

The Berean.

THEY RECEIVED THE WORD WITH ALL READINESS OF MIND, AND SEARCHED THE SCRIPTURES DAILY, WHETHER THOSE THINGS WERE SO.—Acts xvii. 11.

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ISRAEL'S WOE AND ISRAEL'S HOPE.

“His blood be on us, and on our children.”
MATT. XXVII. 25.

The curse was answered; and how well
Let Salem's ruined towers tell,
Her burning smouldering fane,
The hurrying tread of hostile feet,
The carnage heaped in blood-stained street,
And help implored in vain.

How well—O fearful is the tale!
The heart is sick, the cheek is pale
At Israel's weight of woe,
Her lonely groans, her bitter tears,
Accumulated wrongs of years
The lingering curse still show.

And yet, we shrink not from the word,
Thy blood be on them, gracious Lord,
On all thy chosen race!
They've known thy deep-rending power:
O haste the time and speed the hour
Of mercy and of grace.

The blood which Jewish hands have spilt
Alone can expiate their guilt,
And for their crime atone:
The prayer, in ignorance preferred,
In mercy let it now be heard,
Before thy Father's throne.

By all the pangs of deepened thought
Which in thy prophet bosom wrought
Of patriotic love;
By pitying tears o'er Salem poured,
The tears of her rejected Lord,
Let Israel's curse remove.

It shall remove. Egypt's Land
Even now beholds Jehovah's hand
Stretched o'er her seven-streamed Nile:
In lofty joy shall Judah spring
To bow before her Saviour King,
And bask beneath his smile.

It shall remove. Yea, once again
Shall Zion lift the exulting strain,
“All hail to David's Son!”
And gathering nations catch the sound,
And Judah's hills the notes rebound,
Which hymn Messiah's throne.
[A Fragment of “S.riptural Lyrics,”
by Miss M. A. Stewart, in the
“of England Magazine.”]

THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY.

Concluded.

THE ACTS OF FAITH.

With regard to the acts of faith—we are taught that “it possesses the heart,” bringing forth fruit unto holiness. How can it be otherwise? An awakened sinner, who has trembled under the curse of the violated law, but has found a refuge from the wrath under the cross of an agonizing and bleeding and expiring Saviour, must see in that victim an expression of the evil of sin which will divorce him from it—inflame him with revenge against it, and set him on perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord—and this purifying process will spread and prevail, just in proportion to the steadiness, distinctness, and intensity with which faith gazes on the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.

Another act of faith consists in “overcoming the world;” and to this noble and necessary conquest it is incited, as well as sweetly aided in the action, by the blessed influence of the affectionate grace with which it is inseparably allied—by love:—“Where the treasure is, there the heart will be also,” and as the heavens have received “him whom not having seen we love,” the affections not finding their object here, are detached from the world, and “set upon things above at God's right hand where Christ is.” “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith.” There is nothing like it to loosen the entanglements of earth and tighten the bands of the celestial citizenship—elevating the spirit into an increasing fellowship with the saints in light, and fixing the heart there upon him who is its brightness and its bliss.

One action more. We read of “the obedience of faith.” In its nature it is preeminently an obedient grace, and this, not from terror or mere calculating interest. There is no such menial, selfish spirit in faith. It is spontaneous, cheerful, and generous in its service. Bought with a price, even the precious blood of Jesus, the believer thankfully realizes that he is not his own, and gladly yields himself, without qualification, to him who died for him and rose again. The first and the habitually prevailing inquiry of his grateful heart is, “Lord what wilt thou have me to do?” for he regards conformity to the will of Him by whom he has been redeemed, as the bounden duty and chief delight of his life. Not from coercion, therefore, but from choice, he surrenders himself in obedience, and seeks to work righteousness, not to procure pardon and acceptance of God—for of this he already has humble hope through Christ—but being justified by grace through faith, he works from love as the expression of a dutiful and devoted spirit.

Such is the grace, and the companionship and acts of that grace by which *only* the sinner is virtually ingrafted into Christ, and derives through him the benefits of redemption. And in making manifest this truth, with great care and accurate discrimination, consists a most important part of the work of the ministry.

We have now, I conceive, arrived at the right point and found a proper subject for the application and use of the sacraments of the gospel. Of course we speak of the case of an adult, and of one by whom no sacrament has yet been received. Having, as in the case of Cornelius and his household, received the Holy Ghost, of which fact the credible declaration of faith, as in the case of the Eunuch, is the assurance, “who can forbid water that he should not be baptized?” The grace being given, the ordained sign is properly applied.—The covenant being embraced, the sacred seal of its promises is rightly affixed.—The vital union being established, the instrument of engraftment into the Church is appropriately employed. And then in this work of the Ministry and obedience of the believer, further blessings may be expected.—“Faith is confirmed and grace increased, by virtue of prayer to God.”

One thus taught and blessed—having received

the initiatory ordinance, either in infancy, or at years of discretion—may without distrust be presented as a suitable candidate for the apostolical rite of confirmation, and on the renewed exercise of repentance and faith, seek and receive what our Heavenly Father is more ready to give than we to ask—the increased communications of the spirit of life through Christ Jesus. A simple, scriptural, salutary service indeed;—in aiding persons to prepare to engage in it aright, the minister finds a delightful and productive part of his sacred work, blessed of God, not only to those who are immediately concerned in it, but often to others—to those who have years gone by so ratified their baptismal vows—to those who only came to witness, but retire with unexpected impressions—and to the minister's own heart which is revived and invigorated by the very labours and solitudes of the service.

To introduce to the supper of the Lord those who have been thus advanced, no other work is necessary on the part of the minister than to see to it that the nature and design of the ordinance are rightly apprehended, and to remove such doubts and difficulties as may arise to prevent them from participating in this Holy Institution.

It is strange indeed, and not to have been anticipated by human foresight, that a service so simple in itself should have been abused, to the introduction of the most “blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits” which have perverted and degraded the Church of Christ. Who could have supposed that an ordinance instituted for the continual remembrance of Christ's death, and of the benefits which we receive thereby, would ever “of a memory he made a sacrifice,” and thus the sufficiency of the one great sacrifice, offered once for all, be impeached by the perversion of the symbolical service which was intended as its memorial? Who could have supposed that the sign which as such necessarily denotes something which is not, should be regarded as transformed by consecration into the very thing itself? Who could have imagined that the true spiritual presence of Christ vouchsafed in this and all his institutions rightly used, and realized to the heart of the believer by faith, should be mystified into the real presence of his body and blood in or under the elements of bread and wine? I need not say to you that these dangerous deformities have obtained—no need I say, what is more surprising, that having once obtained and been repudiated, language is beginning to be used upon this subject, and practices to be adopted, the inevitable tendency of which is to reintroduce those superstitious and perilous errors. I believe that an important part of the work of the ministry in this day, lies in exposing and driving away such strange doctrines so contrary to God's word, and in exhibiting the sacraments in their scriptural simplicity, that they may be truly apprehended in their nature and design, and rightly received by those who partake of them. Then they will indeed be the means of confirming faith, increasing grace, and strengthening and refreshing the souls of believers.

To suppose that the work we are now contemplating is finished when persons are thus brought to a full profession of religion, would be to take a defective view of the ministry. It is intended for the edification of the body of Christ—to build up believers in the most holy faith—to promote the growth, symmetry, usefulness, and comfort of those who are pledged to be “the servants and soldiers of Jesus to their lives' end.”

Labour must be bestowed to provide for them both the sincere milk, and the strong meat of the word—giving to each his portion in due season that they may grow thereby; so passing “from strength to strength”—“till all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”

Labour must be bestowed in meditating and proposing to them opportunities and ways of usefulness, that they may bring forth fruit abundantly to the glory of the Master.

Pains must be taken to present those considerations which may stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance, and quicken and inspirit them in their course.

Time must be given to watch for and over them, so as to detect and faithfully disclose to them their general and peculiar exposures, that they may avoid all these scenes, associations, and influences which would prove detrimental to their piety. Then, there must be a heart of true and lively sympathy and quick and strong response, in reference to their varying circumstances and experience, producing, on the part of the minister, a readiness to rejoice with those who do rejoice, whilst he reminds them of the necessity of moderation, lest prosperity prove a snare—and, on the other hand, a willingness to weep with those who weep, entering into and seeking to solace them in their sorrows, and to assist them to gather from their grief the full benefit of sanctified affliction. In seasons of sickness, when enfeebled and embarrassed and pained by disease, he must be with them as a brother, sustaining them in their languor and soothing under their suffering, by the refreshing and invigorating power of the exceeding great and precious promises of God's Covenant.—When the last sad struggle is at hand—when symptoms of approaching dissolution thicken upon the person of a beloved parishioner, and heart and flesh begin to faint and fail, then the work of the Ministry is of intense solemnity and unequalled interest. To aid the soldier of the cross, in gently loosing the remaining ligaments which had lawfully connected him with earth, but which, at such a moment, might entangle and disturb him—to assist him to adjust to advantage the whole armour provided of God—to revive and enforce those animating considerations which brace the spirit and render it undaunted—to help him to enter upon the mysterious conflict in the heroism of faith, lifting with firm voice its triumphant anthem, “O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory! Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord!” Such is the service of which we speak. And when the last note of that anthem ceases to vibrate upon the ear, and the tongue which uttered it is silent, and the eye, which under its influence had kindled to supernatural lustre, stands fixed and glazed in its socket—when the spirit has departed and is with Christ—then, and not till then, the work of the Ministry is done. Nothing remains but to

commit the mortal part to the ground—“earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust,” in hope of a glorious resurrection, and to inscribe on the tomb, the Heaven dictated epitaph, “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord?”

You see your calling, dear brethren in the ministry, and the nature of the work for which you are commissioned—“to turn sinners from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Christ.” Immortal man is your subject, and your labour is to tell upon his destiny for eternity.

[The above, together with the articles under the same heading in our last two numbers, is the main part of a Sermon, preached at the opening of the last Annual Convention, by the Right Rev. J. Johns, D. D., Assistant Bishop of Virginia. The headings given to the different portions into which we have divided our selection are our own.—Ed.]

NO ALTAR, NO SACRIFICER IN THE REFORMED CHURCH.

From Address to the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Ohio, by the Right Rev. C. P. McIlvaine, D. D., Bishop of the Diocese.

Concluded.

I know it is pleaded that in the Office for the Institution of Ministers the table is called “*the altar*.” But I cannot perceive any room to argue from that source in justification of an altar-form structure, instead of a table, in our churches. I have already told you of the late introduction of that office. It speaks of “*the altar*” some six or seven times. Was such a thing as an altar, in a literal sense, known in the churches, at that time? We answer no, unless possibly as some very rare exception to a general custom. What could the Office then have meant by the *altar* but the *table*; and inasmuch as the table was no figurative table, but the literal thing, in the ordinary sense how could it be called an altar but in a figurative sense, just as we speak of “*the family altar*,” and why should we any more infer from such use, that it is consistent with good taste, or church-propriety, to have a literal altar in our houses of worship, than we should infer from the common expression “*family altar*,” that people really erect altars in their houses of residence; or why, if the Prayer Book speaks literally when it speaks of “*the table*” and figuratively when it speaks of “*the altar*,” should we have for our article of furniture for the communion literally an altar, and only figuratively a table?

But all this aside. It does seem most singular that we should allow a word used only some five or six times in the whole Prayer Book, and that in an office so recent and so little used, to overrule the use and interpretation of centuries; that instead of requiring it to take its interpretation from all the communion office, where, if any where, the true doctrine and use of the Church, on this head, should be expected, and from the whole history of the Prayer Book, and of the Prot. Ep. Church, we should on the contrary oblige these able authorities to receive their interpretation from that one word. We have no disposition to deny that the communion table may in some sense be rightly called an altar. When Romish writers, in controversy with our Reformers, adduced the use of the term among the fathers, they were answered by Dean Nowell as follows: “If St. Basil and some other old writers, call it an altar, that is no proper but a figurative name, for that, as in the old law, their burnt offerings and sacrifices were offered upon the altar, so are our sacrifices of prayer and thanksgiving, &c., offered to God at the Lord's table, as if it were an altar. But such kind of figurative speech can be no just cause to set up altars, rather than tables, unless they think that their crosses also should be turned into altars, for that like phrase is used of them, where it is said Christ offered up himself upon the altar of the cross.”

2. My second reason is, that the form of a table is according to the institution of Christ, the practice of the primitive Church, the practice of the Church of England, and, until recently, the almost unvaried practice of the Prot. Ep. Churches in these United States; while on the other hand the form of an altar is no older in the Christian church than those grievous corruptions of Christianity which became prevalent in the 4th and 5th centuries, and is identified with the whole history of the Romish apostasy.

3. My third reason is, that the form of a table is according to the nature of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; while that of an altar is not. This was one of the reasons given by Bishop Ridley, when he issued his injunction for the placing of tables in the churches of his Diocese, and I am content to use his words: “The use of an altar (he says) is to make sacrifice upon it; the use of a table is to serve for men to eat upon. Now when we come to the Lord's board what do we come for? to sacrifice Christ again, or to feed upon him that was once only crucified and offered up for us? If we come to feed upon him, *spiritually* to eat his body, and *spiritually* to drink his blood, which is the true use of the Lord's Supper, then no man can deny but the form of a table is more meet for the Lord's board than the form of an altar.”

4. My fourth reason is that the due guardianship of the scriptural doctrine of the Lord's Supper, against those errors and corruptions which the great adversary of Christ is ever seeking to insinuate among us, requires that we carefully keep up the form of a table, and reject that of an altar.

And here I am content to take the language of the leading Divines of the Reformation, in the reign of Elizabeth, as found in a list of reasons for the removal of altars, supposed to have been written by Archbishop Parker: “An altar (they say) hath relation to a sacrifice; for they be corroborative, so that of necessity, if we allow an altar, we must grant a sacrifice; like as if there be a father, there is also a son; and if there is a master, there is also a servant. Whereupon divers of the learned adversaries themselves have spoken of late, that there is no reason to take away the sacrifice of the mass, and leave the altar standing, seeing the one was ordained for the other.”

I will now conclude what I have to say on this subject by reminding you of the earnestness with which that late venerable Father of our American

Ep. Church, Bp. White, contended against whatever had a tendency to introduce among us that doctrine of a real sacrifice and priesthood, in the Eucharist, with which the altar is so essentially connected.

One of the legacies left us by that far-seeing Divine is a Dissertation on the Eucharist, written, throughout, for the purpose of showing that in the Christian Church there is no such thing as a material sacrifice since that of Christ on the cross; no Priest, in the sense of an offerer of sacrifice, but Christ himself, and therefore no altar but that of his cross. Allow me to quote from that and from another of his works a few passages: “I conceive (he says) so unfavourably of whatever may lead, by remote consequence, to creature worship, as to give a caution against a notion which sometimes appears in writers, who were sincere, though inconsistent, Protestants. The notion is that there is in the Eucharist a real sacrifice, that it is offered upon an altar; and that the officiating minister is a priest, in the sense of an offerer of sacrifice. Under the economy of the gospel, there is nothing under the names referred to, except the fulfilment of them in the person of the High-Priest of our profession. As to our Church, although she commemorates a great sacrifice in the Eucharist, yet she knows of no offering of anything of this description, except in the figurative sense in which prayers and alms are sacrifices.—She calls the place on which her oblation is made, not an altar, but a table; although there is no impropriety in calling it an altar also, the word being understood figuratively. And as to the minister in the ordinance, although she retains the word Priest, yet she considers it synonymous with Presbyter.” Bp. White said that the Romish error, on these heads, “makes an irreconcilable division between us and the Church of Rome;” that the intercommunity of the names altar and table, is only justifiable in an accommodated or figurative sense; for although an altar may be called a table because of some common properties which they serve, it does not follow that any table not possessed of the discriminating property of the altar, may be so called. It is like the occasional calling of a Church, a house. Such it is without its being right to call every house a church. In short, an altar is a place of sacrifice; and the taking of its name carries by implication its distinguishing property.” He said that the errors concerning Priest, sacrifice, and altar, against which he was contending, and which were precisely those which are now striving so powerfully to gain prevalence in our Church, and have already gained such alarming accessions, “appeared at first in the closet lucubrations of the few writers (of antiquity) whose works have been handed down; crept in gradually; and began in the literal application of language which had been all along, and may be now, figuratively used on the respective points. In England (he continues) the doctrine was completely put down at the Reformation. If, in later times, the notion has been entertained by some of the clergy of the Church of England, it has not crept into her public institutions.” The venerable author closed his Dissertation on the Eucharist, from which I have just quoted, with these almost prophetic words: “The author would lament an approach to the opposite theory, (opposite to that which he was advocating,) among the clergy and other members of the Church as having a threatening aspect on her peace.” An approach even to the doctrine of a real sacrifice and priest and altar in the Eucharist, Bp. White thus deprecated as dangerous to the peace of the Church. How like he was in this to the views of the English Reformers! When, with Archbishop Parker at their head, they addressed themselves to Queen Elizabeth, giving certain reasons why it was not convenient that the communion should be ministered at an altar, one was that “the consciences of many thousands, which from their hearts embrace the Gospel, would be wounded by continuance of altars; and great numbers would abstain from receiving the communion at an altar; which in the end might grow to accession of great schism and division among the people.”

Alas! if Bp. White would have lamented even “an approach” to the theory which he wrote against, what would he feel were it his cross to live in these days of the boasted revival of the misnamed “Catholic System,” when one may forfeit his good name as a churchman if he profess the simple Gospel truth concerning the Eucharist which that good man taught, and when the bold teaching, in a Protestant Episcopal Church, of the precise form of error which he opposed, has become so frequent, that we have lost the sense of its being a strange sound of doctrine, and scarcely notice it. Did that wise and watchful father conceive it his duty to raise his voice against the least beginning of a tendency to Romish error at a period when the prospect of its ever spreading among us was not even as a little cloud upon the horizon, the bigness of a man's hand; and is it a gratuitous and needless work to take precautions against the same error now when the storm has shrouded the sky, and the winds of that evil doctrine have already caused so many to loose their anchorage and drive towards those dark shores of superstition and idolatry, where others have already made shipwreck of the faith?

I fully agree with Bishop White that any approach toward the theory which he opposed, of a real sacrifice, priest, and altar, would endanger the peace of the Church. That peace is now endangered precisely as he feared. But where lies the blame? On those who like myself have endeavoured to protect and maintain the integrity of our Church's doctrine against all innovations, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and subsequently revived at the reformation, and now professed in our Articles and Liturgy and Homilies; or does it lie in all such as attempt to break in upon the established standards and the well known teaching and usages of our Church with novelties which our fathers knew not of and could not bear?

I trust, my brethren, I have now said enough to show that in the step I have taken, I have not acted without consideration, without precedent, without reason. Viewed in one aspect, as the world would view it, I may seem to have made a

great deal out of a very trifling matter. So it seemed to the world when Epiphanius, a Bishop, in the 4th century, when image-worship was in the seed, tore away from the door of a Church a picture of Christ, and, to pour condemnation upon the admission of such things into Churches, ordered that the painted cloth be used to bury a dead man.” The subsequent history of the worship of images and pictures in the Churches, teaches us how well it would have been had all men seen with the same eyes as that faithful Bishop. God grant that the progress of events within a few years to come may not speak a language quite as strong in vindication of those who now plant their protests against an invading Romanism besides those things so unimportant to some eyes as altars and crosses, and who strive to escape the final and full issues of evil, by thus resisting the beginnings. *Obsta Principis.*

I close this prolonged address, with again requesting you, my brethren, to remember that in what I have said I have had no reference to any one parish or person in the Diocese. In what I have already done in this connection, I have censured none, I have imputed no wrong motive to any, and now I have no censure to give, or wrong motive to aim at. Therefore let not any one of the clergy present, or of the parishes represented, suppose that I have spoken to, or of, either of them, in the address more than of others.

Now may the God of truth and love and peace and holiness, be mercifully with us in our present meeting and further us with his continual help, that all our doings being ordered by his governance may be righteous in his sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord!

CHAS. P. McILVAINE.

DELAWARE, August 7, 1816.

ON PRIDE.

How far can that pride of family which we find daily instilled into our hearts be consistent? We feel but one difficulty in framing our reply to this query, and that is, to find language sufficiently strong and pointed to express the utter abhorrence in which every child of God should hold that most pernicious and hateful principle of fallen man, pride. Pride, even to the smallest extent, is not consistent in the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. Pride sullies the brightness of a Christian's character. Pride damps the ardour of a Christian's love. Pride forbids him free access to the throne of grace, for “God resisteth the proud.” O, ye who are seeking an interest in our Redeemer! give no quarter to pride—no matter what connection it forms, or what dress it assumes, it is unbecoming in you. Call it what you please; pride of family, pride of talent, pride of station, pride of person, pride of dress, pride of spiritual attainments, it is one and the same thing still, notwithstanding all its variety of names; it is a thing which God hates—a thing which he cannot away with; therefore we exhort you to cast it from you, as an unclean garment, and be clothed with humility,—not indeed an outward affectation of humility, thrown round a proud and unhumiliated heart, but that real humility of heart and lowliness of mind which is so commendable in the sight of God, as to call forth the mark of his special approbation, as it is written, “Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of an humble and contrite spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite.”—*Dublin Christian Journal.*

RETIREMENT.

From a letter, containing directions for leading a Christian life, by the late Rev. Henry Venn.

Company, beyond a certain measure, is of bad consequence. Keeping much retired, and by ourselves, is most profitable for us all. Indeed, when our worldly business is attended to as it ought to be, and secret duties are punctually observed, there cannot remain a great deal of time for persons, in any station, to spend in company: and they who imagine that praying at certain seasons, hearing the Gospel, and then entering into a sort of general conversation about religion and religious people, will be sufficient, are grievously mistaken. Unless we love (and contrive, as we are able) to be much alone, how can we often and solemnly call to remembrance the evil of our past lives, so as to loathe ourselves?—how feel contrition for the follies of our innate depravity?—how, with the blessed Mary, ponder in our hearts the sayings of our Lord?—how enter deeply into his agony and death, the price of our peace and eternal life?—how weigh the value of our spiritual privileges, and the weight of the crown of glory laid up for the faithful?—how feel the strength and multitude of our obligations to live in exemplary obedience, constrained by love passing knowledge? Though the pastors of Christ's Church speak on these subjects, and they make part of every conversation, we must ruminate in private upon them, or they will never duly impress and fill our mind.

Hence the most distinguished saints, before they entered on any arduous work for the glory of God or the good of men, did not think their purity of intention, or the promise of God's Spirit, sufficient, without preparing by much retirement. Moses, Elijah, Daniel, the Baptist, and our Lord himself, teach us, by their practice, the benefit and necessity of being often and much alone. Great and many evils grow in the church, from its pastors and people neglecting to copy these infallible examples.

For want of being much alone, popular teachers are puffed up; thence become contentious, jealous of those they fear as their rivals, disputers, and abusers of their fellow-servants. For want of meditation in private upon the truths of God, professors of faith in Christ are arrant Pharisees, whilst they violently condemn pharisaism; formalists, though they know it not, in the midst of perpetual exclamations against formality;—for they can talk, without humiliation; of man's total corruption, and the sinfulness of sin;—they can talk, without gratitude, of redemption by the blood of God manifest in the flesh; and, without grief, on the hypocrisy and unbecoming lives of many who make profession of faith in Christ. Nothing, in their discourse on these deeply affecting topics, strikes the hearer's mind as coming from a broken heart. This prota-

* Bp. White's Lectures on the Catechism, Lect. V.

† Diss. on the Eucharist.

‡ Stryppe's Annals, as before cited.

* Nowell's Reproof of Dorman's Proof.

† Stryppe's Annals, vol. 1, Part. 1, pp. 160, &c.

* Homily on Peril of Idolatry, p. 11.