

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, JULY 21, 1838.

[NUMBER V.]

Poetry.

For the Church.

VERSES.

1.
Ashes to ashes! dust to dust!
Will soon conclude our brief career;
Yet God shall be our tower and trust,
And strong defence when Death is near.
Our faith is founded on Thy word,
Thy promises are sure and true,
We cast us on thy truth, O Lord,
What Thou hast promis'd, sworn to do.

2.
Ashes to ashes!—when earth's dust
Lies cumbrous on our coffin's lid,
Oh! may our souls reign with the just,
Our precious life with Christ be hid;
When, in the grave, each kindred clod
Lies heavy on our senseless clay,
Oh! may our souls be blest with God,
In realms of bright and wondrous day.

3.
Ashes to ashes!—Oh! ye great,
Noble and mighty, proud and high,
Like men of poor and low estate,
Ye soon must suffer, groan, and die:
Ye soon must in the judgment stand,
And hear the final, just decree;
With fiendish gang, or saintly band,
Be class'd for all eternity.

4.
Tremble ye proud ones of the earth,
Nor longer slight the Saviour's call;
Your souls must know a nobler birth,
Born from above, new creatures all;
Old things must pass, like morning dew,
And leave your souls all fresh and fair;
God's Spirit must your hearts renew,
And rule and reign in brightness there.
Loughboro', June 23, 1838. J. H.

LINES BY THE REV. JOHN MARRIOTT ON BEING CALLED A SAINT.

A Saint!—oh! would that I could claim,
The privileged, the precious name,
And confidently take my stand,
The lowest of the saintly band.
Would that the name in scorn applied,
As well the test of truth could 'bide,
As kingly salutation given
In mockery to the King of Heaven!
A Saint! and what imports the name,
Thus banded in derision's game,
Holy and separate from sin,
To good, nay 'e'en to God a-kin,
Is such the meaning of a name
From which a Christian shrinks with shame?
Yes; dazzled with the glorious light,
He owns his crown is all too bright;
And ill might sons of Adam dare,
Alone such honours' weight to bear;
But fearlessly he takes the load,
United to the Son of God.
A Saint! Oh, scorner give some sign,
Some seal to prove the title mine,
And warmer thanks shalt thou command,
Than bringing kingdoms in thine hand.
O! for an interest in that name,
When hell shall open its jaws of flame,
And scorers to their doom be hurled,
While scorned saints shall judge the world!
How shall the name of Saint be prized,
Though now rejected and despised;
When truth shall witness to the word,
That none but Saints shall see the Lord!

BISHOP HOBART.*

The subject of this memoir was one of those distinguished few, whose happiness it has been at once to merit and acquire a marked influence over the age and society in which they lived. The life of Bishop Hobart will form an era in the ecclesiastical history of his country; the ardent self-devotion of his character, the multiplied energies of a mind ready for every emergency, his promptitude of judgment and undeviating consistency of principle, his candour and simplicity of manners, the true index of a Christian singleness of heart, were qualities which admirably became a ruler in the Church of God, and which gained for him in congenial souls an ascendancy never to be effaced. The weight of his authority extended far over the scattered flock of Christians in America; it was seen during his lifetime in the rapid and unprecedented extension of the Church; and since his death it animates the pastoral clergy and episcopate of his country, by an example which is treasured in their most affectionate and dutiful remembrance.

The writings of Bishop Hobart have not been unappreciated in England. They bear the impress of his character, a fervid and vigorous eloquence, which, neglecting the graces of style, seizes on the essential merits of the question, and seldom fails to exhibit the truth in strong outline, distinctly marking its most important and genuine features. The effect thus produced is often more striking from the very absence of art in the composition; the thoughts flow from a well-stored mind, and there can scarcely be any arguments more directly conclusive, than those which he has embodied in his "Apology for Apostolical order," and his Pastoral charges, in defence of the leading doctrines, the polity and orders of the Christian church. But his writings are only a small portion of the services he rendered in his generation; he was born to act rather than to write; and it is a happiness to find that the history of a life so employed in the highest duties is now in a fair way of being generally known, from the interesting and well-written memoirs which from several hands in his native country have been presented to the Christian world.

The paternal ancestors of Bishop Hobart were originally from the county of Norfolk; and of the number of those who, either from a spirit of enterprise or religious considerations, in the early part of the reign of Charles I., removed from their native country to Massachusetts Bay. That re-

ligious considerations had their influence in persuading the emigration is probable from the circumstance that Peter Hobart, a divine, educated at Cambridge, and Episcopally ordained, but strongly attached to the Presbyterian model, in 1735, followed his father and brothers to the new settlement. The whole family, which appears to have been numerous, together with some friends, agreed to form a new plantation, which they called, after their native village in Norfolk, by the name of Hingham. There Peter Hobart continued in the faithful discharge of his ministry for about forty-three years, and left several sons, who followed his professional labours in the colony, among whom was Dr. Nehemiah Hobart, who is recorded to have been "held in peculiar veneration as a scholar, a gentleman, and Christian." It is also said that the mother of the celebrated missionary, David Brainerd, was a daughter of the first pastor of Hingham.

By what means that branch of the family, from which Bishop Hobart came, was led to conformity with the Episcopal Church, we are not distinctly informed. He was lineally descended from Joshua Hobart, a younger brother of Peter, and fourth son of Edmund Hobart, the pilgrim father of the plantation. The next in descent had changed his abode from Massachusetts to Pennsylvania, previously to the origin of Penn's colony, and a marriage into a Swedish family there may have prepared the way to a change in his religious sentiments. It appears at least that from the earliest station of an episcopal minister at Philadelphia, the church-membership of the family was avowed. Here in 1775, John Henry Hobart, the subject of this memoir, was born,—the youngest son of Captain Enoch Hobart and his wife, the daughter of a Mr. Pratt of Philadelphia. It is commonly said that there have been few eminently religious characters, whose bias cannot be traced to the influence of maternal piety. This was strikingly exemplified in Hobart. Left fatherless when only fourteen months old, the care of his childhood, with circumstances by no means affluent, devolved upon an admirable mother, who, by rigid economy and self-denial, rendered still more pressing by the period of the revolutionary war, was enabled to provide for her family of five children, and to give to the youngest that liberal education of which she lived to see the first-fruits, long enough no doubt to bless Him who had thus guided her own discriminating affection, and inclined the heart of her son to the office of a Christian minister. She died while yet but a few years of that ministry were completed.

His school instructions were received from Dr. Andrews, a Churchman, and master of an Episcopalian school in Philadelphia; and subsequently, at the age of fifteen, he was removed to the College at Princeton in New Jersey, the president of which, at that time, was Dr. Witherspoon, a Presbyterian divine of considerable literary celebrity. Amongst his cotemporaries at this College was the Hon. Richard Rush, not many years ago the United States minister in England, who has borne a high testimony to the superior talents and general worth of his fellow academic.

Shortly after this, a temporary change took place in his prospects. The anxiety of his friends, who regretted that his talents should be given up to the unprofitable labours of a clergyman, prevailed with him to attempt the employment of them in a counting house. He submitted with that ready alacrity which never forsook him; but it was against the whole bias of his nature, and he soon afterwards accepted an urgent offer to become a tutor in the college at Princeton, with a view to pursue his studies for the ministry. In the midst of the perplexing circumstances into which he was thrown, it is remarkable how his attachment to Episcopacy was confirmed. But this is best explained in his own words, extracted from his admirable "Apology":—

"My opinions on the subject of Episcopacy cannot be ranked among the prejudices of education. That part of my life in which my religious principles became a subject of my anxious investigation, was passed at a Presbyterian college. Respect and veneration for my instructors and guides in the paths of science; esteem and affection for many valued friends, to whom I knew certain opinions on this subject would be obnoxious, excited in my bosom a painful struggle between the most amiable impulses of feeling and the strong demands of duty. But when after an honest and faithful examination, I became satisfied that it was evident from Scripture and antiquity, that there have been from the Apostles' times, three orders of Ministers,—Bishops, Priests, and Deacons,—in Christ's Church, and that the Episcopal Church considered no man as a lawful Bishop, Priest, or Deacon, who hath not had Episcopal consecration or ordination, it surely became my duty to maintain what the church thus solemnly declared. Perhaps I had also cause to apprehend that Episcopals in many places were losing sight of these important truths."

He continued to reside at Princeton, ably fulfilling the duties of a tutor and prosecuting his studies in theology,—giving at the same time proofs of a spirit of fervent piety and of a sound judgment,—for more than three years, when he returned to Philadelphia, and was ordained in 1798, by Bishop White.

The situation of the American church at this period was such as to invite none but the most devoted spirits to engage in her service. In all the provinces North of Maryland, there were scattered no more than ninety clergymen who had received Episcopal ordination, of whom twenty were in the State of New York, and seventeen in Pennsylvania. In the Southern States, the depression was still more afflictive, from the contrast it presented to former prosperity. This is eloquently described by Hobart himself some years later, in one of his Convention Sermons:—

"But little more than half a century has elapsed since our church universally prevailed through the flourishing dominion of Virginia. In every county there were churches and chapels, all of them decent and substantial, some of them even splendid in their decorations. In those temples were steadily performed all the services of our primitive Liturgy. The parishes, not much short of one hundred, were all supplied with clergy. What is the contrast? We have

wept over it. Our hearts have been wrong with shame, with grief, that this contrast has been produced, not entirely (God forbid we should sink them under this tremendous guilt) but in no inconsiderable degree, by many of the clergy themselves. What is the contrast? Few are the parishes in Virginia which enjoy the regular ministrations of a Clergyman. In many places the Liturgy is scarcely known, but as some antiquated book once used by their fathers. The edifices, where their fathers worshipped, now in a state of ruin, fix the astonished gaze, and excite the mournful sigh of the passing traveller; and in those courts where the living God was once invoked, and the messages of mercy through his Son proclaimed, no sounds are heard but the screams of the bird of night, or the lowings of the beasts of the field."

We should be profitably employed in bringing forward the reasons for this spiritual desolation; but our limits forbid entrance upon the interesting theme,—and we must return to the subject of this sketch.—Great as were the difficulties with which Hobart was surrounded when he entered upon the ministry, his was a mind not to be deterred by any circumstances of discouragement. Strong in his reliance on a higher power, he laboured in the work of restoring what was fallen. In the words of Bishop Hall, "the man that had been tempered with so many tears, could not but outlast all the flints and marbles of human confidence." After passing his first two years in a charge at Hempstead, New Jersey, he was in 1800 invited to become assistant minister of Trinity Church; and from his acceptance of this offer, his public life began its distinguished career. As a preacher he was highly distinguished. His discourses were written with all the freedom and glow of youthful feeling: the evangelical spirit which they always breathed—the bold and direct appeals which they addressed to the heart and conscience—the indifference which he himself felt to the world, that made others more sensible of its emptiness and vanity; all these things were calculated to arouse the attention of his hearers, to awaken their zeal, inflame their piety, and urge them on with increasing diligence in their Christian course. His duties as a pastor he performed with conscientious fidelity and zeal. No considerations of ease or pleasure were suffered to interfere with any parochial call; the engagements of company, the business of study, was laid aside. In his visitation of the sick, the ease and freedom, the tenderness and delicacy of his manner removed embarrassment and inspired confidence, while the solemnity and fervour of his prayers were peculiarly impressive and soothing. But his visits were not limited to the sick; he devoted much of his time to conversation with those that were well, where the easy familiarity of a friend was combined with the consistent gravity of a Christian minister.

His literary exertions were also great. He republished the Christian's Manual, Nelson on the Festivals and Fasts, the Clergyman's Companion, and Stevens on the Nature and Constitution of the Christian Church, the last with several additions and corrections of his own. He wrote an exposition of the Church Catechism in question and answer, a Companion to the Book of Common Prayer, and a Companion to the altar; works which are extensively diffused and held in high and deserved estimation. But the production of his pen most distinguished for learning and acuteness is his "Apology for Apostolical Order," caused by certain strictures upon his companion to the altar by Dr. Mason, pastor of the Associate Reformed Church in New York. In the year 1808 he originated a work entitled the Churchman's Magazine, the success of which laid the foundation for those numerous and able periodicals with which the Episcopal Church in the United States is now so well furnished.

Bishop Moore, the second Protestant Bishop of New York, being now incapacitated by infirmities from exercising the Episcopal office, Dr. Hobart was, in 1811, elected Assistant Bishop of the Diocese, by the suffrages of the great body of the Clergy and Laity, and in 1816, by the death of Bishop Moore, he succeeded to the whole charge of that Episcopate. In this influential situation he was able more effectually to pursue those objects which he had most at heart, and one of the first was to establish a College for the education of an Episcopal ministry. These exertions resulted in the organization of that admirable and flourishing Institution, the General Theological Seminary at New York.

But it would be impossible to recount the diversified labours of this beloved and indefatigable Bishop. In "journeys often," visiting the remotest portions of his important charge, and in unceasing occupation in the study and pulpit, when those visitations were suspended, he broke the strength of his constitution. His own ardour exhausted the support that nature gave. His health, which had more than once given way on the distant and protracted journeys which duty required, became at length so impaired that nothing but a change of scene and perfect relaxation could restore him. In the autumn of 1823, he set out on his voyage to England; and, in the affecting language of his biographer, Dr. Berrian, "a throng of his parishioners and friends pressed round him at the moment of his departure with anxious and sorrowing hearts to bid him farewell; and some felt but little less than the Ephesian converts in parting with St. Paul, from the painful apprehension "that they might see his face no more." Most of his clergy who were resident in the city accompanied him many miles, and then watched with fond and anxious regret the last glimpse of the sails that bore him hence."

How he was received by the prelates of the English church, by his correspondents and friends, and what a remarkable influence his character and conversation gained over those who then saw him for the first time, is too well known to need repetition. His letters to his family and friends in New York prove abundantly how much he appreciated that kindness and hospitality, and with what delight and enthusiasm he viewed the exquisite scenery, the time-hallowed edifices, and the glorious institutions of our lovely mother-land.

His return to New York after an absence of two years, was hailed with so warm a greeting, as made his heart melt with joy. Every one seemed to have recovered a dear and personal friend, of whose safety they had before despaired. A more deep and heart-felt greeting, pervading all ranks, was never given to any one on his restoration to his native land.

It is not perhaps to be wondered that, at such a time, his ardent spirit should have expressed itself in terms of affection to his friends, countrymen and brothers, heightened beyond the limits of justice by a contrast with the state of things in England. On the Sunday after his return, he preached that sermon, in which his own country was eulogized at the expense of England, and which, although it provoked at the time more animadversion than it needed, was not strictly consistent with good taste or with those impressions which a sound and philosophical view of the real state of things in England ought to have awakened. While it was natural that Bishop Hobart should have looked with honest pride on the success of a different system, familiar to him from infancy, he could scarcely have investigated with his usual acumen the heavenly authority as well as the blessed practical workings of that establishment which, combined with the natural influence of her sound and scriptural principles, has served to render the Church of England "the glory of the Reformed churches."

The renewed health and vigour with which this excellent man now continued to discharge his rapidly increasing duties, led his friends to hope he would long be spared to their anxious prayers. But on his visitation in the beginning of September, 1830, a short illness at the house of his old and estimable friend Dr. Rudd, at Auburn, terminated his valuable life.

The little we have attempted to detail can give but a slight impression of the powerful influence exercised by so devoted and ardent a servant of God. One conclusion an impartial review of this eminently public character must enforce on every candid mind. Whatever we hold as a truth of religion, let no supposed expediency induce us to compromise it, in the hope of gaining any supposed advantage to religion. Truth can be promoted only by truth; and truth desires no other defence, but that her champions should be faithful in her cause. "EVANGELICAL TRUTH, APOSTOLICAL ORDER," was the banner of Hobart, and they ought to be the watchword of every Episcopalian.

Bishop Hobart lived to see the success of the principles for which he so undauntedly contended. The parochial clergy and congregations of the diocese of New York were twice doubled in number during his episcopate; the Theological Seminary has long been supplying to the several States of the Union a number of well-instructed candidates for the ministerial office; and there has been a vigorous growth of what constitutes the peculiar charm of the American Episcopalian character,—a simple-minded affection for primitive Christianity, a hearty reverence for the beauty of holiness in the Church's ordinances, and a freshness of admiration for our sacred Liturgy.

It is impossible to rise from the contemplation of such a character as Hobart's, without partaking of some of his animating sentiments. Let the hand of violence do its worst, a portion will still remain for the inheritance of truth. Hobart himself beautifully expressed it. "A state of society without religion cannot continue long. Man does not feel himself in safety even when with his fellow-men, loosened from the restraints of religion. He cannot live without its consolations—he cannot enter on futurity without its hopes."

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA.*

No. I.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

The "Book of the Revelation of St. John the Divine," like many of the Epistles of St. Paul, contains "some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable" may have wrested, as they have done also "the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." The desire to be wise above what is written, and to inquire into the secret things which belong unto the Lord our God, instead of attending to those things which are revealed and belong to us, is very deeply interwoven in some characters. This has not unfrequently led to the adoption of an unwarrantable mode of "private interpretation," sometimes distinguished for the wildest flights of enthusiasm, for an entire discordance with all that is rational, and utterly subversive of sound and sober truth. As a natural consequence, this portion of the word of God has been deemed by many as of a nature too abstruse for the meditation of the private Christian, who has been dissuaded from perusing its contents, and recommended to direct his thoughts more fully to those plainer portions of the sacred oracles which set forth, in clearer language, the fundamental truths of the Gospel.

When we consider, indeed, the fearful woes denounced against those who either add to, or take from "the words of the prophecy of this book," it ought to be approached, as indeed every other portion of the sacred volume ought, in a prayerful, humble spirit, with a desire for the enlightening of the understanding, and of being led to the perception of the truth. The utmost caution should be used in endeavouring to arrive at the true meaning of its contents. Notwithstanding many of its difficulties, it may, unquestionably, afford much consolation and edification to the Christian. It forms part of that Scripture which "is given by inspiration of God." Doubts on this subject have indeed arisen, but they have been satisfactorily met and fully answered. The perusal of it, in a right frame, cannot fail to be conducive to the Christian's spiritual advancement and growth in grace: for who can read of its glowing descriptions of the blessedness of heaven's ransomed company, of the triumphs of those "who have come out of great tribulation, who have

* From the "Church of England Magazine"—and designed to be inserted at intervals in connection with "Scriptural Illustrations," as embracing, in general, the same object.

* Compiled chiefly from the "British Critic."