

spot that in the happy agricultural time sustained one family came in the progress of this vital struggle to support twenty. Existence was now a toil of eternal labour, with the elements for its inexhaustible quarry. In this turmoil, the pleasant tides of the year, that used to be the resting points of enjoyment and thanksgiving, were gradually dropped off the calendar and except here and there, in some primal and loving retreats they are now nearly forgotten, or spoken of only as traditions.

We do not affect to think that any argument can break down this crust of thrift, that has become as it were, frosted over our good old warm hearted customs; but we have too much belief in their utility to suppose that the frost may not yield more or less, in some places, at least to the genial and cordial influences of benevolence. If the season at which we are now arriving through snows that makes it wear a physiognomy such as we remember to have worn in our youth, be not welcomed in with a suitable commemoration for its own sake and for ours, we hope it may at all events be welcomed with kindly thoughts for the poor and houseless. All we ask is that railroads and steam boilers may not be allowed to choke up the sympathies of Christmas. We plead only for its charities, although we could write a volume on its festivities.

Christmas is Christmas still to the poor. It is the rich alone who have suffered its poetical associations to die out. The poor look for commiseration at this moment, when the hard winter has set in, when their labor out of doors is suspended, when the provision and absolute necessities of life have risen almost to famine price compared with the falling off of their resources, and when the domestic affections yearn for some little tokens of revival and reprobation with tenfold the force they put forth at any other period. If the rich cannot keep Christmas themselves—if they have forgotten its immemorial pleasures in modern, tantalizing, and artificial modes—they may assist in preserving the national and christian festival, by extending help to their needy neighbourhoods where many strong hands and bleeding hearts are perishing in the inclement fields. There ought to be a Christmas subscription in every village. Everybody can give something—coats, blankets, fuel, bread, beer, meat, money. All this might be easily calculated. If properly have its duties as well as its rights, we hardly know any duty in the way of charity so pressing or imperative.

But, notwithstanding all we have said on this point, we do not give up our festivity. Christmas is still celebrated in many places with an enthusiasm that encourages us to look one day or another for its revival in all its ancient bounteousness, although its simplicity is gone for ever. The custom of 'bodening' is still continued in some parts of Kent—a sort of musical procession, with a horse head affixed to the top of a pole, which is covered with a horse cloth, and attended by a roystering party of young people ringing bells and singing carols. The 'whites' and the 'mummers' are extant in most of the rural districts; and in Whitehaven, we believe, to this hour a grotesque play is enacted in the streets called 'Alexandria and the King of Egypt,' consisting of doggerel dialogues, more remarkable, it must be confessed, for the coarseness of the humour than the propriety of its application. There is a tradition, near Raleigh, in Nottingham, which ascribes the origin of a certain valley in that neighbourhood to an earthquake, which occurred several hundred years ago, and is said to have swallowed up a whole village with its church. Formerly the people used to assemble in the valley on Christmas morning to listen to the ringing of the church bells under the ground; and even now the old inhabitants playfully send the young people down to the valley to hear this strange subterranean music. In Cumberland a round of festivities is still kept up night after night at the houses of the farmers, where good old English fare, card-playing, and a variety of tricks and amusements enliven the season; and in Oxford the boar's head and the ox's head are still principal figures in the revelry. A model of an ox's head, with horns, was formerly placed on the top of the eastern end of the chancel of the church; a few years ago it fell into decay, but was renewed, and we believe is still to be seen there. The origin of this curious custom has been referred to the monks of the convent of Mount St. Bernard, in Savoy, of which, it is supposed, the ox's head and horns formed the arms or crest. But the boar's head has still greater honours paid to it. The lease of the tithes

of New College annually supplies a boar's head, dressed and garnished with hay leaves, for the occasion. It is carried in procession in the afternoon to the Mill-field, where it is wrestled for, and in the evening it is feasted upon in the hostelry. At Queen's College the first course at dinner is 'a fair and large boreshead upon a silver platter, with ministralsye: a custom which is preserved in commemoration of an act of valour said to have been performed by a student of the college, who, while walking in the forest of Shotover reading Aristotle, was suddenly attacked by a wild boar. The furious beast came roaring down upon the youth open-mouthed; but the student, nothing dismayed, advanced upon him, rammed the volume into his mouth, crying out, 'Græcum est,' and, says the chronicler, fairly choked the savage with the sage.

ENGLISH CHURCHES.

How beautiful they stand,
Those ancient altars of our native land,
Amid the pasture fields and dark green woods,
Amid the mountain's clouds and solitude;
By rivers broad that rush into the sea:
By little brooks that with a lispingsound,
Like playful children, run by copse and lea!
Each in its little plot of holy ground,
How beautiful they stand,
Those old grey churches of our native land:

Our lives are all turmoil;
Our souls are in a weary strife and toil,
Grasping and straining—tasking nerve and brain,
Both day and night for gain,
We have grown worldly; made gold our god;
Have turned our hearts away from lowly things;
We seek not now the wild flower on the sod;
We see not snowy folded angel's wings
Amid the summer skies;
For visions come not to polluted eyes.

Yet, blessed quiet fanes,
Still piety, still poetry remains,
And shall remain, whilst ever on the air
One chapel bell calls high and low to prayer—
Whilst ever green and sunny church yards keep
The dust of our beloved, and tears are shed
From fountains which in the human heart lie deep,
Something in these aspiring days we need
To keep our spirits lowly,
To set within our hearts sweet thoughts and holy.

And 'tis for this they stand,
The old grey churches of our native land,
And even in the gold corrupted mart,
In the great city's heart,
They stand; and chantry dome and organ sound
And staid services of prayer and praise,
Like to the righteous ten which were not found
For the polluted city shall upraise,
Meek faith and love sincere—
Better in time of need than shield or spear.
MARY HOWITT.

NEW WORKS.

A Journey from La Trappe to Rome. By the Reverend Father Baron Geramb, Abbot and Procurator of La Trappe.

First, here is a peep into the solitude of the monastery, as the Baron found it on his return to Jerusalem. It affords a fair sample of his elevated manner. The exultation with which he delineates, the delight he takes in the gloomy exercises of his order, is not the least extraordinary part of this extract.

How sweet it is, on returning from a long pilgrimage, after so many incidents and dangers, to find one's self again in the calm, the silence and even the monotony of La Trappe! I need not describe what I felt when, from Reiningen, I discovered the walls of this holy monastery, where I had suffered so much, and had been so happy. Shall I meet with all the religious that I left there? Do these venerable men yet live—those angels, those models of perfection, who even in their austerities, seem to regain their pristine vigour? While putting this question to myself, I passed by the cemetery; for our fathers had placed it at the entrance of the convent, that the image of death might conduct us to penance, and undergo its rigours. I cast my eyes on the spot where, one day, I am to repose. In more than one place the earth had been recently disturbed. How many of my brethren have been laid there since my departure? This agitation increases when I find myself before the couch, whereon I repose only for a few hours, even in the longest nights, and on which, however I seek for sleep, which refuses itself to my wearied eyelids—when I take my place in the common refectory to partake of some vegetables only, seasoned with a little salt, and eat of bread which we bake but once in ten days. All this is very hard, you will tell me, and ought to cost nature much. My dear Charles, this is the language of the world; but the world, which censures the austerities of the religious life, knows not the sweetness by which they are accompanied.

How my heart beat—what was the impression I experienced when, in the middle of the first night, the bell called me to prayer! The darkness of the cloister, illuminated by the pale glimmer of a lamp—the heavy and measured steps of the religious, who advanced towards the church—the slow and profound salutations at the entrance of the sanctuary—those vaults which resound with the singing of the inspired canticles, and the sighs which interrupt the words of the royal penitent—all this penetrated my soul, and inundated it with a delight I had not enjoyed for a long time.

There is a touch of the world in the very contrast he suggests between the monastery of La Trappe, and the incidents of his pilgrimage. No man could have conceived all this, except one, who, like the author had drunk deeply of earthly pleasures before he came to enjoy these inexplicable anticipations of heaven.

The progress of his journey to Paris—his sight-seeing in that city, recalling some memorable recollections of the days of Napoleon—and his subsequent journey to Rome, are described with considerable animation, and display not a little pictorial effect, strongly mingled with devotional reflections. Let us take a short example from the description of the city and the piety of Lyons.

How shall I describe, my dear Charles, the spectacle presented by the churches of Lyons and festivals? Scarcely do the eighteen parish churches, in which there is a constant succession of masses, suffice for the wants of the faithful. The same throng is seen in the private chapels in different quarters of the city; in those attached to colleges, hospitals, and religious houses. But it is particularly on the feasts of the Virgin, and on Saturday, which is consecrated to her veneration, that you will be edified by the pilgrimage of Pourvières. What a concourse! In this ascending and tortuous road, faith sustains and fortifies the women, the children, and the old men; love is in their hearts, and hope in their looks. Enter the chapel, if the dense crowd will permit you, what sentiments will you experience! What impression will not be made on you, by the multitudes engaged in prayer, the flambeaux will burn before the altar, and the numerous votive offerings, which cover the walls—pictures, indeed, which the artist would not always admire, but which, nevertheless attest the goodness and protection of Mary, and the gratitude of her victories! This chapel is truly worthy of the Queen of Heaven; there she is never invoked in vain. Twice did the cholera approach Lyons. The inhabitants redoubled their fervour; they multiplied their offerings, and during nine days the venerable prelate, who is charged with the administration of the diocese, notwithstanding his great age and infirmities, visited this chapel with a portion of his clergy to offer himself a victim for his flock. These prayers were not disregarded. Mary presented him at the throne of her eternal Sion, and the exterminating angel turned aside from this favoured city. An inscription placed over the principal entrance perpetuates the recollection of the danger; and the Lyonesse cease not to turn their eyes towards that hill whence they derived assistance.

That such a miracle should be wrought in the nineteenth century is not more worthy of admiration than that it should be thus graphically commemorated!

He gives us an account of the dress of the Pope, his court and his authority.

In the interior of his palace the Pope wears a soutane of white cloth, and a rochet of fine linen, a mozetta of red velvet, lined with ermine, and a large cap of the same material and colour. His shoes are either of red cloth, with gold tissue, or of red morocco leather, according to the time of the year. The cross is embroidered in gold, on the middle of the upper part of the shoe. He always wears the same dress, except during Advent, Lent, and on fast days, when he puts on a soutane of white serge. From the Saturday of Holy Week to the following Saturday, he wears a mozetta and cap of white damask. When he goes out he wears a stole.

The household of the Pope has the magnificence which becomes his rank as a Sovereign Prince. His dignity as head of the church is indicated by the cardinals, prelates, and other officers which form his court, and some of whom always accompany him in public. The cardinals are his counsellors; the regular ambassadors are called Nunzii, and the governors of provinces, and extraordinary ambassadors are styled 'Legates.' The councils in which questions regarding the church or the state are discussed, are called 'Congregations.' The tribunal della rota, is that in which the most important civil causes are decided, without appeal; and the Dataria, that whence bulls are issued. The term 'Pope' was formerly common to all bishops, but is now confined to the successors of St. Peter; it is of Greek origin, and signifies 'father.' The tiara, which the Pope wears in his coronation ceremony, resembles, somewhat the head-dress of the

Chaldeans, which was round, rising in a conical form, and encircled with a crown when worn by monarchs. Boniface VIII. added a second crown, to show the union of the spiritual and temporal powers, and in 1334, Benedict XII. added a third crown to indicate the paternal power which should be united with those before named. This triple crown is, in reality, a crown of thorns; for this elevated station demands a reserve and self abnegation which its dignity scarcely compensates for. The Pope enjoys no public amusement; he eats always alone, and his table is served in the most simple manner. The morning is entirely spent in the divine service and the administration of public affairs, and a visit to a church, or to an hospital, constitutes his only recreation. In a word the practices of devotion, and the cares of government fill up all the hours of the Pontiff's life. Are there many men who would submit to such a life, even at the recompense of a throne?

The custom of kissing the cross, embroidered on the Pope's shoe, is a consequence of his elevation above all other powers. The Emperor Constantine kissed the foot of St. Sylvester; the Emperor Justin I. that of Pope John. Justinian exhibited to Pope Constantine, and Charles V. to Clement VIII. the same mark of their subjection to him as head of the church. This homage is rendered to Jesus Christ in the person of his vicar, and this ceremony is observed by all Kings and their ambassadors.

The History of the Jews, from the taking of Jerusalem by Titus, to the present time.

The history of the Jews, since the taking of Jerusalem by Titus, is almost one continued record of robbery, persecution and injustice. In almost every country they have been treated as a 'slave-class,' and made to minister to the selfish rapacity of the privileged orders. In Spain, France, Germany, and England, the Jews have met with continued oppression and contumely. While in Mahomedan countries they have been comparatively tolerated and protected, among Christians they have been invariably despised and persecuted. Against no sect or class of men was the wrath of the early Christians more generally stirred up, than against these descendants of the chosen people of God. They were banished by turns from almost every country in Europe, under pain of death; and every means were employed to spoliage, crush, and exterminate them. Often were they compelled to become converts to Christianity; and of this forced conversion the following may be quoted as one of the many melancholy results. The scene is in Portugal.

'The new Christians,' who remained in the Kingdom, were looked upon with suspicion by the Clergy and the people. In 1506, one of them imprudently discovered an imposture which a monk was practising upon a crowd of admiring spectators; holding up a crucifix to their view, and bidding them observe the light which streamed from it, a manifest appearance, as he intimated, of the Saviour himself. The Jew, whose eyes were not blinded by superstition, saw a lamp behind the mysterious crucifix, and made known his discovery in a taunting manner. The enraged multitude seized him, dragged him out of the church, and tore him to pieces. His brother, who stood lamenting his fate, was butchered for his expressions of natural feeling. Nor were they contented with this demonstration of their bigoted sect. Inflamed by the exhortations of two Dominican monks, they attacked the new converts on all sides, and massacred them. Even the churches afforded no refuge to the wretched beings who fled thither; they were dragged from the sanctuaries, and put to death without mercy. The slaughter continued three days, during which we are assured that 2000 of the new Christians perished. The magistrates, either through fear, or a secret approbation of these excesses, took no measures to prevent them.

In 148, a terrible pestilence called the black death, the counterpart of the cholera of our day, broke out in France, which carried off immense numbers of victims. Ignorant of the real causes of this tremendous visitation, the credulous multitude every where accused the Jews of poisoning the rivers and fountains, and polluting the atmosphere by magical arts. In all countries through which the disease passed the Jews were made the subjects of the most horrible cruelties.

'Nowhere,' says our author, 'was the treatment of the Jews more atrocious than at Stragburg. There the civic authorities had shown symptoms of a desire to protect them from their enemies, when the populace rose in sedition, and deposed them, installing in their room others, who would willingly cooperate with them in their sanguinary schemes. The new magistrates caused several Jews to be arrested and put to the torture, which wrung from them a confession that they were guilty of the imputed crime. No more was necessary to ensure their punishment; they were hurried away to the place of execution and broken on the wheel. Their brethren