

Original.

ON THE SOUL.

Know'st thou th' importance of a soul immortal?
Behold this midnight glory, worlds on worlds;
Amazing pomp! Redouble this amaze,
Ten thousand add and twice ten thousand more;
Thou weigh the whole: one soul outweighs them
all;

And calls th' astonishing magnificence
Of unintelligent creation poor.

Young's Complaint, Night 7th.

When I look into myself, and take a view of my own soul; when I consider all her excellent qualities and final destination, I cannot help feeling for myself a certain respect and esteem, which hinders me from doing anything below the dignity of my nature. When my mind has risen to this pitch of thought, if I look abroad among my fellow creatures, and consider them in all the variety of rank and condition, I am apt to think we are all children of one common Father: and that although our present inequality, if rightly understood, be necessary for the preservation and harmony of society; when we are called from our temporary exile to our eternal home, there will be no difference made between the haughty statesman and the humble artisan, the king and the beggar. Full of this idea, I can look upon the greatest monarch as my brother, and the meanest slave as mine equal; without either admiring the grandeur of the one, which is but like the sunny cloud, that fleets with the wind and disappears, or despising the meanness of the other, an imaginary stain, which death will wipe away: I consider in each only that immortal part of man, the soul, which in both is equally great and equally noble.

And indeed what a grand idea does it not give us of the soul, to think that even now, while shut up in the prison of the body, and not suffered to exert all her native energy, she can trace back the events of the most distant ages past, and behold them as present. She can look into futurity, and by rational conjecture foresee what is to happen. She can follow out the thread of human sciences and unravel the most knotty difficulties. Or, if she disdains to confine herself to this earth, she can with Newton wing her flight to the stars; run over the vast expanse of the firmament, contemplate those huge unwieldy bodies; those numberless luminous or illumined orbs, which the hand of the Almighty has scattered through the void; and with the rapidity of imagination she can trace their course in all its velocity. In less than the twinkling of an eye she can overleap the bounds of finitude, and lose herself in the contemplation of the Deity.

There is nothing created, so great, but her imagination can grasp: so perfect, to which she cannot add some new perfection. She even seems in some sense to partake of the divine attributes. Her reason is an emanation of the wisdom of the Creator; her benevolence and charity of his goodness; her love of virtue and abhorrence of vice, of his sanctity and justice; her sense of honor and contempt of whatever is base and mean, of his personal dignity. It is this that impresses on her mind the sense of shame, and makes

her even internally blush, when by any vile action she has degraded her innate dignity. In fine, by being immortal, she, as far as a creature can, divides eternity with the Supreme Being.

Had the soul of man been doomed over to fall back into her ancient nothing, it would have been impossible for God himself to have completed her happiness.—Nothing but the eternal enjoyment of himself was capable of filling up the immense capacity of her desires. Give her all the delights imaginable, allow her bliss to be infinite, save in its duration; the reflection that it all must come to nought, is alone capable of embittering all the sweets of her otherwise perfect felicity. Nay, the more exquisite you suppose her happiness, the greater her reluctance to part with it must be: and God, by adding to her bliss, would in effect only augment her misery. She would view in despair the fatal boundary of her existence, and shudder at the dreadful thought of annihilation:

Did we frequently endeavor by such reflections as these to keep up in ourselves a proper sense of our own intrinsic worth and dignity, we would scorn to busy ourselves so much in the vain pursuits of the momentary and imperfect enjoyments of this earth; but turning our backs on time, and carrying our view beyond the grave, we would make the goods of eternity the sole object of our hope and desire.

O eternity! what is time, or all that is created and that passes with time, if compared with thee! A mere atom dropped from the hand of the Almighty within the immensity of thy sphere; an airy bubble blown up, on the bosom of thy depth which must shortly burst and dissolve into nought. Towards thee am I carried on the wings of time. The scenes of my past life seem but a dream. I see this world passing before me like a phantom: and nothing is permanent here below, nor can my soul any where find rest, till death break the bonds of my mortality asunder, and set her free to wing her flight to those mansions of never ending bliss, which God has prepared for his faithful servants.

ERECTION OF A CATHOLIC CHURCH IN WINDSOR.—A richly endowed Roman Catholic Chapel is shortly to be erected at Windsor, for the special accommodation of the Roman Catholics, who are now, or may hereafter be, attendant on her Majesty. This will be very welcome news to foreign princes and ambassadors, &c., of the Catholic faith, who have hitherto been obliged, while the court is at Windsor, to go to Clewer-Green. The Queen of the Belgians, particularly, who was put to great inconvenience last year, will be glad of this. The living is to be in the gift of her Majesty the Queen, with the approval of the Vicar Apostolic of the London District. The curate will be a French priest.—*London Sun.*

CONFIRMATION AT SHREWSBURY. On Sunday, December 19, the Right Rev. Dr. Walsh administered the holy sacrament of Confirmation to forty-seven members of the Catholic congregation of this town, twenty-seven of whom were converts.

All letters and remittances are to be forwarded, free of postage, to the Editor, the Very Rev. Wm. P. McDonald, Hamilton.

THE CATHOLIC.

Hamilton, G. D.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6.

As the Feast of St. George, the Patron of England, is at hand, the following authentic account of him, from *Butler's Lives of the Saints*, will doubtless be acceptable to our readers:

SAINT GEORGE, MARTYR.

About the year 303.

SAINT GEORGE is honored in the catholic church as one of the most illustrious martyrs of Christ. The Greeks have long distinguished him by the title of The Great Martyr, and keep his festival an holy-day of obligation. There stood formerly in Constantinople five or six churches dedicated to his honour; the oldest of which was always said to have been built by Constantine the Great; who seems also to have been the founder of the church of St. George, which stood over his tomb in Palestine. Both these churches were certainly built under the first Christian emperors. In the middle of the sixth age, the emperor Justinian erected a new church, in honour of this saint, at Bizanes, in Lesser Armenia: the emperor Mauritius founded one in Constantinople. It is related in the life of St. Theodorus of Siceon, that he served God a long while in a chapel which bore the name of St. George, had a particular devotion to this glorious martyr, and strongly recommended the same to Mauritius, when he foretold him the empire. One of the churches of St. George in Constantinople, called Manganes, with a monastery adjoining, gave to the Hellespont the name of the Arm of St. George. To this day is St. George honoured as principal patron or tutelary saint by several eastern nations, particularly the Georgians. The Byzantine historians relate several battles to have been gained, and other miracles wrought through his intercession. From frequent pilgrimages to his church and tomb in Palestine, performed by those who visited the Holy Land, his veneration was much propagated over the West. St. Gregory of Tours mentions him as highly celebrated in France in the sixth century. St. Gregory the Great ordered an old church of Saint George, which was fallen to decay, to be repaired. His office is to be found in the sacramentary of that pope, and many others. St. Clothildis, wife of Clovis the first Christian king of France, erected altars under his name; and the church of Chelles, built by her, was originally dedicated in his honor. The ancient life of Droctovæus mentions, that certain relics of St. George were placed in the church of St. Vincent, now called St. Germaris, in Paris, when it was first consecrated. Fortunatus of Poitiers wrote an epigram on a church of St. George, in Mentz. The intercession of this saint was implored especially in battles, and by warriors, as ap-

pears by several instances in the Byzantine history, and he is said himself to have been a great soldier. He is at this day the tutelary saint of the republic of Genoa; and was chosen by our ancestors in the same quality under our first Norman kings. The great national council, held at Oxford in 1223, commanded his feast to be kept a holyday of the lesser rank throughout all England. Under his name and ensign was instituted by our victorious king Edward III. in 1330, the most noble Order of Knighthood in Europe, consisting of twenty five knights, besides the sovereign. Its establishment is dated 50 years before the knights of St. Michael were instituted in France by Lewis XI; 80 years before the Order of the Golden Fleece, established by Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy; and one hundred and ninety before the Order of St. Andrew was set up in Scotland by James V. The emperor Frederick IV. instituted, in 3470, an Order of knights in honour of St. George; and an honourable military Order in Venice bears his name.

The extraordinary devotion of all Christendom to this saint, is an authentic proof how glorious his triumph and name have always been in the church.—All his acts relate, that he suffered under Dioclesian, at Nicomedia. Joseph Assemani shews, from the unanimous consent of all churches, that he was crowned on the twenty-third of April. According to the account given us by Metaphrastes, he was born in Cappadocia, of noble Christian parents. After the death of his father, he went with his mother into Palestine, she being a native of that country, and having there a considerable estate, which fell to her son George. He was strong and robust in body, and having embraced the profession of a soldier, was made a tribune or colonel in the army. By his courage and conduct he was soon preferred to higher stations by the emperor Dioclesian. When that prince waged war against the Christian religion, St. George laid aside the marks of his dignity, threw up his commission and posts, and complained to the Emperor himself of his severities and bloody edicts. He was immediately cast into prison, and tried, first by promises, and afterwards put to the question, and tortured with great cruelty; but nothing could shake his constancy. The next day he was led through the city and beleagued. Some think him to have been the same illustrious young man who tore down the edicts when they were first fixed up at Nicomedia, as Lactantius relates in his book, On the Death of the Persecutors, and Eusebius in his history. The reason why St. George has been regarded as the patron of military men, is partly upon the score of his profession, and partly upon the credit of a relation of his appearing to the Christian army in the holy war, before the battle of Antioch. The success of this battle proving fortunate to the Christians, under Godfrey of Bouillon, made the name of St. George more famous in Europe, and disposed the military men to implore more particularly his intercession. This devotion was confirmed, as it is said, by an apparition of St. George to our king,