

tive and fuller, until at last, in the private absolution when the conscience most felt its burden and had laid it down at the feet of her Lord, the priest thus spoke:—"By His authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Nor could here be any question of freeing from the censures of the Church, or restoring to communion, from which among ourselves none were in practice shut out who did not shut out themselves; it was a private act between the sinner's soul and God in the presence of the priest. And parochial ministers were bound to invite their people to open their grief, not in sickness only, but before the holy communion, if they could not quiet their own consciences, that they might receive the benefit of absolution. In visiting the sick man, he was not to be waited for, 'but moved to make a special confession of his sins,' and then 'if he humbly and heartily desired it,' absolved by the authority conveyed to the priest in the words in which it was given by our Lord to his apostles. All this doctrine of our Church as to absolution was the more solemn as being embodied in acts in the name of Almighty God himself, in his daily worship, at the holy communion, or in silent preparation for it; and when the soul was approaching its last conflict, in that moment which summed up all the past and decided eternity, when after the deep confession one voice alone was heard, the rest in silence receiving it, the penitent awaiting with intense earnest longings those words of awful comfort which the Church commissioned her priest to pronounce—this might well make us think more deeply how very serious a doctrine it was which was so imparted. But our Church also bore witness to a further, and in some sense more awful and more painful part of the doctrine of the keys—the power not to loose only, but to bind; not to remit only, but to retain sin. She yearly expressed her sorrow at the loss of the 'godly discipline, whereby persons who stood convicted of notorious sin were put to open penance and punished in this world, that their souls might be saved in the day of the Lord;' and in her articles she spoke of such as 'being cut off from the unity of the Church, were to be taken as heathens, until they be openly reconciled by penance.' But this whole subject of discipline did not belong to him (the preacher,) nor need he speak of that power of 'binding,' which in our Church, equally with that of loosing, was conferred on her priests, since such power was to be exercised only towards the impenitent, and his office was chiefly with the penitent, whose consciences were oppressed by the memory of past sin, and who longed to know how they might be replaced in that condition in which God once placed them. Probably one ground why so little needed to be said in the New Testament as to the forgiveness of sins of a Christian very grievously fallen, was that our Lord had left a living provision in His church, whereby the penitent, however fall-

en, should be restored. And in healthful times, when discipline was observed, and people were in earnest about their souls, and felt the pressure of their sins, and the darkness of the absence of Divine grace, the forgiveness of sins was seen, and witnessed, and felt, and shone forth in the renewed health and life of the soul, whose restoration was furthered by the Church's love and prayers. The penitent then saw the oppressed set free, and knew that his own chain of evil habits might be loosed; the Church could give account of the source of her power, appealing to the commission given her by her Divine Lord, and the workings of that power were the pledge of it to all; saying to the lame by the decrepitude of sin, 'Walk,' and 'run in the way of God's commandments;' and to the leper, 'Wash in Siloam (him who is sent), and let thy flesh come again as that of a little child.' She showed that she was clad with the power of her Lord, and no one needed to ask, 'By what authority doest thou these things?'

Concluded in our next.

BIRTHS RECORDED.

AT ST. MARY'S.

- MARCH 18—Mrs. Mary Hogan, of a Son.
 " Mrs. Mary Maher, of a Son.
 " Mrs. Priscilla Lane, of a Son.
 " Mrs. Mary Donovan, of a Son.
 19—Mrs. Jean Tobin, of a Son.
 21—Mrs. Mary Dereen, of a Daughter.
 " Mrs. Ellen Carey, of a Daughter.
 " Mrs. Mary Morrissey, of a Son.
 " Mrs. Honora Hutcheson, of a Daughter.
 24 Mrs. Catherine Bell, of a Daughter.
 25—Mrs. Elizabeth Fitzgerald, of a Son.
 26—Mrs. Anne Regan, of a Daughter.
 " Mrs. Margaret Power, of a Son.

INTERMENTS.

AT THE CEMETERY OF THE HOLY CROSS.

- MARCH 24—Frances, daughter of Samuel and Mary Adams, aged 1 year and 8 months.
 " Margaret, daughter of William and Catherine O'Brien, aged 9 months.
 26—Mary, daughter of Michael and Johanna O'Brien, aged 3 years and 8 months.

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