

I now detest ; grace to serve thee faithfully in this life, by doing the good works thou hast commanded ; and eternal happiness in the next, through my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

"AN ACT OF CHARITY."

"O my God ! my Creator ! my Redeemer ! my Sovereign Good ! whose boundless charity to me has been unceasing, and whose infinite perfections adoring angels behold with unspeakable delight, I love thee with my whole heart and soul, and above all things, and for thy sake, I love my neighbour as myself. (Not a Protestant neighbour presumably). Oh ! teach me, my gracious God ! to love thee daily more and more ; and mercifully grant that, having loved thee on earth, I may love and enjoy thee for ever in heaven.."

As the celebration of the Mass involves a prolonged service, it will only be possible to record (on this occasion) the first prayer ; we shall do so, without comment, as we are indisposed to interfere with a service which, to the faithful at least, is a matter of the utmost solemnity.

A PRAYER BEFORE MASS.

O merciful Father, who didst so love the world, as to give up for our redemption thy beloved Son, who, in obedience to thee, and for us sinners, humbled himself even unto the death of the cross, and continues to offer himself daily, by the ministry of his priests, for the living and the dead ; we humbly beseech thee that, penetrated with a lively faith, we may always assist with the utmost devotion, and reverence at the oblation of his most precious body and blood, which is made at Mass, and thereby be made partakers of the sacrifice which he consummated on Calvary. In union with thy holy Church and its minister, and invoking the blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, and all the angels and saints, we now offer the adorable sacrifice of the Mass to thy honor and glory, to acknowledge thy infinite perfections, thy supreme dominion over all thy creatures, our entire subjection to thee, and total dependance on thy gracious providence, and in thanksgiving for all thy benefits and for the remission of our sins. We offer it for the propagation of the Catholic faith ; for our most holy father the Pope ; for our Archbishop ; and for all the pastors and clergy of thy holy Church, that they may direct the faithful in the way of salvation ; for the Queen, for her Viceroy, and all that are in high station, that we may lead quiet and holy lives ; for peace and good-will among all states and people ; for the necessities of mankind and particularly for the congregation here present, to obtain all blessings we stand in need of in this life, everlasting happiness in the next, and eternal rest to the faithful departed. And as Jesus Christ so ordained when he instituted at his last Supper this wonderful mystery of his power, wisdom and goodness, we offer the Mass in grateful remembrance of all he has done and suffered for the love of us ; making special commemoration of his bitter passion and death, and of his glorious resurrection and ascension into heaven. Vouchsafe, O almighty and eternal God (for to thee alone so great a sacrifice is due), graciously to accept it, for these and all other purposes agreeable to thy holy will. And to render it the more pleasing, we offer it to thee through the same Jesus Christ, thy beloved Son, our Lord and Saviour, our Priest and Victim, and in the name of the Most Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to whom be honor, praise, and glory, for ever and ever. AMEN."

Little would the Salvation Army imagine that one of the hymns recited in their "barracks" would be soon after-

wards repeated to a priest of the Church of Rome, and appreciated by him ; but so it transpired on this occasion ; in the course of a pleasant conversation with one of the priests, at the close of the service, it fell to the lot of the writer to recite the verses which commence with the line :

"I've found a Friend ; oh, such a Friend ! He loved me ere I knew him ;"

The best feature of the Church of Rome, in the writer's judgment, is one which is unlikely to be generally apprehended, owing to its necessary privacy ; and it would not be referred to in this place, but for its inexpressible importance ; the practice of the priests in speaking plainly to the young of both sexes, of the necessity of bridling their passions, is that to which we refer ; the sickly sentiment which obtains on this subject, in most non-Romish churches, results in wholesale hypocrisy on the one hand, and in sickness and suffering which exceeds calculation on the other ; of this, the asylums for the insane and the graveyards are respectively filled with living and speechless monuments. It is obviously the *duty of parents* to warn their children, on this subject, but in view of the all but universal neglect of it, an elderly and judicious adviser, (whether "priest," "sister," or other person, is probably of but small moment) does well to discharge that duty.

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A subscriber to *Pulpit Criticism* requests an explanation of the similarity between Is. xxxvii, and 2 Kings xix. The only explanation of the circumstance is, that the prophet in narrating the events of the history, made use of the national records. There is however much connected with the portion of scripture which is of deep interest ; from 2 Chr. xxxii, 31, it is evident that intelligence of the destruction of Sennacherib's army had reached Babylon ; the destruction of the Assyrian army accounts for the sudden acquisition of Hezekiah's wealth, as contrasted with his impoverishment, as described in 2 Kings xviii, 15, 16, and for his misplaced pride therein. In relation to the narrative of 2 Chr. xxxii, 21, it is most remarkable that we do not hear a word from Hezekiah on the subject of "the wonder"—"God left him, to try him, that he might know (as it is quaintly worded) all that was in his heart."* The inscriptions on the sculptures in the British Museum confirm the historical accuracy of this narrative ; two extracts from them are subjoined—"Because Hezekiah, king of Judea, did not submit to my yoke, 46 of his strong fenced cities, and innumerable smaller towns which depended on them, I took and plundered ; but I left to him Jerusalem, his capital city, and some of the inferior towns around it. . . . And because Hezekiah still continued to refuse to pay me homage, I attacked and carried off the whole population fixed and nomade, which dwelled around Jerusalem, with 30 talents of gold, and 800 talents of silver (see 2 Kings xviii, 14) the accumulated wealth of the nobles of Hezekiah's court, and of their daughters, with the officers of his palace, men-slaves and women-slaves. I returned to Nineveh, and I accounted their spoil for the tribute which he refused to pay me." "Sennacherib, the mighty king, king of the country of Assyria, sitting on the throne of judgement, before the city of Lachish (Lakisha), I give permission for its slaughter." There is much matter of deep interest in the portions to which our correspondent has invited our attention, but this must not be dilated on at present.

*See Blunt's *Undesigned coincidences*, one of the most valuable books ever written in relation to the Bible.