

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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[Vol. I.]

Poetry.

LOOK ALOFT!

A little boy on board of a ship, once in a playful mood climbed up a mast without fear, till he bethought himself to come down again, and then he began to feel giddy. He trembled, and was looking downwards, when his father on deck perceived the boy's perilous position. He called out to him: "Look aloft!—look aloft!" The boy obeyed, and very soon his sense of giddiness was gone, he clung to the mast with vigour, and came down unhurt.

In the tempest of life, where the wave and the gale are round and above, if thy footsteps should fail, if thine eye should grow dim, and thy courage depart, "Look aloft," and be firm, and be fearless of heart.

If the friend who embraced in prosperity's glow, With a smile for each joy, and a tear for each woe, Should betray thee when sorrows like clouds are arrayed, "Look aloft," to the friendship which never shall fade.

Should the visions which hope spreads in light to thine eye, Like the tint of the rainbow, but brighter to fly, Turn away the dim eye, wipe the tears of regret, "Look aloft," to the sun which is never to set.

Shall they who are dearest—the love of thy heart—The friend of thy bosom, in sorrow depart— "Look aloft," from the darkness and dust of the tomb, To that soil "where affection is ever in bloom."

And, oh! when death comes in wild terrors to cast His fears on the future, his pall on the past, In that moment of darkness, with hope in the heart, And a smile in thine eye, "look aloft," and depart! (From a Scrap-Book.)

THE ALL-SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE.

2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

(Concluded.)

Our first conclusion is, that "All Scripture" is a perfect rule of life; or, in the words of our 6th Article: "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation."

How evident is this from the text!—Man, by nature, knows not God—is in utter ignorance—his understanding darkened, alienated from God through the blindness of his heart. To obtain actual life; he must know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. Where can he gain this knowledge? "The world, by wisdom, knew not God" of old, and it is no wiser now. Scripture, expressly given by inspiration of God "for doctrine," in the dilemma, offers to become the teacher. They who obey the divine call—"the sheep scattered abroad"—become disciples and learn of Christ, through the medium of these Scriptures, "as the Holy Ghost teaches." But, though disciples, they are babes in knowledge, and liable to mistakes. Sheep of his pasture—hearing his voice, indeed, yet prone to wander—erring and straying from God's ways—they need to be stopped in their career of folly.—Scripture is profitable "for reproof." Not only must their wanderings be arrested, but their feet turned back into the way of truth and holiness. Where can they find "correction," if not in the word of truth? Weak and helpless, in themselves—a heart of unbelief—desperately wicked—in its nature earthly—this called and chosen child requires to be built up, to be strengthened and refreshed; "all Scripture," formed into one body, yet divided into its several parts, suited to circumstances, becomes his "instruction in righteousness." Viewing, on one hand, man's wants, and on the other, the various uses, for which "Scripture—given by inspiration of God"—"is profitable," can any more perfect rule be imagined, by which the sinner may become a saint; the servant of the world, may become a man of God; perfect, in Christ, the only perfection—armed with the whole armour of God, thoroughly furnished unto the discharge of all good works here, and the enjoyment of their rewards hereafter?

Certainly, Scripture speaks of itself as a perfect rule. The Jews are forbidden to add unto the word commanded, or diminish aught from it—Deut. iv. 2. And in that book which forms the conclusion to the sacred volume, the awful doom of such a sacrilegious "to add to these things" is set forth—"God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." In the parable before alluded to, Abraham is described as stating the sufficiency of Scripture for every moral purpose—"they have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear their words;" and, in answer to the suggestion, that some further testimony would be more convincing, answers—"if they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

Consider the teaching of the Church of England on this point:

(i.) Holy Scripture is as perfect a rule as is needed. "We may learn, also, in these books, to know God's will and pleasure, as much as for this present time is convenient for us to know"—(Hom. p. 2). Quoting the language of Chrysostom, she says, again: "Whatever is required to the salvation of man is fully contained in the Scripture of God." (Ib.)

(ii.) The Decisions of Holy Scripture are final. "That which is once confirmed by the certainty of his eternal truth, hath no

more need of the confirmation of man's doctrine and writings, than the bright sun at noontide hath need of the light of a little candle to put away darkness, and to increase his glory"—(14th Hom. 2nd part.)

(iii.) The Church indignantly rejects, as authority, all other rules. "It may be called knowledge and learning that is otherwise gotten without the Word; but the wise man plainly testifieth, that they all be but vain, which have not in them the wisdom of God. We see to what vanity the old philosophers came, who were destitute of this science, gotten and searched for in his Word. We see what vanity the school-doctrine is mixed with; for that in this Word they sought not the will of God, but rather the will of reason, the trade of custom, the path of the fathers, the practice of the church"—(29th Hom. 3d part.)

How can words teach more clearly, that Holy Scripture is the perfect rule; or deny more positively every other rule whence-soever derived—whether from the will of reason, the trade of custom, the path of the fathers, or (what some all but idolize) the practice of the Church.

We conclude, secondly, that Scripture is its own interpreter; or in the words of the 6th Article, "Whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

At 1 Cor. ii. 12, St. Paul speaks of "the things which are freely given to us of God." In the next verse he mentions his mode of teaching these revealed truths:—first, as to his language—"not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but as the Holy Ghost teacheth";—secondly, as to his method—"comparing spiritual things with spiritual." I ask your special attention to these words, because I apprehend that this method of St. Paul proves my point.

"Comparing spiritual things with spiritual." Locke explains these words, by "comparing one part of revelation with another." Doddridge and MacKnight by explaining spiritual things by spiritual words. Chrysostom, in Parkhurst's Lexicon, "illustrating the truths of the gospel by comparing them with the types of the Old Testament." The Westminster Assembly of Divines say—"the word used in the text properly signifieth to judge together, that is, by comparing texts of Scripture, and setting spiritual things one against another "that, like opposite glasses, they may cast a mutual light one upon another, and we may make a more certain judgment of them." That this mode of argumentation was that adopted by the Apostle, is clear from Acts ix. 22—"But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ." On the original word, translated, proving, Parkhurst, having explained it "to evince by laying arguments together," adds—"perhaps, it particularly refers to St. Paul's manner of preaching to the Jews, by laying and comparing together the testimonies of the Old Testament to Jesus being the Christ."

Again, Acts xvii. 2, 3—"And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus whom I preach unto you, is Christ." St. Paul "reasoned with them out of the Scriptures."—How?—"Opening and alleging, &c." Here, note the word rendered "alleging," which Parkhurst explains "proving by allegations or citations," and adds: "The Greek writers, particularly Athenæus and Theophrastus, produced by Weinstein, use it for citing or quoting the expressions of another. It refers to St. Paul's alleging or citing the words of the Old Testament (comp. Exodus xix. 7, where the Septuagint uses the same word, rendered "laid before their faces.") See Acts xviii. 28; xxvi. 21, 22.

Nor was this mode of reasoning, making Scripture its own interpreter, confined to the Apostle Paul. Apollonius (Acts xviii. 28), is described as mightily convincing the Jews, "showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ."

To my mind, the Apostolic practice is an additional corroboration of the point in question, when I consider that the Jews of the day set a high value upon another source of evidence, the Tradition of the Elders called the Mishna. The Mishna consists of various traditions of the Jews, and of explanations of several passages of Scripture.* Now observe, that the Great Teacher makes no use of these traditions; nor once mentions them except in condemnation. The Apostles never refer their audience to them; and St. Paul, at least, (probably, Luke also, since he was well-educated) must have been thoroughly acquainted with them, "as taught, as he had been, according to the perfect manner of the law of the Fathers"—(Acts xxii. 3).

Before concluding, suffer me to contrast the teaching of the Book of God, and of our branch of the Catholic Church, with the dogma of that body which arrogates to itself the exclusive title of the Church, consequently claims the exclusive privilege of being the depository of God's truths—the Church of Rome.

In a note, in her authorized version of the Bible, on this passage, it is said, "If we would have the whole rule of Christian faith and practice, we must not be content with those Scriptures which Timothy knew from his infancy, i. e. with the Old Testament alone; nor yet with the New Testament, without taking along with it the traditions of

* For an account of this Book and its Commentary—the Gemara—see Dr. Lightfoot and Dr. Lardner.

the Church to which the Apostles delivered both the Book and the true meaning of it." Again, "Tradition explains Scripture. The Church is the depository of tradition; the living, speaking judge, to watch over and explain the rule of faith in all matters of controversy;" and the Priest is the representative and interpreter of the Church.

The absurdity of this is apparent. The taught become judges of the teacher!—It is not the Spirit of God, who gave the Scriptures, but the Priest, that is to decide on the meaning of the Holy Scripture!

From all that has been said, I conclude that Holy Scripture explains itself to the diligent student, who examines its truths after apostolic practice, with prayer for that demonstration of the Spirit, which is ever fully granted to them who ask it (comp. 1 Cor. ii. 1, and Luke xi. 13). Once more, hear the language of our Church: "Humility (1st Hom.) will only search to know the truth; it will search, and will bring together one place with another, and where it cannot find out the meaning, it will pray; and will ask of others that know, and will not presumptuously and rashly defend any thing which it knoweth not."

The words of the text have now been considered as teaching:—

The inspiration of Holy Scripture; its various uses to the Christian, and the design with which it was given.

The following conclusions have been drawn from this passage:—1st. All Holy Scripture is a perfect rule; and 2d. Holy Scripture is its own interpreter. We have seen the perfect harmony of our Church, in the honour thus done to God's word. Does the Word of God say—"Search the Scriptures?" our Church binds the same duty on every consistent member of her communion—for it is "Holy Scripture that containeth all things necessary to salvation" (6th Article). In bringing these considerations, therefore, to a close, let us adopt the language of the Homilies (22d at the close), and pray, "God, therefore, for his mercies' sake, vouchsafe to purify our minds through faith in his Son Jesus Christ, and to instil the heavenly drops of his grace into our hard stony hearts, to supply the same, that we be not contenters and deriders of his infallible word; but that with all humbleness of mind and christian reverence, we may endeavour ourselves to hear and to read his Sacred Scriptures, and inwardly so to digest them as shall be to the comfort of our souls and sanctification of his holy name: to whom with the Son and the Holy Ghost, three persons, and one living God, be all laud, honour, and praise, for ever and ever.—Amen."

AGAINST PREVAILING ERRORS.

THE LORD BISHOP OF EXETER,

(H. PHILLIPPS, D. D.)

4. I turn, therefore, to another and, practically, the most mischievous of the principles set forth in the tract.*

It is here held that "our Articles were not directed against the Decrees of Trent, because they were written before those decrees;" that "the decrees, in their mere letter, do not express that authoritative teaching of Rome which is condemned by the Articles; that senses short of this doctrine will fulfil the letter of the Decrees: and that the censures contained in the Articles have a sufficient object, though the Decrees of Trent, taken by themselves, remain untouched."

All this, and much more to the same effect, is manifestly designed to show that there is nothing in our Articles inconsistent with the letter of the Decrees of Trent: that those Decrees, and the Articles may be held together by the same person.

As this is by far the most daring attempt ever yet made by a minister of the Church of England to neutralize the distinctive doctrines of our Church, and to make us symbolize with Rome, I shall be excused if I detain you for a few minutes in unravelling the web of sophistry which has been laboriously woven to cover it.

It rests mainly, as has been said, on the allegation, that the Articles were of a date anterior to the Decrees of Trent—an allegation, having just that measure of truth which will enable it most effectually to deceive.

In the statutes and canons, the Articles are described as "Articles agreed upon in the Convocation holden at London in the year 1562:" whereas, the Council of Trent did not hold its last session, nor put forth its last decree, till December in 1563.

This is the face of facts and dates most favourable to the assertion in the tract.

Now let us see to what it really amounts. The Convocation of 1562 is so called according to the Old Style. It commenced its sittings in the month of January of the year which would now be called 1563; and it continued to sit till the month of June, just six months before the conclusion of the Council of Trent. In the course of those six months, how many Decrees were made by the Council on the points condemned in our Articles?

One, only one; including, indeed, all the matter dealt with in the 22d Article; an Article, it must be admitted, relating to several important particulars. Such is the amount of all that can be honestly stated in favour of the writer's allegation; but even this would give a very inadequate view of the weakness of his case. For, although the Articles, having been in the main settled by the Convocation of 1562, are always designated as the Articles of that Synod, yet they were not then permanently and finally concluded.

The Convocation of 1571 reconsidered them, with a view to a final settlement, and made alterations in them (of no great moment indeed) before it authorized their publication in English; and what is more important, before it made the canon requiring subscription. It was to the Articles so corrected, not as they were left by the Synod of 1562, that the statute of 13 Elizabeth requires subscription: for it expressly specifies "the Book of Articles put forth by the Queen's Authority," which was true of the English Book of 1571 only.

Subsequently, on the accession of King James, because towards the close of the preceding reign subscription to the Articles had been made by many, with such limitations or qualifications as materially affected its value, as a test of unity of doctrine: the Synod holden at London in 1603 (after "having upon a public reading and deliberate consideration of the said Articles, willingly and with one accord consented and subscribed") provided by its 36th canon a more precise and stringent formula, by which every one who subscribes professes to believe "all and every of the Articles to be agreeable to the Word of God."

Here, then, we might leave the case, apparently without a shadow of pretence for the allegation, that "whereas the Articles were written before the Decrees of Trent, they were not directed against those decrees."

But if this be so, the other and much more important allegation, that the Decrees, taken by themselves, in their mere letter, do not express the Romish doctrine which our Articles condemn; and, consequently, that subscription to the Articles is not incompatible with adherence to the Decrees, loses at once its best support. And thus, perhaps, we might be excused from more minute examination of it. Still it cannot be a useless labour to show the utter want of all foundation whatever for so dangerous a position. For, as I hardly need to say, whether true or false, it involves the whole question between us and Rome. Those decrees combine, avowedly combine, the whole system of Romish doctrine, peculiarly so called. They compose the Shilboleth of Rome. The Creed of Pius IV., formed upon them, and little else than a brief epitome of them (appended to the Creed of the Catholic Church, in defiance of the canons of the general councils at Ephesus and Chalcedon), is required to be explicitly held and maintained, not only by every Romish pastor, but also by every convert who is received in communion with Rome. Too much care, therefore, cannot be used, in warning every member of our own Church, especially, I may be allowed to say, after recent unhappy experience, the younger of our clergy, against all approach to so fearful and unwholesome a conjunction.—(Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Exeter, 1842.)

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

She is, if I do not greatly mistake, not only the eldest, but the most excellent, daughter of the Reformation; the rich boon of God Almighty's mercy to the kingdom; the depository of His eternal truth; the guardian of His worship and glory; and, at the present time, the object of His peculiar care and love. Whilst I gladly embrace this fair opportunity of assigning the reasons of my warm attachment to the Church; an attachment, not the blind offspring of prejudice or habit, but the result of serious and very close reflection; an attachment which has not only strengthened with my strength, but which is gathering fresh strength even in my weakness; I would remember that it is the will of God that Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim. It ill becomes a sinner who lives and breathes daily and hourly through much divine forbearance; it less becomes a believer who has hope towards God, through a redemption founded and finished in pure and marvellous mercy; it still less becomes a minister of the Prince of Peace—to assail those who profess to fear God, with one word of reproach, or to indulge towards them one feeling of unkindness, or one thought of uncharitableness. Grace be with all them who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, though they move not within our circle, nor bow the knee in our house of prayer. The hour of death, and the day of judgment, are fast advancing. If we take nothing with us into the dark valley, but the name of "CHRISTIAN," we shall meet nothing better than the sting of death. Unsupported by our formality, and

laden with our sins, we shall fall into the hands of the living God. If we carry into the presence of our Judge nothing but a pure creed floating in the understanding, our sentence is recorded—"Depart from me; I never knew you." Let us then supplicate our God without ceasing, that the doctrines which we profess to receive, may be principles of operation; divorcing us from sin, subduing our worldliness, renewing our souls, preparing us to meet our God; and that the worship in which we join, may be forming us to the taste and temper of this great multitude who stand before the throne, and before the Lamb.—Rev. Robert Housman, A. B. late Incumbent of St. Anne's, Lancaster.

[Our friend who has communicated the above, suggested the substitution of "a" in the place of several of the "the's" in the opening period. We should have thought them more correctly expressive of the author's meaning; but as we profess to give his own words, we do not feel at liberty to make the alteration. It is a common vice in writing, to use superlative phrases when only a high degree of worth is intended to be expressed.—Editor.]

THE REV. CHARLES SIMEON.

EARLY DAYS.—The early days of Mr. Simeon at Cambridge were days of deep mortification, and called for much patient endurance and Christian self-denial. And few things can exhibit more clearly the mighty change which has since then been effected in men's minds in relation to Christian doctrine, (however some persons of the highest assumption of superior knowledge and discernment cannot by any means see it,) than the contrast presented by the repugnant rejection of evangelical truth in those days in the University and town of Cambridge, and the cordial reception of the same truth in the same place in the present day. A change indeed! since the single preacher of evangelical truth was universally disowned, ridiculed, and contemned, and the self-same truth is now preached and honoured in nearly every pulpit in the place.

For no stinted period, the "fanatical" minister of Trinity Church was rejected by high and low. No man with a decent coat on his back would venture to speak to or notice him in the street; and the universality of this repudiation and the effect which it produced on a naturally sensitive, not to say vain, mind, may be judged of from the interesting fact, that when at last a poor man in the street took off his hat to the despised preacher and saluted him with obvious marks of unfeigned respect, the effect on his mind was too great to be controlled, and he hastened to his rooms to pour out before his Father in heaven, the thanksgiving of an overflowing heart, that at last one individual, bearing the form of a fellow-creature, was found not to spurn and disown him.

But it was by this hard service of mortification and dishonour that it pleased God to prepare his servant for the great work which he had destined him to accomplish. Amidst it all he fainted not. He endured hardness as a good soldier. No doubt he was richly refreshed by the consolations of the Spirit, as he was endued with the strength of the Most High. And, at length, the shadows of night fled away. The light of the morning dawned upon his path. He pursued a long and honoured course amidst the pure light of heaven. And his sun has gone down at length in perfect serenity and peace, the sure harbinger of a bright rising in that eternal kingdom, where "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that have turned many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

DEATH AND BURIAL.—They who may expect to hear, concerning Mr. Simeon, that he died in a state of high excitement, or of triumphant exultation, will find that they knew not the man. "Let me," said he, "die alone." "A scene! a dying scene! I abhor a dying scene." "I lie before Him—the vilest of the vile—the lowest of the low—the poorest of the poor." "Now let me be alone."

His end was peace, perfect peace—no doubt, no fear, no wish; humble, sweet affiance!

The affectionate respect shewn to his memory by the University and town of Cambridge is, we believe, without a parallel. His remains were deposited, on Saturday the 19th of November, in the Chapel of King's College, followed by about one thousand members of the University in mourning. The pall-bearers were eight Fellows of King's College; Sir Richard Simeon, Bart., his nephew, attended as chief mourner, followed by many personal friends of the deceased, who had come from a distance. Then followed the Heads of Houses and members of the Senate, two and two. The Bachelors and Undergraduates walked four abreast. The procession, which set out from the College Hall, extended through three sides of the large quadrangle, and entered the

* Tract for the Times, No. 90.