

# The Church.

"Her Foundations are upon the holy hills."

"Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the Old Paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."

Vol. XVIII.]

TORONTO, CANADA, APRIL 19, 1855.

No. 38

## Poetry.

### EARTHLY THINGS

Are but the transient fragments of an hour;  
And earthly pride is like the passing flower,  
That springs to fall, and blossoms but to die.  
'Tis as the tower erected on a cloud—  
Baseless and silly as the school-boy's dream.  
Ages and epochs that destroy our pride,  
And then record its downfall, what are they,  
But the poor creations of man's teeming brain,  
Hath Heaven its ages? or doth Heaven fore-  
saw?

It's staid era? Both the Omnipotent  
Hear of to-morrow or of yesterday?  
There is to God no future nor a past;  
Throned in his might, all times to him are  
present;

He hath no lapse, no past, no time to come!  
He sees before him one eternal now.  
Time moveth not!—our being 'tis that moves,  
And we, swift gliding down life's rapid stream,  
Dream of swift ages and revolving years,  
Ordain'd to chronicle our passing days;  
So the young sailor in the gallant bark  
Scudding before the wind, beholds the coast  
Receding from his eyes, and thinks the white,  
Struck with amazement, that he is motionless,  
And that the land is sailing.

Such, alas!  
Are the illusions of this transient life:  
All, all, is false; through every phasis still  
'Tis shadowy and deceitful. It assumes  
The semblance of things and specious shapes  
But the lost traveller might as soon rely  
On the evasive spirit of the marsh,  
Whose lantern beams, and vanishes, and fits  
O'er log and rock, and pit and hollow way,  
As we on its appearances.

## Selected.

### THE CHURCH IN THE CATACOMBS.

*The Church in the Catacombs: A description of the Primitive Church of Rome, illustrated by Sepulchral Remains.* By Charles Maitland, M. D. Second Edition, revised. London: Longman & Co. 1847. 8vo. pp. 396.

*The Catacombs of Rome, as illustrating the Church of the First Three Centuries.* By the Right Rev. Wm. Ingraham Kip, D.D., Miss. Bp. of California, &c. New York: Redfield. 1854. 12mo. pp. 212.

Aringhi closes the first part of his great work on the Catacombs of Rome with a long and eloquent inscription, appropriate to the character of these ancient monuments, and expressive of his sense of their untold richness and importance. Its first words direct the attention of the heedless wanderer in the busy city above to the fact, that there is a silent city of the dead under him; "Siste gradum tu quis es O viator! Sacra hanc Urbis, immo Orbis Coemeteria sunt, quae inspicis." Its closing words are: "Sub Roma Romanorum."

The increased attention which is now being given to the subject of Christian archaeology in its various branches, seems to be generally incited and governed by the purpose of seeking Rome under Rome. The Romanist is anxious to identify the controverted teachings and usages of his branch of the Church Catholic with those of the primitive Church. The Protestant, on the other hand, wishes to disprove the primitive character of the former by the latter. The practice of testing doctrines and rites, which have been adopted without the clear sanction of Revelation, by a reference to primitive teaching and usage, is gaining ground even in the midst of the great degree of skepticism and self-reliance which is everywhere prevalent. This may well be regarded as a hopeful sign for the future.

The value of the paintings and sculptures of the Catacombs, as a source of information in this contest between primitive antiquity and modern innovation, purity and adulteration, has not been overrated by the few Protestants who have used them for such a purpose. The arguments against the modern Roman Church which can be derived from them singly, or as a whole, are mostly of a negative character. We have to reason from the absence of certain signs, which usually accompany the prevalence of particular doctrines and practices, to the conclusion that the early Christians did not teach or do these things. With some minds such proof will be conclusive, while there are others with whom it can have little or no weight.

Everything which can clearly be shewn to have pertained to the belief or to the practice of the Church, during the first three centuries of her spiritual warfare, while the simplicity and purity of her faith and worship were yet free from the dangerous advances of the god of this world, gains by such a connection a great additional importance. On the other hand, everything upheld as primitive in its character, which can be satisfactorily proved to have formed no part of the entire Christian system during those primitive ages, is justly liable to increased suspicion; and in some cases, as when a thing is itself repugnant to the whole teaching and intent of Scripture, to immediate rejection. Such, then, is the rule in the spirit of which we should judge of the importance of the art of the Catacombs, as bearing upon religious controversies.

It will not materially further our purpose, in this necessarily brief review of the more important relics of the Catacombs, to dwell upon the question of their origin, and the first occupancy of them by the Christians. This is a subject invested with the deepest antiquarian interest, and one which has been ably discussed by some of the early writers in this department of Christian antiquities. There can be no reason-

able doubt of their having become places of refuge for the persecuted Christians late in the first, or very early in the second century. The earliest consular date satisfactorily determined upon from the inscriptions belongs to the year of our Lord 102. The famous Boldetti claimed to have discovered one of the year 93; but subsequent writers are disposed to consider the monument bearing it a pagan one. As it is, we must content ourselves with a reference to some of the more important works containing full materials for the examination of this point, and others of equal interest which we shall not be able to discuss here.

The history of the subterranean passages and galleries, so generally known as the Catacombs, is very fully presented in the "Roma Subterranea" of Aringhi, a priest of the Oratory at Rome, who translated and enlarged the Italian work on which the learned Bosio had spent thirty years of his life, and had left unpublished at his death. The first edition of Bosio's work was edited and published in 1632 by Severano, also a priest of the Oratory, and was then made the basis of a Latin work by Aringhi. The "Roma Subterranea" is the work most commonly consulted by modern writers on this subject, it being more accessible and readable than the equally important Italian works.

The elaborate "Osservazioni sopra i Cimiterii del Santi Martiri" of Boldetti, who also extended his labors through more than a quarter of a century, was published in 1720. This is esteemed one of the best that has appeared. Following this was the celebrated work of Bottari on the general subject of Christian Art, including full notices of the sculptures and paintings of the Catacombs. Not long afterwards was published that magnificent monument of industrious research, M. D'Agincourt's "Histoire de l'Art par les Monumens." This is more frequently met with in our public libraries than any of the great Italian works. D'Agincourt is said to have gone to Rome to prepare a portion of this work, with the intention of remaining only six months; but he became so absorbed in the study of the relics of antiquity there that he stayed fifty years instead. His is the last complete work closely connected with this subject. Various compendiums and essays on the Catacombs and kindred topics have more recently appeared, some of which are of great value. The writings of an accomplished antiquary of France, M. Raoul Rochette, are especially valuable. Through them all there runs a vein of deep appreciation of the beautiful side by side with the precision and dryness of a learned antiquarian. His essays on the Catacombs in Volume XIII. of the Memoirs of the French Academy of Belles Lettres richly repay careful study.

Several other Frenchmen appear in this field of research, but we know little of their works. Of the proposed work of M. Perret, in course of publication at Paris, only a portion has been finished. It promises to surpass in richness of illustration all that has hitherto appeared in this department of literature. The German work of Bishop Mûnter, entitled, "Sinnbilder und Kunstvorstellungen der alten Christen," should be noticed in this connection. In it he traces the history and meaning of the various symbols and images used in the art of the early Christians as nearly as possible to their source. It is much esteemed for its conciseness and truthfulness. Little has been written in English concerning these remains, as they have not until recently engaged the attention of students either in England or in this country. The two works whose titles are copied at the head of this article are the most important of any that have appeared in our own language. That by Dr. Maitland has a value which a mere compilation from larger and more pretentious works would not possess; inasmuch as he has been able to present some of the numerous inscriptions and monuments discovered since the time of the last Italian authors. He also professes to have brought to the work of elucidating these monumental remains the additional information respecting primitive antiquity which the present increased study of the past has furnished. So far as it was practicable the author himself copied from the walls of the Lapidarian Gallery the inscriptions which appear on his pages, having obtained a license from the officers of the Vatican for that purpose. Coming to the task with these advantages, added to a personal fitness by his extensive learning and quick perception, we are led to expect from him a performance of unusual ability and interest. And such it is, so far as it relates to the Catacombs; but large portions of the work are liable to the objection that they have no immediate connection with the subject, and so distract the reader's attention, that, unless perchance he may have obtained his knowledge elsewhere, he closes the book with most indefinite notions as to the true character of "the Church in the Catacombs;" nevertheless he will gain much useful information respecting some of its prominent features. There is a sad lack of unity in the work; for instance, in the chapter on the "Martyrs of the Catacombs," which makes up nearly one-third of the whole book, more than one-half of the matter has little or nothing to do with the proper subject of the chapter. It was hardly necessary in such a work to attempt, as he has, the discussion of the whole subject of martyrology. Aside from this irrelevancy of portions, the chapter is an exceedingly rich one. He also introduces, near the end of the book, a dissertation on early Christian poetry, which is entirely out of

place. But, for all this, the work is the ablest and most creditable that has yet appeared on this subject in English. There is an originality and freedom of inquiry occasionally exhibited which are truly refreshing.

Bishop Kip, in the little compilation recently put forth by him, has avoided the great fault of Dr. Maitland, and confined himself strictly to his subject. This is the first work of the kind that has issued from the American press. In the preface the author disclaims all attempts at originality, and acknowledges his indebtedness to the larger productions of Aringhi and Maitland. It would, therefore, be an unfair treatment of the book to measure its proportions by the standard of those greater ones from which it is professedly compiled. It should be regarded with reference to the author's declared purpose in the preface: "The writer believes that the argument derived from the Catacombs of Rome, in defence of primitivetruth, is but little known in this country, and that he might therefore be doing some service by placing it in an accessible form. To most readers it will be a new chapter in the past history of the Church. Hitherto the descriptions have been locked up in two or three small volumes published in England. He believes that no work on this subject has ever been printed in this country." It is very true that the history of the Church in the Catacombs, as derived from these venerable monuments, is something with which most Christians are in no way familiar. It has escaped the notice of nearly every compiler of Church History, and has not hitherto been brought before the mass of readers in its separate form. It appears to have been the intention of Bishop Kip to supply this deficiency, and to afford the great body of Christian readers the means of becoming somewhat familiar with early monuments of their faith which are not surpassed by any in attractiveness. This praiseworthy purpose is excellently carried out in the work before us. A more happy and instructive selection than his could not have been made from the Catacomb paintings and sculptures. If such a presentation of the subject to the public does not serve to render it popular, certainly no other can; and students must be content, as heretofore, to enjoy these rich treasures alone.

Of course it would be impossible to bring up in review, within the limits of the few pages allotted to us here, any large portion of the thousands of Catacomb monuments which enrich the Vatican at Rome, or of the numerous representations copied from the walls and ceilings of the subterranean galleries into the works of the early explorers of their recesses. Our present purpose will be more readily attained by selecting a few of the more interesting subjects suggested by these works, and viewing them with a particular reference to the departures of the modern Roman Church from the simplicity and truth of the Christianity which finds expression in the Catacombs, and also with an eye to the beautiful lessons of faith with which they abound.

There is, perhaps, no subject connected with the Catacombs which has given rise to more discussion, and upon which the Church of Rome has taken a more decided stand against the truth, than that of the adoration of martyrs. The high esteem in which those who died for Christ's sake were always held in the early persecuted Church, is of so natural a consequence, and so in accordance with our better feelings, that it cannot surprise or offend us. But it is not easy to account in the same way for the gross perversion of this sentiment which grew up in the Church not long after heathen persecution subsided; for, as Dr. Maitland truly remarks, "martyrs and martyr-worship did not exist in the Church at the same time."

The position of the Church of Rome, in relation to martyr and relic-worship, has been fixed since the decree of the Council of Trent in its favor. It is hardly better than quibbling for a Romanist to plead that something less than worship is intended by his standards in the word *cultus*, as applied to sacred relics and images, for the constant practice of his Church shows what is taken to be the real meaning of this convenient word. And yet, if you object to him the inculcation of idolatry in his Church, he will scarcely ever fail to tell you that she teaches the "*cultus*" of the Blessed Virgin, relics, images, and the like, not the *worship* of them. It will be interesting to see how Aringhi argues for this practice in the "Roma Subterranea." In the first place, he would advance Scripture examples tending to establish the miraculous power of the relics of saints. As, for instance, the bones of Joseph are said to have prophesied (Ecclesiasticus, c. xlix.); the case of the dead man who was revived by coming in contact with the bones of Elisha (II. Kings, xiii.); then that the relics of saints were held in veneration by such holy men as Ambrose, Augustine, the Gregories, &c.; and that, according to Ambrose, *even demons* rever the bodies of martyrs; Jerome, also con-

\* Dean Milman's Hist. of Christianity, contains a chapter in which this subject is briefly noticed. Most Church Histories pass it by altogether.

† We will not take leave of this book without noticing a mistake of the author's, which he will be glad to correct, in justice to a distinguished fellow-laborer with himself in this rich field. On page 80 he quotes a beautiful and truthful *resumé* of the characteristics of the art of the Catacombs, which he attributes to D'Agincourt. This is an error. The extract is part of Rochette's Academy of Belles Lettres. The same quotation appears in Vol. II. of Milman's Hist. of Christianity, p. 359. Upon turning to Milman, it appears that the bishop's mistake arose from quoting at second hand; although Milman does not, as it might at first seem, attribute the passage to D'Agincourt.

siders that honor to martyrs redounds to the glory of God; that the relics of such everywhere glitter (coruscant) with innumerable miracles. This is the foundation of the Catholic doctrine. The first heretic with regard to it was Eranomius; then came Vigilantius, followed in turn by Eustathius (Bishop of Sebaste in the fourth century). This heresy—i. e., forbidding worship of relics—was condemned in the seventh General Synod. It had almost vanished in the darkness, when "impudensissimus Novatorum omnium coryphaeus Johannes Wiclef" did not hesitate with rash daring to revive it "*ab inferis*." He in turn was followed by the secretaries of Luther and Calvin, till at last the anathema of the Council of Trent against all asserting the contrary to the Catholic doctrine on this point settled the matter.\* Such is the succinct and lucid account of Aringhi.

One of the richest storehouses of Catacomb art is the Cemetery of Callistus, so called because repaired and adorned under Pope Callistus. Aringhi copies a modern official inscription from the entrance of this Cemetery, which is worthy of a careful perusal in connection with the point under consideration. It is the following: "Hoc est Cœmeterium Callisti Papae et Martyris inelyti; quicunque illud contritus et confessus ingressus fuerit, plenam remissionem omnium peccatorum suorum obtinebit, per meritum gloriosissimi septuaginta quatuor millium sanctorum Martyrum, una cum quadraginta sex summis Pontificibus, quorum hic corpora in pace sepulta sunt; qui omnes ex magna tribulatione venerunt, et ad hæredes fident in domino Domino, mortis supplicium pro Christi nomine pertulerunt."†

This blasphemous offer of full remission of all sins by the glorious merits, not of Christ's sacrifice, but of one hundred and seventy-four thousand holy martyrs, together with forty-six chief Pontiffs, is something which we may well suppose would have been perused with ill-concealed horror by the early occupants of these subterranean chambers. Well might Aringhi, as a sincere Romanist, exclaim, in the words of the waking Patriarch, "Truly, this place is holy!"

One may also derive from this inscription a hint towards the true explanation of the astounding numbers given by the Roman martyrologists. The exact enumeration here is at least liable to suspicion. Another circumstance which has led candid men, even amongst the Romanists themselves, to suspect "the faithful" of excessive exaggeration in reckoning the "noble army of martyrs," is well illustrated by the story of St. Viar, which Maitland (p. 183) quotes from Mabillon: "Some well-meaning persons (in Spain) having met with an ancient stone, inscribed with the letters 'S.V.I.A.R.' concluded it to be the epitaph of a St. Viar. Nothing daunted by the singularity of the name, or the total want of evidence in support of his sanctity, they boldly established his worship. But the zeal of his admirers, though it had conferred the honors of sainthood, was unable to secure his immortality; for, on their application to Urban for indulgences, the Roman antiquaries required sound proof of his existence. The stone was therefore forwarded to Rome, where it was immediately seen to be the fragment of an inscription to a Praefectus S.V.I.A.Rum, or 'Curator of the ways.' This needs no comment. It will readily be granted that ancient inscriptions, which cannot be so easily made out by the antiquaries as was this Spanish one (and there have been many such discovered in the Catacombs), stand a good chance of being interpreted in favor of Roman martyrology." Abuses growing out of this liberty have at times roused the Church of Rome herself to legislation against herself.

Roman antiquaries have been accustomed to consider the cup or vase which was very often found in connection with the graves of the Catacombs, and the branch of palm, as indubitable signs of a martyr's resting-place. Aringhi boldly takes this ground. Rochette, and some other later antiquaries of the same Church, disagree with him. It is this cup-and-palm theory which has in a great degree served to swell the supposed number of martyrs to such prodigious proportions. The cup, it was said, contained a portion of the martyr's blood, and was put by the side of his grave at the time of his burial. The palm was sculptured on the monumental slab to signify that the soldier of Christ had come off victorious, and had gone to join the "great multitude" standing before the Throne, "clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." (Rev. vii. 9.)

Aringhi relates that the early explorers of the cemeteries found in these cups coagulated blood of an earthy hue, which, when mixed with water, assumed its natural color and consistency, as if just drawn from the veins.† The subsequent discovery by Bosio of two vases in the Cemetery of Callistus seems to have settled the question with the advocates of the blood-cup theory. Adjoining one of these, not

\* Aringhi, i. 54.  
† Aringhi, Rom. Sub. i. 178.  
\* As, for instance, the inscription: "TRIVLA ET XI. MM. VV." which, having been interpreted, "Urula et undecim milia Virginum," gave rise to the strange legend of St. Urula and her 11,000 virgins. There can be no doubt that the proper reading is "Urula et undecim Martires Virgines." See Rochette's essay as above.

† This substance is a fine reddish dust, and it has sorely perplexed the various writers on the Catacombs to account for its presence in the cups. Mr. Seymour (*Morning with the Vestals*) says the Gordian knot by supposing it to be red earth, provided for the purpose of a pious fraud. The distinguished chemist Leibnitz found it to be of organic origin. Dr. Maitland (p. 176) supposes it to be a deposit from the decomposition of either the bodies, the apices, or the soil. As it is found elsewhere in the Catacombs than upon the cups, he seems to be the true explanation.

upon it, was the following inscription: "SA SATVRNII." This Bosio and his followers read, "*Sanguis Saturnini*," instead of "*Sancti Saturnini*." The other furnishes a remarkable foundation upon which to build so important a theory, viz.: the difference between the letters G and C; and this to be made out, too, from a surface of rough cement, centuries after the inscription of the letter upon it. This vase, which was also from the Cemetery of Callistus, and contained, as Romanists assert, the blood of St. Victor, had four letters remaining upon it when found by Bosio. Of these three, SAN, were very distinct; the other seemed to be a half-way letter between a G and C (though if one look in any Romish work on the Catacombs, one will find it engraved an unmistakable G—e. g., Roma Sub., p. 296; whereas in Maitland's engraving, p. 175, it comes very near being a C), which was eagerly adopted for a G by Bosio and his followers, but has been disputed by some more recent writers. The former would read the imperfect inscription SANG. (sanguis), the latter SANC. (sancti). On such slight threads hangs the huge martyrological system of the Church of Rome. As the early explorers of the Catacombs attempted to explain almost every inscription and symbol, with reference to the fact or to the manner of martyrdom, they were sometimes embarrassed by the figures which they found there. For instance, that small class of inscriptions in which a sort of play upon the name of the person appears in an accompanying figure; as on the tomb of *Nasira*, where a *little ship* is to be seen; or that of *Leo*, with a *veritable lion* beneath the inscription. The tomb of *Dracontius* exhibits a *dragon*; that of *Onager* an *ass*; that of *Doliceus* a *cat*; *Porcella* a *pig*. Dr. Maitland can hardly conjecture what the Roman martyrologists would make of these; he says, "Leo, indeed, would have been a victim to the *horns* of the Coliseum; but the pig and cat, the ass and the dragon, must have puzzled all but Gallions, whose love of the horrible would doubtless have invented unheard-of tortures to explain the symbols, and embodied them in engravings of fearful aspect."

It is time, however, to contrast with all this error and exaggeration the simple testimony of the number of early epitaphs in them, which are clearly those of martyrs, is very remarkable. Dr. Maitland asserts (p. 127) that only *five* have been discovered. Of these, one belongs to the time of the persecution under Adrian (A.D. 130), another to that of Antonine (A.D. 160), one or two to that of the Diocletian persecution, and one to the time of Julian. The following, the first mentioned above, is a good specimen of their simple character: "TEMPORE ADRIANI IMPERATORIS MARIUS ADOLESCENS DVX MILITVM QVI SATIS VIXIT DVX VITALI PRO CHO CVM SANGVINE CONSVNSIT IN PACE TANDEM QVIVIT BENE MERENTES CVM LACRIMIS ET METV POSVERVIT I. D. VI." At the right of this inscription is the combination of the Chi and Rho, the monogram of Christ's name, equivalent in Catacomb inscriptions to "in Christo," and on the left the palm-branch. It should be read thus: "In Christ. In the time of the Emperor Adrian, Marius, a young military officer who had lived long enough, when with blood he gave up his life for Christ. At length he rested in peace. The well-deserving set up this with tears and in fear. On the fifth, before the Ides of —." It should be remembered that in computing the number of veritable martyr epitaphs, the numerous votive tablets, erected long after their death to the memory of martyrs, or of those supposed to have been such, are altogether excluded. Such are the following from Aringhi: VIVASIO MARTYRI — "To the martyr Vivasio;" MARCELLA ET CHRISTI MARTYRES CCCC. — "Marcella, and 500 Martyrs of Christ." So then we have from all the vast recesses of the Catacombs only *five* reliable epitaphs of martyrs from which to infer a true estimate of the relation of the Christians of this period to martyr-worship; and they speak with one accord against any such perversion of a natural and praiseworthy sentiment. Only five! But has not the infallible Church set her seal to the fact that the Cemetery of Callistus alone contained 174,000 primitive martyrs? Yes, but "*credat Judeus Apella*."

(To be continued.)

PETER AND JUDAS.  
From the German of Thulock.

In the Christian life, the sun is often enveloped in mourning, and its progress through storms and tempests; but we have in the Holy Scriptures the most striking exemplifications of the truth, that we may fall, but not to our utter confusion, if only we know how we can be raised up again, and that it is to the most feeble of his children that the faithful hand of the Lord is especially turned. How many who have deplorably fallen have drawn from Peter's example strength to rise up again! What a mighty and gracious blessing has God imparted to us, in preserving for us this portion of Peter's history!

He who has a nature like Peter's—in the morning weak, in the evening bold; to-day flaming, to-morrow cold—may well despair, at first sight, of the possibility of God's forming a temple for his glory from such sorry materials. Yet it was to Peter that the Lord addressed these words, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Wonderful, indeed! Nor would we wonder the less did we know what poor materials the Lord possessed in the hearts of the rest of his disciples. How feeble their capacity for acquiring knowledge, or of understanding the plainest words of our Lord! and in their hearts how much impurity had grace

to struggle with—the faithlessness of a Thomas, for instance, and the impure fire of a John! But there is one thing to be observed, they were children, and something can be made of children—children can be trained. And hence, notwithstanding all their spiritual poverty, their Lord was so certain of the result that he could rejoice and praise his Father in heaven, saying, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

I have often met with those who could not conceive how a man like Peter, after such words as these, "Lord, to whom shall we go but unto thee? thou hast the words of eternal life," could deny his Master, and swear, "I know not the man." Ah, "Wind and weather have overnight Touched many a flower with a withering blight." If once a man fall, of course the whole world will run him down. But how do we estimate a false word? If that will be once thrown down which should stand forever between the Christian heart and falsehood on the other, what are called necessary lies can be allowed to introduce themselves, and if these can glide over the lips almost as freely as words of truth,—what reason have we to think that in the hour of danger and trial many of those who now boast with Peter, "Though all men shall be offended, yet will I never be offended," (Mat. xxvi. 33.) would not have fallen as that disciple fell?

But if none of us would have fallen on that night as Peter fell, how many of us, do we suppose, would have been found standing by his side when he testified in the very face of the judges of the crucified Jesus, "We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew, and hanged on a tree; him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him?" Acts v. 29-32. How many would have continued at his side when he willingly received the stripes, and went forth from the council, "rejoicing that he was counted worthy to suffer shame for his name?" Acts v. 41. When his Saviour was dying on the cross, he was among the cowards; but when he was to verify the Saviour's words, "Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me afterwards," henceforth we find him following his Saviour indeed,—following him to the pillar and to shame, and at last entering upon a participation in his Saviour's cross. And how many of us who stand by and accuse him would have followed? No, Peter; thou knowest what thou saidst when thou spakest to thy Saviour thus: "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."

In what more consolatory manner could this great truth have been presented to timid hearts, wavering still between heaven and earth,—our good Lord maketh his strength perfect in weakness! How often have I, when I felt my hands feeble and my knees weary, when I staggered hither and thither with uncertain steps, when I sighed, "O, shall the twilight never vanish, and I find entrance into the perfect light?"—how often have I, a fallen child, arisen by Peter's example!

Verily, it must have been long indeed before he was thoroughly imbued with the Spirit of the Saviour. Even after he had preached Christ, not only are we told that the *new man* Peter had to strive with the old, but that the old man was often victorious. When those zealous for the law came down from Jerusalem, he was afraid to eat any longer with his brethren contrary to the law. In this respect he feared man more than God; he acted contrary to his better knowledge; and for this he was reproved by his brother Paul. That the fear of man could conquer the better knowledge of an apostle was shameful in the highest degree; but while it saddens us deeply to think of the greatness of human weakness, it leads us with still greater self-distrust to exclaim, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall," and to renounce all confidence in one's own strength. At the same time, we have in this small testimony to the fact, that such grace and not a little weakness may coexist for a long time in the human heart; while this testimony is enhanced by the reflection, that it was this very Peter who laid at Pentecost the first foundations of the Christian Church, who took joyfully scourings and revilings for the name of his Lord even to the cross. Patience, therefore, thou weak heart of mine,—patience with thyself, seeing God has so much long-suffering with thee.

But how has this child, who has so often fallen, been always raised up again! He fell—but he never let go the hand which sustained him; and it was this hand which lifted him up again! The disciple spake no doubtful truth when he once said, "To whom shall we go but unto thee? thou hast the words of eternal life; and again when he said, "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee;" and, therefore, no sooner did he fall than the tears of penitence sprung forth, and, from these penitential tears, invigorated love. How beautifully is this depicted in the narrative of his denial! He was yet standing by the fire in the court of the high priest, when the doors of the inner apartment opened, and the Saviour stepped forth from the judicial examination. The cock crowed twice; "and the Lord turned to Peter, and Peter thought on the words of the Lord, which he said, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly." O that Judas could have wept such tears! Perhaps it was at

this very time that he went to the high priests and said, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood;" even then, perhaps, there was time to seek the Saviour of sinners himself. O Judas, why wentest thou to those cold-hearted hypocrites, who flung thee back thy money with a— "What is that to us? see thou to that!" Why didst thou not hasten to Him whose innocent blood thou hadst betrayed, and raise, even beneath the cross, thy hands in supplication? True, those arms, which were ever stretched forth to every seeking sinner, were now nailed upon the cross; but not assuredly those lips would have said to thee, "See thou to that!" If he could no more stretch forth his arms to thee, would not his broken-hearted look at least have spoken forgiveness? But in that heart there was neither love nor faith! Severe, indeed, were the words pronounced over his betrayer by the meek and gentle Lamb of God: "The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born." Matt. xxvi. 24.

Self-murder is too often the last convulsive effort of a storm which has raged for years through the bodily frame. Where it reveals its own peculiar nature, suicide is but the topstone of a life-long slavery to sin, in which the sinner springs into its opened jaws, merely because, over mountains and valleys, weary and worn, he has been lashed on by sin to this brink, where the last deed of his life is the culminating point of his sin, and in which he dies. Can there be ought more horrible than self-murder?

My father and my God, one thing would I entreat: If in my great weakness I should fall, O give me true contrition in my heart, and let not my repentance be without tears! Lo, I can say with Peter, "If thou takest me not up, I know not where to go." Thy hand I never will let go. And if I leave it not, thou wilt not let me lie in the dust, but wilt lift me up; and when thou shalt have humbled me, so that I renounce dependence on myself, and seek my strength, my consolation, all in thee, then the hour will come when I shall no more tread with uncertain steps, but shall walk forever in uprightness of heart before thy face!—Banner of the Cross.

### ROMAN CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT NATIONS.

N. Roussel, of Paris, has undertaken to institute an extensive comparison between Roman Catholic and Protestant nations, under the three-fold aspect of their material progress, their intelligence, and their morality. For some years, in various portions of the European continent, but more especially in France, attacks on Protestantism have been renewed with double ardour, and, if so questionable a term may be used, have increased in audacity; and there have not been wanting writers who maintain that the Reformation was, for the people who embraced it, the cause of both moral and intellectual decadence. Writing in the interest of the Romish Church, they have so altered the history of the Reformation, as apparently to justify the cruelties to which so-called heretics were rendered subject; Protestantism has even been represented as the source of all revolutionary ideas, and of the most monstrous tenets of Socialism. In an article contained in several numbers of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, entitled "The Reform before Luther," the spiritualism of the period is represented as confounded with pantheism, and subtle heresies, merely a veil to political organization; and the faith of the Vaudois and Albigenses is held up as not having its development in mountains but in cities; not in the pious convictions of sincere hearts, but in the cabinets of princes and the intrigues of statesmen. All the world knows how Innocent III., at the suggestion of Durando of Huesca of Aragon, who had formerly been a Vaudois, for which he asked pardon of God and man, established under the same impression, a confederation of the model of the German communists, consisting chiefly of the poor of Lyons, who carried into effect the same purity of manners, essaying thus to connect the heretics, but whose members, by their very faithfulness of imitation, were themselves soon suspected. It is not to be deemed, however, that there was any confusion of religious ideas in Europe, and that the period which gave birth to an energetic and profound philosophy, though without having discovered all the principles of thought, was to some extent tainted with rationalism and spiritualism. In face of the current misrepresentations and falsehoods re-produced in French works under the approbation of the highest ecclesiastical authority, all that is necessary is the establishment of the actual verity of fact. This is attempted by M. Roussel, who, in place of signifying errors, and disposing in logical form of false positions, prefers to expose simply the action of modern civilization in its results on Roman Catholic and Protestant nations. This comparative view, which each reader in France may at once comprehend and easily verify for himself, is certainly more eloquent and more persuasive than any other species of eloquence. In fact, the difference existing between the two categories is not a little striking. In which exactitude is the principal requirement for a right decision, the authorities are cited. Mr. Roussel draws a parallel between the Northern and Southern American continents, between Ireland and Scotland, and between the Swiss Catholics and the Swiss Protestants, between Austria and Prussia, Belgium and Holland. As to Spain and England, he proceeds to another plan; he takes them in two several epochs of their history—Spain in the sixteenth and England in the nineteenth century. In Italy he