

Poetry.

My Prayer Book.

THE CATECHISM.

"WHO GAVE YOU THIS NAME? MY GODFATHERS AND GODMOTHERS IN MY BAPTISM."—*The Catechism.*

If they who stand beside the source
Of some famed river's mountain-flow,
And ponder on its trackless course,
To meet the far-off waves below,
Can feel a pensive influence born,—
Then how, on each Sabbath morn,
The men of God must inly feel
A musing depth of voiceless zeal,

When at the fountain-head they stand
Of youthful life's untraced career,
As round them groups an order'd band
Of earnest children, shy and dear;
Encircled thus, to hear and speak,
With glistening eye, and glowing cheek,
Those truths baptismal, pure and high,
Which link our being with the sky.

"Go, feed My Lambs," the Saviour cried
To Peter's large and loving heart;
And, ever have those words supplied
What cannot from the Church depart,—
A pastoral right to form and feed
God's nurslings, by His grace decreed
To taste the food of heaven, and live
By all His word and wisdom give.

What, though the catechizer teach
Unfathom'd truths, which far outsoar
All raptured saints and seraphs reach,
When most their minds a God adore,
Love brings a light that truth explains
Beyond what science ere attains,
As heaven by intuitions mild
Gleams on the conscience of a child.

If faltering tongues of bashful youth
The careful Priest by welcome bland
Attune to some almighty truth,
Beyond a child to understand,
Is not the most gigantic Soul
Which awes the world by deep control,
A mental babe with lisping mind,
Compared with angels in its kind?

The Gospel o'er the cradle bends,
And gently leads each growing child;
Nor at the Font its mission ends,
But follows it with accent mild;
And so, by her maternal voice
The Church directs the infant choice,
And loves to dream on each white brow
The mystic Cross is mirror'd now.

God shield each lamb, and little one!
For now the world before it lies;
And cold were he who looked upon
Those cherub lips, and chaster'd eyes,
Nor felt his heart-pulse throb with prayer
That all the Sacerdotes did declare,
When first the white-robed babe was given
To Jesu's arms for life and heaven.

Hereafter each in faith may keep,—
Alas, the infant-grace departs;
Enough to make mild angels weep
Already stains some youthful heart!
Wildered by many a temper wild
Wilful and vain becomes the child,
Till robes baptismal wear no more
The whiteness at the Font they wore.

Yet, SHEPHERD of Thy blood-priced fold,
Since Thou didst stand at mother's knee,
And as a spotless Babe behold
The virgin brow, which bent o'er Thee,—
Thy spirit hung on each high word
An echoing conscience loved and heard,
While patriarch, saint and prophet brought
Lessons to rear Thy human thought!

Lover divine of children dear!
In Whose fond arms an infant lay,
E'en now the Church believes Thee near
To hear their budding accents pray;
And oh! if child-born memories still
Thy depths of sacred manhood fill,
Look from Thy Mercy-Throne on high,
Hear children's lips, and mothers sigh.

Nor let the stern and sceptic mind
Tween Christ and childhood take its stand;
And, reas'ning here with falsehood blind,
Presume to hold His secret Hand,
Who works by love's mysterious law
A grace cold reason never saw;
And by His Spirit, present now,
Recalls the child's baptismal vow.

Back to the soul, perchance with fear;
And ope the spring of thought within,
Until religion's vestal tear
Is dropt o'er some remember'd sin:
New hopes awake, and conscience burns
With hallow'd blush, as more it learns,
Who at the font His welcome gave,
Still longs in heaven the child to save.

Lord of simplicity and truth!
A scene like this the oldest need,
To summon back regretted youth
And bid them with compunction bleed:
A babe-like spirit, born of love,—
What purer gift can Grace above
Grant to the saint, who lives below,
More childlike for the heavens to grow?

DIOCESE OF FREDERICTON.

Extracts from a Charge delivered in the Cathedral of Christ Church, Fredericton, to the Clergy of the Diocese, assembled at the second Triennial Visitation of JOHN, BISHOP OF FREDERICTON.

ON DOCTRINE.

Our duty on this head in general terms, is to Preach the Gospel, an expression limited by some to the declaration of certain doctrines taken out of the Gospel; by a few, to preaching the Gospel of Calvin, but never so limited in the Bible itself.—The word is used in the New Testament nearly one hundred times; and in almost every instance, is applied to the whole Revelation of God: whether it be doctrine or duty. "Go ye into all the world

1 Luke ii. 10.

and preach the Gospel to every creature;" of which Gospel the necessity of Faith, and of Baptism, form (as we are told in the next clause) essential parts; nor are works omitted in the definition, for our Lord adds, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you;" and the presence of Christ, and the succession of His Ministers, is another part of the same Gospel, for he says again, "Lo I am with you always, even to the end of the world." And St. Paul says expressly, that the doctrines of the general retribution at the day of judgment, of obeying rulers and magistrates, of a provision for the Clergy, of a right use of the moral law, of "speaking evil of no man," and among other duties, were all part and parcel of "his Gospel," of "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, committed to his trust." If these things be so, there seems no Scriptural reason why we ourselves should limit, or encourage others to limit the phrase within narrower bounds than those which Divine wisdom has marked out: or why we should encourage those who "hold men's persons in admiration" to talk of the "pure Gospel," and the "full Gospel," and thus set up one Clergyman against another. This echoing of phrases, "like children in the market place," is unworthy a manly and thoughtful mind, and should be shunned by those who wish to adhere to the practice of our Lord and His Apostles. What we have to teach concerns the Author of Salvation, the Way of Salvation, the Means of Salvation, and the Nature of Salvation. In other words, we have to declare what God has revealed concerning His own great and Adorable Nature, as our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier; concerning our Redemption, Justification, and Regeneration in Christ, the one Mediator, God and Man, by the power of one Spirit; concerning all the duties which we owe to God and to each other as redeemed, justified, and regenerated; concerning the Church, the Scriptures, the Sacraments, and Prayer; concerning the general judgment, and the life of the world to come. All this is to be taught: not in one Sermon, nor in a series of discourses, but "in proportion," and as opportunity offers. But our teaching should embrace it all, so that in no one point any attentive hearer need be ignorant. And an explanation of the claims and worship of our own branch of the Church is certainly as much a part of the Gospel as any other.

They seem to me to have read very little of the Scripture, or to very little purpose, who imagine that what they call the "simple preaching of Christ Crucified" (in their sense, I mean, which excludes all but one or two doctrines from the class of legitimate subjects of address) is sufficient to turn "the disobedient, to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared to the Lord." We desire no other appeal in this matter than the Bible itself. Did John the Baptist preach Christ "crucified," even before his crucifixion? Undoubtedly he did; for he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world." Yet who that has ever read of John's preaching before the Pharisees, before Herod, the publicans, the soldiers, the people generally, can believe that this was the only topic of his preaching? Did St. James preach Christ crucified after his crucifixion? Beyond all question. Yet in his Epistle the atonement is never mentioned. Did St. Jude and St. Peter preach Christ crucified? Surely. Yet a large portion of the second Epistle of the one, and of the Epistle of the other, is occupied with the subject of false teachers who denied the divine or human nature of Christ, and were immoral in their conduct. Did St. Paul preach Christ crucified? Who can doubt it? Yet in St. Paul's addresses and Epistles large portions are devoted exclusively to other subjects. That the atonement made by a crucified Lord should form a prominent and essential part of our preaching, that it should be the ground work of faith, repentance and obedience, we all contend: we all, I hope, put it in practice; but what is objected to, and justly, is the narrowing of the phrase "Gospel truth," to one set of doctrines narrowly interpreted: the spiritual pride which invariably attends such narrowness: the boasting of the "simplicity" of the Gospel, and of the "foolishness of preaching," when that simplicity and fully is our own. On the other hand, exclusive preaching of the Church and the Sacraments only, without reference to their connection with other revealed doctrines and duties, is as hurtful as the preaching, which excludes the Church and the Sacraments.

Unhappily a considerable part of the "preaching of the Gospel," from St. Paul's days to our own, has consisted in defending it against the attacks, which, on every side, have been made against it. So that the three Ancient Creeds, and our Protest against heresy or error, are in fact part of our "Gospel," being propositions, fairly as we conceive deduced from the Bible itself, on which they are grounded, and so "concluded and proved" by the word of God, and as regards some of them, coeval with primitive christianity. But I shall not enlarge on the nature of this defence further than to point out to you what part of this Gospel is now specially assailed, and how it may be defended.

1. We have our ancient enemy, Infidelity, rearing its dishonoured head amongst us, and reappearing (it is said) among the young men in the Province. With a view of meeting this evil, some of the Clergy have thought it desirable to preach Lec-

tures on this subject. Let me not be thought disposed to discourage this pious work, if I remark, that the persons most likely to be benefitted by such lectures are the believers, not the infidels.—Unbelievers are commonly very irregular and inattentive hearers, and "I doubt the core lies deeper" than sermons alone are likely to reach. Young men generally lapse into infidelity either for want of parental training, or from some viciousness of life; and these errors will best be grappled with in private. Let these young men be sought out, and kindly reasoned with. Let the moral cause of their obliquity be detected, and if possible, the miserable consequences of it made known to them. And above all, let the Church shew herself an active energising body, united and powerful for good, convinced of the reality of her Divine system and of her Divine commission: throwing open wide her gates day by day, to "the poor and the needy, the halt and the blind," "lengthening her cords," extending her privileges, increasing her opportunities of communion, building new edifices, and improving the old; and, this, in my judgment, will do more to keep down Infidelity than all the sermons that ever have been, or that ever will be preached against it. There can be no doubt that the absence of parental discipline, and the refusal, or neglect of parents to teach their children the Church Catechism, is fast bringing many young persons to the conclusion, that religion in general is a matter of small importance. What their parents have not thought it worth while to teach, the young cannot be expected to believe.

2. But there is another more attractive form of Infidelity, and on that account more I think to be dreaded. I mean the denial of special doctrines of the faith, under the mask of their being obsolete, or bigoted, or intolerant, or inconsistent with the mercy and goodness of God. Ancient Infidelity came out to meet its adversary in the open field, fought, and was vanquished. Modern unbelief hides itself within our own camp. It professes a general regard for Christianity, rears aloft the broad and spacious banner of Protestantism, but vehemently opposes every doctrine which is distinctly and clearly brought out, and presented for its acceptance. More especially are those doctrines the objects of its abhorrence, which rests wholly on what is unseen, which involve self-denial in him who receives them, or which imply the "severity" as well as the "goodness of God." These the semi-sceptic perpetually denounces: declares them to be Popish or exclusive: inconsistent with the renunciation of merit, or with spiritual religion; and above all, impossible to be apprehended by reason, and subversive of that infinite mercy which will eventually save all mankind.

To trace out this error in all its branches, would demand a longer time than I can now bestow upon it. It may suffice to point out two forms of it which are prevalent in these parts, the denial of the Eternity of future rewards and punishments, and the denial of Sacramental Grace. The former I imagine to be very common, if not to be gaining ground, and some of the treatises which promote it, are specious, and written with apparent candour. Long lists of Scriptures are produced, and examined in turn: opposing statements heard, and confuted, and the result of the whole triumphantly proclaimed to be the overthrow of "man-made creeds," the ascendancy of reason, and the vindication of God's ways to mankind. I strongly recommend your careful study of this awful subject: study, not mere citation of a few well known texts: the Scripture must be solidly vindicated from the glosses put upon it, and the ancient faith maintained. But the whole system is ill-disguised Infidelity. If (as is pretended) the Scripture teaches that wicked men suffer all their punishment here, such teaching is as contrary to fact, as the doctrine we hold is affirmed to be contrary to reason. If all that our Lord has so plainly said of everlasting punishment be applied to temporal or Jewish destruction, then the promises of everlasting life rest on a very slender foundation, or rather, no foundation whatever. And if a judgment to come, accompanied by a judicial sentence, and solemn vindication of the apparent inequalities of Divine Providence, with a distinction (which all justice requires) between good and evil, mean no more than publishing a universal salvation; then a judgment to come is an unreal thing, and the Judge is one who regards with equal favour, the just, and the unjust, the righteous, and the wicked. Paganism in its worst form seldom avowed this absolutely atheistical infidelity. If this doctrine be true, it matters not, as regards the next world, how we live or how we die, for we are sure to be saved; and the heavy afflictions which befall the best men in the present life, reduce divine retribution, and the desirableness of a virtuous course to a perfect uncertainty. And, which is still more monstrous, the man who blasphemously God every day of his life, breaks all his commandments, and dies in his hardened impiety, may, at the same moment, mockingly thank him for the certainty of his own final salvation. If this were true, what harm could there be in calling evil good, and good evil?

Never shall they come to the second resurrection which is unto the life everlasting, that will not rise by repentance unto a new life in Him who is both resurrection and life.—*Bishop Bale.*

THE DOXOLOGY, OR GLORIA PATRI.

(From Bishop Sparrow.)

This is, the Christian's both hymn and shorter creed. For what is the sum of the Christian's faith but the mystery of the Holy Trinity, God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which neither Jew nor pagan, but only the Christian believes, and in this doxology professes against all heretics old and new? And as it is a short creed, so also is it a most excellent hymn; for the glory of God is the end of our creation, and should be the aim of all our services—whatsoever we do should be done to the glory of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: and this is all that we can, either by word or deed, give to God, namely, glory. Therefore this hymn fitly serves to close any of our religious services, our praises, prayers, thanksgivings, confessions of sins, or faith. Since all these we do to glorify God, it cannot be unfitting to close with "Glory be to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." It cannot easily be expressed how useful this divine hymn is upon all occasions. If God Almighty sends us prosperity, what can we better return him than glory? If he sends adversity, it still befits us to say, "Glory be to the Father," &c. Whether we receive good, or whether we receive evil at the hands of God, we cannot say a better "grace" than "Glory be to the Father." In a word, we cannot better begin the day when we awake, nor conclude the day when we go to sleep, than by "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost."

ESTHER MERLE; OR THE NURSERY MAID.

CHAPTER IX.

It almost seemed like a new life opening to Esther, the more she talked to Miss Marston and thought of all that lady said. Instead of getting up in the morning with the feeling that things must take their "chance," and lying down at night satisfied if the usual round of duties were performed and laying all want of temper and other faults solemn work to perform. Every duty seemed more down to "chance," now Esther felt that she had a important—every hour brought some trial, some temper to be subdued. Many a struggle she had when the children provoked her, and often did a hasty word and angry look come before she could check it. But she now felt that it was wrong; and so on the whole, though slowly, she did improve, and more order and quietness reigned in the nursery.

Mrs Parker observed the improvement, and set it down to her scolding.

It happened shortly after this, that all the little Parkers caught the measles. Augusta had them very badly, and required much careful watching. Esther was a kind and attentive nurse, and she tried in every way to make up for past faults, by showing patience towards the sick child. She received bad accounts of Margaret, but still, as there seemed no immediate danger, she resolved not to ask leave to go home yet, for it would have given much trouble to Mrs. Parker just at this time. However, before Augusta was able to go out of the nursery, Esther received a message from her mother begging her if possible to come to Ellerton. Margaret had caught a fresh cold, and was so very much worse that they scarcely expected she could last many days.

Mrs. Parker could not spare Esther that day, but on hearing her story said she might go on the following afternoon. As Esther walked along the same road which she had travelled when she first left her home, many many recollections and thoughts crowded on her. She remembered how sure she had felt that she should make a very good nursery maid; "but ah! how little did I consider all I was about to undertake!" said she to herself; "well, it has taught me much truth; it has made me see how much more is meant by being good and religious than I fancied: how easy it is for persons to bear a fair and respectable character, and yet be very far from God. And the children! how much harm I was doing to them, by neglecting myself, and by keeping the thought of God out of sight! Yes, I understand now what I once heard Mr. Grove say to mother, that religion is too often considered a distinct and separate duty—that people read and go to church, and pray, very often without being at all religious; they try to be grave and solemn for certain hours, and then at other times quite forget all about it; are happy if all things go right with them, or discontented and gloomy if they are poor and ill; whereas a true Christian is always religious whether in church or at home, whether reading and praying, or about their daily work, the thought of God is with them; and so servants and working people, and gentlefolks, and every one, may make their duties and employments a way of serving God. Oh yes, I see all this now; how I wish that every servant had a Miss Marston to point out to them what she calls their responsibilities; how beautifully she talked! and yet I believe after all that watching her did me more good even than her words."

As Esther thought on in this manner, sometimes half aloud, and sometimes silently, she reached the edge of the common. And now the sight of this, with its bright patches of golden furze blossoms and purple heath, and the donkeys scattered about here—