

The Church.

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, I, 12.

VOL. I.]

COBOURG, U. C., SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1838.

[NO. XXXVII.]

Poetry.

THE CHURCH BELLS.

I heard the chime of the merry bell
On the breeze of the forest flowing—
And as I listened to each full swell,
I thought on the hearts that were glowing;
But the wind soon chang'd, and bore away
The happy sounds of pleasure,
And I thought how the heart must often stray
Without its most valued treasure.

I heard—and the note was chang'd to woe,
And the funeral peal was knelling:—
And I thought of the tears that were doom'd to flow,
And the hearts that grief was swelling.
But again the wind blew the sounds afar—
But again the wind blew the sounds afar—
And I thought how soon ends sorrow:
'Tis a tear in the morn, and a sigh in the eve,
And a smile, perhaps, to-morrow.

And I heard—and the bells rang the Sabbath peal
Which nor merry chim'd, nor sadly;
And the steady wind did no change reveal,
As when notes were mixed more gladly.
There was no change, as when woe had been
The burden'd music's measure:—
And I thought—that peace lies more between
The extremes of pain and pleasure.

Sunday Reader.

THE ENGLISH LAYMAN.

No. IX.

THE ORGAN.*

When beneath the nave,
High arching, the Cathedral organ 'gins
Its prelude, lingeringly exquisite
Within retired the bashful sweetness dwells;
Anon like sunlight, or the floodgate rush
Of waters, bursts it forth, clear, solemn, full;
It breaks upon the mazy fretted roof;
It coils up round the clustering pillars tall;
It leaps into the cell-like chapels; strikes
Beneath the pavement sepulchres; at once
The living temple is instinct, ablaze,
With the uncontrol'd exuberance of sound.

The organ is an instrument of great antiquity, and was known to the Romans during the latter period of the Empire, though not exactly in its present state. St. Jerome, a Father of the fourth century, describes one that could be heard a mile off, and says that there was an organ at Jerusalem, the sound of which reached even to the Mount of Olives. It was in use among our Anglo-Saxon ancestors, as passages in the works of Aldhelm, (who died A. D. 703) and Bede, (who died A. D. 735) most fully prove. "St. Dunstan (J. A. D. 903) great in all the knowledge of his day,"—remarks Sharon Turner,—"as well as in his ambition, is described to have made an organ of brass pipes, elaborated by musical measures, and filled with air from the bellows;" and in the tenth century, one was erected in Winchester cathedral by St. Elphage which was of such immense power, "that," the same writer remarks, "the effect of its diapason and choruses on the ears of the Anglo-Saxons must have been so tremendous, and so like a battle-cannonading, that all melody must have been lost in the overpowering roar within a confining edifice, however spacious." Seventy men, forming two companies which worked alternately, supplied it with wind; so that in the cathedral there were probably, according to the conjecture of the Rev. H. Soames, many unglazed apertures, otherwise machinery so colossal must have emitted sound almost beyond endurance.

From the tenth century, organs were more and more introduced into cathedrals, Abbies, and larger churches, until at last they became identified with the national worship. The hand that for a time expelled them from the sanctuary, was that of their own familiar friends, of a party in the very bosom of the church. When the Puritan clergy were gradually undermining the battlements of the Establishment, and depriving it, one after another, of those decent ceremonials, which constituted its outer wall of defence, they levelled some portion of their wrath against that ungodly relic of Popery, the organ. In the commencement of Queen Elizabeth's reign, the leaders of the Nonconformists, though still remaining within the fold of the church, included the use of music, and of organs in divine worship, among the scruples which their tender consciences could not overcome. In vain did the moderate divines of Zurich, to whom they referred their doubts and difficulties, advise them to submit to many matters indifferent in themselves, rather than endanger the peace of the Reformed Church of England. Their blind zeal, which at first could not tolerate an organ, went on unrestrained, until the church itself, fell beneath wounds inflicted on it by its own undutiful children. When Laud succeeded the Puritanic Abbot, in the see of Canterbury he found the chapel at Lambeth, "a scene of filth, disorder, and decay,"—internally and externally neglected,—the organ broken and tuneless. This he immediately repaired, and his so doing, formed the substance of one of the many baseless charges urged against him on his trial. He had

* The erection of a new organ in the church of St. James at Toronto has led to the compilation of the present article. Of this instrument, and its humbler predecessor, it is to be hoped that some account will be transmitted to 'The Church.' It is a duty we owe to those who may come after us, to record every incident in our ecclesiastical history, and to hand down the names of those generous benefactors who have built a house unto the Lord, or, when built, have furnished it with those instruments, decorations, and appliances, which are prescribed or permitted by our Ritual.

previously incurred a storm of obloquy, and the imputation of Papistical practices, when he introduced an organ into the chapel of St. John's College, Oxford, of which he was the munificent President.

As the darkness fell thicker and thicker on the Church of England, this instrument, which, by the common consent of many nations for many centuries, had been dedicated to the service of religion, was more and more inveighed against and proscribed. The Clergyman who defended its use, was summoned before the Committee for Scandalous Ministers, or, as it might be more appropriately termed, the Scandalous Committee for Ministers: the organs were sold to tavern-keepers, and, ceasing to administer to devotional purposes, became subservient to the Puritan's stolen pleasures, accompanying the demure drunkards of the Commonwealth in their "bestial bacchanalias."

So successful was the warfare waged against them, that, at the Restoration, an organist, or organ-builder could scarcely be found. To supply this want, foreign artificers were invited to repair to England; and thus encouraged Bernard Schmidt (Smith) and his two nephews, natives of Germany,—and Harris, and his son, natives of France, commenced trying their fortune in London. A contest for superiority soon arose between these musical clans, which was decided in favour of the Smiths by the notorious Lord Chief Justice Jefferies. The Temple Church was the scene of this harmonious discord, and the victorious masterpiece still remains within the walls of a sanctuary, which a Hooker and a Benson have made vocal with their holy eloquence. The rejected instrument, which though rejected, was still one of surpassing excellence, travelled to the Cathedral of Christ-Church at Dublin, and subsequently from thence to the Parish Church of Wolverhampton.

Though the organ is admitted into the churches of England, Holland, and Rome, and into those of Germany, Protestant as well as Catholic,—it is entirely banished from the severer forms of the Scottish Kirk. Yet even in the latter denomination, some innovating Erastians, as old Mause Cuddie would have designated them, have at various times attempted to introduce the 'Kist fu' o' whistles' into their places of worship. Bishop Horne, in a sermon preached by him in 1784 at the opening of the new organ in Canterbury, says that he believes some Presbyterian ministers have adopted it in their chapels. In the Presbytery of Glasgow, however, at their meeting on the 7th October 1807, after deliberating at great length, a resolution to the following purport was adopted: "That the Presbytery are of opinion, that the use of organs in the public worship of God is contrary to the law of the land, and to the law and constitution of our established Church, and therefore prohibit it in all the churches and chapels within their bounds." And this may be considered as the general opinion of the Kirk. I am not aware, whether our respectable half-brothers, the Wesleyan Methodists, are friendly, as a body, to the introduction of organs into their chapels. One of their brightest ornaments, the late Rev. Richard Watson, gave his opinion in favour of their use in large chapels, when the end for which they are introduced, to assist congregational singing, is steadily maintained.

In our own venerable and beloved Church, which steers a midway course between the chilling nakedness of Nonconformist worship, and the gorgeous ceremonies and sensual allurements of the Roman Catholic Ritual, the use of organs has not only been sanctioned by immemorial prescription, but vindicated by our most learned, pious, and apostolical divines. Jeremy Taylor, whose prose is but one continuous strain of the noblest, the sweetest, and most musical poetry,—and whose heterodoxy on this point must therefore strike us as the more extraordinary,—in a tone of faint and dubious approval says, he "cannot condemn instrumental music, if it be used as a help to Psalmody." Yet a higher authority on such a subject, the wise and irrefutable HOOKER, has delivered a decision which, it may safely be pronounced, is the rule of our church to this very day:—"They which, under pretence of the law ceremonial abrogated, require the abrogation of instrumental music, approving nevertheless the use of vocal melody to remain, must show some reason wherefore the one should be thought a legal ceremony, and not the other. In Church music* curiosity and ostentation of act, wanton, or light, or unsuitable harmony, such as only please the ear, and doth not naturally serve to the very kind and degree of those impressions which the matter that goeth with it, leaveth, or is apt to leave in men's minds, doth rather blemish and disgrace that we do, than add either beauty or furtherance unto it. On the other side, these faults prevented, the force and efficacy of the thing itself when it drowneth not utterly, but fitly suiteth with matter altogether sounding to the praise of God, is in truth most admirable, and doth much edify, if not the understanding, because it teacheth not; yet surely the affection, because therein it worketh much. They must have hearts very dry and tough, from whom the melody of the Psalms doth not sometime draw that wherein a mind religiously affected delighteth." "It is not

* The end of Church-music is to relieve the weariness of a long attention; to make the mind more cheerful and composed; and to endear the offices of religion. It should therefore imitate the perfume of the Jewish tabernacle, and have as little of the composition of common use as is possible. There must be no voluntary maggots, no military tattoos, no light and galliardizing notes; nothing that may make the fancy trifling, or raise an improper thought: this would be to profane the service, and bring the play-house into the Church. Religious harmony must be moving; but noble without; grave, solemn, and seraphic; fit for a martyr to play, and an angel to hear. It should be contrived so as to warm the best blood within us, and take hold of the finest part of the affections.—Jeremy Collier. Essays II p. 25.

wonderful," says Dr. Hawkins, the Reverend Provost of Oriel, the latest authority I can adduce,—"that the organ has been so long and so closely associated with sacred songs and sacred edifices, when it does not necessarily divert even a single Christian from his own devotions, and yet so beautifully and appropriately assists the devotions of the whole congregation by its magnificent compass, and its solemn tones."

Who that has ever poured out his devotions within one of England's venerable cathedrals, survivors of the Puritanic tempest, without feeling himself enwrapped in a frame of mind, pure, spiritual, and seraphic? As the organ swells or sinks, he rises and falls with its wings; he soars from a world of pain into regions such as Milton has described, and enjoys a fruition such as the same bard represents angels as enjoying, when they "circle the throne of Heaven rejoicing," and strike Hallelujahs from their golden harps. If aught of earth intrude into his thoughts, it is perchance, a passing vision of the angelic Herbert wending his way to Salisbury to taste his "heaven upon earth," cathedral music,—or of the blind Milton, reviving the ancient union of poet and musician, and with his own hands pouring melody into his own ears. Perchance also when the worshipper's overstrained imagination returns from wandering through the empyrean, where it has been lost in conjecturing the condition of saints and martyrs in their beatified state, he thinks of those earthly means and appliances, which may assist him in attaining an immortality, the glories and bliss of which it is beyond the power of man to conceive. Among these he instantly recollects that the ministrations of his fathers' church, are the most efficient; and filled with the genius of the place, ravished with the strains that softened the Puritan Iconoclast, with the monuments of ages around him, bathed in a flood of varied light, peered through rich painted windows, and with the dust of generations beneath him, he vows within the secret chambers of his heart, that, while the breath of life is in his nostrils, he will defend the bulwark of England's liberties, the National Church,—internally he ejaculates, "when I forget thee, O thou church of my country, may my right hand forget its cunning." "Let us,"—writes the Quarterly Reviewer, whom I suspect to be Dr. Southey,— "Let us bring the sternest of our northern brethren, who ever denounced the Papistical 'Kist fu' o' whistles,' and place him within the choir of York, or in King's College chapel, and if he be not entirely of Cassius's vein, we do not doubt that we should find him surprised into involuntary devotion; and even perhaps bowing the knee to Baal. There is something in that wonderful instrument itself which the Puritan spirit would rashly have assigned over to the enemy, the fulness of sound, without the visible appearance of human agency, which appears singularly adapted to devotional purposes. We know little of the human heart, we know little of our own, if multitudes have not felt the purest devotion heightened by those sounds accompanying one of our own simple scriptural anthems; if many, who were never disposed to devotion before, have not derived incalculable advantage from feelings thus kindled for the first time."

The Haarlem organ for a long time bore the reputation of being the largest in the world; but a writer in the *Penny Magazine* for 1834, states that the organs at Seville, Gœtitz (Upper Lusatia), Marsoberg, Hamburg, Weingarten (a Benedictine monastery in Suabia), and Tours, are all larger than that of Haarlem, and that the new instruments at York and Birmingham exceed them all. I have very lately met with an account of a wonderful organ at Freyburg in Switzerland, built within the last six or eight years, and said to be capable of imitating all other instruments, and the human voice. The maker, Moser, now about 75 years of age, is reported to have declined building one, on a similar plan, for the King of France, saying that he was too old to build another, and that he wished his own city to possess the only instrument of the kind in the world. No one is allowed to see the interior.

The largest organ on this continent is, probably, at Baltimore.

ALAN FAIRFORD.

Toronto, 7th February, 1838.

HOMER BIBLEICÆ.

No. X.

THE FIGURATIVE STYLE OF SCRIPTURE,

CONTINUED.

Although sceptical readers of the Bible may be disposed to ridicule some of those figures which appear to them extravagant, and even absurd; yet any one who lends an impartial attention to the subject, will clearly perceive that the occurrence of imagery, which would be frequently obscure, and sometimes unintelligible to us, was to be expected in any composition formed on the model of our sacred writings.

First. The innovating hand of time has rendered many things obsolete; and, consequently, the allusions which in metaphorical language are made to those things must be difficult, if not impossible, to be understood. And when we recollect that some portions of the Scriptures were written more than 3000 years ago, and that the latest of them were written between 1700 and 1800 years ago, it would have been very remarkable had we lost sight of none of those customs and none of those events on which the figures of Scripture are founded.

Secondly. The difference between the scene and climate in which the sacred writers lived, and our own, forms another barrier to the right understanding of their figurative terms. This prevents us often from perceiving the full force of a passage even when its beauty, nevertheless, powerfully affects the mind. Thus, when the Psalmist says, "As the hart panteth after the