

# A FUNERAL ORATION,

PREACHED BY THE

REV. ARCHDEACON O'KEEFFE,

ON

## POPE PIUS VII.,

In the Cathedral, Cork,

IN THE YEAR 1825,

WITH A BRIEF

MEMOIR OF THE PREACHER,

BY THE REV. DEAN MURPHY.

PUBLISHED FOR THE BENEFIT OF

### MISS NANO NAGLE'S ASYLUM

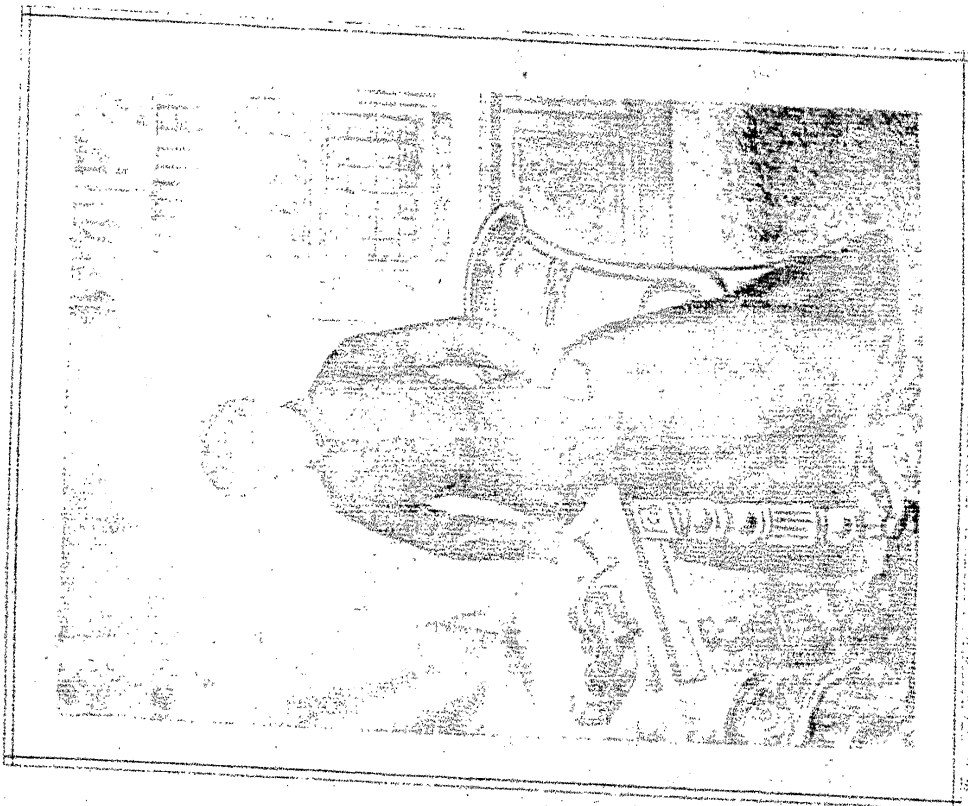
FOR AGED AND DESTITUTE WOMEN.

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*The Very Rev. & Archdeacon O'Keefe*

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## FUNERAL ORATION ON PIUS VII.

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"He shall shew forth the discipline he hath learned and shall glory in the Law of the Covenant of the Lord. The memory of him shall not depart away and his name shall be in request from generation to generation. Nations shall declare his wisdom and the Church shall show forth his praise."—*Eccles. c. 39, v. 11, 13, 14.*

SUCH is the consolation addressed by Religion to those that mourn over departed worth and greatness. It comes upon the mind to-day with peculiar interest and energy, amidst these emblems which death has employed to proclaim his triumph, and to enforce the humiliating conviction of our nothingness. Without its inspiring voice sorrow would be aggravated by the reflection that of all we loved, or cherished, or venerated here, there remained but the sad remembrance of the worth that was prized, and that barren representation where sorrow would look in vain for its object, and where the honoured remains of what we deplore are wanting to our homage. Her light has not only pierced the depths and scattered the darkness of the grave, revealing far beyond it that purer and loftier state of being where rest the spirits of the just; but it has concentrated its glories on earth, and formed

for the brow of virtue a crown, glorious and enduring. Those high and heart-stirring associations that throng upon the memory, when we hear of those who nobly trod the high path of honor and religion, at the risk of life and at the expense of every earthly enjoyment—of men girded with power only for the happiness of others, whose triumphs are those of humanity, the elements of whose fame are not cemented with human blood, not loaded with the orphan's sorrow or cursed by the widow's lamentation. Theirs is the record that survives the lapse of ages, the ravages of barbarism, the revolutions of empires, aye, and the destruction of this great and glorious frame of nature itself; whilst the achievement of heroes, the splendour, the pomp, and the pride of kings and conquerors shrink into some small measure of earth and are forgotten. But when the work of blood and the scenes of destruction though blazoned on the scutcheon or inscribed on perishing marble to be the wonder of the weak and the execration of the wise, the man whose grandeur is from within, and from God, lives in the memory of mankind whose interests he upheld and whose happiness he promoted. "His name shall be in request from generation to generation. Nations shall declare his wisdom and the Church shall show forth his praise."

The immortality promised by the spirit to the

name of the just, springs from his connection with God's everlasting counsels in promoting the happiness of mankind, by the establishment of peace and truth and religion upon earth. To this great end, alone worthy of the Almighty Parent, all the interference of His providence is uniformly directed. As the mighty superintendent of this great plan, the eyes of the Lord are fixed upon all the devices of men and the movements of society, approving their counsels or bringing them to nought, exalting or depressing according as they promote or contradict the final and magnificent results of His counsels. This will be found to be the solution of the great problem of human revolutions and of the extraordinary catastrophes, whether of individuals or nations, antecedent to the establishment of the Gospel; and all the force of analogy, and all the facts of history, and all the destinies of nations, demonstrate the justice of its application to the subsequent history of mankind. To this we trace the strange revolutions that occurred in the different periods of time—the use, the progress, and the decay of those ancient and mighty dynasties that overshadowed this earth in remotest antiquity, whose names would scarcely be known to-day were they not registered in the sacred records of God's eternal counsels, and whose unwieldy grandeur and extensive domination after being ren-

dered subservient to the establishment of these same counsels were rolled down the steep of time and plunged in that devouring gulph whose silent waves, gloomy and fathomless, now roll over the perishing wreck of their histories.

In these our days, that same unseen Providence is employing the resources of boundless wisdom in shaping all events, and directing all characters, to its own great and final purpose, whilst it appears to the undiscerning mind to be regardless of human affairs, whilst the vast and varied scene of human events seems to us tending one definite object, whilst the revolutions of states, and the wreck of empires, and the fate of individuals seem to originate in the passions of one or the frenzy of many; all these multiplied agitations of life, even the blood-stained triumphs of conquest itself and all the fiercer conflicts of worldly and ferocious passions are bent by the overruling power of God to the promotion of His own eternal purposes.

“The counsel of God alone remaineth for ever.”  
 Whatever approaches it shines in its brightness; whatever promotes it partakes of its grandeur, its immensity and its elevation. It is stamped with the impress of eternity, the character of God himself, who liveth and reigneth for ever. This is the source of that glory that crowns the memory of the departed saint whose death is felt and

mourned to-day throughout the Christian world; and his high association with the designs of God is his title to that immortality, which virtue alone deserves and God only can give. To have been selected from all flesh to judge the people of God, and rule the household of faith, when all the weapons of destruction were wielded by the mighty against it, to have been placed at the helm of the bark amid the darkness and the storm, and amid the ravings of the tempest and the thick darkness of the night, to hear, with Peter's faith, the unearthly voice and see the Godlike form of Him that trod upon the troubled waves to protect and to encourage amid the wreck of all beside, to have bound himself, like Peter, in his youth, and to have gone whither it pleased him, and like his predecessor in office and in suffering, to feel the rude hand of another bind him, when years, and care, and infirmity had silvered his head and bowed his wasting frame, to be dragged in these bonds before the rulers of this world, for justice sake, and then to exhibit earth's sublimest spectacle, the good man contending with the earth-born brutal might, and amid the triumph of the bad and the prostration of the good, to stand up fearless, though alone, and plead for right and justice, for humanity and for God, to brave the tempest of a tyrant's rage and to brighten the gloom of captivity, until the bars of his prison-

house were broken and forged into fetters for the tyrant that bound him, to have loved and restored the beauty of the House of God and the place where His glory dwelleth, to stand upon the watch-tower by day and by night for the safety of the Church of God, to have enlarged the place of her tent, to have lengthened her cords and strengthened her stakes, to have sent the Apostle to his labour and the martyr to his crown, to have shod the feet and anointed the head of him that flies with an angel's wing to carry the tidings of salvation and the name of Christ to lands that are far away and to the islands of the sea that have long expected the brightness of their vision, and last and best of all, because their consummation and the crown, to have gloriously persevered to the end, and to have died, not on the cross of Peter but in his spirit, a penitent in death, after all his labour and all his love. These are his claims to that veneration which his name excites amongst the faithful. "The memory of him shall not depart away, and his name shall be in request from generation to generation. Nations shall declare his wisdom and the Church shall show forth his praise."

The history of every period is an exemplification of the Providence which guides and directs the Church of God according to the promise of her founder, and never was that overruling care more

powerfully evinced than in this generation. At the termination of the last, and the commencement of this century, Europe presented an aspect of desperate ferocity, and more desperate opinions and theories than ever disgraced mankind at any former period. Its mind and spirit were shrouded by a dark and blasphemous scepticism and by a restless desire for changes, systems, and experiments on society and its institutions, both civil and religious. It was proclaimed by a few master spirits that this was the age of inquiry and superior illumination, and the result was, that all that was fixed or true in legislation, morals, or religion, was subjected to the examination of minds without the capacity to investigate the evidences of truth, and without virtue enough to appreciate the institutions which the wisdom of God or the experience of man had established for the repose and happiness of mankind. Religion, the glorious work of God, was decreed as the artifice of man, the engine of oppression, the bondage of the free-born spirit. All the infirmities incidental to its possessors—all the crimes of all the hypocrites that ever wore its garb without inhaling its spirit were raked together with laborious industry, and flung by impiety and corruption at the altar of the living God. The monuments of the Jewish antiquity, on which revelation is established were assailed in the hope that if once

shaken the whole edifice of religion would fall to the earth. Its facts were declared to be false, absurd, and ridiculous, its characters fictitious—its legislation incoherent, arbitrary and ferocious—its morality without principle or basis, and its whole tendency gross, exclusive, uncultivated and unphilosophical. Every department of science was scrutinized to accredit these assertions. External nature was pressed against God into the service of a lying philosophy—the bowels of the earth were ransacked, the bosom of the volcano explored, the phenomena of the heavens belied, and even the half obliterated inscriptions on Egyptian walls construed to the support of impiety. The specious and enlightened infidelity that disgraced some of the brightest ornaments of English literature, and which the people could neither reach nor understand, was transferred to a light-minded people, and there prepared for the taste, and adapted to the capacities of all orders of intelligence throughout Europe. These productions of impiety were hourly discharged upon the public mind from the presses of France, Germany and Holland, misrepresenting truth, distorting facts, blinding the judgment by captious sophistry and licentious ridicule, until every fixed principle of truth, and every idea of duty and all respect for authority, whether parental, social, or religious, were effaced from the

minds of the growing generation. I shall not attempt to crowd into the same perspective the various and disjointed scenes of anarchy and horror and bloodshed that have been acted before the face of Europe and the world—the violent convulsions that tore up the foundations of law and religion in some countries, and whose sound shook the whole frame of society in others—the rising up of nations against each other—war scattering its lightnings and rolling its red deluge from one end of the earth to the other—terrible catastrophes of nations and individuals—men exalted to-day, falling to-morrow and drawing the nations after them to the brink of destruction—institutions overthrown, the course of events impeded—men's minds unsettled and God almost forgotten. Amid this terrible breaking up of society the Church of God was left without its earthly ruler by the death of Pius the Sixth. Robbed of his temporal power, impeded in the exercise of his spiritual jurisdiction, insulted, abused and ill-treated, he sunk under the pressure of his sufferings and died in prison, one of the countless victims to the mild and tolerant spirit of the new and enlightened philosophy. The persecution and dispersion of all orders of the priesthood in Italy did not afford much hope that he would be speedily followed by a successor. The French Directory proclaimed to the world that they

had annihilated the Papal authority, both temporal and spiritual; and religious fanaticism hailed with no ordinary congratulations the widest accomplishment of the Apocalypse, the destruction of Antichrist and the commencement of the millenium. But long before modern philosophy held up its glimmering taper to the sun or religious extravagance divided Christianity, it was written "the weapon that is formed against thee shall not prosper," and accordingly it was dashed to pieces against the Rock of Ages. The hordes of revolutionary France were swept from the face of Italy by a victorious army, and an opportunity was afforded for holding a conclave at Venice three months after the death of Pius the Sixth. On the 14th of March, 1800, Gregory Barnabas Chiaramonte was declared Supreme Pastor of the Fold of Jesus Christ, and the 251st from Peter, whose chair he was to fill and whose authority he was to exercise.

He was born at Cesena in the Roman States on the 14th of August, 1742, and received from God one of his first and most effectual graces, a sainted mother. He devoted himself, like Samuel, from his youth, to the service of the Altar, and after being distinguished, even amongst the most eminent, for his learning, his sanctity, and apostolic zeal, he was promoted successively to the sees of

Imola and Tivoli, and subsequently to the dignity of Cardinal by Pius the 6th. The wisdom that guided his conduct in the administration of his diocese, the rare combination of unalterable meekness with the most unbending firmness, the simplicity and suavity of his manners, exalted by that severity of thought and persevering vigour in conduct which marked and made his country's character in the proudest day of her glory, were the qualities required for the government of the Church at that period, and therefore did Providence exalt him to the Chair of Peter.

In providing for the necessities of the universal Church, France, once the most distinguished, and then the most distracted and desolate portion of Christ's inheritance, attracted his attention. Here he had to contend not only with the opposition and hatred of impiety which disputed every inch, but even with an alarming schism which threatened the integrity of faith and of discipline. The wisdom that governed the Church in the extinction of the great schism which commenced after the death of Gregory the 11th, in 1378, afforded him its light. He demanded from the pastors of the Church of France, whether ancient or constitutional, that submission and sacrifice which the Council of Pisa required of the contending rivals, Gregory the 12th and Benedict the 13th; and subsequently des-

stituted those pastors who, abounding in their sense and disregarding the spirit of the times, and the strange and perilous circumstances of the Church, refused to sacrifice themselves for the preservation of that religion to which they owed their rights and their dignities.

On this occasion he was brought into contact with one of those strange combinations of character formed in the stormy atmosphere of the French revolution—one of those bold and gigantic minds, not made for treading the ordinary paths of men, and always destined to be either the blessing or the curse of the human race—the late ruler of France. In him all that was stern, sanguinary, or godless in the revolution that engendered him, started into one living and dreadful impersonation, combining the reckless, daring impiety of a people, with the decision, the energy, and the rapidity that belongs to one fiercer and determined spirit. Nursed among visions of rebel grandeur, his early life was a wild and fiery dream of strife and blood, and desperate hazard, and fierce conflict for pre-eminence and mastery, until at last he sprang into the seat of power amid the divisions and weakness of contending factions, substituting the milder despotism of one for the remorseless tyranny of many; and holding out to France the prospect of internal repose to encourage her in the invasion of

the peace of Europe. He restored religion to conciliate some; he degraded its ministers to gratify others; he spared the chair of Peter to make it the footstool of his throne, and he preserved its temporalities to plunder them at his leisure. Such at length appeared to be his policy, when, after repeated violations of the faith of treaties, and after resorting to artifices that bespoke some inherent meanness of character, he seized on the temporalities of the Holy See, and justified the usurpation by the refusal of the Pontiff to join the general confederation of the continental powers against England, and to close the only ports that were open to her commerce or her navy in the Mediterranean. In vain did the Holy Father represent his government as one of peace, that his temporal possessions were given to ensure his independence in the exercise of Christianity, that his states, so far from being involved in wars, should be as so many cities of refuge from the calamities that followed that scourge of Heaven, and, above all, that he had not received the least unjust aggression that could serve as a pretext for such a declaration.

Ambition had no ears for reason, or justice, or truth, and the Pontiff was stripped of his temporal power by a formal decree, issued by Napoleon from the imperial camp before Vienna. Ignorance and



infidelity could not comprehend the right by which the Fisherman's successor possessed even the semblance of temporal authority. The new philosophy was so habituated to reduce all right to brutal force, that the weakness of a state was considered sufficient pretext for destroying its independence. The rights, however, of the Supreme Pontiff were established on a prescription of 1500 years, a title which no dynasty in Europe could exhibit in support of its power and authority. He was sanctioned also by a title which few sovereignties, whether ancient or modern, can boast of, its uniform tendency to promote the civilization of mankind, and its increasing efforts to preserve and to diffuse a knowledge of the arts and sciences. For the services it rendered to religion and to science I appeal to the monuments of history, and to open, fair, unprejudiced statement, not to the pages of prejudice and interest and foul besotted calumny. For 300 years they combated the ignorance and the so called illumination of Greece and Rome, and subsequently they withstood and enlightened the deep-rooted barbarism of the northern nations that swarmed in countless myriads to break up the unwieldy mass of Roman dominion. The Egyptian darkness that covered the wild and savage route never reached the dominion of the Pontiff. Knowledge took sanctuary at his altar. The time-

honored rolls of literature were placed within the veil of the Temple, and whilst some endeavoured to civilize the untaught savage, others were employed in restoring and preserving whatever was valuable in sacred or profane antiquity. When Italy in the 8th century, neglected by its temporal sovereigns, groaned under the tyranny of barbarous invaders, the Roman States and with them knowledge and literature were defended and protected by the Father of the Faithful. After filling the East in vain with his complaints, Stephen the 2nd crossed the Alps and sought the assistance of a hero whose wisdom and valour were employed, not in destroying the monuments of the arts, not in burning or plundering the collections of literature—the usual resources of enlightened modern warfare—but in defending those treasures against barbarous power.

The 9th century witnessed the exertions of the Roman Pontiffs in favour of peace and knowledge and civilization, when the throne of the Cæsars was destroyed by the incursions of Saracen power, and France, Sicily, and Rome itself, were cursed by their oppression. When one undistinguished ruin awaited every institution, political, social or religious, the wise and vigorous policy of Leo the 3rd directed and encouraged the talents and exertions of Charles the Great to the acquisition of real and substantial glory, by erecting a barrier against the

inroads of a barbarous and un-christian power. When the empire of Charles himself crumbles into dust by intestine divisions, and the sons of Louis, weak and wicked, contended for the fragments of empire without the least regard for the rights and the happiness of the people, the interests of the nations were upheld by the exertions of the Supreme Pontiff.

Europe at this period was blessed in possessing, amidst division, confusion and violence, a religious power which, becoming more respected in proportion as kings and courts sunk deeper in corruption, barbarism and crime, could interpose with effect in the destructive and sanguinary quarrels of princes, and save the people who are always the victims.

In the darkness that is said to have covered the nations during the 10th century no exertion was made to dissipate its gloom except by the Roman Pontiffs. Even then, when Europe was one scene of confusion, faction and disorder, which even Rome itself did not escape, when the freedom of canonical election was impeded by the intrigues of Princes and Rulers, and the Chair of Peter was dishonored by some who filled it, the noblest exertions were made for the restoration of order, and the diffusion of knowledge and religion. Poland, Denmark, Sweden and Muscovy received, for the first time,

the lights of Christianity and the elements of civilization through the exertions and solicitude of the Roman Pontiff. At the close of that century it was from the Palace of the Lateran that the rays of science first diverged, when Sylvester the 2nd exhibited to the world the noblest combination of extraordinary talents and splendid virtues, kindling throughout Italy, France and Germany a taste for knowledge so long neglected. His exertions for the restoration and diffusion of the severer sciences, which he himself had diligently cultivated, has assigned to him a lofty place amongst the benefactors of knowledge.

The increase of influence and authority which took place under Gregory the 7th was not attained by policy or design, but resulted from events in the production of which they possessed no power and in whose regulations they could scarcely exercise control, namely, the establishment of the dynasty of the Capets in France, and the conquest of Naples, Sicily, and England by the Norman powers.

At this period Europe was indebted to their wisdom and precaution in transferring the seat of barbarous warfare to Asia, and without any power, genius, or arms, but the Cross, they saved the nations from the inroads of sanguinary and fanatical power, and the mind of Europe itself from

sinking once more into the profoundest lethargy. Such were their exertions at that period, and true philosophy will not contest to-day the salutary influence as well as the absolute necessity of the precautionary system they adopted. From their exertions arose the dawn of a new political system on the ruins of feudal government, the enfranchisement of citizens, the emancipation of cities, the progress of light, industry and commerce during the 12th century, whose spirit of high-minded honour and chivalry was enkindled by them, and without which the philosophy and knowledge of this day could not have existed to misrepresent their motives or deny their influence.

The contests with kings and courts which commenced by Gregory the 7th respecting investitures and continued for nearly a century, has been misrepresented and attributed to the thirst of power, and condemned by sycophants and flatterers; but that contest originated in the absolute necessity of resuming the offices and dignities of the Church out of the hands of men who degraded the Altar and debased the ministry for political ends or a sordid interest, and a long experience justified the Pontiff, as the worst evils that ever afflicted the Church of Christ may be traced to the interference of designing politicians and anti-christian courts.

During this same period Europe was indebted

to the exertions of Calixtus the 2nd for peace which he procured by the sole influence of his virtues, and subsequently it owed its safety to the wisdom of Alexander the 3rd, the strenuous opposer of the encroachments and usurpation of the Emperor Frederick, and the author and head of the patriotic league which the Italian Republics formed against his barbarous power. For his wise and enlightened policy on this occasion a writer not to be suspected of prejudice, the impious Voltaire, declared him to be the benefactor of the human race. In this same age, whilst the general interests of humanity were upheld by the influence of the Supreme Pastor, we should not forget that his power was often exerted in the protection of individual right against lawless power and unjust oppression. When the Lion-hearted Richard, the noblest of England's Monarchs, pined in a dungeon, forgotten by Europe, the only power that espoused his cause was that of Celestine the 3rd who compelled the Sovereigns of Germany and Austria to release the captive whom they unjustly imprisoned. In fact the whole of their history bears unequivocal testimony to the beneficial efforts of their influence. It proves that when the arts were almost lost, and sciences had nearly perished, when polished languages were exchanged for the jargon of barbarous invaders, when human institutions crumbled into dust before their stormy

career and human knowledge withered at the foul contact of northern barbarism, when one overwhelming deluge of ignorance, ferocity, rapine and blood, rolled over the fairest countries of Southern Europe, the successor of Peter seized the expiring torch of science, held it unquenched amid the flood and the storm, waved it for ages over the wild waves of ignorance and barbarism that raged far below, until the spirit of that religion of which he was the head, brooding a second time over the turbulent chaos, dried up the foul waters and made a pathway for science to re-visit once more the dwellings of men.

Their interference in politics arose from the circumstances of the times, and was it not a happiness for the nations and for princes themselves, whose headlong violence and ambition were without measure or restraint, that there should exist a power capable of supplying the acknowledged insufficiency of international laws, and by protecting alike the powerful and the oppressed save both from mutual horrors and mutual destruction. It was a real happiness, and the dispassionate and truly philosophical mind that is capable of combining events and tracing their causes will freely acknowledge the unspeakable importance of the benefits conferred by the successors of Peter on society, knowledge and religion.

After the occupation of the Ecclesiastical States by the army of the Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte a system of unequalled insult, outrage and persecution commenced, disgraceful to the tyrant who inflicted it, as it was painful to the feelings of the Supreme Pontiff. His friends were imprisoned and in some instances put to death or banished, his correspondence violated, his communications with the universal Church impeded, his person insulted, and his safety frequently endangered. At length after 18 months of patient endurance, on the 6th of July, 1809, his palace was surrounded at midnight by the military, the doors that led to his apartments broken open, and the French Commander apologised for his conduct by saying that he had taken an oath of fidelity to the Emperor, and that he had it in commission to receive the Holy Father's renunciation and to offer him a pension, otherwise that he must be regarded as a traitor and removed from Rome. The Pontiff calmly replied that he also had taken an oath of fidelity to God, and that he should observe it at the risk of life. Without any farther intimidation, or allowing him a moment to prepare for a long and painful journey, he was dragged by a brutal soldiery to a close carriage, and conveyed from Rome by the most unfrequented ways. The sufferings he endured, the indignities he bore, the

unnecessary outrages inflicted upon him during a tedious journey in which he travelled incessantly, exposed him frequently to the danger of death before he arrived at Savona, the place of his captivity. The patient suffering of an aged and infirm man, the unbroken calm, the simplicity and sanctity for which he was distinguished, the mildness with which he received every insult and bore every privation, excited in his behalf a general sympathy and obliged the tyrant to soften a little the rigours of confinement. After 3 years of captivity at Savona, on the 20th June, 1812, he was removed without notice to Fontainebleau, that he might be more accessible to the emissaries of the Emperor and be the more easily induced to make those sacrifices which the boundless ambition of the tyrant sought to extort from him; and which he intended at any risk to complete after his victorious return from the Russian campaign for which he was preparing to depart. Every expedient was resorted to for the purpose of bending the inflexible resolution of the Holy Father. The dreadful evils that afflicted the Church, the utter destruction that awaited her institutions, the increasing dangers of an universal schism, were designedly represented to him as the consequences of his conduct, and as likely to render him an object of execration to posterity. The Pontiff, however, had taken his

stand. He saw distinctly the ruin that threatened the Church, but he knew that it was not the duty of man to extricate her from danger by the compromise of principle, and he resolved not to imitate the timidity of Oza in raising his hand to support the Ark, though falling. Having carried concession to just limits, he relied on the unfulfilling promise of the Redeemer to be with His Church to the consummation of ages, and he left the event to Providence—a Providence who nobly, amply, and speedily vindicated his faith, his wisdom, and his resolution.

After the disastrous campaign in Russia the tyrant's conscience smote him, and he thought that a personal interview with the Holy Father might effect his purposes. The moment he conceived the idea, with his characteristic rapidity, he flew from Paris, reached Fontainebleau, and stood in the presence of the Holy Father. The Pontiff fixed his eyes upon him, then raised his hands and eyes to heaven. No word of reproach—no complaints of hardships endured, though there was much room to complain,—no mention of indignities offered and of wants and privations borne—escaped from the lips of the aged and venerable priest of God. The deep, unearthly repose of his pale and emaciated visage struck the tyrant with awe, for it imaged forth a soul whose thoughts, and hopes, and joys,

and sorrows were of a loftier stamp than his—the cheek was doubly blanchèd. It seemed to his attendants, whilst he gazed on the upturned visage of the man of God, as if he were reading the handwriting on the wall that spoke his own destruction nigh. He recovered, and played the tyrant. The Pontiff looked on in patience, but was inflexible, and the interview was unproductive, except of indignation and rebuke and fiery disordered insult on the part of the usurper.

Thus far flowed the tide of proud imperial passion until the voice of the Eternal went forth as of old, "Thus far shalt thou go and no further, and here shall thy proud waves be staid." He in whose balance the kings of the earth are weighed found the tyrant wanting. He had not fulfilled his destiny. He was destined to break the rod of oppression and he himself became the worst of oppressors. Earth and its princes rose up against him and he fell, and the noise and the depth and the degradation of his fall astonished the nations. The cry of the prophet was rung through the earth, "How art thou fallen to the earth, thou that didst wound the nations and didst say in thy heart I will exalt my throne above the stars, I will sit in the mountain of the Covenant. But thou shalt be brought down. They that see thee shall turn to thee and

say, is this the man that troubled the earth, that shook the kingdoms, that made the world a wilderness, and opened not the prisons to his prisoners. All the kings of the nations have slept in glory, every one in his own house, but thou art cast out as an insupportable branch, defiled. Thou shalt not keep company with them, even in thy burial, for the Lord of Hosts hath decreed and who can disannul it, His hand is stretched out and who can turn it away."—*Isaiah*, 14.

A few months previous to the tyrant's fall he had, without assigning any reason, ordered the liberation of the Pontiff, and on the 24th of January, 1814, the Holy Father departed from the place of his captivity. The enthusiasm with which he was hailed wherever he appeared, the public demonstrations, the sanguine joy at the liberation of the aged Confessor of the Church exhibited by all ranks and classes and persuasions, evinced at once their sympathy for his great and unmerited sufferings, and their high admiration of the noble spirit which could not be subdued by violence and would not yield to the more venal influence of power. He reassumed at once the care of the Universal Church, and not content with repairing the injuries it had received, and restoring its former splendour, he sent the apostles of labour and love throughout the boundless regions of the East and

West. The Missions of Setchum, Tonkin, Siam, Malabar and Coromandel revived beneath his care, and even in China, where the martyr this moment is pouring his blood as a testimony, he has planted the Cross of Christ, so that the storm of persecution but serves to root it more deeply. The wandering tribes of Western Tartary also attracted his attention, and the men of the desert have come to the fold of Christ.

The Western World, the last portion of earth in which the eternal Gospel is to be preached before the consummation, the land of the ignorant savage and the uncivilized infidel, was the object of his peculiar solicitude. He looked, as we know, to the ends of the earth for men powerful in word and work to cultivate the desert, and we ourselves have felt and acknowledged the justice of his selections.\*

The strenuous promoter of Education, he cherished every institution that tended to diffuse its light, and he conferred upon this country one of its greatest blessings, the Order of the Presentation, for the religious education of the poor. The inheritor of the spirit of his predecessors, he cherished the arts that humanise and exalt the mind; and he loved and honored the artist. At the moment when he might have filled his treasury

\* This was spoken with reference to the Right Rev. Dr. England, then recently consecrated to the See of Charleston, U. S.

by exactions from France, a pecuniary compensation for the plunder with which she had filled her hands in Rome, he insisted solely on the restoration of the monuments of Art to their native home. He claimed with no feeble voice the restoration of those sublime creations of the mind that have, like so many golden treasures, poured over his country's name a flood of living glory, drawing from the ends of the earth the children of genius to the temple of the mighty dead, and the nations from every clime to bend their way to the Eternal City, revered amid its ruins, where was embodied so much that was grand in history, so much that was sublime in art. A city sovereign in its decay, surviving the wreck and ruin even of temporal dominion, and asserting nobly the immortality of mind, even on the very tomb, where sleeps the mightiest nation of the earth.

At length after exhibiting to the world the bright example of every public and private virtue—beloved of all that ever looked upon him, and accessible to all that ever desired it, his hour came. His warning was a painful accident, and he recognised the voice of the one Eternal Priest commanding him to lay down the golden crown, and even the breast-plate of Israel on which he had graven the names of his people. That call he heard with joy for he hailed its coming, and replied to it with

tears, saying with the Apostle, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have preserved the faith," and he passed away to his rest and to his God for ever. Peter dies, but the priesthood is immortal. Men pass away, offices are transferred from one to another, but the one fixed purpose of the Eternal mind is holding on its high course with steadiness and magnificence—one day wrapt in clouds and storms, the next emerging in all the splendour of Heaven, with light too brilliant for some to bear, to some a pillar of fire in the pathless desert, to others a dark and shapeless cloud concealing the path and the progress of Israel. But amid all the variations of its destiny and amid all the tossings and troubles of this stormy scene, each succeeding day throwing light on the past, and all things and occurrences and characters are tending fast to one grand and final consummation, which shall collect, combine and crown the scattered portions of the system, which shall vindicate before an assembled universe the designs of God, and the purity and the efficiency of the institutions by which these designs are upheld and promoted.

And thou, Chair of Peter, destined pre-eminently by God to uphold these designs of mercy, centre of that unity which characterises all the operations of God, both physical and moral, deluged by much

blood and shaken by so many storms from Nero to Napoleon, post of so much honor, where so many illustrious saints and sages have sat to judge the people of God; post of so much danger, for 300 years of thy youth thou wert but the scaffold of death, and he who rose upon thee had to brace his nerves and burden his face how to look upon the rack, the gibbet and the blazing cauldron, for he knew he should pour down upon thee the rich libation of a martyr's blood. In thy latter day still fated to be the object of persecution for tyranny, and of calumny to falsehood. Amid the damp and the gloom of dungeons undecayed, in the wreck of empires undestroyed, abandoned by friends, upheld mysteriously by thine enemies, thou art shorn of thy splendours to-day, for the glory that rested on thee hath departed, and the sainted priest that filled thee so nobly, hath passed away amid the tears and the regret and the admiration of the Christian world.

And as he judged thy people, oh God! in mercy and in love so do Thou in Thy mercy deal compassionately with him. Be mindful, oh Lord, of his faith and patience, of his meekness and his love. Hear Thou, oh Lord, the voice of our supplication in his behalf, or rather do thou, priest of the living God, presiding at that altar, make heard the voice of that Victim "who even now intercedeth for us" and pour out that mysterious blood which



“ speaketh better things than that of Abel,” that so his soul may be this day in peace and his abode in Holy Sion.

Through Christ our Lord.—Amen.



## MEMOIR.

THE Preacher of the Funeral Oration of Pius VII. was well known in the south of Ireland, and his memory is still reverently cherished by those to whom eloquence is still dear, and whose recollection still embraces the history of Cork. The only complete specimen of that eloquence which was so much admired by his cotemporaries is that which is now supplied to the public. But as most of the rising generation would be glad of some slight memoir of him whose person they have never seen, but of whom they have heard of often, we hasten to supply as far as we can, the deficiency.

THOMAS O'KEEFE was a native of the northern parish of this city, in which he was born in the year 1790. He was baptized on the 31st of July in that year, by the Rev. MORRIS KEANE. He owed his education to the care of his mother, who had him sent to the best schools the city could then afford. His intelligence attracted the attention of the Rev. ROBERT M'CARNEY, Vicar-General and intimate friend of the Bishop Dr. MOYLAN.

He, at that early age, having been too young for entrance to Maynooth, resolved to accept the offer made him by a master of a large establishment in the town of Fermoy to devote a few hours in the day to the work of tuition, while he should be at liberty to apply the remainder to purposes of

self-improvement. Such a proposition would not admit of doubt, and the advantages were too evident to admit of rejection. There he remained some time pursuing his studies and storing his mind with knowledge, and after he attained a proper age was recommended for admission to the College of Maynooth. His admission dates there from the roll of the College, at the year 1802, and he was ordained in the year 1814.

Immediately on his ordination he was appointed to the curacy of Saints Peter and Paul's, in the city of Cork, and soon after, on the promotion of the RIGHT REV. DR. MURPHY to the See of his native City, the REV. THOMAS O'K was appointed to the charge of that parish. At that time and for some time after, the parish church was frequented by all the leading Catholics of the city. The pastor of that church had therefore opportunities of instructing the ignorant and admonishing the erring in a manner that was in a great measure such as no preacher in the city could desire. Very soon the ardent words and conclusive arguments found their way to many hearts, and a rich harvest of goodness began to show itself among the public. The flippant arguments that were then in use among a considerable number of young men were no longer in vogue, and ceased to exercise an influence upon their conduct.

Among the principal ways of instruction he made great use of conferences or discussions on the essential truths of religion. These he had carried on by two priests, of whom he invariably was one. The priest who made the conference was stationed in the pulpit, which all those who can remember the Carey's-lane Chapel will not easily forget, and the REV. MR. O'K occupied a chair upon the altar. The subjects, which were not of a controversial nature, were discussed in a familiar manner between them, much to the edification of their audience. All those who enjoyed the benefit of those conferences always

recalled them with much pleasure for many a year afterwards. The writer of this has heard him say with what concern he began his Lenten discussions, often not with a score of persons in the chapel, and how in the course of a few nights, as he and the REV. THOMAS ENGLAND pursued their labours, the chapel could not contain all who sought admission.

In the year 1828 a vacancy occurred in the parish of Upper Glanmire, on the death of the REV. MR. CROWLEY, and the REV. MR. O'K was appointed to it, and with a permission to hold it in conjunction with Saints Peter and Paul's. Soon after another vacancy occurred on the death of the VERY REV. DEAN COLLINS, and he was appointed thereto with the dignity of Archdeacon, which he retained for the rest of his life. On being appointed to the South Parish he vacated all the other appointments which he had hitherto held, and he remained Parish Priest of Saint Finbarr's for the last eighteen years of his life. He died in the month of April, in the year 1847, in the 57th year of his age. He never put forth the varied power of his earlier days; though he often spoke effectively from the pulpit, he never realized a discourse like that which is now presented to the public. The only sermon which we have seen worthy of his name is that of "Scandal," an extract from which has found its way into some school books, and an extract from the Sermon of "All Saints." Whatever became of his discourses nothing whatever remains beyond one part of a sermon on the Blessed Virgin, which is in his own writing, and this is scarcely worthy of publication. His fame as a preacher, as far as written words can go, must rest on the sermon which now goes before the public. It was in reference to the remarkable effect which this sermon produced on the audience that a certain individual, long resident in Cork and now alive, accosted the preacher when proceeding to the Sacristy: "I am not, REV. SIR., of your profession, yet I have been so enchanted by your magnificent oration, that I have no other way of

expressing my sentiments than by requesting your acceptance of this ring, which I request you will wear in memory of this occasion." He presented him with a precious ring, adorned with sapphires, which he took off his finger and put on that of the preacher.

As a man he had rather a slight and spare figure and never showed any signs of corpulency. He had an eye of singular brilliancy, and had a dark and sallow complexion. He had an elastic spring in his walk, which the large dress boots, then not unusual to ecclesiastics, set off to advantage. His voice, which varied little in modulation in his preaching, was singularly slow and emphatic, making an impression upon his hearers as a chisel would make on marble, so that the impression once made became indelible. His conversation on ordinary topics became agreeable and interesting, and his manner was kind and affable to the most ordinary individuals. His kindness of manner and his charity of disposition attracted numerous friends, so that they esteemed his memory as sacred, and cherished even the most trifling memorial of him as a thing invaluable. Let us hope that a person so kind, so gifted, is now enjoying a greater and more lasting immortality than any that awaits him upon earth.

His remains are interred in the church of Saint Finbarr's.

