

THE
PRINCETON REVIEW.

OCTOBER, 1852.

No. IV.

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- ART. I.—*Œuvres de Bossuet*, 4 vol. gros, 8vo., Paris, Firmin Didot, 1843.
Œuvres de Bourdaloue, 3 vol. gr., 8vo., Paris, 1837.
Œuvres de Massillon, 2 vol. gr., 8vo., Paris, 1844.

THE age of Louis XIV. has ever been considered the most brilliant era for France. Under the conduct of the most renowned generals, it attained the highest pitch of military glory; under the encouragement given to philosophy, the most valuable discoveries were made in science; under the liberal patronage bestowed upon the fine arts, taste and genius achieved the most splendid triumphs. It was an age of truly great men—of warriors, politicians, philosophers, poets, historians—of such men as Condé and Turenne, Corneille and Racine, Descartes and Fontenelle, Montesquieu and Malebranche, Rochefoucauld and Pascal, Boileau and Rollin, and hundreds of others whose works still yield improvement and delight. It was a period too when eloquence of the highest kind lived and flourished. Not the eloquence of the bar; for its celebrated pleaders, in judicial contests, and the application of the law, seldom went beyond the strain of dry and logical reasoning. Not the eloquence of popular assemblies, for there were no such assem-

blics there to nourish the genius of liberty. Nothing of that kind existed, as in ancient Greece and Rome, and as in our own country, where the assembled people are brought under the influence of the art of speaking; where the public affairs are transacted; where those who compose the nation and make the laws can be convinced and persuaded by direct appeals to their interests and passions; where continued struggles for rights and power rouse the genius of every citizen, force to exertion every talent, inspire with enthusiasm every council, and give to orators all that can qualify them for the sublimest eloquence. There was no room for such eloquence in France at the period to which we refer. "She sat as a queen, and said, I shall see no sorrow." After a combat of many years with the rest of Europe, she beheld provinces conquered, and kings humbled before her; she owned no superior; she feared no rival; she saw the arts and sciences raised to the highest splendour, and the most refined taste and erudition in all the walks of polite literature; she beheld all her people vying with each other in the increase and enjoyment of national glory—while the "grand monarque" sat in his palace proclaiming, "I am the government." In such circumstances we cannot suppose that *that* high, manly, forcible eloquence, which, as an instrument of power, mingles with the busy scenes of public life, could find an existence. But all this is perfectly consistent with another kind of eloquence—the eloquence of the *Pulpit*. To be truly eloquent, the speaker must feel on a level with his auditors—at times even exercise a kind of dominion over them. The sacred orator, speaking in the name of God, can do this under any government; in the most arbitrary monarchy, he can display the same lofty freedom which the equality of citizens gives to a speaker in the active scenes of a republic. Hence, in a country where no civil freedom was enjoyed, there was an eloquence of the loftiest kind, which long flourished, which was carried to the greatest height, and which is still the object of warm admiration.

Some eloquent preachers existed in France, previous to those whose names are prefixed to our article; but whatever reputation they may have had at the time, few have attained

any celebrity. They were eclipsed like tapers placed in the rays of a meridian sun.

BOSSUET lived when the French language had reached a degree of maturity, and was advancing towards perfection. He first appeared in Paris in 1659; was soon invited to be one of the preachers of the court; for ten years passed through a most brilliant career; and then was promoted to the bishopric of Condom, and afterwards to that of Meaux.

He has been termed the "French Demosthenes," and well does he deserve the title; for he, of all his contemporaries, bears the greatest resemblance to the Athenian orator. He was regarded as the former, in Europe, of the eloquence of the pulpit; and his works were directed to be studied as classic works, as men repair to Rome to improve their taste by the master pieces of Raphael and Michael Angelo. Time, that great destroyer of ill-founded reputation, instead of impairing, has from age to age added fresh lustre to his glory.

He was devoted to the study of the Fathers, particularly of Chrysostom and Austin, from whom he drew profound maxims and convincing arguments; and to the frequent reading of Demosthenes and Homer, to imbibe the vehemence of the one, and the imagination of the other. But he was specially sedulous in the study of the Holy Scriptures. From that divine book he drew forth the richest treasures; in this inexhaustible mine he found the sublimest thoughts, the strongest expressions, the most eloquent descriptions, the most pathetic images. There he found history, laws, moral precepts, oratory, and poetry.

If eloquence consist in taking strong hold of a subject, knowing its resources, measuring its extent, and skilfully uniting all its parts; in causing ideas to succeed each other, so as to bear us away with almost irresistible force; if it consist in painting objects in such a manner as to give them life and animation; if it consist in such a power upon the human mind as leads us to be carried along with the speaker, and to enter into all his emotions and passions, then the Bishop of Meaux is eloquent. But let us not mistake the nature of his eloquence. He was not content with gratifying his audience, or leaving their minds in a state of satisfied tranquillity, but aimed at thorough-

ly convincing and agitating their souls, and making such an impression as could not be easily obliterated. Every thing is simple and natural—there is no affectation of pomp, no visible desire to please, no disposition to withdraw attention from the subject to the author—all is related and described in such a manner as to conceal all art. In every thing there is nature, both its order and its irregularity—sometimes rising to the mountain-top, and sometimes descending to the valleys—sometimes the winding and transparent rivulet, and sometimes the mighty cataract which astonishes and overwhelms.

Few of his sermons that have come down to us received his finishing hand. The greater part are sketches—full and perfect as far as they go, and filled up at the time of delivery. They were such, too, as he never repeated, after he left Paris; for when he became bishop, though he preached much, yet he wrote not his sermons, but trusted to the occasion for language, after profoundly studying his subject. But though they are the productions of his youth, and in a state of comparative imperfection, yet they bear the marks of a mighty genius; they present thoughts strong and original, in a corresponding style of energy and majesty; they show the author powerfully affected by what he writes, and when the subject requires it, warmed by imagination, and heated by passion; they impress and captivate the reader, and animate him with the same admiration, love, fear, and hatred with which the orator is inspired.

We shall present, in a free translation, a few quotations from some of his sermons, fully sensible how much is lost in such translation, and how a resort to the original can alone discover their beauties.

One of the best sermons is on the *Truth and Perfection of the Christian Religion*, from Matt. xi. 5, 6.—“Preached before the king.” It is, throughout, convincing and eloquent. We make the following extract:

* “Truth is a queen who may be said to inhabit her own excellence; who reigns invested with her own native splendour, and who is enthroned in her own grandeur, and upon her own felicity. This queen condescending to reign in our world for the good of man, our Saviour came down from above to establish

* “La vérité est une reine qui habite en elle-même,” &c., &c.

her empire upon earth. Human reason is not consulted in the establishment of her empire. Relying on herself, on her celestial origin, on her infallible authority, she speaks and demands belief; she publishes her edicts, and exacts submission; she holds out to our assent the sublime and incomprehensible union of the most blessed Trinity; she proclaims a God-man, and shows him to us extended on a cross, expiring in ignominy and pain, and calls upon human reason to bow down before this tremendous mystery.

“The Christian religion, not resting her cause upon the principles of human reason, rejects also the meretricious aid of human eloquence. It is true the apostles, who were its preachers, humbled the dignity of the Roman fasces, and laid them at the foot of the cross; and in those very trials to which they were summoned as criminals, they made their judges tremble. They conquered idolatry, and presented their converts as willing captives to the true religion. But they accomplished this end, not by the artifice of words, by the arrangement of seductive periods, by the magic of human eloquence—they effected it by a sacred persuasive power which impressed—more than impressed—which captivated the understanding. This power being derived from heaven, preserves its efficiency, even as it passes through the lowly style of unadorned composition; like a rapid river, which as it courses through the plain, retains the impetuosity which it acquired from the mountain whence it sprung, and from whose lofty source its waters were precipitated.

“Let us then form this conclusion, that our Saviour has revealed to us the light of the Gospel by means worthy of the Giver, and at the same time by means the most consonant with our nature. Surrounded as we are by error, and distressed with uncertainty, we require not the aid of a doubting academician, but we stand in absolute need of a God to illuminate our researches. The path of reason is circuitous, and perplexed with thorns. Pursuit presupposes distance, and argument indecision. As the principle of our conduct is the object of this inquiry, it is necessary to have recourse to an immediate and immutable belief. The Christian finds every thing easy in his faith; for though the doctrines which Christ proposes to his acceptance are too immeasurable for the narrow capacity of his

intellect, yet they may be embraced by the expansive submission of his belief.

“Let us dwell on a theme so interesting; let us direct our view to those divine features which proclaim the heavenly origin of our religion.—When she first descended from above, did she not come as an unwilling visitant? Rejection, hatred, and persecution met her in every step; nevertheless she made no appeal to human justice, no application to the secular power; she enlisted defenders worthy of her cause, who, in attachment to her interests, presented themselves to the stroke of the executioner, in such numbers that persecution grew alarmed, the law blushed at its own decree, and princes were constrained to recall their sanguinary edicts. It was the destiny of truth to erect her throne in opposition to the kings of the earth. She called not for their assistance, when she laid the foundation of her own establishment—but, when the edifice rose from its foundation, and lifted high its impregnable towers, she then adopted the great for her children; not that she stood in need of their concurrence, but in order to cast an additional lustre on their authority, and to dignify their power. At the same time, our holy religion maintained its independence; for when sovereigns are said to protect religion, it is rather religion that protects them, and is the firmest support of their thrones. I appeal for the ascertainment of this fact to the history of the church. The world threatened, but the Christian religion continued firm; error polluted the stream, but the spring retained its purity; schism wounded the holy form of the church, but the truth remained inviolable; many were seduced, the weak overcome, the strong shaken, but the pillar of the sacred edifice stood immovable.

“—You that think yourselves endowed with a sagacity to pervade the secrets of God, approach, and unfold to us the mysteries of nature—the whole creation is spread out before you. Choose your theme—unravel what is at a distance, or develop what is near; explain what is beneath your feet, or illustrate the wonderful luminary which glitters over your head. What! does your reasoning faculty stagger on the very threshold? Poor, presumptuous, erring traveller, do you expect that an unclouded beam of truth is to illuminate your path? Ah! be no more deceived. Advert to the dark, tempestuous atmosphere,

which is diffused over that country through which we are traveling; advert to the imbecility of our reasoning powers; and until the Omniscient God shall remove the obscuring veil that hangs between heaven and earth, let us not reject the salutary aid and soothing intervention of a simple faith."

In the sermon *on the Crucifixion*, from Gal. vi. 14, the influence of Christianity in destroying idolatry is strikingly exhibited:

* "Religious truth was exiled from the earth, and idolatry sat brooding over the moral world. The Egyptians, the fathers of philosophy, the Grecians, the inventors of the fine arts, the Romans, the conquerors of the universe, were all unfortunately celebrated for perversion of religious worship, for gross errors which they admitted into their belief, and the indignities which they offered to the true religion. Minerals, vegetables, animals, the elements, became objects of adoration; even abstract visionary forms, such as fevers and distempers, received the honours of deification; and to the most infamous vices and dissolute passions altars were erected. The world which God made to manifest his power, seemed to have become a temple of idols, where every thing was God but God himself. The mystery of the Saviour's crucifixion was the remedy which the Almighty ordained for this universal idolatry. He knew the mind of man; and he knew that it was not by reasoning that an error could be destroyed, which reasoning had not established. Idolatry prevailed by the suppression of the rational faculty; by suffering the senses to predominate, which are apt to clothe every thing with qualities with which they are affected. Men gave the Divinity their own figure, and attributed to him their vices and passions. It was a subversion of reason, a delirium, a phrensy. Argue with a man who is insane—you do but the more provoke him, and render the distemper incurable. Neither will such argumentation cure the delirium of idolatry. What has learned antiquity gained by her elaborate discourses—her disputations so artfully framed? Did Plato, with that eloquence which was styled divine, overthrow one single altar, where those monstrous divini-

* La vérité religieuse étoit exilé sur la terre, &c.

ties were worshipped? Experience has shown that the overthrow of idolatry could not be the work of reason alone. Far from commissioning human wisdom to cure such a malady, God completed its confusion by the mystery of the cross. When that was raised, and displayed to the world an agonized Redeemer, incredulity exclaimed, it was *foolishness*—but the darkened sun—nature convulsed—the dead arising from their graves, said, it was *wisdom*.”

Many fine thoughts are found in the sermon on *the Name of Jesus*, from Matt. i. 21.

* “I cannot observe without an emotion of astonishment the conduct of the Son of God. I observe him through the course of his ministry displaying, even with magnificence, the lowliness of his condition, and when the hour approaches which is to terminate in his death, the word *glory* dwells on his lips, and he discourses with his disciples of nothing but his greatness. On the eve of his ignominious death, when the traitor had just gone from him, big with his execrable intention, it was then that the Saviour of the world cried out, with a divine ardour—‘Now is the Son of man glorified.’ Tell me in what manner he is going to be glorified? What means the emphatic word—*now*? Is he at once to rise above the clouds, and thence to advance vengeance on his foes? Or is the angelic hierarchy, seraphs, dominions, principalities, and powers, to descend from on high, and pay him instant adoration? No! he is going to be degraded; to submit to excruciating pain; to expire with malefactors. This is what he denominates his *glory*; this is what he esteems his triumph! Behold his entrance into Jerusalem, ‘riding on an ass.’ Ah! Christians, let us not be ashamed of our Heavenly King—let the sceptic deride, if he please, this humble appearance of the Son of God; but I will tell human arrogance that this lowly exhibition was worthy of the king who came into this world, in order to degrade and crush beneath his feet all terrestrial grandeur. Behold what a concourse of people, of all ages and of all conditions, precede him, with branches of palm trees, in the act of exultation—how the air resounds with the acclamations; ‘Hosannah to the Son

* Certes je ne puis voir sans étonnement dans les Ecritures Divines, &c.

of David—blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.’ Whence this sudden change, so opposite to his former conduct? Whence is it that *he* now courts applause, whom we see in another part of the gospel, retiring to the summit of a solitary mountain to escape the solicitations of the multitudes assembled from the neighbouring cities and villages for the purpose of electing him their king? He now listens with complacency to the people who accost him with that title. The jealous Pharisees endeavour to impose silence; but the Saviour cries, ‘If these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.’ I ask again, whence is this abrupt change? why does he approve of what he lately abhorred, and accept of what he lately rejected? Entering Jerusalem now for the last time, it is in order to die; and agreeably to his sentiments, to die is to reign; to die, in his estimation, is to be ‘glorified.’ How dignified was his conduct through the whole process of his passion! How dignified his deportment at the tribunal of Pilate! The Roman President asked, ‘art thou a king?’ The Son of God, who had until that time been silent, no sooner heard his title to royalty mentioned, than he abruptly replied, ‘Thou sayest that I am a king; to this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world.’ Yes! gracious Saviour, I comprehend thee—it is thy glory to suffer for the love of thy people; and thou wilt not claim the sceptre, until, by a victorious death, thou deliverest thy subjects from eternal slavery!

“Let heaven and earth burst forth into a song of praise, for Jesus Christ is a King. To those who have been regained and subdued to his protection at so high a price, he is a most liberal monarch—through him they not only live, but have the hope of reigning themselves—for such is the munificence of our celestial King, that in every court, every brow is to be encircled with a diadem. Listen to the beautiful hymn of the twenty-four elders—representing most probably the assemblage of the faithful, under the Old and the New Testament—the one half representing the twelve patriarchs of the Jewish church—the other half, the twelve apostles of the Christian church. Observe that the elders are crowned, that they fall prostrate in humble adoration before the Lamb, singing, ‘Thou hast made us kings.’ Let me ask if human grandeur dare for a moment to enter

into competition with this celestial court? Cyneas, the ambassador of Pyrrhus, in speaking of ancient Rome, said that he beheld in that imperial city as many kings as senators. But our God calls us to a more resplendent exhibition; in this court, this nation of elected kings, this triumphal city whose walls are cemented by the blood of Christ, I not only affirm that we shall behold as many kings as senators, but I assert that there will be as many kings as inhabitants. The King of the world admits to the participation of his throne all the people whom he has redeemed by his blood and subdued by his grace."

There are some similar thoughts in his second sermon "pour le premier dimanche de l'avent;"—in which there is a beautiful contrast between Jesus Christ and Alexander—presented with great simplicity, by an allusion to authentic history.

* "Hear how the author of the first book of Maccabees speaks of the great king of Macedonia, whose name seemed to breathe nothing but victory and triumph. 'It happened that Alexander, son of Philip, reigned over Greece, and made many wars, and won many strongholds, and slew the kings of the earth, and went to the ends of the world, and took spoils of many nations, insomuch that the earth was quiet before him.' What a grand and magnificent beginning!—but hear the conclusion. 'After these things he fell sick, and perceived that he must die; wherefore he called his servants, and parted his kingdom among them. So Alexander reigned twelve years, and he died.' To this fate is suddenly reduced all his glory; in this manner the history of Alexander the Great terminates. How different the history of Jesus Christ! It does not indeed commence in a manner so pompous—neither does it end in a way so ruinous. It begins by showing him to us in the sordid manner—then leads him through various stages of humiliation—then conducts him to the infamy of the cross—and at length envelopes him in the darkness of the tomb—confessedly the very lowest degree of depression. But this, instead of being the period of his final abasement, is that from which he recovers, and is exalted. He rises—ascends—takes possession of his throne—is extending his glory to the utmost bounds of the uni-

* "Ecoutez comme parle l'Histoire," &c., &c.

verse, and will one day come with great power to judge the quick and the dead."

In his addresses to the king, there is a noble and manly freedom which we cannot but admire—an apostolic fidelity which shows a marked dislike and careful avoidance of adulation. The following is a specimen:

* "While your majesty looks down from that eminence to which Providence has raised you; while you behold your flourishing provinces reaping the harvest of happiness, and enjoying the blessings of peace; while you behold your throne encompassed with the affections of a loyal people, what have you to fear? Where is the enemy that can injure your happiness? Yes! sire, there is an enemy that can injure you—that enemy is yourself—that enemy is the glory that encircles you. It is no easy task to submit to the rule that seems to submit to us. Where is the canopy of sufficient texture to screen you from the penetrating and searching beams of unbounded prosperity? Let me entreat you to descend in spirit from your exalted situation, and visit the tomb of Jesus; there you may meditate on loftier subjects than this world with all its pomp can offer; there you may learn that by our Redeemer's resurrection from the grave, you may be entitled to a crown of immortal glory.

"What will it avail you, sire, to have lifted so high the glory of your country, unless you direct your mind to works which are of estimation in the sight of God, and which are to be recorded in the book of life? Consider the terrors which are to usher in the last day, when the Saviour of the world will appear in tremendous majesty, and send judgment unto victory. Reflect if the stars are then doomed to fall, if the glorious canopy of the heavens is to be rolled together as a scroll, how will those works endure, which are constructed by man? Can you, sire, affix any real grandeur to what must one day be blended in the dust? Elevate then your mind, and fill the page of your life with other records and other annals."

We have often been struck with the manner in which truth is pressed upon the conscience, and the sinner urged to immediate repentance. The following is a single instance from many that might be presented:

* "Pendant que votre majesté regarde en bas de cette élévation," &c., &c.

* "When God transported the prophetic spirit of Ezekiel into the valley of bones, he heard a voice cry out, 'Can these dry bones live? Say unto them, O! ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.'—The application is obvious; bring it home to your own bosoms; enforce it on your own situation. Let no time be lost; defer not to a distant period your repentance; the voice that now whispers to your soul, 'O! ye dry bones, hear the voice of the Lord,' will perhaps never invite you more. The season of age and weakness will betray you; when you are arrived within a few steps of the grave, you will find neither time, nor disposition, nor capacity to perform the solemn task which you have so long delayed—your soul will be encumbered with a train of confused, turbid, comfortless thoughts; (I have unhappily often witnessed such scenes,)—your cold lips will utter a few imperfect prayers that will not reach the heart any more than water gliding over a marble surface will penetrate the substance. Seize then the present hour—the offered moment. Why will you perish? You, my brethren, who have been distinguished by so many blessings; to whom, in your earlier years, the immaculate page of Christianity was unfolded; who were reared in the hallowed bosom of religion, why will ye perish? You for whom this roof resounds with the voice of the preacher; for whom that table is spread with celestial food, why will you perish? You for whom Jesus died, for whom he rose from the dead—and now, willing your salvation, shows to his Father the sacred wounds he suffered, why will you perish?

"The best method to raise our thoughts above this speck of earth, is first to contemplate the deceitful and fugitive tenure of terrestrial existence. May we not compare human life to a road that terminates in a ruinous precipice? We are informed of the dangers we incur, but the imperial command is announced, and we must advance. I would wish to turn back, in order to avoid the ruinous precipice, but the tyrant necessity exclaims, 'advance, advance.' An irresistible power seems to carry me along. Many inconveniences—many hardships—many untoward accidents occur; but they would appear trivial, could I withhold my steps from the ruinous precipice. No! no! An

* Quand Dieu transportoit l'esprit prophétique, &c.

irresistible power urges me to proceed, and even impels me to run—such is the rapidity of time. Some pleasant circumstances, however, present themselves; we meet with objects in the course of our journey, which attract attention—limpid streams—groves resounding with harmony—trees loaded with delicious fruit—flowers exhaling their aromatic odour into the passing gale. Here we would be glad to wander, and suspend the progress of our journey; but the voice exclaims, ‘advance, advance,’—while all the objects we have passed suddenly vanish, like the materials of a turbid dream. Some wretched consolation still remains—you have gathered some flowers as you have passed by, which, however, wither in the hand that grasps them—you have plucked some fruit, which, however, decays before it reaches the lips. This, this is the enchantment of delusion. In the progress of your destined course, you now approach the tremendous gulf which breathes forth a solemn vapour that discolours every object. Behold the shadowy form of Death rising from the jaws of the fatal gulf, to hail your arrival. Your heart palpitates—your eyes grow dim—your cheeks turn pale—your lips quiver—the final step is taken—and the hideous chasm swallows up your trembling frame.”

We make but one more quotation from his sermons, from a discourse on *the Sufferings of the Soul of Jesus*, founded on Isaiah liii. 6. And we do it the more cheerfully, as his sentiments on the doctrine of the Atonement are so correct and scriptural.

* “The most soothing consolation to the man plunged in affliction, is the consciousness of his freedom from guilt, which, like an angel, watches at his side, and whispers comfort to his soul. The holy confidence arising from this source supported the martyrs, and upheld their enduring patience under the pressure of the severest tortures. This consolation acted with a magical influence; it calmed their sufferings; it lulled the exquisite sensation of the flames which consumed their bodies, and diffused over their countenance the expression of a celestial joy. But Jesus, the personally innocent Jesus, found no such consolation in his sufferings; what was given to the martyrs was denied to the King of martyrs. Under the ignominy of a most

* La consolation la plus douce pour un homme qui souffert, &c.

disgraceful death, under the impression of the most agonizing torments, he was not allowed to complain, nor even to think that he was treated with injustice. It is true he was personally innocent; but what did the recollection of an immaculate life avail him? His Heavenly Father, from whom alone he looked for consolation, who from eternity had shed upon his beloved Son the effulgence of his glory, now withdraws his sacred beams, and spreads over his head an angry cloud. Behold the innocent Jesus, the spotless Lamb, suddenly become the goat of abomination, burdened with the sins of men. It is no longer the Jesus who once said, 'which of you convinceth me of sin?' (John viii. 46,)—he presumes to speak no more of his innocence. O! Jesus, I view thee bending beneath the weight of human guilt. See, my brethren, see imputed to him the sins of men; see the turbulent ocean of iniquity ready to engulf him: wherever he casts his eye, he beholds torrents of sin bursting upon him. By a wonderful commutation which comprises the mystery of our salvation, one is smitten and others are delivered. God smites his innocent Son for the sake of guilty men; and pardons guilty men for the sake of his innocent Son. How inadequate is all language to express such mercy! Let this sanctuary be to every one of us a Calvary, and let us not depart hence, before we have kindled in our bosoms the flame of eternal gratitude for the sublime act of love which is this day recorded through the Christian world."

But it is in his *Funeral Orations* that the eloquence of Bossuet is specially seen. These were prepared in mature life, when his taste was chastened, received all the correction which his hand could give them, and by universal consent are the enduring memorials of the loftiest genius. They are not only uncommonly spirited, and animated with the boldest figures, but frequently rise to a degree of the sublime. While celebrating the illustrious dead, he employs them as preachers to the living; while sitting on the tombs of kings and princes, he crushes the pride of all kings, levels them with the meanest of their subjects, and confounds them in the common dust.

His success in this species of eloquence is seen in his *Funeral Oration for Henrietta, Queen of England, wife of Charles I.* It was a subject worthy of the great talents of Bossuet; a

subject most dramatic and eventful—a rebellion crowned with victory—a fugitive queen—a monarch bleeding on the scaffold—all furnishing important materials for such a discourse, and employed in such a manner as to bear the impress of the highest eloquence. While he paints in vivid colours the civil commotions, he shows us God in them all, “setting up one and putting down another,” destroying thrones, precipitating revolutions, subduing opposition: and while thus directing our attention to a superintending Providence, he casts a religious awe through the whole scene, which renders it really pathetic, and truly grand.

In adverting to the dignified manliness which accompanied Charles I. in the last scenes of his life, the orator says:

* “Pursued by the unrelenting malignity of fortune, abandoned, betrayed, defeated, he never abandoned himself. His mind rose superior to the victorious standard of the enemy. Humane and magnanimous in the moment of victory, he was great and dignified in the hour of adversity. This is the image which presents itself to my view in his last trial. O! thou august and unfortunate queen! I know that I gratify thy tender affection, while I consecrate these few words to his memory—that heart which never lived but for him, awakens even under the pall of death, and resumes its palpitating sensibility at the name of so endeared a husband.”

Instead of directly saying that Charles died on the scaffold, he represents the queen as adopting the words of Jeremiah, who alone is capable of lamentations equal to his sorrows.

† “O! Lord, behold my afflictions, for the enemy hath magnified himself: the adversary hath spread out his hand upon all my pleasant things; my children are desolate, because the enemy prevailed. The kingdom is polluted, and the princes thereof. For these things I weep; mine eye runneth down with water, because the comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me.” (Lam. i. 9. 16.)

In this manner he speaks of the queen’s escape from her enemies in England.

* Poursuivi à toute outrance par l’implacable malignité, &c. &c.

† Jérémie lui-même, qui seul, &c., &c.

* “The queen was at length obliged to leave her kingdom. She sailed out of the English ports in sight of the rebellious navy; it approached so near to her, in pursuit, that she almost heard their profane cries and insolent threats. Ah! how different was this voyage from that which she made on the same sea, when, going to take possession of the sceptre of Great Britain, she saw the billows smooth themselves under her, to pay homage to the queen of the seas. Now pursued by implacable enemies who falsely accused and endeavoured to destroy her—sometimes just escaped, and sometimes just taken—her fortune changing every hour—having no other aid but the Almighty and her invincible courage—no winds nor sails to favour her precipitate flight; but God preserved her and permitted her to live.”

The *oration for Henrietta, Princess of England, and daughter of Charles I.*, has not events so grand and striking; and presents not a picture so vast and magnificent—but it exhibits a pathos, though more soft, yet equally touching. Bossuet was evidently much affected when he composed this discourse and deeply moved when he delivered it. The fate of a young princess, the daughter, sister, and sister-in-law of a king, enjoying all the advantages of grandeur and beauty—dying suddenly at the age of twenty-six, of a frightful accident, with all the marks of poison, was an event calculated to excite the tenderest commiseration, and to make an impression that would settle on the heart. The Christian orator tenderly affected by the greatness of the calamity, and the painful circumstances connected with it, declares that “in one single woe he will deplore all human calamities, and in one single death, show the death and emptiness of all human grandeur.” He has done it—he exhibits the earth under the image of a universal wreck—shows us man continually striving for elevation, and the divine power hurling him from the eminence. From the experience of her whom he deplores and celebrates, he vividly delineates the uncertainty of life, the frailty of youth, the evanescence of beauty, the emptiness of royalty, and the utter nothingness of all worldly greatness; while sketching

* La reine fut obligée à se retirer de son royaume, &c.

these pensive scenes, he continually returns to the princess, and shows us what she once was, and what she now is.

He describes the manner in which she was almost miraculously delivered out of the hands of her enemies.

* "In spite of the storms of the ocean, and the more violent commotions of the earth, God, taking her on his wings, as the eagle does her young, carries her into that kingdom; places her in the bosom of the queen, her mother, or rather in the bosom of the Christian church."

How terrible must have been the impression, when he spoke of her death; when after a sentence unusually calm, he suddenly cried out:

† "O! ever memorable, disastrous, terrific night! when consternation reigned throughout the palace; when, like a burst of thunder, a despairing voice cried out, '*the princess is dying—the princess is dead!*'"

At this sentence, the orator was obliged to stop—the audience burst into sobs, and the preacher was interrupted by weeping.

Some moments after, having spoken of the greatness of her soul, and the nature and extent of her virtues, he suddenly stops, and pointing to the tomb in which she is inclosed, exclaims:

‡ "There she lies as death presents her to our view; yet even these mournful honours with which she is now encircled will soon disappear; she will be despoiled of this melancholy decoration, and be conveyed into the dark receptacle, the last gloomy habitation, to sleep in the dust with annihilated kings, among whom it will be difficult to place her, so closely do the ranks press upon each other—so prompt is death in crowding this gloomy vault with departed greatness. Yet even here our imagination deludes us; for this form, destitute of life, which still retains the human resemblance, the faint similitude which still lingers in the countenance, must undergo a change, and be turned into a terrific something, for which no lan-

* Malgré les tempêtes de l'océan, et les agitations encore plus violentes de la terre, &c., &c.

† O! nuit désastreuse, O! nuit effroyable, &c., &c.

‡ La voilà que la mort l'a faite, &c., &c.

guage has a name; so true is it that everything dies that belongs to man, even those funeral expressions that designate his remains."

The following is the conclusion:

* "Should we wait until the dead arise before we open our minds to religious instruction! What this day descends into the grave should be sufficient to awaken and convert us. Could the divine providence bring nearer to our view, or more forcibly display the vanity and emptiness of human greatness?

† "I entreat you to begin from this hour to despise the smiles of fortune, and the favours of this transient world. And when you shall enter those august habitations—those sumptuous palaces, which received an additional lustre from the person we now lament—when you shall cast your eyes around those splendid apartments, and find their better ornament wanting, then remember that the exalted station she held, that the accomplishments and attractions she was known to possess, augmented the dangers to which she was exposed in this world, and now form the subject of a righteous investigation in the world to come."

We pass over several of his other orations to the one which we have always regarded as his best—that *on the Prince of Condé*. If ever an orator entered into his subject with the highest enthusiasm, and imparted it to his hearers with elevated passion, it was Bossuet on this occasion. He thoroughly comprehends the character and acts of him whom he celebrates; collects and combines in a manner the most admirable all the particulars which relate to his birth, his life, his death, his private character and public career. While thus happy in his arrangement, in description he has all the impetuosity of his hero, and details events with the rapidity and force with which his warrior gained battles. He seems to have at his command all incidents, present, past and future—he vividly paints, and skilfully unites them—he collects together, and presses upon the imagination a multitude of objects the most grand and startling—and hurries us forward with such precipitation that we

* Attendons-nous que Dieu ressuscite des morts, &c. &c.

† Commencez aujourd' hui à mépriser, &c. &c.

become almost breathless; all preparing us for the following conclusion.

* “Draw near to this mournful solemnity, people of every rank and profession—draw near, ye great, ye humble, ye rich, ye poor, and chiefly ye, O! illustrious progeny of the house of Bourbon, draw near, and behold all that remains of a birth so exalted, of a renown so extensive, of a glory so brilliant. See all that sumptuousness can perform to celebrate the hero! Mark the titles and inscriptions it has flung around—vain indications of an influence not now to be exercised. Mark those sculptured images, that, sorrowfully bending round yon monument, appear to weep: mark those aspiring columns, which magnificently attest our nothingness. Amidst this profusion of honours, nothing is wanting but the person to whom they are dedicated. Let us then lament our frail and fugitive existence, while we perform the rites of a sickly immortality to the memory of our departed hero. I now address myself particularly to those who are advanced in the same career of military glory. Approach and bewail your great commander. I can almost persuade myself that I hear you saying, ‘Is he then no more—our intrepid chief, who through the rugged paths of danger led us on to victory? His name, the only part of him that remains, is all-sufficient to excite us to future exertions; his departed spirit now whispers to our souls the sacred admonition that if we hope to obtain at death the reward of our labours, we must serve our God in heaven, and not be satisfied with serving our sovereign on earth.’ Yes! serve your heavenly King—enter fully into the service of your God, the great remunerator, who in the prodigality of his mercy will estimate higher one pious act, or a drop of water given in his name, than the sovereigns of the earth will prize the sacrifice of your lives in their service. Shall not they also approach this mournful monument, who are united to him by the sacred bond of friendship? Draw near, ye companions of his social hours; pay homage to the memory of your associate, whose goodness of heart equalled his intrepidity of soul, and let his death be at once the object of your sorrow, your consolation, and your

* Venez, people, venez maintenant, &c. &c.

example. As for me, if I may be permitted, in my turn, to deliver the sentiments of my affection, I should say, O! thou illustrious theme of my encomium and of my regret, thou shalt ever claim a place in my grateful recollection. The image, however, which is there engraved, is not impressed with that daring eye which foretells victory; for I will behold nothing in thee which death effaces; but on this image shall be found the features of immortality. The image presents itself as I beheld thee at the hour of dissolution, when the glories of the heavenly world seemed to burst upon thee. Yes, at that moment, even on the couch of languor, did I behold thee more triumphant than in the plains of Fribourg or Rocroy—so true is what the beloved disciple says: ‘This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.’ Enjoy, O prince, this victory, and let it be the object of thy eternal triumph. Indulge these closing accents of a voice which was not unknown to thee. With thee shall terminate all my funeral discourses; instead of deploring the death of others, I will labour to make my own resemble thine; and happy will it be for me, if, taking warning from these gray hairs, I devote myself exclusively to the duties of the ministry, and reserve for my flock, whom I ought to feed with the word of life, the glimmerings of an eye which is almost extinguished, and the faint efforts of a voice that is almost expiring.”

Nothing could be finer—nothing more effective to bring down our elevated feelings to calm serenity—nothing better fitted for the closing scene than those “gray hairs,” that “feeble voice,” that glance into a future state—all well adapted to inspire the heart with the tender sadness becoming such an occasion. Surely Bossuet should be placed in the same rank with men of eloquence, which Milton holds in the class of poets.

After Bossuet had left Paris, to enter upon his other functions to which he had been appointed, BOURDALOUE appeared in 1669; preached the “avent” before the court in 1670, and was chosen one of the preachers “before the king.” At his first appearance, his powers as a pulpit orator were highly estimated; multitudes of all classes crowded to hear him—his reputation thus early established, never diminished—the lustre increased as he advanced; and to the close of his life he was regarded by

all as one of the finest preachers of the age. He had not, it is true, the lofty talents of Bossuet, but he excelled in labour him whom he was incapable of equalling in genius; for forty years he devoted himself almost entirely to the art of preaching; to the preparation of sermons for the instruction of the people. These sermons, instead of sketches on which he enlarged during delivery, are full written discourses, prepared with much care; and on every variety of subjects suited to the pulpit. They are not such as answered only a temporary purpose, like vegetables of a night, or insects of a day; they are read as specimens of oratorical elegance; put into the hands of youth, as models; and presented as lessons for the formation of their taste and the improvement of their hearts. No one can read them without perceiving the elevation to which genius may be raised by intense study. In the variety of subjects which are discussed, we see a fulness and luxuriance which leaves nothing further to be said or supposed; an accurate logic which detects and exposes sophistry; an admirable use of the Scriptures, and sometimes of the Fathers; a profound knowledge of the human heart; a continued effort to keep himself out of sight, and an habitual aim at the conversion of his hearers—all expressed in a style simple and nervous, natural and noble.

A clear and proper method is visible in all his writings; to this he devotes much attention; in this he far excels Bossuet; he has the happy talent of arranging his arguments and thoughts, with that order of which the Roman critic speaks, when he compares the merit of an orator who composes a discourse to the skill of a general who commands an army*—every thing is found in its proper place.

But Bourdaloue is not more distinguished for the soundness of his judgment, and the strength of his reasoning, than for his power at times in affecting the passions. Not satisfied with impressing the mind with the sense of truth, he rouses the affections of his hearers by the energy and pathos of eloquence—we meet continually with those strokes of passion which penetrate and melt the heart. In his sermons on the *Passion of Christ*, of which he has many, but in which there is no repetition, (presenting in each the subject under different views,)

* "Est velut imperatoria virtus."—QUINT. INSTIT. II.

there are several instances. We quote from one, founded on Luke xxiii. 33, in which is illustrated the truth, that in the death of the Saviour, "righteousness and peace have embraced each other."

I. *Christ died as the victim of Divine Justice.*

II. *As an exhibition of Divine mercy.*

Under the first head the preacher asks; * "Who is the victim immolated on the altar erected on Calvary? None other than the eternal Son of God, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. From the moment of his incarnation, he became this sacrifice, he descended into the world and clothed himself with a mortal body to do homage to the Creator of the universe, and to offer himself a burnt-offering. In the temple of Jerusalem, this sacrifice was continued, when, presented by the hands of Mary, he was placed in the arms of Simeon; but that was the morning offering—this upon the cross was the evening sacrifice. But why was he exposed to this inexorable justice—this 'Lamb of God without blemish and without spot?' Of what crime had he been guilty? What had he done to draw upon him wrath from on high, and which exposed him to such ignominy and death. You know that in himself he is the Holy of holies; that in his celestial abode he received the adoration of the angelic spirits, that he was perfectly blessed, and that he needed no creature to add to his happiness; that when he appeared on earth as an exile, and deigned to converse with men, he knew sin only to combat and destroy it; that to him was rendered more than once that illustrious testimony which re-echoed along the banks of Jordan, and resounded upon Tabor—'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' Yet this Saviour, thus holy in himself, 'took upon him the form of a servant,'—yea, of a sinner; and though he had never committed sin, and was incapable of committing it, yet 'he bore our sins in his own body upon the tree;' his holy Father charged our sins upon him, covered, as it were, his whole soul with them—'laid on him the iniquity of us all.' Under an aspect so hideous, so abhorrent to infinite holiness, Heaven considers him on the cross; under such a weight of sin, the justice of God views him a fit object of its vengeance; it

* Car quelle victime lui est immolée sur l'autel, &c., &c.

suffers him not to escape; it pursues him in a hostile and vindictive manner, and pronounces the sentence of condemnation. Represent to yourselves the victim of which the apostle speaks in his epistle to the Hebrews (xiii. 11,)—upon which were placed the iniquities of the people for expiation, and which ‘was burned without the camp.’ It is a sensible image of what was accomplished in the person of our Redeemer. They conduct him out of the city—they bring him to Calvary—it is the last place where he is to appear, as the ‘man of sorrows;’ and there divine justice stands waiting to exact the whole debt for which he is responsible; to execute the heavy punishment by the executioners it has chosen. When God drove guilty man from Eden, he sent an angel with a double flaming sword to guard for ever the access to the tree of life. By the ministry of an exterminating angel he smote the army of Sennacherib, and for the safety of his people made known his power against the haughty monarch; but when a sacrifice was to be effected for the salvation of men, no angel was sent to afflict the soul of the Redeemer; supreme and sovereign justice itself descended, and invisibly presided over the bloody and terrible execution.”

In a similar manner the eloquent preacher proceeds, and shows in detail how the executioners of the Saviour are mere instruments in the hands of God of completing his purpose; and how powerful, and holy, and severe is that justice which crushes a God-man.

The second part, which represents the death of Christ as an *exhibition of the divine mercy*, affords a beautiful instance of antithesis; making, by the contrast, the object stronger and the impression deeper. In the first part, we behold the divine justice citing the Son of God to its tribunal, and sacrificing him, satisfied with nothing but his blood and death; so inflexible as to disregard his dignity and personal innocence; every thing, therefore, is awful, and the thoughts terrible. In the second part, all the love and grace of which the Saviour is capable, is presented, and every thing is tender and pathetic.

* “The nearer Jesus advances to the close of life, the tenderer is his heart; on the cross he breathes only mercy. He

* Plus il avance vers la fin de sa carrière, plus son cœur s'attendrit, &c., &c.

prays, and it is a prayer of mercy; he promises, and it is a promise of mercy; he gives, and it is a gift of mercy.

“1. *He prays, and it is a prayer of mercy*—of the richest mercy, for he prays for his enemies. He prays for the priests and rulers of the synagogue who had formed the conspiracy against him; for the soldiers who had arrested, the people who had insulted, the false witnesses who had calumniated, Pilate who had condemned, and the executioners who had crucified him. It would have been mercy most wonderful, if he had done it on the acknowledgment and repentance of their crime. But he pleads for them, when they are loading him with new outrages; when they are uttering blasphemies and imprecations; when they are shaking their heads with scorn, and saying, ‘he saved others—himself he cannot save—if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross’—when they are deriding his power and holiness, his offices and divinity. In the midst of such insults and execrations, he raises his eyes to heaven, and what does he ask? Is it not that the thunders may descend, that righteous vengeance may follow the commission of such horrid crimes? No! my brethren, mercy leads him to speak, no word is uttered which is not dictated by mercy. ‘Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.’ He does not say *God*, but *Father*, for that is a name more tender and endearing—more favourable for giving audience to petition, and for averting wrath. He does not plead for this one or that one less guilty than others in the conspiracy against him, but he prays in general, without excluding any, without excepting those who treated him so cruelly in the court of Caiaphas and Herod; those who scourged and smote him, or those who pierced his temples with thorns, or those who drove the nails into his hands and feet. There is not one whom his arms and bosom are not open to receive—not one for whom he would not be an advocate and intercessor. He more than prays, he extenuates their crime; his love leads him to find something to plead in their behalf—‘they know not what they do’—they are blind, and know not the enormity of the offence which they are committing; they know not whom they revile and torture; they know not that they are crucifying the Lord of glory.

“2. *He promises, and it is the promise of mercy.* Admire

the virtue and efficacy of that prayer which has just ascended to heaven—scarcely is it offered before it is answered, by a miracle of grace—scarcely is it offered before an enemy of Christ, a thief and malefactor, is converted and pardoned. He was a wretch, worse probably than Barabbas—a blasphemer who united with the other malefactor in reviling Jesus, for the Evangelist says, (referring to them both,) they ‘cast the same in his teeth.’ But behold, by a secret and resistless impression of divine grace, this bold blasphemer and robber changed into an humble penitent, who gives glory to God, who publicly confesses his sins, and acknowledges himself worthy of death, who publishes the innocence of that ‘just one’ who is crucified, who addresses Jesus as his sovereign, and asks admission into his heavenly kingdom, and who receives from the Son of God that consoling assurance, ‘to-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.’

“3. *He gives, and it is the gift of mercy.* Do you ask, what is his last will and testament? what the disposition of this dying man’s effects? what personal property or landed estate does he bequeathe? Ah! my brethren, what riches had he to leave who ‘had not where to lay his head’—who in ordinary circumstances was sustained by alms, and in extraordinary cases, by miracles? What then does he give? From that engine of torture to which he is fastened he looks down, and what is before those eyes that begin to be weighed down by the hand of death? His own mother Mary, and his beloved disciple, John—that is the priceless treasure, the precious succession. At this sight, all exhausted as he is, his heart awakens; in his state of suffering, increasing every moment, he is not so occupied as to be regardless of these friends; he cannot leave them without giving them a last proof of his remembrance, and a genuine pledge of his love; he cannot commend his spirit into the hands of his Father without affording them consolation. With serenity, firmness, and tenderness, he turns to his mother: ‘behold thy son—he will discharge the filial office, guard, nourish, and defend thee.’ Then saith he to the disciple, ‘behold thy mother—regard her as thou wouldst the tenderest of all connections, as thy mother.’ ‘And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.’”

The conclusion, in which the hearers are invited to cultivate love to Christ as the best preparation for death, is urgent and tender—we have however no room for it.

We have spoken of the fidelity of Bossuet in addressing his king; we find the same faithfulness in Bourdaloue; the same disposition to remind him of his duty to his God; the same pungent appeals to the conscience; the same, or severer reproofs of vices which were prevalent in the court. Instead of quoting from his addresses, we shall relate a circumstance which is well authenticated, illustrative of this trait in his character and of the power of divine truth; fully equal to the courage of John the Baptist towards Herod, or to the intrepidity of Paul before Felix.

In one of the sermons which he preached before the monarch, he described with great eloquence the horrors of an adulterous life, its abomination in the sight of God, its scandal to man, and all the evils which attend it; but he managed his discourse with so much address, that he kept the king from suspecting that the thunder was ultimately to fall upon him. In general, Bourdaloue spake in a level tone of voice, and with his eyes partly closed. On this occasion, having wound the attention of the monarch and the audience to the highest pitch, he paused. The audience expected something terrible, and seemed to fear the next word. The pause continued for some time—at length the preacher fixing his eye directly on his royal hearer, and in a tone of voice equally expressive of horror and concern, cried out, in the words of the prophet, "*thou art the man!*" then leaving the words to their effect, he concluded with a general prayer to heaven for the conversion of all sinners. When the service was concluded, the monarch walked slowly from the church, and ordered Bourdaloue into his presence. He reminded him of his general protection of religion, the kindness which he had ever shown to the society of Jesus, his particular attention to himself and his friends. He then sternly asked him, "what could have been your motive for insulting me, thus publicly, in the presence of my subjects?" Bourdaloue fell on his knees; "God is my witness that it was not my wish to insult your majesty; but I am a minister of God, and must not disguise the truth. What I said in my sermon is my morning and

evening prayer. May God in his infinite mercy grant me to see the day, when the greatest of monarchs shall be the holiest of kings." The king was affected, and silently dismissed the preacher; but from this time the court began to observe that change which led Louis to a life of greater regularity.

More known and read among us than either of the others of whom we have spoken, is MASSILLON; whose name is almost proverbial as a master of pulpit eloquence. He was transferred to Paris about the year 1690, and was therefore contemporary with Bourdaloue. Admiring him who at that time was regarded as the prince of preachers, he determined not to imitate him, but to strike out for himself a new path in the field of pulpit oratory. He was satisfied that profound argumentation is not sufficient for the pulpit; that a preacher must not only instruct the mind, but succeed in affecting the passions; that if some of the hearers are incapable of laying hold of an act of reasoning, all have souls capable of being moved by weighty sentiments. This plan he proposed; and this plan he executed like a man of genius.

None of the French preachers have so much of that *onction*, that tender and affecting manner which interests and allures; that mild magic, gentle fascination, endearing simplicity which characterizes the Evangelists. This is apparent in almost all his discourses. He has not, it is true, the sublime strains of Bossuet, and does not so often produce violent agitations, yet he succeeds in insinuating himself into the heart, and awakening the tenderest affections; he lays open the secret recesses of the soul with so delicate a hand, that the hearer before he is aware, is persuaded and overcome. Instead of wandering in abstract speculation, he has all the liveliness of continued address, and speaks *to* his hearers, *all* his hearers, because he speaks to the *heart*. This is the characteristic of his eloquence—what in others is proof and reason, in him is feeling. For this cause, every one saw himself in the lively picture that was presented; every one imagined the discourse addressed to him, and supposed the speaker meant him only. Hence the remarkable effects of his preaching. No one after hearing him, stopped to praise or criticise—each retired in a

pensive silence, and with a thoughtful air, carrying home the arrow which the preacher had lodged in his heart.

In his funeral orations, he is not so happy; he does not there fully sustain his character as an orator. He who in his sermons made his eloquence seen and felt—at one time gentle and persuasive, at another, strong and vehement; who knew so well how to paint religion in all its charms, and sin in all its deformity, who seldom failed in reaching the heart, here disappoints us, and shows that he was better calculated to instruct kings and princes than to celebrate them. We must not, however, overlook his funeral oration at the interment of Louis XIV— an office to which he was probably designated by the monarch himself; for we are told that among other arrangements which he made on his death-bed, he gave particular directions about his funeral solemnities. It is a discourse worthy, in many respects, of the grandeur of the occasion; possessing a majesty of style well becoming such an occasion, and adorned with all the magnificence of imagery—but yet, with all its richness, while it excites the highest admiration, it is scarcely capable of touching the heart. One excellency, however, must not be overlooked—it is not an unqualified eulogy—the orator speaks openly of the follies and vices of him whom he celebrates, and hesitates not to declare that this reign, so brilliant to the monarch, was most disastrous to the people; an instance well worthy of being noted, of the courage and fidelity of a minister of God.

The exordium has often been quoted. To see the propriety of the language, and to account for the effect, we must consider the text of the preacher, and the circumstances of his position. The text was Eccl. i. 16, 17—"I became great,* and got more wisdom than all they that were before me in Jerusalem; I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit." The circumstances were peculiar. The church was hung with black; a magnificent mausoleum was raised over the bier, the edifice was filled with trophies of the monarch's glories, day-light was excluded, and its place supplied by innumerable tapers; and the ceremony was attended by the most illustrious persons in the kingdom.

* Though in our version it is, "I am come to great estate," yet in the French, it is "Je suis devenu grand."

Massillon ascended the pulpit, contemplated for some moments the scene before him, then raised his arms to heaven, looked down on the scene beneath, and after a short pause, slowly said, (in allusion to his text, which he had already repeated,) in a solemn, subdued tone, "*God only is great!*" With one impulse, all the audience rose from their seats, turned to the altar, and slowly and reverently bowed.

Another instance of the mighty effect of his preaching, is known to every one, and has been quoted a thousand times—the instance mentioned by Voltaire, when Massillon preached his celebrated sermon on "the small number of the righteous." When the preacher was drawing near to the close, the whole assembly were moved; by a sort of involuntary motion they started from their seats, and manifested such indications of surprise and terror as for a time wholly disconcerted the speaker. We have often read the discourse to inquire what could produce such a startling effect. Much of it is to be attributed to the timely and repeated use of that powerful figure, Interrogation; a figure by which Demosthenes aroused the Athenians, and Cicero overwhelmed Cataline; a sure method, when employed at the proper time and place, of startling the hearers, and agitating the heart. The preacher had accurately described the character of the righteous—he had succeeded in separating his hearers from the rest of mankind; they thought of no others, and regarded themselves alone as criminals to be judged. They see the judge descending, ready to make the separation and to pronounce the sentence; they are filled with trembling solicitude to know on whom the thunder will fall; their imaginations are terrified and their thoughts confused. When the orator has brought his hearers into this state, and sees their countenances reflecting their emotions, then gathering all his strength, and with tones and actions corresponding, he pours forth the sublime apostrophe; "Where! O! my God, where are thy people? Where are you, O! ye righteous—stand forth, and enjoy your reward!" There is a startling surprise in this interrogation, that may well excite sensation. The words increase the consternation which had long been gathering; each hearer answers the repeated questions put to him by personal accusations; he feels that he is the criminal; he hears the irrevocable sen-

tence; and he shrieks and trembles, lest it be immediately executed.*

If Bossuet be compared to the great Athenian orator, Massillon may well be termed the "French Cicero." Like him, he is rich in ornament, pathetic and persuasive; has a diction smooth and elegant, and is capable at times of seizing and captivating the heart.

We shall not present any extracts from his writings, as so many have been translated into English; though it is much to be regretted that some of these translations are so weak and inaccurate, and fall so far short of the original.†

We cannot take leave of these illustrious preachers without inquiring into their *manner of delivery*. Like the ancients, they regarded it as an essential branch of oratory, paid to it eminent attention, and are said to have carried it to a high degree of perfection. Bossuet, (as we have already intimated) seldom wrote all that he said. Retaining in his memory what he had composed in his closet, he filled up the unfinished sketch in the pulpit, and found a readiness of expression, marked with energy and grace. Bourdaloue and Massillon wrote their discourses in full, and preached memoriter; the latter, so accurately, that when asked, which he regarded as his best sermons, he replied, "those which are the most exactly remembered."

Bossuet, in his personal appearance, was liberally gifted by nature for an orator; possessing a fine and majestic figure. He spake with great authority, in a manner which indicated the

* This sermon was preached a second time with most powerful, though not perhaps equal effect, in the royal chapel at Versailles, when Louis was deeply affected.

"Une commotion fut excitée par le même trait de ce sermon dans la chapelle de Versailles. Louis XIV. la partagea devant Massillon qu'on vit aussitôt changer de visage, et couvrir son front de ses tremblantes mains. Les soupirs étouffés de l'assemblée rendirent l'orateur muet pendant quelques instants, et il parut lui-même encore plus consterné que toute la cour."

† His "Le Petit Carême," or Discourses before Louis XIV., and his work on the "Priesthood," have been well translated; but we cannot say the same of some of his best sermons, translated by Dickson. That work is servilely liberal, retaining the French idioms, expressing the thoughts of the writer most unskillfully, presenting rhetorical and grammatical errors, and giving us very little idea of the elegance of Massillon. If he had been translated, as Saurin has been, by Robinson, how much more would he be read and prized!

expectation of success; with a strong, firm, and manly voice; with an air of candour, simplicity, and vehemence, which showed that his object was to convince and persuade, rather than to gratify and please. Bourdaloue, in one respect, was peculiar; in the delivery of his sermons, especially in the exordium, he partially closed his eyes, and is so represented in all the portraits of him we have seen; though he was never charged with the want of ease or grace. In his manner, he was grave and serious, and had all the dignity of a prophet. His voice was full and clear, and when elevated to the highest pitch, was sufficient to fill the largest house with the volume of the sound, and to produce a deep impression. His eloquence was usually attended with a strong conviction that great as he was as an orator, he was still greater as a Christian and a minister of God. Massillon approached still nearer to perfection, and had the power of uttering his sentiments with the highest possible skill. His clear and melodious voice was completely under his control—the lowest whisper could be distinctly heard—and some of his tones were so sweet and tender that they went directly to the heart, and at once drew tears from the eyes. And yet, when necessary, his shrill tones penetrated like arrows; he could utter such piercing cries, as would startle his hearers, and bring them upon their feet—and by such instances of the terrible, make his whole audience bow before him. Thus differing from each other, these orators, in one respect, were all alike; in their elocution, they imitated nature, as they had, in composition, followed her directions. They spake with such life and spirit, such freedom and fervency, that (whether Bossuet was speaking extempore, or Massillon repeating what he had committed to memory,) all seemed to come fresh from the mind and heart.

Such is the character of that eloquence which once prevailed in France, and such the character of the men who employed it. They exerted a commanding influence, and swayed the minds, and imaginations, and feelings of their auditors, as Demosthenes did the Athenians, and Cicero the Roman senate. Deeply affected themselves, they deeply affected others; strong emotions displayed by words, countenance, tones, gestures, the whole manner, produced, we have seen, effects perfectly over-

powering. Is not eloquence like this—the eloquence of warmth and passion—peculiarly suited to the pulpit? Must men be regarded as mere intellectual beings, void of sentiment and feeling? Is not this elevation of soul and style as well adapted to our age and country as to the age of Louis the Great, or the country of France? Would it not produce similar effects? Shall men be allured to our sanctuaries by artificial attractions rather than by the charms of eloquence; by the gorgeousness of architecture rather than by that most attractive of all arts, the art of speaking; by the fascinations even of music, rather than by that enchanting oratory, which, while it expands the understanding, touches the secret springs of the heart? That will please men long after external ornament ceases to gratify; satiated as they will be, in time, by other arts, they will never be weary in their attention to solid thoughts well attired, and well exhibited, in listening to a preacher habitually under the influence of strong passion, and speaking boldly, ardently, and simply.

May the time soon come, when there shall be multitudes of such preachers; when great numbers, embracing the whole truth, without any mixture of superstition or error, shall speak in the sublime strains of BOSSUET, with the energy and elevation of BOURDALOUE, and with the insinuating grace and melody of MASSILLON.

Lidor L. ...

ART. II.—*The Gymnasium in Prussia.*

THE various forms assumed by associations for the promotion of science were divided by Schleiermacher into three classes: Schools, Universities, Academies. These names, as well as the division itself, have in view that perfect development of these forms which is only to be found in Germany, where the school may be said to be the place where the soil is broken by the plough and harrow, the university that where the seed is sown, and the academy that where the mature fruit is to appear. The latter, then, is an association of the learned as such, a body of *producers* of science; the university prepares the *con-*