

THE COMMON PLACE BOOK.

CHARITY.

Charity is a virtue of all times and all places.—
It is not so much an independent grace in itself, as
an energy which gives the last and highest finish
to every other, and resolves them all into one com-
mon principle.—*Hannah More.*

THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

Lovely symbol and effectual instrument of Ca-
tholic fellowship! A golden censer used in days
gone past by saints and confessors and martyrs;
formed of the fine gold of primitive times; cleansed
in the Reformation from the rust and alloy where-
with Rome had debased it. It is now in the hands
of the children of the Church all over the earth,
and out of it they offer as one, the incense of praise
and supplication before their common mercy-seat,
and through their common Mediator, by the com-
mon Comforter, to their common Father; so that,
not only with one mind, but with one mouth, they
glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus
Christ.—*Rev. Hugh Stowell.*

DEATH OF CHRIST.

When in that last loud wail, the Son of God
Rent open graves and shook the mountain's steep—
Adam, affrighted from his world long sleep,
Raised up his head; then stark and upright stood:
With fear and wonder filled, he moved around
His troubled eyes—then asked with throbbing heart,
Who was that awful One who hung apart,
Gore-stained and lifeless, on the curst tree bound.
Soon as he learned, his penitent hand defiled
His shriveled brow and bloodless cheeks, and tore
The heavy locks that streamed his shoulders o'er.
Turning to Eve, in lamentation wild,
He cried, 'till Calvary echoed to the cry—
'WOMAN! FOR THESE I'VE GIVEN MY LORD TO DIE!'
—*Minzoni.*

ROMANISM UNCHANGEABLE.

Sooner may God create a new Rome than re-
form the old. Yea, needs must that Church put
off itself and cease to be what it is, ere it can be-
gin to be what it once was. Rome may be sacked
and battered, as it hath often been by military
forces; but purged by admonitions, convictions,
censures, it will never be. Only this one thing
which God hath promised we do verily expect to see—
the day when the Lord Jesus shall with the
breath of His mouth, destroy this lawless one, long
since revealed to his Church, and by the bright-
ness of His glorious coming, discover and despatch
him. Not only in the means and way, but in the
end also, is Rome opposite to heaven. The heaven
shall pass away by a change of quality, not an ut-
ter destruction of substance; Rome by destruc-
tion, not change.—*Bishop Hall.*

THE DEAD FORM.

A poor woman who had been a regular attend-
ant at a Dissenting meeting-house, was one day
asked why she had not been there for several
months? "Because I go to the Church now," she
replied.

"Why do you go there?"

"Because the Minister always prays for my
poor sailor boy."

"Impossible!—he must stick to the dead form."

We may put up what prayer we like, but it is as
much as his place is worth for any Clergyman of
the Church of England to do this."

"But indeed, Sir, it is not so at that Church;
for the Minister there has prayed for my sailor boy,
every Sunday since he went to sea—and that is
three months come to-morrow."

"What can make you think that he prays for
your son?"

"Why, Sir, every Sunday he prays for all that
travel by land or by water, and all the people—
may God bless them for it!—join with him and
say—*We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord!*"

EARTH AND HEAVEN.

All the beauty and all the fruit of the earth is
placed on the very outside of it,—to show how
short and narrow our affections should be towards
it. But upwards, the eye finds scarce anything to
bound it; all is transparent,—to note how vast
our affections should be toward God, how endless
our thought and desires after that heavenly king-
dom, that shall endure through eternity.—*Bishop
Reynolds.*

THE SPIRIT OF TIME.

Another year, methought a spirit cried
Another year is dead! Still rolls the world
Magnificent as ever; bright the Sun,
And beautiful his native heaven; the Earth
Around, looks fresh as on her birth-day morn;
And Man, as gay as if no knell had rung,
No heart been broken, and no tears been shed!
When, then, the history of the buried year,
Of wail and woe, of glory and of shame?
ETERNAL! not a minute fleets away
That doth not wait a record to Thy throne:
Time cannot die; the unapparent years
Again will rise, and cited ages come
Like thoughts,—creations of the mind.
A year hath perished, who can tell his tale?
—*Rev. R. Montgomery.*

SALT.

In the symbolical language of Scripture, salt is
understood to be pure doctrine in a corrupt world.
—*Horne.*

PULPIT AND READING DESK.

John Wesley said to one of his followers, who
urged the deficiencies of some of the Clergy as a
cause of separation,—*"If you have nothing but
chaff from the pulpit, you are abundantly fed with
the finest of the wheat from the desk!"*

MODERATION.

Moderation is the silken string running through
the pearl chain of all virtues.—*Bishop Hall.*

MARY WORSHIP.

A poor Swiss sabotier, or wooden-shoemaker,
on being asked why he had left off worshipping the
Virgin Mary, replied, "Because she says, My soul
doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced
in God my Saviour. If she has need of a Saviour
herself, how can she save me?"

ATHEISM.

I had rather believe all the fables in the Legend,
the Testament, and the Koran, than that this uni-
versal frame is without a mind. God never wrought
miracles to convert Atheists, because His ordinary
works are sufficient to convince them. It is true
that a little philosophy inclineth men's minds to
Atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth them
back to religion; for while the mind of man look-
eth upon second causes scattered, it may some-
times rest on them, and go no further; but when
it beholdeth the chain of them confederate and
linked together, it must needs fly to Providence
and Deity.—*Lord Bacon.*

TRUE GAIETY.

Whom call we gay? That honour has long been
The boast of mere pretenders to the name.
The innocent are gay—the lark is gay.
That dries his feathers saturate with dew,
Beneath the rosy cloud, while yet the beams
Of day spring overshoot his humble nest.
The peasant too, a witness of his song,
Himself a songster, is as gay as he.
But save me from the gaiety of those
Whose headaches nail them to a noon-day bed;
And save me too from theirs, whose haggard eyes
Flash desperation, and betray their pangs,
For property stripped off by cruel chance;
From gaiety, that fills the bones with pain,
The mouth with blasphemy, the heart with woe.
—*Cowper.*

ASSURANCE.

A want of assurance is not unbelief. Drooping
spirits may be believers. There is a manifest dis-
tinction made between faith in Christ, and the
comfort of that faith—between believing to eternal
life, and knowing we have eternal life. There is a
difference between a child's having a right to an
estate, and his full knowledge of the title. The
character of faith may be written in the heart, as
letters engraven upon a seal, yet filled with so
much dust as not to be distinguished. The dust
hinders the reading of the letters, yet doth not
raze them out.—*Charnock.*

THE CHRISTIAN MOTHER.

Where is he who peoples the past with the dear
forms and venerated faces of younger days and hap-
pier hours, and can do so without some strong com-
punction, self-rebuke, and regret. How harshly did
we often think, how petulantly we spoke, how re-
belliously we acted, and how thankless we fre-
quently behaved,—in regard to those whose love,
gentleness, and sacred character ought to have
won from us the homage of our undivided heart,
and the obedience of our un murmuring will! And
when this hour of painful but profitable retrospect
comes over us; when the Spirit of our God is
plying us with the words of Christ, "all live unto
Him,"—Oh! among the forms which will awake
before the creative eye of affection, perchance one
will be a mother! And should it be so, look on
her calm features; gaze on her pensive brow;
revive her soft tones; and so picture her out to
the mind's eye, till you are ready to fall on your
knees, and over the recalled sin of much that was
ungrateful, or impatient, or neglectful, shed the due,
the penitent, the devoted tear! For is it not a
truth, that never in this world is there any thing so
deep, so pure, and so exhaustless as a Christian
mother's love? Tears may roll over her tomb;
new alliances may have been formed; bright pros-
pects opened; high pursuits followed; and many
triumphs won on the field of ambition and fame.—
But what can ever rival the mother's love, that
prepared its welcome before even we were born;
hung over us when a little unconscious babe—
watched our tottering infancy—bore gently with
all our cries and humours—taught our stammer-
ing mouths to lisp the holy name of Jesus beside
her own dear knees—folded our tiny hands in fre-
quent prayer; and as the infant grew into the
child, and childhood advanced into maturer and
more endangered age—besought us again and
again with all a mother's tears and prayers, never
to forsake the God of our fathers, and the cross of
our Redeemer! What is there in manhood's
more imposing world, so exquisitely beautiful in
the history of the heart, as this? Yes, we tell the
scornor of what is simple, and the mocker of what
is lovely, and the doubter of whatsoever is touch-
ing and sacred in life's vernal dawn,—that well it
would be, for them and for us all, if we carried
into maturer life more of what a godly parent
taught us, ere the "evil days come when we have
no pleasure in them." So far from thinking that
because we are become burdened by the world,
and acquainted with the ways of mankind,—that
therefore the simple lessons, and the plain axioms,
and the hallowed counsels we often heard from
maternal lips are not required;—we apprehend
the reverse is true. Rather would it be a blessing
for themselves, next to heaven itself, if their hands
were half as docile, and their spirits half as guilt-
less, as when in childhood they looked up into

their mother's countenance of watchful love, and
felt a throb of responsive devotion vibrate through
their unsuspecting bosoms, when she taught how
to read, *Honour thy father and thy mother that thy
days may be long in the land.*—*Rev. R. Montgo-
mery.*

WINTER.

See how rude Winters icy hand
Has stripped the trees, and sealed the ground!
But Spring shall soon his rage withstand,
And spread new beauties all around.

My soul a sharper winter mourns;
Barren and fruitless I remain;
When will the gentle spring return,
And bid my graces grow again?

Jesus, my glorious sun, arise!
'Tis thine the frozen heart to move;
Oh! hush these storms, and clear my skies,
And let me feel thy vital love!

Dear Lord, regard my feeble cry,
I faint and droop till Thou appear;
Wilt Thou permit Thy plant to die?
Must it be winter all the year?

Be still my soul, and wait his hour,
With humble prayer, and patient faith;
Till He reveals His gracious power,
Repose on what His promise saith.

He, by whose all-commanding word
Seasons their changing course maintain,
In every change a pledge affords,
That none shall seek His face in vain.

—*Newton.*

THE MARTYRS.

God grant that the admonitions of our godly
martyrs may so warn us, their doctrine so instruct
us, and their example so confirm us in the true
knowledge and fear of God, that flying and abhor-
ring idolatry and superstition, we may embrace true
religion and piety; forsaking the fantasies of men,
we may humbly obey the written word, and, ruled
thereby, direct all our doings to the glory of His
name, and our own endless salvation in Christ Jesus.
—*Bishop Ridley.*

THE MUNIFICENT CHURCH-WOMAN.

Mrs. Ann Partis, a remarkable woman, who
combined untiring benevolence with unsparring self-
denial, and tempered the most generous impulses
with mature and well balanced judgment, was born
in, or about the year 1757.

She married Mr. Fletcher Partis, a gentleman
whose industry, ability, and integrity as a convey-
ancer enabled him to amass great wealth. In the
meridian of life, a partial paralysis, confined to the
tongue, induced him to relinquish his profession.—
He could communicate his sentiments only by his
pen; and after nine years of suffering, longed for
death. He was childless and without kindred.—
His wife's impression was, that her family, consist-
ing of a sister and some nephews and nieces, were
all sufficiently provided for. He avowed his inten-
tion of leaving her all his property for her life, and
consulted her on the disposal of it after her death.
He suggested a public charity; she the expedi-
ency of a previous inquiry into the actual state of
that institution, and the funds which it might pos-
sess for its permanent support.

After careful investigation, it was found that
ample provision had been made for it. She then
mentioned to him what had long dwelt on her own
mind, that among the numerous British charities a
class of claimants had been overlooked, ladies who
had been reduced by the death of their fathers or
husbands, from a state of competence and comfort
to a pittance insufficient or scarcely sufficient for
their bare support in the decline of life: "the an-
guish of whose souls increased tenfold by cultiva-
tion of mind, and by an acquired taste for intellec-
tual and moral gratification." He received the
suggestion with marks of high approbation, even,
(for he was himself a man of the most benevolent
disposition) clapping his hands in ecstasy.

The subject was renewed from day to day with
increased satisfaction: and he hoped to have seen
the projected asylum commenced during what
might remain to him of life. In July, 1820, he
purchased for the purpose three acres of land in
the parish of Weston near Bath, and under the re-
quirements of the Mortmain Act enrolled the deed
in chancery. To secure this land to a charitable
purpose, it was necessary to wait twelve months.—
He died within six weeks. To provide against
any contingent obstructions his widow might ex-
perience, he had in the short interval made his
will, and left the whole of his property, uncondi-
tionally, to her sole use and absolute disposal.

Immediately on his demise, his widow expressed
her earnest desire to accomplish the foundation of
that college which had been approved by him; a
college for the providing an asylum for thirty de-
cayed gentlewomen, being widows and daughters
of clergymen, merchants, or professional men,
whom adverse fortune had deprived of brighter
prospects; and where it was hoped they would
find rest and comfort in the evening of their days.

The building of the college cost little less than
£20,000; and very soon required repairs. These
she made good yearly out of the limited income
she had reserved for herself.

To the original endowment, moreover, of £30,000
3 per cent., she subsequently added £8,000 for
the stipend of the chaplain, and for other purposes.
To this sum (£8,000) she added the fee simple
of the field first purchased, which may eventually

prove a source of large income, if let upon building
leases; and also the reversion of £11,000 after the
decease of her five nieces.

The amount of aid rendered by this extraordi-
nary woman to various public charities, it is impos-
sible to trace. She was in the habit of taking
large sums of money at a time from her banker,
and distributing them in charity, without preserving
any account of their appropriation.

Some noble acts of mercy were revealed after
her death, only by the very few letters of thanks
which she had preserved; and these, in many in-
stances, in acknowledging present gifts refer to for-
mer donations of which there is no record what-
ever! It must moreover be distinctly stated, in at-
tempting to form an estimate of her character,
that on the death of her husband, though put into
unconditional possession of his wealth, she at once
gave up all expensive superfluities, her carriage, her
men-servants and all costly charges of her estab-
lishment, retaining only the house in Pulteney-st.,
Bath and two female domestics. She not only de-
termined to found an asylum for the father-
less and widows who had seen better days, but at
the same time, to the utmost of her power, to aid
other institutions, already in operation, as soon as
she had acquainted herself of their designs, the sup-
port they had obtained, and the manner in which
they were conducted. Even while harrassed with
the obstacles which the law had interposed to the
commencement of her great work, she was anxious
to enter upon her general career of charity. In
1822, before she had purchased the second site for
the college, she became a life-governor of the So-
ciety for Promoting Christian Knowledge, contri-
buting the usual benefaction of £21, and gave to
the Middlesex Hospital £100, and to the Royal
Hospital of Bethlehem £100.

In 1823, to the Refuge for the Destitute, £100.
In 1825, to a charity "for educating, clothing,
and wholly maintaining, fifty-one poor girls from
all parts of the kingdom, whether orphans or not,
and especially designed for those whose parents
have moved in a respectable sphere," £100.

In 1826, to the Refuge for the Destitute, a se-
cond donation of £100. And having accidentally
heard of a poor artist in an adjoining street who
was dying, this good Samaritan promptly visited
him, and gladdened his last hours by an assurance,
faithfully fulfilled, that a religious education should
be given to his only child. For this purpose she
handed over to the London Orphan Asylum £105
to the same charity without condition, in the
same year she gave £21 to "The Society for the
Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts," and
£105 to the "Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb."
The foregoing donations were made while she had
on her hands the building of her college.

In 1827 she gave to public charities, in sums
varying from £200 to £50, the gross amount of
£405. In 1828 she dispensed, to similar institu-
tions, no less a sum than £1700! This included
a donation of £1050 to that admirable charity,
"The National Benevolent Institution." In 1829,
from the same generous source, came a series of
well-considered benefactions, again amounting to
£1700. Among these was a gift of £1000 to
Christ's Hospital, and another of £100 to the
Bishop of Quebec, "to be applied by him in assist-
ing to build churches," which his lordship acknow-
ledged to be "not the first donation you have con-
tributed to this purpose." The year 1830 wit-
nessed her distribution of no less than £6000, in
sums of three thousand each to the "London Or-
phan Asylum," and to the "St. Anne's Society's
Schools."

In 1831 her charitable donations amounted to
£400. In the following year they rose to £420.
In 1833 she dispensed £300, and in 1834 no
greater extent can be traced than £90. In 1835
they amounted to £300. In 1836 her beneficent
spirit indulged itself in the disbursement of no less
a sum than £2250. This included a gift of
£2000 sterling to the "National Benevolent Insti-
tution," a benefaction memorable for its amount,
still more so for its object. It purchased in the
Three per Cent Consols £2279 4s.; the interest
thereof, £68 7s. 6d., per annum, divisible into
three sums of £22 15s. 6d. was to be paid half-
yearly to three reduced gentlewomen, who had
been unsuccessful candidates for the bounty of
this most valuable institution. The endowment
is, with perfect propriety, called "Mrs. Partis's
Benevolent Fund."

The year 1837 furnishes us with an analogous
case of well-considered bounty; to the corporation
for the sons of the clergy she gave, first, in May,
£1000 three per cent. consols, and in November,
£1000, on this condition, that the dividends aris-
ing from the £3000, amounting annually to £90,
should be appropriated, in equal portions, to nine
widows, or fatherless unmarried daughters, of
clergymen, who might at any time be inmates of
Partis College. She had found that some of the
most deserving applicants for admission into her
college were disqualified, from not possessing a
certain income of £20 per annum; for such ladies,
and for those who might have only £20, she de-
signed these annuities to £10.

She also gave in this year £300 to King's
College.

In 1839, the year in which she made her will,