

THE CHRISTIAN SENTINEL.

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CHURCH AND STATE.—No. III.

(Concluded from p. 125, No. XVI.)

17. It is reproachfully said, that the connection of Church and State is an *adulterous* connection. A heavy charge indeed!—But wherein, or how is it so, or by what law? When did the connection first become so shockingly impure? What part of *God's* word supports the accusation? What say "the law and the prophets?" Surely we cannot go to that law which bound the Church and State together in the same bundle, to find its own condemnation; nor yet to the prophets who, in foretelling "*good things to come*," assure the Christian Church that "*kings shall be its nursing fathers, and their queens its nursing mothers*." What also says the Gospel? "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth shall pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

If the connection is now adulterous, it never was otherwise; for we may lawfully claim that it is now what it ever has been, because the Author of it has never promulgated a statute stamping it with any different character from that first given it: not to say how exceedingly out of place it would have been for the Almighty at so early a period in the history of man as his very creation, and subsequently in separating a *holy and peculiar people* from the midst of an apostate world, to establish an order of things which, in the lapse of time should, by some unknown process, become so exceedingly unclean. The charge cannot but be unadvisedly made. "Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities."

We have shewn that Church and State do exist together in the strictest sense of the words in every consistent Christian Family: but the sinfulness and impurity of it have not yet been formally announced. For the sake of consistency, however, it should be proclaimed upon the house-tops by those who take such offence at a *divine* institution..... *Fiat voluntas, si ruat mundus!*

But what then is spiritual adultery? Read the first and second Commandments; and if they are not explicit, turn to Ezekiel the twenty-third, and Hosea the four first chapters..... But why should the Church be espoused to the State, seeing she is the spouse of Christ? We reply interrogatively: Did not the *same persons* compose the Jewish Church that composed the State; and was not even every private individual a part of both Church and State? The truth is, the State was the Church, and the Church was the State; the true condition of a people under the moral government of God. The difference was only this; one department discharged this duty, and another that; so that whatever they either did, it was God's work, and they did "all to the glory of God." We find the same in family-government, as far as its jurisdiction will bear a parallel. Government is for religious instruction, and religious instruction is for government. And so we ought to find every Christian State conducting its whole policy. A Christian politician, or soldier, ought always to regard himself as in the service of God and his Church, and scorn an action or line of policy that the Bible would condemn. A Christian lawgiver, or a body of them, ought invariably to legislate as if their business was to promote the glory of God in and by his Church; for by the Church, and that only, have we access to him, and come under his moral rule: "to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God." Every man who aims to be a sound politician, should be a good Christian, and understand the importance of the Gospel as it mingles itself with civil institutions, imparting to them the elixir of life, health, strength and durability. A state governed entirely by the Bible would be INVULNERABLE and INDESTRUCTIBLE to the end of time!—How could it fall, when it was composed of "Kings and priests unto God," "keeping his covenant, and thinking upon his commandments to do them?"

18. There are things in which man is concerned that are joined together as co-operators for mutual benefit and the result of common advantages. "It is not good" that either should be alone, but enjoy "a help-meet." Male and female God created man, each sex being endowed with appropriate qualifications, and each necessary to the preservation and happiness of the other. One is formed for the more rough and hardy duties of life; the other for those that are gentle, bland, persuasive, softening and humanizing. The one provides and protects from without; the other manages in privacy and retirement, and as it were, converts into life and loveliness the crude material furnished to her hand. They both are fellow-labourers in the production of mutual happiness.

The destiny of man is connected, in another department, with something not entirely dissimilar to the above, both as to the pairing of twain, and the happy consequences of certain influential and interchangeably operative causes. The proper government and direction of the human mind in a state of society and subordination, comprises two sets of principles, (if the expression be allowable,) which run together in beautiful and harmonious coalescence, and produce the most beneficial results. These are, the State machinery, or that political economy which operates on mind and forms society in its rude outline; and in addition thereto the Ecclesiastical machinery, or that religious economy which renders society good, by bringing mind under the law of love, kindness, and obedience, and keeping it in the reverent fear of God. There might be government without religion; but it could not be one of order, peace and happiness, because not one of love and good will. Force may compel a kind of obedience, but religion will cause it to spring spontaneously from "an honest and good heart." Ecclesiastical rule, that heavenly directress, that divine operator which by the Spirit softens and mollifies, and converts into life and loveliness, is the prudent matron whose "price is far above rubies,"—the wedded wife of Sovereignty—the honorable and honoured mother of every Christian and godly virtue. These virtues are the holy and lovely offspring that religion bears to sovereign rule—that the Church bears to the State. For without rule there can be no religion; and without religion there can be no cheerful obedience, and no "perfect freedom" in servitude. Sovereignty imposes the yoke of subjection; but religion only possesses the divine art of rendering the yoke easy and the burden light;—and the readier too, when, as it was in Israel, they both are associated together in the same public administration, and invested with an equal share of the same inviolable sacredness of character. From this association, sovereignty derives the double advantage of being regarded,—not as the creature and slave of the people, but as the ordinance of God for his own glory and the instrument of their spiritual good;—not as a mercenary hireling barely to keep the civil peace amongst contending religious factions, but as the friend and partner of the Church, her associated guardian of public virtue, and the provider of way and means for conveying her instructions to its people. Look only at a well-ordered Christian family, and you will at once recognize the truth and the force of these observations. For should not the child understand that the parents' sovereignty is included under its spiritual instruction, and that God has given the father kingly honor in its sight, obedience to which is combined in its mind with its religious education, and forms no small part of its religious creed? But why will you stop here, and bid adieu to these solemn truths, and banish them from Christian belief the moment you step aside from the domestic circle? Are larger families—Are Christian States incapable of giving a practical exhibition of the same things? Rather do they not furnish a more noble theatre for their blessed influence, as they present a wider range for the operation of this family scheme of divine benevolence? Before you deny it blot from the page of the history of the chosen people of Jehovah those brilliant periods of national glory, when Church and State were true alike to their God and to each other, and when Israel was blessed above all people. And is the Gospel less privileged than the Law, that kings and their queens are not permitted to discharge that sacred duty to the Church which prophecy assigns them?

19. Hence we conclude that it is the bounden duty of all human Governments to take the Church under their protection, and lead the way in religion, that she may have a fair opportunity of making their subjects good and worthy men. We all know the force