

EPICUREANISM.

The proofs that the bulk of mankind in this age are Epicureans, and believe pain the greatest of evils, and pleasure the chief good, are abundant. It has been well observed, that the aversion to the idea of punishment, which is so universal, is, in some degree, the result of the Epicurean horror of pain. That particular phenomenon is, however, connected with Epicureanism in another way. The gods of Epicurus took no part in the government of the world, and, therefore, no right of governing could in any way be derived from them. Our modern theories of government are, in this particular, Epicurean. All government must, according to the prevalent notions, be founded in the assent of the governed; because it cannot be founded on the Will of God, Whom men have agreed, practically, to shut out of the world. Some believe Him, as we have already suggested, to have exhausted His government, by enacting a set of laws and decrees which execute themselves, requiring, and receiving, no attention or superintendence from Him. Others regard Him, in a manner still more Epicurean, as taking no thought for any thing which occurs upon earth. It is probable, that many more persons hold this last view unconsciously than consciously. But some hold it each way; and the two classes both unite, with the men of laws and decrees, to treat God as any thing but the moral Governor of the world.

If God be not the moral Governor of the world, there can be no foundation for government, but the assent of the governed. Nothing is more clear, than that no creature can have any inherent authority over any other creature. This palpable difficulty is gotten over in fashionable theories of government, by introducing the idea of a natural right in the majority to rule. But if no creature have any natural right to direct the actions of any other creature that is, to govern him, neither can any majority which is only an aggregation of creatures, have such a right. The right of the majority to rule, must then have one of two bases. Either it must rest upon the Will of God, or upon the assent of the governed. It cannot rest upon the Will of God for two reasons. There is no revelation, or other evidence, of the existence of such will; and, besides, such an idea is inconsistent with the Epicurean theory, that God has nothing to do, or does nothing, in the government of the world. If the advocates of this majority theory, were content to rest its claims, on what has been well called, the Providential theory, that whatever government is found in well established possession, is to be taken to be of Providential appointment, and so entitled to obedience, they might still rest their claims upon the Will of God, wherever the power was actually in the hands of

the majority. In fact, there would be no answer to such an argument; but it will not answer the purpose; for it applies with equal force to any other system of government. This is also true of the only remaining foundation of the right of the majority to govern, the assent of the governed. But then another fancy intervenes, that men are not likely to assent to be governed by any other power than the majority. This is contradicted by all history; which shews that whenever men have found themselves subjected to the will of a majority, they have seized the first opportunity of erecting any other form of government, in order to escape from that which this fancy supposes to be the universal favorite. But the fashionable notion is, notwithstanding all this, that government is, and must be founded on the assent of the governed. This assent will, of course, be withdrawn, the moment it becomes inconvenient, and, at least, at the moment when the individual is about to be punished. The right of punishment must then rest on one theory, and can rest on no other, that man is, by the Will of God, subjected to authority and government. But this theory is inconsistent with the Epicurean theory which excludes God from the government of the world, and thus there is, to an Epicurean, no reasonable foundation for the right of governments to inflict punishment.

Pain being regarded as the greatest of evils, and pleasure the greatest of goods, punishment becomes objectionable upon another ground. There can be no propriety in inflicting pain as a means of reformation; for the pain is an evil greater than the moral good of reformation. If, then, we had authority to inflict punishment, which, upon Epicurean principles, we cannot have, there would be no propriety in doing so, because we should be producing more evil than good. Hence the loose manner in which children are brought up, the absence, in fact, of all domestic discipline. To punish children for their faults, is to inflict a certain evil, in order to attain an uncertain good. This, besides that it involves an assumption of authority, which upon Epicurean principles, cannot exist, is wrong in itself. For it will certainly increase the quantity of evil in the world, and possibly may not increase the amount of good. Moreover, we cannot punish our children, without inflicting pain upon ourselves; and what right have they to expect that we should undergo a certain and present evil for their contingent and remote advantage?

These principles prevail among us, they are not avowed and set forth in logical connection; but they are acted upon as consistently as if they were, and they are all, moreover, every now and then avowed; it is only the connection between them which is disavowed.

But the proof of the prevalence of Epicureanism

among us, is equally strong when we turn to the other division of the doctrine of Epicurus, that pleasure is the greatest of goods. We have already remarked, that the pleasure, of which Epicurus spoke, was not mere brutal sensuality. That was not excluded from his idea of pleasure, but it did not complete that idea. His idea of pleasure included those more refined pleasures of sense, which we are not accustomed to speak of as sensual, as well as the semi-intellectual pleasures of art, and intellectual pleasures themselves. It did not include moral pleasures; because they all rest on self-denial. This was one great defect of Epicurus' system. It was merely selfish. Self-denial had a place in it, but not for any but selfish purposes. Epicureans abstain to-day, that they may enjoy to-morrow. Enjoy the same things, not better things. They do not abstain, that they may acquire a control over their appetites, and become purer beings, but that they may retain the means of enjoyment, by the preservation of their faculties.

Is not this the course of things among ourselves? Who denies himself any thing in order that he may have wherewithal to give to the poor, or the Church? Much money is given to both; but it is superfluous money, which the donors suppose they will never miss. It would, perhaps, be not less true, that they would never miss what they gave, if they gave more. But, in fact, very few persons, if any, give any thing which involves self-denial. Men give nothing which will abridge their pleasures; because they look upon pleasure as their chief good. They are Epicureans; and when the ambassadors of CHRIST descend into the market place, these Epicureans encounter them, and treat them as babblers, because they preach Jesus and the Resurrection, and the brotherhood, which has its foundation in the membership of one and the hope of the other, and desire that they would part with their treasures which are upon earth, and which can only purchase for them the pleasures of sin for a season, in order that they may "lay up treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor dust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal."

We have often adverted to the curious combination of the worship of Mammon with that of Belial, for which this age, and especially this country, is so remarkable. It has its origin in the prevalence of Epicureanism. Men regard pleasure as the chief good, and therefore they cannot wait, but must seize upon it as soon as they can. They cannot wait for enjoyment until they are rich; yet they cannot forego the hope of being rich. They therefore endeavour to extend their acquisitions so that they may have enough to spend extravagantly, and yet leave enough to accumulate into wealth. The moral evils of this double necessity of "making money" are not difficult to imagine.

Men are, however, not willing to admit that they are Epicureans, because their pleasures are not exclusively gross, and, in their estimation, sensual. But the delights for which they seek, are not more refined than those of the garden of Epicurus. Nor are sensual pleasures excluded from their notions of enjoyment. Splendid entertainments furnish one very common mode of expense. It may be asserted, that these are not given for the sake of the sensual pleasures of eating and drinking. We believe that they are not given exclusively on account of those pleasures. They are sacrifices, not to "the lusts of the flesh," but, to "the pride of life." The principal object which the givers of such entertainments have in view, is the assertion and advancement of their position in society, by the display of real or imaginary wealth, and of the mental qualifications required to arrange an elegant entertainment. But neither "the lust of the eye," nor "the lusts of the flesh," are entirely overlooked. The pleasures of the palate are not forgotten, and if they were, there would be but few admirers of the display. The display itself may be regarded as belonging, so far as the givers are concerned, to "the pride of life;" but to the rest of the company it falls under the description of "the lust of the eye."

But in the most favorable aspect of such things, they are still Epicurean. For they administer, at the best, to the refined intercourse of society; a thing lawful in itself, but not lawful to be made the great object of life. Nothing earthly can be lawfully made the great object of life. Yet every thing around us shows, that, to the greater portion of mankind, pleasure, in some form, and under some modification, is that of which they are in pursuit.

This produces a state of mind, which is one of the greatest impediments to the progress of the Church. The Church wants men and money. Men who are persuaded that earthly pleasures, no matter how refined, are the great end of life, will not devote themselves to her service. They will not even give any considerable portion of their time to forwarding her interests. They find it much easier to throw away, as they call it, a small sum of money, than the time which they hope will enable them to earn a larger. Yet they are not liberal of money either; for money is the stuff of which wealth is made; and their pleasures depend upon the possession of wealth. It is in this way that the Epicureans now most dangerously encounter the Church. It is Epicureanism which cuts off her supplies, both of men and money, and thus impedes all her operations.

The evil can only be overcome by substituting Christianity for Epicureanism; self-denial for self-indulgence. It will not do to preach a diluted Christianity, a compromise between Christianity and Epicureanism; that is, between CHRIST and

SCHEDULE OF RETURNS OF CONVICTIONS

Before Justices of the Peace for the United Counties of York, Ontario and Peel, transmitted to my Office by the Justices whose names are annexed, and now Published by me under Provincial Statute 4 & 5 Victoria, Chapter 12.

OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE PEACE, Cos. Y., O. & P.
Toronto, July, 1852.

GEORGE GURNETT,
Clerk Peace, Cos. Y., O., and P.

NAME OF PROSECUTOR.	NAME OF DEFENDANT.	NATURE OF CHARGE.	Date of Conviction.	NAME OF CONVICTING JUSTICE.	Amount of Fine, Penalty or Damage.	Fine when paid or to be paid to said Justice.	TO WHOM PAID OVER BY THE SAID JUSTICE.	IF NOT PAID, WHY NOT? GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.
Jane Clow.....	Richard Clow.....	Intoxication and abuse.....	1st April 1852.	Wm. B. Reeve, Esq.....	£ s. d. 1 5 0	Ten days.....	County Treasurer	
Elizabeth Cardinali.....	Norrie Barry.....	Assault and Battery.....	8th May "	do.....	0 10 0	Forthwith.....	do.	
James Gibbins.....	William Hill.....	Non-payment of wages.....	3rd April "	Eli Gorham, Esq.....	2 1 6	Twenty-one days	Plaintiff	
James Hallen.....	Henry O. Van Allen.....	do. do.....	19th "	do.....	2 17 7	do.	do.	
James Summerville.....	William Fowler.....	Assault.....	7th May "	do.....	0 2 6	Ten days.....	County Treasurer	
James Summerville.....	William Moore.....	Non-payment of wages.....	" "	do.....	0 9 4½	do.	Plaintiff	
John McKay.....	James Mortain.....	Fraudulently removing goods to prevent distress for rent.....	24th "	do. and James Gamble, Esq.....	7 10 0	do.	do.	
George Metcalfe.....	Charles Phillips.....	Assault.....	8th April "	Abm. Bagshaw, Esq.....	0 5 0	do.	{ Half to Prosecutor Half to party injured }	
Charles Brown.....	Simon Allcock.....	do.....	24th "	do.....	0 2 6	do.	County Treasurer	
Charles Brown.....	Duncan Shell.....	do.....	24th "	do.....	0 5 0	do.	Prosecutor	
Adam McPeak.....	William Walker.....	do.....	25th "	do.....	1 5 0	do.	{ 20 shillings to Prosecutor 5 do. to Co. Treasurer 5 shillings to Co. Treasurer 10 do. to Prosecutor }	
Adam McPeak.....	Charles Backner.....	do.....	" "	do.....	0 15 0	do.	County Treasurer	
Thomas Bolster.....	James Hughes.....	Trespass.....	23rd Dec. 1851.	do.....	0 5 0	do.	do.	
William Brooks.....	Joel Hackner.....	Assault.....	10th Jan. 1852.	do.....	0 5 0	do.	do.	
William Brooks.....	William Tracey.....	do.....	" "	do.....	0 10 0	do.	do.	
Otway & Edmund.....	Thomas Goldsmith.....	Default of Statute Labour.....	14th Oct. 1851.	John Wilson, 4th Esq.....	0 15 0	One month.....	John Edmund, overseer	
Do. Do.....	Thomas McLellan.....	do. do.....	" "	do.....	0 3 9	Eight days.....	do.	
Do. Do.....	McLean.....	do. do.....	" "	do.....	1 13 9	do.	do.	
Do. Do.....	William Townley.....	do. do.....	" "	do.....	0 11 3	do.	do.	
James W. Bridgland.....	C. P. Lyda.....	do. do.....	" "	do.....	0 5 7½	do.	do.	
James Miller.....	Richard Gann.....	Malignant injury to property.....	17th Oct. 1851.	do.....	0 11 3	do.	J. W. Bridgland	No goods to distrain
John Sherwood.....	David McBride.....	Default of Statute Labour.....	10th Jan. 1852.	do.....	0 1 0	10th Jan. 1852.	Township Treasurer	
George Cook.....	William Long.....	Disturbing Public Worship.....	" "	do.....	0 1 0	Eight days.....	County Treasurer	
Y. & V. Plank Road Co.....	Jacob Wice.....	Trespass.....	28th Feb.	do.....	0 1 0	28th Feb 1852.	do.	
Do.....	William Jackson.....	Evasion of Toll.....	8th April "	do.....	0 7 4½	14th April "	Y. & V. Plank Road Co.	
Do.....	Henry White.....	do.....	12th "	do.....	0 0 7½	12th "	do.	
Do.....	Edward Jackson.....	do.....	" "	do.....	0 0 7½	12th "	do.	
Do.....	Henry Ross.....	do.....	21st "	do.....	0 10 7½	12th "	do.	
Edward Miles.....	Robert Erwin.....	Assault and Battery.....	14th June "	do.....	0 2 6	14th June "	County Treasurer	
Edwin Smith.....	William Clary.....	do.....	21st April "	James Gamble, Esq.....	0 5 0	One week.....	do.	
Mary Ann Ransom.....	Arthur Mortimer.....	do.....	16th June "	do.....	0 1 0	do.	do.	
Mary Ann Parks.....	Sarah Sherman.....	do.....	28th May "	John Hawkins, Esq.....	0 10 0	Forthwith.....	do.	
Abel Staff rd.....	George Vinner.....	do.....	10th June "	do.....	0 5 0	do.	do.	
Juliet Dowd.....	Margaret White.....	do.....	21st April "	W. M. Sutton, and Sinclair Holden, Esqs.....	0 5 0	do.	do.	
Miles Wilkinson.....	James White.....	Misdemeanor.....	17th May "	Chancy Crosby, and do.....	1 0 0	24th May 1852.	{ Half do. Half Prosecutor }	
Rebecca Slater.....	Andrew Blair.....	Non-payment of wages.....	5th May "	James Johnson, Esq.....	0 15 7½	10th May "	Prosecutor	
James Baster.....	James B. Hall.....	do. do.....	21st "	do.....	0 18 9	12th June "	do.	Not yet paid time given.
Robert Davis.....	Samuel Stump.....	do. do.....	25th "	do.....	3 2 6	16th "	do.	No goods.
Wm. Brownlee.....	James Shaw.....	Assault.....	" "	do.....	0 5 0	29th "	County Treasurer	
Thomas Boyle.....	Brian Dolan.....	do.....	21st June "	do.....	0 5 0	One month.....	do.	
Henry Christopherson.....	James Walker.....	Throwing down fence.....	29th "	do.....	2 0 0	29th June 1852.	County Treasurer	
James Edwards.....	John Fitz Gibbon.....	Assault and Battery.....	1st March "	S. E. Phillips, and N. Pearson, Esqs.....	1 0 0	Forthwith.....	do.	
Wm. Stokes, Insp'tor.....	John Egan.....	Selling liquors without licence.....	1st May "	do. and Jas. Gamble, Esq.....	1 0 0	1st July 1852.	do.	Could not collect Fine. By Law deficient.
John Sanderson.....	Freeman Pennick.....	Assault and Battery.....	24th April "	Henry Wideman, Esq.....	0 2 6	Ten days.....	County Treasurer	Absconded.
Wm. McKenzie.....	John Herrington.....	Sabbath breaking.....	" "	do.....	0 5 0	Forthwith.....	do.	
Mich'l R. Brougham.....	George Balfour.....	Assault.....	2nd June "	George Gurnett, Esq.....	0 10 0	do.	do.	

I certify that the above is a true and correct account of the Returns of Convictions made to this Office from the 16th April last to this date.

OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE PEACE,
United Counties of York, Ontario, and Peel,
Toronto, 10th July, 1852.

GEORGE GURNETT,
Clerk of the Peace, Cos. Y., O., and P.