

Poetry.

THE THREE SONS.

I have a son, a little son, a boy just five years old,
With eyes of thoughtful earnestness, and mind of gentle mould.
They tell me that unusual grace in all his ways appears,—
That my child is grave and wise of heart beyond his childish
years.
I cannot say how this may be; I know his face is fair,
And yet his sweetest comeliness is his sweet and serious air;
I know his heart is kind and fond; I know he loveth me,
But loveth yet his mother more, with grateful ferrency,
But that which others most admire is the thought which fills
his mind,—
The food for grave, inquiring speech he every where doth find.
Strange questions doth he ask of me, when we together walk;
He scarcely thinks as children think, or talks as children talk.
Nor cares he much for childish sports, doats not on bat or ball,
But looks on manhood's ways and works, and aptly mimics all.
His little heart is busy still, and oftentimes perplexed
With thoughts about this world of ours, and thoughts about
the next.

He kneels at his dear mother's knee; she teaches him to pray,
And strange and sweet and solemn then are the words which he
will say.
Oh! should my gentle child be spared to manhood's years like
me,
A holier and a wiser man I trust that he will be;
And when I look upon his eyes, and stroke his thoughtful brow,
I dare not think what I should feel, were I to lose him now.

I have a son, a second son, a simple child of three;
I'll not declare how bright and fair his little features be,—
How silver sweet those tones of his, when he prattles on my
knee.
I do not think his light blue eye is like his brother's keen,
Nor his brow so full of childish thought as his has ever been;
But his little heart's a fountain pure of kind and tender feeling,
And his every look's a gleam of light, rich depths of love reveal-
ing.

When he walks with me, the country folk, who pass us in the
street,
Will shout for joy, and bless my boy, he looks so mild and sweet.
A playfellow is he to all, and yet, with cheerful tone,
Will sing his little song of love, when left to sport alone.
His presence is like sunshine sent, to gladden home and hearth,
To comfort us in all our griefs and sweeten all our mirth.
Should he grow up to riper years, God grant his heart may
prove

As sweet a home for heavenly grace as now for earthly love!
And if beside his grave the tears our aching eyes must dim,
God comfort us for all the love that we shall lose in him!

I have a son, a third sweet son; his age I cannot tell;
For they reckon not by years and months where he is gone to
dwell.
To us, for fourteen anxious months, his infant smiles were given,
And then he bade farewell to earth, and went to live in heaven.
I cannot tell what form his is, what looks he weareth now,
Nor guess how bright a glory crowns his shining seraph brow;
The thoughts that fill his sinless soul, the bliss which he doth
feel.

Am numbered with the secret things that God will not reveal.
But I know (for God hath told me this) that he is now at rest,
Where other blessed infants be, on their Saviour's loving breast;
I know his spirit feels no more this weary load of flesh,
That his sleep is blessed with endless dreams of joy for ever fresh.
I know the angels fold him close beneath their glittering wings,
And soothe him with a song that breathes of heaven's divinest
things.

I know that we shall meet our babe (his mother dear and I)
Where God for aye shall wipe away all tears from every eye.
What'er befalls his brethren twain, his bliss can never cease;
Their lot may here be grief and fear, but his is certain peace.
It may be that the tempter's wiles their souls from bliss may
sever;

But, if our own poor faith fail not, he must be ours for ever.
When we think of what our darling is, and what we still must
be;
When we muse on that world's perfect bliss, and this world's
misery;
When we groan beneath this load of sin, and feel this grief and
pain,—
Oh! we'd rather lose our other two than have him here again.
REV. J. MOUTRIE.

ON THE ROMISH WORSHIP OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN. (From the Irish Ecclesiastical Journal.)

The tendency of the teaching of Romanists to subvert the fundamental doctrines of Catholic Christianity has but too plainly appeared in the extracts already selected from their works of popular devotion. In truth, the more one examines these writings, the more painfully must it be forced on his mind, that the real habitual object of their love and their adoration is, not their Creator, but a creature. To call Rome Antichrist, indeed, may be to abuse the language of prophecy; but, on the other hand, is it not a question deserving the most serious consideration of every person who communicates with Rome,—whether the direct and inevitable tendency of her devotions be not, in effect, to prepare men's minds for the reception of Antichrist, whenever it may please the Almighty to permit His Church to be assailed by that portentous trial? For, if we ask what is to be the distinguishing characteristic of Antichrist,—do not the Holy Scriptures teach us,—that it will be the denial of the doctrine of the incarnation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? (1 John, iv. 3, and 2 John, 7.) And is it possible to conceive any thing more likely to prepare the mass of mankind for the renunciation of this great mystery of our redemption, as a fable and a falsehood, than a system, which, with daring impiety and profaneness, has transformed the fundamental doctrine of the faith once delivered to the saints, into an idolatrous and demoralizing mythology? The existence of the Blessed Virgin was designed to be (as it really was) to the primitive disciples of our Redeemer, a living and tangible witness of the truth of His human nature. Rome,—or rather that evil being, by whose cruel devices Rome has fallen far indeed from that faith which once was "spoken of throughout the whole world"—has poisoned the very fountain of faith and piety; has made good men and devout men to fear to dwell, even in their secret meditations, on her whom "all generations" should have rejoiced to call "blessed;" and has so mixed up the venerable and honoured name of the mother of our Lord, with appalling fictions and impieties, that it is easy to see, how few and precipitous are the steps from their present fanaticism and secularism, to an open renunciation of the Christian name.

To proceed with some further extracts from the practical and devotional writings of Romanists. One of their most popular little volumes has the following title, "Man's Only Affair, or Reflections on the Four Last Things to be Remembered, translated from the latest French Edition, and enlarged with a Chapter on the Devotion to the Blessed Virgin, with several edifying Histories. Tolle et lege.—Take and read. Second edition. Dublin, printed and published by the Catholic Book Society, 5, Essex-bridge, Parliament-street, 1833."—This book has the following approbation on the back of the title-page: "Approbation: I have attentively read the reflections on the Four Last Things to be Remembered, translated from the French, and find them conformable to the original publication. The happy effects heretofore produced by this little work in the French language, have induced me to recommend most earnestly the present publication in English, to the perusal of all. Leonard,

Bishop of Gortyna, May 14, 1807." The following passage is of a similar character to some which have been quoted in the foregoing papers:

"The sentiment of St. Bonaventure respecting the charity of Mary is admirable. He compares this amiable Virgin to an officious friend who goes to glean in the field, for the benefit of the proprietor; who gathers up carefully the grain the reapers have left, and which the master of the family thought nothing about, leaving it on the earth, for the nourishment of the birds of the air. Oftentimes, the pastors and ministers, who are the labourers whom God sends to gather in his harvest, abandon the care and conduct of sinners, whom they consider incorrigible: sometimes their guardian-angels forsake them, as it were, as being past cure; God himself turns away his face from those impious beings, leaving them to wallow in the mire of their vices, until they become a prey to the devil, whom Jesus Christ compares to the fowls of the air.

"Mary alone, the mother of grace and mercy, rejects not the sinner, when they implore her commiseration, even in the midst of their disorders. Her maternal tenderness obliges her to stretch out a succouring hand to them, as soon as they invoke her assistance. She becomes their mediatrix before the Sovereign Judge; she calms, she appeases the wrath of the Most High; she inspires them with all that can contribute to their perfect reconciliation; and like a mysterious dove, of which the one that returned to the ark, bearing an olive branch, was a figure, she informs them that the deluge of the wrath of God is at an end, and that they may go and offer Him the sacrifice of a contrite and humble heart.—Think well on it."—*Man's only Affair*, pp. 137—8.

In a word, according to this doctrine, Mary is more merciful than Christ, and saves those whom the master of the family thought nothing about, and whom He would have left to perish in their sins. But it may be doubted, whether even this blasphemy is so mischievous, as the notion which it really intended to convey; namely, that there is no degree of wickedness which can prove destructive to the sinner, provided only he shall retain,—with or without any definite motive,—the practice of some external and profane homage to the Blessed Virgin. At times, no doubt, the Romish writers endeavor to qualify this frightful doctrine by cautions and explanations. But such cautions and explanations are too evidently controversial; designed not so much to guard their own flocks from error, as to protect themselves against the indignant remonstrances of Protestants.

Let any person acquainted with the real doctrines of the Holy Scripture and the Christian Church, consider the practical effects of such teaching as the following:

"St. German, Archbishop of Constantinople, was used to say, that as respiration is a sure mark that a person is not yet dead, however low he may be reduced by sickness; so, the invocation of Mary, is a certain proof that a sinner still lives in the remembrance of God, and that his salvation is not desperate, however hardened and obstinate he may seem.—*Think well on it*."—*Man's only Affair*, p. 136.

The reader will observe that the invocation of Mary is not here treated as an indication of some remains of spiritual feeling and vitality. It is merely a sort of claim which the sinner is retaining on the Divine mercy, however profligate his life may be. The following extract from the same work puts this beyond question:

"M. de Queriolet, counsellor to the parliament of Britany, about the middle of the seventeenth century, was impious, and so lost to every sentiment of religion, that on a certain day, he had the blasphemous assurance to fire his pistol against heaven, at a time when the lightning had just fallen on his bed. Travelling into Poitou, and passing through Loudun, at the very time they were taking informations on the subject of the possessed Ursulines, he entered the church where this famous procedure was conducting, and in which a vast concourse of people had assembled. What was his astonishment, when, on a sudden, he heard his name called by one of the nuns! He knew nobody, and was not known in the city. This nun revealed publicly all the most secret disorders of this impious wretch. There are then devils, he cried! There must consequently be also a God!—Sensibly struck with this thought, he yielded to the grace that pressed him; and shortly after astonished France with the rigours of his penance. Being asked one day to whom he felt himself indebted for this so great a grace? He replied: amidst my greatest impieties, I never omitted to recite daily, through custom, a prayer to Mary, the Mother [of] Sinners. *Think well on it*."—*Man's only Affair*, pp. 142—3.

If such be the encouragement given to the hardened sinner to bid defiance to the justice of the Almighty, one need not wonder at the advice with which the chapter concludes:

"Sinners, whoever ye be, never despair of the power or bounty of Mary! Adopt at least the easy practice of reciting every day the above short prayer of St. Bernard, your salvation perhaps depends upon it.—*Think well on it*."—*Man's only Affair*, p. 150.

"We read," says St. Alphonsus Liguori, in *The Glories of Mary*, "in the life of Sister Catherine of St. Augustine, that in the town where her monastery was situated, there dwelt a woman, named Mary, who from her infancy, led a very irregular life; she was from her infancy, led a very irregular life; she was not corrected by time, but continued the same vicious course, until disgusted with her wickedness, she drove her from the city, and confined her in a cave in the suburbs. There eaten up by a frightful disease, which caused her flesh to fall in pieces, she soon died, without spiritual or corporal aid. This death was regarded as a just punishment from the hands of God, and undeserving of the ordinary rites of burial, so that the poor corpse was interred in some high way or common, like a beast of the field. Sister Catherine, who was in the pious custom of praying for all whom she learned departed this life, thought not of recommending this old sinner to God, supposing her to be lost for ever.

"It happened about four years after this woman's death, that Sister Catherine being one day in prayer, a soul from purgatory appeared to her, and said: 'Sister Catherine, how unfortunate am I not; you pray for every one, but you never pray for me.' 'Who are you?' said the religious. 'I am,' replied the soul, 'that poor Mary that died in the cave.' 'What! said Catherine with amazement, 'is it possible that you are saved?' 'I am indeed,' replied the soul, 'through the charity of the blessed Virgin Mary. In my last moments, abandoned by all, and seeing myself loaded with sins, I addressed this prayer to the Mother of God—O thou, the refuge of the forsaken,

have pity on me! Hope of the universe, my only hope, come to my assistance.' This little supplication was not made in vain. Mary obtained for me the grace of true contrition, by means of which, I escaped hell. She moreover procured me the abridgement of my torments in purgatory—the divine Justice, at her suit, causing me to suffer in intensity, what I should suffer in duration. A few masses would now release me, cause them to be offered for me, and I promise not to forget you in heaven.

"Sister Catherine lost no time in complying with this request, and some days after, the soul of Mary again appeared, shining like the sun, and testifying her gratitude. 'Paradise is opened at length to me,' said she, 'I am now going there to celebrate the mercies of my God, and be assured, Sister Catherine, I shall not forget to pray for you.'—*Glories of Mary*, pp. 47—48.

If such monstrous falsehoods be not the most direct encouragement to vice and profligacy, it is not easy to imagine what can be. The story would have been dangerous to morality, were it even pretended that the unhappy woman had called on her Redeemer. But no, not even a recollection of His name, or His dying mercy, is ascribed to her;—and yet in a few days she is described as entering into Paradise.

Another story of this sort is told by Liguori. "One of the most distinguished preachers of the last century was once called about midnight, to administer the last sacraments to a young nobleman, who had just been seized with apoplexy. When he arrived, he found the house all in confusion, the wife distracted, and the physicians vainly employing all the resources of their art, on an invalid, with no more than the semblance of life. This was the state of things during the night; when day appeared, the churches being opened, the priest went to offer a votive mass of the Holy Virgin, for the sick person, in the next chapel; and glory for ever be to God and his blessed Mother, it was scarcely finished, when a servant came to tell him that his master had now the use of his faculties. The surprise of this good priest was greatly increased, when on revisiting the gentleman, who had been too well known by his scandals and debaucheries, he found him penetrated with the liveliest sorrow and compunction, imploring pardon of God, more by tears than words, and offering his life for the expiation of his sins. In these dispositions he made his confession, and received the last sacraments. The confessor, edified and amazed at such a change, when all was over, asked the dying person if he had any idea of the cause of such a miracle of the divine mercy in his favour. 'Alas! Father,' he replied, 'what other cause could there be but this, divine Mercy itself, moved by your prayers, and perhaps by those of my deceased mother.'

"This good woman was a model of piety to the court, and to the city. I was her only son—after being married but a few years, her husband died, and unfortunately for me, she survived him but a few months. When on her death bed, she caused me to be brought to her, and spoke nearly in the following words: 'I leave you my son, an illustrious name, and riches in abundance; but I entreat you to prefer to both, the sacred character of Christian—you are exposed to great dangers, my child, to what jeopardy perhaps will not your best possessions expose you? I die alas too soon for you! but may the will of God be accomplished! I leave you under the protection of the Holy Virgin, and entreat her to shew herself your Mother. If you, my child, wish to give your affectionate parent some mark of attachment and recollection, promise me the only thing I am going to ask of you—it will cost you little: it is to recite the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin every day.' 'I promised her most readily,' said the invalid, 'and never failed to keep my word amid all my debaucheries; nay, I confess, that for the last ten years it is the only act of religion I have performed.'

"The confessor now saw clearly, that the conversion of this young man was owing to the special protection of Mary. He exhorted him to redouble his confidence in his powerful benefactress. He did not leave him until his death—he received his last sighs, which were poured forth in the same penitential spirit."—*Glories of Mary*, pp. 96—99.

In fact, the doctrine inculcated by St. Alphonsus Liguori is neither more nor less than this, that a man live to his last hour in never so hardened a resistance to the voice of conscience, the holy Spirit, and the ministers of Christ, if he have, during the career of his wickedness, offered some acts of idolatrous adulation and external homage—such as are more worthy the service of a heathen deity, than the approval of a reasonable being, his salvation is secure.

"As Ruth, the daughter-in-law of Noemi, found so great favour with Booz, that he permitted her to collect the sheaves which fell from his reapers, thus Mary has found such grace before the Lord, that he has appointed her to gather up the blades which resist or escape the evangelical scythe of the preachers, and missionaries, who labour to fill his granaries. There are some souls so rebellious, that it is impossible to convert them by any efforts on the part of God's ministers—it is left to Mary alone to save them by her powerful intercession. But woe to the sheaves which would escape the hands of this amiable gleaner, they shall in time be gathered up and cast into the eternal flames."—*Glories of Mary*, p. 95.

"It is related of a man in the Kingdom of Valencia, that having committed great crimes, and fearing the pursuit of justice, he determined to become a Mahometan, and was going to embark for Barbary, when chance conducted him into a church, while Father Lopez, of the S. J. was preaching on the divine mercy. The impression made on the guilty man was so great, that he was converted and made his confession to Father Lopez. The good father was so struck with the suddenness of the change, that he asked him if he had not retained some pious practice, which drew on him the effects of divine mercy. The penitent replied, that he practised no other devotion, save that of praying to the Blessed Virgin, every day, never to abandon him.

"The same father one time heard in hospital the confession of an invalid, who had not confessed for fifty-five years. During all this time he practised no devotion whatsoever, except that whenever passing before the image of the Blessed Virgin, he took off his hat, and begged her to obtain that he might not die in mortal sin. He said, that at one time in a quarrel, he was in danger of being slain, but when he cried out, O! I am a dead man, and I shall be damned, Mother of sinners help me! he found himself transported without knowing how, to a place of security."—*ib.* pp. 160, 161.

But, suppose the life of this man had not been saved: suppose he had been cut off in the midst of his iniquities—still, according to this monstrous per-

version of Christianity, his salvation would have been as secure as if he had repented. Let St. Alphonsus himself deliver that doctrine for which the court of Rome, in the year 1830, has enrolled him amongst the saints:

"It is the opinion even of many theologians, and of St. Thomas particularly, that the blessed Virgin has obtained for several who died in the state of mortal sin, the suspension of their sentence, and their return to life that they might do penance. Some authors relate many examples of the like; among others, Odoard, who lived in the ninth century, relates, that Ademan, a deacon, came to life as they were going to bury him, and told all at his funeral that he had seen hell, and the place therein prepared for him, but that the Mother of God had obtained his resurrection, that he might expiate his sins. Surius relates a similar case of a Roman named Andrew; and Pelbart states, that in his time the Emperor Sigismund, in crossing the Alps with his army, met in his way the skeleton of a man, whence a voice issued, which demanded confession. It was a soldier, he said, who had been slain in the state of mortal sin, and that Mary, for whom he entertained a special devotion, obtained, that his soul might sojourn in his remains until he could confess his sins; immediately after receiving absolution, it ceased to give signs of its presence.

"We do not cite these examples as an encouragement to sinners to persevere in their crimes; this would be as great extravagance as that of a man, who from mere levity would cast himself from a precipice, under pretence that the blessed Virgin could preserve him unhurt; but rather to excite our confidence in the Mother of God, since as they seem to show that she can save even those who died in mortal sin, on her how much more certainly can those count on her intercession, who during life are sincerely converted. 'Yes,' as St. Anselm says, 'he for whom Mary prays even once, will be exempt from eternal evils; and again, who will dare tell me, I shall not find my judge favourable, if the Mother of Mercy advocates my cause?' 'My soul,' says the blessed Eric Suzon, 'is in the hands of Mary, so if the Judge wishes to condemn me, the sentence must pass through this clement Queen, and she will know how to prevent its execution.' We have the same hope as this great saint, and shall not cease to say with St. Bonaventure, 'O Mary, I have hoped in you, and shall never be disappointed.'"—*Glories of Mary*, pp. 170—172.

Can any person be silly enough not to perceive the monstrous absurdity of endeavouring to neutralize the obvious tendency of such prodigious falsehoods as these, by saying, "We do not cite these examples as an encouragement to sinners to persevere in their crimes?" Very possibly not. But sinners are too easily encouraged to persevere in their crimes. And with whatever flimsy evasions of this kind the emissaries of Rome may blind themselves to the wickedness and impiety of their doctrines, their teaching must prove the immediate and instrumental cause of the everlasting destruction of multitudes, whether of those who are deluded by such falsehoods, or of those who are driven by such teachers to turn their back in disgust, and abandon Christianity altogether, as part and parcel of a settled scheme to impose on the credulity of mankind.

The end of such teaching is inevitable. Sooner or later it must lead to a renunciation of the name and form of Christianity. And if it be thus that the last afflictions of the Church are to be brought about, what are the plagues reserved for those who are, as far as in them lies, turning the Gospel of Jesus Christ into a code of wickedness? And will any reasonable person be persuaded to believe, that the sacred Congregation of Rites who pronounced that there was nothing in the writings of this melancholy fanatic "deserving of censure"—or Pius VII. who confirmed this sentence—or Leo XII. who sanctioned the publication of his works in 1825, by a papal brief, and honoured his editor with a "golden medal"—or the College of Cardinals who were "unanimous" in the act of his beatification—or, in fine, Pius VIII. and the whole Court of Rome, who published the decree of his canonization;—that this vast body of dignified ecclesiastics—some of them, most probably, men of profound learning and extensive acquaintance with antiquity—did really for a single instant believe, that such wicked nonsense as has been transcribed into that Catholic Faith—"quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus creditur est." Is there in such mischievous blasphemies any, the least affinity, with that interpretation of Holy Scripture to which every one of these Ecclesiastics was bound by all the solemnity of an oath—"juxta unanimum consensus patrum." Whatever may have been their aim or motive, it is impossible to rise from the perusal of such a book, so sanctioned, without exclaiming with the Prophet, "The leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed."—*Isa.* ix. 16.

BISHOP ALEXANDER'S OWN ACCOUNT OF HIS CONVERSION TO CHRISTIANITY.

(The following is a copy of the Appendix to the Sermon, preached by the Rev. Mr. Hatchard, at the baptism of the present Bishop in Jerusalem, at Plymouth, June 22, 1825. Sponsors, the Rev. B. Golding, Captain Thicknesse, and Mrs. Hatchard.)

In compliance with the wishes of those to whom I am greatly indebted, I am induced to give a brief account of the circumstances which led me to the final decision of embracing the Christian religion.

I was born in a town in Prussia in the year 1799, educated since the seventh year of my age, principally in the Talmud, and in the strictest principles of Judaism. From my sixteenth to my twentieth year, I held the office of a teacher of the Talmud and the German language among my brethren in Germany, at which period a situation of a similar nature offered itself to me in England, where it was required that I should be capable of performing the duty of a shocket, (an office, as is known to my Jewish brethren, only given to persons peculiarly qualified, and who must go through the strictest examination by the high-priest), this, however, I soon acquired, and came to England.

Not to enter into useless details, I need only mention, that until that time I had not the slightest knowledge of Christianity, nor did I even know of the existence of the New Testament. Strong impressions of prejudice against the very name of Christ, was all the knowledge I possessed of him, and in blindness and ignorance I never felt curious to inquire the reason of that prejudice. I looked upon all other sects besides Jews, as the Gentile idolaters mentioned by Moses and the Prophets, from whom I found sufficient reasons and commands to abhor their practices. But blessed be the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who has dealt thus mercifully with me, a sinner, who am not worthy of the least of his mercies, in raising

* Here it must be stated that at all the Jewish colleges on the Continent, the New Testament is never introduced or mentioned.

me from a death-like sleep in which so many still remain, who are satisfied with a false peace, without a wish or an effort to be awakened from its dangers.

In the year 1820 I came to London, and having found myself disappointed of the situation above alluded to, I was recommended by the kindness of the high priest in London to a private family in the country, as tutor to their children.

My employer was a man of strict integrity, and strongly attached to the principles and ceremonies of Judaism. He was the first who acquainted me with the exertions which are making in England for the conversion of the Jews, but treated them with derision, and said, that every Jew ought to read the New Testament, in order to be more confirmed in his own religion. This roused my curiosity, and not being able then to read and understand English, I procured a German Bible. I was greatly struck with the first of St. Matthew, and had no idea that Christians knew anything of our patriarchs. I was still more struck with the character of Christ, and the excellent morals which he taught; but having gone no further than merely to admire them, it produced no particular effect upon my mind, though it considerably lessened my prejudices. By the providence of God I was led from thence to another place (Norwich), as rabbi, where I had opportunity and leisure to give lessons in Hebrew and German, as I had then obtained some knowledge of the English language. This afforded me the means of access to many pious Christians, and of becoming more acquainted with their religion. I was in an especial manner led to read the New Testament, and found many of the references there given to the Old Testament prophecies incontrovertibly fulfilled.

This produced great uneasiness of mind; but instead of turning my face to the Lord God in prayer and supplication to direct, and lead me in the right way, I endeavoured to shrink and turn away from the Divine light which had thus begun to dawn upon me.

About this period, the situation at Plymouth most providentially offered itself, and I was led to accept it, partly from its having been represented to me as more advantageous, but chiefly from the desire I felt to become reconciled to my former views, and regain my peace of mind, with a full determination to have no intercourse with Christians; and during my first three months at Plymouth I strictly adhered to this resolution;—Satan so far aided the wishes of my wicked heart as to lull me again into a delusive peace.

The Lord, in his love toward me, would not suffer me thus to proceed in the path of destruction; he raised me up a spiritual preceptor, in a friend (the Rev. Mr. Golding) who was desirous of taking lessons in Hebrew; and when we began to read for our lessons parts of the Old Testament, subjects of discussion often presented themselves, and feelings to which I had for some time past been a stranger again rose in my mind, and I began more seriously (and I trust not without earnest prayer to God for his guidance) to inquire into the truth, by more carefully comparing the Old and New Testament; and after much mental conflict, came almost to the conviction that Jesus was the Messiah, whom I had been taught to expect in a different form from that in which he is really represented in the Old Testament.

Still I could not see everything so clearly as to be enabled to give up all for him; I had not strength enough to avow my feelings publicly, though I did not hide them from several of my brethren, especially from one with whom I had more frequent intercourse; to him my sentiments were well known, and it pleased the Lord to raise him up, after having been acquainted with it for several months, to inform the elders of the congregation; they could do no otherwise than take the matter into serious consideration, and, I am sure not without very painful feelings to me, made known the circumstances to the Rev. S. Herschel, Chief Rabbi, who has the power of deciding these matters. He requested my suspension until he heard again from the congregation, in order finally to decide. This was one of the most painful periods of my life; Satan stirred up every possible means to prevent fears and doubts to me.

Those who are acquainted with human nature, and with the influence of early education, will easily be able to judge in what a painful situation I was then placed. By following the dictates of my conscience I had nothing else to expect than to lose all that was valuable to me in this world, a comfortable and sufficient livelihood, together with the affections and friendship of all who were dear to me. But by yielding to the entreaties of my friends, I should have inflicted a wound upon my conscience: in short, many painful ideas presented themselves to me, the giving up all (to which I was evidently called), the prejudices of early impressions, and the prospect of having to take up a new and heavy cross in my future life.

All these considerations so tended to increase my distress of mind, that if there could have been found at that time any means whatever to reconcile me to my former views, I should have gladly used them. However, this was not the Lord's will. A week after I was finally suspended, and had eventually pointed out to me the way in which I was to go; I began to submit myself to the Lord to follow him; and soon afterwards regularly attended the ministry of a dear friend (the Rev. Mr. Golding, then officiating at Stonehouse Chapel), to whose spiritual instruction I am greatly indebted. Having also been brought into immediate connexion with many Christian friends, my mind became more and more established, which led me finally to embrace the Christian faith as my future hope for time and for eternity.

To my Jewish friends, whose kindness toward me I shall ever remember, I beg to take this opportunity of returning my sincere thanks; and though I am sensible of being an outcast from them, yet I trust I shall never be unmindful of them before a throne of grace in my feeble prayers, "that the Lord may bless and keep them, that the Lord may cause his face to shine upon them, and be gracious unto them, that the Lord may lift up the light of his countenance, and give them peace," even "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding."—*Amen.*

M. S. ALEXANDER.

ENGLISH DIVINES OF THE LAST CENTURY VINDICATED FROM MISREPRESENTATION. (From Bishop Van Mildert's Life of Dr. Waterland.)

It has, of late years, been made a subject of censure, that our principal Divines in the middle and earlier part of the last century, had, in a great degree, departed from doctrinal and evangelical preaching, and had done little more for the edification of their flocks than deliver dry and jejune dissertations on moral topics, grounded rather upon heathen ethics or abstract philosophy, than upon Christian principles; and it has answered the purpose of a certain active and zealous party in the Church, to arrogate to itself the merit, not only of having been the first to introduce a more spiritual and evangelical mode of preaching to the people, but also of giving a higher and better tone than heretofore to the great body of the Clergy at large, in their popular discourses. It would not, perhaps, be difficult to shew, that these assumptions have been somewhat hastily advanced, and inconsiderately admitted. For, upon a careful examination of the very many volumes of sermons published during the above-mentioned period, by the parochial Clergy, as well as by

† In proof of this I must state, that so great was the struggle, and so earnest the entreaties of my friends at that time, that I was even induced to appeal personally, and also by letter, to the leader of the congregation, to say that I should be happy to retract my steps, if any means could be found to remove the difficulties by which I was encompassed.

