

# The Church.

"HER FOUNDATIONS ARE UPON THE HOLY HILLS."

THEREFORE I WILL NOT BE NEGLIGENT TO PUT YOU ALWAYS IN REMEMBRANCE OF THESE THINGS, THOUGH YE KNOW THEM AND BE ESTABLISHED IN THE PRESENT TRUTH.—2 PETER 1, 12.

VOLUME II.]

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[NUMBER XXXI.]

## Poetry.

### THE OFFERING.

I see them fading round me,  
The beautiful, the bright,  
As the rose-red lights that darken  
At the falling of the night.

I had a lute, whose music  
Made sweet the summer wind;  
But the broken strings have vanished,  
And no song remains behind.

I had a lovely garden,  
Fruits and flowers on every bough;  
But the frost came too severely,—  
'Tis decayed and blighted now.

That lute is like my spirits—  
They have lost their buoyant tone;  
Crushed and shattered, they've forgotten  
The glad tones once their own.

And my mind is like that garden—  
It has spent its early store;  
And, wearied and exhausted,  
It has no strength for more.

I will look on them as warnings,  
Sent less in wrath than love,  
To call the being homeward—  
To its other home above.

As the Lesbian, in false worship,  
Hung her harp upon the shrine,  
When the world lost its attraction,  
So will I offer mine.

But in another spirit,—  
With a higher hope and aim,  
And in a holier temple,  
And to a holier name.

I offer up affections  
Void, violent, and vain;  
I offer years of sorrow,  
Of the mind and body's pain:

I offer up my memory—  
'Tis a drear and darkened page,  
Where experience has been bitter,  
And whose youth has been like age.

I offer hopes, whose folly  
Only after-thoughts can know,—  
For, instead of seeking Heaven,  
They were chained to earth below!

Saying, "wrong and grief have brought me  
To thy altar as a home;  
I am sad and broken-hearted,  
And therefore am I come.

Let the incense of my sorrow  
Be, through Christ, a sacrifice;—  
The worn and contrite spirit  
Thou did'st never yet despise."

[Communicated.]

### ENGLAND'S RESPONSIBILITIES.

FROM A VISITATION SERMON BY THE REV. DR. CROLY.\*

In presenting the argument of this great truth to you, my brethren, the laborious and learned pastors of the Church, it is possible that I may tell you little which has not already occurred to your own minds. But I am not aware that it has been used before; and I feel that no argument can be superfluous, especially in our time, which demonstrates that the Church of England, in being made the depository of Protestantism, is made the depository of a direct gift of God. In proving the Reformation to be thus the act of an immediate Providence, I do not limit myself to its doctrines. Its purpose was, not to give a third revelation, but to restore the previous one—to renovate fallen Christianity. The argument is,—that Judaism and Christianity being confessedly given to the world by the Divine will, the Reformation, given to the world under circumstances closely similar, is, like them, to be regarded as a direct work of Heaven.....

A third great interposition was to come. In the long lapse of a thousand years Christianity had decayed; it was to revive in the Reformation. In this instance, too, a distinct and appropriate preparative was to be given. From the sixth century to the fifteenth, the human mind was in a lethargy. There is scarcely any one work of that immense period which can be regarded as an increase to human knowledge. Europe was a great intellectual prison, of which superstition kept the key: But when it was the Divine will to rescue man from this more than thralldom, this slavery of the soul, a sudden burst of intellectual splendour, like the light that shone round the angel in the dungeon of Peter, like it, announced the hour of deliverance. The 14th and 15th centuries still live recorded as the most memorable advance of the human mind.

Yet I should not adduce even this era, if its products could be accounted for by the habitual progress of human intelligence. But all its great inventions were what is termed accidental; yet, what should more justly be termed, the work of Heaven assisting the tardiness of man. First was given that restless compound, which came to change the state of war, and with it the state of nations; to erect a barrier for ever against barbarian invasion; and making opulence and science essential to military success, make even the triumphs of war dependent on the strenuous prosecution of the arts of peace. Then the magnet, which threw open every quarter of the world to European intercourse. Then printing, which threw open every mind of the world to European literature;—the consummate gift! which, by rendering all past knowledge imperishable, provided for the accumulation of all future; by rendering it universal, provided for the freedom of the human understanding in all lands, and, achieving its most unparalleled triumph at its first step, gave the Scriptures into the hands of mankind. But it is not on the greatness of any one of those disco-

\* From the St. James's Chronicle.

veries, nor of them all, that I rest their origin. I see them coming from quarters wide asunder, and then gathering into one concentrated radiance. It is not the blaze from a peculiar spot; it is the lustre shooting from round the whole horizon, which tells us that it is from above,—that it is the dawn, and heralds the sun.....

While Europe was thus panting in the chase of knowledge, while scientific zeal had begun to mingle with new feelings of unconscious freedom, while every eye was lifted to expect the advent of some glorious enlightener from the skies—the German Reformation was given! Christianity, purified from the long corruptions of the dark ages, and appealing as of old to the understanding, was given, as of old, to that understanding, excited, trained, and strengthened for its reception. It was scarcely 20 years from the discovery of America, when Luther preached his first sermon in Wittenberg, and in that hour laid the first stone of the Reformation!.....

Thus is our country the depository of a direct gift of Heaven; and accountable for its protection and honour under the heaviest penalties of public ruin. In this aspect there is much to dread; yet, I will believe, much more to cheer. No encouragement can be given to the human heart, more calculated to nerve and elevate all its powers, than the conviction, that it is contending in the unquestionable cause of God; that its object is unequivocally holy; and that whatever may be the human results of the struggle, its reward is sure with Him "who seeth in secret, but rewardeth openly." I will believe that the great Disposer of all things has not set this glory before England, only to throw light on her shame. That He has not thus lifted her on the wings of the Spirit, only to cast her down. That He has not especially bound on her imperial breast the Urim and Thummim of the Gospel, only that their effulgence might be darkened, and that she might incur the twofold guilt of a twofold treason—alike as the head of empire, and the head of Christendom. On the contrary, it is my gravest impression, from the whole course of Providence with Protestant England, that it is the Divine will to put within her reach an extraordinary prosperity, unless she shall reject the boon; that the widest extent of empire, the most redundant physical, moral, and intellectual opulence, and the most dignified, secure, and universal honour, are not beyond the offer held out to her, if she will but do her duty in the hour of trial. I solemnly believe that that hour is at hand.....

Yet, if a powerful moral change should be wrought; if the Continent should no longer exhibit, as it does at this hour, only the capacities of our nature for corruption; if it should cease to be only a huge museum of the morbid anatomy of the human mind; probably the most piercing eye would not discover the limit to her happiness. With religion and morals at the head of the national advance, all that human ambition has ever dreamed might be tardy and pale to the rapidity and splendour of a march, guided, like the march of Israel, by the Living Glory. If the hour shall ever come for preaching to those 'spirits in prison,' there may be no bound to the grandeur of an ascending triumph, in which 'Captivity shall be thus led captive,' and new and imperishable gifts received for every generation of man.

I disclaim all local politics;—they are unfit for the pulpit. But politics on the scale of nations; politics, reverentially tracing the courses marked on the map of Providence; politics, taking the lights of Heaven for the illustration of its ways among men; form a legitimate purpose of the pulpit, and form one of the noblest contemplations of the philosopher, the theologian, and the Christian.....

But the most singular and pregnant omen is in the East. There the star of change has risen with sudden and perplexing beams. If man ever speculated on innovation, it must have been in the activity and ardour of Europe. On the threshold of the East it dared not plant its foot. The oriental love of ancient customs; the oriental contempt for European; the oriental tyranny; the oriental superstition; the tiger ferocity of the despot, linked with the serpent ferocity of the bigot; the scimitar lying on the Koran; all precluded change. Yet it is into the midst of this most stagnant, prejudiced, and intractable race of earth, that innovation has come with matchless force; that it has plunged, like a thunderbolt into a lake, and roused up all its depths, flashing on every side. It has come upon the three great branches of Islamism—the Turk, the Arab, and the African—and come upon them all at once. It has come upon them from different sources—fear of conquest, ambition of independence, violent aggression. Yet it urges all in the same direction. From Algiers to Constantinople, Islamism is flinging off its ancient and cumbrous robes, and striding with gigantic steps into that arena where every passion and every energy of man will soon be demanded and displayed.

How are those things to be accounted for? The principle of population is beyond all human control; the inventors of those new facilities of intercourse can have no political purpose; the foreign sovereigns can have no desire to shake their own security; the African and Asiatic can have no sympathy with our objects. What other solution of the universal problem is to be found, but that this extraordinary concurrence of natural means and human impulses comes from that Supreme Source of power and wisdom, who moulds the times and the minds of men, and does all for ultimate good?.....

Why do I conceive that the Church of England is divinely summoned to be the teacher of Europe? Because I see the force of uncontrollable circumstances suddenly placing her in the condition to be that teacher; throwing a new light upon the infirmity of her rivals; and compelling the nation, by a stronger evidence than was ever administered before, to acknowledge her superiority as the guide of the national mind. On this comprehensive subject I must now merely glance. I desire also to speak in language of the most moderated order. Schism and superstition are alike the natural enemies of the Church of England. They are the enemies of more. Schism, by making opinion the rule of authority,

makes religious confusion a principle. Superstition, by making authority the rule of opinion, makes religious tyranny a principle. But the hostility of both to the Church had been long palliated under the plea of natural indignation at the refusal of privileges. The plea is now extinct. Not a vestige of precaution remains on the side of the Church; not a fragment of restraint on the side of her adversaries; not a hair's breadth of separation excludes either from all privileges. There evidently exists no jealousy of either among the present dispensers of dignities. But, has the result been peace? Whom has the conciliation conciliated? Has either been content to extinguish the long discord, and beat the sword into the ploughshare? Or has not the sword been flung into the scale, with the contempt of an acknowledged victor, in the very act of treaty? Both have declared, in the plainest language, that the Church of England must be destroyed; that our bishops must be expelled from the legislature; that our churches must be no longer upheld by the nation; and that our clergy must be driven to the state for subsistence—a subsistence which might thus depend on the voice of the very individuals who had given them only the alternative of being paupers or slaves—'Delenda est Carthago!.....'

The people of England are a sedate, a rational, and a feeling people. They have no love of change, they suspect innovation without utility as the sign of coming evil. They are not, like one branch of the foreigner, dissatisfied, unless they see churches and constitutions shifting before them, with the rapidity of scenes in a theatre; nor like another, always looking on earth and heaven distorted through a metaphysic fog. They love to follow their old pursuits in peace, and to reverence the old institutions, which made their forefathers great and happy. They are the last people in the world to clear the ground for new fabrics of polity or faith, by breaking up the tombs of their ancestors. Ascribing their prosperity and their virtue to the united influence of a regulated freedom and a Scriptural religion, they will not patiently see either torn down. And thus guarding the principles, they will equally guard the rites and organs of their national integrity. They will not suffer marriage, of all human ties the holiest and most essential, to be loosened into a vulgar bargain; nor baptism to be degraded into a superfluous ceremony. Nor will they suffer their Universities, the noblest strongholds of learning and sacred truth in the world, to be stormed before their eyes, and stormed not for the purposes of tenancy, but of dilapidation. They will look with disdain on the conscience that exhibits its new-found sensibility in the evasion of notorious contract; and will utterly refuse to join in the confiscation of the oldest property of the realm, under the cloak of the voluntary principle—that bill of indemnity for every meanness and every fraud of man. They will look with still deeper disdain on religionists hurrying from the extremes of opinion into an unhallowed embrace, reconciled only by conspiracy, and compromising their mutual antipathies only in sacrilege. Finally, they will remember that England has been twice brought to the verge of ruin, within less than two centuries, by both schism and superstition; that she escaped in the first instance only through the havoc of a civil war, and in the second, only through the perils of a revolution; and they will not have the madness to provoke a third hazard, only to escape by miracle.

This is the true antagonist, the colossal challenger, with the 'helmet of brass, and the spear like a weaver's beam.' See the haughtiness and daring of the defiance. Fifty years ago there were not 50 Romish chapels in Scotland, England, and Wales; there are now upwards of 500 in England alone! Cathedrals are rising; monasteries and colleges are preparing to fill their ranks; enormous contributions are levied; in all the vaunted illumination of the 19th century, Rome is sending back upon us the morals, the discipline, and the darkness of the 13th. We must not fall into the capital error of mistaking the danger. Compared with this solid and progressive usurpation, Dissent is nothing. The true peril of the mariner is not in the ice-land, shaped in chill and obscurity, sure to break up into fragments by its nature, and vanishing as it meets the sun. The danger is in the shoal, growing beneath the surface, continually shifting its shape, yet continually advancing, till it spreads over the waters, and makes wreck inevitable and irretrievable.....

In full contrast to her adversaries, the people see the Church of England—with all her ancient majesty unimpaired, and with even more than her ancient vigour awakened; sustaining the purity of her own doctrines and discipline, yet allowing to every man the full rights of conscience; ministering to the good order of the state, yet keeping aloof from the factions and follies of the time; indefatigably labouring for the poor, yet disdaining to court popularity by a bribe to their passions. With new respect and gratitude, they see her, in all the tumults of the period, steadily pursuing her way to the public welfare, forming great plans of education, gathering the multitude into new temples, pouring out her munificent charity to her afflicted brethren, at the ends of the earth, spreading that most exalted gift of human benevolence, the Bible, wherever man can live and be redeemed, and planting her dignities, her discipline, and her principles, in mighty kingdoms, yet to reflect her image on a bolder scale. Like the sacred tree of India, projecting her noble branches far and wide, that touch the ground only to take root, rise in statelier beauty, and sanctify the land with a broader shade.

### HOMELITURGICAL.

No. XI.

### THE LESSONS.

Amongst the many excellencies of our highly prized Liturgy, there is none worthy of higher commendation than the provision which is made in it for the public reading of "God's most holy Word." The Liturgy itself, in its whole construction and in the doctrines it embodies, is Scriptural; and by the large portion of the Word of God which it intro-

duces, it makes, as it were, a constant appeal to the sacredness of the foundation upon which it is built: it reiterates those holy and precious truths by which its devotions, its prayers and praises, have been framed.

In the dark days of the Church, when an overshadowing cloud hid the fair face of truth from the world, and a corrupt priesthood sought by every means to rivet the spiritual bondage by which the minds of men were enthralled, the sacred Word of God, which "giveth understanding unto the simple," was studiously concealed from the people. They were not permitted to peruse for themselves its comforting and awakening lessons; nor had they opportunity, like the Bereans of old, of comparing the instructions they received with the fountain of truth from which it was professed that they were drawn. But when a brighter day dawned upon the overclouded Church of Christ, and when, by the blessed Reformation, the chains of superstition were snapped asunder, one of the first-fruits of the glorious change was the restoration to the people of that precious charter of their salvation, from the sight of which they had been so long debarred.

This to Christians is an inestimable privilege; for if they "cannot hear without a preacher," neither can they confide in the counsels which the preacher offers, unless the means be afforded of comparing the instructions which he delivers with that holy Book from which all Christian exhortation should be derived.

"Search the Scriptures," is a command of our Saviour which his Apostles have reiterated;—an injunction which, no doubt, was meant to apply primarily to the duty of perusing them in retirement, and rendering them the subject of daily study and meditation. But what is a necessary adjunct of a Christian's obligation in private, it would be manifestly inconsistent to separate from his duty in public. While in secret he prays and offers up his praises to God, and searches as for a "hid treasure" the holy Scriptures,—so when, openly in the congregation, he expresses his thankfulness and presents his petitions to the throne of grace, it is but right and dutiful that he should then make his appeal also to the Book of books, the Bible.

In this public reading of the holy Scriptures there are obvious practical advantages. There are some persons in almost every community, who cannot of themselves read the Word of God; and therefore it is a high privilege to such to receive the knowledge of its truths, and experience the comfort of its promises, by this their public proclamation. And while some are so circumstanced as to be unable to read the Bible for themselves, there are more who are unwilling to do so: that blessed Book is perhaps in their possession, and they are without excuse for neglecting the study of it; but it is laid aside unopened and unregarded. Such persons, however, are often constrained to hear in the house of God what at home perhaps they neglect to look into. Moreover, through "the hearing of the ear," impressions are often communicated which a private perusal of the Scriptures might not have an equal effect in producing; and sometimes warnings and counsels from the Book of God, pronounced in that public and solemn manner, have an influence which, under ordinary circumstances, might not be in the same degree awakened.

The Exhortation at the commencement of the service, in enumerating the ends of public worship, states one to be,—the "hearing of God's most holy Word," and therefore, after the conclusion of the Psalms,—themselves, strictly speaking, a portion of that Word,—we proceed, with a peculiar propriety, to the reading of other portions of the Scriptures. By the devout exercise of reading the Psalms, the mind is elevated and the heart warmed to heavenly themes; and that, surely, is the moment in which the record of God's gracious dealings in providence and grace, as furnished in the Scriptures, is likely to be received with the greatest reverence and improvement. The same sort of preparation is afforded, indeed, by the whole course of devotions which precedes the reading of God's word: "he which prayeth in due sort," says Hooker, "is made more ready to hear; and he which heareth, the more earnest to pray."

The custom of reading the Holy Scriptures in public, which our Church has retained, derives incontestable authority from the example as well of the Jews as of the early Christians. Ezra, who himself collated most of the Scriptures of the Old Testament into one volume, we are told, "brought the law before the congregation—and he read therein from the morning until mid-day, before the men and the women, and those that could understand." And "he stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose—and he opened the book in the sight of all the people.—Also the Levites caused the people to understand the Law—and they read in the book, in the Law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading."\* In our Saviour's time, we find that the Scriptures were read in the synagogues on the Sabbath-day;† in the Apostles' days, the law and the prophets were read on the same occasions;‡ and from St. Paul's injunction to the Colossians that his epistle should be read among them and also in the Church of the Laodiceans, we are to infer that the public reading of the Scriptures was customary in the assemblies of the Christians.‡

Such, too, was the practice of the Church immediately succeeding the times of the Apostles. Justin Martyr, who flourished A.D. 140, speaking of the Lessons and of the usual manner of explaining and applying them, says, "On the day called Sunday, there is held a meeting in one place of all the people, whether they dwell in towns or in the country; and the writings of the Apostles and Prophets are read, as far as time and opportunity permit." Tertullian also, who flourished A.D. 200, describing the public worship of the early Christians, says, "We meet together to hear the holy Scriptures rehearsed—for by them we support our faith, exalt our hope, and establish our confidence. We

\* Nehemiah i. 1—8. † Luke iv. 16. ‡ Acts xiii. 15, and xv. 21. § Coloss. iv. 16. See also 1 Thess. v. 27.