

Poetry.

HEAVENLY SIGNS.

And can ye not perceive streaks that illumine
This world of sorrow, and a milder sky.
(Which speaks a fairer morn beyond the tomb.)
In gentleness and mercy kindling night?

KING CHARLES THE MARTYR TO HIS SON.

Above all, I would have you, as I hope you are
already well-grounded and settled in your religion;
the best profession of which I have ever esteemed that
of the Church of England, in which you have been
educated; yet I would have your own judgment and
reason now lead to that sacred bond which education
has written, that it may be judiciously your own
religion, and not other men's custom or tradition, which
you profess.

ingenious liberties, which consist in the enjoyment
of the fruits of their industry, and the benefit of those
laws to which themselves have consented.
Never charge your head with such a crown as shall,
by its heaviness, oppress the whole body, the weak-
ness of whose parts cannot return any thing of strength
honour, or safety to the head, but necessary debilita-
tion and ruin.
Your prerogative is best showed and exercised in
remitting, rather than exacting, the rigour of the laws;
there being nothing worse than legal tyranny.
In these two points, the preservation of established
religion and laws, I may, without vanity, turn the re-
proach of my sufferings, as to the world's censure, in-
to the honour of a kind of martyrdom, as to the testi-
mony of my own conscience; the troubles of my king-
doms having nothing else to object against me but
this, that I prefer religion and laws established before
those alterations they propounded.
And so, indeed, I do, and ever shall, till I am con-
vinced by better arguments than what hitherto have
been chiefly used towards me,—tumults, armies, and
prisons.
I cannot yet learn that lesson, nor I hope ever will
you, that it is safe for a king to gratify any fac-
tion with the perturbation of the laws, in which is
wrapt up the public interest, and the good of the com-
munity.
How God will deal with me, as to the removal of
these pressures and indignities, which his justice, by
the very unjust hands of some of my subjects, hath
been obliged to lay upon me, I cannot tell; but I
retain in my soul what I believe is right before God.
I have offered all for reformation and safety, that in
reason, honour, and conscience I can; reserving only
what I cannot consent unto, without an irreparable
injury to my own soul, the Church, and my people, and
to you also, as the next and undoubted heir of my
kingdoms.
To which, if the Divine Providence, to whom no
difficulties are insuperable, shall in his due time, after
my decease, bring you, as I hope he will; my counsel
and charge to you is, that you seriously consider the
former led or objected miscarriages, which might object
my troubles, that you may avoid them.
Never repose so much upon any man's counsel,
fidelity, and discretion, in managing affairs of the
first magnitude (that is, matters of religion and justice)
as to create in yourself or others a diffidence of your
own judgment, which is likely to be always more con-
stant and impartial to the interests of your crown and
kingdom than any man's.

about the meditating any revenge, or executing your
anger upon the many.
The more conscious you shall be to your own mer-
its upon your people, the more prone you will be to
expect all love and loyalty from them, and to inflict
no punishment upon them for former miscarriages: you
will have more inward complacency in pardoning
one than in punishing a thousand.
This I write to you, not despairing of God's mercy,
and my subject's affections towards you; both which
I hope you will study to deserve; yet we cannot merit
of God, but by his own mercy.
If God shall see fit to restore me, and you after me,
to those enjoyments which the laws have assigned to
us, and no subjects without a high degree of guilt and
sin can divest us of, then may I have better opportu-
nity, when I shall be so happy to see you in peace, to
let you more fully understand the things that belong
to God's glory, and your own honour, and the king-
dom's peace.
But if you never see my face again, and God will
have me buried in such a barbarous imprisonment and
obscurity (which the perfecting some men's designs
require), wherein few hearts that love me are permitted
to exchange a word or a look with me; I do re-
quire and entreat you as your father and your king,
that you never suffer your heart to receive the least
check against or disaffection from, the true religion
established in the Church of England.
I tell you I have tried, and after much search and
many disputes, to find out the community, as Christian, but
also in the special notion, as Reformed; keeping the
middle way between the pomp of superstitious tyranny,
and the meanness of fantastic anarchy.
Not that (the draught being excellent as to the
main, both for doctrine and government, in the Church
of England) some lines, as in very good figures, may
haply need some sweetening or polishing, which might
have easily been done by a safe and gentle hand; if
some men's precipitancy had not violently demand-
ed such rude alterations as would have quite destroyed
all the beauty and proportions of the whole.
The scandal of the late troubles, which some may
object and urge to you against the Protestant religion
established in England, is easily answered to them, or
your own thoughts, in this, that scarce any one, who
hath been a beginner or active prosecutor of this late
war against the Church, the laws, and me, either was
or is a true lover, embracer, or practitioner of the
Protestant religion established in England; which nei-
ther gives such rules, nor ever before set such exam-
ples.

purely Catholic; and if Rome will become truly Catho-
lic, then to Church of England will cease to be Pro-
testant.
Q. Built a said, do not what are called the Thirty-
nine Articles contain an exposition of the doctrines
of the Church of England, and were they not first
drawn up as they now stand, in the year 1562; and
if so, where was the faith of the English Church before
that time? and if she had no Articles of Faith, how
could she be a Church? and how therefore be united
in doctrine with the Catholic Church?
A. To this objection we might reply by the ques-
tion, when was the faith of the Universal Church
of Christ before the year 325, when the Nicene Creed
was promulgated? It was in the Holy Scriptures as
interpreted by the Church from the beginning. The
Church of England holds neither more nor less than
"the faith once for all (ἀρά) delivered to the
saints." The Thirty-nine Articles contain an enact-
ment of anything new in doctrine, but they are a
declaration of what is old. In them the Church of England
affirms that HOLY SCRIPTURE "containeth all things
necessary to salvation," and that by Holy Scripture
she means "those Canonical books of whose authority
was never any doubt in the Church;" in them she
asserts that the three CREEDS, which have been re-
ceived by the Catholic Church ever since they were
framed, "ought thoroughly to be received and believed."
She rejects "all such inventions as have been
invented by the Word of God, and the custom of the
primitive Church." Similarly, she speaks to "Ancient
Authors," "Fathers," and "Doctors" of the Church in
her Original, Homilies and Canons. She is ready to be
judged by the earliest and best ages of the Church.
But, on the contrary, the Church of
Rome, on other occasions, and especially at the Council
of Trent in the sixteenth century (A.D. 1545-63),
imposed Twelve new Articles of faith (which she now
acknowledges not to be found in Holy Scripture) to be
believed on pain of damnation, on the authority of this
Council, which was uncanonical in its convocation, il-
legal in its convention, and uncanonical in its constitu-
tion; and thus she claims to herself the power of
publishing a quintum Evangelium, or rather, as may
be truly said, she convicts herself of preaching a New
Religion, and of being, so far, a New Church.
Q. But may not the same defence be made for
these twelve articles of the Council of Trent, which
was just now alleged in behalf of the Thirty-nine Ar-
ticles? May it not be said that they also were only
declaratory, and that, though first enounced at that
Council, they had been believed by the Catholic Church
from the beginning?
A. This has indeed been said; but it is written in
Holy Scripture, that "if any man speak, let him speak
as the Oracles of God," and "if any man or even an
Angel of heaven, preach any other doctrine than
what the Apostles have delivered, and the Apostolic
Churches have received, let him be anathema;" and
the true "faith was once for all (ἀρά) delivered to the
Saints;" and it is incredible that the Church
should have believed from the beginning so many ar-
ticles which it did not publicly profess till the Council
of Trent; and no proof has ever been adduced of such
a belief as is here affirmed. And further, the Thirty-
nine Articles not only do not enforce any new doctrine,
but they affirm (Article xx.) that none can be enforced
which is not found in Scripture; whereas the greater
number of these articles of the Council of Trent were
first declared then; and they, be it observed, are ar-
ticles of doctrine; and are required to be believed as
necessary to salvation. Now, a communion which en-
forces articles of faith which it does not find in Scrip-
ture, and which it allows to have been first introduced
in it, in consequence of what it may hereafter declare to
be necessary to salvation; it proves itself to have been
very remiss in not having before declared doctrines
which it asserts to be necessary to salvation, although it
cannot show them to have been held before; it re-
moves the Faith from the rock on which Christ has
set it, and places it on the shifting sand; it overturns
the authority of Scripture, and subjects itself to the
anathema, "Adoro Scripturam plenitudinem; si non
est scriptum, tamen Verbum illud adhibentibus aut detra-
hentibus destinatum!"
Q. But, although the Church of England declares
that the Scriptures contain all things necessary to sal-
vation, yet she is often said to admit the right of pri-
vate judgment also, and may not therefore novel ex-
positions of the Scriptures be publicly propounded with
her permission by Ministers in her communion?
A. The Church of England admits the right of
private judgment so far as it is exercised by any one
in determining whether he will engage to expound ac-
cording to her public formularies; but she admits no
right of private judgment to enable him, who has made
such an engagement, to alter, weaken, and subvert;
what is by his own act pledged to maintain; on the
contrary, she censures all impugners of her doc-
trine and discipline; and no minister of her commu-
nion may expound at all, unless examined, approved,
and licensed by the Bishop, and all preachers are
under the jurisdiction of their ordinary; and she as-
serts the authority of the Church "in controversies of
faith." As, then, she professes no novelties herself, so
she tolerates none in her ministers; and she has em-
phatically declared her reverence for Scripture, as ex-
pounded by Antiquity, in her Canon of 1571, concern-
ing Preachers: "In primis videlicet Concilio, nequid unquam doceant pro concilio quod a populo
religiose tenetur et creditur, nisi quod consentaneum sit
doctrinae Veteris aut Novi Testamenti, quodque ex illis
ipsa doctrina Catholici Patres et veteres Episcopi col-
legerint; and with respect to discipline also, she says
in her xxxviii Article, "Whosoever through his pri-
vate judgment willingly and purposely doth break the
traditions of God's Church, which be not repugnant to
God's Word, and be ordained and approved by com-
mon Authority, ought to be rebuked openly, that
others may fear to do the like."
Q. But if the Church of Rome be chargeable with
error and corruption in doctrine and discipline, is not
the Church of England tainted with error and corrup-
tion, since she has derived so much from that of
Rome? and if she wishes to be a pure Church, ought
she not to renounce and utterly destroy what she has
so received?
A. Let it be allowed, for argument's sake, that the
Church of England has received from the Primitive
Church many things through that of Rome, and not
rather through the medium of the original British, Irish,
and Scotch Churches, and some few things from that
of Rome herself. But the nature of the former, as,
for example the Sacraments, the Word of God, Holy
Orders, Episcopal Government, Prayers, Creeds, Places
for Divine Worship, the observance of the Lord's Day
and of Fasts and Festivals, has not been impaired by
transmission; and if, because they had been abused,
she had lost these, she would have lost herself; for
the abuse of a thing does not take away its lawful use,
but on the contrary, is confirmed usum, qui tollit ab-
usum; the latter were not derived from Romanists, as
such, but from them as being therein reasonable and
Christian men; and the Church of England, by re-
taining both, has prudently, charitably, and piously
vindicated and restored God's things to God's service;
whereas, if she had permitted the accidental associa-
tion of bad with good to deprive her of the good, and
had chosen to destroy, instead of to restore, she would
have been guilty of the folly and of the sin of promot-
ing the cause of evil against Almighty God and a-
gainst herself.

OBJECTIONS TO THE LITURGY ANSWERED.
(From Dean Cumber on "Prescribed Forms of Prayer.")
Objection 1. It is said to be a form, and therefore a
hindrance to zealous praying by the Spirit.
Answer. Whoever makes this objection, and affirms
we cannot pray by the Spirit in the words of a form,
must beware his ignorance betray him into a dan-
gerous uncharitableness, and, perhaps, blasphemy.—
For the saints of the Old Testament (Num. vi. 23,
Deut. xxvi. 5, Ezra xi. 5, Dan. ix. 1.) prayed by
word; and so did Christ himself in the New; (Matt.
xxvi. 44); and he taught his apostles a form to pray
by; and dare any say they prayed not by the Spirit?
Have not all churches, since the Apostles' time to our
days, had their forms of prayer? And did not the
most devout men of all ages compose and use such?—
Was ever extempore prayer heard of in public (till of
late) unless on special occasions; and do we think no
church nor persons prayed by the Spirit till now?
To come nearer still: have not France and Geneva
their forms? And did not learned Calvin, and the
best reformed divines, use a form before their sermons?
And is not an unstudied prayer a form to the people,
who are confined to pray in the speaker's words?—
And will you say these all pray without the Spirit of
God? But sure we bug the phrase of praying by the
Spirit, not attending the sense. For the meaning,
as we are to be assisted by the Holy Ghost, that our
thoughts being composed, and our souls calmed,
and our hearts deeply affected with our wants, and
the Divine all-sufficiency, we can pray with a strong
faith and a fervent love. When we are so intent upon
our requests that we duly weigh them, and pursue every
petition with pressing importunity, ardent desires, and
vigorous affections, this is the spirit of prayer; and
thus we may better pray by the spirit in the words of
a form, than we can do when our mind is employed in
inventing new expressions; for, having a form, which
custom hath made familiar, we have all things set down
to our hands which we or others want, and we are at
leisure to improve the good motions of the Spirit, hav-
ing no more to do but to join our souls and affections
to every petition, and follow them up to heaven in
most passionate and zealous wishes that God would
grant them; whereas, in extempore prayer, the petitions
expire into air in a moment, for neither minister
nor people knew them before, nor can remember them
afterwards; the one being busy in inventing, the others
in expecting a pleasing novelty; and, methinks, it ar-
gues more of the spirit of God, when we can attend
the old prayers with zeal and love, than when we need
devotion too much like artifice, and seeming rather to
be moved by the pleasure of the fancy than the ac-
tings of the desire. We may judge of the effects of
God's spirit rather by disposing our hearts to join in
a well-composed form, than by filling our heads with
new prayers, or opening our mouths in fluent expres-
sions; both which may be done without the help
of the spirit, but to be devout without it is most impos-
sible. To which we shall only add, that many truly
good men, and sound members of our Church, do daily
use these prayers with as much spirit and life, with as
serious and sincere devotion, as any in the world can
do; and this they account a demonstration that the
Spirit doth assist them in this form; and so they may
assist these mistaken persons, if they will lay down
their groundless prejudice, and strive to serve God
just as well as they can. So would the good Spirit
assist their prayers, and make up our differences, giv-
ing us one mind and one spirit, that with one heart
and one mouth we might glorify one God.
Objection 2. But it is further urged, that these words
are by daily use, and consequently become an im-
pediment to devotion.
Answer. We come not to the house of God for re-
creation, but for a supply of our wants; and therefore
this might be a better reason of an empty theatre, than
a thin congregation. We come to God in public to
petition for the relief of our own general necessities,
and those of the whole Church, namely, for pardon of
sin, peace of conscience, and succours of divine grace;
and a deliverance from sin and Satan, death and hell;
as also for food and raiment, health and strength, pro-
tection and success, in all our concerns; and, more
generally, for the peace of the kingdom, the prosperity
of the Church, the propagation of the Gospel, and the
success of its ministers. Now, these things are al-
ways needful, and always the same, to be prayed for
every day alike. Wherefore (unless we be so vain as
to fancy God is delighted with variety and change as
well as we) what need is there to alter the phrase every
day, or what efficacy can a new model give to our old
requests? Particular wants and single cases must be
supplied by the closest devotions; for the public,
whether by form or extempore, can never reach all
those which are so numerous and variable; wherefore
one form may fit all that ought to be asked in the
church; and why, then, should we desire a needless
and infinite variety and alteration? If we do, it is
out of curiosity, not necessity. The poor man is most
heedful whose labour procures him both appetite and
digestion, who seldom changeth his dish, yet finds a
relish in it, and a new strength from it every day.—
And so it is with the sober and industrious Christian,
who, buying himself in serving God, gets daily a new
sense of his wants, and consequently a fresh stomach
to these holy forms, which are never flat or dull to him,
that bring new affections to every day. It is
the epicure and luxurious, the crammed lazy wanton,
or the dissipated man, that need quizzing chores, or
sauces, to make this daily bread desirable. And if
these be our temper, it is a sign of a diseased soul, and
an effect of those murmurs (Numb. xi. 6.) which despised
the "bread of heaven," because they had it daily, and
lost it, manna itself, calling it in scorn "dry meat."
This was sufficient to sustain their bodies, and satisfy
their hunger, but they required "meat for their soul,"
(Psal. lxxviii. 18.) that is, to feed their fancies and
their lusts; even as we do, for whom the Church hath
provided prayers sufficient to express our needs, but
not to satiate our wanton fancies, nor gratify the lusts
of our curiosity; and we complain they are insipid;
so, perhaps, they are to such, for the manna had no
taste to the wicked; but it suited itself to the appe-
tite and taste of every good man, as the Jews tell us
in their traditions. (Wis. xi. 21.) Sure I am, it
is true here; for if we be curious and proud, or carnal
and profane, there is no gust in the common prayers;
but a truly pious man can every day here exercise
repentance and faith, love and desire, and so use them
as to obtain fresh hopes of mercy, peace of conscience,
increase of grace, and expectations of glory; and who
ever finds not this, the fault is not in the prayers, but
in the indisposition of his own heart.

wants, or his discipline and improvement. But by
far the most considerable cause of the inequalities in
devotion which some too frequently, and perhaps most
Christian occasionally experience, unquestionably is
the increase and intrusion of tempers, practices, or
pursuits, which are unfavourable to holiness. If the
heart is sored by unkindness, or disturbed by the
commotion of angry passions, can we be surprised that
our prayers are attended with little profit, and no sen-
sible delight? When the waves are swept by a Le-
vauter, will they cease to rage merely because the blue
vault above is serene and lovely? If we rise in the
morning full of eager projects for our worldly advance-
ment, or lie down at night hurried with the rapture
of a struggle to find that our hearts, like our knees,
are bowed down to earth; that the incense of devotion
is in our hands, but there is no fire to make it stream
to Heaven a sweet-smelling sacrifice? Prayer is the
touchstone by which our lives are tried. It is the
magic signet that changes its colour at the approach
of every danger. And these things, in the materials of
varying degrees and shades, are the materials of
Christian experience. We become acquainted with the
order of God's good providence; with our own
corruptions, infirmities, dangers, habits, and necessi-
ties. Happy, happy they, in whom the spirit of real
devotion is ever increasing; who "grieve not the Holy
Spirit of God by whom they are sealed unto the day
of redemption" who, observing the ways of their
heavenly Father, and diligently watching their own
hearts and lives, "continue instant in prayer;" and
find, in its blessed exercises, an ever flowing spring of
life, and strength, and consolation. They are the
fruitful, the joyful, the established Christians. Theirs
are not the wanderings of earthly pilgrims, feeble and
way-worn, labouring up the rude mountains, and
shrinking beneath the wintry blast. Theirs is the
mark of angels;
On thy move
Indissolubly firm; nor obvious hill,
Nor straitening vale, nor wood, nor stream divides,
Their private ranks; for high above the ground
Their march was, and the passive air upbore
Their nimble tread."
Prayer is our chief security in seasons of difficulty
and temptation. Our lives are not long; compared
with the eternity that is opening upon us, they are
almost nothing; yet such is our present weakness,
that we are seldom able to preserve an equal tenor
even through these short portions of existence. Dis-
tresses come upon us before we are aware, and find
us ill prepared. Past favours render us justly dis-
tressed of ourselves; and our happiest hours are sad-
dened with the thought that perhaps temptations may
hereafter arise too powerful for our strength; or a
new state of things may insensibly turn our minds
from spiritual pursuits, and steal from us the little
hope and joy we have been labouring to attain. Now,
Prayer is that blessed mean by which a correspondence
is maintained with God Himself, and through which
spiritual strength and knowledge may always be de-
rived from Heaven, proportioned to our needs. The
princess who, by touching a talisman, could summon
the mightiest genii to her aid, had little reason to be
afraid of her enemies though otherwise defenceless.
A man, who has liberty to draw without limit upon a
wealthy friend, will not be apprehensive of want,
though his own resources may be scanty. Let us not
be fearful. Elijah was faint with his journey, and re-
quested that he might die; but angels brought him
food from heaven; and in the strength of that meat
he travelled forty days, even to the mount of God.—
Angels are still "sent forth to minister for them who
shall be heirs of salvation." God himself is ever pre-
willing to perform them. How thankful should we
be, that he has condescended to appoint a regular
medium for communication with Him. Only let us
continue to improve it: let us become acquainted with
all the power of prayer, and capable, by active and
unremitting exercise, of proving its full energy in the
day of necessity. If this heavenly path be kept
open and unobstructed, we may encamp with security
through placed in the midst of our enemies. Our sup-
plies are safe; we are in no danger of discomfort;
"I will lay me down in peace, and take my rest; for
it is thou Lord only, that makest me dwell in safety."

THE CHRISTIAN'S LAST WAR.

(From "Sermons on Miscellaneous Subjects, by the Rev. W.
J. E. Bennett, M.A.")
There is one way by which, in human things, the
soldier may escape the fulfilment of his pledges to
serve in battle—by finding a substitute. He may, in
the ardour of youth, in the strength of those first feel-
ings of religious love with which the young man eried
out to Jesus, "I will follow thee whithersoever thou
goest," have enrolled himself under Christ's banner
to serve in the war against death; but as his first
eagerness cooled down, when he finds that the captain
under whom he is to fight, "though the birds of the air
have nests, and the foxes holes, yet, he has not where
to lay his head;" he may, seeing this, on the princi-
ple of human warfare, look about for some substitute.
The day of battle, as it draws nearer and nearer,
seems more terrible; he would fain escape. While
it is distant; while he was young and vigorous and
healthy, he thought not of its approach; he mocked
at its terrors, he despised its threats. But now a de-
caying body, a sinking spirit, the dim eye, the feeble
hand, these all cry aloud to him—"The war is coming."
But "no man can redeem his brother, nor give to
God a ransom for him." No substitute to bear the
agony of that bitter encounter can be found. There
is no discharge in that war.
And why is it that there can be found in this war-
fare no substitute? Simply because every one has to
contend on his own account. If any were exempt,
then some might serve for others, and we should have
the rich, and the wise, and the mighty, and the noble,
offering their fairest bribes to purchase the suffering
of others in their stead. But it is not so. The rich
cannot say to the poor, "Let me purchase your ser-
vice," because the poor has to serve for himself. The
ignorant cannot say to the wise, "Your wisdom may
invent for me some means of escaping this bitter con-
flict," because he will be answered, "Alas, I cannot
do it for myself." The young and the feeble, and the
beautiful, cannot say to the aged and feeble, "You
can have no longer any pleasure in this world's glories,
bear for me this penalty," because nature, and every
day, and every night reminds them, that their own hearts
continually announce to them, that God looks to each
man for himself; that he is no respecter of persons;
that "every one must bear his own burden."
Behold the universal course of nature. Everything that
we see, handle, look upon, all that we witness be-
fore our eyes in the revolutions of the seasons, every
animal which renews its coat, every tree that sheds its
leaves, every seed that rots and perishes, betokens this
universal war, which no man or thing can escape.—
"The autumn, with its fruits, provides disorders, and
the winter's cold turns them into sharp diseases; and
the spring brings flowers to strew our hearse, and the
summer gives green turf and brambles to bind upon
our graves. We live but in our course; our light
burns awhile; it may be bright and beautiful, but
only for awhile, and then it becomes blue, and faint,
and sickly, and we go to converse with spirits, and we
reach out the taper to another." Thus does Bishop
Taylor, in his usual beautiful manner describe the
fleeting state of man, never continuing in one stay.—
Par. Lost, Lib. vi.