

THE BAPTISM OF THE PRINCE OF WALES.

On the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul. 25th January, 1842.

Our Mother Church hath bid us keep
 A festival to-day
 In memory of the time when first
 From sun-lit heavens the glory burst.
 The zealot's haste to stay.

Apostle of the Gentiles, then
 Was thy commission given,
 The quenchless fire burned in thy breast
 And soon far islands of the west
 Gladdened in light of Heaven.

O well may Christian England keep
 The day with festal cheer,
 Nor smile if childish fancies deem
 The mid-day sun's unclouded beam
 Glad omen for the year :*

And sunlight now o'er Windsor's towers
 Its brightest mantle throws,
 Where many a princely guest is come,
 For joy is in the ancestral home
 Of England's Royal Rose.

'Tis holiday throughout the land,
 And loyal hearts beat high,
 While fancy loves on every face
 A more than earthly joy to trace,
 The brightness of the sky ;

For now our country unto God
 Her infant Treasure brings,
 While crowned heads as suppliants own
 Jesus, the Priest upon His throne,
 Jesus, the King of kings.

It is a glorious sight I ween
 As one might wish to see—
 Almost the rich array might seem
 A painter's, or a poet's dream
 Of days of chivalry :

But 'tis no freak of fancy's wand,
 No empty pageant now—
 Assembled in the House of Prayer,
 Earth's fairest, noblest, mightiest, there
 In lowly reverence bow.

The shadow of God's holy fear
 Is felt, and all is still,
 For there His Priests, a white-rob'd band,
 By the Baptismal fountain stand
 Their office to fulfil.

In golden font the water gleams
 From Jordan's river brought,
 But eyes illum'd by "faith and prayer,"
 See crimson life-drops mingling there,
 With wondrous virtue fraught.

* "If St. Paul's day be bright and clear,
 It doth betide a happy year."—*Old Saying*.