

versy (as we think the Foreign Reformers did) overlook their instrumental efficacy as a Divinely-appointed means. Bishop Hooper's strong Protestant revelling might, in his controversy with Gardiner, somewhat obscure the full apprehension of the truth, which shines more clearly in the simple 'Confession of his Christian Faith.' Calvin when occupied in constructing his system, was fettered by human moulding, the fitting and consistency of the several parts—defending himself on all sides from assault. But as an expositor of Scripture he is in a far better spirit than as a mere dogmatist. His views of Sacramental truth are more full. And in his free intercourse with his friends he grasps the whole compass with the liveliest interest, expressing to his dear friend Melancthon his entire agreement with Luther, that 'the Sacraments are not empty figures, but that in them is given what they exhibit—that in Baptism the power of the Spirit is present to cleanse and regenerate; that the holy Supper is a spiritual feast, in which we feed truly on the flesh and blood of Christ.' Zuingli also in the field of Sacramental dispute, how chilled and cramped are his statements of truth! But when exercising himself in the field of Scripture, he breathes a pure atmosphere, and brings out more enlarged and spiritual exhibition of truth. We are not insensible to the importance of 'contending earnestly for the faith.' But our souls feed on the simplicity—not the controversy of the truth.

Yet we should not forget, that a strong and sensitive perception of error is a most valuable preservative. Indeed the only safe holding of forms is found in maintaining a deep and primary regard to spiritual worship; else will they be the paralysis—not the channel—of the divine life. 'Learn'—says the admirable Leighton—'to look on the ordinances of God suitably to their nature, spiritually. We would willingly have all religion reduced to externals; and we would pay all in this coin, as cheaper and easier by far; and would compound for the spiritual part, rather to add and give more external performance to the ceremony.'\*

In fine, we know not how to balance this delicate subject better than in the careful words of this most spiritual expositor—'Sacraments are in the hands of the Spirit of God, as the word itself is, to convey grace and salvation to the soul by the reference they have to, and union with, that which they represent. Signs they are, but more than signs, merely representing: they are means exhibiting, and seals confirming, grace to the faithful. But the working of faith, and the conveying of Christ into the soul, to be received by faith, is not a thing put into them to do of themselves, but still in the supreme hand that appointed them; and he indeed both causes the souls of his own to receive those his seals with faith, and makes them effectual to confirm that faith which receives them so. They are then, in a word, neither empty signs to those that believe, nor effectual causes of grace to them that believe not.'\*\*

IV. We remark on the importance of a devotional exhibition and improvement of these holy ordinances. And here we cannot but feel the great moment of a deep and prayerful study of the Scriptures; both to know the mind of God, and to breathe his spirit. Better to begin with the Bible than with the Church—to try the Church by the Bible, not the Bible by the Church. Far better also to study the subject in the Bible than in controversy. Our foundation-principles are more established. The sound mind is more perfectly balanced. We are not unmindful of the enlargement and settlement, which a well-disciplined mind will obtain in the thorny field. But principles must first be solidly grounded upon Scriptural foundation, else instead of the "good thing of the heart established with grace," it will be the profession of one "carried about by every wind of doctrine—ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."†† Connected with this firm Christian establishment will be a devotional spirit. We naturally inhale the atmosphere in which we live. Here we shall be walking with God. How refreshing will his ordinances then be—with a spiritual apprehension of their nature, and a spiritual taste for their enjoyment! As compared with those who are living in unspiritual disputation, it will be, as Hooker exquisitely draws the contrast,—the one, because they enjoyed not, disputed; the other disputed not, because they enjoyed.††† Who does not long to breathe the spirit of this truly 'seraphic doctor,' who in the adoring contemplation of these holy privileges, could command 'disputes and questions, enemies to piety, and abatements of true devotion, to take their rest?' and who summed up his triumphant exercise in this sublime aspiration—'O my God! thou art true! soul! thou art happy!—Rev. C. Bridges, M. A. Vicar of Old Newton.

HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAITH.

If, while Christianity was in its prime and when its divine truths had scarcely ceased to reach the ears of believers from the lips of Apostles, on whose heads the Spirit had visibly descended, and cloven tongues, like as of fire, had sat; if, even at that time, one of the seven churches of Asia had already departed from its first love; if two others were partially polluted by the errors of doctrine, and evils in the practice, of some of their members; if another had only a few

names that were worthy, and yet another none; and if they who formed the last and worst of these, thought themselves rich and increased with goods, and that they had need of nothing; and knew not that, being lukewarm, they were wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; have you an ear to hear, or a heart to understand such knowledge? and do you, professing yourself a Christian, as they also did, see no cause or warning here to question and examine yourself; even as the same Spirit would search and try you, of your works, and charity, and service, and faith, and patience, and thy works, and the last more than the first? What is your labour of love, or wherein do you labour at all for His name sake, by whose name you are called? What trials does your faith patiently endure? What temptations does it triumphantly overcome? Is Christ in you the hope of glory? and is your heart purified through that blessed hope? To a church, we trust, you belong, but whose is the kingdom within you? What principles ever actuated you which Christ and his Apostles taught? Where, in your affections and life, are the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, temperance? Turn the precepts of the Gospel into questions, and ask thus: What does the Spirit say unto you, as he said unto the churches?—KEITH.

This number will not be ready for transmission by mail till Friday's post, owing to the festival of yesterday.

The Berean.

QUEBEC, THURSDAY, DEC. 26, 1844.

Centuries have been rolling on, since the Saviour made his humble entrance into a world which he came to redeem, but which knew him not, as he lay in his manger-cradle, attended by no outward pomp or splendour, surrounded by none of the great and noble of the earth. Shepherds were there, called from their night-watch to glorify God at the Saviour's birth; and the wise men from the east were on their way, they also probably taught respecting his coming, in the stillness of the night, amidst their watchful observation of the heavenly bodies. We ask our readers, in what frame of mind have they entered upon this festival season? Have they looked for the manifestation of the Child that is born unto us, in retired converse of the soul with God, in searching self-examination, and in watchful observance of their affections—and have they become quite willing to be led by their search for Him into deep humiliation and separation from a world which values things only according to the gratification of sense, and not by the influence they may have upon the heart? Will they spend these days of gladness in none other rejoicings than what will consist with a lively recollection of the great danger from which mankind were delivered by the Saviour's coming into the world, and to which, alas! too many, even among those who profess to celebrate this festival, are utterly indifferent? What inward preparedness for the visitation of the dayspring from on high—or what experience of it do they recognise in themselves, by the light of self-inquiry?

In the lowliness of a place for strangers at Bethlehem, men of the humblest occupation were brought nigh to be the first to hail the Messiah's birth: next men of the science then in repute came to offer their gifts and worship; but they also had to seek, in a retirement whether they had not thought of directing their steps, Him that was born King of the Jews. Low estate must not discourage us, neither must high attainments disincense, from seeking the Saviour where He will let Himself be found: if we have gold, frankincense, and myrrh to offer, they cannot be better bestowed than in His service; but with Himself we shall have to seek intimacy through the depths of self-abasement; and ill would that consist with the frivolities and dissipation to which, by many, this portion of the year is devoted.

Millions of our fellow-creatures are yet in utter ignorance of the way of salvation; Christians have a command to preach the gospel to all nations. Will it be lawful for them to spend in pastime or sensual gratification that which, otherwise bestowed, might be the means of conveying the light of the gospel to souls as yet in darkness and in the shadow of death? May God give us wisdom so to execute our office as stewards over the talents committed to us, that in the great day of reckoning we may be found faithful!

CHRISTMAS.

The susceptibilities of the human mind are such that the recollection of the past and the anticipation of the future, seldom fail to produce irresistible and affecting emotions.

The weary traveller crossing the broad and bleak desert, being anxious to arrive at his home in safety, looks behind him to observe the progress he has made, and, being encouraged by the view of the past, he looks forward to the termination of his journey with stimulating anticipations. The same view may be admitted relative to the journey of human life, as the retrospect of the past operates impressively on the present, and the volitions of the present throw forth their reflections on the future, and whatever may tend to unite, introduce and impress these aspects of time with their peculiar and relative assemblages of ideas upon the mind, must be worthy of consideration and remark. These obser-

vations may be introductory to the subject of the festival of Christmas, which by reason of custom and usage, is so much venerated and welcomed by the members of the Church and by Christians in general. It is that period, when families separated by distance, assemble together like the pious Jews, who annually travelled from different parts of the world to celebrate their feast at Jerusalem. It is then they behold each other's face with joy, reciprocate their sentiments of love and esteem, compare the past by the present, and, whilst repeating to each other, both the happy and the adverse circumstances of this changing life, they look forward to the future with invigorating expectation. Some tell of increase and prosperity like Jacob when his household augmented, and others, of sorrows like Job, when he was bereaved of his children. Some speak of holy joys, and others of their desire to obtain them, and, like a tree with all its flourishing branches, they unitedly partake of the same animating influence. Hail, happy Christmas! thou art like a Jubilee of worship, rest, felicity and reconciliation. Who would not welcome thee and celebrate thy significance with the inspiring and triumphant song of radiant angels—'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men!'

How unenviable are the views of any who disregard the distinctions of time, which the wisdom of the Church hath appointed for the particular consideration of divine interpositions, and for their appropriation by faith to their own spiritual necessities! Who can justly object to concentrate his best thoughts on a subject, for the publication of which, the Church of God has waited for 4000 years, and that so much concerns a guilty and lost world, namely, that God was manifested in the flesh, and descended to unite to himself the lowest link in the chain of rational being, and thereby restore the whole creation, and bring them into nearer connexion with himself! Many slight this subject, and turn from the humble scene of the babe of Bethlehem, whilst Angels gaze with wonder, and apprehend him as the Ancient of days,—the great cause of all existence, infinite in his own fulness of imitable perfections, in comparison with whom the magnificence of all worlds, the excellency of Angels and men dwindle into insignificance, and like vanishing stars, become eclipsed and lost amid the boundless, overwhelming blaze of day. May all the members of our venerable Church and all true Christians enjoy this festival, and, whilst with gratitude to God they possess present confidence, look forward with high expectation to receive abundance of grace and fulness of joy: and, looking from the first to the second advent, anticipate the glorious revelation of their Lord, when he shall come in the glory and majesty of the Father, with his Saints and Angels to judge the world, to be glorified by his Saints, and to be admired by all that believe. F.

To the Editor of the Berean.

Sir,—In a late number of an American Church Newspaper, there appears an article, with the significant heading: "A CHRISTIAN GOVERNOR?" this article being introductory to a document prepared by the Governor of South Carolina, in answer to a remonstrance addressed to him by certain Jews at Charleston, who had taken offence at His Excellency's Proclamation, recommending a day of Thanksgiving: "to God the Creator, and His Son Jesus Christ the Redeemer, of the world." You may imagine my surprise when, on turning to the document itself, I discovered, that the Governor was by his own confession, "unhappily for himself not a professor of religion, nor specially attached by education or habit to any particular denomination." Surely those who sit in the Editorial Chair ought to be more guarded in the commendations which they bestow. It is one thing to hope well of such a man who does seem "almost persuaded to be a Christian," and quite another to hold him up as a pattern, simply because he has been mainly enough to declare that the conscientious scruples of Christians are as deserving of indulgent consideration, as those of their enemies.

I remain, your obedt. Servant, PRESBYTER.

[The American Church newspaper to which our Correspondent refers, is one of those which profess, above others, to uphold "Church Principles." A sample of the modern interpretation of that term is afforded by the editorial inconsistency which PRESBYTER exposes. If this Governor had avowed himself a Presbyterian, Methodist, Independent, or any other Non-Episcopalian, he would at most have been noticed as belonging to Samaria, we suppose: but since he candidly avows that he is nothing at all in the Church of Christ, he is a very hopeful subject, and christened without ceremony, because he knows how to do his official duty as Governor of a people professedly Christian. This is that low churchmanship to which we referred in our last Editorial.

We must take the opportunity of appraising our readers, many of whom will be shocked at Governor Hammond's avowal that he is "not a professor of religion;" that this does not by any means imply such an utter disregard of the claims of religion as would, among us, compel a man to confess so unhappy a deficiency. According to American habits and modes of expression, we may still presume that this gentleman is a regular attendant upon some place of worship, perhaps a liberal contributor to the maintenance of its outward decencies, not improbably baptized in infancy: but he is not persuaded yet to allow religion that influence over his mind which would bring him to the fountain of strength for power to maintain such consistency of walk as is requisite for a worthy participation in Church privileges as a communicant. He may be in that state which, among us, makes most men without hesitation declare themselves members of one or other religious denomination—may be really, as PRESBYTER is willing to believe him "almost persuaded to be a Christian." And for his present hesitation, he may be all the nearer to a decision, safe for his own soul, and creditable to the religious denomination which shall fold him in its bosom—but not, we trust, induced by the complaisance with which our American contemporary would receive him into the Church. We very much rejoice in the new proof

afforded by this Governor's view of his official duty, that our Republican neighbours, after all their professions of having no State-religion, are compelled to fly from them and, to all intents and purposes, establish the Christian religion. He can not humour "Israelites, Deists, Atheists, or any other class of persons in the State, who deny the divinity of Jesus Christ." We extract that portion of his reply to the intemperate remonstrance made to him which succeeds the paragraph quoted by our Correspondent.—Ed.]

"I must say, that up to this time, I have always thought it a settled matter, that I lived in a Christian land! and that I was the temporary Chief Magistrate of a Christian people. That in such a country and among such a people, I should be publicly called to account, reprimanded and required to make amends for acknowledging Jesus Christ as the Redeemer of the world, I would not have believed possible, if it had not come to pass. I have not examined, nor am I now able to refer to the Proclamations of my predecessors, to ascertain whether they have limited their fellow citizens to address their devotions to the Father, or the Son, or to the Father only: nor could I verify the motives which might have influenced them to do the one or the other; but I am of opinion that a Proclamation of Thanksgiving which omits to unite the name of the Redeemer with that of the Creator, is not a Christian Proclamation, and might justly give offence to the Christian people whom it invited to worship. If in complaisance to the Israelites and Deists, His name must be excluded, the Atheist might as justly require that of the Creator to be omitted also, and the Mahometan or Mormon that others should be inserted. I feel myself upon the broad ground that this is a Christian community, and that, as their Chief Magistrate, it was my duty and my right, in conformity with usage, to invite them to return thanks for the blessings they enjoy, to that power from whence, and that Being through whose intercession they believe that they derive them. And whatever may be the language of the Proclamation and of the Constitution, I know that the civilization of the age is derived from Christianity, that the institutions of this country are instinct with the same spirit; and that it pervades the law of the State as it does the manners, and I trust the hearts of the people.—Why do we observe the Sabbath, instituted in honour of Christ? Why do our laws forbid labour on that day or the execution of civil process? It is because we are, and acknowledge ourselves, and wish to be considered a Christian people. You appeal to the Constitution as guaranteeing "the free exercise and enjoyment of religious professions and worship, without discrimination or preference to all mankind." If the laws recognizing the Christian Sabbath do not violate the Constitution, how can my Proclamation, which was compulsory on no one, do it? If both are unconstitutional, why have not the Israelites commenced by attacking these long standing laws and purifying our legislation? Do they deem it easier to intimidate one man and exact from him a confession and an apology, under the apprehension of their fierce and unrelenting hostility, than to reform the State? In whatever situation I have been placed, it has always been my aim to adhere strictly to the Constitution and uphold the laws. I did not think, and do not now think, that I violated the Constitution of this State by my Proclamation. That forbids the Legislature to pass any law restricting the most perfect toleration. I addressed to the Christian community, at their request, a proclamation inviting them to worship in accordance with their faith. I had neither the power nor desire to compel any one to offer his devotions contrary to his faith, or to offer them at all. Those who did not choose to accept my invitation, were at full liberty to decline. And, if the Israelites refused to open their Synagogues, I had no complaint to make—no penalty to exact. Had they stopped at that, such a manifestation of their disapproval of my proclamation would have been the more severely felt by me, because of its dignity and its consonance with true religious feelings, as I apprehend them. But if, inheriting the same score for Jesus Christ which inspired their ancestors to crucify Him, they would have felt themselves degraded and disgraced in obeying my exhortation to worship their "Creator," because I had also recommended the adoration of his "Son the Redeemer," still I would not have hesitated to appoint for them, had it been requested, a special day of Thanksgiving according to their own creed. This however, was not, I imagine, what the Israelites desired. They wished to be included in the same invitation to public devotion with the Christians. And to make that invitation acceptable to them, I must strike out the corner-stone of the Christian creed, and reduce the whole to entire conformity with that of the Israelites: I must exhort a Christian people to worship after the manner of the Jews. "The Constitution forbids me to "discriminate" in favour of the Christians, and I am denounced because I have not "discriminated" in favour of the Israelites. This is the sum and substance of your charge. The terms of my proclamation were broad enough to include all believers. You wished me to narrow it down to the exclusion of ninety-nine hundredths of my fellow citizens. Neither the Constitution, nor my public duty would allow me to do this, and they also forbid me to offer any apology for not having done it."

RAILWAY TO THE LAKES.

The following sonnet and note by the Poet Laureate, "on the projected Kendal and Windermere Railway," are published by the Morning Post:—

"Is there no nook of English ground secure From rash assault? Schemes of retirement sown In youth, and 'mid the busy world kept pure As when their earliest flowers of hope were blown, Must perish: how can they this bright endure? And must he too his old delights disown Who scorns a false Utilitarian lure, 'Mid his paternal fields at random thrown? Baffle the threat, bright scene, from Orrest-head, Given to the pausing traveller's rapturous glance! Plead for thy peace, thou beautiful romance Of nature; and if human hearts be dead, Speak, passing winds! ye torrents, with your strong And constant voice, protest against the wrong!" "WM. WORDSWORTH.

"Rydal Mount, 12th October, 1844." "Let not the above be considered as merely a poetical effusion. The degree and kind of attachment which many of the yeomanry feel to their small inheritances can scarcely be overrated. Near the house of one of them stands a magnificent tree, which a neighbour of the owner advised him to fell, for profit's sake. 'Fell it!' exclaimed the yeoman, 'I had rather fall on my knees and worship it!' It happens, I believe, that the intended railway will pass through this little property; and I hope that an apology for the answer will not be thought necessary by any one who enters into the strength of the feeling. W. W."

It is stated in the Kendal Mercury, that the Kendal and Windermere Railway Bill will be introduced into the House of Commons by the county Members, the Hon. Colonel Lowther and Alderman Thompson; and into the Upper House, by Lord Brougham. We are glad to find that so excellent a measure has secured

this influential support. William Wordsworth has been inditing and publishing in the Morning Post a sonnet against this line. Like most things proceeding from the same pen, it is beautiful as a poetical composition, but as a reason against this or any other railway (for in truth it applies equally to all lines that touch upon "the romance of nature") it is worth nothing.—Railway Paper.

[With the poet's leave, it may be added that when a man begins to feel he "had rather fall on his knees and worship" a favourite tree than have it felled, it is time it should be cut down.

We remember—and it raises a cloud of affecting recollections—a missionary meeting which we attended, a long time ago, at Ball's Pond, Islington. It was on an Easter Monday or Tuesday, that great frolicking time of Londoners. The Church Missionary Society's steady friend, Mr. Strachan, was telling us that his youth was spent about the spot where, after many years' absence in India, he found rows of houses, brickfields, canals, and a busy population. "But I am well content," was his conclusion, "to miss the green fields over which I used to roam in the days of my boyhood, when I find instead of them the habitations of people brought under the sound of the gospel as it is ministered to you, people who, instead of going forth to the whirl of dissipation this evening, come at their pastor's invitation to rejoice over the triumphs of the gospel in heathen lands, to sympathize with missionaries in their trials, and to aid them with their prayers." We do not profess to be able—to give the exact words; but our recollection is one of unintentional poetry, better than Wordsworth's, because submissive to the directing hand of Him who can turn the Utilitarian's schemes to the furtherance of the gospel.

Poets whine at the felling of a tree, and applaud the yeoman's idolatrous attachment to it, while they are cool and unconcerned at the greater evil which rail-roads do: the desecration of the Lord's day. Has Wordsworth's muse ever moved him to sing on that theme?—Ed.]

HYMNS FOR CHILDREN.

The experience of the last few years has led us to look with some suspicion on the writings of men who have a fondness for posting all their letters, and finishing the productions for the press, on saints' days. A few days ago we received a small volume entitled "Hymns on the Catechism," published by Mr. A. V. Blake, of New York, which might serve to confirm our fears. It is a reprint of an English edition, and is introduced by two advertisements, the one Anglican, by the author, and the other American. The English advertisement is signed J. W. Bisley, Feast of the Holy Innocents, 1842; the American, C. C., New York, Feast of All Saints, 1844. We have little doubt that C. C. is a fellow-traveller on the Parmanian hills, and are not without evidence of his being strongly disposed and well able to prepare flowery stories to set forth and scatter abroad such doctrines as are contained in the pages now before us. He commends this work most affectionately to "the children of our parish schools, the lambs of the flock," and states that our catechism has attained an additional grace in their "pictures of silver." We are exceedingly sorry that we cannot subscribe the commendation. Our reason will be found in the extract which we subjoin.

Q. Who gave you this name? A. My Godfathers and my Godmothers in my baptism.

My name—it is my Christian name; And as a pledge is given That I am now enrold and made A citizen of Heaven.

It is a name by which I am Writ "in the book of life," And here below a charm to keep Unharm'd by sin and strife.

We know of no such charm, nor do we wish our children to have any idea so identified with heathenism, impressed upon their minds. The Efficacy of Baptism is set forth in the following lines:

Thus, Lord, in the baptismal wave All sin within me dies, And all that's holy from that grave Must to new life arise.

Efficacy of Repentance:— Lord, if within my spirit aught Of former sin remains, O grant me tears of bitter thought To wash away the stains.

Efficacy of Ministers:— And holy pastors too, then are, By whom we're born again, The Church our mother is, whose care Doth us with life sustain.

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is shrouded with mystery, and strong intimations given of what Archbishop Tillotson calls the "hocus pocus" of transubstantiation under the wonder-working power of a priest. "This is my body"

Mysterious words! like priests of old We eat the sacrifice, But half the meaning is not told, Untold the countless price;

We hear and do thy last command, Our hearts adore thy words but cannot understand. I eat thy flesh, I drink thy blood, I cannot tell the rest; But this I know, 'tis very good, And I therein am blest:

Thy priest, thy word bring down the same; I from their hands receive, and take it in Thy name.

We only repeat that we cannot recommend to "the children of our parish schools, the lambs of the flock," even these saints' days' productions.—Episcopal Recorder.

THE FASCINATION OF CRIME.—Referring to the recent case of a gentleman of rank, but of no occupation who, from no assignable motive whatever, shot at a person, nor made any attempt to escape, but who is known to have long been engaged in treasuring up every account of horrible events he could find, the Brighton Gazette says: "From long observation and experience we are convinced, that there does unfortunately exist in the human mind a morbid principle of imitative wickedness; such as that by which the unhappy person in question appears to have been actuated. One monstrous crime is no sooner de-

\* See pp. 19, 20 n. † Comp. on Rom. vi. 3, 4. ‡ Opp. xiii. p. 134. § See e. g. his Expositions of Jer. xxvii. John iv. 23, 24. ¶ On 1 Peter iii. 21. \*\* Ib. The same balance is struck in the terse—though somewhat quaint—language of a valuable old writer—"We are not to conceive of the sacramental elements as bare and naked signs, so to grow into the contempt of them; neither as idol signs, by insisting on them, as if they were the whole Sacrament; for they are but outward, whereas the principal matter of a Sacrament is spiritual and inward. Thus we truest conceive of a Sacrament, when by looking at the one of these we see both; neither making the sign a vain symbol, nor yet ascribing any thing to it transcending the nature of it, such as are the peculiar and prerogatives of God; but in the sign and action, which is outward, led to those which are spiritual and inward." Taylor on Titus iii. 5. †† Heb. xiii. 9. ††† 2 Tim. iii. 7. †††† Book v. lxxvii. 3. ††††† Ib. lxxvii. 12.