

RELIGIOUS MISCELLANY.

PURGATORY.*

Opposed to Scripture.

And before him (the Son of Man), shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left; then shall the King say to them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: Matt. xxv. 32, 34.—Then shall he say to them on his left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: Matt. xxv. 41.—He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.—He that believeth not shall be damned: Mark xvi. 16.—Between us and you there is a great gulph fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence: Luke xvi. 26.—And Jesus said unto him (the thief on the cross), Verily, I say unto thee, this day shalt thou be with me in Paradise: Luke xxii. 43.—The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin: John i. 7.—Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours: Rev. xiv. 13.

Opposed to the Fathers.

The Bishops assembled at the Council of Aquisgranum, write, "The sins of men are punished three ways, two in this life, and the third in the life to come. Of these two, the apostle says, if we would judge ourselves we should not be judged of the Lord; this is the punishment wherewith every sinner (by the inspiration of God) by repenting for his offences, executes vengeance upon himself. But when the same Apostle afterwards says, when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world; this is the punishment which Almighty God doth mercifully inflict upon a sinner, according to that saying, whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son that he receiveth. But the third is very fearful and terrible, which by the righteous judgment of God shall be executed, not in this world, but in that which is to come, when the last Judge shall say, depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire: *Capit. Aquisgranum Concil. ad. Pi. Mss. lib. i. cap. 1.*—When the soul departeth, which cannot be seen with carnal eyes, it is received by the angels, and placed within the bosom of Abraham, if it be faithful, or in the custody of the prison of hell, if it be sinful, until the day appointed come, wherein it is to receive the body, and render an account of the works thereof, at the tribunal of Christ the true Judge: *Serm. 2, de Consolat. Matior Eligius Noviomensis.*—A purgatory fire, and a punishment by fire, which is temporal, and shall terminate in the end, we have neither received from our doctors, nor do we know that the Church in the East maintain it: *Apology of Greeks to the Council of Basil, A. D. 1438.*

Error when Introduced.

Fisher, the Jesuit, admits, that this doctrine was introduced into the Church by little and little. Gregory I, the pious and exemplary Bishop of Rome, was the first who (unconsciously) made a step towards its adoption. Believing the end of the world to have been then near (he died 640), he construed some passages, which relate to the Gentile opposers of Christ's Kingdom at the time of the end, as inferring that some souls, for the punishment of their light offences, were confined and tortured in some deep places of the earth. This was an idea very far removed from that now entertained respecting purgatory: slight penances are now rendered sufficient for light faults, which were supposed to have been punishable in the Gregorian Purgatory. Thomas Aquinas, and other friars after him, first fashioned and moulded Purgatory into its present shape in the thirteenth century. No trace of the doctrine is found in the Eastern Churches, which have continued in regular succession from the Apostles, and it was publicly disavowed by the Greek Church.

PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD.

Opposed to Scripture.

Whatspever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest: Eccles. ix. 10.—Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near, let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon: Isaiah lv. 6, 7.—Behold! now is the accepted time; behold! now is the day of salvation: 2 Cor. vi. 2.

Opposed to the Fathers.

Infidels and wicked men departed out of this life, are no more to be prayed for than the devil and his angels, which were appointed into everlasting punishment: *St. Gregory Moral. in Job. lib. 34, cap. 16. et Dial. lib. iv. cap. 44.*—Erius accused the Church of this error, though it was only partially held, and that by few, asking for what reason do you commemorate the names of those that are departed?—He that is alive prayeth—what shall the dead, be profited hereby? If the prayers of those here, can profit those that be there, then let no man be godly—let him be prayed for after death, and his sins will not be required: *Erius apud Epiphanius, p. 386.*—To this, Epiphanius, the Church's apologist replied, and admitted that it can do the departed no good: but maintains that it testifies the faith of the survivors, proving them to believe that they who are departed do live, and are not extinguished, but are still living and being with the Lord.—Again, he considers it useful, as tending to the glory of Christ, who, being in the full perfection of glory and bliss, is prayed to for the just, fathers, prophets, evangelists, apostles, &c., that at the resurrection their purified bodies might be reunited to their souls.—This kind of prayer for the dead, which Epiphanius thus advocated, widely differs from that used by the Romanists.—His was for those who are freed from sin, theirs for those who are now suffering for sin.

Error when Introduced.

In the year 993, a pilgrim, entertained by an anchorite in Sicily, was so terrified by an eruption of the volcanic mountain, that his imagination led him to the conclusion that he heard the groans of the damned.—His report caused the Abbot Odilo, without any pretence of a Scriptural warrant, and merely on his own authority, to appoint a solemnity to be observed, on the day following that of All Saints, for the souls of the departed in torment. A measure, says Peter Damianus, so effectual, that the devils complained they were robbed of the souls of the damned (not merely of those in Purgatory—that would have been a trifle, but of the damned), by the alms and prayers of Odilo.—Before this time, the deaths of the martyrs were celebrated, as also of the faithful deceased; when thanksgivings were offered to God for their salvation, and prayers made, that they might have a part in the blessings of the first resurrection. This was done, because it was argued the blessing was not yet obtained, though certain, and that God requires us to pray for what he designs to do. No instance occurs, during this period, of prayer made for souls in suffering.

Question.—Are Protestants in the wrong for the rejection of the above as articles of Faith? Or are Romanists in the wrong for their adoption of them as such? Whichsoever of them be in the wrong, "let them fear the woe allotted to such as add to, or take away:" See *Tertul. ad Hermogenem.*—To be continued.

Archbishop Williams once said to a friend of his, "I have passed through many places of honour and trust, both in church and state, more than any of my order in England these seventy years back; yet were I but assured that by my preaching I had but converted one soul to God, I should take therein more spiritual joy and comfort, than in all the honour and offices which have been bestowed upon me."—Anon.

EASTERN SHORE OF NOVA SCOTIA.*

That portion of the Eastern Shore, which is least known in the province, lies between the mouth of Musquodoboit River, and the Harbour of Marie Joseph, and comprehends a great many small bays and inlets, including Jeddore Harbour, Ship Harbour, Sheet Harbour, and several other commodious havens. It is a dreary region, thinly inhabited, without roads or bridges, and possessing very little to attract the eye of the traveller, except rugged rocks, the green woods and the dark blue sea, with occasionally a small boat skimming its surface, or a larger vessel ploughing the deep.

The population may be roughly estimated at 1600 souls. They have 68 decked vessels, some of which go to the West Indies, and double that number of good whale boats, employed in the shore fishery. They have about 150 pair of working oxen, but few if any horses, to the use of which the country is not adapted. With the exception of a few old people, the inhabitants of this part of the coast, are all country born, and chiefly natives of this rugged, sea-beaten shore. Their original employment was carrying cord wood to Halifax, but the fine hard wood with which their hills were formerly covered, has nearly all disappeared, and they now seek support for their families and themselves, partly by a small coasting trade partly by ship building, and partly by fishing and farming. They are a humane, honest, hospitable people, and not much inferior in moral worth, to their more showy neighbours in Halifax, Musquodoboit, and other parts of the province. Their greatest defect, one incident to their situation and circumstances, and therefore rather their misfortune than their fault, is the want of education. Many of their young men grow up without any information, but what nature teaches, and the very scanty instruction their parents may be capable of imparting. Their schools are few in number, in most cases recently established, far distant from each other, and sadly deficient in the machinery for conducting the business of education.

They are also very partially supplied with religious instruction, and have never enjoyed the labours of a stated clergyman. They hear the murmurs of the ocean, as its surges beat upon their rock encircled shore, and the moaning of the blast amid the trees of the forest; but they seldom hear the voice of the missionary of salvation. Some years ago when the Rev. John Burnyeat visited Ship Harbour, and commenced public worship, for the first time, in that place, the master of the house, in which the service was conducted, being from home, accidentally returned at the time of the dismissal of the congregation. The sight threw him into great alarm. He supposed there was a funeral in his house, that being the only occasion on which the people were in the habit of assembling together on one spot. But a great change for the better has since taken place throughout the district; and they have already erected places for the worship of God in Musquodoboit harbour, in Jeddore, in Ship Harbour, in Pope's Harbour, and in Sheet Harbour, where small congregations are now regularly organised. In all these churches they assemble for divine service on the sabbath, not only when a travelling missionary visits them, but also upon other occasions; and their meetings are marked and their services conducted, with a decorum and solemnity becoming their profession. In many of the harbours, they have a leaning to Episcopacy; and in most places the prayer book is used, even among the adherents of the Presbyterian Church.

Of late the Eastern Shore has been occasionally visited, by ministers of different denominations, whose services are highly prized and gratefully acknowledged.

Among the number of those zealous and devoted missionaries who have travelled through this neglected district, probably the highest praise should be awarded to the Rev. John Stevenson, of King's College, Windsor. This distinguished scholar often relinquishes his scientific pursuits, for the noble work of preaching the gospel in the scattered villages of the Eastern Shore. I have frequently known him travel through the woods on foot, in the month of July, with his knapsack on his back, under the full

* From a letter in the Halifax "Guardian" by Rev. J. Spratt.

* From the Church Magazine.