

M. P. W. Moore

THE

COLONIAL CHURCHMAN.

"BUILT UPON THE FOUNDATION OF THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS, JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF BEING THE CHIEF CORNER STONE..... Eph. 2 c. 20 v.

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SLEEPING IN JESUS.

Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep!
From which none ever wakes to weep:
A calm and undisturb'd repose,
Unbroken by the list of foes!

Asleep in Jesus! Oh how sweet
To be for such a slumber meet:
With holy confidence to sing
That death has lost his venom'd sting!

Asleep in Jesus! peaceful rest,
Whose waking is supremely bless'd;
No fear—no wo shall dim that hour,
That manifests the Saviour's power.

Asleep in Jesus! O for me
May such a blissful refuge be:
Securely shall my ashes lie,
Waiting the summons from on high!

Asleep in Jesus! time nor space
Debars this precious "hiding place":
On Indian plains, or Lapland snows,
Believers find the same repose.

Asleep in Jesus! far from thee
Thy kindred and their graves may be:
But there is still a blessed sleep,
From which none ever wakes to weep!

Mrs. Makay.

For the Colonial Churchman.

PASTORAL CONVERSATIONS.

No. 4.

THE COMMUNION.

There are but few of the usual means of grace, the intention of which is so generally misunderstood among the hearers of the word, as that of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Some, who feel almost inclined to become partakers, and whose spiritual interests would have been undoubtedly advanced by becoming so, do yet hold back from a mistaken opinion that they are unworthy,—that they are not good enough for such a devout exercise of the soul,—and that therefore, by coming forward to the Lord's table, they would only enhance their own condemnation.

In many instances there may certainly be some foundation for scruples of this nature; and no minister of the Gospel would of course urge any one to become a communicant until all such misgivings had been superseded, by acts of repentance and contrition, and a holy reliance on the merits of Christ crucified as the only foundation of pardon for the sins of mankind. But it seems to me that in many cases, a feeling of reluctance to partake of the Holy Eucharist exists after, where, to all outward appearance, it ought not to exist. And I am certain that if persons, whose general conduct is agreeable to their profession and who are regular hearers of the word, would search and examine their own hearts for a sufficient reason for the neglect of a positive duty, they would find it a diffi-

cult matter to discover any that should be considered conclusive in favour of the kind of half-christianity,—if I may so express myself—which they have chosen to adopt. Some misapprehension with regard to the intention of this solemn sacrament,—some erroneous idea as to its nature and tendency, would be found to be the chief obstacle in their way. Of this I had a proof the other day, when endeavouring to induce an esteemed hearer to avail himself of the spiritual nourishment and refreshment, which the sincere communicant is sure to find in a participation of the Lord's Supper as a means of grace and salvation.

On arriving at one of my distant churches with the view of performing Divine Service I found him there before me; and after the ordinary salutation which friendship renders necessary on such occasions, asked him—

'Mr. F. why is it, that I never see you among the number of our communicants?'

'Why, Sir: to tell you the truth, I have often thought about it: but I can never satisfy myself that I could be a worthy partaker.'

'How so?'

'Well: I can scarcely say how it is.'

'You are a moral man: you have a regard for religion; and you seem conscious that salvation can be obtained in no other way than through the merits of Christ crucified?'

'Yes: I can say from my heart, that in so far as I know myself, all you say is true.'

'Have you ever felt yourself touched with a feeling of regret for your past sins and imperfections,—felt that you needed some other person to make your peace with God,—some one to reconcile your case to a just and Holy Being—in short that you needed a Saviour?'

'I know indeed that I have many imperfections, and infirmities, and sins. And the Scripture tells me that I cannot escape from them except through the death of Christ,—the sacrifice offered on the cross.'

'Well then: do't you perceive any reason from your own admission why you ought to be a communicant?'

'No: I confess I do't perceive it clearly.'

'Listen therefore: You admit that Jesus Christ died for you and all people.'

'Decidedly.'

'Well: you will, I have no doubt, readily admit that this was a wonderful instance of the Saviour's love for the souls of men?'

'No one can deny that, who reads his Bible.'

'None surely: for this is an instance of the extent of the Divine love of which we can form no adequate conception. As the apostle says—"God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." He died for us whilst we were yet in our sins.'

'I understand.'

'Well: do't you think it is only reasonable that the act by which we are freed from our sins should be kept in remembrance?'

'I hope, Sir, that I shall never forget it.'

'I hope so too: but then something more is necessary than the remembrance of it as a matter of fact, or a historical event. You remember the death of Pontius Pilate, Julius Cæsar, or George the Fourth, as mere events of history: you have no personal interest in them. They do not affect your spiritual concerns in one way or another. Hence it is necessary, in order to shew your gratitude, which can never be commensurate with the benefit conferred, in a more palpable and sensible manner than a mere act of the intellect would imply,—it is necessary to commemorate the death of Christ in a way that will affect the heart.'

'All that is very true: but I do not clearly understand, how such commemoration is to be a benefit to me personally.'

'You shall hear. But allow me now to observe that Christ has actually commanded all his followers to commemorate his dying love for them. "Do this in remembrance of me." So that we can scarcely commemorate, in a proper manner, the death of Christ otherwise than he himself has commanded.'

'No doubt, it is all right.'

'Besides: if you attended the bedside of a friend, whom you loved, whilst near his death, would you not be scrupulous to observe punctually all the directions he gave you,—would you not "hang on his words," as it were, and fulfil his commands to the letter after he had left you for a better inheritance?'

'To be sure, I would.'

'Well then: do't you think it equally necessary to observe the dying commands of Him; who gave his life for you and all people?'

'It appears I ought to do so.'

'Most decidedly you ought. For in my apprehension you have no alternative between being a communicant, and breaking a solemn command,—a command too, which, from the circumstances attending the delivery of it, is peculiarly endearing to, and binding on all that believe the glad tidings of salvation.'

'You are putting the matter in a very serious light Sir.'

'It is my wish to do so, and to convince you, if I can, that in keeping back from the Lord's table, you are neglecting a most important duty.'

'But then how can I go forward if I am not worthy?'

'How do you mean?'

'I mean, that being a sinner, I cannot be a worthy receiver.'

'Now these, Mr. F. I think you mistake.'

'Will you have the goodness then to put me a-right Sir?—for I assure you that this is the chief reason that prevented me from being a communicant long ago.'

'I think I shall be able to satisfy you Mr. F. You and many others seem to look upon this Sacrament—not as the means, but as the end or object—of a holy life. You think that you must be spotless, and holy, and perfect, in order to be a communicant, and