

# The Church.

THEREFORE I WILL NOT BE NEGLIGENT TO PUT YOU ALWAYS IN REMEMBRANCE OF THESE THINGS, THOUGH YE KNOW THEM AND BE ESTABLISHED IN THE PRESENT TRUTH.—2 PETER, 1, 12.

VOL. I.]

COBOURG, U. C., SATURDAY, APRIL 14, 1838.

[NO. XLIV.]

## Original Poetry.

For the Church.

### THE DEATH BELL.

Toll on, toll on—  
A son of man is passing to his rest,  
A wayward child hath sought its parent breast :—  
Toll on, toll on.

Bear on the dead :  
On the dark bier the home-come wanderer lies ;  
Dimm'd is the lustre of those rayless eyes,  
Their light is fled.

On—slowly—on :  
The varying dreams of love, of pride, of power,—  
The aspiring hopes of many a lofty hour,  
With him are gone.

Tread soft and light :  
That palsied heart no more with life is warm,  
The quickening essence from that silent form  
Hath wing'd its flight !

Look on him now :—  
The cold still torpor of the ice-bound wave,  
The chilling signet of the opening grave  
Is on that brow !

But on, toll on—  
A struggling spirit is at length unbound,  
A wearied pilgrim hath a resting found :—  
Toll on, toll on !—

Voice of the tomb !  
A thousand hearts thy awful notes have stirr'd,  
A thousand years thy deep-toned summons heard,—  
Sound forth the doom.

"Man ! thou must die."  
So prophet-like would seem the fearful knell,  
To the chill'd heart th' unerring fate to tell  
"All—all must die."

Stern tolls thy chime—  
The funeral-herald of the warrior brave,  
Whom glory's halo lighteth to the grave  
In life's full prime.

As when, alone  
The stranger bendeth to the quiet tomb,  
Nor mourner's voice for his unheeded doom,  
Save thy deep tone.

Near, ah ! too near—  
The gathering voices of a thousand graves,  
Like the hoarse murmur of the sullen waves,  
Awe-struck I hear.

They call too plain,  
"Fond soul, come down from thine unearthly dreams,—  
"Thy fancied might, thy visionary schemes  
"Alike are vain.

"For what art thou ?—  
"True friends and kindred once were by thy side  
"Brave hearts flush'd high with hope and youthful pride :—  
"Where are they now ?

"Strive up no more :—  
"The lingering sands now shiver in thy glass,  
"Earth and its visions as a dream will pass,  
"And all is o'er !"

Why bring again  
The empty shadows of each vain regret,  
The buried hopes of life remember'd yet,  
Thou chilling strain ?

Oft hast thou swept  
The slumbering heart-strings of the faithful breast,  
And waked sad music from their broken rest,  
That long had slept—

Deep joys long fled—  
The bitterness of Death again is proved,  
The cold earth closing o'er the lost, the lov'd,  
The early dead !—

Break not their sleep :—  
From their deep quiet home no murmurs rise,  
The tears are passing from the mourner's eyes—  
Must they still weep ?

Thine hopes recall :—  
My soul ! the dark cold grave is not for thee ;  
Thou from the slimy earth-worm's crawl art free,—  
Earth is not all !—

Eternity !  
Thy light is flashing through the mortal gloom,  
Thy star is bright beyond the craving tomb ;—  
We die for thee !

Toll on, toll on—  
Joy to the wanderer in his resting found,  
Joy to the spirit from its chain unbound :—  
Toll on, toll on !

Toronto, April, 1838.

ZADIG.

## SCRIPTURAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

NO. XI.

VEGETABLE CORRECTIVE OF BITTER OR BRACKISH WATERS.

Exodus xv. 23, 25. "And they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. And Moses cried unto the Lord : and the Lord shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet."

The Hebrew word *marah* signifies bitter. The water of the deserts of the East in general, and in particular in a part of the great Arabian Desert, is bitter and brackish. It has likewise been discovered, that there are several kinds of plants by which this water is rendered drinkable.

Thus a certain tree growing on the coast of Coromandel, which is called in the Tamul language *nellimaram*, possesses this power. A missionary of the name of Kirnander states, that in the year 1744 they had the misfortune to have a fine spring in the garden of the missionaries turn bitter from a want of rain, which is frequently the case. He was advised to cut down a nellimaram, and to throw it into the spring : he did so, and the water became and remained drinkable. The Tamulians, when digging a well, employ this wood as the underlayer, which is let down into the water, and the stones built over it.

In Peru there is a plant, called by the Spaniards *yerva cani-ani*, which has the power of purifying and rendering drinkable any water however brackish and corrupt. The Peruvians when they travel to Buenos Ayres or Chili, always carry the herb with them, and do not hesitate to drink any water which they meet with on the way, when they have purified it by means of this herb, which is done by pouring the water upon it, and letting it stand a few minutes before it is wanted for use. The water thus purified, nearly resembles warm water poured upon the best green tea : its colour is light green, with a light yellowish tinge.

TEARS PRESERVED IN BOTTLES.

PSALM lvi. 8. "Put thou my tears into thy bottle."

The Persians are accustomed in the first month of every year to commemorate for ten days the death of Imam Hossein. This Hossein was the second son of Ali, the brother of Hassan, who having refused to recognize Yezid for the legitimate caliph, was obliged to quit Medina, and retire to Mecca. Yezid dispatched a force against him, which meeting him, killed him and all who were with him, in the sixty first year of the Hegira. These events have been formed into a drama of several parts, one of which is performed in each successive day of the commemoration. On one of these nights, the whole of the embassy was invited to attend. The Persians were all in mourning dresses, and no man did put on his ornaments. (Exodus xxxiii. 4) A mollah of high consideration reminded the crowd present of the value of each tear shed for the sake of Imam Hossein, which he represented as an atonement for a past life of wickedness. In the tragical parts of the drama, afterwards acted, most of the audience appeared to weep very unaffectedly ; and Mr. Morier was witness to many real tears which fell from the grand vizier and the mollah who sat near him. "In some of these mournful assemblies," he adds, "it is the custom for a priest to go about to each person, at the height of his grief, with a piece of cotton in his hand, with which he carefully collects the falling tears, and which he then squeezes into a bottle, preserving them with the greatest caution. This practically illustrates that passage of the Psalmist, 'Put thou my tears into thy bottle.'"

Some of the Persians assert that in the agony of death, when all medicines have failed, a drop of tears so collected put into the mouth of a dying man has been known to revive him : and it is for such use they are collected.

EASTERN BOTTLES.

GENESIS xxi. 14. "And Abraham took bread and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulders."

CHARDIN informs us, that the Arabs, and all those who lead a wandering life, preserve their water, milk, and other liquors, in leathern bottles. "They keep in them more fresh than otherwise they would do. These leathern bottles are made of goat-skins. When the animal is killed, they cut off its feet and its head, and they draw it in this manner out of the skin without opening its belly. They afterwards sew up the places where the legs were cut off and the tail, and when it is filled they tie it about the neck. These nations, and the country people of Persia, never go a journey without a small leathern bottle of water hanging by their side like a scrip. The great leathern bottles are made of the skin of a he-goat, and the small ones that serve instead of a bottle of water on the road, are made of a kid's skin." These bottles are frequently rent when old and much used, and are capable of being repaired by being bound up.—"This they do," CHARDIN says, "sometimes by setting in a piece; sometimes by gathering up the wounded place in the manner of a purse: sometimes they put in a round flat piece of wood, and by that means stop the hole."

MAUNDRELL gives a similar account. Speaking of the Greek convent at Bellmount, near Tripoli in Syria, he says, "The same person whom we saw officiating at the altar in his embroidered sacerdotal robe, brought us the next day, on his own back, a kid and a goat-skin of wine as a present from the convent."

Mr. BRUCE gives a description of the girba, which seems to be a vessel of the same kind as those now mentioned, only of dimensions considerably larger. "A girba is an ox's skin, squared, and the edges sewed together very artificially, by a double seam which does not let out water, much resembling that upon our best English cricket-balls. An opening is left at the top of the girba, in the same manner as the bung hole of a cask; around this the skin is gathered to the size of a large handful, which, when the girba is full of water, is tied round with whipcord. These girbas generally contain about sixty gallons each, and two of them are the load of a camel. They are besmeared on the outside with grease, as well to hinder the water from oozing through, as to prevent its being evaporated by the heat of the sun on the girba: which, in fact, happened to us twice, so as to put us in imminent danger of perishing with thirst."

MARRIAGE PORTIONS.

GENESIS xxxiv. 12. "Ask me never so much dowry and gift,

and I will give according as ye shall say unto me: but give me the damsel to wife."

It was usual for the bridegroom to give to his bride or her father a dowry or portion of money or goods, as a kind of purchase for her person. That this was the custom among the Greeks and other ancient nations is abundantly evident from Homer and other classical writers. But the practice is still continued in some of the Asiatic countries. "The modern Arabs, who live under tents," observes DE LA ROQUE, "purchase their wives: and fathers are never more happy than when they have many daughters. This is in many cases the principal part of the riches of a house. Accordingly, when a young man would treat with a person whose daughter he is inclined to marry, he says to him, 'will you give me your daughter for fifty sheep? for six camels? or for a dozen cows?' If he be not rich enough to make such offers, he will propose the giving her to him for a mare or a young colt: considering in the offer the merit of the young woman, the rank of her family, and the circumstances of him that desires to marry her. When these preliminaries are agreed upon on both sides, the contract is drawn up by him who acts as cadi, or judge, among them."

THUNBERG alludes to the same practice as still prevailing in Japan; and observes, that the more daughters a man has, and the handsomer they are, the richer he esteems himself: it being the established custom for suitors to make presents to their father-in-law before they obtain his daughter.

## A CANDID EXAMINATION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH;

IN TWO LETTERS TO A FRIEND.  
LETTER II.

(Concluded from our last.)

The morning and evening prayers of the church are commended by the reading, on the part of the minister, of two or three selections from Scripture, intended to call the people to a sense of their condition, and to prepare their minds for the solemnities in which they are about to engage. Then follows an earnest *Exhortation*, setting forth the duty of the worshippers, and inviting all present to unite in a humble confession of sin, which is the first thing necessary when we come into the temple of God. We have no praises to offer, no favours to ask for ourselves or others, and no consolations or encouragements to receive from the holy writings, without first acknowledging our transgressions, and sincerely supplicating for the pardoning mercy of God.

After the *Exhortation*, in which the minister acquaints the people with the necessity and qualifications of *Confession*, they all unite, each one for himself, in bewailing their sins, and imploring the forgiveness of their Maker. And if this confession be made from the heart; if this supplication proceed from a sincere desire of pardon, and be accompanied with strong resolutions of obedience, then are the people encouraged to hope that their iniquities are blotted out; and this encouragement is conveyed to them by the minister in the *Declaration of Absolution* which follows. He is authorized by that Almighty Being from whom he derives his commission, to declare that if they be truly penitent, their sins are forgiven; and on their bended knees, they are to receive the joyful declaration.

After this, as the restored prodigal, as the pardoned sinner, as the humble disciple, they are permitted to call God 'Our Father,' and to unite in that comprehensive form which Jesus Christ has commanded us always to use, and by which we acknowledge ourselves as his followers.

After repeating the *Lord's prayer*, and in view of the great privileges received in the forgiveness of sins, and the permission through Christ to call God, *Father*, the whole congregation unite in solemn ascriptions of praise, the people performing their part as well as the minister his, and thus manifesting their common interest in the whole service.

When the daily course of praises is ended, a *Lesson* is read from the old Testament, which is followed by a hymn of thanksgiving, with reference to the goodness of God in all his revelations to the children of men, and including the most devout adoration of his righteous attributes. To this succeeds a *Lesson* in the New Testament, which is followed by another hymn of praise, called forth by a sense of fervent gratitude for the interesting truths of the Gospel of his dear Son. And what can be more proper than, after hearing those truths which are able to make us wise unto salvation, for the whole congregation to rise and exclaim, with one voice, 'We praise thee, O God, we acknowledge thee to be the Lord,' or 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people.'

Having heard the word of God as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, we proceed to acknowledge that our faith as Christians is founded thereon, and in union with the church universal in heaven and upon earth, we declare the several articles of our belief as contained in the *Apostles' Creed*.

Then having first petitioned for mercy and salvation, we proceed to the *Collects* or prayers, which are arranged agreeably to St. Paul's direction to Timothy: "I exhort, therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and for all in authority," &c. The service, by being thrown into short collects, instead of one continued prayer, is better calculated to keep up the spirit of devotion, and to prevent the mind from losing sight of the subject before it. Our natures are such that we cannot confine our attention to any one thing for a great length of time, and the variety in the devotions of the church is admirably adapted to afford that relief which the mind requires.