

ed, the authorised version is rejected, and the marginal reading substituted in an important word, 'whereby,' viz., by the cross, instead of 'by whom,' viz., by Christ. This might be unimportant in another connexion but here the design is manifest. We have then prayers, 'confirm this stone, and bless this stone,' which, though just possibly capable of a spiritual application to the figurative stone—Jesus Christ—yet are manifestly connected with the mere block of stone in a way revolting to a spiritual mind. These affairs are now becoming gross and rank, and it is our duty to watch and resist this spirit of worshipping externals, which is travelling to its ordinary consummation."—*B. Vindicator.*

PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD.

"The solemn usage of praying for the Dead can be founded only on the belief that there exists a middle state of purification and suffering through which souls pass after death, and from which the prayers of the faithful may aid in delivering them. The antiquity, therefore, of the use of prayers for the dead (and we trace them through all the most ancient Liturgies) sufficiently proves to us how ancient was the belief on which they are founded. From the Second Book of the Maccabees (taking these Books merely in the Protestant view of them, as an uncanonical but authentic record) we learn that the ancient Jews, on this point, held the same faith as the Catholics:—"It is therefore a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins."

We cannot wonder that such a belief should be thus ancient for assuredly none can be more natural; nor, on the other hand, can anything be less consistent either with our knowledge of human nature, or notion of the divine, than such an absence of all gradation, both in reward and punishment, as the want of an intermediate state between heaven and hell must imply. What the Protestant divine, Paley, has said on the subject of Purgatory, appears to me to be founded on such sentiments as both reason and nature approve; 'Who can bear,' he asks, 'the thought of dwelling in everlasting torments! Yet who can say that a God everlastingly just will not inflict them? The mind of man seeks for some resource: it finds one only in conceiving "that some temporary punishment, after death, may purify the soul from its moral pollutions, and make it at last acceptable even to a Deity infinitely pure."

Folly agreeing with Paley on this point, it was with some pleasure I now discovered that, from Justin Martyr down to Basil & Ambrose, all the Fathers of the four first ages concur in opinion as to the existence of such an intermediate state; the greater number of them interpreting a remarkable passage of St. Paul (1 Cor. iii. 13, 14, 15) as denoting expressly some region of purgation for the soul, where the 'fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is,' and where, as Origen explains the passage, 'each crime shall in proportion to its character, experience a just degree of punishment.' Referring to the same passage of the Apostle, St. Ambrose says, "From hence it may be collected, that

the same man is saved in part, and is condemned in part;" and, again, in a Commentary on this Epistle, he remarks;—"The Apostle said, 'He shall be saved, yet so as by fire,' in order that his salvation be not understood to be without pain. He shows that he shall be saved indeed, but that he shall undergo the pain of fire and be thus purified; not like the unbelieving and wicked man who shall be punished in everlasting fire."—(*Comment in 1 Ep. ad Cor.*)—*Travels of an Irish Gentleman in search of Religion.*

CENT. II.—*Tertullian L. C.* Among the apostolical traditions, received from the fathers, and not enforced by the positive words of scripture, he reckons "oblations for the dead on the anniversary day."—*De Cor. Milit. p. 282.*—In his treatise on single marriages, he advises the widow "to pray for the soul of her departed husband, entreating repose for him, and participation in the first resurrection, and making oblations for him on the anniversary day of his death; which if she neglect, it may be truly said of her, that, as far as in her lies, she has repudiated her husband." *De Monogamia c. x. p. 955.* "Reflect," he says to widowers, "for whose soul you pray, for whom you make annual oblations." *Exhort. ad Castit. c. xi. p. 942.*

CENT. III.—*Cyprian, L. C.* "Our predecessors prudently advised, that no brother, departing this life, should nominate any churchman his executor; and should he do it, that no oblation should be made for him, nor sacrifice offered for his repose; of which we have had a late example, when no oblation was made, nor prayer, in his name, offered in the church."—*Ep. 1. 2.*—in other letters he speaks of the same offerings,—*p. 28, 67.*—"It is one thing, to be a petitioner for pardon; and another, to arrive at glory; one, to be cast into prison, and not go out from thence till the last farthing be paid; and, another, to receive at once the reward of faith and virtue; one, in punishment of sin to be purified by long suffering, and purged long by fire; and another to have expiated all sins by (previous) suffering; one infinite, at the day of judgment, to wait the sentence of the Lord; another to receive an immediate crown from him."—*Ep. cv. p. 109.*

CENT. IV.—*Eusebius of Casarea, G. C.* Describing the funeral of the emperor Constantine, he thus writes:—"In this manner did Constantius perform the last duties in honour of his father. But when he had departed with his guards, the ministers of God, surrounded by the multitude of the faithful, advanced into the middle space, and with prayers performed the ceremonies of divine worship. The blessed prince, reposing in his coffin, was extolled with many praises; when the people, in concert with the priests, not without sighs and tears, offered prayers to heaven for his soul; in this, manifesting the most acceptable service to a religious prince. God, besides, thus continued to show his kindness to his servant. He had bestowed the succession of the empire on his sons; and now, in compliance with his ardent wishes, he gives him a place near the bodies of the holy apostles; in order that he may enjoy their blessed fellowship

and in their temple be associated with the people of God. He would thus also be admitted to a participation in the religious rites, the mystic sacrifice, and holy suffragans of the faithful." *De Vita Constant. L. iv. c. xxi. p. 667.*

Arnobius L. C. "Why were the oratories [of the Christians] destined to savage destruction, wherein prayers are offered up to the sovereign God; peace and pardon are implored for all men, magistrates, soldiers, kings, and enemies, for those who have quitted their bodies?" *L. iv. ad Gentes p. 152. Edit, Lugduni Bataworum, 1651.*

S. Ephrem of Edessa, G. C. In a work entitled his *Testament*, this pious and learned deacon thus speaks; "My brethren, come to me, and prepare me for my departure, for my strength is wholly gone. Go alone with me in psalms and in prayers; and please constantly to make oblations for me. When the thirtieth day shall be completed, then remember me: for the dead are helped by the offerings of the living. Now listen with patience to what I shall mention from the scriptures. Moses bestowed blessings on Reuben after the third generation. [Deut. xxxiii. 6.] But if the dead are not aided; why was he blessed? Again, if they be insensible; here what the apostle says: "If the dead rise not again at all why are they then baptised for them?" [1 Cor. 15. 29.] If also the sons of Mathathias [ii. Machab. xii.] who celebrated their feasts in figure only could cleanse those from guilt by their offerings, who fell in battle; how much more shall the priests of Christ aid the dead by their oblations and prayers?" *In Testament, T. iii. p. 294. Edit. Vossii p. 371. Edit. Ozon.*

S. Cyril of Jerusalem, G. C. "Then [in the service of the church] we pray for the holy fathers and the bishops that are dead; and in short for all those who are departed this life in our communion; believing that souls receive very great relief, by the prayers that are offered for them, while this holy and tremendous victim lies upon the altar.

Fourth council of Carthage, L. C. "Penitents who have carefully submitted, to the laws of the church, should they accidentally die on the road, or by sea, where no assistance could be given; shall be remembered in the prayers and offerings of the faithful." *CAN. lxxix. CONC. GEN. T. ii. p. 1206; See also the 29th canon of the preceding council of Carthage. Ibid. p. 1171.*

S. Ambrose, L. C. In his funeral oration on the two emperors, Valentinians, he says: "Blessed shall you both be, if my prayers can avail any thing. No day shall pass, in which I will not make honorable mention of you: no night, in which you shall not partake of my prayers. In all my oblations I will remember you." *In ob. Valent. T. V. p. 116.*

Of the emperor Theodosius he likewise says: "Lately we deplored together his death, and now while the prince Honorius is present before our altars, we celebrate the fortieth day. Some observes the third and thirtieth, others the seventh and fortieth. Give, O Lord, rest to thy servant Theodosius, that rest, which thou hast prepared for thy saints. May his soul thither tend, whence it came, where it cannot feel the sting of death, where it will learn that death is the termination, not of nature, but of sin—I loved him, therefore I will follow him to the land of the living: will not leave him, till by prayers and lamentation he shall be admitted to the holy mount of the Lord, to which his deser's call him." *De op. Theod. Ibid p.*

17. On the death of his brother Saryrus, he expresses the like sentiments, and utters the like prayers; he also mentions, that to the celebration of the birth day, succeeded the celebration of the day of the death. *De ob fratris sui. T. iv. p. 307.*

S. Epiphanius, G. C. "There is nothing more opportune, nothing more to be admired, than the rite which directs the names of the dead to be mentioned. They are aided by the prayer that is offered for them; though it may not cancel all their faults. We mention both the just and sinners, in order that for the latter we may obtain mercy."—*Her. lxxx. T. i. p. 911.*

S. John Chrysostom, G. C. "It is not in vain that oblations and prayers are offered, and alms given, for the dead. So has the divine spirit ordained things, that we might mutually assist one another. The deacon (in the Greek liturgy) proclaims: "For them who are dead in Christ, and for them who make a memorial of them." The victim is in the hands (of the ministers); all things are ready; the angels and the archangels assist; the Son of God is present; a holy horror seizes the minds of the people while the sacred rite is celebrated. And do you think, that this is done without effect?—Let us then aid these our brethren. For if the offering of Job could benefit his sons; why should you not believe, if you make offerings for the dead, that they may receive some consolation from them? God grants favours to the prayers of others, as St. Paul teaches: "You helping withal in prayer for us; that for this gift obtained for us, by the means of many persons, thanks may be given by many in our behalf." (2 Cor. i 11.) Let us not tire in affording aid to the dead, in offering prayers for them: prayer is the common victim of the world." *Homil. xli. in Ep. ad Cor. T. x. p. 467.* "Let us pity them: let us aid them as we may be able; let us obtain some comfort for them; small indeed, yet still some comfort. But how; by what means? Ourselves praying, and entreating others to do the same, and for them unceasingly giving alms to the poor. Hence comfort will be derived. God has said: "I will defend this city to see it for my own sake, and for my servant David's sake." (3 Kings xix. 34) If the remembrance alone of a just man was so prevalent; what may not works effect? It was ordained by the apostles, that, in celebrating the sacred mysteries, the dead would be remembered; for they well knew, what advantage would thence be derived to them. Will not God be propitious, when he looks down on the whole assembly of the people, raising the hands up to him; when he beholds the venerable choir of the priests, and the sacred victim lying on the altar?" *Homil. iii in Ep. ad Philip, T. xii p. 32.*

To be continued.

GERMANY.—Twenty persons have abjured the errors of protestantism in the Church of our Blessed Lady at Munich since Easter last. A subscription set on foot in that city for the relief of the exiled clergy of Spain, at the head of which is the king, has produced the sum of 33,000 francs, which has been transmitted for distribution to the Archbishop of Besancon.—*London Catholic.*