

CHRISTIAN



VISITOR.

A Family Newspaper: devoted to

Religious & General Intelligence.

REV. E. D. VERY,

BY PURENESS, BY KNOWLEDGE—BY LOVE UNFEIGNED.—ST. PAUL.

EDITOR.

Volume III.

SAINT JOHN, NEW-BRUNSWICK, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25, 1850.

Number 40.

DEATH'S FINAL CONQUEST.

These fine moral stanzas were originally intended for a solemn funeral song in a play of James Shirley, entitled "The Contention of Ajax and Ulysses." Shirley flourished as a dramatic writer early in the reign of Charles I. He died Oct. 23, 1666, at 72. It is said to have been a favorite song with King Charles II.

The glories of our birth and state
Are shadows, not substantial things;
There is no armor against fate;
Death lays his icy hand on kings;
Sceptre and crown
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.
Some men with swords may reap the field,
And plant fresh laurels where they kill;
But their strong nerves at last must yield,
They tame but one another still.
Early or late
They stoop to fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath,
When they, pale captives, creep to death.
The garlands wither on your brow;
Then boast no more your mighty deeds;
Upon death's purple altar now
See where the victor-victim bleeds.
All heads must come
To the cold tomb:
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet and blossom in the dust.

AN HISTORICAL CURIOSITY.—In 1798, a clergyman, vicar of a parish in Shrewsbury, committed what the Catholics or Puseyites would call sacrilege. In his church was a picture of the Crucifixion of Christ, suspended over what is called the altar. This picture, as he believed it to be an object of worship, he ordered to be removed. Various efforts were made to retain it, but at length it was taken from the building. The Catholic priest, on the next day, issued the following lampoon, which was circulated over the whole town:

"The parson's the man,
Let him say what he can,
Will for gain leave his God in the lurch;
Could Iscariot do more
Had it been in his power,
Than to turn his Lord out of the Church?"
It may easily be supposed that on one part of the community this would have its effect; but the worthy vicar soon gave evidence that he possessed wit as well as his neighbor, for he immediately replied:
"The Lord I adore
Is mighty in power,
The one only living and true;
But that Lord of yours
That I turned out of doors,
Had about as much knowledge as you.
"But since you bemoan
This God of your own,
Cheer up, my disconsolate brother!
Though it seems very odd,
Still, if this be your God,
Any painter can make you another."

THE GREEK CHURCH.

It denominates itself 'the Catholic and Apostolical Oriental Church.' It has four ancient patriarchates in Turkey—those of Constantinople, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria. In the north of Syria, particularly about Aleppo and Antioch, it includes the majority of the Christian population. For instance, out of the whole number of inhabitants in Da-

mascus, which is above 78,000, this church claims more than 45,000 as its members. It is the largest denomination of Christians in Syria and the Holy Land; for those of the Greek church here amount to 345,000 souls, while that of the other Christian bodies does not altogether exceed 260,000. It has 2,000 or 3,000 members in Egypt, and possesses the convents in Arabia Petraea, among which is the monastery on Mount Sinai. In all parts of Asia Minor and Lesser Armenia, it has more followers than any other Christian church; and they exceed at Constantinople those of the Latin or Roman and Armenian churches taken together. It is almost the only Christian church in the Turkish provinces in Europe; but in respect to the united population of Turkey in Europe and Asia, it numbers about 4,000,000 out of the entire Christian community of 6,600,000, and forms about one fourth of the whole of the Sultan's subjects. It is the established religion in the kingdom of Greece, where the law of August, 1843, has limited the number of bishoprics to twelve, though the present number is thirty-eight, including the twenty-six suffragan bishoprics, whose places will not be filled up when they die. The same law styles the national church 'the Orthodox Eastern Apostolical Church of the kingdom of Greece.' Out of the 640,000 inhabitants of this new monarchy, all are Greeks except about 45,000 Romanists. North of the Danube, more than three fourths of the inhabitants are of this church; and in Hungary its adherents amount to about 1,350,000, or one eighth of the entire population. It is the established religion of Russia, where the emperor holds the supremacy; and it has more than 47,000,000 followers, out of a population of nearly 64,000,000. The Russo-Greek church is administered in all general respects by the 'holy-directing synod,' consisting of certain dignitaries, besides a cabinet minister. The ecclesiastical affairs are conducted by forty-eight eparchates, divided into three classes, and each under the superintendance of its own prelate, who is either a metropolitan, an archbishop, or a bishop.—Latterly, two additional eparchates have been created in Warsaw and Kamptschatka. It has upwards of 28,500 churches in this vast empire, and 350 monasteries, all of the order of St. Basil.

The standards of this church, for doctrine and rituals, are contained in certain symbolical books, of which an edition in the original Greek, accompanied with a latin translation, was published at Jena, in 1843. The Greek synod held at Jerusalem (Bethlehem), in 1672, enacted a 'shield of orthodoxy,' subscribed by three patriarchs, twenty-one bishops, and twenty-three other ecclesiastics, among whom were the legates from the Russian church.

It will be seen that the apostacy of the Greek Church yields in few things to the Roman; and this is further confirmed by the answers given to the questions in Mogilas's catechetical confession, p. 128, which is appended to the decretals. Here we find that Holy Scripture is not to be used commonly or indiscriminately by all Christians, and that its perspicuity admits of question. The inspiration of certain books of the apocrypha is asserted; and the virgin Mary, as well as saints and angels are to be worshipped: the one by 'hyperdulia,' and the others by direct 'dulia.' So also the pictures and the relics of saints, holy places and articles, sacramental vessels, churchyards, and graves.

The Greek church has fallen away in a lamentable manner from the simplicity and truth of Christ's gospel, and agrees with the Romish Church in most matters of highest moment. It places priests on earth and the saints and angels in heaven as intermediators between

the soul and the Saviour, and allows the merits of the Son of God to be dispensed by the ministers, and purchased by the prayers, penances, and services of the worshippers.—With all this, there are points in which the Greek church stands on superior ground to the Roman: its tyranny is not so compact and fearful: it wants the power or the will, which Rome has, to follow out its principles to the length of abomination of which they would admit; it does not lay claim to an infallible head upon earth; nor does it systematically oppose the diffusion of scripture. Let us pray, then, that the power of the holy light of those scriptures may bring this church out of the mire of error and superstition into which it has been permitted to its blind meddlars to plunge it.—Church of England Magazine.

The Religion of the Anglo Saxons.

But little is generally known concerning the religion and manners of our forefathers. The time and means of most people are too limited for the study of this interesting subject. To such the writer hopes the present compend will be acceptable.

The days of the week were named after these gods, and I shall give them in that order. They were—

Sunday,	Sun day.
Monday,	Moon day.
Tuesday,	Tiw's day.
Wednesday,	Woden's day.
Thursday,	Thor's day.
Friday,	Friga's day.
Saturday,	Seator's day.

The sun was one of the chief divinities of the Saxons. He was represented as placed on a pillar. His head was completely encircled by flames, and he bore a burning wheel on his breast, as a symbol of his course round the world.

The next is the Moon. Although she is a female divinity, she is represented clothed like a man, in a short tunic reaching to the knees; and, on her head she wears a *chapron* (or hood) with long ears, probably intended to represent the horns of the new moon. She wears on her feet shoes turned up at the toes; and, in her hands, she carries a sort of shield, on which is pictured the new moon. She is represented with a noble and firm countenance.

Tiw or Tuisco was originally a man, and appears to have been the founder of the human race in Europe. Tacitus says that Germans "in all songs and ballads, celebrate the god Tuisco, who was born of the earth, and Mannus his son, as the founders of their race," which seems to confirm the foregoing opinion, as Mannus is the word "man" Latinized.

Tuisco was represented as clothed in the skin of a wild beast, in the manner of the ancient Germans. After him they called themselves, "Tuytshen" from whence came "Dentsch," English "Dutch." He was probably Japhet, the settler of that part of the world.

We come next to Woden, the Odin of the Danes and Scandinavians. Being the tutelar god of war, of course, in a barbarous nation, like the early Saxons, he received very high honors. He is said, in the traditions, to have been a prince of Scythia, who made many conquests, and introduced a new religion.—He was the inventor of the dread Runic characters which were in the middle Ages, regarded with great fear by the people. He also possessed a great power over all spirits and spells, and, after his death, was deified.—There seems to be a mysterious connection between him and Nimrod, between whose lives there is a striking coincidence.

Woden had temples in various parts of England which are now called by his name among those are Wodnesborough, (pronounced Winsborough) Wensfield, and Wednesbury.

Next to Woden, is his son Thor, who is represented as seated upon a throne, with a crown upon his head, and bearing a sceptre. He is the thunderer, who scatters his lightnings over the world. Human sacrifices were often offered to him.

Verstegan, an old English antiquary, says of Thor: "Of the weekly day, which was dedicated unto his peculiar service, we yet retain the name of Thursday, and which the Danes and Swedens yet call *Thorsday*. In the Netherlands it is called *Dunderodagh*; that is *Thunder's day*."

Next in order was Freya or Friga, who was probably the wife of Woden. She was represented as holding a sword and bow, signifying, as Verstegan says, "that women should be ready to fight in time of need." She was, however, the goddess of harvest, agriculture, and peace.

Last is Seator, who is supposed by some to be Saturn, but I see no reason for this except the similarity of the name. He was the tutelar god of the Saxons, and was represented as clothed in a long tunic, whose girdle flew about to the wind, to express the freedom of the Saxons. He stood barefooted upon the prickly back of a fish, signifying the safety of his worshippers. He held a wheel in one hand, and a pail of water, which also held flowers and fruits, in the other. The wheel signified the union of the Saxons, and the pail of water, that by kindly rains he would nourish the earth.

There were several other deities of the Saxons, and interesting particulars concerning their religion, which would have found place in this article, but that it has already been extended to an undue length. However, if the present article shall have been found acceptable, the writer may publish a continuation of it.—*Albany Argus*.

The London Post Office.

Perhaps the most remarkable place of its kind in the world is the London Post Office. Our own post-office, and that of New York are curiosities to the uninitiated; but they will not stand a comparison, for a moment, with the London office. The business done there is almost incredible. Some idea of the amount may be gathered, however, from the fact that it employs a force of 2,903 persons, and that at least 350,000 letters pass daily through the inland department alone.

One of its most curious features is the making up and dispatching the Indian mails, which are sent off semi-monthly, on the 7th and 24th. The letters are tied in packages, and then placed in iron chests, the lids of which, when once shut, fasten with a spring, and cannot be opened without a chisel. These chests are one foot eight inches long, one foot wide, and ten and a half inches deep; yet not less than one hundred and twenty, on an average, are dispatched every month. After being closed, they are soldered, and the seal of the post office affixed. They are then committed to the charge of an agent, who accompanies them across France to Marseilles, never losing sight of them till they are placed on board the steamer for Alexandria, whence they find their way across the isthmus of Suez, and down the Red Sea, to their final destination.

Another object of interest is the dead letter office. The number of letters for whom no owners could be found, and which were therefore returned as dead, was, in 1849, not less than 1,476,456. Of these 10,572, on being opened, were found to contain property to the amount of nearly two millions and a half of