

From the Episcopal Recorder.

## THE PRAYER BOOK.

The church had dropped her garb of mourning and humiliation, had arrayed herself in her garment of praise, and her faithful sons and daughters had come up to celebrate the festival of Easter—happy, holy Easter—the “day of days”—the “queen of feasts”—the “Sun of other days.”

It was a bright and beautiful morning, and the sun's light was very cheering though it shone upon leafless trees and barren fields, for nature with us, does not, as in our mother land, keep pace with the church at this season, and tell by her bursting buds and blossoms the tale of hope and resurrection. But there was enough without her echoing voice to cheer the Christian's heart, to strengthen his hopes, and bid him go on his way rejoicing.

The solemn and interesting services of the morning were over in one of our village churches, and its worshippers had assembled for those of the evening.

“Chalice and plate and snowy vest” had been removed, and in their place stood the simple silver font. The memorable events of the day of Pentecost, contained in the second evening lesson, had been read, and the clergyman descended from the desk and stood beside the consecrated basin. A mother approached the chancel, leading her only child, a boy of nine years. She was alone, and, in her dress of pure white, was a most interesting object—the ceremony of adult baptism commenced—the lovely parent knelt, and was received into the congregation of Christ's flock. The boy stood apart, watching the scene, with his eye intently fixed upon the clergyman. The service concluded, the mother took her son's hand and presented him at the font. All are familiar with the beautiful rite of infant baptism. The young soldier was duly sworn into the service of the Lord Jesus Christ, and his maternal sponsor assumed for another the promises which she had just made in her own name. The ceremony was soon over—the mother and child quietly returned to their seats—the organ pealed forth the inspiring chant, and the regular service was resumed. It was a common and simple occurrence—the dedication of two souls to God, but a peculiar interest was excited by this baptism.

The circumstances that had thus drawn this mother into the holy precincts of our church, were singular and seemed almost accidental unless viewed as links in that chain of providences by which an Almighty hand draws the wanderers, one after another, into his fold.

Some months since, three young men were walking together through the streets of one of our large cities. As they sauntered idly along, the attention of one of them was arrested by three books which appeared to have been dropped by some one, and were lying unclaimed upon the side-walk. They were picked up, and proved to be three copies of the Book of Common Prayer. The brothers each took one, and, placing them in their pockets, they proceeded on their walk.

Some time after, one of these youth visited his home in the country, where his sister, the subject of this little sketch, resided. He found her in circumstances of affliction, peculiarly distressing. She had lived without God in the world, and had no refuge in the hour of trial. When trouble came upon her, she began to consider her ways, and, at the time of her brother's return, was anxiously seeking some new foundation on which to rest her broken hopes. In “all time of prosperity,” the Bible had been a sealed book, but now that the clouds had gathered she occasionally opened its sacred pages—but the “scales” still obscured her mental vision, for they had not been touched by that Holy Spirit which is promised to all who seek it.

As she was arranging her brother's trunk, she found one of the volumes of the Prayer book, of which we have spoken. Being the only book there, she was curious to see what it was, and set down to look it over—she became interested and took it to her room. The next day she resumed her examination, and, to use her own language to the clergyman who baptized her, “found in it every thing she wanted.” It pointed her to God, her Creator—to Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of her faith, and to the Holy Scriptures which revealed that God and Saviour's will, and it

taught her to pray for grace that she might “read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them.” She now made the word of God her daily study, and in the light of its hallowed pages became sensible of the sinfulness of her heart, and was brought a weeping penitent to her Saviour's feet.

In a town about eleven miles from her home, there was an Episcopal church. Thither with her son and her Prayer-book she went, and found in its scriptural services, all that her heart desired. At long intervals, she was enabled to visit the sanctuary of her choice. She sought an interview with the clergyman, and made known to him the state of her feelings. He guided, counselled, and encouraged her, and she went on step by step, adding to her faith knowledge, and to knowledge the graces of the christian life, and when the sweet festival of Easter came forward, she stood at the baptismal font, and dedicated herself and her child to the service of their risen Lord.

*Parliamentary proceedings relative to the Church of England*—The English ministry has prepared a bill for the abolition of Church Rates, which “is now avowed on all hands,” says the Christian Observer, “to involve the whole question of a church establishment.” The Church Rates are levied by the vote of the parishioners in the respective parishes to provide for the repairs of their churches, and keeping them in proper order for public worship. If these be abolished, the expense must of course be provided for in some other way, and it is now proposed by the ministry to make the estates of the bishop available for this purpose, by taking them from their control and putting them into the hands of a Board of Commissioners, to be used for the benefit of the bishops and other purposes.

HOUSE OF LORDS, March 9th, 1836.—The Archbishop said,—“the plan was neither more nor less than a scheme for placing the estates of the dignitaries of the church under the management of a Board of Commissioners, invested with full powers of granting leases, of settling reversions, mortgaging or alienating the property. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) Who was so blind as not to see the effect of this plan would be to make the dignitaries of the church (to use the mildest terms) annuitants (hear)—to deprive them of all the influence and advantages which were annexed to the possession of land, and to render them dependent on a Board of Commissioners, persons nominated by the government? (Loud cries of ‘Hear.’) Why, considering the very violent changes that had taken place at different times, a state of affairs might arise in which the aggregate of the whole of the property might be swept away at once. (Cheers.) He had said enough, he hoped, to show the injustice of the scheme that was proposed—its invading effect on the dignitaries of the church, and the danger with which it was attended to the property of the church itself. Objections without end could be urged against the measure, but as many of them were matters of detail, although involving principles of importance, yet he would not further remark on them. He felt himself obliged to come forward, not only in compliance with his own feelings on the subject, but on account of his having being authorized to express the sentiments of others. A meeting of bishops had been held that morning, at which they assembled to the number of fifteen, being nearly all the prelates who were in town; and he had been authorized by them to express their unanimous concurrence in the sentiments he had expressed, and their determination to resist the proposed measure by all proper and justifiable means. (Cries of ‘Hear, hear.’) There was another consideration which impelled him to come forward. It was that the names of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and the Bishop of Llandaff, as Dean of St. Paul's, were placed amongst the names of the Commissioners in the proposed bill. He objected to this, as it had not been done with their concurrence. (Hear.) The Right Rev. Prelate then concluded by presenting petitions in favour of church-rates.”

Lord Melbourne said—“he did not pretend to be master of all the calculations on the subject; but if there was one part of the measure on which he entertained less doubt than another, it was with respect to the financial question; for he was fully sa-

tified that the lands would produce funds ample—fact, more than sufficient—for all the purposes to which it was proposed to apply them. He admitted that there was much weight to be attached to what the most Rev. Prelate had stated. He admitted that the question was between the purposes to which the funds were to be applied and the wants of the church. His opinion was, that when the House came to argue the question further, and when it went into the details of the measure, it would be of opinion that the preference should be given—and he should give it with great reluctance, being most anxious for the augmentation of small livings—in favor of the plan which had been detailed to their lordships. The most Reverend Prelate asked if a better produce could be obtained, whether a portion of it would be given to any sect of men? He [Viscount Melbourne] could say that it would be given to meet the general exigencies of the State—for the general interests of the community—and to secure that object, of all others the most desirable, peace, harmony, tranquillity, and concord, which certainly was a great object with him, [Viscount Melbourne,] whatsoever it might be to the most Rev. Prelate and his Right Rev. brethren.”

From this it seems that no sacrifice of the rights of the church, no spoliation of its property, must be resisted if “peace, harmony, tranquillity, and concord” are thereby to be promoted! On this principle it is only necessary for violent men to raise a clamor, and to purchase peace, their demands must be granted to an unlimited extent. Such men are to be found in every country, and their numbers and importunities will increase with every concession. Their motto may well be the language of the victorious Brennus to the Romans, when they agreed to purchase his favor with gold. “Vae victis,” *vox the conquered*, was the reply to their expostulations against the addition of his sword to the stipulated weight. And well may the English bishops anticipate the loss of the whole property of the church, if the principle is once admitted that it is to be put into the hands of Commissioners, and used under any pretext or in any degree for “the general exigencies of the state.” We cannot see what right the Parliament has to interfere with property which the church never received from it, any more than it has to seize the possessions of Lord Melbourne himself, for the benefit of the community.—*Ibid.*

*Baptisms and Marriages in Manchester, Eng.*—On Christmas day the extraordinary number of 204 children were baptized at the Collegiate Church. On the morning of the same day, there were 43 marriages at that church, and on the following day 27 more.

## THE COLONIAL CHURCHMAN.

LUNEBURG, THURSDAY, MAY 18, 1837.

TEMPERANCE.—This good cause is not much indebted to the “Reformers” for late enactments. We grieve to find that the new licence law will open (or rather has already opened) wide, the floodgates of intemperance, and deluge the land once more with all the iniquity of which that vice is the fruitful parent. Before, the high price of licenses, and the restriction as to the quantity sold, tended greatly to abate the evils arising from the consumption of ardent spirits, and to assist the endeavours of those who were striving to substitute sobriety and independence for drunkenness and poverty in the habits and circumstances of the people. Much was thus saved to the country and to individuals, and an incalculable amount of comfort conferred on families before rendered wretched by their intemperance of their heads. The idle and worthless were thus becoming industrious and useful members of society, and Temperance was bringing in its smiling train—blessings of peace and virtue as inmates of every cottage in the land. If over such a state of things the heart of a patriot and the christian could not but rejoice, it cannot but be cast down at the prospect now before us of an unhappy reverse. So far from any check being now imposed upon the vicious propensities of the intemperate every facility is afforded them by the existing law. The price of the license is reduced one half,—the shop-keep-