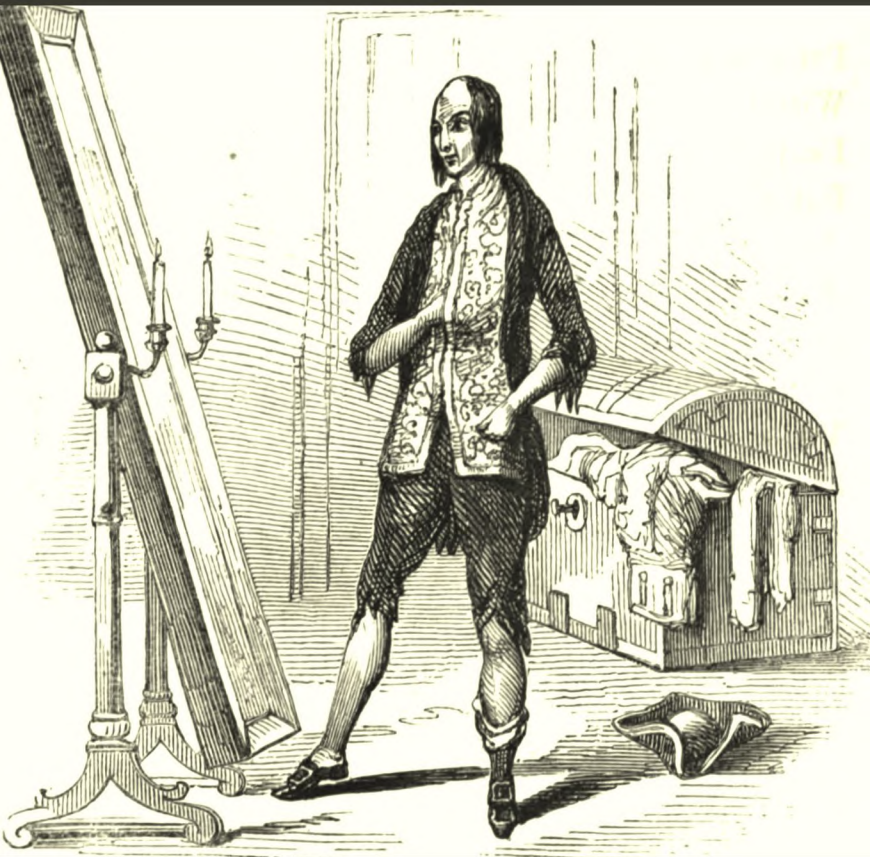

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*A paper lantern for Puseyites.
By 'Will o'the wisp'.*

Georgiana Margaritta Zornlin

43. 720.

A

PAPER



LANTERN

FOR

Museyites.

BY

"WILL O' THE WISE."



"O, some do call me Jack, sweet love,
And some do call me Gill;
But when I ride to Holyrood
My name is Wilful Will."

The Abbot.

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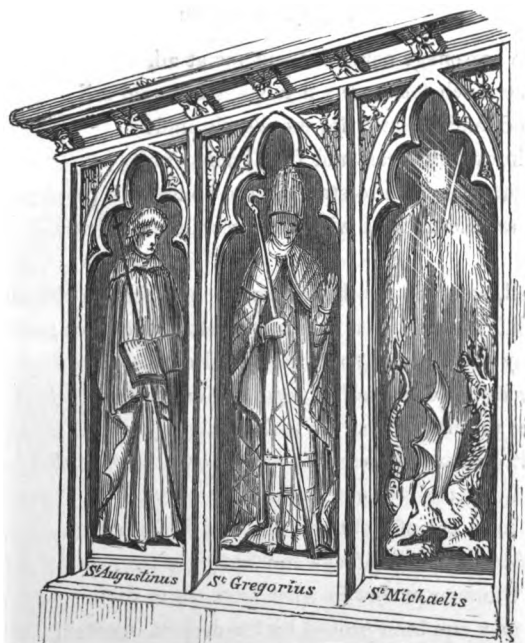
Letters

FROM

THE REV. HILARY ORIEL


TO

THE REV. CLEMENT LOYOLA.



LETTER I.

POPE'S NEWMOUTH,
Invention of the Cross.¹


 O! here I am, Clement, arrived at my living,
 Though, alas! I confess, I have some sad misgiving
 It will not be to me like the banks of the Isis:
 I've a strange set to deal with, and many devices
 Arise in my mind, which I wish to pursue;
 I know you'll assist me,—I'll tell them to you.—

The parsonage never can suit me at all,
 It is so much too large ; it is what I should call
 A good family house, for me wholly unfit ;
 You know my ideas, and I will not permit
 Such arrangements to stand in the house of a priest ;
 They are meant for a wife and six children at least.

Well, so much for the residence : now for the church,
 Which I find has been shockingly left in the lurch ;
 For my predecessor, poor, sleepy old creature !
 Never troubled himself in repairing one feature
 Of her primitive face. It looks sadly dejected ;
 And it goes to my heart that it thus was neglected.
 Now I am resolved on complete restoration :
 I will keep out of sight the so-called Reformation,
 Set aside all those Ridleys and Latimers too ;
 With Cranmer or Jewell what have we to do ?
 As it now has been proved by the deepest research,
 'Tis the Catholic, never the Protestant Church.—
 The old-fashioned Commandments, the Prayer, and the
 Creed,
 Set just like a horn-book for the children to read,
 I cannot, I fear, altogether erase,
 But some new ones I'll have, more befitting the place.
 Pray send your old missals,—I'll study the letters,
 For I must take some hints from our Romanist betters.
 Then with characters varied, with ornaments new,
 Painted quite in a blaze, with gold, scarlet, and blue,
 And with roses and flourishes properly decked,
 They will have a most brilliant and striking effect ;

So may every one think they are different quite
From those ugly old things done in mere black and white.

When all this is arranged, I shall stand in great need
For some lights for my altar : it grieves me indeed
To find that there is not a candlestick here,
Not a vestige of one ; and to me it is clear
That Cromwell's vile men knocked them all on the head
When they sought to establish their new lights instead :
Now it is my intention to set up thirteen,—
That's enough for the candlesticks ; next comes the screen,
For which I must order some plaster and paints,
As I'm anxious anew to bedizen my saints ;
There is one wants a head, and another a nose,
St. Chad has no fingers, St. Crispin no toes ;
The stigmata gone from St. Francis's hands ;
Without arrows or wounds St. Sebastian stands ;
Poor St. Ursula's there, but she hasn't a rag on ;
They've taken St. Michael, and left me the dragon ;
Of a book most obscure St. Augustine's the bearer ;
And St. Gregory needs a new papal tiara.²

The sight of the windows would make you quite sad ;
I must have some stained glass, if it is to be had.
The king's arms once shone there, but have now no supporter ;
The Puritans broke them, and gave them no quarter :
In the shields you can't separate azure from or,
Every coat is abated by gusset and gore.³
What reformers began, the churchwardens have finished,
All the figures misplaced, and their glories diminished ;

For (would you believe it?) these odious old fuzzles
 Have twisted and turned them like so many puzzles;
 They've murdered St. Denis, they've set on his head,
 'Tis not borne on his hands, but his shoulders instead!
 Among other queer changes, what think you I've pounced on?
 The devil is taking the nose of St. Dunstan!
 There are angels sans wings, and the heroes are flying,
 The martyrs are slaying, the torturers dying;
 And unlucky St. Cuthbert they cleverly show there,
 With his head in one window, his trunk in another;
 And with horrors no tyrant could dare to invent, I
 Saw "Repaired in the year 1720"⁴
 Stuck in bright yellow glass through the midst of St. James!
 These miscreants should all be condemned to the flames.
 It is useless to speak, for their brains are so scant—
 What d'you think they replied, when I spoke of the font?—
 "Oh! there is an old font, but we make it a rule
 "To use a pint-basin and four-legged stool."⁵
 Now, according to law—and I'll have it made known—
 I am bound to use none but a fit one of stone.
 When I looked at the pulpit, the cushions and cloths
 Were of common blue serge, full of nothing but moths.
 I declared I would have (though they asked what I meant)
 Crimson velvet for Easter, and black cloth for Lent.
 The Bishop, I hope, will encourage my views,
 And I mean, by his help, to get rid of the pews,
 And the gallery, too, with its vile band of singers;
 In the midst of the church I'll ne'er have the bell-ringers.⁶
 The surplice is covered with stains old and recent,
 And I'm sure that it looks neither "comely" nor "decent."⁷

A new one of lawn shall be made at my charge,
 The skirts shall be full, and the sleeves shall be large :
 This at least I will have. I may shortly, I hope,
 Bear a cross on my scarf, and most surely a cope.

Every cranny and corner is smothered with dust,
 Which shows how these "questmen" have heeded their trust.
 I must find out the heirs of my cross-legged knight ;
 He's defaced by their whitewash, a terrible sight ;
 If I met his descendants,—I gladly would tell any—
 They might threaten these brutes with indictment for felony.

But you'll tire of this list ; I'll no longer pursue it.
 Then, to mend these abuses,—say, how can I do it ?
 I must stir up Squire Bradshaw,⁸ and all these dull people,
 To restore the old church, and to rebuild the steeple ;
 To come once every day to the church, at the least ;
 To keep strictly each fast-day, each vigil and feast ;
 To refurnish the faldstool,⁹ if not the sedillia,¹⁰
 And with all the old rites to become quite familiar.
 The Squire's absent, as yet ; and just now I remember,
 He will not be at home, I believe, till September ;
 But I hope, if I find him a sensible man,
 He'll be easily brought to approve of my plan.





LETTER II.

St. Michael and all Angels.

DEAR Clement, you wish to know what I have done ;
So I'll sit down and tell you how far I've got on,
In a change so important, what hopes I have had,
Though I fear on the whole my success has been bad ;—
But I still am supported by this consolation,
That it has not been owing to my defalcation :
To the rites of the church I most strictly adhere,
And attend to my duty, though no one is near ;
Still at six every morning the church-bells are rung,
Though one wants a body, another a tongue.
The sexton is furious, and so is the clerk,
At thus having to leave their warm beds in the dark :

Upon mortification I lecture in vain ;
They hear, but they heed not ; they turn off again :
Thus to open the church they are sure is no use—
Not a soul will attend !—What an idle excuse !
But I shortly may hope an assemblage to get,
Though the clerk and myself are the only ones yet ;
And my anger against him so strongly is moved,
I can scarcely address him as “ Dearly Beloved !”

What to do with my singers I really can't tell ;
They have voices more cracked than my horrible bell !
And they keep bawling out Tate and Brady the while,
And still screech about “ concord,” in discords most vile !
But dismiss them I will, with their hautboy and fiddle.—
I have lately been placing two seats in the middle
Of the nave, on each side ;—my churchwardens sit there ;
I think this an improvement, it has a great air
Of old times ; though they terribly grumbled and growled
Thus to sit by themselves,—they should surely take cold !
Snobbs declared that whenever he sat in his box
He should fancy he looked like a well-fed stalled ox.
“ Oh yes !” cried his wife, full of venom and pith,
“ He'll be just like a stalled ox, and hatred therewith !”

For the clerk and the sexton new seats are arranged :—
Though I can't change their manners, their places are changed.
Some amendment I would not think utterly hopeless,—
So I've just been presenting them each with a surplice.
The clerk, by this wise alteration, I reckon,
As he should be in orders, may look like a deacon ;

And the sexton, though he's a delectable cub,
 I am willing to fancy may seem like the sub.—
 This morning I've made a most capital choice,
 Of six of the prettiest charity boys ;—
 These will sit round the altar arrayed in white linen ;—
 They may shortly wear red,—this is but the beginning.
 Their appearance I know you will greatly admire ;
 I shall have them taught chaunting, and thus form my choir.

Round the table the ornaments wear a new face :
 The Commandments last Thursday were fixed in their place,
 And I really do think you would like the design ;—
 I should not be vain-glorious ;—in fact they were mine.
 Said Snobbs, when I told him, “ I fancied as much !
 “ I am sure they 're your new ones,—I never saw such !
 “ We must all learn from these how to bow and to scrape ;
 “ But I can't read the letters, so queer is their shape !”

Mr. Bradshaw, last Sunday, appeared in his pew,
 And I thought he seemed struck by the change, though I knew
 No refinement belonged to the Regicide race,
 Yet he stood for a moment admiring the place.
 The next morning he called, and appeared so urbane
 That I really forgot the old Puritan stain :
 On returning his visit, I thought I would see
 How far he might prove an assistance to me ;
 But I met a rebuff ; and what could be expected
 From one who inherited blood so infected ?
 His air was exceedingly courteous at first,
 But ere long, with a most unaccountable burst

Of anger, he shortened this visit of mine ;—
 Though what could have caused it, 'tis hard to divine.
 I will give you my words, and I trust you'll conclude
 My address ne'er deserved a reception so rude.

Said I,—“ I am anxious to call your attention
 “ To a circumstance needing your kind intervention
 “ For the good of the church, and I'm sure you will see
 “ That the change a most striking improvement will be.
 “ In a matter like this you will never refuse, I——
 “ Just would mention to you the removal of Pews, I——”
 “ The removal !” he cried ; “ Well, I'm sure, my dear lad,
 “ You have by this news made me heartily glad ;
 “ We shall soon understand one another much better,
 “ And have back plain English instead of black letter.”
 Though I thought that black letter was nought in the case,
 Yet he spoke of the change with such mighty good grace,
 That I said, “ I will instantly order the stalls,
 “ And tear down those hideous old pews from the walls.
 “ I'm so pleased——” “ No, indeed !” he replied, with a start,
 “ You'll excuse me, I must take a different part ;
 “ I quite misunderstood you. What ! give up my pew,
 “ With its fire-place, and cushions, and lining all new !
 “ From such changes as these I will still keep my distance,
 “ And I must be excused lending any assistance.
 “ If you only come here to propose this *New-mania*,
 “ As the day is so fine, I'll no longer detain you—
 “ I wish you good morning—I now take my ride.”
 Now what *was* the Squire's meaning? I sat down and tried

* Spelt thus in the MS.—*Printer's Devil*.

To discover. I hope you will solve the enigma,
And attach, wheresoever it please you, the stigma.

I fear I was ruffled ;—I quitted the door,
And almost vowed never to enter it more ;
But I brought to my mind apostolic succession,
And a dignified calm of my thoughts took possession :
“ We alone are the ministers ; we hold the keys,
“ And let in, or keep out, whomsoever we please.”
As I mused in this way, I strolled down by a road,
That turned close by a cottager’s lowly abode ;
I heard a soft voice, in a silvery tone,
Reading forth from the Gospel of blessed St. John.
I crept up to the window, and peeped through the bushes ;
I acknowledge I sneaked,—and it raises my blushes
To think I should feel thus ashamed to be seen.
Now, why did I do it ?—for really ’twas mean.
But when my eyes glanced on an object within,
I paused—there I fear that I fell into sin—
A thought flashed through my brain, but I bitterly rue
it,—
“ Though women can’t minister, angels may do it !”
The delicate fingers that lifted the page,—
The sweet lips of youth speaking comfort to age,
Were by no means what I had expected to see,
Why then should I mind ? these were nothing to me.
Then I hurried away ;—but what cause for this haste ?
You ’ll allow that I might have been awkwardly placed,
As a son of the church, if I thus had been caught,
To seem not like a teacher, but more as one taught.

Of this thing I'm convinced, and I'll certainly preach,
That no self-ordained woman be suffered to teach ;
So, next morn, in my surplice arrayed with due care,
I walked into that cottage, sat down in a chair,
And desired the old woman would just let me look
At her Bible. I wished to see whether the book
Contained the Apocrypha. There it was not.
(An omission like this makes it not worth a groat.)
Perhaps it was wrong, but I could not quite say
It were wiser to put it entirely away ;
So I told her I'd take it, and give her a better,
Which should have the Apocrypha in, to a letter ;
And as to the old one she had on her shelf,
Though it *was* an incumbrance, I'd take it myself.
She says she can't come to my church : 'tis a shame !
She is only past eighty, and not very lame ;
But I'll call, and I'll read her the Lessons some day ;
It is *my* place to teach, so I'll not keep away.
Yet she never revealed—I, of course, did not ask—
The name of the lady who'd chosen this task.

How I sigh for the cloisters ! I've not half expressed
The contending emotions that trouble my breast.
I would fain do my duty ; and yet I perceive
I have harboured such feelings as cause me to grieve.
I find I'm outdone where I should take the lead :
Do send me your counsel ; I want it indeed.





LETTER III.

All Saints' Day.

TO-MORROW, dear Clement, I dine with the Squire,
Though I scarce like to do it ; it raises my ire,
That the Bradshaws should not have been swept
from the earth !

The blood of King Charles seems to darken their hearth.

I hate to partake their republican cheer :

The squire's a staunch Whig—so, of course, is Miss Leah.

I've scarce seen Rachel Bradshaw, no doubt she's the same,
With her vile puritanical regicide name !
I expect to be martyred—I'll tell you my fate,
But 'tis hard to be friends where one justly might hate.

All Souls.

Well, the dinner is over,—I'm now in my chair,
You shall hear of the Bradshaws, and what happened there.
I have little of interest,—nought to complain,
And I don't expect soon to be tempted again
To quit for their mansion my calm little cell,—
I am best when alone, and this life suits me well ;
But if called there by duty, I'll gladly obey,
There's no saying what good may be done in that way.
On the whole it was dull—I expected no more—
The Squire's a shrewd man, and he has a queer store
Of old tales, which he frequently oddly applies :
Had he been to Oxford, 'twould open his eyes ;
But so long as he keeps in his own petty sphere
He will ne'er understand my improvements ; I fear
That his bias against them too strongly is fixed—
And what prospect from blindness and prejudice mixed !
He was candid, however, and told me his mind,
Though his notions are narrow, his actions are kind.

“ You are young, my good friend,” he with courtesy said,
“ So excuse if I tell you my thoughts on this head :—
“ I've read an old story, 'tis many years back,
“ Of three brothers named Peter, Martin and Jack :

" Though their various disputes I ne'er took any part in,
 " Yet my feelings were always in favour of Martin.
 " That Jack's hand has been here, I am ready to own,
 " For his rents and his tatters are every where shewn ;—
 " But some symptoms I've witnessed just now in this place
 " Of Jack's sorry rags, stuck with Peter's gold lace.
 " I have also some fears your researches and gleaning
 " Are like Peter's, for letters, and not for the meaning ;
 " And on points where the Bible affords no decision,
 " You command by the Fathers, or doubtful tradition.
 " If you thus should proceed as you seem to begin,
 " You may have a patched coat that is empty within.
 " You would fly off from Jack ; but why rush back to Peter ?
 " The course Martin pursued would I think be far better ;
 " If like him you could soberly try to restore,
 " Your friends, be assured, would assist you much more."

I may whisper to you, that this gave a slight rub :
 But to quote from a work like the Tale of a Tub !—
 A volume notorious for utter depravity,
 Was not suited at all to my notions of gravity ;
 So I said, " You'll excuse me, but really that book
 " Is one on which I have ne'er ventured to look."

" Indeed, my good sir," he replied with a smile,
 " 'Tis the mind that's impure, if that book will defile,—
 " But enough on this head ; you perhaps may conclude
 " I inherit bad taste with my puritan blood,
 " And you may not be readily led to believe
 " That my forefathers' actions have caused me to grieve :

"Though their mischiefs I'd willingly seek to repair,
 "I would ne'er give the church a theatrical air,
 "Nor would I stick on all those trappings at random,
 "For they look like feathers, flowers and paint on my grandam.
 "But such alterations and changes I'd make
 "As were fittest for order and decency's sake ;
 "And when such is your object, appeal when you list,
 "If it lies in my power, I'll gladly assist."

This is terribly lukewarm ; but help it I can't,
 I must bear with it all, though I feel I shall want
 Some congenial spirit, for here there is none,—
 Alone, unsupported, my course I must run.

Mr. Bradshaw's two daughters I'd almost forgot,—
 Miss Leah, who's the eldest, is certainly not
 Either handsome or plain ; she seemed somewhat inclined
 To agree in those changes I have in my mind :
 She praised my Commandments, and said they were pretty—
 Comes to church upon Saints-days, and thinks it a pity
 That all old regulations are not put in force,
 And begged on such topics as these I'd discourse.
 She put on a long face when she spoke of King Charles,
 And enquired the date of the bishops of Arles :
 Then requested to know if I kindly would pardon
 Her desire that I'd just take a turn in the garden,
 To decide on some flowers she was anxious to rear,
 As she hoped to have some at all times of the year,
 To form chaplets of purple, or crimson and white,
 To be placed on the altar ; 'twas such a delight

Thus to raise them—"Pray mention the plants most correct
"For martyr or virgin; do only select."

She appears well disposed, but I really can't tell—

Perhaps, in a short time, she'll do pretty well.

The second, Miss Rachel, I cannot tell why—

When I saw her, I felt very awkward and shy :

I believe I had told you,—I'm not very sure—

That I once saw a lady who read to a poor

Old woman, I have reason to think her the same,—

But that such act the teacher, is really a shame !

For her manner's excessively forward and pert ;

She's a shrew, I am certain, as well as a flirt.

Now there is no accounting for tastes, but I rather

Suspect she's egregiously spoiled by her father :

Whatever he does, she holds perfectly right,

And he thinks her a beauty,—she's really a fright !

At least, so I find on a nearer inspection,

For what, after all, are fine eyes and complexion ?

And to her I could scarcely find patience to speak,

For she never will come to my church in the week.

When I hinted as much, she replied,—“I don't know

“What your red and blue characters teach us to do ;

“But from those two plain Tables that came down from heaven

“I had always been taught to keep one day in seven.”

The vile regicide blood she is proud to inherit,

Instead of a scandal, she deems it a merit !

There's a picture of Cromwell stuck up in the hall,

With his hideous seamed face, warts, and pimples and all :

She pointed it out with impertinent glee,

And said, as she spitefully shewed it to me,

“I’ve no doubt, to your notions it seems very droll,
“But I’m fond of that portrait of ugly old Noll.”

It is mournful to think I am destined to hear
Conversation like this ;—’tis my duty to bear,—
And though small is my hope with so hardened a heart,
Yet to leave it in darkness should not be my part ;
So I’ll strive, though most strongly against inclination,
To bring down that proud spirit, and teach humiliation.
I must do this by precept, as well as example,
Of my plans, in my next, I will give you a sample.





LETTER IV.

Holy Innocents' Day.

WHEN last I addressed you, I said I designed
To attempt reformations in manners :—you'll find
What a task I have thus set before me to do,
Though I own, to achieve it, my hopes are but few ;
But at least such a practice of patience, to me,
Is not without benefit :—doubtless you see
How distasteful to deal with a prejudiced mind
Which is badly disposed, and to mischief inclined ;
'Tis a duty, however, befitting my station,
And appointed to me for a mortification.

In my progress, I own I have somewhat to cheer
In the change I already have wrought in Miss Leah ;

But the victory is small when so easily won,
And her way she will find, if I leave her alone ;—
If I take up her books which are laid on the table,
I at least shall see Hooker or Laud on the label :
The stools for the altar she asks to embroider
With cross keys in the centre, and lambs for a border ;
And said she, “ It would make me so happy, now will you
“ Let me work you three cushions to fit your sedillia.”
From advances like these I had best turn away,
Lest her speeches, too soothing, should lead me astray :
I’m afraid for myself when I think of Miss Leah ;
But with Rachel, her sister, I’ve nothing to fear,
For I boldly declare that whoever has seen us
Would immediately find there’s no love lost between us.
Now by love, I mean nothing but brother’s affection,
So pray don’t give your thoughts any other direction :—
And believe me, in this case, I only mistrust
Myself, lest I run into hate and disgust.
I have looked at her books, and among her theology
I saw Baxter’s Saints’ Rest, nay e’en Barclay’s Apology.
Though I offered to lend, disregarding the peril
That their bindings might run, St. Augustine, or Cyril,
She not only refused them, but begged I would take
A horrid old tract called “ A Switch for the Snake,”
“ Three pen’orth of eye-salve” or “ George Fox’s Battledoor,”¹¹
And other vile volumes, whose titles she rattled o’er.
It was lucky for me she rejected my books,
She’d have tossed them like shuttlecocks,—really she looks
As if scorn and defiance shot forth in each feature,
Though some call her the picture of mirth and good-nature ;

And she is so wickedly obstinate, too,—
 She seems always resolved in her mind not to do
 Any thing that I wish ; and I'm angry indeed,
 When I stand at the altar reciting the Creed,
 For whether I threaten, exhort or request,
 Still this staunch little Puritan turns to the west.
 One day when I hinted this matter in private
 What excuse should you think did the lady arrive at?—
 "Why really," she said, "'tis a matter of conscience :
 "Can you tell, if among all the Fathers, one mentions
 "The right course to pursue in this difficult case ?
 "'Tis a cause of regret,—but you know, in this place
 "That the church, though 'tis ancient, it must be confessed,
 "Has been built East-North-East, and not due East and
 West.
 "You must own 'tis a matter of question at least
 "Or to turn to the altar, or turn to the East :
 "And since one or the other is sure to be wrong,
 "Pray mention the point to which right can belong."
 I replied, "Why the business is soon brought to light,
 "When the one or the other is sure to be right,—
 "And as I am appointed your spiritual guide,
 "While you do as I bid, you may safely abide :
 "Just reflect for a moment,—you 'll easily see
 "You should settle the matter by looking at me."
 But she answered, "My ways you should ne'er see at all,
 "For you ought to turn round with your face to the wall ;
 "So, pray, lead by example, as well as by preaching,
 "For your actions are noted far more than your teaching."

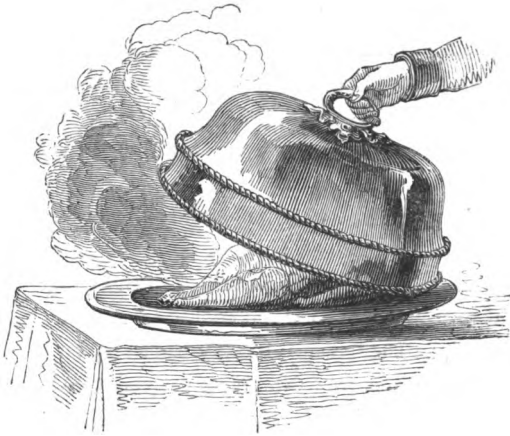
As my sermons on fasting had all been in vain,
 I determined to try if example might gain
 More attention from her ; for perhaps in this way
 She might seem more disposed to regard what I say :
 So last Friday, at tea time, I went to the hall,—
 The motive will justify, ne'er would I call
 On that day with an idle pretext or excuse :
 In this case it was painful, but might be of use.
 Miss Leah in due order sat making the tea,
 And a cup she most graciously handed to me :—
 In a sad fit of absence I strangely forgot
 To request that no sugar should fall to my lot :
 As you know that I make it a rule to abstain,
 In my fasts, from that luxury useless and vain ;
 (Though in fact she had made it so nauseously sweet,
 That to me it was more of a dose than a treat !)
 Yet I thought it was right to express just so much ;
 So I said,—“ I have made up my mind not to touch
 “ That ingredient—” “ Oh dear !” she exclaimed, “ so like
 “ So consistent, so kind, with compassion to view [you—
 “ The sufferings of all those dear negroes, the diggers
 “ In our West India isles !” “ What, the horrible niggers ?”
 I retorted in haste,—for I felt quite afraid
 They should think I had ever opposed the slave-trade :
 “ I hold it a duty to keep in my mind
 “ An habitual aversion to them ; for I find
 “ Dissent, cant, and whiggery ranged on their side ;
 “ Their grinning black faces I cannot abide !
 “ Their stupidity, forwardness, want of propriety,
 “ Are like an incarnate Anti-Slavery Society !”¹²

“ I am sorry for *you*,” rejoined Rachel, so calm,
 Though ’twas meant for a nettle, it seemed like a balm.
 “ My father supported their emancipation ;—
 “ I am thankful that stain has been wiped from the nation.”

Before Rachel was placed a fresh loaf and the butter.
 I once recollect reading of Charlotte and Werter
 In the days of my folly ;—but never mind now,
 The thought crossed my remembrance, I scarcely know how.
 “ Bread and butter,” she said ;—“ shall I cut you a slice ?
 “ It this moment was churned,—’tis remarkably nice !”
 “ I don’t take any butter,—’tis Friday,” I said ;—
 “ But that is no penance, so you cut the bread.”
 Now how came I to think of so stupid a speech ?
 She ’s so wily I fear that I never can teach
 Her ;—you know I dislike her ;—I wonder
 Why I always contrive to fall into some blunder
 Whenever I see her ; ’tis only her art ;
 And to me it is clear she has war in her heart ;
 ’Tis her words that beguile me ; ’tis easy to see
 That they were far softer than butter to me.—
 Some pretend that her figure is graceful and airy,
 Yet her language bespeaks her more fit for the dairy ;
 And I smile as I find how my memory lingers
 On those rosy—I’ll rather say, dairy-maid’s fingers.

Farewell, my dear Clement, my hopes are but small
 That I shall effect any good at the Hall.





LETTER V.

King Charles I. Martyr.

SAM sorry, my friend, that I have to impart
Much that deeply concerns me, and goes to my heart.
You shall hear all my griefs, for I own my weak nature
To you, my superior, my guide, and my teacher.
Like St. Antony, I am beset with temptation ;
I know I'm unworthy my calling and station :
I'm ashamed to relate, that on this sacred day
From my high and sad feelings I soon went astray.—
In the morning I read the church service, 'tis true ;
But how little I afterwards kept it in view !
For it was my misfortune, on quitting my place,
To behold Rachel's sly hypocritical face ;

And she told me—I'm sure 'twas to lead to a scrape—
 They'd been dressing old Oliver up in black crape ;
 She declared it was wholly her sister's idea,
 Adding, " Pray, come and see, 'twill so gratify Leah."

As I fancied this looked something like an improvement,
 I resolved, to encourage, I'd just make the movement ;
 It could do me no harm if I walked to the Hall,
 It was but for a moment, and should be no call.
 I declared, as I entered, " I really can't stay !
 "Though your picture wears crape, yet your face looks so gay
 "That I fear you but lightly mourn over the past
 "On this day of extreme humiliation and fast."
 At this, Rachel, whose conscience appeared somewhat
 pricked,
 Enquired why it was kept so remarkably strict ;
 " 'Tis a fast," I replied, " for the sins of the nation,
 "For the church's bereavement, and great tribulation."
 " Indeed !—well I thought it had been for the King,—
 "But now I perceive 'tis a different thing.
 "Then pray let's have a fast to be called Diocletian,
 "And also for Nero, as well as Domitian ;
 "Since you tell us so much of the Primitive Church,
 "Why should these persecutors be left in the lurch ?"¹³
 Though her meaning to me did not seem very plain,
 I supposed she alluded to Cromwell again ;
 So I answered, " The Church, from the earliest times,
 "Has remembered, with fasting, oppression and crimes ;
 "And the horrible deeds that usurper had wrought—
 "The destruction he planned, and the evils he brought—

“ May well lead her sons to recall her sad loss,
 “ Till the Second Charles came, bearing homeward the
 cross.”¹⁴

“ *The cross!*” Rachel exclaimed, “ I ne’er heard that *he bore it*,
 “ Though he may claim *your* reverence, he sought to restore it
 “ In its bodily shape ; that was doubtless your thought.”
 To a speech such as this I was bound to retort ;
 So I cried, “ You must grant the blest martyr’s descendants
 “ Were better by far than those vile Independents ;
 “ They perhaps had their failings, but what can you fish up
 “ Like murdering their king, as they’d done their arch-
 bishop ?”

Rachel said, “ You must own that the royal prerogative,
 “ When too strongly ’tis urged, must be very provocative.
 “ For extension of power is the Parliament blamed ?
 “ But ’twas not till their monarch that privilege claimed.
 “ In excuse of their conduct, what more need I bring
 “ Than example thus set by so faultless a king ?
 “ And on very good ground you have probably reckoned,
 “ To acquit of *high treason* your dear Charles the Second,
 “ As *self-condemnation*, or *self-accusation*
 “ I’m afraid never entered in his contemplation ;
 “ Though a crime somewhat like it perhaps may be shewn
 “ In his murdering those men who supported his throne ;
 “ Then why should you make this disturbance and bustle
 “ About Laud, and pass over Vane, Sidney and Russell,
 “ Because they were whigs, was it right to despatch all ?
 “ But pray spare my namesake, my saint, Lady Rachel,¹⁵
 “ She sat undismayed mid that terrible scene,
 “ So tender, courageous, devoted, serene !”

I'm ashamed to record that I really so silly am,
 I that moment half wished myself into Lord William :
 But the fit soon passed off, I felt cool as I said
 I was grieved so much blood had been frequently shed,—
 “ A less heavy infliction I doubtless prefer :
 “ (But what would have been banishment saving from her)
 “ I mean that—hem—banishment, fine, confiscation,
 “ As inflictions, depend on the rank and the station
 “ Of the parties concerned—hem—I just would remark
 “ With regard to that plot, though we're much in the dark,
 “ Yet it seems that some traitorous mischief was hovering
 “ At that time over Charles, their legitimate sovereign.”
 “ And pray what constitutes a legitimate prince ?”
 Cried Rachel: I answered, resolved not to mince
 The matter, “ The monarch, to whom through long line
 “ The crown has descended,—his right is divine.”
 “ Indeed !” exclaimed Rachel ; “ that 's your definition :
 “ I don't grant divine right, since I own the permission ;
 “ And as much believe Cromwell permitted to reign,
 “ As all the joint kings of France, England, and Spain.”
 “ But the powers that be are divinely ordained,
 “ And this both by Scripture and Church is maintained ;
 “ Then what *have* you to say in reply to St. Paul ?”
 “ Why, I say,” she rejoined, “ it is no proof at all ;
 “ For the purple was seized at that period by Nero,
 “ Which, I fear, makes your argument tumble to zero.
 “ Of sedition and strife I am not a defender,
 “ The things that are Cæsar's to Cæsar I'd render ;
 “ But your grand right divine to my notions in short is
 “ To render to Cæsar the things that are not his.

“ But, granting your point,—now, if I do not scan ill,
“ In a land which lies West of the Irish Channel,
“ We have acted our part like atrocious usurpers,
“ And for ages been nothing but lawless extirpers ;
“ For their monarch, by your true legitimate plan,
“ Might be probably crowned by the name of King Dan.
“ Though I cannot feel bound to your sort of allegiance,
“ At the same time I ’m willing to grant the expedience
“ That the line of succession be duly maintained,
“ And my bias in favour of this is unfeigned.
“ To the monarch appointed I ’ll be a true woman ;
“ If not a divine right, I bow to the human.
“ And I hope that I thus have a resting-place found,
“ Where as friends we may meet on allowed neutral ground ;
“ In our martyrs we ’re not altogether agreed,
“ But may each have our saints, though we own the same creed.”
I foolishly said, as I smiled, “ I can see
“ That you soon will be making a martyr of me !”
“ Yes !” she cried, “ I am thinking, from what you have said,
“ You perhaps are in danger of losing your head.”
I whispered, “ I fear for a tenderer part,—
“ Lest you think me a traitor, and take out my heart.”
How stupid and wrong !—but so low was my tone,
That I trust I was heard by no ears but my own.
She went on—“ I ’ve been wicked to raise you to laughter
“ On this strictest of fast-days, your own Royal Martyr ;
“ But I hope you ’ll excuse all this nonsense and clatter,
“ I ’m like Beatrice, born to speak mirth, and not matter.”
’Twas just at this moment, that, wholly unsought,
The rule of St. Benedict came to my thought,—

How, freed from temptation by taking those vows,
Regulations like his I would gladly espouse.
How disgraceful my fast, and how silly was I !
“ I really must go,” I exclaimed ; “ so, good bye.”
“ Oh !” said Rachel, “ Papa bid me ask you to dine ;
“ I am sure he ’ll allow for your not taking wine ;
“ We have got no calf’s head for our dinner to-day,
“ But we have some stale bread, so you ’d far better stay.”
I rushed out, and I quitted the mansion at last ;
But I scented the goose in the hall as I passed,
’Twas my greediness then, made me long to return :
Should abstaining from dinner thus cause me to mourn ?
My motives to-day have been shockingly low,
As I fear all these petty recitals will show.
I’ve sent a sad list of my venial transgressions ;
But to you I have promised to make my confessions.





LETTER VI.

St. Valentine's Day.

S MUST own it, dear Clement; I know I'd your warning;
But alas! 'tis too late.—'Twas a beautiful morning,
And, allured by the sight, I could deem it no sin
To go forth and behold the sweet day ushered in;
A vapour dispersing, revealed the fair scene,
While the meadows were fresh with their tenderest green;
The late boisterous winds had been hushed from the North,
And the snow-drops' white blossoms peeped timidly forth;
The bright-coloured catkins which waved in the breeze
Atoned for the absence of leaves on the trees;
The streams leaped for joy, and the birds on the wing
Gave to sullen old Winter the semblance of Spring:
It appeared as if Nature had lifted her voice
To bid all her children be glad and rejoice

So benign was the radiance, so hallowed the mirth,
That it looked like the union of heaven and earth.

Afar off I saw Rachel,—what harm in my meeting
On a morning like this, just to give her a greeting ?
There was so much around that might blamelessly please ;
We must surely agree amid objects like these.
The sense of good will was produced by the weather ;
And why, if we met, should we not walk together ?
Soon after I joined her, I felt it so warm,
That I hastily threw my cloak off to my arm.

“ I am thinking,” she cried, “ of the fables of Æsop ;
“ Though I do not suppose that you ever take these up ;
“ But just at this moment you brought to my mind
“ The tale of the Traveller, the Sun, and the Wind ;
“ Now although I can recollect learning this fable
“ At a time when I stood just so high as the table ;
“ Though it must have been read in all climes, it appears,
“ And written for more than these two thousand years ;
“ Yet how little the world can have profited by it !
“ For when has it yet understood to apply it ?”

“ Pray what is your meaning ? I ’m anxious to know ;
“ I gladly would hear, if you kindly will show.”

“ Why,” said she, “ you have just displayed true non-
resistance :
“ ’Twas the sun, not the wind, that afforded assistance ;
“ The tempestuous blasts may tear down the strong oak,
“ But would they make you willing to give up your cloak ?

“ Thus, amid persecution and every disaster,
“ We cling to each feeling and prejudice faster.
“ Just consider the genial effect of the sun,
“ And you soon will perceive how much more he has done.
“ Now, to tell you the truth, 'tis seen plainly enough,
“ With our old-fashion'd ways you have been somewhat rough ;
“ You have acted your part like a rude agitator,
“ And forgotten that Time is the great innovator :
“ With regard to this parish, the change you 'd work in it,
“ Believe me, is not to be done in a minute ;
“ And our galleries and whitewash will not be displaced,
“ Because you so loudly denounce our bad taste ;
“ On the duty of fasting your word may be passed,—
“ It may only induce us to make our doors fast ;
“ You may preach on this strict self-denial, 'tis true,
“ Should you call, we may practise denial to you ;
“ And if on these points you so strongly will enter,
“ I fear you 'll raise many a sturdy Dissenter.”

I cried out, “ I 've some notion of quitting my home,
“ And, to quiet my conscience, of going to Rome ;
“ My motives misconstrued and misunderstood,
“ I despair that I ever shall work any good.”
“ Oh no !” she exclaimed, “ you don't mean what you say !
“ So soon are you talking of going away ?
“ Pray, don't tell me of Rome, of *despair*, and the Pope ;
“ You had far better speak of some point called *Good Hope*.”

These words seemed a riddle ; whate'er their intent,
I answered, “ If I for a moment had lent

“ Be assured that no Pope shall induce me to go ;
“ A thought to this scheme, since you say the word ‘ No !’
“ And I ’ll alter a point with regard to confession,
“ For to you I will own what has taken possession
“ Of my fancies, my feelings, my thoughts, and my heart,
“ Which before, to myself, I ne’er dared to impart.”
And she graciously smiled, as she heard me confess
A secret—the rest I must leave you to guess,





LETTER VII.

Æbe of St. Benedict.

DEAR Clem, since I've made this unfortunate stumble,
I am sure you'll forgive me a bit of a grumble.—
I can't think what made me act so like a goose,
As to run my head foolishly into that noose ;
It is all very fine when it's only ideal,
But a horrible thing when one comes to the real ;
Though the sentence is passed,—it needs some resolution
To contemplate with calmness one's fixed execution ;
For I'm almost afraid, when the matter is ended,
Though I should not be hanged, I may yet be suspended.
Then the way is so shockingly vulgar and stupid
In which all my neighbours will hint about Cupid ;

And as to my house, it is quite disarranged,
 My books tossed about, and their places all changed ;
 I hate my new cumbersome tables and chairs,
 I've a strong inclination to kick them down stairs ;
 And I've not the least atom of taste, I am certain,
 For deciding the patterns of carpet or curtain ;
 My best cassock is spoiled,—all bedaubed with new paint,—
 The mere smell is enough to make any one faint ;
 Then again, all those gaudy detestable papers
 Have been adding their share to my fit of the vapours.—
 I assure you, with fretting, I've grown so much thinner,
 That, although it is Lent, I can't go without dinner ;
 But what more than all makes me angry and sad—pshaw !
 I take up the arms and the surname of—BRADSHAW !
 At the same time, in justice I own, that the Squire
 Through this painful affair has expressed his desire
 That all shall be done on a liberal scale,
 And it is not his fault if my spirits should fail ;
 But he warned me, “ Though Rachel may seem to obey,
 “ Yet, somehow or other, she 'll have her own way ;
 “ At least, I've invariably found this the case ;
 “ And she carries it through with such politic grace,
 “ That in gaining her point, you believe it your own ;
 “ How she does it, no matter,—perhaps you 'll be shown.”

And now that my weathercock fancies I've twirled,
 I declare I would not give her up for the world.



Notes.

NOTE 1.—page 5.

The day recorded in our Church Calendar as the Invention of the Cross, is a feast commemorative of the discovery of the true cross by St. Helena, the mother of the Emperor Constantine; she having, by means of torture, compelled some Jews to acknowledge where they had concealed it.

NOTE 2.—page 7.

In many parts of the kingdom similar traces of Puritan zeal may be seen in the remains of the painted screens. The accompanying cut is done from one of these as it now stands.

NOTE 3.—page 7.

Abatements are marks of degradation in coats of arms, gussets and gores being the terms made use of to express them,—words now more in use among sempstresses than heralds.

NOTE 4.—page 8.

Something similar to this is introduced into one of the windows of York Minster.

NOTE 5.—page 8.

Vide "Glossary of Architecture," art. "Font," and half the parish churches in the kingdom.

NOTE 6.—page 8.

This abomination exists in many churches, in some of which the beautifully groined roof has been bored through, to admit of the passage of the bell-ropes, in order to save the bell-ringers the trouble of ascending into the tower; and, in consequence, these need stand in the middle of the church, to the no small annoyance of the congregation.

NOTE 7.—page 8.

According to a statute of Edward VI. every minister saying the “public prayers shall wear a decent and comely surplice, to be provided at the charge of the parish,”—a matter not always attended to.

NOTE 8.—page 9.

An imaginary descendant of Judge Bradshaw.

NOTE 9.—page 9.

Faldstool, or litany-stool, a small desk to be seen in some cathedrals, placed in the middle of the choir, from which the Litany is read.

NOTE 10.—page 9.

Sedillia, stone seats, which may be seen in the south wall of the chancel of many cathedrals and churches, usually three in number, and intended for the use of the priest, deacon, and sub-deacon, during part of the service of high mass.

NOTE 11.—page 23.

Copies of old Puritan and Quaker tracts, bearing these names, are still in existence.

NOTE 12.—page 25.

These sentiments are abridged and moderated from Froude's *Remains*, from the publication of which it appears that Mr. Oriel has derived many valuable hints.

NOTE 13.—page 28.

Miss Bradshaw is supposed here to have assumed the language of a member of the Scotch Kirk.

NOTE 14.—page 29.

“When proudly streamed o'er Ocean's plains
Our own returning cross.”

Vide Christian Year, 14th Edition, Restoration of Charles II.

NOTE 15.—page 29.

“Like that sweet Saint who sate by Russel's side
Under the Judgment Seat.”

Rogers's Human Life.

