

The blood of the martyrs, we are told, is the seed of the church. The papal power will, we doubt not, soon be furnished with a striking proof of this. The blood of the Madiai has thus been shed under circumstances of cruelty of which a demon might well be ashamed. Not only was no crime of any kind—always excepting the crime of reading the Bible—proved against the Madiai, but they were not even charged with any act of criminality. Two more inoffensive, harmless, amiable persons were not to be found in the Grand Duke's dominions. But that mattered not to the Romish church. They did not belong to her, and that was enough. They might have committed every other crime under heaven—the greatest atrocities of which we have any record in history—and these would all have been forgiven by the Church of Rome; but to renounce the errors of Popery and betake themselves to the reading of the Scriptures, were crimes too great to be forgiven by the Romish church in this life, and, if she could help it, they would never be forgiven in the life that is to come. Not satisfied with exacting the earthly life of one of the Madiai, the Church of Rome rejoices with sordid joy in the idea, groundless though it be, that her imprecations will follow him into the world to which she has sent him.

But the malignant spirit of the Romish church has carried matters somewhat too far. She has overdone the thing. The blood of the innocent man whom she has deliberately murdered, will cry aloud throughout the whole Protestant world against the demoniacal spirit by which the church is actuated. Those who have till now entertained the opinion—which we for a long time were anxious to entertain—that the progress of civilization had considerably modified the persecuting spirit of popery, will now be convinced of their error. The conviction will be forced upon them, that their charity was at variance with the fact. They can no longer resist the force of evidence in support of the position that the church of Rome is just as deeply imbued with the spirit of persecution as ever.

The great cause of the error which prevails so largely in this country with regard to popery is, that we do not see it in its true light. The Church of Rome is on her good behaviour in Great Britain. She is not herself. She is not allowed to show herself in her true colours. Here she is kept in due subjection. What she is, therefore, with us, is a very different thing from what she would be, were she mistress of her own actions. Why does not Popery act in London as it does in Florence? Is it because the difference in the latitude of the two places makes a difference in the character of the system? Assuredly not. The reason why our prisons are not full to repletion with persons charged with the crime of reading the Scriptures is simply this—that the Church of Rome is not in the ascendant here. Give her the same power in London as she possesses in Florence, and we shall have Protestants dying in their dungeons in their metropolis, because they have been found with a copy of the Bible, in their possession, just as we have seen the poor Madiai expiring, under the effects of confinement and hard labour, in one of the cells of Florence. It will be a great point gained when this view of the real character of Popery shall have made its way to the minds of those who were not prepared for its reception. In this way the martyrdom of Francesco Madiai will be of unpeakable service to evangelical truth.

The death of Francesco Madiai, brought about by the slow, lingering process of close confinement in an unhealthy dungeon, and incessant hard labour—of all deaths the most appalling to contemplate—will create a feeling of intense horror throughout the civilized world. Martyrdom at the stake or on the scaffold, as in days of yore, when Popery, being in the ascendant in our own country, kept Smithfield in a perpetual blaze, is not nearly so formidable as the daily death for more than six months to which the poor Madiai were subjected. So that, in reality, the Church of Rome, instead of becoming less cruel, has of late refined in her cruelty. Yet this poor, pious man, never for one moment wavered in his resolution. He shrunk not from the certain death which stared him in the face. He met his doom with the courage of a martyr, blended with the meekness of a confessor. The future was not only disarmed of all terrors to his mind, but was arrayed in the most radiant hues. This was the fruit of his faith. So far as nature was concerned, his position and the prospect of dissolution, must necessarily have been appalling. View through the usual medium, therefore, the fate of Francesco Madiai must everywhere excite emotions of mingled indignation and horror. Even some of the Roman Catholics themselves must, we are sure, shudder at what their church has in this case done. It will inflict a heavy blow on Popery. It is a momentous fact—one pregnant with meaning. It will do more, and go farther, to open the eyes of the public to the real character of the Romish church in the second half of the nineteenth century, than years of discussion on the theology of Romanism, or of thousands of volumes written on the Protestant side of the controversy. And never let the great fact be forgotten, that what Popery has just proved itself to be in Florence, it is everywhere. And if the fruits or manifestations of the system are not of the same kind, the modification is to be solely ascribed to the restraints which the civil institutions of the country impose upon it.—*London Advertiser*, Jan. 10.

[Since the above was in type, and just as we are going to press, we have learned by the *London Times*, that Francesco Madiai is still alive. So far there is reason for thankfulness. But the very report of his death has had a good result in calling forth the British press on the doings of popery, and is showing the strong protestant feeling that is daily gathering in strength. Such an article as the above, and two from the "Great Thunderer," will do more to shake the papacy on the continent of Europe,

than if it were assaulted by a British cannonade. The pen, and the mind that guides it, are now more potent than armaments.]

**PRIVATE DEVOTIONS.**—The first Christians attended to the duty of secret worship; prayer and reading the word of God. Valens, deacon of the church of Jerusalem, a venerable old man, had so studied the Scriptures, that he could repeat whole pages together. So also could John, an Egyptian, who had his eyes put out, and was condemned to the mines in Palestine. The word of Christ dwelt in him richly. What a consolation must this have been to himself and his fellow-sufferers! Secret worship is indeed, a most important duty in prosperity as well as in adversity, to the young as well as to the aged. Satan is peculiarly anxious and artful to make Christians neglect, or perform without earnestness, this duty. Guard, reader, against your enemy. Be instant in prayer. If you neglect the Bible and prayer, you stand defenceless, without your shield, without your helmet, without your breastplate, without your girdle, without your sword. How then, will you be able to stand in the day of battle, when powerful temptations rise? The neglect of secret worship is the first step of departure from the faith.

**TWO IN HEAVEN.**—"You have two children," said I.

"I have four," was the reply: "two on earth, two in heaven."

There spoke the mother! Still hers! only "gone before!" Still remembered, loved and cherished, by the hearth and at the board; their places not yet filled, even though their successors draw life from the same faithful breast where their dying heads were pillowed.

"Two in heaven!"

Safely housed from storm and tempest; no sickness there, nor drooping head, nor fading eye, nor weary feet.—By the green pastures; tended by the Good Shepherd, linger the little lambs of the heavenly fold.

"Two in heaven!"

Earth less attractive! Eternity nearer! Invisible cords, drawing the maternal soul upwards. "Still small" voices, ever whispering come! to the world, weary spirit.

"Two in heaven!"

Mother of angels, walk softly! Holy eyes watch thy footsteps, cherub forms bend to listen! Keep thy spirit free from earth taint; so shalt thou "go to them," though "they may not return to thee."

John Bunyan, while in Bedford jail, was called upon by a Quaker desirous of making a convert of him.

"Friend John," said he, "I came to thee with a message from the Lord; and after having searched for thee, in all the prisons in England, I am glad I have found thee at last."

"If the Lord has sent you," returned Bunyan, "you need not have taken so much pains to find me out, for the Lord knows I have been here for twelve years."

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