

The Berean.

THEY RECEIVED THE WORD WITH ALL READINESS OF MIND, AND SEARCHED THE SCRIPTURES DAILY, WHETHER THOSE THINGS WERE SO.—Acts xvii. 11.

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[Vol. I.]

Poetry.

THE FAIREST OF THE FAIR.

Say sinner, wilt thou go with me,
And leave the gay delusive scene,
Where dangerous snares are laid for thee,
And ruin smiles with treacherous mien?
Oh, quit a while the tempting bait
While I my gentle suit declare,
All heavenly charms around me wait,
For I am Fairest of the fair.

For thee I left the realm of bliss,
Nor cast one sorrowing look behind,
For thee endured the darkest night,
And bare the blast of winter's wind;
I clothed myself in mortal clay,
Humble my birth, and hard my fare,
Thy helpless sorrows to allay,
Though I am Fairest of the fair.

Come, and I'll pardon all thy sin,
And take thy load of guilt away;
I'll make thy spotted nature clean,
And turn thy darkness into day;
Through life I'll guide thee with mine eye,
And make thee my peculiar care;
For all thy wants there's rich supply
In Me, the Fairest of the fair.

FROM A MS. BOOK.

EPISCOPAL TESTIMONY.

Close of an Address by the Right Rev. John Johns, D. D., Assistant Bishop of Virginia, at the Annual Meeting of the Convention in May last.

Under ordinary circumstances, the preceding record of services and statistics, with such interspersed remarks as the facts suggested, would comprise all that is called for in an annual address. It is, however, as I have reason to believe, expected that I should embrace this occasion to record briefly my testimony touching the difficulties by which the Church at large has, within the last few years been disquieted. Those difficulties have been too often identified to require being defined here, and too ably met, as I conceive, to need any new mode of resistance for their counteraction. To their origin, nature and tendency your attention has just been directed by the address of my Right Reverend Brother. With the principles of that address, my own views so accord, that to give it my endorsement would be enough to acquit my conscience at this juncture. The whole system which it opposes, I cannot but regard as unscriptural—at variance with the doctrines of the Reformation, as embodied in our Articles—and so pernicious in its influence, that were it to succeed in effecting the changes which it seeks, by assimilating to itself the standards and usages of the Church—that Church, in the language of the present Metropolitan of India, "would not be worth preserving"—or rather, so far as primitive truth and protestant principles are concerned, it would be already destroyed. I am constrained to regard the whole system as originating largely in a most mistaken desire to magnify unduly the office and functions of the Christian ministry, by superadding to its just claims, pretensions to a kind of priestly character and service, not only unrecognized, but discountenanced by the Gospel. To effect this, the nature, design, and efficacy of the Sacraments, and the range and powers contemplated by the evangelical commission, are withdrawn from the light in which they are set by the inspired penmen, and shrouded in a mystery which overawes investigation, and invested with a superstitious sanctity which forbids all interference. The relation of anxious inquirers to the Saviour, is thus seriously changed. Instead of a direct personal approach to Him whose language is "come unto me," they are required to seek acceptance and sanctification through the hands of a priestly order, to whom, exclusively, the dispensation of these blessings is committed, and by whom they are imparted in a way which, after all modest explanation, savours more of spiritual legerdemain than of evangelical truth and simplicity. To sustain this spurious system, the appeal is not directly to the Scriptures—these alone, by many who have spoken out, are represented as an insufficient, and on some points, an unsafe rule of faith and practice—whilst others of this school, without indulging in positive expressions of disgust, betray the same mind by maintaining that the only safe position from which to study the Word of God is in company with the post-Nicene fathers and in submission to their conscientious interpretations. Hence the theory which insists, not avowedly on another rule than the Sacred Scriptures—but upon that which is tantamount to such substitution, the recognition of what is termed the concurrent testimony of the fathers as authoritative in the determination of the meaning of Scripture, and binding on the conscience. Their competency as witnesses to matters of fact, we do not question. For the information which they furnish, we are grateful. But as theologians and expositors of God's Word, we receive their opinions not without due consideration. The moment we admit the insufficiency of the Sacred Scripture—associate any thing co-ordinately with it as a rule of faith, or yield implicitly to the authority of any uninspired teachers, we become liable to gross imposition and fatal error. Any system which even connotes at such a surrender of Christian liberty and prostration of human intellect, needs, in my view, no other condemnation. The Bible, my brethren, after all, is and must be our religion. As Clergy, we are bound by solemn oath of office, to teach nothing as necessary to Salvation, but what may be clearly proved by Sacred Scripture. It is because our Creeds and Articles may be so proved, that we believe them. And it is

because our ecclesiastical organization and our mode of worship have, as we are satisfied, this clear sanction, that we maintain them. It may be necessary to feel one's way down into the darkness and corruption of the middle ages in quest of other views and practices which, when found, are worse than useless—tending in general to exalt the priest at the expense of the Saviour—despoiling Him of His mediatorial garments for the adornment of His ministers—and impoverishing and degrading His people, to aggrandize and glorify those who should deem it honour enough to be "helpers of their faith and joy." To say that the dogmas and ceremonies, which it is now attempted to revive amongst us under the miserable misnomer of "Catholic verities and usages," and the sanction afforded by the unguarded language of later fathers and the occasional inflated phraseology of a few of earlier date—do not differ materially from the wholesome truths set forth with so much simplicity in our Articles—to maintain that the present controversy is mainly a mere verbal disagreement, is preposterous—unless words have no definite meaning, and serve only to cloud and conceal, and not to convey ideas. That the movement which we condemn is made in such mystery—that such, to a considerable extent, is the character of the style and thought of many of its abettors, we concede. It is not surprising, therefore, that they should sometimes be misapprehended—and if so, the fault is with themselves. But it must be observed, they profess to understand, and they deplore the uncanonical position of the church to which they avowedly belong. They mourn over it as "working in chains." They have declared their purpose to be "unprotestantize" it. We give them credit for their discernment and design. We see that what they desire, would indeed be the result of the prevalence of their schemes, which we regard as Romanism not in germ only, but in considerable and increasing development. And as we are satisfied with the Church as it is, and seek no change, but least of all, such change as they would give us, we feel bound, according to our vow, "with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away from the Church these erroneous and strange doctrines, contrary to God's word, and both privately and openly to call upon and encourage others to do the same.

LABOURERS FOR THE HARVEST.

Let us look at the instrumentalities we possess for the performance of this work. It may be said, that though the harvest is plenteous, the labourers, according to the text, are few; and that therefore, while the prospect of the former is calculated to arouse our energies, the view of the latter is equally depressing to our hopes. Yet, when the Saviour spoke these words, the labourers were few; very few; and to one who did not reflect on the power of Him with whom is "the residue of the Spirit," it must have seemed a vain thing to attempt with so few the regeneration of the world. But since that time, the company of the preachers has vastly increased: they were then to be counted by tens, but now by tens of thousands: so that this part of the text is not so applicable in the present day. And when we reflect on what was done in the life-time of the "few" to whom the Saviour's words had reference, we cannot but think, that if their spirit were restored to the Church again, she might, with the multitude of labourers which she now possesses, and an ordinary measure of blessing, speedily bring the world under the influence of Christianity, in profession wholly, and in principle in good degree. The resources of the Church then, in this view, are abundant in regard to men. But there is another view of this matter. Not only are those actually enlisted, be their spirit what it may, more numerous than when our Lord was upon the earth, but the mass out of which new conversions are to be made is vastly increased. At the date of the delivery of our text, if any man was made a missionary, he must first be made a convert: now the converts are many, out of whom missionaries may be called. Christian men—and every true Christian has in him the germ of that principle which make a man a true missionary. Christian men are numerous amongst us. In this sense also, therefore, the labourers abound. There is some force in this remark, as it appears to me, especially in application to young Christians.

In every great enterprise, as the planning and counselling and directing belong naturally to the aged, so the execution devolves upon those of fewer years. Now of the young there are many within the bounds of the Church, our portion of it particularly, who, I might say, are waiting to have their energies called forth and directed to the missionary field. Many are the young men of strong heads and warm hearts, and sanctified affections, ready, when the matter is properly laid before them, to hear and obey the call of the Church, and go wherever the spiritual wants of men may seem to require. My own observation would lead me to conclude, that there are quite as many of the character described, ready to go forth, as the older members of the Church, whether clerical or laic, in their zeal for the cause, are ready to urge to the duty, or even to let go.

So far as there is a deficiency in the supply of labourers, one chief obstacle is the unwillingness of parents to part with their children. This is true not only of those who by baptism in their infancy are members and merely members of the visible Church, but even of fathers and mothers who have personally acknowledged themselves not their own, and have presented themselves to God, their bodies and souls, and all that they have, and are, in the most solemn rite of our religion. Even they allow their mere natural affection as parents, to stand in the way of their Chris-

tian duty and privilege. They are unwilling to give up the society of their children, or unwilling to see them give up the prospect of comfort and, it may be, eminence at home, to go to an obscure and distant corner of the world. It is indeed most astonishing that it should be so,—that a follower of Christ should desire any thing so much for his children as that they should live a missionary life, and be laid, yea, even prematurely, if only worthily, in a missionary grave. One would think if the very "joy and crown of rejoicing" of a Christian parent, that God had given his child the heart to forsake all for Christ; and that if the labours of the missionary field, or the insalubrity of the climate, or any other peril by land or by sea, should send him "before his time" to heaven, it would be more than sufficient consolation for that parent through the rest of his own earthly pilgrimage, though made lonely and sad thereby, to reflect that he had one waiting him above, who had travelled thither by the way Apostles trod. As he professed to count Christ more "precious" than all things else, one would think his first desire would be that his child should be able cheerfully to leave father and mother, brothers and sisters, and all other objects of affection on the earth, from love to Christ and those for whom Christ died. Oh the gross inconsistency! A Christian parent holding back his child from the most Christian form of life! One who has by solemn profession given his very heart unto the Lord, refusing to surrender his child, even though he testifies that the Lord has called him, and that he feels ready, like the youthful Samuel in the temple, to reply: "Speak Lord, thy servant heareth." Yes, this is a great inconsistency—a sore evil. One of the severest rebukes ever uttered by the tender and compassionate Jesus, was directed against this spirit. In the passage referred to, the words are addressed indeed to the son, but they fall most heavily on the parent. On a certain occasion a disciple whom our Saviour had called to follow him, expressed himself by the plea: "Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father."—a sufficient plea on the principles of the mere natural man, or of a carnal Christianity. But what was the answer? "Jesus said unto him, Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead."—We judge no man: what are we that we should judge another man's servant? But in view of these words, may not professing Christian parents be urged to inquire, whether, when they keep back their children from the missionary field, they do not betray some of that "deadness" to God and eternal things, which is here condemned; whether they are not deficient in that all-absorbing view of Christ and his glory, that entire devotion to his kingdom and cause, which are here insisted on?—The children of this world might shame such children of light. Patriotism has often accomplished for others, what their religion cannot do for them. During the Revolutionary war, a traveller came to the hut of a poor widow, and found her at her door busily occupied with her needle. He had been informed that she had a family of sons full grown, but he knew nothing more. As in the warmth of his patriotism he ventured to urge, that in the then pending struggle for civil rights and national existence, nothing should be kept back; that though in widowhood she ought not to withhold her sons from the service of her country; her quiet answer was, that two had already gone to the wars and perished, and she was now making garments for the third and last, that he also might go,—she could only hope not to perish!—We are commanded to make to ourselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness: might not the Christian parents we have been speaking of, take a lesson from the patriotism of the world?—From the Rev. Dr. Sparrow's Sermon before the Board of Missions of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, preached in June last.

THE LATE REV. CHARLES SIMEOON'S EXERCISE OF PATRONAGE AND LIBERality.

Mr. Simeon's conduct in these respects has indeed been objected to, on the ground of its tendency to advance the interests of a party, and thus to promote schism and its attendant evils. But this objection derives all its force from a misapprehension of the actual state of things in our establishment. There are, there always have been, and there probably will long continue amongst its ministers, and its members, very different opinions on points of essential importance. On the one hand it is maintained that "man is by nature depraved and sinful," that we are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and not for our own works or deservings; that "we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working in us when we have that good will." On the other hand, these statements are either directly opposed, or in great measure explained away; the depravity of man is regarded as little more than a figurative expression: it is asserted that he is by nature innocent; that he is accepted of God, if not in whole, yet at least in a great degree, by his own merits; and that he can repent and turn to God when he pleases. Now they who maintain the one class of these positions, must regard the supporter of the other as advancing dangerous and destructive doctrines, and it therefore becomes the duty of those who are fully convinced in their own minds of the dangers to which their opponents are exposed, to exert themselves to the utmost to bring them off from their pernicious sentiments, and render them sound in the faith. If I apprehend an individual to be in danger of everlasting death, true charity requires me to use every lawful means in my power to

rescue him from his danger, and bring him into the way of life and salvation; and it is a false and mistaken charity which leads me to let him go on, in what appears to me evidently a wrong course, under any fallacious imagination, that perhaps he may not be so very wrong as he appears to be, or may possibly at last be saved though as by fire. On the contrary it is an obvious duty to warn, entreat, beseech, and by every means in my power persuade him to turn from the dangerous path, and enter into the way of life and peace, now while there is hope. On this principle Mr. Simeon acted; while men called him uncharitable, he evinced true charity by exerting himself to his measure, yea, and beyond his measure to rescue others from those dangers to which he saw they were exposed; and the effect of his exertions was such, that multitudes were through his instrumentality brought to sounder views, and went forth to preach those doctrines, which, however opposed by some, and distasteful to others, are yet interwoven and embodied with the Liturgy, the Articles, and the Homilies of our church. With those doctrines the sentiments entertained and promulgated by Mr. Simeon were strictly accordant, and we invite all who have any doubts upon the subject to compare the statements in his *Horæ Homileticæ* with those of our authorized formularies, and to compare both with the only infallible standard, the Word of God.

Such was ever his own conduct. His appeal was to the Law and to the Testimony; he called the attention of the members of our church to the form of sound words established and daily used amongst us. He appealed many years ago to wise men to judge what he said by that standard; while able himself both to read and preach, he read prayers with inimitable feeling, and tenderness, and propriety; and it was his delight after he had been compelled gradually to relinquish other attempts of doing good, to receive at his rooms a few students or young ministers, and assist them in attaining the rare and difficult art of reading our admirable Liturgy with propriety, affection, and ardent devotion. The same zeal for the glory of God which actuated Mr. Simeon's exertions with reference to the particulars already noticed, induced him also to labour on behalf of the various institutions which have been, from time to time, established for the promotion of true religion in the world. The Church Missionary Society—the Bible Society—and especially the London Society for the Conversion of the Jews—occupied a prominent place in his affection and his liberality; and to their support at different periods he contributed to the amount of many thousand pounds: while he travelled, and preached, and pleaded in their behalf as long as his health and strength would permit. He devoted considerable sums of money to the assistance of poor pious students, and to preparing suitable young men for, and maintaining them at, the University. He was also a liberal contributor to numerous other charities, and to many, very many cases of private distress; in such instances he was always ready to attend to the recommendation of friends. His bounty was prompt and large, and bestowed with the feelings of one who knew that it was more blessed to give than to receive.—From a Sermon by the Rev. Thomas Webster, Rector of St. Botolph's, Cambridge.

THE BISHOPRIC OF JERUSALEM.

Exhibiting Union.—It is to be hoped that the bishopric of Jerusalem may become the bond of union between Christians of England and Germany. The Prussian Monarch intends to send members of his own Church to Jerusalem, to receive orders at the hands of the new Bishop, and then to assist in labouring amongst the Jews, or in ministering to those among their own countrymen who may settle in the Holy Land, subject to the jurisdiction of the new Episcopate; and thus, in the city of peace, and over the tomb of the Saviour, the national Churches may join the right hand of fellowship, and commence a communion which, it is to be hoped, will speedily become universal. That such an union of Protestant Churches is as desirable as a re-union with the ancient branches of Christ's Church, can be doubted by none, whose desire for catholic unity is sincere. The charity of him who would exclude, from the sphere of his sympathies, the Protestant, though sound in the faith, and court to his embrace those, of whom his own Church teaches, that they commit "Idolatry to be abhorred of all faithful Christians," is not the charity of the Gospel. The religion of Christ carefully marks out the difference between the form, even though divinely appointed, and the substance, which is as unchangeable as God himself. And he is but slenderly read in the Gospel who elevates the former to the rank of the first, or even the second great commandment, or maintains that sacrifice is more acceptable than mercy. If we truly desire the cessation of all schism, and the re-union of all Christ's believing people, we must especially desire that all those who have been delivered from the errors of Romanism, may be associated in apostolic discipline as well as doctrine, and both be united to those Churches of the East, who join in the same protest against Papal usurpation. The Bishop of the Church at Jerusalem appears as the first-fruits of an union so desirable, the emblem of the hearty co-operation of national Churches in extending the kingdom of God.

Not making light of error.—It is universally conceded, that schism and heresy are sins which the Church of England may not connive

at: It is equally certain, that in the churches amongst which she is to appear in the completeness of her discipline there exist errors of doctrine and practice, of which she cannot dare to make herself a partaker. It is doubtless our duty to treat these errors with all tenderness—to remember who made us differ—to be humbled at the thought of our own abuse of superior light and privileges. But no appearance of external unity can warrant us to make light of the difference of right and wrong, to do evil that good may come, or to sacrifice truth. And here it is to be hoped that the sight of pure reformed worship, directed by a bishop, and accompanied by the good offices of Anglican Christians, will be peculiarly beneficial. The heretical Churches of the East are considerable, both for their numbers and their power. To restore such in the spirit of meekness, is the Church's bounden duty: for though erring, they are still children, purchased with Christ's blood, and called by His name. In the time and manner of their original excision there is much to palliate their guilt. In their present professions there is much to make us doubt whether they are obstinate in error. But, whatever their error or their sin, the chief Shepherd came to seek and to save that which was lost, and has left us an example to follow His steps. In making this attempt, a bishop of our own Church would have much in his favour. He would appear, not as the champion of a party, but the advocate of truth. Having no selfish interests to advance, no triumphs of controversy to achieve, he may be listened to dispassionately, and be liable to conciliate to truth, without making any concession to error. Happy the Church, and blessed the minister who shall in any wise contribute to heal those ancient wounds! Thrice blessed and thrice lovely "the feet of him" who shall exhibit, in the East, Christianity unstained by idolatry, unobtrusively manifest the light of pure religion to professing Christians, and remove the stumbling-block out of the way of Jew and unbeliever. To make known the Gospel to the Jews is a main object of the present appointment. The pious monarch, who has called upon the English Church and nation to unite with him in this labour of love, had his attention first arrested by the Mission to the Jews in Jerusalem, and the attempt to build a Protestant church upon Mount Zion. He saw that, without religious freedom and legal protection, the success of these labours must be much impeded; and that, without a bishop as representative of the Reformed Church and her interests, her claims could scarcely be understood; and least of all, a beneficial influence be exercised over the Churches of the East. The Royal proposition, therefore, had special reference to the work of preaching the Gospel to the Jews; and the superintendence of those who labour in it will constitute no inconsiderable part of the Bishop's care and duty. That it is an important object, a scriptural duty, worthy a monarch's attention, a bishop's care; a Christian church's most strenuous efforts, can be doubted only by those who misinterpret the prophets, or misunderstand the Gospel.—The Rev. Dr. A. McCaul's Sermon at the consecration of the Right Rev. Bishop Alexander.

The King of Prussia on the erection of a Protestant Episcopate in Jerusalem.—His Majesty cannot doubt that Protestant Christianity owes it to herself and to her Lord, in such a moment, and on such a stage, not to present to the world the stumbling-block of her discord and separation, but to set the good example of her communion in faith, and her unity in action. She does not intend to present herself in those countries, in the face of those more anciently established communities, and in presence of Jews and Mohammedans, in order to persecute, to deprive, to exclude, to create dissension, or to disperse and to dissolve. She will announce her mission to the world, not as a work of hatred and jealousy, but as a message of charity, of peace, and concord.

FAMILY PRAYER.

A household in which family prayer is devoutly attended to, conjoined with the reading of the Scriptures, is a school of religious instruction. The whole contents of the sacred Volume are in due course laid open before its members. They are continually reminded of their relation to God and the Redeemer, of their sins, and their wants, and of the method they must take to procure pardon for the one, and relief for the other. Every day they are receiving "line upon line, and precept upon precept." A fresh accession is continually making to their stock of knowledge; new truths are gradually opened to their view, and the impressions of old truths revived. A judicious parent will naturally notice the most striking incidents in his family in his devotional addresses; such as the sickness, or death or removal for a longer or shorter time, of the members of which it is composed. His addresses will be varied according to circumstances. Has a pleasing event spread joy and cheerfulness through the household? It will be noticed with becoming expressions of fervent gratitude. Has some calamity overwhelmed the domestic circle? It will give occasion to an acknowledgment of the Divine equity; the justice of God's proceedings will be vindicated, and grace implored through the blood of the Redeemer, to sustain and sanctify the stroke. When the most powerful feelings, and the most interesting circumstances, are thus connected with religion, it is not unreasonable to hope that, through Divine grace, some lasting and useful impressions will be made. Is not some part of the good seed thus sown, and thus nurtured, likely to take root and to become fruitful? Deeply as we are con-

* The Right Rev. Bishop Meade; see the last two numbers of The Berean.

* Mark xii. 28, 31.

* The King of Prussia.