

Original Poetry.

FOR THE CHURCH.

THE PASSAGE OF THE BERESINA.

In these behold the tools,
The broken tools, that tyrants cast away
By myriads, when they dare to pave their way
With human hearts—to what?—a dream alone.
Childe Harold.

Onward! still on—the relics of a host,
Whose fame hath made Earth's proudest monarchs quake,
They rush, like Ocean's waves tumultuous tost—
Bloodshed and famine mingling in their wake!
There, in one mass, behold the proud array—
The boast of France! Ere yet shall close that day,
Not e'en his voice his minions shall awake;
Nor yet a mother's eye—if such were there—
Shall tell amid the ghastly heaps the son she bare!

Onward they press—far, ever in their rear,
The foeman sweeps relentless on his way—
The cannon speaks in thunder to the ear—
No voice can bid that fearful torrent stay—
Or rouse their spirit for the bloody fray—
And flash on flash, and gleaming steel appear!
What reck they ought of war, save mortal fear,
That bids them not from safety madly stay,
But seek that boon in fight! For, wild and dread,
O'er many a dreary plain the Hettman's Cossacks spread.

Mark, how their spectral corpses, grimly strew
Their brethren's path; and all unheeded lie,
Save by their warrior foe's marauding crew,
Whose knives gleam swiftly on the closing eye—
Waked, but to hear the curse that bids them die!
And there the banner, once that proudly flew,
War-worn and soiled, lies stiff'ning in the hold
Of him who, to his honoured standard true,
Binds to his heart that pall with one convulsive fold!

Onward! still on—for now, before their view
The sullen river rolls its darkling flood—
The clang of war, behind, hath burst auew—
No time have they o'er sad defeat to brood.
Onward—o'er dying friends, so late who stood
The sharers of their toil—for life, for life,
The madd'ning race begins: in that dark hour,
With every horror fraught, with danger rife,
Who dreamt of kindred ties, or felt sweet friendship's power?

And fast and wild, in gathering crowds they come;
And shrieks and groans from out that mingling mass,
Tell that the anguish'd spirit wingeth home
Its weary flight. They win that narrow pass!
But, ever and anon, the thundering bass
Of guns, that rumble in the distance, boom—
Waking to one continuous peal! Alas!
Is there no hope for that late victor host?
The despot's arm, earth's scourge, and Gaul's triumphant
boast!

None! for the tempest breath of heaven hath woke,
And, darkly green, the swollen waters flow;
The voice of God in sweeping winds hath spoke—
The rear-guard yields to the victorious foe!
It heaves—it yawns—O God! with one dread throe,
The crowded bridge, their last resource, hath broke;
And thrice ten thousand souls are hurled below,
Into that "hell of waters," fierce and strong,
Whose waves relentless bear the flower of France along!

Aye, and her vine-clad vallies long shall hear
The voice of mourning for her sons who lie,
Thrown by the sated wave on deserts drear;
And long shall ring "that agonizing cry,"
And haunt his dreams, when none to soothe is nigh!
And fortune frown, shall thunder in his ear
Mid courts and camps—the worm that ne'er shall die—
And tell to every age, like Heaven's own wrath,
The vengeance dire that waits upon the Invader's path!
B. V. R.
Belleville, 1839.

CHURCH CALENDAR.

April 28.—Fourth Sunday after Easter.
May 1.—St. Philip and St. James' Day,
5.—Fifth Sunday after Easter.
9.—Ascension Day.

THE DEATH OF SIR RALPH ABERCROMBIE.

Throughout this dreadful contest, Sir Ralph Abercrombie, unattended even by an aid-de-camp, moved about cheering the men, and exerting himself to restore order. He was thus employed when two French dragons rode furiously at him, and endeavoured to lead him away prisoner. The brave veteran would not yield, upon which one of the troopers made a lunge at his breast, and passed his sword with great force under the general's arm: though severely bruised by a blow from the sword-guard, Abercrombie seized the Frenchman's weapon, and, after a brief struggle, wrested it from his hand; he then turned, with equal judgment and magnanimity, to oppose his remaining adversary, but that man was already harmless; a corporal of the 42d, observing the perilous situation of his chief, sprang forward, and applying the muzzle of his piece to the Frenchman's side, shot him dead.

A great and important victory was obtained, though at a price which was accounted, by every man and officer in the British army, as far too costly. The gallant veteran who had that day wielded their energies, was found to have received a desperate wound; under which, now that the excitement of a doubtful contest was over, his physical powers gave way. At what precise period during the battle the fatal bullet struck him, has not been accurately ascertained.

"Some time after," says General David Stuart of Garth, who was himself present in the action, "the general attempted to alight from his horse; a soldier of the highlanders, seeing he had some difficulty in dismounting, assisted him, and asked if he should follow him with the horse. He answered, that he would not require him any more that day. While all this was passing, no officer was near him. The first officer he met was Sir Sidney Smith; and, observing that his sword was broken, the general presented him with the trophy he had gained. He betrayed no symptoms of personal pain, nor relaxed a moment the intense interest he took in the state of the field; nor was it perceived that he was wounded, till he was joined by some of the staff, who observed the blood trickling down his thigh. Even during the interval from the time of his being wounded and the last charge of cavalry, he walked with a firm and steady step along the line of the highlanders and General Stuart's brigade, to the position of the guards in the centre of the line, where, from its elevated situation, he had a full view of the whole field of battle.—Here he remained, regardless of the wound, giving his orders so much in his usual manner, that the officers who came to receive them perceived nothing that indicated either pain or anxiety. These officers afterwards could not sufficiently express their astonishment, when they came to learn the state in which he was, and the pain which he must have suffered from the nature of his wound. A musket ball

had entered his groin and lodged deep in the hip joint; the ball was even so firmly fixed in the hip joint, that it required considerable force to extract it after his death. My respectable friend, Dr. Alexander Robertson, the surgeon who attended him, assured me that nothing could exceed his surprise and admiration at the calmness of his heroic patient. With a wound in such a part, connected with and bearing on every part of his body, it is a matter of surprise how he could move at all; and nothing but the most intense interest in the fate of his army, the issue of the battle, and the honour of the British name, could have inspired and sustained such resolution. As soon as the impulse ceased in the assurance of victory, he yielded to exhausted nature, acknowledged that he required some rest, and lay down on a little sand hill close to the battery."

By this time the rumour was spread abroad that the commander-in-chief was wounded, and the place where he lay was soon surrounded by the general and other officers. At a respectful distance from that melancholy party, the soldiers stood in groups; the triumphant feelings attendant on victory having given place to the deepest sorrow, and the most intense anxiety; for Abercrombie was adored by the men. A strict disciplinarian, he nevertheless knew how to unite kindness with rigour; and his mode of address was at all times such as to win the affections of the very men he was compelled from time to time to punish. The consequence was, that among the rugged countenances that watched him on that eventful occasion, there was scarce one over which the "unaccustomed tear" did not flow; and when at last he was borne off for transportation on board the Foudroyant, he carried with him the blessings and the prayers of all ranks and degrees in the army.

Whatever science could suggest, or skill execute, to preserve a life so valuable, was performed by the medical gentlemen both of the fleet and the army. Every possible effort was made to extract the ball; and he bore for a while with so much firmness the painful and irritating operation, that confident hopes were entertained almost to the last moment. It appeared, however, that the mind was on this, as it is on various occasions, too active for the body. Sir Ralph Abercrombie could not be persuaded to divert his thoughts from the condition and prospects of the army; over which he continued to watch, while a patient in the flag-ship, with the same intensity of interest which he had experienced while on shore. His son, Lieutenant-Colonel Abercrombie, attended him, indeed, from day to day, and took his instructions exactly as if no misfortune had befallen him. It would have been marvellous had nature withstood this two-fold pressure of bodily suffering and mental disquiet. Throughout the evening of the 27th he became more than usually restless, complaining of excessive languor and an increased degree of thirst; and, from an early hour on the morning of the 28th, his medical attendants entertained serious apprehensions. These were not misplaced; for after lingering a few hours, apparently in little pain, though labouring under a difficulty of respiration exceedingly distressing to behold, the lamp of life went out, and the soul of the chivalrous and kind-hearted veteran returned "to Him who gave it."—*Rev. G. R. Gleig.*

THE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE.

We are informed by Strabo, that the eloquence of the ancients was only an imitation of poetry, divested of its measures; and Lord Bacon, carrying out and enlarging the definition, observes, that in all persuasions wrought by eloquence, or by any impressions of a similar nature, which paint and disguise the true appearance of things, the chief recommendation unto the reason is derived from the imagination. But herein we discover a distinction of very great importance between the oratory of the Pulpit and the oratory of the Senate. The Christian advocate will employ colours, indeed, but not disguises. He will array virtue and vice in the most attractive and the most repulsive attitudes, with all the charm of hue, and all the gloom of shadow; but the features will be only drawn larger than nature, so to speak, not beyond nature. Hence his most magnificent pictures are usually historical; his portraits copied from the living or the dead; his situations suggested and authorised by a familiar acquaintance with the workings of the human mind, in all its varying positions of dignity, piety, folly and degradation. He thus speaks as one having authority, so that his opinions wear the aspect and the gravity of the results of conviction, and are received by the listener as the offspring of truth. Even the hideous grouping, the fearful contortion, the ghastly expression, which frequently animate the designs of our early preachers, may be traced to their diligent and courageous anatomy of the soul and the passions. They had hung over the convulsed agony of the suffering sinner, and recorded all the deepening throes of the spiritual dissolution. They had sat by the pillow of the expiring Christian, and beheld with the eye of faith the ANGELIC CLOUD descending upon the chamber of death. What they had seen and heard, they declared with uncompromising hardihood and sincerity; but, like some of the Italian painters, the vigour of their feelings, and the sublime energy of their genius, often hurried them into a grotesque and offensive audacity of sentiment. Their imagery is not seldom discordant. Sir Joshua Reynolds relates, that upon the first inspection of Poussin's wonderful picture of Perseus and Medusa's Head, he turned away in disgust; every principle of composition seemed to be violated, that the stormy agitation of the story might be deepened. A closer examination enabled him to discover the characteristic beauties of the Master.—*Church of England Quarterly Review.*

BOOKS.

Books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a progeny of life in them, to be as active as that soul whose whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve, as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. I know they are as lively, and as vigorously productive, as those fabulous dragon's teeth; and being sown up and down, may chance to bring up armed men. And yet, on the other hand, unless wariness be used, as good almost kill a man as kill a good book: who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life. It is true, no ago can restore a life, whereof perhaps there is no great loss; and revolutions of ages do not oft recover the loss of a rejected truth, for the want of which whole nations fare the worse. We should be wary, therefore, what persecutions we raise against

the living labours of public men, how we spill that seasoned life of man, preserved and stored up in books; since we see a kind of homicide may be thus committed, sometimes a martyrdom; and if it extend to the whole impression, a kind of massacre, whereof the execution ends not in the slaying of an elemental life, but strikes at the ethereal and fifth essence, the breath of reason itself; slays an immortality rather than a life.—*Milton.*

The Garner.

THE NATURAL SINFULNESS OF MAN.

The image of God in the human soul is disfigured indeed, but not effaced. That we are intended for another and a better state of existence than the present, is attested by those instincts, energies, and apprehensions of our minds, which have little or nothing to do with our actual location upon the earth, and which, therefore, we cannot conceive a wise Providence to have placed within us, had he not intended them to be hereafter more fully developed. These however, at this moment, are like golden treasures in earthen vessels, or rather, like jewels and costly works of art which are occasionally found imbedded among the ruined edifices of former ages, telling at the same time the story of their present desolation, and of the more glorious state of things with which they were originally connected. Every theory of religion which does not assert as its primary position the ruined condition of the human mind, as we now witness it in this world, is obviously wrong, because it is obviously irreconcilable with the evidence of incontrovertible facts. But harsh and uncompromising statements are seldom consistent with the sober character of real truth. The good principles of our minds are manifestly not entirely destroyed, but only crushed; not extinct, but only benumbed and embarrassed in their operations. It is the object of religion to awaken them from this lethargy, and to restore them to their original vigour. How then would common reason tell us that this object might be best relieved, even were revelation silent on the subject? Obviously by invigorating, not extinguishing, the latent and almost imperceptible spark of holiness within us; by calling into better and more consistent action our suspended or misapplied energies. Now it is evident that such is the salutary struggle in which we are engaged by the instrumentality of Christianity, if we understand our religion rightly.—*Rev. Dr. Shuttleworth.*

A GOOD NAME.

What is it that makes the monumental tablet, the bust or statue, speak, and speak home to the heart? It is the name which yields that witness, and which animates the stone; which in one word comprises all that which Death has not the power to seize, nor the licence to destroy. And what is the virtue of a name? Will the scoffer say, mere sound and nothing more? Base and pernicious cavil! Observe the sordid infamy of such affected scorn for names and characters. Say they are shadows; but the shadow shows the just proportion of the figure, and, if rightly measured, leaves a perfect record of its altitude. And is the substance too of all such deserts reduced to nothing, when its date in this world shall expire? Is it nothing to have been good and great; to have filled a part in life, and filled it well? Were these things nothing when they formed the living objects of attention to mankind? Ambitious men may find it so. It is so to those who pursue forbidden paths to glory, and who mistake ill-gained applauses for renown. Their hearts will tell them that it is but a dissembled part which they sustain. In that case, indeed, their name will be but the shadow of a shade. They have but the momentary plaudits, and the transient honours of a noisy theatre, filled for an hour, but cold and cheerless when the crowd removes; a theatre in which no one suspects in the person who fills the part, and wears the trappings, the real hero of the story.—*Archdeacon Pott.*

TRUE SPIRITUAL GUIDES.

Those who derive their authority by a continued succession from the Apostles; who are called unto and constituted in their office in a regular and peaceable way, agreeable to the institution of God, and the constant practice of his Church; according to rules approved in the best and purest ages; who are prepared to the exercise of their function by the best education that ordinarily can be provided, under sober discipline, in the schools of the prophets, who thence by competent endowments of mind, and useful furniture of good learning, acquired by painful study, become qualified to guide and instruct the people; who, after previous examination of their abilities, and probable testimonies concerning their manners, (with regard to the qualifications of incorrupt doctrine, and sober conversation described by the Apostles,) are adjudged fit for the office; who also in a pious, grave, solemn manner, with invocation of God's blessing, by laying on the hands of the presbytery, are admitted thereunto. * * * * * Those also, who are acknowledged by the laws of our country, an obligation to obey whom is part of that human constitution, unto which we are in all things (not evidently repugnant to God's law) indispensably bound to submit; whom our sovereign, God's vicegerent and the nursing father of his Church among us, (unto whom in all things high respect, in all lawful things entire obedience is due,) doth command and encourage us to obey. Those, I say, to whom this character plainly doth agree, we may reasonably be assured, that they are our true guides and governors, whom we are obliged to follow and obey.—*Dr. I. Barrow.*

SHIPS.

By the invention of shipping, and the art of navigation, the sea is made in reality to join those nations which it appears to divide, the communication being often far more easy and expeditious by water than it would have been by land. The riches of both the Indies are wafted to our shores; we sit at home, and feast upon the productions of every country under heaven, while the superfluity of our own commodities is disposed of to advantage abroad. A friendly intercourse is opened between the most distant lands; savages are humanized, and become proficient in the arts and sciences; the Gospel is preached among them, and the light of truth made to shine upon those who sat in darkness and the shadow of death; they are taught the art of arts, the science of sciences, the art of holy living and the science of salvation. A large vessel, with all its conveniences, constructed in such a manner as to go upon the surface of the water, and to brave the fury of the winds and waves, is, perhaps, the master-piece of human contrivance; and the Psalmist, when contemplating the wonders of the ocean, cries out in admiration, as if placed in a situation like this of ours—"There go the ships."—*Bishop Horne.*

GROWTH IN GRACE.

The growth of a believer is not like a mushroom, but like an oak, which increases slowly indeed, but surely.—Many suns, showers, and frosts pass upon it before it comes to perfection; and though in winter it seems dead, it is gathering strength at the root.—*Cowper.*

All our outward performances and worship of the body are nothing but the body of worship, and therefore nothing but a carcass, except the Lord Jesus by his Spirit breathe upon it the breath of life.—*Archbishop Leighton.*

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A LADY of the highest respectability is anxious to receive two or three children, from six to twelve years of age, who would be boarded and educated in her family. They would be instructed in the usual branches of a good English education, and the greatest attention would be paid to their religious improvement. Music, Dancing, Singing and the Guitar would be taught, if required. Application may be made (if by letter, post paid,) to the Rev. A. N. Bethune, Rector of Cobourg, or Mr. Sheriff Rattan, of the same place.
Cobourg, January 18th, 1839. 39-6w.

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