

Poetry.

FAITH.

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* Now faith is the substance (subsistence) of things hoped for, the evidence (demonstration) of things not seen.—Heb. xi. 1.

Faith is the vision of the soul,
The telescopic view
Of things beyond the eye's control,
That mortal never knew,
Until the spirit's pow'r unseal'd
His spell-bound thought, and heav'n reveal'd.

Faith is the secret charm that brings
Assurance from on high,
And lends the new-born spirit wings
Of angel-ecstasy;—
He that is destitute of faith
Dwells in the gloom of legal death.

Faith is the operating grace
That opens the fount within,
And, from the heart's most secret place,
Pours forth the dregs of sin;—
'Tis faith that "sweetly works by love,"
And makes the very mountains move.

Faith is the saint's security,
When deep afflictions roll
Around his pilgrim-feet, and darts
Of hell assail his soul;—
He stands upon the cov'nant rock,
Nor dreads the complicated shock!

Faith is the mystery that veils
The pang of death, and flings
Around the Christian's dying couch
Such high imaginings.
Who have not seen a Christian die,
May wond'ring pause and question why?

Whence then is faith? has ever earth
Its pure enjoyment giv'n?
No; 'tis a pow'r of heav'nly birth—
Its Author reigns in heav'n;
And it has pleas'd Him to declare
That faith shall only rest on pray'r.

Review.

A Short Catechism on the Duty of Conforming to the Established Church, as good subjects and good Christians: being an abstract of a larger Catechism, on the same subject. By the Right Rev. THOMAS BRUCESS, D. D., Bishop of St. David's. Ninth edition: London. Re-printed at St. John, N. B., by Lewis M. Durant & Co. 1937: *With an Addition to the Re-print.* 12 pp.*

"Q. WHAT were the persons called, whom the Apostles appointed to govern the Church and administer its ordinances?"

"A. They were called Bishops, Priests, and Deacons."

In the opinion of the Rev. Doctor, these imply three distinct, ecclesiastical orders. Where, then, in the New Testament, and by which of the sacred writers, are the governors of the church so called? No book, or chapter, or verse, is quoted, and therefore we are left entirely in the dark as to the source whence the

compiler has derived his information. How foolish would the scholar appear, who, having been instructed in this catechism, was asked for the scripture proof of the above assertion! The New Testament in no one place asserts a distinction between Bishops and Presbyters, called Priests, but in several places speaks of them in a way implying perfect equality: and, in no one instance, is there a hint in the New Testament that bishops are "overseers" of presbyters. If this be not the case, the contrary can easily be shown: but, in all fairness, the passages adduced should, at least, state the superiority of bishops with clearness equal to that with which several passages state their equality. Such passages have not been adduced: such passages cannot be adduced. The fact is known, that the proof of diocesan episcopacy is rested principally upon the supposed testimony of the Primitive Fathers in its favour. The only oracle, by whose authoritative decisions, it can alone be confirmed or established, so as to render it obligatory, is perfectly silent; and this should be sufficient to satisfy the mind of every person who regards the Sacred Scriptures as the perfect and only rule of faith and practice. As to those who, to support a system, are disposed to pay greater regard to human than divine testimony on the subject of ecclesiastical authority, it would be waste time to hold an argument: and yet, even the Primitive Fathers, when divested of interpolations and fairly examined, prove beyond doubt the fact, that the superiority of bishops was the work of time and the result of human expediency, whereby, the episcopal mode of church-government is deprived of that robe of supposed divinity in which some of its good, but mistaken friends, have decorated it. Is it not strange, that we hear nothing about the divine character of episcopacy and "the uninterrupted succession" from the Reformers of the Church of England? There is not a syllable on either of these subjects in any of the Articles of the Church of England. The thirty-sixth Article, which treats "of consecration of Bishops and Ministers," contains a mere declaration of the belief of the compilers that persons consecrated or ordered to the offices of Archbishop, Bishop, Priest and Deacon, according to the rites of a certain book set forth in the time of Edward the Sixth, and confirmed by authority of Parliament, are "rightly, orderly, and lawfully consecrated and ordered." Nothing, however, is contained in this Article to the disparagement of other modes of ordination. They preferred the episcopal mode, and the Article is only declaratory of this preference, and binding only on those who subscribe to it. This is a point of great importance in this discussion, as it shows that the compilers of the Articles were not carried away by such exclusive and intolerant notions as many in later times have been who profess to follow in their steps. That the Reformers of the Church of England built not their claims to the ministerial character on any original superiority of bishops is evident from their sayings; and that many of the brightest ornaments which have ever adorned the Church of England, Divines of the first eminence, have professed and declared similar views, cannot be denied by any per-

* Continued from p. 76.]