

From the Church.

BOWING AT THE NAME ON JESUS.

Among the innovations that are perpetually creeping in, changing the customs, and invading the institutions of our forefathers, who, after all, were perhaps, a little wiser than their descendants, I am often grieved to witness the growing neglect of a most seemly and reverential observance,—bowing at the name of Jesus, when reciting the Creeds of our Church. One might naturally expect, that, in days when fidelity rears its brazen front with impudence unparalleled, when blasphemies abound, and scoffers walk on every side insensible to rebuke, the people of Christ would wax more jealous—would become more tenacious of every badge distinguishing them as the worshippers of an insulted Lord. New light, however, seems to have broken in upon some of them, which I do not believe to have come from heaven, whencesoever else it may have emanated; teaching them that now is the time to relax in those points—the season to rob the Lord of those outward demonstrations of respect, which his enemies (who have no idea of spiritual service) delight to see withdrawn from him. “It is too popish,” say some of these defaulter; “it is a mere bodily exercise, which profiteth little.” Craving your pardon, my good friends, it is not popish. Popery yields little honour to Jesus: his name is not referred to in her services nearly so often as those of other mediators; his work is undervalued—his glory tarnished. He is not even once mentioned either in the confession or the absolution of that unhappy Church. It is true, his image, and that of his cross, are exhibited as objects of idolatrous worship, and that to them a genuflection is performed; but we, when by doing reverence at the mention of his adorable name, as Jesus Christ, the Father’s only Son, and our Lord, we enter a solemn public protest against the blasphemies of Socinianism, no more approximate to popish superstition, than we do when verbally acknowledging the grand doctrine of the triune Jehovah, which the Church of Rome has never renounced. Popery is Christianity, corrupted, defiled, and rendered void by men’s traditions and commandments. Protestantism is Christianity, reduced and Reformed upon the perfect model of Scripture. Our beautiful Liturgy is no other than the Romish prayer-book, purged of all that the craft or subtlety of the devil, or man, had introduced to pollute so pure a worship: and those who object to the beautiful symbol of the liquid cross marked on the brow of the baptized, “in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner, against the world, and the devil; and to continue Christ’s faithful soldier and servant unto his life’s end;”—they who stiffen the neck and knee, when an assembled congregation presses as it were, into the participation of what, either as a privilege or a menace, is proclaimed to the universe that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow,—are in some peril of losing a substance, in their eager grasp after a shadowy spirituality.

[We call special attention to what follows.]

Our rubric enjoins kneeling during the supplicatory portions of the service; and fast and far are our congregations departing from that command. Yet no man can have the face to assert that the bodily exercise of kneeling is not enjoined or implied as a duty throughout the New Testament; enforced, too, by the example of the Lord Jesus Christ himself. I do not know, because I have never tried, and I trust in God I shall never be induced to try, what degree of devotional feeling accompanies a sitting position, during the worship of my heavenly King; but I very much question the advantages of such demeanor. While we remain in the body, we cannot discover the intimate connexion subsisting between the outward act and inward thought; and it does appear an odd way of obeying the apostolic exhortation, “glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are his,” to attempt such disjunction of mind and matter, just where we are admonished specially to unite them in the service, and surely in the worship of God. To deny, or indeed to curtail, the homage of the body, in order to exalt that of the soul, is going against universal experience, and against the tenor

of His injunctions, who knows better what is man than man himself does.

To me, I confess, it is a very delightful moment of realization, in regard to the privileges of Church-membership, when brethren and sister, with one accord, do outward homage to the name of Him who, in taking their nature upon him, never ceased to be God over all, blessed for ever. It is very meet, that flesh which he designed to take into communion with Deity, should, with lowly and external reverence, hail God manifest in the flesh. “Jesus Christ, our Lord,” are words of mighty, of immeasurable import. The Saviour, the Anointed our Saviour, our God, the Captain of our Salvation, the Head of his body, the Church, which body (at least in profession) are we. It was he who wore our form, who bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows; who walked our earth, a persecuted, afflicted man; who hung on the cross to atone for our sins; descended into the grave, that it might become the gate of life to us; and now in the Majesty of his eternal glory, visits our temples, and hearkens to our prayers. Let those who can, deny him the poor tribute of grateful reverence; so long as I have power to bend a muscle, my knee shall bow, in deed and willing adoration, at the glorious and beloved Name of Jesus Christ my Lord.

FROM DR. ADAM CLARKE’S COMMENTARY ON THE SCRIPTURES.

Reasons for the frequent occurrence of the Lord’s Prayer in the Liturgy.

HOSEA xiv. 2.—“Take with you words, &c.” “And you may be assured that you pray aright when you use the words which God himself has put in your mouths. On this very ground there is a potency in the Lord’s Prayer, when offered up believingly, beyond what can be found in any human composition. And it may be presumed that it was this consideration that induced our Reformers to introduce it so frequently in the public Liturgy.”

Opinion on the union of Church and State.

I. “There should be a public acknowledgment of God in every nation; and this should be provided for by the State in a way the least burthensome to the people, that all may rejoice in the benefit. Happy the nation that have a Bible so correct, and a Liturgy so pure, as those in the British Empire! In such cases a religion established by the State is an unutterable blessing to the nation; only keep it to the Bible, and to the Liturgy, and all (under God) will be well; but when the sermon is against these, all is bad.—Notes on Ezek. ch. 46. in fine.

II. “A Christian State has surely authority to enact.—The christian religion is, and shall be, the religion of this land; and prejudice apart, should not the laws provide for the permanence of this system? Is the form of Christianity likely to be preserved in times of general profligacy, if the laws do not secure its permanence? What would our nation have been if we had not had a version of the Sacred Writings established by the authority of the laws; and a form of sound words for general devotion established by the same authority? Whatever the reader may do, the writer thanks God for the religious establishment of his country.”—Notes on 1 Kings, ch. 13. in fine.

The most of the following article on “the Minister’s Disease,” will be found in vol. 1. p. 171—but is republished for the admonition of our Brethren.—Ed. C. C.

THE MINISTER’S DISEASE.

“Much has lately been written on this subject. One who has had some experience of this visitant thus named, offers a few remarks which may possibly be of use to his younger brethren. It is a law of nature, as well as of revelation, that man should have periodical relaxation and rest. To most of the world this can or does come one day in seven. But when shall the clergyman have it? On Sunday most evidently he is a severe labourer.—He must therefore take some other day. After much trial the writer is clearly of opinion that Saturday should be the clergyman’s day. Let him make it a point of duty, and of habit to finish his writing on Friday night. This can be done by the resolute. The mind is as susceptible of habits as the body. It has been the writer’s

practice to do most of his writing on a Thursday; and on that day after considerable practice his mind came almost as naturally to its task, as the appetite to the hour of dining.

“Having thus disciplined the mind, let Saturday be devoted to pastoral visits, and as much as may be, to exercise in the open air. Particularly, if convenient, let a ride on horseback with a hard trotting horse be taken that day. It was some time before the writer could decide why on some Sundays his voice was several tones heavier and much freer. He at last observed that this always followed a ride on such a horse as has been mentioned, and concluded that his lungs were materially benefited by the mechanical exercise they received, or in other words by their being well shaken. Saturday having thus been devoted to employments which will fatigue the physical system sufficiently for sound and quiet rest, let an hour or two of additional sleep be taken on Saturday night.—then, on Sunday, the clergyman will rise fresh and vigorous, for his labours. He will go through them with a facility which will astonish him—a facility which will contribute immensely to the smooth flow of his spirits and thus to his religious enjoyment. Let his food on that day be light and nourishing. Let him avoid a hearty supper of solid food, when his public exercises are finished: a mistake into which many clergymen fall and for which they pay bitterly in what is called “mondayishness.” The stomach often craves food after preaching, but then is no time to gratify it; for it is weakened by the unusual exertion of the lungs and less able to digest, though its appetite be ever so keen.

A word as to the tones with which we should speak. We have two tones,—the tenor and the bass. Common conversation is usually conducted in the latter, and every body knows that we can talk for hours without fatigue; so we can preach, if we will talk on the same key; only adding to the volume of the voice, according to the size of the church. And less of this adding is necessary than is supposed. It is not loudness but distinctness which makes us audible and understood. A late Judge in Massachusetts, a very feeble and sickly man, was always heard in every court room in the State, while the stoutest and most vociferous lawyers were often quite unintelligible. He was distinct in his utterance, and taught himself the habit, by reading aloud in his study a half an hour every day.

Speaking on the tenor key, straining, screeching, and making the lungs a forcing pump, it is which scales, and excoriates, the throat, debilitates the system, and terminates so often in throat disease, bronchitis, and consumption. Most especially is this the case when the system has been admirably prepared for deleterious impressions, by anxious and hurried labour on Saturday, and protracted writing of Saturday night. This is a suicidal practice: the clergyman who persists in it, is a traitor to his constitution.

If soreness of the throat have been occasioned less by physical debility, &c. than by some sudden change of weather, let a gargle of cayenne pepper in warm water be used. The writer has experienced great benefit from this; indeed has frequently cured by it a soreness which might have proved obstinate.

These are a few simple hints thrown together in much haste, but they are the fruit of sober and painful experience; and if so regarded by our young clergy may save them many a pang and continue them blessings to the church, when otherwise they might go down prematurely to the grave; mourning over squandered health, blasted prospects, and purpose for ever broken off.”

We annex the following, as furnishing also upon this subject a very profitable hint:—

NIGHT STUDY.—Never go to bed direct from the labour of composition, because the transition is too great, and the vascular balance is thereby destroyed. Night is commonly the literary labourer’s best hour; but then the arterial system is excited; and if in that state of excitement he retires to rest, the consequence is, difficulty in the action of the returning vessels which produces, first sluggishness, then congestion, and from this torpor, and many a fearful evil. Before the act of retiring, the pen should be thrown aside; some work, which does not require much