

# The Church.

"HER FOUNDATIONS ARE UPON THE HOLY HILLS."

STAND YE IN THE WAYS, AND SEE, AND ASK FOR THE OLD PATHS, WHERE IS THE GOOD WAY, AND WALK THEREIN, AND YE SHALL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.—JEREMIAH VI. 16.

VOLUME III.]

COBOURG, UPPER CANADA, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26, 1839.

[NUMBER XVII.]

## Poetry.

### LINES

Suggested by seeing a child asleep, with wild flowers grasped in its hand.

Blessed be God for flowers!  
For the bright, gentle, holy, thoughts that breathe  
From their odoriferous beauty, like a wreath  
Of sunshine on life's hours!

Lightly upon thine eyes,  
Hath fallen the noontide sleep, my joyous bird;  
And through thy parted lips the breath, scarce heard,  
Comes like a summer sigh.

One rosy hand is thrown  
Beneath thy rosier cheek, the other holds  
A group of sweet field flowers, whose bloom unfolds  
A freshness like thy own.

Around the fragrant prize,  
With eager grasp thy little fingers close;  
What are the dreams that haunt thy sweet repose,  
What radiance greets thine eyes!

For thou art smiling still;  
Art thou yet wandering in the quiet woods,  
Plucking thy expanded cups, and bursting buds,  
At thine unfettered will?

Or does some prophet voice,  
Murmuring amidst thy dreams, instinctively say—  
"Prize well these flowers, for thou, beyond to-day,  
Shalt in their spells rejoice!"

Yes! thou wilt learn their power,  
When cherished not as now, thou stand'st alone,  
Compass'd by sweetly-sadening memories, thrown  
Round thee by leaf or flower!

'Twill come! as seasons come,  
The empire of the flowers, when they shall raise  
Round thee once more the forms of other days,  
Warm with the lights of home!

Shapes thou no more may'st see:  
The household earth, the heart-enlisted prayer;  
All thou hast loved, and lost, and treasured here,  
Where thy best thoughts must be!

Aye, prize them well, my child!  
The bright, young, blooming things that never die;  
Pointing our hopes to happier worlds, that lie  
Far o'er this earthly wild!

Prize them, that when forgot  
By all, their old, familiar tints shall bring  
Sweet thoughts of her whose dirge the deep winds sing,  
And whose love earth holds not!

Prize them that through all hours,  
Thou hold'st sweet commune with their beauty here  
And rich in this, through many a future year,  
Bless thou our God for Flowers!

—Gardener's Gazette.

## THE LATE LAMENTED LADY FLORA HASTINGS.

BY CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH.

It was towards sunset on the evening of the 9th July, 1839, that, while crossing London Bridge, I descried amid 'the thousand masts of Thames' one with a sable ensign the sad purport of which I well knew. It was the Leith steamer, 'Royal William,' lying off St. Katherine's wharf, destined to receive a freight, the recollection of which thrilled my bosom with emotions inseparable from the subject. A long drive brought me to the opposite extremity of the great city; and I soon found myself housed in the very spot whence, twelve months before, I had looked on the brilliant pageantry of the coronation procession; yea, standing at the window where I had proudly hung forth my banner—the name of Victoria wrought in living rosebuds—over which, as my fingers pursued the delightful task, many a prayer had been secretly breathed that the glory of a divine workmanship might be manifested in the life, the reign, of the maiden monarch, even as it was in the inimitable beauty of those exquisite flowers. The prayer is recorded on high; oh, God grant that I may yet live to render thanks for its accomplishment!

But no bright blossoms were around me now; the unoccupied hands hung listlessly down that had then so cheerily laboured through the night; and, oppressed with thoughts of grief, I held a solitary vigil, ever and anon looking forth, with a vague apprehension that the expected removal might be accomplished under the shadow of midnight. I watched until the pure full light of morning had succeeded the glare of lamps, and every closed window along the silent street suggested a strange contrast between the darkened rooms within, and the silvery brightness of early day without. Still no movement appeared, save the measured tread of the relieving guard on their march to the old palace gate. The procession was to start at three; half-past-hour had elapsed since St. James's clock had proclaimed the appointed time; and I could no longer resist the impulse that prompted a movement towards the scene of sorrowful expectation. It was not difficult to induce a sympathising friend to accompany me, and we crossed the court-yard, bent our steps along the Mall, and reached the place that I can well remember as that where the stately old red brick palace of Queen Charlotte looked over the length of a straight canal towards the Horse Guards. All is changed since those days—the canal, the park, the palace, the court, the times—a mighty change hath passed on all.

It was a lovely morning: freshness characterised alike the clear blue sky above us, the verdant plantation beside us, and the unfettered breeze so delicious after a night of sorrowful watching. Groups of respectable persons were collected in front of the palace, serious, earnest, and expectant; and this I could account for. Carriages with closed windows were from time to time arriving and filing off towards Piccadilly, there to take up an assigned position, and for this too I could account: a commanding officer of dragoon guards, fully equipped, was walking his charger to and fro, while in the more distant guard-house, soldiers were seen looking out upon the morning's light; and this was not strange to me, for I knew the customs of a garrisoned place; but for one thing I was at a loss to assign a cause. A formidable body of the metropolitan police took their station in such wise as to present to those assembled a front that certainly bespoke a purpose of intimidation. As my eye ran along the extended line of this fine body of men, drawn up with military precision, and evidently prepared to act with instantaneous effect, I could not but mentally ask, what prompted this idle precaution? Does any breathless body of an innocent maiden, already pent close in her narrow coffin? It was an unseemly spectacle in my eyes; but the spirit of change has passed over all things. A thrill ran through the quiet assemblage; they ga-

thered closer to the railing that encloses the palace; and all eyes were fixed upon the object that slowly passed across the spacious court. It was a hearse, overtopped with sable plumes, that with almost imperceptible motion drew up before the centre door of the right wing, and there remained stationary. The infirmity of corrupt nature was strong upon me, and had thought been allowed to pursue its obvious track, dark indeed as the black plumage drooping before us would its angry complexion soon have become; but a sudden and sweet turn was given to the course of those troubled thoughts; for immediately on the hearse becoming an immoveable object, the sun attained a height that enabled him to shoot a most brilliant ray over the tree tops under which I was standing; it fell in a direct line over the sable bier; and such a dazzling glory as rested over it, while every pane of glass lost itself in the flashing blaze of that magnificent beam, I scarcely ever witnessed. The contrast was perfect: sin, sorrow, death, corruption below—salvation, light, life, glory, immortality, and everlasting joy above—my inmost heart responded to the signal. The tears then swelling, were those of bitter indignation mingled with sullen grief—the tears that presently overflowed were full of softened gladness, for well I knew that though the body was enclosed in impenetrable darkness, the soul was enfranchised in fields of unextinguishable light.

'And was it so? Was the Lady Flora Hastings indeed a child of God? Did her path of almost unequalled sorrows really 'lead to the world where sorrow is unknown? Can you certainly tell to think of her as a departed sister in Jesus Christ?'

Yes, God be thanked, I can; and never were the pages of a Christian Lady's Magazine more suitably occupied than with the record that is now to be engraven on these pages—facts, not collected from public documents, or from the hearsay of multiplied reporters of what others have told, but personally derived from a source the most unquestionably correct. What I am about to state in this brief memorial I know to be strictly, literally true; and if the tale draw tears of tender sympathy in the past sufferings of our departed sister, let it also open every lip in thanksgiving to God and to the Lamb, who, by the operation of the Holy Spirit, so beautifully fitted her for her present inheritance among the saints in light.

The Lady Flora Hastings was, from a very early age, deeply impressed with the importance of vital religion; and so far as opportunity allowed it, she availed herself of the help afforded in seeking far better things than rank and affluence could bestow. Witness, among others, the touching testimony given when, with dying hand, she delivered to her fond brother a little Bible, the gift of her mother, requesting him to restore it to that beloved parent with the assurance that, from the age of seven years, when she received it from her, it had been her best treasure; and she added, her sole support under all her recent afflictions. Naturally retiring, timid, sensitive, modest, even to a painful degree, she wrapped up in her own bosom many a thought that would have gladdened pious friends to hear her utter; and the habit of deep abstraction, while thus meditating, sometimes occasioned among those who knew her not aright, a most injurious surmise—they called it pride! Her meek and quiet spirit was as far removed from worldly pride as any child of Adam's can be.

Brought up in intimate association with the highest in the land, Lady Flora formed a strong attachment to her royal mistress, the mother of her future Queen, in whose house she held an honourable appointment; and this attachment deepened in proportion as its value became enhanced to its object. Many sorrows pierced that royal lady, and among the more recent was the early death of Lady Mary Stopford; an event that called for redoubled attentions on the part of Lady Flora, who loved with filial affection one who never failed to manifest a maternal tenderness for her. In this we have a clue to the solution of many questions, as to why did Lady Flora, while alive to spiritual impressions, continue a partaker in pleasures wherein those who live are by Scripture declared to be dead? To her they brought no enjoyment: far rather would she have devoted herself to the Lord's service in a secluded path of usefulness; but He who giveth no account of his matters saw good to leave his dear child where a furnace was being heated for the trial of her faith, and the consummation of her eternal bliss.

Lady Flora's happiest hours were passed in meditation on God's word, in prayer, and in efforts to promote every good work brought under her notice. Some beautiful productions of her pen I have seen which show the heavenward tending of her thoughts, and a clearness of apprehension concerning the love of God in Christ to her soul, such as the natural heart never conceived. Still the excess of her retiring modesty shrank from every semblance of display; and while striving to perform her difficult duties in the path wherein she found herself, she walked before God in lowliness of heart, and knew no delight apart from communicating with him.

Such was Lady Flora Hastings; and such she had long been at the time when the storm fell upon her. I know every particular of that fearful storm, and in relating them I seek not to perpetuate the memory of wrongs which were fully and unreservedly forgiven by their gentle victim; still less would I fling reproach where every British Christian is bound by God's command to yield honour; but the fierceness of the fiery trial, under which the quiet sufferer sank, does so exceedingly magnify the grace of God which upheld her throughout, and overspread her wounded spirit with joy and peace in believing, that all shall be told—truly told, upon the unimpeachable authority already alluded to.

Lady Flora Hastings had always been of a strong constitution, and vigorous as any other young person in her rank of life. Of late she had felt the progress of some disease affecting the liver, but not so as to occasion great uneasiness. She placed herself at length under the medical treatment of Sir James Clarke, her Majesty's physician, and was by him ordered strong tonics with a very generous diet. A slight external swelling had become perceptible, of which, if any one noticed it, Sir James could satisfactorily state the cause, and explain the appearance. On one occasion, never to be forgotten, he entered the apartment of his patient, and without circumlocution addressed her in these words,—'It is supposed you are with child.'

Astounded, shocked at an announcement, the grossness of which could only be paralleled by its frightful injuriousness, the noble lady warmly repelled the charge, adding that her accuser would not have ventured to address such language to a woman in the streets. The assertion was however reiterated; and she was told that

the ladies of the court would not be satisfied without a medical examination. Leaving this shaft to rankle in the bosom of the victim, the messenger departed; and a communication was forthwith made to the Duchess of Kent, in the name of the Sovereign, forbidding the appearance of Lady Flora Hastings in public until the step alluded to should have been taken. The Duchess warmly vindicated her young friend, and protested that no such degradation should be inflicted on her; but this objection was overruled by the Lady Flora herself.

Immediately on being left alone, she had betaken herself to most fervent prayer; and while humbled before God, had reviewed the position in which her own reputation was placed, together with the solemn duty which she owed to a noble brother, to a family of beloved sisters, to a widowed mother, to whom such an aspersion on her child would be a death-blow, and to the memory of a father whose gallant deeds had given him a claim of no common magnitude on England, and on England's monarch; and above all to the honour of that name which many knew that she devoutly professed. Like a frightened dove she looked around for shelter, but found none; her mother's bosom was the earthly resting place she would have flown to; but far away in her native north that dear mother abode, unconscious of her child's piercing distress: her brother was nigh, but she trembled to arouse the spirit of a Hastings with such an appeal: her sisters—she was the elder, and to her they looked for the continuance of all that they had hitherto revered in her. No, she had no refuge, poor trembler! no refuge below: so she cast her burthen on the Lord, and with a magnanimity, before which every vaunt of female heroism shrinks into nothingness, this maintainer of a family's honour deared herself ready for the degrading, disgusting, infamous outrage which she was informed must be submitted to on the following day.

Mothers! I would appeal to you; but what mother's heart could brook the bare idea, as she looks on her own gentle, modest girl, shrinking even from the eye of man, and pictures such a proceeding, enforced far from her sheltering arm, among strangers and enemies; ay, and with that very person appointed to officiate, whose coarse address had so wretchedly harrowed the feelings, while it aimed a mortal stab at the fair fame of the maiden! No, I will make no appeal; but there is an awful declaration in God's own word—may those who have exposed themselves to its menace, by timely repentance, avert the impending blow! 'Ye shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child.' If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; and my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.'

Lady Flora passed, as she afterwards declared, the whole of the interesting time in prayer to her covenant God. The terrible hour approached; and who do my readers think was chosen by her to be present as a female companion? Did she ask to lay her agonised head on the kind bosom of her maternal friend, the royal Duchess? Did she seek the comforting and soothing presence of her dear brother's wife—of a married sister of her own—or of any among the hundreds of noble British Matrons who would at a word have flown to supply the place of the absent mother? No, this consistent lady, receiving strength from on high to offer up self in every shape on the altar of duty, selected as a witness one of the two ladies of the Queen's court, who were already identified as the originators of this inhuman calumny—one of the ladies who had expressly demanded what no female can think of without shrinking with horror—she chose Lady Portman; and Lady Portman was an eyewitness of the insulting degradation to which they had among them doomed the innocent Lady Flora.

Another titled physician of the same name was associated with Sir James Clarke, who strongly protested against carrying the test beyond verbal inquiry, and who was deeply affected and agitated throughout the scene which followed. This was the death-blow: all the bursts of public sympathy, respect, and warm approval that greeted Lady Flora from that day forward, were agony to her delicate mind; she secretly connected them, as perhaps no other did, with the barbarous indignity she had suffered, to enable the Queen's doctor to certify to her Majesty, that the Lady Flora Hastings was not, nor ever had been, *eniente*. And so the well-meant acclamations that burst from many hearts and honest lips served evermore to open afresh the wound her modesty had sustained. A most heart-rending proof was given towards the close of the tragedy, how deeply this had wracked within, though in words she never had alluded to it until then. For two days before her departure, Lady Flora suffered under a degree of mental wandering, not amounting to delirium, but approaching it: while in this state she saw the medical men who anxiously attended her dying bed enter the room; and in a hurried, alarmed manner, exclaimed, 'Here come the doctors to see whether I am a married lady.'

She is married now, and the heavenly Bridegroom rejoices over the rescued soul. There never was a tale so calculated to burn out the blushes of modest shame with the far deeper blushes of indignation. There never was such a blot on the heraldic honours of England's nobility since England's nobles emblazoned a crest, as must ever cleave to the escutcheons of those who perpetrated this fearful deed. Who they were it belongs not for me to decide: Lady Flora forgave them all, on the occasion of her receiving the sacrament from the Bishop of London. She authorised that excellent prelate to declare how fully and freely she forgave them, even as God for Christ's sake had forgiven her; and we, too, must look compassionately on the offenders, while we loathe the offence. Most pitiable, indeed, are they! From her happy mind every cloud was dispelled; she had glorified God in the fires, and on a retrospect she yielded him redoubled thanksgiving for the humbling, purifying effect of the furnace. She observed that, had it been the divine pleasure to prolong her life, she had hoped, by an open unreserved devotion of herself to his service, to honour her heavenly Father before men; adding, 'His will be done: it is better to depart, and to be with Christ.' When life was fast ebbing away, she stretched out her hand, saying, 'Lord, I am coming'; but the latest breath that left her lips was fashioned into the tender word—'Mother.'

Well, the bereaved mother has strewn flowers over her darling's bier, and has seen her lain in the lowly resting-place of a spot rendered doubly sacred by having been a shelter to the Covenanters of other days—and the mother blesses God for the privilege of having reared such a child. She follows that child's sweet example, by forgiving the low insults to which her touch-

ing appeal exposed her; and seeks a refuge at the foot of the cross whereto her daughter clung. And if a thought of sorrowing pride will wander to the bastion of St. John, under the shadow of which her gallant husband moulders in the far-off island of Malta, while the heart asks, 'Is this the recompense for all his toils and labours, for all his achievements?' a calming recollection will raise her eye from the things and creatures of an hour, to that eternal throne where the King of kings dispenses equal justice, by giving to each believer the reward of Christ's perfect obedience, and where her Flora is now singing the praises of Him who loved her, and redeemed her to God by his blood. She never pleaded either merit or suffering of her own; she openly acknowledged, in all the afflictions that terminated in the body's death, a gracious dispensation to keep her humble under the generous temptation to self-applause that lurked in the unreserved approval of her countrymen. Such was indeed her horror of even appearing to take pleasure in those demonstrations, that when on the race-ground at Ascot, whither her official duty compelled her to accompany her royal lady, the acclamations of the people made her air resound, and 'One cheer more for Lady Flora' was repeated again and again by the vast assemblage, she described its effect, implying too as it did a cutting rebuke where she never wished rebuke to fall, as having brought on the last alarming symptoms of her fatal illness.

What tortments did that finely-constituted mind undergo! One of the little instances that touches me most, was that of her having attempted to calculate in how many months 'her time would be up'—that is to say, how long a space must elapse before the infamous slander would be for ever crushed, by her having remained in the daily view of her calumniators, beyond the latest point for justifying their foul aspersions. Until that period should come, she was chained to the court, by the resolution she had so fixedly formed to disprove even thus what none—not even its assertors—had ever really believed; and when she found deliverance from the strife of tongues, and from every other trouble that was at hand, she put the seal of her consistency, by enjoining that her innocent remains should be mingled to the uttermost, and the result of such investigation made most public. So short, so terrible a combat, so speedy and perfect a victory, few of God's children have known in modern days. She realised, in a very little space, the fulness of meaning contained in those emphatic words—'In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer—I have overcome the world.' She, too, overcame it, by the exercise of that living faith which enabled her, in the Lord's strength, to do all things. In the bitterest afflictions that human cruelty could practise, she recognised the directing hand of fatherly chastisement; and never was she heard to breathe one resentful word against those who through maliciousness, volunteered to be the scourge. They were the subjects of her intercessory prayers, the objects of her tender compassion. Full well she knew, and so did they, that the chief and only provocation given on her part had been found in the profession of Christian faith, the example of Christian practice, which, despite the difficulties of her situation, could not but be manifest, like Paul's, 'to all in the palace.' Like Paul, too, she was there in bonds which she could not break, and that retirement for which her heart panted could not be attained but at the sacrifice of personal and family character. The Lord, who knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation, sent down from above and took her out of many waters. The religious world might disclaim her, because she could not yet openly have come out and be separate from what she knew to be in enmity against God; the irreligious world might hate her, because they discerned in her many fruits of the Spirit abhorrent to the carnal mind; but it was a small matter to her to be judged of them, or of man's judgment. She was cleaving with full purpose of heart to one who never yet broke the bruised reed, nor quenched the smoking flax: and he claimed his child, and took her out of the iron furnace, and has wiped away for ever all tears from her eyes.

In the eyes of those who knew her not, it may have seemed that the course pursued by Lady Flora Hastings, under the dreadful circumstances of her unprecedented persecution, was dictated by the pride of birth, of station, or of female character, apart from any higher or holier principle. It was not so; her disposition was such that any measure of undeserved reproach would have been preferable in her sight to the endurance of a far less terrible ordeal, whether in its private or public nature. From notoriety in any shape she always shrunk; and such a notoriety as the evil machinations of others forced upon her, was torture—inexpressible—it killed her. Yet she felt herself placed in the gap, called upon to fight a battle, the result of which the matrons and the maidens of England may have cause to bless even through far distant years. Had court profligacy been permitted to triumph, in driving forth with reproach a character of female purity and honour from the precincts of the court, on the strength of an infamous fabrication, how rapidly might the plague-spot, first manifested itself in high quarters, have overspread the land! Evil communications corrupting good manners, would have tainted society downwards, from the palace to the cottage, and have issued in such fearful consequences as when, during the universal licentiousness that demoralized England under our second Charles, the enemy of our faith and nation so practised and prospered as to acquire in the succeeding reign power to excite a sanguinary civil war in the attack on and defence of our liberties and our Protestantism. The plot against Lady Flora Hastings, and, in her person, against female character in general, had nothing English in its aspect. It wears a look utterly foreign; it savours rankly, alike of the subtlety of the Jesuit and the arbitrary inquisitorial cruelty of the Dominican. They who demanded that this innocent lady should submit to the torturing 'question' might fairly calculate, from their knowledge of her shrinking delicacy, that she would prefer to its infliction the ignominy with which they longed to brand her spotless fame, more particularly as they also knew that she would enjoy the strong support of conscious integrity, under the vain branding of their guilty tongues. They were deceived; they had a character to deal with, upon the depths of which they could not enter. Lady Flora Hastings was, it is true, a most modest, delicate, sensitive British maiden; but then Lady Flora Hastings was also a Christian patriot, and of the component parts of such a character what could they know? They have seen it in its glorious fruits, and may God give them all whosoever they be, grace, to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the solemn lesson that they have received!

When, with an overflowing heart, I hastened from St. James's Park, and resumed my station at the window in time to see the slow procession pass by along the sun-shiny but perfectly silent and deserted street, where one so dissimilar in appearance had wound its gorgeous way, through acclaiming thousands just one year before, when I looked on the touching spectacle of mortality, that young and gentle victim, borne from the scene of the cruel conflict towards the sepulchre of her fathers, unnoticed by a single toll from any bell, and precluded from those of respectful love and sympathy with which, at any other hour the people of England would have honoured her obsequies—and when towards evening I went to fix a farewell gaze upon the vessel that contained her mortal remains, as it lay on the untruffled surface of England's royal river; I could only deprecate, on my country's behalf, the wrathful visitation of Him in whom, while the fatherless findeth mercy, the oppressors of the fatherless are warned to look for swift and terrible judgment. May her prayers and ours be answered in the repentance and conversion of all who did her wrong!

## THE ATONEMENT.

The doctrine of the atonement is not a mere speculative doctrine, one which we may embrace or not, as we please, and the rejection of which is to be classed among involuntary errors; if it be true, and if we believe it to be true (for God made the application of it to ourselves to depend upon our own faith), then we shall rise again to everlasting life; but if there be no such doctrine, then we have no promise, and we can have no certain hope that we shall rise again at all. Let a man reject the Scriptures altogether, let him say that in Adam all die, and then he may not see the necessity or the fitness of Christ's atonement. But will he be a gainer by this miserable unbelief? He may not believe that death is the lot of all men in consequence of one man's sin, but, for some cause or other, knows that he himself shall die; and how does he know, without the light of Christianity, that from that death he shall ever rise again? Will abstract reasoning lead him to this conclusion? Let him look to the sages of Greece and Rome, and he will see them, as wise perhaps, or wiser than himself, lost in the ocean of perplexity, or wrecked on the shoals of atheism. Does he think that his own virtues will raise his body from the grave; and that these are sufficient to insure the happiness of heaven? This is, in fact, the creed of those unhappy persons who reject the atonement of Christ. They may not like to speak of the sufficiency of human merit, or of claiming heaven as a right; but if they do not look for redemption from sin and its punishment through the righteousness and the death of Christ, they must trust to themselves; they must think, that what they have done will atone for what they have done amiss; and let every one look into his own heart, and see whether this is a belief which will open to him the happiness of heaven. There may be difficulties in the doctrine of the atonement; the very notion of it is fraught with mystery: but God has revealed enough to make faith an anchor of our souls, both sure and steadfast. That Christ, having the divine nature added to the human, should be perfectly free from sin is not difficult to be believed—that, having taken our human nature, he should be subject to death is also a point which we might expect—that his divine nature should enable him to rise again from the dead is agreeable to our notions of divinity; so that in these three propositions, viewed separately and distinctly, human reason would find nothing which it might not readily adopt. That God should accept the death of Christ as an atonement for the death of all men is undoubtedly an article of faith; it is one which, if God had not revealed it, we could never have discovered; the pride of reason may reject it, and the coldness of philosophy may reduce it to a name; but we have not so learned Christ; we know that it is appointed unto all men once to die, and after death the judgment; and who is there amongst us that looks into his own heart, that sees there a consciousness of sins for which he will hereafter be judged, that hears the comfortable assurance that these sins may be washed away in the blood of Christ—who will not say with a thankful, though a fearful heart, 'Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.'—Professor Burton.

## THE VISIBLE CHURCH.

When we read of any duty which the Church of God is bound unto, the Church whom this duty concerns is a sensible known company. And this visible Church in like sort is but one, continued from the first beginning of the world unto the last end; which company being divided into two moieties, the one before, the other since the coming of Christ, that part which since the coming of Christ partly had embraced, and partly shall hereafter embrace the Christian religion, we term, as by a more proper name, the Church of Christ. And therefore the apostle affirmeth plainly of all men Christian, that be they Jews or Gentiles, bond or free, they are all incorporated into one company, they all make but *one body* (Eph. ii. 16.). The unity of which visible body and Church of Christ consisteth in that uniformity which all several persons thereunto belonging have, by reason of that *one Lord* whose servants they all profess themselves; that *one faith*, which they all acknowledge; that *one baptism* wherewith they are all initiated. The visible Church of Jesus Christ is therefore one in outward profession of those things which supernaturally appertain to the very essence of Christianity, and are necessarily required in every particular Christian man. . . . Howbeit, of the visible body and Church of Christ, those may be and are oftentimes are, in respect of the main parts of their outward profession, who, in regard of their inward disposition of mind, yea, of external conversation, yea, even of some parts of their very profession, are most worthily both hateful in the sight of God himself, and in the eyes of the sounder part of the visible Church most execrable. Our Saviour, therefore, compareth the kingdom of heaven to a net, whereunto all which cometh neither is nor seemeth fish; his Church he compareth unto a field, where tares manifestly known and seen by all men do grow, intermingled with good corn, and even so shall continue till the final consummation of the world (Matt. xiii. 24, 48.). God hath had ever, and ever shall have, some Church visible upon earth. When the people of God worshipped the calf in the wilderness; when they adored the brazen serpent; when they served the gods of the nations; when they bowed their knees to Baal; when they burnt incense, and offered sacrifice unto idols; true it is, the wrath of God was most fiercely inflamed against them; their prophets justly condemned them as an adulterous seed, and a wicked generation of miscreants, which had forsaken the living God, and of him were likewise forsaken, in respect of that singular mercy wherewith he kindly and lovingly embraceth his faithful children. Howbeit retaining the law of God, and the holy seal of his covenant, the sheep of his visible flock they continued, even in the depth of their disobedience and rebellion. . . . For lack of diligent observing the difference, first between the Church of God mystical and visible, then between the visible sound and corrupt, sometimes more, sometimes less, the oversights are neither few nor light that have been committed.—Hooker.