight,  
Ere millions find a hopeless grave.

Kneel, while unsullied youth doth glow  
Resplendent on the blooming cheek,  
And for the climes of heathen wo,  
A blest Redeemer's favour seek.

Blend sweetly with the classic page,  
The love of heaven, sublime and fair,  
So beauty's brow, though dim with age,  
The lustre of the soul shall wear.

L. H. S.

## THE DEATH OF THE LAST CHILD.

By the Rev. THOMAS DALE, A. M.

(From the Christian Keepsake.)

Farewell, my young blossom!  
The fairest, the fleetest:  
The pride of my bosom,  
The last—and the sweetest!  
On thee my heart center'd  
All hopes earth could cherish:  
The spoiler hath entered,  
And thou, too, must perish!

I see thy bloom wasting,  
And cannot restore it;  
The end now is hastening—  
'Tis vain to deplore it.  
Could prayers detain thee,  
As pale thou art lying,  
I would not enchain thee  
To live ever-dying!

To linger—to languish—  
That life may be sorrow:  
Through the night pain and anguish,  
No rest on the morrow.  
Oh, soon may deep slumber  
In mercy steal o'er thee!  
Earth can but encumber,  
And Heaven is before thee!

O loveliest!—O dearest!  
When anguish oppressed thee  
My arm still was nearest,  
My prayer still hath blessed thee  
But now all is ended:  
How welcome that sighing!  
My prayer hath ascended,  
'Tis heard!—She is dying!

My God! I adore Thee!

Receive the freed spirit  
In gladness before Thee,  
A crown to inherit;  
Take the gem that Thou gavest;  
Take the flower Thou dost sever;  
Take the soul that Thou savest:—  
It is Thine—and for ever!

From the Boston Recorder.

## HYMN FOR SICKNESS.

This life, with all its thousand ties,  
Is but a loan from thee,  
Our God, whose goodness gilds the skies,  
Whose power controls the sea.

Thine are its early joys, that spring,  
Like flowers, where'er we tread,  
And thine, its later comforts too,  
When brighter hopes are fled.

Thou Maker of this curious frame,  
Who know'st its every pain,  
And bid'st its broken wheels roll on  
When man's weak help is vain.

Still plainly as thy might is seen,  
Thy blest compassions shine,  
So would we peaceful rest our souls  
Upon thine arm divine.

And clinging to our Saviour's cross,  
Supported by his love,  
Pass through this changeable life below,  
To deathless life above.

From LITURGICA, by Rev. John Ayre, A. M.

## THE BURIAL SERVICE.

Some of the objections most frequently urged against the ritual of the English church, are made to her occasional offices. In the burial service, for instance it is often asserted that the minister pronounces the salvation of the deceased certain, even though his preceding life may have been unchristian, and his character notorious: 'we therefore commit his body to the ground...in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life.' Now though indisputably the church intended to use the language of charity respecting those whose bodies she thus consigns to the grave, yet it is most clear that she never meant to affirm of every man that he will rise to eternal life. The words are 'in sure, &c. of the resurrection,'—the resurrection generally, not necessarily that of particular individuals. But the question is incontrovertibly settled by the fact, that at the last review the sentence was changed: it formerly stood 'in sure and certain hope of resurrection to eternal life;' an alteration was made, and the article 'the' was inserted, *on purpose* to shew that the sense is general, as I have explained it.

The expressions of the burial service may be defended upon solid grounds: the real objection, therefore, is only that many hearers are not acquainted with the explanation, and may misunderstand them. But as it has been acknowledged by a writer who wishes them altered, 'it is far more easy to see the difficulty, than to remedy it. Shall we have a neutral form which says nothing? or, shall we have one form for believers, and another for the wicked, leaving each clergyman to make his choice between them? This is a responsibility which no clergyman would dare to be charged with. The alteration, or omission of a very few words, would, however, in this instance, ease the minds of many; though, when these words are altered, the service, *as a whole*, still supposes the departed person a true servant of Christ, and therefore, in its spirit, is inapplicable to the case of the wicked. The question goes to the structure of all our services, and must be looked at, and dealt with, as a whole.'

The objection against the burial, and other services of the established church, is simply that the church assumes the sincerity of the worshippers. It is easy

to say, that the fact is otherwise, and that charity, unsupported by fact, is misplaced: it is not easy— it is hardly possible—to say, on what other principle public prayer can be offered. The prayers of dissenters are obliged to rest on exactly the same basis. I refer, in illustration of this point, to an anecdote related in the memoir of Legh Richmond. That venerated clergyman was present, in a private family, when the late Mr. A. Fuller, a leading dissenter of his day, who had objected on the ground I have mentioned, to the service-book, offered up a prayer. Mr. R. afterwards addressed him—'Your prayer is liable to the same objection which you make to the services of our church. Your petitions for pardon and grace, your acknowledgment of guilt, your hope and confidence in God, were all generally offered up, without qualification, as expressive of the feelings and sentiments of the whole assembly.' 'How would you have me pray?' 'Precisely as you did, but you must no longer adhere to your objection: for you were not warranted to believe, except in the judgment of charity, that all the members of the family were sincere worshippers. You have this night authorized the principle, on which our services were constructed, by your example. So long as an individual is not removed by the sentence of a competent tribunal, from the communion of the church, he must be admitted a partaker of all the outward privileges of the faithful. It might perhaps be well to draw the reins of ecclesiastical discipline tighter: it would not be well to lower the services of the church to the standard of the world.'

*Practical sarcasm.*—One of the most ingenious practical sarcasms ever made use of, was that of the late Rev. Robert Hall, addressed to a clergyman who had obtained a lucrative living after a change of religious opinions. Mr. Hall pressed him hard upon the question of church reform. The gentleman's constant answer to the arguments addressed to him, was, 'I can't see it,' 'I don't see it,' 'I can't see that at all.' At last Mr. Hall took a letter from his pocket, and wrote on the back of it, with his pencil in small letters, the word 'God.' 'Do you see that?' 'Yes.' He then covered it with a piece of gold. 'Do you see it now?' 'No.' 'I must wish you good morning, sir,' said Hall, and left him to his meditations.

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