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THE  
CHRISTIAN YEAR.





John Keble, 1792-1866

THE  
**CHRISTIAN YEAR:**

THOUGHTS IN VERSE

FOR THE

SUNDAYS AND HOLYDAYS

THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.



In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.

*Isaiah xxx. 15.*

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VOL. I.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.



**N**EXT to a sound rule of faith, there is nothing of so much consequence as a sober standard of feeling in matters of practical religion : and it is the peculiar happiness of the Church of England to possess, in her authorized formularies, an ample and secure provision for both. But in times of much leisure and unbounded curiosity, when excitement of every kind is sought after with a morbid eagerness, this part of

the merit of our Liturgy is likely in some measure to be lost, on many even of its sincere admirers : the very tempers, which most require such discipline, setting themselves, in general, most decidedly against it.

The object of the present publication will be attained, if any person find assistance from it in bringing his own thoughts and feelings into more entire unison with those recommended and exemplified in the **Prayer Book**. The work does not furnish a complete series of compositions ; for many of them are rather adapted with more or less propriety to the successive portions of the Liturgy, than originally suggested by them. Something has been added at the end concerning the several **Occasional Services** : which constitute, from their personal and

domestic nature, the most perfect instance of that *soothing* tendency in the Prayer Book, which it is the chief purpose of these volumes to exhibit.

*May 30, 1827.*



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I.  
MORNING.

His compassions fail not; they are new every morning.

*Lament. iii. 22, 23.*

**HUES** of the rich unfolding morn,  
That, ere the glorious sun be born,  
By some soft touch invisible  
Around his path are taught to dwell ;—

Thou rustling breeze so fresh and gay,  
That dancest forth at opening day,  
And brushing by with joyous wing,  
Wakenest each little leaf to sing ;—

Ye fragrant clouds of dewy steam,  
By which deep grove and tangled stream  
Pay, for soft rains in season given,  
Their tribute to the genial heaven ;—

Why waste your treasures of delight  
Upon our thankless, joyless sight ;  
Who day by day to sin awake,  
Seldom of heaven and you partake ?

Oh ! timely happy, timely wise,  
Hearts that with rising morn arise !  
Eyes that the beam celestial view,  
Which evermore makes all things new<sup>a</sup> !

New every morning is the love  
Our wakening and uprising prove ;  
Through sleep and darkness safely brought,  
Restored to life, and power, and thought.

New mercies, each returning day,  
Hover around us while we pray ;  
New perils past, new sins forgiven,  
New thoughts of God, new hopes of heaven.

If on our daily course our mind  
Be set to hallow all we find,  
New treasures still, of countless price,  
God will provide for sacrifice.

<sup>a</sup> Revelations xxi. 5.

Old friends, old scenes, will lovelier be,  
As more of heaven in each we see :  
Some softening gleam of love and prayer  
Shall dawn on every cross and care.

As for some dear familiar strain  
Untir'd we ask, and ask again,  
Ever, in its melodious store,  
Finding a spell unheard before ;

Such is the bliss of souls serene,  
When they have sworn, and stedfast mean,  
Counting the cost, in all to' espy  
Their God, in all themselves deny.

O could we learn that sacrifice,  
What lights would all around us rise !  
How would our hearts with wisdom talk  
Along Life's dullest dreariest walk !

We need not bid, for cloister'd cell,  
Our neighbour and our work farewell,  
Nor strive to wind ourselves too high  
For sinful man beneath the sky :

The trivial round, the common task,  
Would furnish all we ought to ask ;  
Room to deny ourselves ; a road  
To bring us, daily, nearer God.

Seek we no more ; content with these,  
Let present Rapture, Comfort, Ease,  
As Heaven shall bid them, come and go :—  
The secret this of Rest below.

Only, O Lord, in thy dear love  
Fit us for perfect Rest above ;  
And help us, this and every day,  
To live more nearly as we pray.

## II. EVENING.

Abide with us, for it is towards evening, and the day is far spent. *St. Luke xxiv. 29.*

'TIS gone, that bright and orb'd blaze,  
Fast fading from our wistful gaze ;  
Yon mantling cloud has hid from sight  
The last faint pulse of quivering light.

In darkness and in weariness  
The traveller on his way must press,  
No gleam to watch on tree or tower,  
Whiling away the lonesome hour.

Sun of my soul ! Thou Saviour dear,  
It is not night if Thou be near :  
Oh may no earth-born cloud arise  
To hide Thee from thy servant's eyes.

When round thy wondrous works below  
My searching rapturous glance I throw,  
Tracing out Wisdom, Power, and Love,  
In earth or sky, in stream or grove ;—

Or by the light thy words disclose  
Watch Time's full river as it flows,  
Scanning thy gracious Providence,  
Where not too deep for mortal sense :—

When with dear friends sweet talk I hold,  
And all the flowers of life unfold ;—  
Let not my heart within me burn,  
Except in all I Thee discern.

When the soft dews of kindly sleep  
My wearied eyelids gently steep,  
Be my last thought, how sweet to rest  
For ever on my Saviour's breast.

Abide with me from morn till eve,  
For without Thee I cannot live :  
Abide with me when night is nigh,  
For without Thee I dare not die.



Thou Framer of the light and dark,  
Steer through the tempest thine own ark :  
Amid the howling wintry sea  
We are in port if we have Thee <sup>b</sup>.

The Rulers of this Christian land,  
'Twixt Thee and us ordained to stand,—  
Guide Thou their course, O Lord, aright,  
Let all do all as in thy sight.

Oh by thine own sad burthen, borne  
So meekly up the hill of scorn,  
Teach Thou thy Priests their daily cross  
To bear as thine, nor count it loss !

If some poor wandering soul of thine  
Have spurn'd, to-day, the voice divine,  
Now, Lord, the gracious work begin ;  
Let her no more lie down in sin.

Watch by the sick: enrich the poor  
With blessings from thy boundless store :

<sup>b</sup> Then they willingly received Him into the ship : and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went. *St. John vi. 21.*

Be every mourner's sleep to-night  
Like infant's slumbers, pure and light.

Come near and bless us when we wake,  
Ere through the world our way we take :  
Till in the ocean of thy love  
We lose ourselves in heaven above.

### III.

## ADVENT SUNDAY.

Now it is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. *Romans* xiii. 11.

**AWAKE**—again the Gospel-trump is blown—  
From year to year it swells with louder tone,  
From year to year the signs of wrath  
Are gathering round the Judge's path,  
Strange words fulfill'd, and mighty works achiev'd,  
And truth in all the world both hated and believ'd.

Awake! why linger in the gorgeous town,  
Sworn liegemen of the Cross and thorny crown?  
Up from your beds of sloth for shame,  
Speed to the eastern mount like flame,  
Nor wonder, should ye find your King in tears,  
Even with the loud Hosanna ringing in his ears.

Alas ! no need to rouse them : long ago  
They are gone forth, to swell Messiah's show :  
    With glittering robes and garlands sweet  
    They strew the ground beneath his feet :  
All but your hearts are there—O set to prove  
True confessors in faith, worst hypocrites in love !

Meanwhile he paces through th' adoring crowd,  
Calm as the march of some majestic cloud,  
    That o'er wild scenes of ocean-war  
    Holds its still course in heaven afar :  
Even so, heart-searching Lord, as years roll on,  
Thou keepest silent watch from thy triumphal throne.

Even so, the world is thronging round to gaze  
On the dread vision of the latter days,  
    Constrain'd to own Thee, but in heart  
    Prepared to take Barabbas' part :  
" Hosanna " now, to-morrow " Crucify,"  
The changeful burden still of their rude lawless cry.

Yet in that throng of selfish hearts untrue  
Thy sad eye rests upon thy faithful few,  
    Children and childlike souls are there,  
    Blind Bartimeus' humble prayer,

And Lazarus waken'd from his four days' sleep,  
Enduring life again, that Passover to keep.

And fast beside the olive-border'd way  
Stands the bless'd home, where Jesus deign'd to stay,  
    The peaceful home, to zeal sincere  
    And heavenly contemplation dear,  
When Martha lov'd to wait with reverence meet,  
And wiser Mary linger'd at thy sacred feet.

Still through decaying ages as they glide,  
Thou lov'st thy chosen remnant to divide ;  
    Sprinkled along the waste of years  
    Full many a soft green isle appears :  
Pause where we may upon the desert road,  
Some shelter is in sight, some sacred safe abode.

When withering blasts of error swept the sky<sup>c</sup>,  
And Love's last flower seem'd fain to droop and die,  
    How sweet, how lone the ray benign  
    On shelter'd nooks of Palestine !  
Then to his early home did Love repair<sup>d</sup>,  
And cheer'd his sickening heart with his own native air.

<sup>c</sup> Arianism in the fourth century.

<sup>d</sup> See St. Jerome's Works, i. 123. edit. Erasm.

Years roll away : again the tide of crime  
Has swept thy footsteps from the favour'd clime.  
Where shall the holy Cross find rest ?  
On a crown'd monarch's<sup>e</sup> mailed breast :  
Like some bright angel o'er the darkling scene,  
Through court and camp he holds his heavenward  
course serene.

A fouler vision yet ; an age of light,  
Light without love, glares on the aching sight :  
O who can tell how calm and sweet,  
Meek Walton ! shews thy green retreat,  
When wearied with the tale thy times disclose,  
The eye first finds thee out in thy secure repose ?

Thus bad and good their several warnings give  
Of His approach, whom none may see and live :  
Faith's ear, with awful still delight,  
Counts them like minute bells at night,  
Keeping the heart awake till dawn of morn,  
While to her funeral pile this aged world is borne.

<sup>e</sup> St. Louis in the tenth century.

But what are heaven's alarms to hearts that cower  
In wilful slumber, deepening every hour,  
    That draw their curtains closer round,  
    The nearer swells the trumpet's sound ?  
Lord, ere our trembling lamps sink down and die,  
Touch us with chastening hand, and make us feel  
    Thee nigh.

#### IV.

### SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up  
and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.

*St. Luke xxi. 28.*

NOT till the freezing blast is still,  
Till freely leaps the sparkling rill,  
And gales sweep soft from summer skies,  
As o'er a sleeping infant's eyes  
A mother's kiss ; ere calls like these,  
No sunny gleam awakes the trees,  
Nor dare the tender flowerets show  
Their bosoms to th' uncertain glow.

Why then, in sad and wintry time,  
Her heavens all dark with doubt and crime,  
Why lifts the Church her drooping head,  
As though her evil hour were fled ?



Is she less wise than leaves of spring,  
Or birds that cower with folded wing?  
What sees she in this lowering sky  
To tempt her meditative eye?

She has a charm, a word of fire,  
A pledge of love that cannot tire;  
By tempests, earthquakes, and by wars,  
By rushing waves and falling stars,  
By every sign her Lord foretold,  
She sees the world is waxing old<sup>f</sup>,  
And through that last and direst storm  
Descries by faith her Saviour's form.

Not surer does each tender gem,  
Set in the figtree's polish'd stem,  
Foreshow the summer season bland,  
Than these dread signs thy mighty hand:  
But oh! frail hearts, and spirits dark!  
The season's flight unwarn'd we mark,

<sup>f</sup> Esdras xlv. 10. The world hath lost his youth, and the times begin to wax old.

But miss the Judge behind the door †,  
For all the light of sacred lore :

Yet is He there : beneath our eaves  
Each sound his wakeful ear receives :  
Hush, idle words, and thoughts of ill,  
Your Lord is listening : peace, be still.  
Christ watches by a Christian's hearth,  
Be silent, " vain deluding mirth,"  
Till in thine alter'd voice be known  
Somewhat of Resignation's tone.

But chiefly ye should lift your gaze  
Above the world's uncertain haze,  
And look with calm unwavering eye  
On the bright fields beyond the sky,  
Ye, who your Lord's commission bear,  
His way of mercy to prepare :  
Angels He calls ye : be your strife  
To lead on earth an Angel's life.

Think not of rest ; though dreams be sweet,  
Start up, and ply your heaven-ward feet.

† See St. James v. 9.

Is not God's oath upon your head,  
Ne'er to sink back on slothful bed,  
Never again your loins untie,  
Nor let your torches waste and die,  
Till, when the shadows thickest fall,  
Ye hear your Master's midnight call ?

V.

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

What went ye out into the wilderness to see! a reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see! a prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. *St. Matt. xi. 7, 8.*

WHAT went ye out to see  
O'er the rude sandy lea,  
Whose stately Jordan flows by many a palm,  
Or where Gennesaret's wave  
Delights the flowers to lave,  
That o'er her western slope breathe airs of balm?

All through the summer night  
Those blossoms red and bright  
Spread their soft breasts, unheeding, to the breeze,  
Like hermits watching still  
Around the sacred hill,  
Where erst our Saviour watch'd upon his knees.

‡ Rhododendrons: with which the western bank of the lake is said to be clothed down to the water's edge.

The Paschal moon above  
Seems like a saint to rove,

Left shining in the world with Christ alone ;  
Below, the lake's still face  
Sleeps sweetly in th' embrace  
Of mountains terrass'd high with mossy stone.

Here may we sit, and dream  
Over the heavenly theme,  
Till to our soul the former days return ;  
Till on the grassy bed,  
Where thousands once He fed,  
The world's incarnate Maker we again discern.

O cross no more the main,  
Wandering so wild and vain,  
To count the reeds that tremble in the wind,  
On listless dalliance bound,  
Like children gazing round,  
Who on God's works no seal of Godhead find :

Bask not in courtly bower,  
Or sun-bright hall of power,  
Pass Babel quick, and seek the holy land—

From robes of Tyrian die  
Turn with undazzled eye  
To Bethlehem's glade, or Carmel's haunted strand.

Or choose thee out a cell  
In Kedron's storied dell,  
Beside the springs of Love, that never die,  
Among the olives kneel  
The chill night-blast to feel,  
And watch the Moon that saw thy Master's agony.

Then rise at dawn of day,  
And wind thy thoughtful way,  
Where rested once the Temple's stately shade,  
With due feet tracing round  
The city's northern bound,  
To th' other holy garden, where the Lord was laid.

Who thus alternate see  
His death and victory,  
Rising and falling as on angel wings,  
They, while they seem to roam,  
Draw daily nearer home,  
Their heart untravell'd still adores the King of kings.

Or, if at home they stay,  
Yet are they, day by day,  
In spirit journeying through the glorious land,  
Not for light Fancy's reed,  
Nor Honour's purple meed,  
Nor gifted Prophet's lore, nor Science' wondrous wand.

But more than Prophet, more  
Than Angels can adore  
With face unveil'd, is He they go to seek :  
Blessed be God, whose grace  
Shews him in every place  
To homeliest hearts of pilgrims pure and meek.

VI.  
FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

The eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. *Isaiah xxxii. 3.*

OFT, as I gaze on landscape fair,  
In thought I feel me poor and base ;  
Soft shades and gleaming lights are there—  
I know it well, but cannot trace.

Mine eye unworthy seems to read  
One page of Nature's beauteous book ;  
It lies before me, fair outspread—  
I only cast a wishful look.

I cannot paint to Memory's eye  
The scene, the glance, I dearest love—  
Unchang'd themselves, in me they die,  
Or faint, or false, their shadows prove.



In vain, with dull and tuneless ear,  
I linger by soft Music's cell,  
And in my heart of hearts would hear  
What to her own she deigns to tell.

'Tis misty all, both sight and sound—  
I only know 'tis fair and sweet—  
'Tis wandering on enchanted ground  
With dizzy brow and tottering feet.

But patience ! there may come a time  
When these dull ears shall scan aright  
Strains, that outring Earth's drowsy chime,  
As Heaven outshines the taper's light.

These eyes, that dazzled now and weak,  
At glancing notes in sunshine wink,  
Shall see the King's<sup>i</sup> full glory break,  
Nor from the blissful vision shrink :

In fearless love and hope uncloy'd  
For ever on that ocean bright

<sup>i</sup> Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty ; they shall behold the land that is very far off. *Isaiah xxxiii. 17.*

Empower'd to gaze ; and undestroy'd,  
Deeper and deeper plunge in light.

Though scarcely now their laggard glance  
Reach to an arrow's flight, that day  
They shall behold, and not in trance,  
" The region very far away."

If Memory sometimes at our spell  
Refuse to speak, or speak amiss,  
We shall not need her where we dwell  
Ever in sight of all our bliss.

Meanwhile, if over sea or sky  
Some tender lights unnotic'd fleet,  
Or on lov'd features dawn and die,  
Unread, to us, their lesson sweet ;

Yet are there saddening sights around,  
Which Heaven, in mercy, spares us too,  
And we see far in holy ground,  
If duly purg'd our mental view.

The distant landscape draws not nigh  
For all our gazing ; but the soul,

That upward looks, may still descry  
Nearer, each day, the brightening goal.

And thou, too curious ear, that fain  
Wouldst thread the maze of Harmony,  
Content thee with one simple strain,  
The lowlier, sure, the worthier thee ;

Till thou art duly trained, and taught  
The concord sweet of Love divine :  
Then, with that inward Music fraught,  
For ever rise, and sing, and shine.

VII.  
CHRISTMAS DAY.

And suddenly there was with the Angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God. *St. Luke ii. 13.*

WHAT sudden blaze of song  
Spreads o'er th' expanse of Heav'n?  
In waves of light it thrills along,  
Th' angelic signal given—  
“Glory to God!” from yonder central fire  
Flows out the echoing lay beyond the starry quire;

Like circles widening round  
Upon a clear blue river,  
Orb after orb, the wondrous sound  
Is echoed on for ever:

“ Glory to God on high, on earth be peace,  
“ And love towards men of love<sup>k</sup> — salvation and  
“ release.”

Yet stay, before thou dare  
To join that festal throng ;  
Listen and mark what gentle air  
First stirr'd the tide of song ;  
’Tis not, “ the Saviour born in David’s home,  
“ To whom for power and health obedient worlds  
“ should come :” —

’Tis not, “ the Christ the Lord :” —  
With fix’d adoring look  
The choir of Angels caught the word,  
Nor yet their silence broke :  
But when they heard the sign, where Christ should be,  
In sudden light they shone and heavenly harmony.

Wrapp’d in his swaddling bands,  
And in his manger laid,

<sup>k</sup> I have ventured to adopt the reading of the Vulgate, as being generally known through Pergolesi’s beautiful composition, “Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.”

The hope and glory of all lands  
Is come to the world's aid :  
No peaceful home upon his cradle smil'd,  
Guests rudely went and came, where slept the royal  
child.

But where Thou dwellest, Lord,  
No other thought should be,  
Once duly welcom'd and ador'd,  
How should I part with Thee ?  
Bethlehem must lose Thee soon, but Thou wilt grace  
The single heart to be thy sure abiding-place.

Thee, on the bosom laid  
Of a pure virgin-mind,  
In quiet ever, and in shade,  
Shepherd and sage may find ;  
They, who have bow'd untaught to Nature's sway,  
And they, who follow Truth along her star-pav'd way.

The pastoral spirits first  
Approach Thee, Babe divine,  
For they in lowly thoughts are nurs'd,  
Meet for thy lowly shrine :

Sooner than they should miss where Thou dost dwell,  
Angels from Heaven will stoop to guide them to thy cell.

Still, as the day comes round

For Thee to be reveal'd,

By wakeful shepherds Thou art found,

Abiding in the field.

All through the wintry heaven and chill night air,  
In music and in light Thou dawnest on their prayer.

O faint not ye for fear—

What though your wandering sheep,

Reckless of what they see and hear,

Lie lost in wilful sleep?

High Heaven in mercy to your sad annoy  
Still greets you with glad tidings of immortal joy.

Think on th' eternal home,

The Saviour left for you ;

Think on the Lord most holy, come

To dwell with hearts untrue :

So shall ye tread untir'd his pastoral ways,  
And in the darkness sing your carol of high praise.

## VIII.

### ST. STEPHEN'S DAY.

He, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. *Acts vii. 55.*

AS rays around the source of light  
Stream upward ere he glow in sight,  
And watching by his future flight  
Set the clear heavens on fire ;  
So on the King of Martyrs wait  
Three chosen bands, in royal state<sup>1</sup>,  
And all earth owns, of good and great,  
Is gather'd in that choir.

<sup>1</sup> Wheatley on the Common Prayer, c. v. sect. iv. 2. "As there are three kinds of martyrdom, the first both in will and deed, which is the highest; the second in will but not in deed; the third in deed but not in will; so the Church commemorates these martyrs in the same order: St. Stephen first, who suffered death both in will and deed; St. John the Evangelist next, who suffered martyrdom in will but not in deed; the holy Innocents last, who suffered in deed but not in will."



One presses on, and welcomes death :  
One calmly yields his willing breath,  
Nor slow, nor hurrying, but in faith

Content to die or live :

And some, the darlings of their Lord,  
Play smiling with the flame and sword,  
And, ere they speak, to his sure word  
Unconscious witness give.

Foremost and nearest to his throne,  
By perfect robes of triumph known,  
And likest Him in look and tone,  
The holy Stephen kneels,  
With stedfast gaze, as when the sky  
Flew open to his fainting eye,  
Which, like a fading lamp, flash'd high,  
Seeing what death conceals.

Well might you guess what vision bright  
Was present to his raptur'd sight,  
Even as reflected streams of light  
Their solar source betray—  
The glory which our God surrounds,  
The Son of Man, th' atoning wounds—

He sees them all ; and earth's dull bounds  
Are melting fast away.

He sees them all—no other view  
Could stamp the Saviour's likeness true,  
Or with his love so deep embrue  
    Man's sullen heart and gross—  
“ Jesu, do Thou my soul receive :  
“ Jesu, do Thou my foes forgive :”  
He who would learn that prayer, must live  
    Under the holy Cross.

He, though he seem on earth to move,  
Must glide in air like gentle dove,  
From yon unclouded depths above  
    Must draw his purer breath ;  
Till men behold his angel face  
All radiant with celestial grace <sup>m</sup>,  
Martyr all o'er, and meet to trace  
    The lines of Jesus' death.

<sup>m</sup> And all that were in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel. *Acts vi. 15.*

IX.

ST. JOHN'S DAY.

Peter seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me. *St. John xxi. 21, 22.*

“ LORD, and what shall this man do ?”

Ask'st thou, Christian, for thy friend?

If his love for Christ be true,

Christ hath told thee of his end :

This is he whom God approves,

This is he whom Jesus loves.

Ask not of him more than this,

Leave it in his Saviour's breast,

Whether, early call'd to bliss,

He in youth shall find his rest,

Or armed in his station wait

Till his Lord be at the gate :

Whether in his lonely course  
 (Lonely, not forlorn) he stay,  
 Or with Love's supporting force  
 Cheat the toil and cheer the way :  
 Leave it all in his high hand,  
 Who doth hearts as streams command <sup>b</sup>.

Gales from heaven, if so he will,  
 Sweeter melodies can wake  
 On the lonely mountain rill  
 Than the meeting waters make.  
 Who hath the Father and the Son,  
 May be left, but not alone.

Sick or healthful, slave or free,  
 Wealthy, or despis'd and poor—  
 What is that to him or thee,  
 So his love to Christ endure ?  
 When the shore is won at last,  
 Who will count the billows past ?

<sup>b</sup> The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will. *Proverbs* **xxi. 1.**

Only, since our souls will shrink  
At the touch of natural grief,  
When our earthly lov'd ones sink,  
Lend us, Lord, thy sure relief ;  
Patient hearts, their pain to see,  
And thy grace, to follow Thee.

## THE HOLY INNOCENTS.

These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits  
unto God and to the Lamb. *Revelations* xiv. 4.

SAY, ye celestial guards, who wait  
In Bethlehem, round the Saviour's palace gate,  
Say, who are these on golden wings,  
That hover o'er the new-born King of kings,  
Their palms and garlands telling plain  
That they are of the glorious martyr train,  
Next to yourselves ordain'd to praise  
His name, and brighten as on Him they gaze?

But where their spoils and trophies? where  
The glorious dint a martyr's shield should bear?  
How chance no cheek among them wears  
The deep-worn trace of penitential tears,

But all is bright and smiling love,  
As if, fresh-borne from Eden's happy grove,  
They had flown here, their King to see,  
Nor ever had been heirs of dark mortality?

Ask, and some angel will reply,  
" These, like yourselves, were born to sin and die,  
" But ere the poison root was grown,  
" God set his seal, and mark'd them for his own.  
" Baptiz'd in blood for Jesus' sake,  
" Now underneath the cross their bed they make,  
" Not to be scar'd from that sure rest  
" By frighten'd mother's shriek, or warrior's waving  
" crest."

Mindful of these, the first fruits sweet  
Borne by the suffering Church her Lord to greet ;  
Bless'd Jesus ever lov'd to trace  
The " innocent brightness" of an infant's face.  
He rais'd them in his holy arms,  
He bless'd them from the world and all its harms :  
Heirs though they were of sin and shame,  
He bless'd them in his own and in his Father's name.

Then, as each fond unconscious child  
On th' everlasting Parent sweetly smil'd,  
    (Like infants sporting on the shore,  
That tremble not at Ocean's boundless roar)  
    Were they not present to thy thought,  
All souls, that in their cradles thou hast bought?  
    But chiefly these, who died for Thee,  
That Thou might'st live for them a sadder death to see.

And next to these, thy gracious word  
Was as a pledge of benediction, stor'd  
    For Christian mothers, while they moan  
Their treasur'd hopes, just born, baptiz'd, and gone.  
    Oh joy for Rachel's broken heart!  
She and her babes shall meet no more to part;  
    So dear to Christ her pious haste  
To trust them in his arms, for ever safe embrac'd.

She dares not grudge to leave them there,  
Where to behold them was her heart's first prayer,  
    She dares not grieve—but she must weep,  
As her pale placid martyr sinks to sleep;



Teaching so well and silently

How, at the shepherd's call, the lamb should die :

How happier far than life the end

Of souls that infant-like beneath their burthen bend.

## XI.

### FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS.

So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down. *Isaiah xxxviii. 8. Cf. Josh. x. 13.*

'TIS true, of old th' unchanging sun  
His daily course refus'd to run,  
The pale moon hurrying to the west  
Paus'd at a mortal's call, to aid  
Th' avenging storm of war, that laid  
Seven guilty realms at once on earth's defiled breast.

But can it be, one suppliant tear  
Should stay the ever-moving sphere ?  
A sick man's lowly breathed sigh,  
When from the world he turns away °,  
And hides his weary eyes to pray,  
Should change your mystic dance, ye wanderers of  
the sky ?

° And Hezekiah turned his face towards the wall, and prayed unto the Lord.

We too, O Lord, would fain command,  
As then, thy wonder-working hand,  
    And backward force the waves of Time,  
That now so swift and silent bear  
Our restless bark from year to year :  
Help us to pause and mourn to Thee our tale of crime.

Bright hopes, that erst the bosom warm'd,  
And vows, too pure to be perform'd,  
    And prayers blown wide by gales of care ;—  
These, and such faint half waking dreams,  
Like stormy lights on mountain streams,  
Wavering and broken all, athwart the conscience glare.

How shall we 'scape th' o'erwhelming past ?  
Can spirits broken, joys o'ercast,  
    And eyes that never more may smile :—  
Can these th' avenging bolt delay,  
Or win us back one little day  
The bitterness of death to soften and beguile !

Father and Lover of our souls !  
Though darkly round thine anger rolls,  
    Thy sunshine smiles beneath the gloom,

42      *First Sunday after Christmas.*

Thou seek'st to warn us, not confound,  
Thy showers would pierce the harden'd ground,  
And win it to give out its brightness and perfume.

Thou smil'st on us in wrath, and we,  
Even in remorse, would smile on Thee ;  
    The tears that bathe our offer'd hearts,  
We would not have them stain'd and dim,  
    But dropp'd from wings of seraphim,  
All glowing with the light accepted Love imparts.

Time's waters will not ebb, nor stay,  
Power cannot change them, but Love may,  
    What cannot be, Love counts it done.  
Deep in the heart, her searching view  
Can read where Faith is fix'd and true,  
Through shades of setting life can see Heaven's work  
    begun.

O Thou, who keep'st the Key of Love,  
Open thy fount, eternal Dove,  
    And overflow this heart of mine,  
Enlarging as it fills with Thee,  
    Till in one blaze of charity  
Care and remorse are lost, like notes in light divine.

*First Sunday after Christmas.* 43

Till, as each moment wafts us higher,  
By every gush of pure desire,  
    And high-breath'd hopes of joys above,  
By every sacred sigh we heave,  
    Whole years of folly we outlive,  
In his unerring sight, who measures Life by Love.

## XII.

### THE CIRCUMCISION OF CHRIST.

In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands. *Colossians* ii. 11.

THE year begins with Thee,  
And Thou beginn'st with woe,  
To let the world of sinners see  
That blood for sin must flow.

Thine infant cries, O Lord,  
Thy tears upon the breast,  
Are not enough—the legal sword  
Must do its stern behest.

Like sacrificial wine  
Pour'd on a victim's head,  
Are those few precious drops of thine,  
Now first to offering led

They are the pledge and seal  
Of Christ's unswerving faith  
Given to his Sire, our souls to heal,  
Although it cost his death.

They to his church of old,  
To each true Jewish heart,  
In Gospel graces manifold  
Communion blest impart.

Now of thy love we deem  
As of an ocean vast,  
Mounting in tides against the stream  
Of ages gone and past.

Both theirs and ours Thou art,  
As we and they are thine ;  
Kings, Prophets, Patriarchs—all have part  
Along the sacred line.

By blood and water too  
God's mark is set on Thee,  
That in Thee every faithful view  
Both covenants might see.

O bond of union, dear  
And strong as is thy grace!  
Saints, parted by a thousand year,  
May thus in heart embrace.

Is there a mourner true,  
Who fallen on faithless days,  
Sighs for the heart-consoling view  
Of those, Heaven deign'd to praise?

In spirit may'st thou meet  
With faithful Abraham here,  
Whom soon in Eden thou shalt greet  
A nursing Father dear.

Wouldst thou a Poet be?  
And would thy dull heart fain  
Borrow of Israel's minstrelsy  
One high enraptur'd strain?

Come here thy soul to tune—  
Here set thy feeble chaunt,  
Here, if at all beneath the moon,  
Is holy David's haunt.



Art thou a child of tears,  
Cradled in care and woe ?  
And seems it hard, thy vernal years  
Few vernal joys can shew ?

And fall the sounds of mirth  
Sad on thy lonely heart,  
From all the hopes and charms of earth  
Untimely call'd to part ?

Look here, and hold thy peace :  
The Giver of all good  
Even from the womb takes no release  
From suffering, tears, and blood.

If thou wouldst reap in love,  
First sow in holy fear :  
So life a winter's morn may prove  
To a bright endless year.

### XIII.

#### SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS.

When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. *Isaiah xli. 17.*

AND wilt Thou hear the fever'd heart  
To Thee in silence cry?  
And as th' inconstant wildfires dart  
Out of the restless eye,  
Wilt Thou forgive the wayward thought,  
By kindly woes yet half untaught  
A Saviour's right, so dearly bought,  
That Hope should never die?

Thou wilt: for many a languid prayer  
Has reach'd Thee from the wild,  
Since the lorn mother, wandering there,  
Cast down her fainting child P,

P Hagar. See Gen. xxi. 15.

Then stole apart to weep and die,  
Nor knew an angel form was nigh  
To shew soft waters gushing by  
And dewy shadows mild.

Thou wilt—for Thou art Israel's God,  
And thine unwearied arm  
Is ready yet with Moses' rod,  
The hidden rill to charm  
Out of the dry unfathom'd deep  
Of sands, that lie in lifeless sleep,  
Save when the scorching whirlwinds heap  
Their waves in rude alarm.

Those moments of wild wrath are thine—  
Thine too the drearier hour  
When o'er th' horizon's silent line  
Fond hopeless fancies cower,  
And on the traveller's listless way  
Rises and sets th' unchanging day,  
No cloud in heaven to slake its ray,  
On earth no sheltering bower.

Thou wilt be there, and not forsake,  
To turn the bitter pool

50      *Second Sunday after Christmas.*

Into a bright and breezy lake,  
    The throbbing brow to cool :  
Till left awhile with Thee alone  
The wilful heart be fain to own  
That He, by whom our bright hours shone,  
    Our darkness best may rule.

The scent of water far away  
    Upon the breeze is flung :  
The desert pelican to-day  
    Securely leaves her young,  
Reproving thankless man, who fears  
To journey on a few lone years,  
Where on the sand thy step appears,  
    Thy crown in sight is hung.

Thou, who didst sit on Jacob's well  
    The weary hour of noon<sup>¶</sup>,  
The languid pulses Thou canst tell,  
    The nerveless spirit tune.  
Thou from whose cross in anguish burst  
The cry that own'd thy dying thirst<sup>†</sup>,  
To thee we turn, our last and first,  
    Our Sun and soothing Moon.

¶ St. John iv. 6.

† St. John xix. 23.

*Second Sunday after Christmas.*      51

From darkness, here, and dreariness

    We ask not full repose,

Only be Thou at hand, to bless

    Our trial hour of woes.

Is not the pilgrim's toil o'erpaid

By the clear rill and palmy shade ?

And see we not, up Earth's dark glade,

    The gate of Heaven unclosed ?

## XIV.

### THE EPIPHANY.

Behold, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was: when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

*St. Matt. ii. 9, 10.*

STAR of the East, how sweet art Thou,  
Seen in Life's early morning sky,  
Ere yet a cloud has dimm'd the brow,  
While yet we gaze with childish eye.

When father, mother, nursing friend,  
Most dearly lov'd, and loving best,  
First bid us from their arms ascend,  
Pointing to Thee in thy sure rest.

Too soon the glare of earthly day  
Buries, to us, thy brightness keen,  
And we are left to find our way  
By faith and hope in Thee unseen.

What matter? if the waymarks sure  
On every side are round us set,  
Soon overleap'd, but not obscure?  
'Tis ours to mark them or forget.

What matter? if in calm old age  
Our childhood's star again arise,  
Crowning our lonely pilgrimage  
With all that cheers a wanderer's eyes?

Ne'er may we lose it from our sight,  
Till all our hopes and thoughts are led  
To where it stays its lucid flight  
Over our Saviour's lowly bed.

There, swath'd in humblest poverty,  
On Chastity's meek lap enshrined,  
With breathless Reverence waiting by,  
When we our sovereign Master find,

Will not the long-forgotten glow  
Of mingled joy and awe return,  
When stars above or flowers below  
First made our infant spirits burn?

Look on us, Lord, and take our parts  
Even on thy throne of purity!  
From these our proud yet grovelling hearts  
Hide not thy mild forgiving eye.

Did not the Gentile Church find grace,  
Our mother dear, this favour'd day?  
With gold and myrrh she sought thy face,  
Nor didst Thou turn thy face away.

She too<sup>s</sup>, in earlier, purer days,  
Had watch'd Thee gleaming faint and far—  
But wandering in self-chosen ways  
She lost Thee quite, thou lovely star.

Yet had her Father's finger turn'd  
To Thee her first enquiring glance:  
The deeper shame within her burn'd,  
When waken'd from her wilful trance.

Behold, her wisest throng thy gate,  
Their richest, sweetest, purest store,  
(Yet own'd too worthless and too late)  
They lavish on the cottage-floor.

\* The Patriarchal Church.



*The Epiphany.*

55

They give their best—O tenfold shame  
On us their fallen progeny,  
Who sacrifice the blind and lame†—  
Who will not watch and pray with Thee!

† Malachi i. 8.

58      *First Sunday after Epiphany.*

But when showers and breezes hail her,  
    Wears again her willing smile.  
Thus I learn contentment's power  
From the slighted willow bower,  
Ready to give thanks and live  
On the least that Heaven may give.

If, the quiet brooklet leaving,  
    Up the stony vale I wind,  
Haply half in fancy grieving  
    For the shades I leave behind,  
By the dusty wayside drear,  
Nightingales with joyous cheer,  
Sing, my sadness to reprove,  
Gladlier than in cultur'd grove.

Where the thickest boughs are twining  
    Of the greenest darkest tree,  
There they plunge, the light declining—  
    All may hear, but none may see.  
Fearless of the passing hoof,  
Hardly will they fleet aloof;  
So they live in modest ways,  
Trust entire, and ceaseless praise.

XVI.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER  
EPIPHANY.

Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine, and when men have well drunk then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now. *St. John* ii. 10.

THE heart of childhood is all mirth:

We frolic to and fro

As free and blithe, as if on earth

Were no such thing as woe.

But if indeed with reckless faith

We trust the flattering voice,

Which whispers, "Take thy fill ere death,

"Indulge thee and rejoice;"

58      *First Sunday after Epiphany.*

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    Wears again her willing smile.  
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From the slighted willow bower,  
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60      *Second Sunday after Epiphany.*

Too surely, every setting day,  
    Some lost delight we mourn,  
The flowers all die along our way,  
    Till we, too, die forlorn.

Such is the world's gay garish feast,  
    In her first charming bowl  
Infusing all that fires the breast,  
    And cheats th' unstable soul.

And still, as loud the revel swells,  
    The fever'd pulse beats higher,  
Till the sear'd taste from foulest wells  
    Is fain to slake its fire.

Unlike the feast of heavenly love  
    Spread at the Saviour's word  
For souls that hear his call, and prove  
    Meet for his bridal board.

Why should we fear, youth's draught of joy,  
    If pure, would sparkle less ?  
Why should the cup the sooner cloy,  
    Which God hath deign'd to bless ?

For, is it Hope, that thrills so keen  
    Along each bounding vein,  
Still whispering glorious things unseen?—  
    Faith makes the vision plain.

The world would kill her soon : but Faith  
    Her daring dreams will cherish,  
Speeding her gaze o'er time and death  
    To realms where nought can perish.

Or is it Love, the dear delight  
    Of hearts that know no guile,  
That all around see all things bright  
    With their own magic smile ?

The silent joy, that sinks so deep,  
    Of confidence and rest,  
Lull'd in a father's arms to sleep,  
    Clasp'd to a mother's breast ?

Who, but a Christian, through all life  
    That blessing may prolong ?  
Who, through the world's sad day of strife,  
    Still chaunt his morning song ?

62      *Second Sunday after Epiphany.*

Fathers may hate us or forsake,<sup>†</sup>  
    God's foundlings then are we :  
Mother on child no pity take †,  
    But we shall still have Thee. °

We may look home, and seek in vain  
    A fond fraternal heart,  
But Christ hath given his promise plain  
    To do a brother's part.

Nor shall dull age, as worldlings say,  
    The heavenward flame annoy :  
The Saviour cannot pass away,  
    And with him lives our joy.

Ever the richest tenderest glow  
    Sets round th' autumnal sun—  
But there sight fails : no heart may know  
    The bliss when life is done.

<sup>†</sup> Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb! yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget Thee! *Isaiah* xlix. 15.



*Second Sunday after Epiphany.*      63

Such is thy banquet, dearest Lord ;  
    O give us grace, to cast  
Our lot with thine, to trust thy word,  
    And keep our best till last.

XVII.  
THIRD SUNDAY AFTER  
EPIPHANY.

When Jesus heard it he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel. *St. Matthew* viii. 10.

I MARK'D a rainbow in the north,  
What time the wild autumnal sun  
From his dark veil at noon look'd forth,  
As glorying in his course half done,  
Flinging soft radiance far and wide  
Over the dusky heaven and bleak hill-side.

It was a gleam to memory dear,  
And as I walk and muse apart,  
When all seems faithless round and drear,  
I would revive it in my heart,  
And watch how light can find its way  
To regions farthest from the fount of day.

Light flashes in the gloomiest sky,  
And Music in the dullest plain,  
For there the lark is soaring high  
Over her flat and leafless reign,  
And chanting in so blithe a tone,  
It shames the weary heart to feel itself alone.

Brighter than rainbow in the north,  
More cheery than the matin lark,  
Is the soft gleam of Christian worth,  
Which on some holy house we mark ;  
Dear to the pastor's aching heart  
To think, where'er he looks, such gleam may have a  
part ;

May dwell, unseen by all but Heaven,  
Like diamond blazing in the mine ;  
For ever, where such grace is given,  
It fears in open day to shine <sup>u</sup>,

<sup>u</sup> Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof.

<sup>u</sup> From the first time that the impressions of religion settled deeply in his mind, he used great caution to conceal it; not only in obedience to the rule given by our Saviour, of fasting, praying, and giving alms in secret, but from a particular distrust he had of him-

66      *Third Sunday after Epiphany.*

Lest the deep stain it owns within  
Break out, and faith be sham'd by the believer's sin.

In silence and afar they wait,  
To find a prayer their Lord may hear :  
Voice of the poor and desolate,  
You best may bring it to his ear.  
Your grateful intercessions rise  
With more than royal pomp, and pierce the skies.

Happy the soul, whose precious cause  
You in the sovereign Presence plead—  
“ This is the lover of thy laws <sup>x</sup>,  
“ The friend of thine in fear and need”—  
For to the poor thy mercy lends  
That solemn style, “ thy nation and thy friends.”

He too is blest, whose outward eye  
The graceful lines of art may trace,

self; for he said he was afraid he should at some time or other do some enormous thing, which if he were looked on as a very religious man, might cast a reproach on the profession of it, and give great advantages to impious men to blaspheme the name of God.”  
*Burnet's Life of Halc, in Wordsworth's Eccl. Biog. vi. 73.*

<sup>x</sup> He loveth our nation.

*Third Sunday after Epiphany.*      67

While his free spirit, soaring high,  
Discerns the glorious from the base ;  
Till out of dust his magic raise <sup>y</sup>  
A home for prayer and love, and full harmonious praise.

Where far away and high above,  
In maze on maze the tranced sight  
Strays, mindful of that heavenly love  
Which knows no end in depth or height.  
While the strong breath of Music seems  
To waft us ever on, soaring in blissful dreams.

What though in poor and humble guise  
Thou here didst sojourn, cottage-born ?  
Yet from thy glory in the skies  
Our earthly gold Thou dost not scorn—  
For Love delights to bring her best,  
And where Love is, that offering evermore is blest.

Love on the Saviour's dying head  
Her spikenard drops unblam'd may pour,  
May mount his cross, and wrap him dead  
In spices from the golden shore <sup>z</sup> ;

<sup>y</sup> He hath built us a synagogue.

<sup>z</sup> St. John xii. 7. xix. 30.

68      *Third Sunday after Epiphany.*

Risen, may embalm his sacred name  
With all a Painter's art, and all a Minstrel's flame.

Worthless and lost our offerings seem,  
Drops in the ocean of his praise ;  
But Mercy with her genial beam  
Is ripening them to pearly blaze,  
To sparkle in His crown above,  
Who welcomes here a child's as there an angel's love.

## XVIII.

### FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

When they saw him, they besought him to depart out of their  
coasts. *St. Matthew* viii. 34.

THEY know th' Almighty's power,  
Who, waken'd by the rushing midnight shower,  
    Watch for the fitful breeze  
To howl and chafe amid the bending trees,  
    Watch for the still white gleam  
To bathe the landscape in a fiery stream,  
Touching the tremulous eye with sense of light  
Too rapid and too pure for all but angel sight.

They know th' Almighty's love,  
Who, when the whirlwinds rock the topmost grove,  
    Stand in the shade, and hear  
The tumult with a deep exulting fear,

70      *Fourth Sunday after Epiphany.*

How, in their fiercest sway,  
Curb'd by some power unseen, they die away,  
Like a bold steed that owns his rider's arm,  
Proud to be check'd and sooth'd by that o'er-mastering  
charm.

But there are storms within  
That heave the struggling heart with wilder din,  
And there is power and love  
The maniac's rushing frenzy to reprove,  
And when he takes his seat,  
Cloth'd and in calmness, at his Saviour's feet <sup>a</sup>,  
Is not the power as strange, the love as blest,  
As when He said, Be still, and ocean sank to rest ?

Woe to the wayward heart,  
That gladlier turns to eye the shuddering start  
Of Passion in her might,  
Than marks the silent growth of grace and light ;—  
Pleas'd in the cheerless tomb  
To linger, while the morning rays illumine  
Green lake, and cedar tuft, and spicy glade,  
Shaking their dewy tresses now the storm is laid.

<sup>a</sup> St. Mark v. 15. iv. 39.



The storm is laid—and now  
In his meek power He climbs the mountain's brow,  
Who bade the waves go sleep,  
And lash'd the vex'd fiends to their yawning deep.  
How on a rock they stand,  
Who watch his eye, and hold his guiding hand!  
Not half so fix'd, amid her vassal hills,  
Rises the holy pile that Kedron's valley fills.

And wilt thou seek again  
Thy howling waste, thy charnel-house and chain,  
And with the demons be,  
Rather than clasp thine own Deliverer's knee?  
Sure 'tis no heav'n-bred awe  
That bids thee from his healing touch withdraw,  
The world and He are struggling in thine heart,  
And in thy reckless mood thou bidd'st thy Lord  
depart.

He, merciful and mild,  
As erst, beholding, loves his wayward child;  
When souls of highest birth  
Waste their impassion'd might on dreams of earth,

72      *Fourth Sunday after Epiphany.*

He opens Nature's book,  
And on his glorious Gospel bids them look,  
Till by such chords, as rule the choirs above,  
Their lawless cries are tun'd to hymns of perfect love.

XIX.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER  
EPIPHANY.

Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God. *Isaiah* lix. 1, 2.

“ WAKE, arm divine! awake,

“ Eye of the only Wise!

“ Now for thy glory's sake,

“ Saviour and God, arise,

“ And may thine ear, that sealed seems,

“ In pity mark our mournful themes!”

Thus in her lonely hour

Thy Church is fain to cry,

As if thy love and power

Were vanish'd from her sky;

Yet God is there, and at his side

. He triumphs, who for sinners died.

74      *Fifth Sunday after Epiphany.*

Ah! 'tis the world enthalls  
The heaven betrothed breast :  
The traitor Sense recalls  
The soaring soul from rest.  
That bitter sigh was all for earth,  
For glories gone, and vanish'd mirth.

Age would to youth return,  
Farther from heaven would be,  
To feel the wildfire burn,  
On idolizing knee  
Again to fall, and rob thy shrine  
Of hearts, the right of love divine.

Lord of this wandering flock !  
Thou whose soft showers distil  
On ocean waste or rock,  
Free as on Hermon hill,  
Do Thou our craven spirits cheer,  
And shame away the selfish tear.

"Twas silent all and dead<sup>b</sup>  
Beside the barren sea,

<sup>b</sup> See Acts viii. 26--40.

Where Philip's steps were led,  
Led by a voice from Thee—  
He rose and went, nor ask'd Thee why,  
Nor stayed to heave one faithless sigh ;

Upon his lonely way  
The high-born traveller came,  
Reading a mournful lay  
Of " One who bore our shame<sup>c</sup>,  
" Silent himself, his name untold,  
" And yet his glories were of old."

To muse what Heaven might mean  
His wondering brow he rais'd,  
And met an eye serene  
That on him watchful gaz'd.  
No wanderer e'er so welcome cross'd  
A child's lone path in woodland lost.

Now wonder turns to love ;  
The scrolls of sacred lore  
No darksome mazes prove ;  
The desert tires no more :

<sup>c</sup> Isaiah liii. 6--8.

76      *Fifth Sunday after Epiphany.*

They bathe where holy waters flow,  
Then on their way rejoicing go.

They part to meet in heaven :  
    But of the joy they share,  
Absolving and forgiven,  
    The sweet remembrance bear.  
Where now that statesman, cold and proud,  
Bewilder'd in a heartless crowd,

Starting and turning pale  
    At Rumour's angry din ?  
No storm can now assail  
    The charm he wears within,  
Rejoicing still, and doing good,  
And with the thought of God imbu'd.

No glare of high estate,  
    No gloom of woe or want,  
The radiance can abate  
    Where heaven delights to haunt.  
Sin only hides the genial ray,  
And, round the cross, makes night of day.

*Fifth Sunday after Epiphany.*      77

Then weep it from thy heart ;  
So may'st thou duly learn  
The intercessor's part,  
Thy prayers and tears may earn  
For fallen souls some healing breath,  
Ere they have died th' Apostate's death.

XX.

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER  
EPIPHANY.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know, that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. 1 *St. John* iii. 2, 3.

THERE are, who darkling and alone,  
Would wish the weary night were gone,  
Though dawning morn should only shew  
The secret of their unknown woe:  
Who pray for sharpest throbs of pain  
To ease them of doubt's galling chain:  
“ Only disperse the cloud,” they cry,  
“ And if our fate be death, give light and let us die <sup>d</sup>.”

Unwise I deem them, LORD, unmeet  
To profit by thy chastenings sweet,

<sup>d</sup> Ἐν δὲ φάτι καὶ ὀλίsson.



For thou wouldst have us linger still  
Upon the verge of good or ill,  
That on thy guiding hand unseen  
Our undivided hearts may lean,  
And this our frail and foundering bark  
Glide in the narrow wake of thy beloved ark.

'Tis so in war—the champion true  
Loves victory more, when dim in view  
He sees her glories gild afar  
The dusky edge of stubborn war,  
Then if th' untrodden bloodless field  
The harvest of her laurels yield ;  
Let not my bark in calm abide,  
But win her fearless way against the chafing tide.

'Tis so in love—the faithful heart  
From her dim vision would not part,  
When first to her fond gaze is given  
That purest spot in Fancy's heaven,  
For all the gorgeous sky beside,  
Though pledg'd her own and sure t' abide :  
Dearer than every past noon-day  
That twilight gleam to her, though faint and far away.

So have I seen some tender flower  
Priz'd above all the vernal bower,  
Shelter'd beneath the coolest shade,  
Upon the softest bosom laid,  
So frail a gem, it scarce may bear  
The playful touch of evening air ;  
When hardier grown we love it less,  
And trust it from our sight, not needing our caress.

And wherefore is the sweet spring tide  
Worth all the changeful year beside ?  
The last-born babe, why lies its part  
Deep in the mother's inmost heart ?  
But that the LORD and source of love  
Would have his weakest ever prove  
Our tenderest care—and most of all  
Our frail immortal souls, His work and Satan's thrall.

So be it, LORD ; I know it best,  
Though not as yet this wayward breast  
Beat quite in answer to thy voice,  
Yet surely I have made my choice ;  
I know not yet the promis'd bliss,  
Know not if I shall win or miss ;

So doubting, rather let me die,  
Than close with aught beside, to last eternally.

What is the heaven we idly dream ?  
The self-deceiver's dreary theme,  
A cloudless sun that softly shines,  
Bright maidens and unfailing vines,  
The warrior's pride, the hunter's mirth,  
Poor fragments all of this low earth :  
Such as in sleep would hardly soothe  
A soul that once had tasted of immortal Truth.

What is the Heaven our God bestows ?  
No Prophet yet, no Angel knows ;  
Was never yet created eye  
Could see across Eternity ;  
Not seraph's wing for ever soaring  
Can pass the flight of souls adoring,  
That nearer still and nearer grow  
To th' unapproached LORD, once made for them so  
low.

Unseen, unfelt their earthly growth,  
And self-accus'd of sin and sloth

They live and die : their names decay,  
Their fragrance passes quite away ;  
Like violets in the freezing blast  
No vernal steam around they cast,—  
But they shall flourish from the tomb,  
The breath of GOD shall wake them into od'rous bloom.

Then on th' incarnate SAVIOUR'S breast,  
The fount of sweetness, they shall rest,  
Their spirits every hour imbu'd  
More deeply with his precious blood.  
But peace—still voice and closed eye  
Suit best with hearts beyond the sky,  
Hearts training in their low abode,  
Daily to lose themselves in hope to find their GOD.

## XXI.

### SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made.

*Romans i. 20.*

THERE is a book, who runs may read,  
Which heavenly truth imparts,  
And all the lore its scholars need,  
Pure eyes and Christian hearts.

The works of God above, below,  
Within us and around,  
Are pages in that book, to shew  
How God himself is found.

The glorious sky embracing all  
Is like the Maker's love,  
Wherewith encompass'd, great and small  
In peace and order move.

The Moon above, the Church below,  
 A wondrous race they run,  
 But all their radiance, all their glow,  
 Each borrows of its Sun.

The Saviour lends the light and heat  
 That crowns his holy hill;  
 The saints, like stars, around his seat,  
 Perform their courses still <sup>e</sup>.

The saints above are stars in Heaven—  
 What are the saints on earth?  
 Like trees they stand whom God has given <sup>f</sup>,  
 Our Eden's happy birth.

Faith is their fix'd unswerving root,  
 Hope their unfading flower,  
 Fair deeds of charity their fruit,  
 The glory of their bower.

The dew of heaven is like thy grace <sup>g</sup>,  
 It steals in silence down;  
 But where it lights, the favour'd place  
 By richest fruits is known.

<sup>e</sup> Dan. xii. 3.

<sup>f</sup> Isaiah lx. 21.

<sup>g</sup> Psalm lxxviii. 9.

One Name above all glorious names  
With its ten thousand tongues  
The everlasting sea proclaims,  
Echoing angelic songs.

The raging Fire <sup>h</sup>, the roaring Wind,  
Thy boundless power display :  
But in the gentler breeze we find  
Thy Spirit's viewless way <sup>i</sup>.

Two worlds are ours : 'tis only Sin  
Forbids us to descry .  
The mystic heaven and earth within,  
Plain as the sea and sky.

Thou, who hast given me eyes to see  
And love this sight so fair,  
Give me a heart to find out Thee,  
And read Thee every where.

<sup>h</sup> Hebrews xii. 29.

<sup>i</sup> St. John iii. 8.

## XXII.

### SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY.

So he drove out the man, and placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims and a flaming sword, which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. *Gen. iii. 24.* Compare *c. vi.*

FOE of mankind ! too bold thy race :  
Thou runn'st at such a reckless pace,  
Thine own dire work thou surely wilt confound :  
'Twas but one little drop of sin  
We saw this morning enter in,  
And lo ! at eventide the world is drown'd.

See here the fruit of wandering eyes,  
Of worldly longings to be wise,  
Of Passion dwelling on forbidden sweets :  
Ye lawless glances, freely rove ;  
Ruin below and wrath above  
Are all that now the wildering fancy meets.



Lord, when in some deep garden glade,  
Of Thee and of myself afraid,  
From thoughts like these among the bowers I hide,  
Nearest and loudest then of all  
I seem to hear the Judge's call :—  
“ Where art thou, fallen man? come forth, and be  
“ thou tried.”

Trembling before Thee as I stand,  
Where'er I gaze on either hand  
The sentence is gone forth, the ground is curs'd :  
Yet mingled with the penal shower  
Some drops of balm in every bower  
Steal down like April dews, that softest fall and first.

If filial and maternal love <sup>k</sup>  
Memorial of our guilt must prove,  
If sinful babes in sorrow must be born,  
Yet, to assuage her sharpest throes,  
The faithful mother surely knows,  
This was the way Thou cam'st to save the world  
forlorn.

<sup>k</sup> In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children.

If blessed wedlock may not bless<sup>1</sup>  
 Without some tinge of bitterness  
 To dash her cup of joy, since Eden lost,  
 Chaining to earth with strong desire  
 Hearts that would highest else aspire,  
 And o'er the tenderer sex usurping ever most ;

Yet by the light of Christian lore  
 'Tis blind Idolatry no more,  
 But a sweet help and pattern of true love,  
 Shewing how best the soul may cling  
 To her immortal Spouse and King,  
 How He should rule, and she with full desire approve.

If niggard Earth her treasures hide<sup>m</sup>,  
 To all but labouring hands denied,  
 Lavish of thorns and worthless weeds alone,  
 The doom is half in mercy given  
 To train us in our way to Heaven,  
 And shew our lagging souls how glory must be won.

<sup>1</sup> Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

<sup>m</sup> Cursed is the ground for thy sake.

If on the sinner's outward frame<sup>n</sup>  
God hath impress'd his mark of blame,  
And even our bodies shrink at touch of light,  
Yet mercy hath not left us bare :  
The very weeds we daily wear<sup>o</sup>  
Are to Faith's eye a pledge of God's forgiving might.

And oh ! if yet one arrow more<sup>p</sup>,  
The sharpest of th' Almighty's store,  
Tremble upon the string—a sinner's death—  
Art Thou not by to soothe and save,  
To lay us gently in the grave,  
To close the weary eye and hush the parting breath ?

Therefore in sight of man bereft  
The happy garden still was left,  
The fiery sword that guarded shew'd it too ;  
Turning all ways, the world to teach,  
That though as yet beyond our reach,  
Still in its place the tree of life and glory grew.

<sup>n</sup> I was afraid because I was naked.

<sup>o</sup> The Lord God made coats of skins, and he clothed them.

<sup>p</sup> Thou shalt surely die.

XXIII.

QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. *Gen. ix. 13.*

SWEET Dove! the softest, steadiest plume  
In all the sunbright sky,  
Brightening in ever-changeful bloom  
As breezes change on high ;—

Sweet Leaf! the pledge of peace and mirth,  
“ Long sought, and lately won,”  
Bless'd increase of reviving Earth,  
When first it felt the Sun ;—

Sweet Rainbow! pride of summer days,  
High set at Heaven's command,  
Though into drear and dusky haze  
Thou melt on either hand ;—

Dear tokens of a pardoning God,  
    We hail ye, one and all,  
As when our fathers walk'd abroad,  
    Freed from their twelvemonths' thrall.

How joyful from th' imprisoning ark,  
    On the green earth they spring!  
Not blither, after showers, the Lark  
    Mounts up with glistening wing.

So home-bound sailors spring to shore,  
    Two oceans safely past;  
So happy souls, when life is o'er,  
    Plunge in th' empyreal vast.

What wins their first and fondest gaze  
    In all the blissful field,  
And keeps it through a thousand days?  
    Love face to face reveal'd:

Love imag'd in that cordial look  
    Our Lord in Eden bends  
On souls that sin and earth forsook  
    In time to die his friends.

And what most welcome and serene  
Dawns on the Patriarch's eye,  
In all th' emerging hills so green,  
In all the brightening sky ?

What but the gentle rainbow's gleam,  
Soothing the wearied sight,  
That cannot bear the solar beam,  
With soft undazzling light ?

Lord, if our fathers turn'd to thee  
With such adoring gaze,  
Wondering frail man thy light should see  
Without thy scorching blaze.

Where is our love, and where our hearts,  
We who have seen thy Son,  
Have tried thy Spirit's winning arts,  
And yet we are not won ?

The Son of God in radiance beam'd  
Too bright for us to scan,  
But we may face the rays that stream'd  
From the mild Son of Man.

There, parted into rainbow hues,  
    In sweet harmonious strife,  
We see celestial love diffuse  
    Its light o'er Jesus' life.

God, by His bow, vouchsafes to write  
    This truth in Heaven above ;  
As every lovely hue is Light,  
    So every grace is Love.

## XXIV.

### ASH-WEDNESDAY.

When thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face, that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret. *St. Matthew vi. 17.*

- “ YES—deep within and deeper yet  
“ The rankling shaft of conscience hide,  
“ Quick let the swelling eye forget  
“ The tears that in the heart abide.  
“ Calm be the voice, the aspect bold,  
“ No shuddering pass o’er lip or brow,  
“ For why should Innocence be told  
“ The pangs that guilty spirits bow ?
- “ The loving eye that watches thine  
“ Close as the air that wraps thee round—  
“ Why in thy sorrow should it pine,  
“ Since never of thy sin it found ?



“ And wherefore should the heathen see †  
“ What chains of darkness thee enslave,  
“ And mocking say, Lo, this is he  
“ Who own'd a God that could not save ?”

Thus oft the mourner's wayward heart  
Tempts him to hide his grief and die,  
Too feeble for Confession's smart,  
Too proud to bear a pitying eye ;  
How sweet, in that dark hour, to fall  
On bosoms waiting to receive  
Our sighs, and gently whisper all !  
They love us—will not God forgive ?

Else let us keep our fast within,  
Till Heaven and we are quite alone,  
Then let the grief, the shame, the sin,  
Before the mercy-seat be thrown.  
Between the porch and altar weep,  
Unworthy of the holiest place,  
Yet hoping near the shrine to keep  
One lowly cell in sight of grace.

† Wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their  
God. *Joel* ii. 17.

Nor fear lest sympathy should fail—  
 Hast thou not seen, in night-hours drear,  
 When racking thoughts the heart assail,  
 The glimmering stars by turns appear,  
 And from th' eternal home above  
 With silent news of mercy steal?  
 So Angels pause on tasks of love,  
 To look where sorrowing sinners kneel.

Or if no Angel pass that way,  
 He who in secret sees, perchance,  
 May bid his own heart-warming ray  
 Toward thee stream with kindlier glance,  
 As when upon His drooping head  
 His Father's light was pour'd from Heaven,  
 What time, unshelter'd and unfed<sup>r</sup>,  
 Far in the wild His steps were driven.

High thoughts were with Him in that hour,  
 Untold, unspeakable on earth—  
 And who can stay the soaring power  
 Of spirits wean'd from worldly mirth,

<sup>r</sup> St. Matt. iv. 1.

While far beyond the sound of praise  
    With upward eye they float serene,  
And learn to bear their Saviour's blaze  
    When Judgment shall undraw the screen.

XXV.

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT.

Haste thee, escape thither, for I cannot do any thing till thou  
be come thither: therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.  
*Genesis xix. 22.*

“ ANGEL of wrath! why linger in mid air,  
“ While the devoted city’s cry  
“ Louder and louder swells? and canst thou spare,  
“ Thy full-charg’d vial standing by?”  
Thus, with stern voice, unsparing Justice pleads :  
He hears her not—with soften’d gaze  
His eye is following where sweet Mercy leads,  
And till she give the sign, his fury stays.

Guided by her, along the mountain road,  
Far through the twilight of the morn,  
With hurrying footsteps from th’ accurs’d abode  
He sees the holy household borne :

Angels, or more, on either hand are nigh,  
To speed them o'er the tempting plain,  
Lingering in heart, and with frail sidelong eye  
Seeking how near they may unharm'd remain.

“ Ah wherefore gleam those upland slopes so fair ?

“ And why, through every woodland arch,

“ Swells yon bright vale, as Eden rich and rare,

“ Where Jordan winds his stately march ;

“ If all must be forsaken, ruin'd all,

“ If God have planted but to burn ?—

“ Surely not yet th' avenging shower will fall,

“ Though to my home for one last look I turn.”

Thus while they waver, surely long ago

They had provoked the withering blast,

But that the merciful Avengers know

Their frailty well, and hold them fast.

“ Haste, for thy life escape, nor look behind” —

Ever in thrilling sounds like these

They check the wandering eye, severely kind,

Nor let the sinner lose his soul at ease.

And when, o'erwearied with the steep ascent,

We for a nearer refuge crave,

One little spot of ground in mercy lent,  
One hour of home before the grave,  
Oft in his pity o'er his children weak,  
His hand withdraws the penal fire,  
And where we fondly cling, forbears to wreak  
Full vengeance, till our hearts are wean'd entire.

Thus, by the merits of one righteous man,  
The Church, our Zoar, shall abide,  
Till she abuse, so sore, her lengthen'd span,  
Even Mercy's self her face must hide.  
Then, onward yet a step, thou hard-won soul ;  
Though in the Church thou know thy place,  
The mountain farther lies—there seek thy goal,  
There breathe at large, o'erpast thy dangerous race.

Sweet is the smile of home ; the mutual look  
When hearts are of each other sure ;  
Sweet all the joys that crowd the household nook,  
The haunt of all affections pure ;  
Yet in the world even these abide, and we  
Above the world our calling boast :  
Once gain the mountain top, and thou art free :  
Till then, who rest, presume ; who turn to look, are  
lost.

## XXVI.

### SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT.

And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father. *Gen.* xxvii. 34. (Compare *Hebrews* xii. 17. He found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.)<sup>s</sup>

“ AND is there in GOD’s world so drear a place  
“ Where the loud bitter cry is rais’d in vain ?  
“ Where tears of penance come too late for grace,  
“ As on th’ uprooted flower the genial rain ?”

<sup>s</sup>The author earnestly hopes, that nothing in these stanzas will be understood to express any opinion as to the general efficacy of what is called “ a death-bed repentance.” Such questions are best left in the merciful obscurity with which Scripture has enveloped them. Esau’s probation, as far as his birthright was concerned, was quite over when he uttered the cry in the text. His despondency therefore is not parallel to any thing on this side the grave.

'Tis even so : the sovereign Lord of souls  
Stores in the dungeon of his boundless realm  
Each bolt, that o'er the sinner vainly rolls,  
With gather'd wrath the reprobate to whelm.

Will the storm hear the sailor's piteous cry †,  
Taught to mistrust, too late, the tempting wave,  
When all around he sees but sea and sky,  
A God in anger, a self-chosen grave ?

Or will the thorns, that strew intemperance' bed,  
Turn with a wish to down ? will late remorse  
Recall the shaft the murderer's hand has sped,  
Or from the guiltless bosom turn its course ?

Then may th' unbodied soul in safety fleet  
Through the dark curtains of the world above,  
Fresh from the stain of crime ; nor fear to meet  
The God, whom here she would not learn to love :

Then is there hope for such as die unblest,  
That angel wings may waft them to the shore,  
Nor need th' unready virgin strike her breast,  
Nor wait desponding round the bridegroom's door.

† Cf. Bp. Butler's *Analogy*, p. 54--64. ed. 1736.



But where is then the stay of contrite hearts?

Of old they lean'd on thy eternal word,

But with the sinner's fear their hope departs,

Fast link'd as thy great Name to Thee, O Lord.

That Name, by which thy faithful oath is past,

That we should endless be, for joy or woe;—

And if the treasures of thy wrath could waste,

Thy lovers must their promis'd Heaven forego.

But ask of elder days, earth's vernal hour,

When in familiar talk God's voice was heard,

When at the Patriarch's call the fiery shower

Propitious o'er the turf-built shrine appear'd.

Watch by our father Isaac's pastoral door—

The birthright sold, the blessing lost and won,

Tell, Heaven has wrath that can relent no more,

The Grave, dark deeds that cannot be undone.

We barter life for pottage; sell true bliss

For wealth or power, for pleasure or renown;

Thus, Esau-like, our Father's blessing miss,

Then wash with fruitless tears our faded crown.

Our faded crown, despis'd and flung aside,  
    Shall on some brother's brow immortal bloom,  
No partial hand the blessing may misguide ;  
    No flattering fancy change our Monarch's doom :

His righteous doom, that meek true-hearted Love  
    The everlasting birthright should receive,  
The softest dews drop on her from above <sup>u</sup>,  
    The richest green her mountain garland weave :

Her brethren, mightiest, wisest, eldest born,  
    Bow to her sway, and move at her behest :  
Isaac's fond blessing may not fall on scorn,  
    Nor Balaam's curse on Love, which God hath blest.

<sup>u</sup> Genesis xxvii. 27, 28.

## XXVII.

### THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT.

When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace. But when a stronger than he shall come upon him and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. *St. Luke xi. 21, 22.*

SEE Lucifer like lightning fall  
Dash'd from his throne of pride ;  
While, answering Thy victorious call,  
The Saints his spoils divide,  
This world of thine, by him usurp'd too long,  
Now opening all her stores to heal thy servants' wrong.

So when the first-born of thy foes  
Dead in the darkness lay,  
When thy redeem'd at midnight rose  
And cast their bonds away,

The orphan'd realm threw wide her gates, and told  
Into freed Israel's lap her jewels and her gold.

And when their wondrous march was o'er,  
And they had won their homes,  
Where Abraham fed his flock of yore,  
Among their fathers' tombs ;—  
A land that drinks the rain of heaven at will,  
Whose waters kiss the feet of many a vine-clad hill ;—

Oft as they watch'd, at thoughtful eve,  
A gale from bowers of balm  
Sweep o'er the billowy corn, and heave  
The tresses of the palm,  
Just as the lingering Sun had touch'd with gold,  
Far o'er the cedar shade, some tower of giants old ;

It was a fearful joy, I ween,  
To trace the Heathen's toil,  
The limpid wells, the orchards green  
Left ready for the spoil,  
The household stores untouch'd, the roses bright  
Wreath'd o'er the cottage walls in garlands of de-  
light.

And now another Canaan yields  
To thine all-conquering ark ;—  
Fly from the “ old poetic” fields<sup>x</sup>,  
Ye Paynim shadows dark !

Immortal Greece, dear land of glorious lays,  
Lo! here the “ unknown God” of thy unconscious  
praise !

The olive wreath, the ivied wand,  
“ The sword in myrtles drest,”  
Each legend of the shadowy strand  
Now wakes a vision blest :  
As little children lisp, and tell of Heaven,  
So thoughts beyond their thought to those high Bards  
were given.

And these are ours : Thy partial grace  
The tempting treasure lends :  
These relics of a guilty race  
Are forfeit to thy friends :  
What seem'd an idol hymn, now breathes of Thee,  
Tun'd by Faith's ear to some celestial melody.

<sup>x</sup> Where each old poetic mountain  
Inspiration breath'd around. *Gray.*

There's not a strain to memory dear<sup>y</sup>,

Nor flower in classic grove,

There's not a sweet note warbled here,

But minds us of thy Love.

O Lord, our Lord, and spoiler of our foes,

There is no light but thine : with Thee all beauty glows.

<sup>y</sup>See Burns's Works, i. 293. Dr. Currie's Edition.

## XXVIII.

### FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT.

Joseph made haste, for his bowels did yearn upon his brother; and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there. *Gen. xliii. 30.*

There stood no man with them, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. *Gen. xlv. 1.*

WHEN Nature tries her finest touch,  
Weaving her vernal wreath,  
Mark ye, how close she veils her round,  
Not to be trac'd by sight or sound,  
Nor soil'd by ruder breath?

Who ever saw the earliest rose  
First open her sweet breast?  
Or, when the summer sun goes down,  
The first soft star in evening's crown  
Light up her gleaming crest?

Fondly we seek the dawning bloom  
    On features wan and fair,—  
The gazing eye no change can trace,  
But look away a little space,  
    Then turn, and, lo! 'tis there.

But there's a sweeter flower than e'er  
    Blush'd on the rosy spray—  
A brighter star, a richer bloom  
Than e'er did western heaven illumine  
    At close of summer day.

'Tis Love, the last best gift of Heaven;  
    Love gentle, holy, pure :  
But tenderer than a dove's soft eye,  
The searching sun, the open sky,  
    She never could endure.

Even human Love will shrink from sight  
    Here in the coarse rude earth :  
How then should rash intruding glance  
Break in upon *her* sacred trance  
    Who boasts a heavenly birth?



So still and secret is her growth,  
    Ever the truest heart,  
Where deepest strikes her kindly root  
For hope or joy, for flower or fruit,  
    Least knows its happy part.

God only, and good angels, look  
    Behind the blissful screen—  
As when, triumphant o'er his woes,  
The Son of God by moonlight rose,  
    By all but Heaven unseen :

As when the holy Maid beheld  
    Her risen Son and Lord :  
Thought has not colours half so fair  
That she to paint that hour may dare,  
    In silence best ador'd.

The gracious Dove, that brought from Heaven  
    The earnest of our bliss,  
Of many a chosen witness telling,  
On many a happy vision dwelling,  
    Sings not a note of this.

So, truest image of the Christ,  
    Old Israel's long-lost son,  
What time, with sweet forgiving cheer,  
He call'd his conscious brethren near,  
    Would weep with them alone.

He could not trust his melting soul  
    But in his Maker's sight—  
Then why should gentle hearts and true  
Bare to the rude world's withering view  
    Their treasure of delight!

No—let the dainty rose awhile  
    Her bashful fragrance hide—  
Rend not her silken veil too soon,  
But leave her, in her own soft noon,  
    To flourish and abide.

## XXIX.

### FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT.

And Moses said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight,  
why the bush is not burned. *Exodus* iii. 3.

TH' historic Muse, from age to age,  
Thro' many a waste heart-sickening page  
Hath trac'd the works of Man :  
But a celestial call to-day  
Stays her, like Moses, on her way,  
The works of God to scan.

Far seen across the sandy wild,  
Where, like a solitary child,  
He thoughtless roam'd and free,  
One towering thorn<sup>z</sup> was wrapt in flame—  
Bright without blaze it went and came :  
Who would not turn and see ?

<sup>z</sup> " Seneh:" said to be a sort of Acacia.

Along the mountain ledges green  
The scatter'd sheep at will may glean  
    The Desert's spicy stores :  
The while, with undivided heart,  
The shepherd talks with God apart,  
    And, as he talks, adores.

Ye too, who tend Christ's wildering flock,  
Well may ye gather round the rock  
    That once was Sion's hill ;  
To watch the fire upon the mount  
Still blazing, like the solar fount,  
    Yet unconsuming still.

Caught from that blaze by wrath divine,  
Lost branches of the once-lov'd vine,  
    Now wither'd, spent, and sear,  
See Israel's sons, like glowing brands,  
'Tost wildly o'er a thousand lands  
    For twice a thousand year.

God will not quench nor slay them quite,  
But lifts them like a beacon light  
    Th' apostate Church to scare :

Or like pale ghosts that darkling roam,  
Hovering around their ancient home,  
But find no refuge there.

Ye blessed Angels! if of you  
There be, who love the ways to view  
Of Kings and Kingdoms here ;  
(And sure, 'tis worth an Angel's gaze,  
To see, throughout that dreary maze,  
God teaching love and fear :)

Oh say, in all the bleak expanse,  
Is there a spot to win your glance,  
So bright, so dark as this?  
A hopeless faith, a homeless race,  
Yet seeking the most holy place,  
And owning the true bliss?

Salted with fire they seem <sup>a</sup>, to shew  
How spirits lost in endless woe  
May undecaying live.  
Oh sickening thought! yet hold it fast

<sup>a</sup> St. Mark ix. 49.

Long as this glittering world shall last,  
Or sin at heart survive.

And hark! amid the flashing fire,  
Mingling with tones of fear and ire,  
Soft Mercy's undersong—  
'Tis Abraham's God who speaks so loud,  
His people's cries have pierc'd the cloud,  
He sees, He sees their wrong<sup>b</sup>;

He is come down to break their chain;  
Though never more on Sion's fane  
His visible ensign wave;  
'Tis Sion, wheresoe'er they dwell,  
Who, with His own true Israel,  
Shall own Him strong to save.

He shall redeem them one by one,  
Where'er the world-encircling sun  
Shall see them meekly kneel:  
All that He asks on Israel's part,  
Is only, that the captive heart  
Its woe and burthen feel.

<sup>b</sup> Exod. iii. 7, 8.

Gentiles! with fix'd yet awful eye

Turn ye this page of mystery,

Nor slight the warning sound :

“ Put off thy shoes from off thy feet—

“ The place where man his God shall meet,

“ Be sure, is holy ground.”

XXX.

PALM SUNDAY.

And He answered and said unto them, I tell you, that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

*St. Luke xix. 40.*

YE whose hearts are beating high  
With the pulse of Poesy,  
Heirs of more than royal race,  
Fram'd by Heaven's peculiar grace,  
God's own work to do on earth,  
(If the word be not too bold,)  
Giving virtue a new birth,  
And a life that ne'er grows old—

Sovereign maisters of all hearts!  
Know ye, who hath set your parts?  
He who gave you breath to sing,  
By whose strength ye sweep the string,



He hath chosen you, to lead  
His Hosannas here below ;—  
Mount, and claim your glorious meed ;  
Linger not with sin and woe.

But if ye should hold your peace,  
Deem not that the song would cease—  
Angels round his glory-throne,  
Stars, His guiding hand that own,  
Flowers, that grow beneath our feet,  
Stones in earth's dark womb that rest,  
High and low in choir shall meet,  
Ere His Name shall be unblest.

Lord, by every minstrel tongue  
Be thy praise so duly sung,  
That thine angels' harps may ne'er  
Fail to find fit echoing here :  
We the while, of meaner birth,  
Who in that divinest spell  
Dare not hope to join on earth,  
Give us grace to listen well.

But should thankless silence seal  
Lips, that might half Heaven reveal,

Should bards in idol-hymns profane  
The sacred soul-enthraling strain,  
(As in this bad world below  
Noblest things find vilest using,)  
Then, thy power and mercy shew,  
In vile things noble breath infusing ;

Then waken into sound divine  
The very pavement of thy shrine,  
Till we, like Heaven's star-sprinkled floor,  
Faintly give back what we adore.  
Childlike though the voices be,  
And untunable the parts,  
Thou wilt own the minstrelsy,  
If it flow from childlike hearts.

## XXXI.

### MONDAY BEFORE EASTER.

Doubtless Thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not. *Isaiah* lxiii. 16.

“FATHER to me Thou art and Mother dear,  
“ And Brother too, kind husband of my heart”—  
So speaks Andromache<sup>c</sup> in boding fear,  
Ere from her last embrace her hero part—  
So evermore, by Faith’s undying glow,  
We own the Crucified in weal or woe.

Strange to our ears the church-bells of our home,  
The fragrance of our old paternal fields  
May be forgotten ; and the time may come  
When the babe’s kiss no sense of pleasure yields  
Even to the doting mother : but thine own  
Thou never canst forget nor leave alone.

<sup>c</sup> *Iliad*. vi. 429.

There are who sigh that no fond heart is theirs,  
 None loves them best—O vain and selfish sigh!  
 Out of the bosom of His love He spares—  
 The Father spares the Son, for thee to die:  
 For thee He died—for thee He lives again:  
 He watches o'er thee in His boundless reign.

Thou art as much His care, as if beside  
 Nor man nor angel liv'd in heaven or earth:  
 Thus sunbeams pour alike their glorious tide  
 To light up worlds, or wake an insect's mirth:  
 They shine and shine with unexhausted store—  
 Thou art thy Saviour's darling—seek no more.

On thee and thine, thy warfare and thine end,  
 Even in His hour of agony He thought,  
 When, ere the final pang His soul should rend,  
 The ransom'd spirits one by one were brought  
 To his mind's eye—two silent nights and days<sup>d</sup>  
 In calmness for His far-seen hour He stays.

Ye vaulted cells where martyr'd seers of old  
 Far in the rocky walls of Sion sleep,

<sup>d</sup> Monday and Tuesday in Passion week; on which days Scripture seems to be nearly silent concerning our Saviour's proceedings.

Green terraces and arched fountains cold,  
Where lies the cypress shade so still and deep,  
Dear sacred haunts of glory and of woe,  
Help us, one hour, to trace his musings high and low :

One heart-ennobling hour ! It may not be.

Th' unearthly thoughts have pass'd from earth away,  
And fast as evening sunbeams from the sea  
Thy footsteps all in Sion's deep decay  
Were blotted from the holy ground : yet dear  
Is every stone of hers ; for Thou wast surely here.

There is a spot within this sacred dale  
That felt Thee kneeling—touch'd thy prostrate brow :  
One angel knows it. O might prayer avail  
To win that knowledge ! sure each holy vow  
Less quickly from th' unstable soul would fade,  
Offer'd where CHRIST in agony was laid.

Might tear of ours once mingle with the blood  
That from his aching brow by moonlight fell,  
Over the mournful joy our thoughts would brood,  
Till they had fram'd within a guardian spell  
To chase repining fancies, as they rise,  
Like birds of evil wing, to mar our sacrifice.

So dreams the heart self-flattering, fondly dreams;—

Else wherefore, when the bitter waves o'erflow,

Miss we the light, Gethsemane, that streams

From thy dear name, where in his page of woe

It shines, a pale kind star in winter's sky?

Who vainly reads it there, in vain had seen Him die.

## XXXII.

### TUESDAY BEFORE EASTER.

They gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not. *St. Mark xv. 23.*

“ **FILL** high the bowl, and spice it well, and pour

“ The dews oblivious: for the Cross is sharp,

“ The Cross is sharp, and He

“ Is tenderer than a lamb.

“ He wept by Lazarus' grave—how will He bear

“ This bed of anguish? and his pale weak form

“ Is worn with many a watch

“ Of sorrow and unrest.

“ His sweat last night was as great drops of blood,

“ And the sad burthen press'd him so to earth,

“ The very torturers paus'd

“ To help Him on His way.

“ Fill high the bowl, benumb His aching sense  
“ With medicin'd sleep.”—O awful in thy woe!  
The parching thirst of death  
Is on thee, and thou triest

The slumbrous potion bland, and wilt not drink :  
Not sullen, nor in scorn, like haughty man  
With suicidal hand  
Putting his solace by :

But as at first thine all-pervading look  
Saw from thy Father's bosom to th' abyss,  
Measuring in calm presage  
The infinite descent ;

So to the end, though now of mortal pangs  
Made heir, and emptied of thy glory' awhile,  
With unaverted eye  
Thou meetest all the storm.

Thou wilt feel all, that Thou may'st pity all ;  
And rather wouldst Thou wrestle with strong pain,  
Than overcloud thy soul,  
So clear in agony,



Or lose one glimpse of Heaven before the time.

O most entire and perfect sacrifice,

Renew'd in every pulse

That on the tedious Cross

Told the long hours of death, as, one by one,

The life-strings of that tender heart gave way ;

Even sinners, taught by Thee,

Look Sorrow in the face,

And bid her freely welcome, unbeguil'd

By false kind solaces, and spells of earth :—

And yet not all unsooth'd ;

For when was Joy so dear,

As the deep calm that breath'd, “ *Father, forgive,*”

Or, “ *Be with me in Paradise to-day?*”

And, though the strife be sore,

Yet in His parting breath

Love masters agony ; the soul that seem'd

Forsaken, feels her present God again,

And in her Father's arms

Contented dies away.

XXXIII.

WEDNESDAY BEFORE EASTER.

Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me : nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done. *St. Luke xxii. 42.*

O LORD my God, do Thou thy holy will—  
I will lie still—

I will not stir, lest I forsake thine arm,  
And break the charm,  
Which lulls me, clinging to my Father's breast,  
In perfect rest.

Wild Fancy, peace! thou must not me beguile  
With thy false smile :

I know thy flatteries and thy cheating ways ;  
Be silent, Praise,  
Blind guide with siren voice, and blinding all  
That hear thy call.

Come, Self-devotion, high and pure,  
Thoughts that in thankfulness endure,  
Though dearest hopes are faithless found,  
And dearest hearts are bursting round.  
Come, Resignation, spirit meek,  
And let me kiss thy placid cheek,  
And read in thy pale eye serene  
Their blessing, who by faith can wean  
Their hearts from sense, and learn to love  
God only, and the joys above.

They say, who know the life divine,  
And upward gaze with eagle eyne,  
That by each golden crown on high<sup>e</sup>,  
Rich with celestial jewelry,  
Which for our Lord's redeem'd is set,  
There hangs a radiant coronet,  
All gemm'd with pure and living light,  
Too dazzling for a sinner's sight,

<sup>e</sup> . . . . that little coronet or special reward which God hath prepared (extraordinary and besides the great Crown of all faithful souls) for those "who have not defiled themselves with women, but follow the (virgin) Lamb for ever." *Bp. Taylor, Holy Living*, c. xi. sect. 3. p. 67.

Prepar'd for virgin souls, and them  
Who seek the martyr's diadem.

Nor deem, who to that bliss aspire,  
Must win their way through blood and fire.  
The writhings of a wounded heart  
Are fiercer than a foeman's dart.  
Oft in Life's stillest shade reclining,  
In Desolation unrepining,  
Without a hope on earth to find  
A mirror in an answering mind,  
Meek souls there are, who little dream  
Their daily strife an Angel's theme,  
Or that the rod they take so calm  
Shall prove in Heaven a martyr's palm.

And there are souls that seem to dwell  
Above this earth—so rich a spell  
Floats round their steps, where'er they move,  
From hopes fulfill'd and mutual love.  
Such, if on high their thoughts are set,  
Nor in the stream the source forget,  
If prompt to quit the bliss they know,  
Following the Lamb where'er he go,

By purest pleasures unbeguil'd  
To idolize or wife or child ;  
Such wedded souls our God shall own  
For faultless virgins round his throne.

Thus every where we find our suffering God,  
And where He trod  
May set our steps : the Cross on Calvary  
Uplifted high  
Beams on the martyr host, a beacon light  
In open fight.

To the still wrestlings of the lonely heart  
He doth impart  
The virtue of His midnight agony,  
When none was nigh,  
Save God and one good angel, to assuage  
The tempest's rage.

Mortal ! if life smile on thee, and thou find  
All to thy mind,  
Think, who did once from Heaven to Hell descend  
Thee to befriend ;  
So shalt thou dare forego, at His dear call,  
Thy best, thine all.

“ O Father! not my will, but thine be done”—

So spake the Son.

Be this our charm, mellowing Earth's ruder noise

Of griefs and joys ;

That we may cling for ever to thy breast

In perfect rest!

## XXXIV.

### THURSDAY BEFORE EASTER.

At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee, for thou art greatly beloved; therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.

*Daniel ix. 23.*

“ O HOLY mountain of my God,  
“ How do thy towers in ruin lie,  
“ How art thou riven and strewn abroad,  
“ Under the rude and wasteful sky!”  
'Twas thus upon his fasting-day  
The “ Man of Loves” was fain to pray,  
His lattice open † toward the western breeze,  
Mourning the home that still his yearning fancy sees.

Oh for a love like Daniel's now,  
To wing to Heaven but one strong prayer

† Daniel vi. 10.

For GOD's new Israel, sunk as low,  
    Yet flourishing to sight as fair,  
As Sion in her height of pride,  
With queens for handmaids at her side,  
With kings her nursing-fathers, throned high,  
And compass'd with the world's too tempting blazonry.

'Tis true, nor winter stays thy growth,  
    Nor torrid summer's sickly smile ;  
The flashing billows of the south  
    Break not upon so lone an isle,  
But thou, rich vine, art grafted there,  
The fruit of death or life to bear,  
Yielding a surer witness every day,  
To thine Almighty Author and his stedfast sway.

Oh grief to think, that grapes of gall  
    Should cluster round thine healthiest shoot !  
God's herald prove a heartless thrall,  
    Who, if he dar'd, would fain be mute !  
Even such is this bad world we see,  
Which, self-condemn'd in owning Thee,  
    Yet dares not open farewell of Thee take,  
For very pride, and her high-boasted Reason's sake.



What do we then ? if far and wide  
Men kneel to CHRIST, the pure and meek,  
Yet rage with passion, swell with pride,  
Have we not still our faith to seek ?  
Nay—but in stedfast humbleness  
Kneel on to Him, who loves to bless  
The prayer that waits for Him ; and trembling strive  
To keep the lingering flame in thine own breast alive.

Dark frown'd the future even on him,  
The loving and beloved Seer,  
What time he saw, through shadows dim,  
The boundary of th' eternal year ;  
He only of the sons of men  
Nam'd to be heir of glory then †.  
Else had it bruis'd too sore his tender heart  
To see GOD'S ransom'd world in wrath and flame  
depart.

Then look no more : or closer watch  
Thy course in Earth's bewildering ways,  
For every glimpse thine eye can catch  
Of what shall be in those dread days :

† Dan. xii. 13. See Bp. Kenn's Sermon on the character of Daniel.

So when th' Archangel's word is spoken,  
And Death's deep trance for ever broken,  
In mercy thou may'st feel the heavenly hand,  
And in thy lot unharm'd before thy Saviour stand <sup>h</sup>.

<sup>h</sup> Dan. xii. 13. "Thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.

XXXV.  
GOOD FRIDAY.

He is despised and rejected of men. *Isaiah liii. 3.*

IS it not strange, the darkest hour  
That ever dawn'd on sinful earth  
Should touch the heart with softer power  
For comfort, than an angel's mirth?  
That to the Cross the mourner's eye should turn  
Sooner than where the stars of Christmas burn?

Sooner than where the Easter sun  
Shines glorious on yon open grave,  
And to and fro the tidings run,  
"Who died to heal, is ris'n to save."  
Sooner than where upon the Saviour's friends  
The very Comforter in light and love descends.

Yet so it is: for duly there

The bitter herbs of earth are set,  
Till temper'd by the Saviour's prayer,  
And with the Saviour's life-blood wet,  
They turn to sweetness, and drop holy balm,  
Soft as imprison'd martyr's deathbed calm.

All turn to sweet—but most of all

That bitterest to the lip of pride,  
When hopes presumptuous fade and fall,  
Or Friendship scorns us, duly tried,  
Or Love, the flower that closes up for fear  
When rude and selfish spirits breathe too near.

Then like a long-forgotten strain

Comes sweeping o'er the heart forlorn  
What sunshine hours had taught in vain  
Of JESUS suffering shame and scorn,  
As in all lowly hearts he suffers still,  
While we triumphant ride and have the world at will.

His pierced hands in vain would hide

His face from rude reproachful gaze,  
His ears are open to abide  
The wildest storm the tongue can raise,

He who with one rough word<sup>i</sup>, some early day,  
Their idol world and them shall sweep for aye away.

But we by Fancy may assuage  
The festering sore by Fancy made,  
Down in some lonely hermitage  
Like wounded pilgrims safely laid.  
Where gentlest breezes whisper souls distress'd,  
That Love yet lives, and Patience shall find rest.

O shame beyond the bitterest thought  
That evil spirit ever fram'd,  
That sinners know what Jesus wrought,  
Yet feel their haughty hearts untam'd—  
That souls in refuge, holding by the Cross,  
Should wince and fret at this world's little loss.

Lord of my heart, by thy last cry,  
Let not thy blood on earth be spent—  
Lo, at thy feet I fainting lie,  
Mine eyes upon thy wounds are bent,  
Upon thy streaming wounds my weary eyes  
Wait like the parched earth on April skies.

<sup>i</sup> Wisdom of Solomon xii. 9.

Wash me, and dry these bitter tears,  
O let my heart no further roam,  
'Tis thine by vows, and hopes, and fears,  
Long since—O call thy wanderer home ;  
To that dear home, safe in thy wounded side,  
Where only broken hearts their sin and shame may  
hide.

## XXXVI.

### EASTER EVE.

As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth  
thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. *Zech.* xi. 11.

AT length the worst is o'er, and Thou art laid  
    Deep in thy darksome bed ;  
All still and cold beneath yon dreary stone  
    Thy sacred form is gone ;  
Around those lips where power and mercy hung,  
    The dews of death have clung ;  
The dull earth o'er Thee, and thy foes around,  
Thou sleep'st a silent corse, in funeral fetters wound.

Sleep'st Thou indeed ? or is thy spirit fled,  
    At large among the dead ?  
Whether in Eden bowers thy welcome voice  
    Wake Abraham to rejoice,

Or in some drearier scene thine eye controuls  
 The thronging band of souls ;  
 That, as thy blood won earth, thine agony  
 Might set the shadowy realm from sin and sorrow free.

Where'er Thou roam'st, one happy soul, we know,  
 Seen at thy side in woe <sup>k</sup>,  
 Waits on thy triumph—even as all the blest  
 With him and thee shall rest.  
 Each on his cross, by Thee we hang a while,  
 Watching thy patient smile,  
 Till we have learn'd to say, " 'Tis justly done,  
 " Only in glory, LORD, thy sinful servant own."

Soon wilt Thou take us to thy tranquil bower  
 To rest one little hour,  
 Till thine elect are number'd, and the grave  
 Call Thee to come and save :  
 Then on thy bosom borne shall we descend,  
 Again with earth to blend,  
 Earth all refin'd with bright supernal fires,  
 Tinctur'd with holy blood, and wing'd with pure  
 desires.

<sup>k</sup> St. Luke xxiii. 43.



Meanwhile with every son and saint of thine  
    Along the glorious line,  
Sitting by turns beneath thy sacred feet  
    We'll hold communion sweet,  
Know them by look and voice, and thank them all  
    For helping us in thrall,  
For words of hope, and bright examples given  
To shew through moonless skies that there is light in  
    Heaven.

O come that day, when in this restless heart  
    Earth shall resign her part,  
When in the grave with Thee my limbs shall rest,  
    My soul with Thee be blest !  
But stay, presumptuous—CHRIST with thee abides  
    In the rock's dreary sides :  
He from the stone will wring celestial dew  
If but the prisoner's heart be faithful found and true.

When tears are spent, and Thou art left alone  
    With ghosts of blessings gone,  
Think thou art taken from the cross, and laid  
    In JESUS' burial shade ;  
Take Moses' rod, the rod of prayer, and call  
    Out of the rocky wall

The fount of holy blood ; and lift on high  
Thy grovelling soul that feels so desolate and dry.

Prisoner of Hope thou art <sup>l</sup>—look up and sing  
In hope of promis'd spring.  
As in the pit his father's darling lay <sup>m</sup>  
Beside the desert way,  
And knew not how, but knew his GOD would save  
Even from that living grave,  
So, buried with our LORD, we'll close our eyes  
To the decaying world, till Angels bid us rise.

<sup>l</sup> Zechariah ix. 12. Turn ye to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope.

<sup>m</sup> Gen. xxxvii. 24. They took him and cast him into a pit, and the pit was empty, there was no water in it.

XXXVII.  
EASTER DAY.

And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen. *St. Luke xxiv. 5, 6.*

OH! day of days! shall hearts set free  
No "minstrel rapture" find for Thee?  
Thou art the Sun of other days,  
They shine by giving back thy rays:

Enthroned in thy sovereign sphere  
Thou shedd'st thy light on all the year:  
Sundays by Thee more glorious break,  
An Easter Day in every week:

And week-days, following in their train,  
The fullness of thy blessing gain,  
Till all, both resting and employ  
Be one Lord's day of holy joy.

Then wake, my soul, to high desires,  
And earlier light thine altar fires :  
The World some hours is on her way,  
Nor thinks on thee, thou blessed day :

Or, if she think, it is in scorn :  
The vernal light of Easter morn .  
To her dark gaze no brighter seems  
Than Reason's or the Law's pale beams.

“ Where is your Lord ?” she scornful asks :  
“ Where is his hire ? we know his tasks ;  
“ Sons of a king ye boast to be ;  
“ Let us your crowns and treasures see.”

We in the words of Truth reply,  
(An angel brought them from the sky,)  
“ Our crown, our treasure is not here,  
“ 'Tis stored above the highest sphere :

“ Methinks your wisdom guides amiss,  
“ To seek on earth a Christian's bliss ;  
“ We watch not now the lifeless stone ;  
“ Our only Lord is risen and gone.”

Yet even the lifeless stone is dear  
For thoughts of Him who late lay here ;  
And the base world, now Christ hath died,  
Ennobled is and glorified.

No more a charnel-house, to fence  
The relics of lost innocence,  
A vault of ruin and decay ;—  
Th' imprisoning stone is roll'd away :

'Tis now a cell, where angels use  
To come and go with heavenly news,  
And in the ears of mourners say,  
“ Come, see the place where Jesus lay :”

'Tis now a fane, where Love can find  
Christ every where embalm'd and shrin'd ;  
Aye gathering up memorials sweet,  
Where'er she sets her duteous feet.

Oh ! joy to Mary first allow'd,  
When rous'd from weeping o'er his shroud,  
By his own calm, soul-soothing tone,  
Breathing her name, as still his own !

Joy to the faithful Three renew'd,  
As their glad errand they pursued !  
Happy, who so Christ's word convey,  
That he may meet them on their way !

So is it still ! to holy tears,  
In lonely hours, Christ risen appears :  
In social hours, who Christ would see,  
Must turn all tasks to Charity.

## XXXVIII.

### MONDAY IN EASTER WEEK.

Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him. *Acts* x. 34, 35.

GO up and watch the new-born rill  
Just trickling from its mossy bed,  
Streaking the heath-clad hill  
With a bright emerald thread.

Canst thou her bold career foretel,  
What rocks she shall o'erleap or rend,  
How far in Ocean's swell  
Her freshening billows send?

Perchance that little brook shall flow  
The bulwark of some mighty realm,  
Bear navies to and fro  
With monarchs at their helm.

Or canst thou guess, how far away  
Some sister nymph, beside her urn  
Reclining night and day,  
Mid reeds and mountain fern,

Nurses her store, with thine to blend  
When many a moor and glen are past,  
Then in the wide sea end  
Their spotless lives at last ?

Even so, the course of prayer who knows ?  
It springs in silence where it will,  
Springs out of sight, and flows  
At first a lonely rill :

But streams shall meet it by and by  
From thousand sympathetic hearts,  
Together swelling high  
Their chant of many parts.

Unheard by all but angel ears  
The good Cornelius knelt alone,  
Nor dream'd his prayers and tears  
Would help a world undone.



The while upon his terrac'd roof  
The lov'd Apostle to his Lord  
In silent thought aloof  
For heavenly vision soar'd.

Far o'er the glowing western main  
His wistful brow was upward rais'd,  
Where, like an angel's train,  
The burnish'd water blaz'd.

The saint beside the ocean pray'd,  
The soldier in his chosen bower,  
Where all his eye survey'd  
Seem'd sacred in that hour.

To each unknown his brother's prayer,  
Yet brethren true in dearest love  
Were they—and now they share  
Fraternal joys above.

There daily through Christ's open gate  
They see the Gentile spirits press,  
Brightening their high estate  
With dearer happiness.

What civic wreath for comrades sav'd  
Shone ever with such deathless gleam,  
Or when did perils brav'd  
So sweet to veterans seem?

XXXIX.

TUESDAY IN EASTER WEEK.

And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy, and did run to bring His disciples word. *St. Matthew xxviii. 8.*

TO THE SNOW-DROP.

THOU first-born of the year's delight,  
Pride of the dewy glade,  
In vernal green and virgin white,  
Thy vestal robes, array'd ;

'Tis not because thy drooping form  
Sinks graceful on its nest,  
When chilly shades from gathering storm  
Affright thy tender breast ;

Nor for yon river islet wild  
Beneath the willow spray,  
Where, like the ringlets of a child,  
Thou weav'st thy circle gay ;

'Tis not for these I love thee dear—  
Thy shy averted smiles  
To Fancy bode a joyous year,  
One of Life's fairy isles.

They twinkle to the wintry moon,  
And cheer th' ungenial day,  
And tell us, all will glisten soon  
As green and bright as they.

Is there a heart, that loves the spring,  
Their witness can refuse?  
Yet mortals doubt, when angels bring  
From Heaven their Easter news:

When holy maids and matrons speak  
Of Christ's forsaken bed,  
And voices, that forbid to seek  
The living mid the dead,

And when they say, "Turn wandering heart,  
"Thy Lord is ris'n indeed,  
"Let Pleasure go, put Care apart,  
"And to His presence speed;"

We smile in scorn : and yet we know  
    They early sought the tomb,  
Their hearts, that now so freshly glow,  
    Lost in desponding gloom.

They who have sought, nor hope to find,  
    Wear not so bright a glance :  
They who have won their earthly mind  
    Less reverently advance.

But where, in gentle spirits, fear  
    And joy so duly meet,  
These sure have seen the angels near,  
    And kiss'd the Saviour's feet.

Nor let the Pastor's thankful eye  
    Their faltering tale disdain,  
As on their lowly couch they lie,  
    Prisoners of want and pain.

O guide us, when our faithless hearts  
    From Thee would start aloof,  
Where Patience her sweet skill imparts  
    Beneath some cottage roof :

Revive our dying fires, to burn  
    High as her anthems soar,  
And of our scholars let us learn  
    Our own forgotten lore.

## XL.

### FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to Himself? *Numbers xvi. 9.*

FIRST Father of the holy seed,  
If yet, invok'd in hour of need,  
    Thou count me for thine own,  
Not quite an outcast if I prove,  
(Thou joy'st in miracles of love)  
    Hear, from thy mercy-throne!

Upon thine altar's horn of gold  
Help me to lay my trembling hold,  
    Though stain'd with Christian gore;—  
The blood of souls by Thee redeem'd,  
But, while I rov'd or idly dream'd,  
    Lost to be found no more.

For oft, when summer leaves were bright,  
And every flower was bath'd in light,  
    In sunshine moments past,  
My wilful heart would burst away  
From where the holy shadow lay,  
    Where Heaven my lot had cast.

I thought it scorn with Thee to dwell,  
A Hermit in a silent cell,  
    While, gaily sweeping by,  
Wild Fancy blew his bugle strain,  
And marshall'd all his gallant train  
    In the world's wondering eye.

I would have join'd him—but as oft  
Thy whisper'd warnings, kind and soft,  
    My better soul confess'd.  
“ My servant, let the world alone—  
“ Safe on the steps of Jesus' throne  
    “ Be tranquil and be blest.

“ Seems it to thee a niggard hand  
“ That nearest Heaven has bade thee stand,  
    “ The ark to touch and bear,



“ With incense of pure heart’s desire  
“ To heap the censer’s sacred fire,  
“ The snow-white Ephod wear ?”

Why should we crave the worldling’s wreath,  
On whom the Saviour deign’d to breathe,  
To whom his keys were given,  
Who lead the choir where angels meet,  
With angels’ food our brethren greet,  
And pour the drink of Heaven ?

When sorrow all our heart would ask,  
We need not shun our daily task,  
And hide ourselves for calm ;  
The herbs we seek to heal our woe  
Familiar by our pathway grow,  
Our common air is balm.

Around each pure domestic shrine  
Bright flowers of Eden bloom and twine,  
Our hearths are altars all ;  
The prayers of hungry souls and poor,  
Like armed angels at the door,  
Our unseen foes appal.

Alms all around and hymns within—  
What evil eye can entrance win  
Where guards like these abound ?  
If chance some heedless heart should roam,  
Sure, thought of these will lure it home  
Ere lost in Folly's round.

O joys, that sweetest in decay,  
Fall not, like wither'd leaves, away,  
But with the silent breath  
Of violets drooping one by one,  
Soon as their fragrant task is done,  
Are wafted high in death !

## XLI.

### SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

He hath said, which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the Most High; which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open: I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall arise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. *Numbers xxiv. 16, 17.*

O FOR a sculptor's hand,  
That thou might'st take thy stand,  
Thy wild hair floating on the eastern breeze,  
Thy transc'd yet open gaze  
Fix'd on the desert haze,  
As one who deep in heaven some airy pageant sees.

In outline dim and vast  
Their fearful shadows cast  
The giant forms of empires on their way  
To ruin: one by one  
They tower and they are gone,  
Yet in the Prophet's soul the dreams of avarice stay.

162      *Second Sunday after Easter.*

No sun or star so bright  
In all the world of light  
That they should draw to heaven his downward eye,  
He hears th' Almighty's word,  
He sees the angel's sword,  
Yet low upon the earth his heart and treasure lie.

Lo from yon argent field,  
To him and us reveal'd  
One gentle star glides down, on earth to dwell.  
Chain'd as they are below  
Our eyes may see it glow,  
And as it mounts again, may track its brightness well.

To him it glar'd afar,  
A token of wild war,  
The banner of his Lord's victorious wrath :  
But close to us it gleams,  
Its soothing lustre streams  
Around our home's green walls, and on our church-  
way path.

We in the tents abide  
Which he at distance eyed

Like goodly cedars by the waters spread,  
While seven red altar-fires  
Rose up in wavy spires,  
Where on the mount he watch'd his sorceries dark and  
dread.

He watch'd till morning's ray  
On lake and meadow lay,  
And willow-shaded streams, that silent sweep  
Around the banner'd lines,  
Where by their several signs  
The desert-wearied tribes in sight of Canaan sleep.

He watch'd till knowledge came  
Upon his soul like flame,  
Not of those magic fires at random caught :  
But true prophetic light  
Flash'd o'er him, high and bright,  
Flash'd once, and died away, and left his darken'd  
thought.

And can he choose but fear,  
Who feels his GOD so near,  
That when he fain would curse, his powerless tongue

164      *Second Sunday after Easter.*

In blessing only moves?—  
Alas! the world he loves  
Too close around his heart her tangling veil hath flung.

Sceptre and Star divine,  
Who in thine inmost shrine  
Hast made us worshippers, O claim thine own ;  
More than thy seers we know—  
O teach our love to grow  
Up to thy heavenly light, and reap what Thou hast  
sown.

## XLII.

### THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but when she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.

*St. John xvi. 21.*

WELL may I guess and feel  
Why Autumn should be sad ;  
But vernal airs should sorrow heal,  
Spring should be gay and glad :  
Yet as along this violet bank I rove,  
The languid sweetness seems to choke my breath,  
I sit me down beside the hazel grove,  
And sigh, and half could wish my weariness were  
death.

Like a bright veering cloud  
Grey blossoms twinkle there,  
Warbles around a busy crowd  
Of larks in purest air.

166      *Third Sunday after Easter.*

Shame on the heart that dreams of blessings gone,  
Or wakes the spectral forms of woe and crime,  
When nature sings of joy and hope alone,  
Reading her cheerful lesson in her own sweet time.

Nor let the proud heart say,  
In her self-torturing hour,  
The travail pangs must have their way,  
The aching brow must lower.  
To us long since the glorious Child is born,  
Our throes should be forgot, or only seem  
Like a sad vision told for joy at morn,  
For joy that we have wak'd and found it but a dream.

Mysterious to all thought  
A mother's prime of bliss,  
When to her eager lips is brought  
Her infant's thrilling kiss.  
O never shall it set, the sacred light  
Which dawns that moment on her tender gaze,  
In the eternal distance blending bright  
Her darling's hope and hers, for love and joy and praise.

No need for her to weep  
Like Thracian wives of yore,



Save when in rapture still and deep  
Her thankful heart runs o'er.  
They mourn'd to trust their treasure on the main,  
Sure of the storm, unknowing of their guide :  
Welcome to her the peril and the pain,  
For well she knows the home where they may safely  
hide.

She joys that one is born  
Into a world forgiven,  
Her Father's household to adorn,  
And dwell with her in heaven.  
So have I seen, in spring's bewitching hour,  
When the glad earth is offering all her best,  
Some gentle maid bend o'er a cherish'd flower,  
And wish it worthier on a Parent's heart to rest.

XLIII.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER  
EASTER.

Nevertheless, I tell you the truth : it is expedient for you that I go away : for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you : but if I depart, I will send him unto you. *St. John xvi. 7.*

MY Saviour, can it ever be  
That I should gain by losing Thee?  
The watchful mother carries nigh  
Though sleep have clos'd her infant's eye,  
For should he wake, and find her gone,  
She knows she could not bear his moan.  
But I am weaker than a child,  
And Thou art more than mother dear ;  
Without Thee Heaven were but a wild :  
How can I live without Thee here ?

“ 'Tis good for you, that I should go,  
“ You lingering yet awhile below ;”—

'Tis thine own gracious promise, Lord!  
Thy saints have prov'd the faithful word,  
When Heaven's bright boundless avenue  
Far open'd on their eager view,  
And homeward to thy Father's throne,  
    Still lessening, brightening on their sight,  
Thy shadowy car went soaring on ;  
    They track'd Thee up th' abyss of light.

Thou bidst rejoice ; they dare not mourn,  
But to their home in gladness turn,  
Their home and God's, that favour'd place,  
Where still he shines on Abraham's race,  
In prayers and blessings there to wait  
Like suppliants at their monarch's gate,  
Who bent with bounty rare to aid  
    The splendours of his crowning day,  
Keeps back awhile his largess, made  
    More welcome for that brief delay :

In doubt they wait, but not unblest ;  
They doubt not of their Master's rest,  
Nor of the gracious will of Heaven—  
Who gave his Son, sure all has given—

170      *Fourth Sunday after Easter.*

But in ecstatic awe they muse  
What course the genial stream may choose,  
And far and wide their fancies rove,  
    And to their height of wonder strain,  
What secret miracle of love  
    Should make their Saviour's going gain.

The days of hope and prayer are past,  
The day of comfort dawns at last,  
The everlasting gates again  
Roll back, and lo! a royal train—  
From the far depth of light once more  
The floods of glory earth-ward pour :  
They part like shower-drops in mid air,  
    But ne'er so soft fell noon-tide shower,  
Nor evening rain-bow gleam'd so fair  
    To weary swains in parched bower.

Swiftly and straight each tongue of flame  
Through cloud and breeze unwavering came,  
And darted to its place of rest  
On some meek brow of Jesus blest.  
Nor fades it yet, that living gleam,  
And still those lambent lightnings stream ;

Where'er the Lord is, there are they ;  
In every heart that gives them room,  
They light His altar every day,  
Zeal to inflame, and vice consume.

Soft as the plumes of Jesus' Dove  
They nurse the soul to heavenly love :  
The struggling spark of good within,  
Just smother'd in the strife of sin,  
They quicken to a timely glow,  
The pure flame spreading high and low.  
Said I, that prayer and hope were o'er ?  
Nay, blessed Spirit ! but by Thee  
The Church's prayer finds wings to soar,  
The Church's hope finds eyes to see.

Then, fainting soul, arise and sing ;  
Mount, but be sober on the wing ;  
Mount up, for Heaven is won by prayer,  
Be sober, for thou art not there ;  
Till death the weary spirit free,  
Thy God hath said, 'Tis good for thee  
To walk by faith and not by sight :  
Take it on trust a little while ;

172      *Fourth Sunday after Easter.*

Soon shalt thou read the mystery right  
In the full sunshine of His smile.

Or if thou yet more knowledge crave,  
Ask thine own heart, that willing slave  
To all that works thee woe or harm?  
Shouldst thou not need some mighty charm  
To win thee to thy Saviour's side,  
Though he had deign'd with thee to bide?  
The Spirit must stir the darkling deep,  
The Dove must settle on the Cross,  
Else we should all sin on or sleep  
With Christ in sight, turning our gain to loss.

XLIV.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

ROGATION SUNDAY.

And the Lord was very angry with Aaron to have destroyed him : and I prayed for Aaron also the same time. *Deut. ix. 20.*

NOW is there solemn pause in earth and heaven ;  
The Conqueror now  
His bonds hath riven,  
And Angels wonder why he stays below :  
Yet hath not man his lesson learn'd,  
How endless love should be return'd.

Deep is the silence as of summer noon,  
When a soft shower  
Will trickle soon,  
A gracious rain, freshening the weary bower—  
O sweetly then far off is heard  
The clear note of some lonely bird.

174      *Fifth Sunday after Easter.*

So let thy turtle dove's sad call arise  
    In doubt and fear  
    Through darkening skies,  
And pierce, O LORD, thy justly sealed ear,  
    Where on the house top<sup>a</sup>, all night long,  
    She trills her widow'd, faltering song.

Teach her to know and love her hour of prayer,  
    And evermore,  
    As faith grows rare,  
Unlock her heart, and offer all its store  
    In holier love and humbler vows,  
    As suits a lost returning spouse.

Not as at first<sup>b</sup>, but with intenser cry,  
    Upon the mount  
    She now must lie,  
Till thy dear love to blot the sad account  
    Of her rebellious race be won,  
    Pitying the mother in the son.

<sup>a</sup> Psalm cii. 7.

<sup>b</sup> Deut. ix. 25. I fell down before the Lord forty days and forty nights, as I fell down at the first.



But chiefly (for she knows thee anger'd worst  
By holiest things  
Profan'd and curst)

Chiefly for Aaron's seed she spreads her wings,  
If but one leaf she may from Thee  
Win of the reconciling tree.

For what shall heal, when holy water banes ?  
Or who may guide  
O'er desert plains

Thy lov'd yet sinful people wandering wide,  
If Aaron's hand unshrinking mould<sup>c</sup>  
An idol form of earthly gold ?

Therefore her tears are bitter, and as deep  
Her boding sigh,  
As, while men sleep,  
Sad hearted mothers heave, that wakeful lie,  
To muse upon some darling child  
Roaming in youth's uncertain wild.

Therefore on fearful dreams her inward sight  
Is fain to dwell—  
What lurid light

<sup>c</sup> Exodus xxxii. 4.

176      *Fifth Sunday after Easter.*

Shall the last darkness of the world dispel,  
The Mediator in his wrath  
Descending down the lightning's path.

Yet, yet awhile, offended Saviour, pause,  
In act to break <sup>d</sup>  
Thine outrag'd laws,  
O spare thy rebels for thine own dear sake ;  
Withdraw thine hand, nor dash to earth  
The covenant of our second birth.

'Tis forfeit like the first—we own it all—  
Yet for love's sake,  
Let it not fall ;  
But at thy touch let veiled hearts awake,  
That nearest to thine altar lie,  
Yet least of holy things descry.

Teacher of teachers ! Priest of priests ! from Thee  
The sweet strong prayer  
Must rise, to free  
First Levi, then all Israël, from the snare.  
Thou art our Moses out of sight—  
Speak for us, or we perish quite.

<sup>d</sup> Exodus xxxii. 19.

## XLV.

### ASCENSION DAY.

Why stand ye gazing up into heaven ? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into Heaven. *Acts i. 11.*

SOFT cloud, that while the breeze of May  
Chants her glad matins in the leafy arch,  
Draw'st thy bright veil across the heavenly way,  
Meet pavement for an angel's glorious march :

My soul is envious of mine eye,  
That it should soar and glide with thee so fast,  
The while my groveling thoughts half buried lie,  
Or lawless roam around this earthly waste.

Chains of my heart, avaunt I say—  
I will arise, and in the strength of love  
Pursue the bright track ere it fade away,  
My Saviour's pathway to his home above.

Sure, when I reach the point where earth  
Melts into nothing from th' uncumber'd sight,  
Heaven will o'ercome th' attraction of my birth,  
And I shall sink in yonder sea of light :

Till resting by th' incarnate LORD,  
Once bleeding, now triumphant for my sake,  
I mark him, how by seraph hosts ador'd  
He to earth's lowest cares is still awake.

The sun and every vassal star,  
All space, beyond the soar of Angel wings,  
Wait on His word : and yet he stays his car  
For every sigh a contrite suppliant brings.

He listens to the silent tear  
For all the anthems of the boundless sky—  
And shall our dreams of music bar our ear  
To His soul-piercing voice for ever nigh ?

Nay, gracious Saviour—but as now  
Our thoughts have trac'd thee to thy glory-throne,  
So help us evermore with thee to bow  
Where human sorrow breathes her lowly moan.

We must not stand to gaze too long,  
Though on unfolding Heaven our gaze we bend,  
Where lost behind the bright angelic throng  
We see CHRIST's entering triumph slow ascend.

No fear but we shall soon behold,  
Faster than now it fades, that gleam revive,  
When issuing from his cloud of fiery gold  
Our wasted frames feel the true sun, and live.

Then shall we see Thee as Thou art,  
For ever fix'd in no unfruitful gaze,  
But such as lifts the new-created heart,  
Age after age, in worthier love and praise.

XLVI.

SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION.

As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same  
one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

1 *St. Peter iv.* 10.

THE Earth that in her genial breast  
Makes for the down a kindly nest,  
Where wafted by the warm south-west  
It floats at pleasure,  
Yields, thankful, of her very best,  
To nurse her treasure :

True to her trust, tree, herb, or reed,  
She renders for each scatter'd seed,  
And to her Lord with duteous heed  
Gives large increase :  
Thus year by year she works unfeed,  
And will not cease.

Woe worth these barren hearts of ours,  
Where Thou hast set celestial flowers,  
And water'd with more balmy showers,

Than e'er distill'd

In Eden, on th' ambrosial bowers—

Yet nought we yield.

Largely Thou givest, gracious Lord,

Largely thy gifts should be restor'd ;

Freely Thou givest, and thy word

Is, "freely give<sup>c</sup>."

He only, who forgets to hoard,

Has learn'd to live.

Wisely Thou givest—all around

Thine equal rays are resting found,

Yet varying so on various ground

They pierce and strike,

That not two roseate cups are crown'd

With dew alike :

Even so, in silence, likest Thee,

Steals on soft-handed Charity,

<sup>c</sup> St. Matt. x. 8.

Tempering her gifts, that seem so free,  
By time and place,  
Till not a woe the bleak world see,  
But finds her grace :

Eyes to the blind, and to the lame  
Feet, and to sinners wholesome blame,  
To starving bodies food and flame  
By turns she brings,  
To humbled souls, that sink for shame,  
Lends heaven-ward wings :

Leads them the way our Saviour went,  
And shews Love's treasure yet unspent ;  
As when th' unclouded heavens were rent  
Opening his road,  
Nor yet his Holy Spirit sent  
To our abode.

Ten days th' eternal doors display'd  
Were wondering (so th' Almighty bade)  
Whom Love enthron'd would send, in aid  
Of souls that mourn,



Left orphans in Earth's dreary shade  
As soon as born.

Open they stand, that prayers in throngs  
May rise on high, and holy songs,  
Such incense as of right belongs  
To the true shrine,  
Where stands the Healer of all wrongs  
In light divine ;

The golden censer in his hand,  
He offers hearts from every land,  
Tied to his own by gentlest band  
Of silent Love :  
About Him winged blessings stand  
In act to move.

A little while, and they shall fleet  
From Heaven to Earth, attendants meet  
On the life-giving Paraclete  
Speeding his flight,  
With all that sacred is and sweet,  
On saints to light.

Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, all  
Shall feel the shower of Mercy fall,  
And starting at th' Almighty's call,  
    Give what He gave,  
Till their high deeds the world appall,  
    And sinners save.

XLVII.  
WHITSUNDAY.

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting: and there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them: and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.  
*Acts ii. 2, 3.*

WHEN God of old came down from Heaven,  
In power and wrath he came ;  
Before his feet the clouds were riven,  
Half darkness and half flame :

Around the trembling mountain's base  
The prostrate people lay,  
Convinc'd of sin, but not of grace ;  
It was a dreadful day.

But when He came the second time,  
He came in power and love,  
Softer than gale at morning prime  
Hover'd his holy Dove.

The fires that rush'd on Sinai down  
    In sudden torrents dread,  
Now gently light, a glorious crown,  
    On every sainted head.

Like arrows went those lightnings forth  
    Wing'd with the sinner's doom,  
But these, like tongues, o'er all the earth  
    Proclaiming life to come :

And as on Israel's awe-struck ear  
    The voice exceeding loud,  
The trump, that angels quake to hear,  
    Thrill'd from the deep, dark cloud,

So, when the Spirit of our God  
    Came down his flock to find,  
A voice from heaven was heard abroad,  
    A rushing, mighty wind.

Nor doth the outward ear alone  
    At that high warning start ;  
Conscience gives back th' appalling tone ;  
    'Tis echoed in the heart.

It fills the Church of God ; it fills  
The sinful world around ;  
Only in stubborn hearts and wills  
No place for it is found.

To other strains our souls are set :  
A giddy whirl of sin  
Fills ear and brain, and will not let  
Heaven's harmonies come in.

Come, Lord, come, Wisdom, Love, and Power,  
Open our ears to hear ;  
Let us not miss th' accepted hour ;  
Save, Lord, by Love or Fear.

XLVIII.

MONDAY IN WHITSUN WEEK.

So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. *Genesis xi. 8.*

SINCE all that is not heav'n must fade,  
Light be the hand of Ruin laid  
    Upon the home I love:  
With lulling spell let soft Decay  
Steal on, and spare the giant sway,  
    The crash of tower and grove.

Far opening down some woodland deep  
In their own quiet glade should sleep  
    The relics dear to thought,  
And wild-flower wreaths from side to side  
Their waving tracery hang, to hide  
    What ruthless Time has wrought.

Such are the visions green and sweet  
That o'er the wistful fancy fleet  
    In Asia's sea-like plain,  
Where slowly, round his isles of sand,  
Euphrates through the lonely land  
    Winds toward the pearly main.

Slumber is there, but not of rest ;  
There his forlorn and weary nest  
    The famish'd hawk has found,  
The wild dog howls at fall of night,  
The serpent's rustling coils affright  
    The traveller on his round.

What shapeless form, half lost on high f,  
Half seen against the evening sky,  
    Seems like a ghost to glide,  
And watch, from Babel's crumbling heap,

<sup>1</sup> See Sir R. K. Porter's *Travels*, ii. 387. " In my second visit to Birs Nimrod, my party suddenly halted, having descried several dark objects moving along the summit of its hill, which they construed into dismounted Arabs on the look out : I took out my glass to examine, and soon distinguished that the causes of our alarm were two or three majestic lions, taking the air upon the heights of the pyramid."

Where in her shadow, fast asleep,  
Lies fall'n imperial Pride ?

With half-clos'd eye a lion there  
Lies basking in his noontide lair,  
Or prowls in twilight gloom.  
The golden city's king he seems,  
Such as in old prophetic dreams ‡  
Sprang from rough ocean's womb.

But where are now his eagle wings,  
That shelter'd erst a thousand kings,  
Hiding the glorious sky  
From half the nations, till they own  
No holier name, no mightier throne ?  
That vision is gone by.

Quench'd is the golden statue's ray <sup>h</sup>,  
The breath of heaven has blown away  
What toiling earth had pil'd,  
Scattering wise heart and crafty hand,  
As breezes strew on ocean's sand  
The fabrics of a child.

‡ Daniel vii. 4.

<sup>h</sup> Daniel ii. and iii.



Divided thence through every age  
Thy rebels, Lord, their warfare wage,  
    And hoarse and jarring all  
Mount up their heaven assailing cries  
To thy bright watchmen in the skies  
    From Babel's shatter'd wall.

Thrice only since, with blended might  
The nations on that haughty height  
    Have met to scale the heaven.  
Thrice only might a Seraph's look  
A moment's shade of sadness brook—  
    Such power to guilt was given.

Now the fierce Bear and Leopard keen <sup>i</sup>  
Are perish'd as they ne'er had been,  
    Oblivion is their home :  
Ambition's boldest dream and last  
Must melt before the clarion blast  
    That sounds the dirge of Rome.

Heroes and Kings, obey the charm,  
Withdraw the proud high-reaching arm,

<sup>i</sup> Daniel vii. 5, 6.

There is an oath on high,  
 That ne'er on brow of mortal birth  
 Shall blend again the crowns of earth,  
 Nor in according cry

Her many voices mingling own  
 One tyrant Lord, one idol throne :  
 But to His triumph soon  
*He* shall descend, who rules above,  
 And the pure language of His love <sup>k</sup>  
 All tongues of men shall tune.

Nor let Ambition heartless mourn ;  
 When Babel's very ruins burn,  
 Her high desires may breathe ;—  
 O'ercome thyself, and thou may'st share  
 With Christ his Father's throne<sup>l</sup>, and wear  
 The world's imperial wreath.

<sup>k</sup> Zephaniah iii. 9. " Then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."

<sup>l</sup> Revelations iii. 21. " To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne."

XLIX.

TUESDAY IN WHITSUN-WEEK.

When He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them.

*St. John x. 4.*

*(Addressed to Candidates for Ordination.)*

“ LORD, in thy field I work all day,  
“ I read, I teach, I warn, I pray,  
“ And yet these wilful wandering sheep  
“ Within thy fold I cannot keep.

“ I journey, yet no step is won—  
“ Alas! the weary course I run!  
“ Like sailors shipwreck'd in their dreams,  
“ All powerless and benighted seems.”

What? wearied out with half a life?  
Scar'd with this smooth unbloody strife?  
Think where thy coward hopes had flown  
Had Heaven held out the martyr's crown.

How could'st thou hang upon the cross,  
To whom a weary hour is loss ?  
Or how the thorns and scourging brook,  
Who shrinkest from a scornful look ?

Yet ere thy craven spirit faints,  
Hear thine own King, the King of saints ;  
Though thou wert toiling in the grave,  
'Tis He can cheer thee, He can save.

He is th' eternal mirror bright,  
Where angels view the FATHER's light,  
And yet in Him the simplest swain  
May read his homely lesson plain.

Early to quit his home on earth,  
And claim his high celestial birth,  
Alone with his true Father found  
Within the temple's solemn round :—

Yet in meek duty to abide  
For many a year at Mary's side,  
Nor heed, though restless spirits ask,  
“ What ? hath the Christ forgot his task ? ” —

Conscious of Deity within,  
To bow before an heir of sin,  
With folded arms on humble breast,  
By his own servant wash'd and blest :—

Then full of Heaven, the mystic Dove  
Hovering his gracious brow above,  
To shun the voice and eye of praise,  
And in the wild his trophies raise :—

With hymns of angels in his ears,  
Back to his task of woe and tears,  
Unmurmuring through the world to roam  
With not a wish or thought at home :—

All but himself to heal and save,  
Till ripen'd for the cross and grave  
He to His Father gently yield  
The breath that our redemption seal'd :—

Then to unearthly life arise,  
Yet not at once to seek the skies,  
But glide awhile from saint to saint,  
Lest on our lonely way we faint ;

And through the cloud by glimpses shew  
How bright, in Heaven, the marks will glow  
Of the true cross, imprinted deep  
Both on the Shepherd and the sheep :—

When out of sight, in heart and prayer  
Thy chosen people still to bear,  
And from behind thy glorious veil,  
Shed light that cannot change or fail :—

This is thy pastoral course, O LORD,  
Till we be sav'd, and Thou ador'd ;—  
Thy course and ours—but who are they  
Who follow on the narrow way ?

And yet of Thee from year to year  
The Church's solemn chaunt we hear,  
As from thy cradle to thy throne  
She swells her high heart-cheering tone.

Listen, ye pure white-robed souls,  
Whom in her list she now enrolls,  
And gird ye for your high emprise  
By these her thrilling minstrelsies.

And wheresoe'er, in earth's wide field,  
Ye lift, for Him, the red-cross shield,  
Be this your song, your joy and pride—  
“ Our Champion went before and died.”

L.

## TRINITY SUNDAY.

If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? *St. John* iii. 12.

CREATOR, Saviour, strengthening Guide,  
Now on Thy mercy's ocean wide  
Far out of sight we seem to glide.

Help us, each hour, with steadier eye  
To search the deepening mystery,  
The wonders of Thy sea and sky.

The blessed angels look and long  
To praise Thee with a worthier song,  
And yet our silence does Thee wrong.—

Along the Church's central space  
The sacred weeks with unfelt pace  
Have borne us on from grace to grace.



As travellers on some woodland height,  
When wintry suns are gleaming bright,  
Lose in arch'd glades their tangled sight ;—

By glimpses such as dreamers love  
Through her grey veil the leafless grove  
Shews where the distant shadows rove ;—

Such trembling joy the soul o'er-awes  
As nearer to thy shrine she draws :—  
And now before the choir we pause.

The door is clos'd—but soft and deep  
Around the awful arches sweep  
Such airs as soothe a hermit's sleep.

From each carv'd nook and fretted bend  
Cornice and gallery seem to send  
Tones that with seraph hymns might blend.

Three solemn parts together twine  
In harmony's mysterious line ;  
Three solemn aisles approach the shrine :

Yet all are One—together all,  
In thoughts that awe but not appal,  
Teach the adoring heart to fall.

Within these walls each fluttering guest  
Is gently lur'd to one safe nest—  
Without, 'tis moaning and unrest.

The busy world a thousand ways  
Is hurrying by, nor ever stays  
To catch a note of Thy dear praise.

Why tarries not her chariot wheel,  
That o'er her with no vain appeal  
One gust of heavenly song might steal?

Alas! for her Thy opening flowers  
Unheeded breathe to summer showers,  
Unheard the music of Thy bowers.

What echoes from the sacred dome  
The selfish spirit may o'er-come  
That will not hear of love or home?

The heart that scorn'd a father's care,  
How can it rise in filial prayer ?  
How an all-seeing Guardian bear ?

Or how shall envious brethren own  
A Brother on th' eternal throne,  
Their Father's joy, their hope alone ?

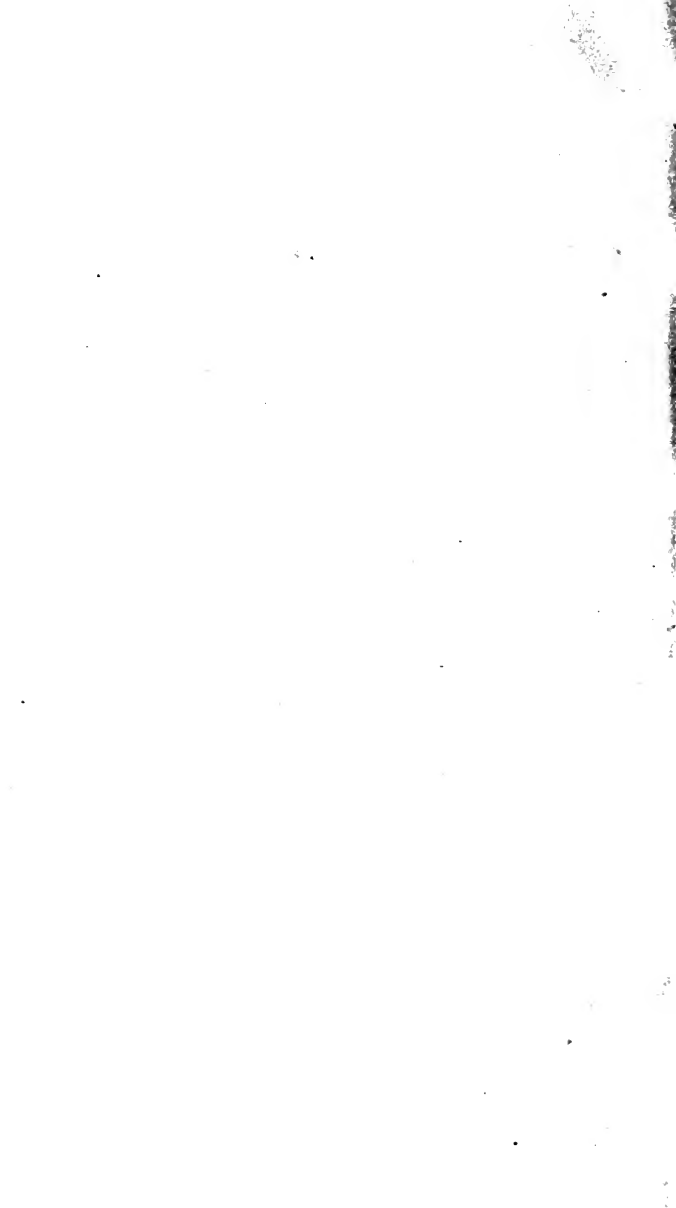
How shall thy Spirit's gracious wile  
The sullen brow of gloom beguile,  
That frowns on sweet affection's smile ?

Eternal One, Almighty Trine !  
(Since Thou art ours, and we are Thine)  
By all thy love did once resign,

By all the grace thy heavens still hide,  
We pray thee, keep us at thy side,  
Creator, Saviour, strengthening Guide !







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