

The Church.

"HER FOUNDATIONS ARE UPON THE HOLY HILLS."

THEREFORE I WILL NOT BE NEGLIGENT TO PUT YOU ALWAYS IN REMEMBRANCE OF THESE THINGS, THOUGH YE KNOW THEM AND BE ESTABLISHED IN THE PRESENT TRUTH.—2 PETER 1, 12.

VOLUME II.]

COBOURG, UPPER CANADA, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1838.

[NUMBER XXVIII.]

Poetry.

THE FLIGHT OF TIME.

Moments pass slowly on,
Years fly apace,
When shall the wearied one
Rest from the Race?

Whether we smile or weep—
Time keeps his flight—
Hours, days, may seem to creep,
Life speeds like Light!

Whether we laugh or groan,
Seasons change fast;
Oh! what hath ever flown
Swift as the Past?

What though we chafe and chide,
Time holds his pace;
No step—no noiseless stride
Doth he retrace!

Hastening, still hastening on,
None may deem how;
But when 'tis fled and gone—
Then seems Time slow?

Time, while we chide thy pace,
Reckless and proud,
Oft doth thy shadowy face,
Laugh from our shroud!

Lady Emmeline Stuart Wortley.

THE ENGLISH LAYMAN.

No. XIX.

ENGLAND THREATENED WITH INVASION.

Attend all ye who list to hear our noble England's praise,
I tell of the thrice-famous deeds she wrought in ancient days,
When the great fleet invincible against her bore in vain,
The richest spoils of Mexico, the stoutest hearts of Spain.

Macauley.

It is not to be thought of that the flood
Of British freedom, which to the open sea
Of the world's praise from dark antiquity
Hath flowed, "with pomp of waters, unwithstood,"
Roused though it be full often to a mood
Which spurs the cheek of salutary hands,
That this most famous stream in bogs and sands
Should perish; and to evil and to good
Be lost for ever.—Wordsworth.

It has been nobly remarked by the elegant Southey, in his usual vein of Christian patriotism, that "the people of England have never, since the Norman conquest, been chastised by the hand of a foreign enemy; when their own folly and their own sins have brought upon them God's judgments, the instructive punishment has been administered by their own hands." This happy exemption from the common lot of nations, not blest with an insular position, and less favoured by Providence with the elements of goodness, and greatness, has undoubtedly fostered the growth of that national pride, which lies at, and almost forms the foundation of the English character. Like an untamed horse which man has not yet tamed, and which tosses its mane in all the luxuriance of freedom, and puts forth its strength in motions of unchecked and undisciplined vigour, England, with sole reference to foreign domination and invasion has for eight centuries been emphatically free. The Scots have descended from their barren hills, and ravaged her fertile borders in a hurried foray; the Dutch have swept the channel with a broom, in the reign of a voluptuous and French hearted Monarch; but to actual invasion our forefathers have been strangers. The white Rose grew pale from the loss of blood, and the red Rose blushed with a deeper ensanguined dye,—but the carnage flowed from English hands, raised in a cruel and unnatural strife. The Cavalier spurred his gallant steed against the pikes of the Roundhead Ironsides, and civil dissension converted England, surfeited with a long and prosperous peace, into a general battle-ground; but no foreign power dared take advantage of the pending contest, and attempt to seize the prize for which the two contending parties fought. The insurrection of Monmouth was a domestic quarrel; and the Dutch army of William was introduced into the heart of the kingdom at the invitation and with the full consent of the Protestant people of England.

But although the flood of British freedom hath flowed through the course of so many centuries with a volume of waters unchecked by any foreign obstacles, yet we are not left without ample memorials of what was the feeling and demeanour of our sires when the threat of invasion broke hoarsely upon their indignant ear. As they have taught us how to wrest our liberties from a weak and superstitious John, and to preserve them from being choked by the iron grasp of a Tudor, crushed by the military despotism of a Cromwell, or frittered away by the bigot James, veiling the monk's cowl under the guise of toleration,—so have they handed down to us an ensample of what a nation's bearing ought to be when "the footstep of invader rude" threatened to invade its happy shores,—and that ensample is presented to us in the reigns of Elizabeth the Great and George the Good, under aspects but little varying save in unimportant and external features. The chivalry of 1588, burst forth with undiminished splendour in 1803; the "armoury of the invincible Knights of old" was wanting, but their valour was an inheritance that had descended without waste; the bow that was bent at Agincourt, and the pikes that bristled at Tilbury, had fallen into disuse, but the sinew of the English arm was unshrunk, and the bayonet most adequately supplied their place.

Beset as Upper Canada is, on every side, by bandit hordes of invaders, who rival the atrocities of the ancient tribe of 'Assassins,' it may prove no faint incentive to heroic deeds, to learn how our forefathers demeaned themselves under trials similar to our own,—how visibly, while arming in a holy cause they were "shielded, and helm'd, and weapon'd" by the God of Battles and of Nations.

Let us carry ourselves back to the year 1588, and behold the attitude of England awaiting the approach of what the Spaniards in their pride had designated "the most fortunate and invincible Armada." The energies of the Island were equal to the emergency, and they were wielded by a Sovereign who combined in her own person, the wisdom of a Ferdinand, and the lofty-minded courage of an Isabella. The nation beat but with one heart, and spoke but with one voice. The counties, at the summons of the Queen, arose up in arms; "from east to west, from north to south," the nobles, who had no special command in the neighbourhood of their own domains, with horse and infantry, with their sturdy tenants converted into serviceable soldiers, thronged the palace-gates of their lion-hearted Mistress; and first in the glorious and goodly array was the Viscount Montague, who, enfeebled by age and sickness, came to die in defence of his country—a patriarchal patriot indeed!—for his horsemen were led by his own sons, and with them came the heir of his house, "that is the eldest son to his son and heir, a young child, very comely, seated on horseback." The tide of patriotism, too, coursed as freely through the veins of the merchant-prince, as of the high-born baron. When the City of London was called upon to furnish its quota of defence, the Lord Mayor requested that Her Majesty's Council would state what would be sufficient. Five thousand men and fifteen ships was the contribution required: and twice those numbers granted, was the answer to the appeal. The noble burghers not only laid their treasures at their country's feet, but they also devoted their persons to the common weal. They met to train, and prepare themselves to take a part in the coming struggle: and, if one gentleman in Kent had a band of 150 foot-soldiers, who were worth in goods above £150,000 sterling, besides their lands—the metropolis was filled with many a band as opulent and patriotic as the Kentish yeomen. The sea presented a spectacle equally inspiring and sublime. The stately and gallant Effingham,—Drake, Hawkins, Frobisher, and Seymour, and the volunteer Raleigh,—with 191 ships, and nearly 18,000 seamen,—were eager to intercept the "Invincible" Armada, and leave no laurels to be gathered by their brethren on shore.

These mighty preparations proceeded under the impulse of the Virgin Queen. She was now in the fifty-sixth year of her age, and all the illusions of royalty could not conceal the ravages of time, or invest her with a beauty which it is doubtful whether she ever possessed in any striking degree! But a moral grandeur far more than supplied the deficiencies of feminine grace, and it needed not the loveliness of a Maria Theresa to unsheath the swords of the Peers and People of England. In Elizabeth they beheld the genius of their country; on her firmness and wisdom they relied; and her voice came to them as the suggestions of inspiration. Much as we may despise her heartless coquetry and egotisms vanity; severely as we may stigmatize her treachery and cruelty, in the recent execution of Mary Queen of Scots,—an act, however, of which her own subjects approved,—how do we forget all these glaring defects in her demeanour at this thrilling crisis! Behold her, "a mother in Israel!" appealing to a mighty nation, and evoking a spirit which she knew full well how to direct! Imagine her at one moment, conversing with the profound Burleigh,—now with the courtly Howard—anon with her lieutenant Leicester,—and not nominally or formally, but actually exhibiting the wisdom of the statesman, the admiral, and the general. And she did not merely trust to an arm of flesh, and leave uninvoked that mighty Power which, after all the preparations for defence, accomplished the victory with its own right hand, availing itself more of winds and waves, than of human instruments, in discomfiting the pride of Philip. She enjoined the Clergy, who had freely contributed from their means to the general cause, to use a form of Prayers, adapted to the emergency; and the supplications, framed so suitably for the occasion, glow with a warmth of faith, and chastened impetuosity, which shows how alarming was the anticipated danger, and yet how firm the reliance of the people on the interposition of the Almighty in their behalf. At the nearer approach of the Invaders, the inspiration of Elizabeth's character and presence was more deeply and enthusiastically felt. She visits the memorable camp at Tilbury—and a speech, the parallel to which is not recorded in history, flows from her lips. Truly, as she herself said, though her body was that of a weak and feeble woman, she had the heart and stomach of a King, and of a King of England too; and it was no vain boast that she uttered, when she avowed her resolution "to live and die amongst them all, to lay down for her God, for her kingdom, and for her people, her honour and her blood even in the dust."

It is only my purpose to describe the feeling that animated England at this trying period, and not to enter into any account of the dispersion of the Spanish Armada. The page of history, most instructive for our study at this special moment is that which records a nation arming against invasion; and, therefore, I will pass on to another glorious leaf in the annals of our country, which, for interest and encouragement to us, may vie with that, on which we have already bestowed such a hasty glance.

Two centuries and more had passed over England, when Napoleon meditated the invasion of her shores, and the annihilation of her independence. And what have we to relate, but that Napoleon possessed all the power and purpose of Philip,—and England all the spirit of Elizabeth, and a people as patriotic as that, which it was her glory to govern? "Invincible Armadas" of gun-boats darkened every port of France: the wrecks of the French Navy were reunited in three different harbours: and the "Army of England", under the command of French Generals, whose names alone were a presage of success, threatened to sweep away from the world the last break-water that stemmed the ambition of the Corsican.

As the note of French preparation was loud, so was the note of English defiance still louder. The land, as of old,

became one universal camp. An army of one hundred thousand men, was backed by a Militia, scarcely less numerous or less disciplined. The volunteers in city, town, and country, almost doubled in number the army and militia combined, and formed a force of a moral weight, which would have more than compensated for a want of experience. The Christian Monarch had his Tilbury Camp, and that camp was every spot on which he trod. Five hundred and seventy British ships of war hovered about the coasts, or blockaded the ports of France. Cornwallis, Nelson, and Pellew, applied the place of Howard, Hawkins, Frobisher, and Drake. The noble summoned his tenants as of yore, and placed himself at their head: the wealthy merchant rivalled the descendant of a princely line and poured out his riches into the lap of his country; the very Clergy, not content with addressing patriotic exhortations from the pulpit, and through the press, were eager to embody themselves into a separate corps, and but one fear pervaded the country, and that was,—that the French would not attempt to land. The Providence of 1588, did not slumber in 1803. The boasted project of Napoleon was frustrated by a disappointment as complete, tho' not so disastrous, as that of Philip.

When the public mind is stirred by events of more than ordinary importance, we cannot do better than repair to History, and gather from its records a lesson for our guidance. He who can recall, in imagination, "the might of England" as "it flashed to anticipate" the Spanish and French Invasions, and not derive confidence from such a reminiscence, can neither be actuated by the courage, nor the patriotism of a Briton: he who can read the noble prayers, which our Protestant forefathers breathed with impassioned lips, and not respond to them with a cordial amen, as applicable to the present crisis, however brave he may be, flings away an armour more impotent, and a spear more weighty than that of Goliath; and he, who casting his eye forwards thro' a few coming years, does not look with cheerfulness to the result of our present troubles, lacks that hopeful spirit which, when common to a nation and sanctified in its aspirations, accomplishes whatsoever it desires. Let us revert to the issue of the two great events, to which we have so briefly alluded, and from thence imbibe an assurance of present success, and a happy omen for futurity. Philip threatened to bring back England to the Papal yoke, and to imprison Elizabeth in the Castle of St. Angelo; but Elizabeth lived to repair in Christian triumph to the cathedral of St. Paul's, and kneeling at the West Door, to render thanks to Almighty God for the preservation of her realm, her religion, and her life. Napoleon boasted that he would blot out England from the rank of independent nations, but his vain imaginings were brought to scorn, and he died the prisoner of his deadliest enemy. Therefore, let us, while we "stiffen our sinews, and summon up our blood" for the worst that may befall us, uplift a resolute and cheerful countenance; let us pray for peace, without the intervention of war; but if war come, let us enter upon it in the language of prophetic inspiration, which Wordsworth breathed in 1803, and Wellington realized,—not "on British ground" but on,—many a Continental field:

Shout for a mighty victory is won!
On British ground the invaders are laid low;
The breath of Heaven hath drifted them like snow,
And left them lying in the silent sun
Never to rise again!—the work is done!

ALAN FAIRFORD.

Toronto, 18th December, 1838.

HORSE LITURGICAL.

No. X.

THE VENITE EXULTEMUS.—THE PSALMS.

From the act of prayer, first directed to be expressed in the words which the Saviour of the world hath taught us, the Church calls upon us—after an invocation of grace and help from above—to "shew forth the praise" of the triune Godhead. This is done, as we have seen, in that ancient and comprehensive hymn in which the victims of pagan persecution were wont to solace their dying hours and which, in many other portions of the service and especially at the conclusion of every Psalm, the Church employs, as being a simple but emphatic declaration of our faith in the Holy Trinity. The hearts of the worshippers being thus full of gratitude for the work of redemption by the triune Deity, the minister of the Church exhorts them to join him in further acts of praise, and he invites them to this office of thankfulness in the words, PRAISE YE THE LORD,—words which may be, as they often are, expressed in the term HALLELUIAH. "This word," says Dean Comber, "is so sacred that St. John retains it, Rev. xix. 1, 3, 4, 6; and St. Augustine saith, the Church of old scrupled to translate it. The use of it is frequent in the Psalms, being the title to, and the conclusion of, many of them; particularly of six Psalms, which were the Paschal Hymn, and called the great Halleluiahs, Psalm cxiii. cxviii. And among the Christians it was so usual to sing Halleluiahs, that St. Jerome saith little children were acquainted with it. The solemn times of singing it among divers churches were different; but it was used every where on the Lord's day; and among us it is used every day, and placed here, first as a return to the Gloria Patri, for in that we worship the Trinity, as we do the Unity in this: secondly, as a triumphant hymn upon the joyful news of our absolute, and the overthrow of our spiritual enemies; for which saith the priest to the people, 'Praise ye the Lord:' and they readily obey him, replying, 'The Lord's name be praised.' Thirdly, it is a proper preface to the Psalms, called in Hebrew, 'The Book of Praises.' The office hath been thus far penitential, it now becomes eucharistical; what more proper introduction can there be than this Halleluiahs?"

In the frame of mind which this invitation of the Minister, and this response of the people bespeaks, we go on in the work of praise to the NINETY-FIFTH PSALM, commonly called the VENITE EXULTEMUS from the words with which it commences in Latin. It is called the "Invitatory Psalm,"

because, at its commencement, it invites us to "come and sing unto the Lord;" and acting upon this its spirit, the primitive Christians were in the habit of using it before the congregation went into Church. The original of the name is thus explained by a valuable writer on the Book of Common Prayer: "this," he says, "we learn from Chrysostom. He informs us, that till the whole congregation was fully assembled, it was usual for those who were present, by way of beguiling the time, to sing psalms, of which Venite Exultemus was the chief. Some parts of this Psalm were in subsequent ages, sung with a strong loud voice, like the sound of a trumpet. The intention of which was to bring the people into the Church. Durandus further informs us, that, in his time (above six hundred years ago,) it was a custom in some places, for the people waiting in expectation of the Morning Service, to hasten into the Church as soon as they heard Venite Exultemus begun to be sung."

In the words, then, of this Hymn, the Church invites us to give the rein, as it were, to those thankful feelings which the previous portions of the service are so calculated to awaken; because those are words which are replete with arguments for reverence and praise, for prayer and thankfulness, to the Great Author of all our mercies. The "Invitatory Psalm," we may observe, is not used in the Evening Service for the day, because then we are presumed to have already joined in it, and heard its invitation at Morning Service.—Nor is it possible to conceive any composition better adapted to the object for which the Church has appointed it: in the mouth of David it would have been a stirring and pious exhortation; but in the alternate voices of a Christian congregation, it is the noble concert of mutual joy and encouragement, brother joining with brother in the heartfelt and affectionate invitation—"O come, let us sing unto the Lord."—And may not only our songs arise, but our hearts rejoice "in the strength of our salvation!"

Very inspiring and animating is this beautiful Psalm; and would that they who recite it, catching the glow of its pious spirit, would from the heart sing the due praises unto the Lord, and offer the tribute of unfeigned thanksgiving to "the strength of our salvation!" "O come," exclaims the Lord's minister and messenger,—come to the work of dutiful praise; and shall the ransomed of the Lord be slow to obey the summons, or speak with faint heart and tuneless tongue, the joys of redemption which that Lord hath finished?

"Let us come"—with delight and exultation let us come—before his presence with thanksgiving, and shew ourselves glad in him with psalms; for should we not, in this joyful and grateful strain, approach Him who is the great God—of dominion unlimited, of Providence beneficent and unfailing? But with "no proud looks" should we approach that adorable Benefactor: the language of David instructs us in the humbleness of soul in which our gladness should be told.—"O come, let us fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker." "Yes, brethren, do not forget, or indolently disregard, the authority and the motives by which you are here invited to kneel. Do not despise the invitation; be not insensible to the claims which the Lord your God has to the bended knee. And especially, my brethren, with respect to this and all other duties to which you are invited in this impressive Hymn, forget not the caution which it sets before you—that if you "harden your hearts," as the Jews did in the wilderness, their fate will be an emblem of yours,—you will wander, during this brief life, in the wilderness of this world, and be finally excluded from God's rest in the heavenly Canaan."

From the Invitatory Hymn, we proceed to the PSALMS, which are appointed to be read by Minister and people in alternate verses,—thus manifesting, that while he calls upon them to "praise the Lord," they are not backward in responding to the appeal that "the Lord's name be praised." Volumes have been written upon the admirable compilation which bears the name of the Psalms of David; suffice it then that we adduce from the "shining lights" of our Church a few testimonies to their surpassing excellence.

"The Book of Psalms," says Dean Comber, "is a collection of praises and prayers indited by the Spirit, composed by holy men on various occasions, and so suited to public worship, that they are used and commended by the Jews and Mahometans, as well as by Christians; and though the several parties of Christians differ in most other things, in this they all agree; so that Cassander designed to compose a Liturgy out of the Psalms, in which all Christians might join. They contain a variety of devotions, agreeable to all degrees and conditions of men, so that without much difficulty every man may apply them to his own case, either directly or by way of accommodation; for which cause the Church useth these oftener than any other part of Scripture. It is certain, the Temple Service consisted chiefly of forms taken out of this Book of Psalms (1 Chron. xvi. 7—37; 1 Chron. xxv. 1, 2), and the prayers of the modern Jews also are mostly gathered thence. The Christians undoubtedly used them in their public service in the Apostles' time (1 Cor. xiv. 26; Col. iii. 16), and in the following ages it is very plain that they sung Psalms in the Church by turns, each side of the choir answering to the other; yea, it appears the Psalms were placed about the beginning of Prayers, soon after the Confession; and that they were so often repeated at the Church, that the poorest Christians could say them by heart, and used to sing them at their labours, in their houses, and in the fields."

"The Psalms," says the eloquent Bishop Horne, "are an epitome of the Bible, adapted to the purposes of devotion. They treat occasionally of the creation and formation of the world; the dispensations of Providence, and the economy of grace; the transactions of the patriarchs, the exodus of the children of Israel; their journey through the wilderness, and their settlement in Canaan; their law, priesthood, and ritual:—the exploits of their great men, wrought through

* Shepherd.

† Penny Sunday Reader.

‡ Penny Sunday Reader.