

POETRY.

THOUGHTS SUGGESTED AT THE SACRAMENT.

FROM THE LITERARY GARLAND.

Awake my Heaven-bound soul—arise, rejoice,
For rapt immortals from the realms above
Are hovering round me—and a still small voice,
Now bids me welcome to the Feast of Love.

That man of God, before the Throne of Grace,
Now offers up the soul sent sacrifice,
A smile of rapture on each feature plays,
While all his soul is centered in the skies.

Sweet—sweet is music to the exile's soul,
That sends remembrance home to happier days,
His bosom heaves with thoughts that scorn control,
And hope rekindles her expiring rays.

But sweeter far to his immortal mind,
Whom conscious guilt has bound in dark despair,
When first in trembling accents unconfin'd,
He breathes to Heaven a confidential prayer.

The threatening clouds disperse, and backward roll,
While faith and love irradiate the gloom,
The Sun of Righteousness revives the soul,
Whose promis'd rainbow gilds his cancel'd doom.

'Tis sweet to rove at even's silent hour
Alone—to muse on Nature's charms unfur'd,
And converse hold with the Eternal power,
Who rules and guides the universal world.

But to the ransom'd soul, 'tis doubly sweet
To feel the joys Immanuel's love has given,
With those who round the sacred altar meet,
Tasting on earth the embodied bliss of Heaven.

Ecclesiastical Information.

AN ADDRESS TO ONE OF THE CONGREGATIONS OF THE ASSOCIATE SYNOD WHICH HAVE RECENTLY JOINED THE COMMUNION OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND. BY THE REV. WILLIAM WALLACE DUNCAN, MINISTER OF CLEISH, KINROSS-SHIRE.

The circumstances under which I address you at present are fraught with overwhelming interest. Till within a very few days you belonged, as a congregation, to a communion which, though holding exactly the same doctrines as the Established Church, has, nevertheless, till now kept itself quite distinct from it as a body. In that communion there is much that demands the respect and admiration of every right thinking man. The principles on which you seceded from the Church of Scotland were, I am persuaded, perfectly conscientious, and therefore honourable. And in these days when sterling principle is at a discount, and expediency reigns paramount in so many quarters, it is not a little refreshing to observe so numerous and respectable a body of Christians (actuated by the very same views as those which originally led their fathers to separate themselves, with much reluctance, from a Church to which they were warmly attached) returning so readily to the bosom of that very Church. It was on principle that they seceded—it is on principle that you return. It was because of seen and felt corruptions that they formed themselves into a separate community and now that you, their sons, join yourselves once more to the National Church, it is because you are convinced, on what you conceive, and I doubt not will prove, to be good grounds, that these corruptions are in a fair way of being thoroughly reformed. In the name of that Church, of her ministers, her elders, her people—in the name of every individual belonging to her communion who is interested in her welfare, and hails the dawn of a bright era in her history, I welcome you, and bid you most cordially God speed. You have proffered brotherhood, "in troublesome times." These are not days when the Ark of our Zion moves smoothly on her course, with the sun of worldly prosperity shining on her, and no dangers around her. On the contrary, just as might have been expected, when God began to smile upon us and symptoms of returning life appeared among us, the world is pouring upon her, and enemies of various kinds, from some of whom better things might have been expected, are marshalling in hostile array against her. Be assured, we appreciate and cordially reciprocate the friendly feelings, which, in these days of rebuke and blasphemy, have prompted you to cast in your lot with us—to share our dangers, and offer us your aid. And now that I appear before you an ambassador of Christ, I am desirous to impress upon you as deeply as possible one most important duty, which is imperatively demanded of you by the new relation in which you have voluntarily placed yourselves to our beloved Zion. That duty is expressed in the language of Sacred Scripture, "Pray for the

peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee."

How delightful it would be, were you to celebrate this your return to the bosom of the Mother-Church by more vigorous and united exertions in the cause of Christ—by a more decided manifestation, than you have ever yet made, of your interest in the extension of His Kingdom—by more systematic social prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. I know not whether there be any fellowship meetings in connection with this congregation or not; but, if not, is there no one here who is ready to come forward, and to stir up his brethren to unite without delay in so important and interesting a work? A more favourable opportunity than the present there can never be and O, if you are sincerely interested in the spiritual well being of yourselves, your families, your friends—of hundreds of perishing sinners at your very doors—you will not, you cannot, be backward in forming yourselves without delay into at least one society for weekly or monthly prayer. And if you do, who can tell what new life, and energy and success, may be imparted to all the ministrations of your pastor, who can tell how many who are now utterly unconcerned about their souls, serving the devil and hastening fast to hell, may be arrested in their headlong career, and brought within the fold of Christ? What is to prevent this very town and neighbourhood from becoming the scene of a Revival as lively, as animating as arousing, as remarkable in every respect, as any that has ever been vouchsafed since apostolic times? It is very common to cry out against the coldness, and slothfulness, and inefficiency of the Church. But I would just ask those who do so, whether they have done their duty in praying for a purer and a brighter era?—If not they have no right to find fault. So long as any are indifferent to the well being of the Church, and neglect fervently to pray for its advancement and success, it ill becomes them to speak of coldness and slothfulness, and inefficiency. On their shoulders, in a great measure, lies the blame. Ministers are more dependent on the prayers of their people, for their personal piety and habitual success, than their people seem to be at all aware. What wonder, if few or no conquests be achieved when the arms of the messengers of truth are not upheld by the earnest applications of those among whom they labour! What wonder should any Church (however surprising her past history) become a proverb among men, if it be doomed to struggle against the fearful calamity of having a worldly, formal, prayerless people with which to do?

At present, a dark and portentous cloud seems to be suspended over the Church of Scotland. All eyes are turned towards it. Her enemies are eagerly expecting it to burst in ruin on her head. But her real friends behold with joy the brilliant rainbow of hope that smiles from the lowering cloud; and if you do your duty in praying for her prosperity and peace, and if all others who belong to her communion do theirs, you shall presently see yonder heavy masses falling asunder and melting away, till the blue sky shall appear without a speck, and the pinnacles of our Zion shall again glitter in the rays of a cloudless sun!—*Scottish Christian Herald.*

INTERESTING EXTRACTS.

THE DEATH BED.

BY THE REV. J. WADDELL, Charlottetown, P. E. Island.

On a dark and gloomy evening in the month of December 1834, when I had already left the place of my residence to visit a poor woman who had for some time been languishing under the wasting influence of consumption, and was looking forward with anxiety to a speedy entrance into the world of spirits, I was overtaken by a messenger, and informed that a young and beloved friend, who had for some time previous been in delicate health, had become alarmingly ill, and desired to see me immediately. With alacrity and sadness I obeyed the summons, and in a few minutes reached the house of affliction, which presented a scene of distress which I have never seen equalled. A group of men first met my view; and on their countenances were portrayed feelings of alarm and expressions of the deepest sadness. The agonized father seemed like one bereft of his reason; and the fond and youthful husband was overpowered by his feelings, when he endeavoured to report that she whom I loved so well, thought herself sick unto death, and despaired of life beyond the grave. Through a group of weeping friends I entered her room; and well do I remember the piercing look with which she noticed my entrance, and the agonized accents in which she inquired if I thought there could be hope for her. Death, she said, stared her in the face, and she was unprepared to die. She had neglected, till too late, to attend to the one thing needful; and now she must suffer the consequence of her folly. With a full heart, a moistened eye, and a trem-

ulous voice, I directed her to some of the precious promises of the Gospel, reminded her that at the eleventh hour employment had been obtained in the vineyard of the Lord, and that to the dying thief upon the cross the gracious language of his compassionate Saviour was: "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise," and encouraged her to believe that for her, pardoning mercy might still be in store. An appeal was made to the throne of grace on her behalf, in which all about her fervently joined; and, at the solicitation of her affectionate and anxious mother, appropriate and favourite passages of scripture were read for her advantage. Older and more experienced ministers than I, were called in, and, in the course of the evening, they spoke to her of the perfect adaptation of the provisions of the Gospel to her necessities, and implored for her the renewing and justifying and sanctifying influence of the Spirit of God. No language, that I can command, can convey a just representation of the anguish and dismay in which the two or three succeeding days were spent. All that wealth, and friendship, and affection, and piety could command, were called into requisition to soothe, if possible, the anguish of the agonized sufferer; but who can minister to a mind diseased? Amid the most excruciating pains, her soul was absorbed in the all-important inquiry, "What must I do to be saved?" To that enquiry, however, she was eventually enabled, by Divine grace, satisfactorily to reply. He who had said to the troubled sea, "Peace! be still," and produced a calm, calmed her perturbed spirit, and gave her peace in believing. He who had rescued doubting Peter from sinking in the devouring waves, supported her in her extremity, and enabled her to rest upon the rock of ages; He who had said to Thomas, "Be not faithless but believing," enabled her to say with him, "My Lord and my God!" The announcement of this happy change wrought upon her mind, was received by her doating parents and pious friends as life from the dead. The strong bonds of natural affection, it is true, were not loosened, but the bitterness of death was past, and the now resigned mother, who, in the anguish of her soul, had at first exclaimed, "I cannot give her up," looked forward with calmness and composure, to the separation which she saw rapidly approaching.

Of these things I was no unconcerned spectator. Constantly by her side, I marked with scrutinizing eye, every symptom of change, both in mind and in body; and accustomed to look upon death-bed repentance with suspicion, I suffered no circumstance to pass unheeded, that had a tendency to decide the character of that, which I had witnessed now professed. I knew much of the native sweetness of her disposition, of the strength of her filial affection, and of the devotedness of her conjugal attachment; and, I may perhaps be considered uncharitable when I make the avowal, I at first wondered whether it were possible, that the exercise of these could influence her to suppress her feelings, and, for the sake of her distressed relations, excite hopes on her account which were without foundation. Innumerable circumstances, however, combined to satisfy me that the doubt which had crossed my mind was harsh and severe; and I soon felt convinced of the sincerity and truth of the profession which she had made.

Her previous alarm subsided; a calm serenity settled upon her countenance; and her remaining energies were directed to the service of her Redeemer. Bitterly did she bemoan the unprofitableness of her past life, her negligence of her eternal interests, and her disregard of the glory of God. She expressed but one object for which she could wish to live,—to evince the sincerity of her repentance, and to glorify God in her body and spirit, which were his. Brother or sister she had none; but father, mother, husband, and friends, were most earnestly and impressively admonished by her, not to delay, as she had done, till the last, to attend to the things which belonged to their eternal peace. She trusted that, vile and guilty as she was, she had obtained mercy, and expressed a fond hope, that if it should please the Lord now to remove her, he would take her to himself, to behold and to share his glory; but she entreated all around her, not to presume upon the eleventh hour, for employment in the vineyard, but to remember that "now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation."

The excitement occasioned by the scenes which I have endeavoured faintly to describe, connected with the rapid progress of her disease, soon brought her very low; and in four or five days, from the time I had first been called to her chamber, she was evidently very near the close of her earthly course. I feel as if I could still hear her whispering accents, requesting us to sing a hymn, and see the fervour of devotion with which, on the night we thought would be her last on earth, she joined in singing that solemn and impressive one, beginning:

"The hour of my departure's come,
I hear the voice that calls me home."