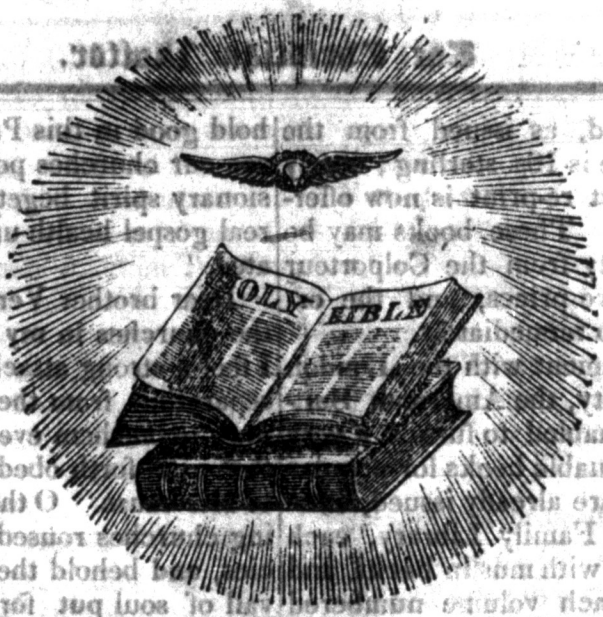


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REV. E. D. VERY,

"BY PURENESS, BY KNOWLEDGE—BY LOVE UNFEIGNED."—St. PAUL.

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WHAT ARE PLEASURES?

What are riches, glory, pride,
Laurel-wreath, or jewelled crown,
When upon life's troubled tide,
Weary, wayworn, man goes down!
What are mankind's dearest pleasures,
But the fitful meteor's gleam?
What his grandeur?—what his treasures?
Moonlight on a mountain stream.

Soon we quit life's dreary path,
For the silence of the grave,—
Soon thy banner, mighty death,
O'er the proudest head shall wave:
Soon the dweller in the hall,
And the child of peasant birth,
Like the forest leaves shall fall,
Mingling with their mother earth.

Prince and peasant, priest and king—
Like the little flowers that blush
On the bosom of the spring,
Time's unsparing foot shall crush.
What! O what is pleasure then!
Can it hush our woes to sleep?
Can it still the throb of pain,
Ranking in the bosom deep?

When the brightest cloud that swims,
Vision-like, across the sky,
Stays the summer's burning beams,
As it floats unheeded by:
Then shall glittering gems of earth
Bid our sorrows cease to flow—
To the joyous laugh of mirth,
Change the thrilling pang of woe.

LONDON.

The importance of the metropolis can scarcely be exaggerated. Within it 2,022,384 persons are gathered together, whose number is increasing at the rate of 30,000 annually. Its population already equals that of the counties of Bedford, Berks, Bucks, Cambridge, Chester, Cornwall, Cumberland, Dorset, Durham, and Rutland. It is already double that of Wales, and approaches that of Scotland.—Here is the seat of empire; here the Queen's court gathers to it the most splendid aristocracy in the world. Here assemble the ministers of the imperial Parliament, who rule the vast territories of the British Crown. In its courts of law thousands of the most active and energetic minds in the kingdom are engaged in their intellectual competition for wealth and fame. Its commerce spreads out its arms to gather wealth from the whole world, and loads its merchants, bankers, brokers, and traders of every description, with princely fortunes.—From it issues a multifarious literature to elevate or to degrade, to enlighten or to pervert, to bless or to curse, the whole family of man. Every town and village of the kingdom pore over its newspapers. To it, as to the centre of fashion, of gaiety, of refinement, of knowledge, and of benevolence, myriads of educated persons come to seek the enjoyments congenial to their tastes, while foreigners from every land visit it, to study our institutions, or to criticise our manners. On the other hand, there is much to corrupt it. It offers unlimited indulgence and infinite luxury to enfeeble and vitiate the wealthy, for whom dissipating amusements succeed each other so rapidly as to make an indolent and worthless life seem busy, and oppress with fatigue those whose only business is to do nothing.—Among the working classes, myriads who crave excitement in the brief intervals of exhausting toil are demoralised by gin-shops, tea-gardens, and low theatres, by Sunday newspapers and Sunday excursions, by Socialist lectures and by infidel magazines; and, above all, a hopeless poverty, which has steep-

ed multitudes to the very lips, has made them regardless of religion, loyalty, character, and life itself. There is no place in the world which more needs earnest ministers and earnest churches, or where their exertions would be more effective. What an influence might London exert on the world if there were only one earnest and enlightened minister to each thousand persons; if rich and poor, princes, nobles, senators, lawyers, editors of newspapers, authors, merchants and men of business, mechanics and labourers, visitors from every country, and foreigners from every land, could find here a thousand heart-stirring preachers, and a thousand congregations, whose piety, zeal, and brotherly-kindness, might recall the experience of the church at Jerusalem when the grace of God made it a praise in the earth! Yet, for this unrivalled city, the State, professing to provide for its spiritual wants, maintains, directly and indirectly, 430 ministers, 98 of whom it orders to confine their ministrations to 54,000 persons within the City walls, and assigns to the remaining 332 the charge of 1,967,758 souls. Such a distribution of ministers reduces the parochial system to an absurdity; and makes the Establishment itself, with respect to the metropolis, a mere delusion. What can 332 ministers do for two millions? What do they accomplish in fact? Chosen by patronage, independent of their people, with a discretionary power to do almost as little as they please of a spiritual kind, do they lead the metropolis to Christ? Will they ever? Can they, or their successors, to the judgment day? Individual zeal, however, has done something towards the supply of ministerial instruction withheld by the State. The State maintains 332 ministers; the Establishment maintains 530; and individual zeal maintains 553. Individual zeal maintains twenty-three ministers more than the Establishment, and 221 more than the State. We learn, by the fact above stated, that individual zeal has done much more than the State for the diffusion of religious knowledge in the metropolis.—*Noel's Essay.*

THE DUKE AT THE CHAPEL ROYAL.

I agreed with a friend to go to early service (at 8 o'clock, a. m.) to the Chapel Royal, St. James' Palace, on a Sunday morning in February. The fact that the Duke of Wellington habitually attended there was the inducement which attracted us. It was a bleak morning. There had been a heavy fall of snow. Our way to the chapel lay through St. James' park. We did not meet a single person. The stillness of London on the earlier hours of Sundays has often struck me. The state of the weather made this stillness seem greater than usual on this morning, and raised a suspicion in our minds that, in so far as our visit to the chapel involved the hope of seeing the duke, it would be attended with disappointment.

Arrived there, however, and with the usual preliminaries admitted within, we found a singularly interesting congregation. The Chapel Royal is remarkable for a large attendance of the aristocracy, and we saw before us a congregation of rank, fashion, fame, power, worth, and wisdom, such as is rarely witnessed. In a word, the congregation consisted of one single person—the Duke alone! Bleak as was the morning, there he was, laden with more of earth's honours, dignities, and renown than any living man, and with but one stain upon his character, intently occupied with the work of worshipping his God, and all alone with the clergyman. Thoughts came flowing in upon us from all quarters, Waterloo, Vittoria, Salamanca; clashing thousands, the wounded, the dying, the silent

camp, the imminent deadly breach; glorious victories, admiring millions, applauding senates, grateful princes, gorgeous courts—all, in fact, that is viewed as great and glorious in this lower world, with the one exception, as so related to the great personage before us, that they in our minds connected themselves with, and were, by his presence on this occasion, forced before our imagination, and, as it were, seen, felt, realized. Here was the giant spirit which had been raised to sit on the whirlwind and rule the storm, which had, instrumentally, for years decided the fate of nations, and people, and kindred, and tongues, and received more of the incense of human gratitude, thanksgiving, and praise, than perhaps ever before were awarded to mortal. Nor did there fail to mingle with the retrospect thrones overturned, dynasties swept away, hopes which towered to heaven flung into perdition, curses both loud and deep.

The hero, the deliverer, the avenger, the warrior of unmatched wisdom in the hour of hesitation, and forbearance in the hour of triumph, stood before us, his head hoar with age, his body feeble and his voice faint, the solitary worshipper of that God who had so often shielded his head in the day of battle, and through his arm delivered the British Empire and its countless subjects from invasion and overthrow. The sight struck us as particularly fine.

On our entrance, the Psalms for the day were being read. The duke took alternate verses with the clergyman. He spoke with an utterance that was thick and indistinct, and occasionally stammered a little ere he could get out a word, but still his voice filled the chapel.

Although my friend and I habitually answered the responses, here we felt that it would be more edifying, that we should be silent worshippers. It struck us both that the Psalm was particularly appropriate. After our entrance it ran and was read thus.

The Duke: I will go forth in the strength of the Lord God, and will make mention of thy righteousness only.

The Clergyman: Thou, O God, hast taught me from my youth up until now: therefore will I tell of thy wondrous works.

The Duke: Forsake me not, O God, in mine old age, when I am grey headed, until I have showed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to all them that are yet for to come.

Clergyman: Thy righteousness, O God, is very high; and great things are they that thou hast done; O God, who is like unto thee?

The Duke: O, what great troubles and adversities hast thou showed me! And yet didst thou turn and refresh me; yea, and broughtest me from the deep of the earth again.

Clergyman: Thou hast brought me to great honour and comforted me on every side.

The Duke: Blessed be the Lord God, even the God of Israel; which only doeth wondrous things.

Clergyman: And blessed be the name of his Majesty for ever: and all the earth shall be filled with his Majesty. Amen, Amen.

The Duke: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

Clergyman: As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

It was impossible not to feel with peculiar force the importance of that part of the ritual of our Church through which the congregation is led to take alternate verses with the clergyman in reading the Psalms for the day. In what remarkable contrast with the hardening circumstances of daily life, its sordid cares, its heartless vanities, its corrupting sen-

timents, do the thoughts of the inspired and royal psalmist present themselves!

The duke was as painstaking in the performance of his duty as ever parish clerk was, and much more so than many of the fraternity whom I have happened upon.

The rubric was punctiliously observed.—At the creed he turned to the communion table, repeated the words distinctly and aloud, and all through impressed the spectator with the idea that he was intently engaged in the fulfilment of an important duty of his own. The emphasis in the Litany was strong and marked. "We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord." And at the commandments, "Incline our hearts to keep this law," was thus repeated on each occasion.

The lessons for the morning were, Genesis ix., and Mark xiv.

The sermon was remarkable, on Exodus, chap. xxiii. 2. It briefly but strongly showed the dangers connected with too great subserviency to the popular voice, and, of course, without any intention on the part of the writer and preacher, dealt some strokes which the duke must have felt.—*Dublin Church Sentinel.*

GOD IN HISTORY.

Napoleon's career was providential: there is no name in history whose whole course bears so palpable a proof of his having been created for a historic purpose. Europe, in the partition of Poland, had committed a great crime. France, in the murder of her king, had committed a great crime. The three criminal thrones, and the regicidal republic, were alike to be punished. Napoleon was the appointed instrument for both purposes. He first crushed the democracy, and then he broke the strength of the three powers in the field—he thrice conquered the Austrian capital—he turned Prussia into a province—and his march to Russia desolated her most populous provinces, and laid her Asiatic capital in ashes. But France, which continually paid for all these fearful triumphs in her blood, was still to suffer a final and retributive punishment. Her armies were hunted from the Vistula to the Rhine, and from the Rhine to the Seine. She saw her capital twice captured—her government twice swept away—her conquest lost—her plunder recovered by its original possessors, and her territory garrisoned by an army of strangers—her army disbanded—her empire cut down to the limits of the old monarchy—her old masters restored, and the idol torn from his altar. Thus were thrown away the fruits of the Revolution, of the regicide, of the democracy, and of a quarter of a century of wretchedness, fury, and blood. On Napoleon himself fell the heaviest blow of all. All the shames, sorrows, and sufferings of France were concentrated on his head. He saw his military power ruined—his last army slaughtered—his last adherents exiled—his family fugitive—his whole dynasty uncrowned—and himself given up a prisoner to England, to be sent to an English dungeon, to be kept in English hands, to finish his solitary and bitter existence in desertion and disease, and be laid in an English grave—leaving to mankind, perhaps, the most striking moral of blasted ambition ever given to the world.—*Blackwood's Magazine.*

King James, with all his pedantry could sometimes do a witty thing, and sometimes say one. A man once stood upon his head on the pinnacle of a church steeple, and afterwards applied to James for some suitable reward for his foolhardiness. His majesty expressed his admiration of the feat, and said—"We will grant thee our letters patent, that none else but thyself shall perform the same experiment."