

ON THE DUTY OF PUBLIC FASTING AND PRAYER, ON ACCOUNT OF THE CHOLERA.

The pestilence has once more visited our land, and God is again, by this sore judgment, speaking to us as a community, and calling on us to humble ourselves before him, and turn from our iniquities.

We cannot regard it as, by any means, a favorable indication of the purity of the province, that as yet, so far as we have known, no authority, either civil or ecclesiastical, have been sending forth monition or recommendation to the people to set apart a season for prayer and supplication, with fasting before the offended Majesty of Heaven. It is now some six or eight weeks since several of the ministers of our church, in this city, had a conference, first amongst themselves, and afterwards with some ministers of other denominations, regarding the expediency of applying to the Governor General, to recommend or appoint a day for fasting and prayer, on account of the sin which might greatly expose us as a people to the visitation of the pestilence; but as the evil was then at a distance, and as there was, in the part of some, a hesitation about doing what might even appear to others to be officious, nothing was done in the matter.

The Cholera, however, is now amongst us, and though it has not yet manifested the malignant form which it assumed in 1832, and 1834, its ravages are such as may well induce alarm even amongst the most thoughtful.

We are quite sure that all our people would readily comply with any call which Sessions or Presbyteries might address to them, for setting apart a day for fasting and prayer, in their several congregations; and perhaps it might be well if no more general appointment or recommendation on the part of the civil authorities be made, that the commission of synod should hold a special meeting for appointing or recommending such a day to be observed throughout the whole bounds of the church. But, we fondly trust, that the civil authorities will come forward in this important matter.

We would grieve to see them issuing any such edict, as that which was promulgated in Upper Canada by the Lieut. Governor in 1832—an edict which, from its threats of pains and penalties to all who should fail to observe the prescribed day in a religious manner, provoked not a few to disregard it altogether.

We think the better way for the Executive is to command all directly in their own employment to cease from labor on such a day, and to recommend to the whole body of the people to do the same, in order to its being appropriated, in private and in public, to the acknowledgment of sin, prayer, and the other exercises of Divine Worship.

The President of the great Republic, in our neighborhood, has adopted this style of address. It will be seen, that the first Friday in August is the day which he recommends to be set apart to fasting, humiliation, and prayer. We confess that we would have liked his recommendation all the better, if it had contained a distinct recognition of the Mediator, as at once, the King of Kings, and the Great High Priest, through whose atone-

ment and intercession alone sins can be forgiven.

The Presidential proclamation runs thus:—

“A recommendation at a season when the Providence of God has manifested itself, in the visitation of a fearful pestilence, which is spreading its ravages throughout the land, it is fitting that a people whose reliance has ever been on His protection, should humble themselves before His throne, and, while acknowledging past transgressions, ask a continuance of Divine mercy. —It is, therefore, earnestly recommended that the first Friday in August be observed throughout the United States, as a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer. All business will be suspended in the various branches of the public service on that day, and it is recommended to persons of all religious denominations to abstain as far as practicable, from all secular occupations, and to assemble in their respective places of public worship, to acknowledge the infinite goodness which has watched over our existence as a nation, and so long crowned us with manifold blessings; and to implore the Almighty, in his own good time, to stay the destroying hand which is now lifted up against us.”

Washington, July 3, 1849.”

THE A PRIORI ARGUMENT FOR THE TRINITY.

Human reason could no more have discovered the truths of Revelation, than it could have planned the universe. These truths can never be fully comprehended by man, even after they have been revealed, yet, in so far as they are understood, they do all commend themselves to enlightened reason. We find, even in regard to some of the most mysterious of these truths, such as the Trinity, that reason, if it cannot demonstrate them from other truths, which are, to some extent, cognizable by itself, can, at least, trace harmonies between them and those truths, and in this way the more readily consents to them, notwithstanding their mysteriousness.

Some of the older Divines, not well considering the proper limits for the exercise of reason, in regard to revelation, endeavored to demonstrate from the nature of the Divine perfections the eternal generation of the Son, and the procession of the Holy Ghost; but these reasonings were of little of service to Divine truth. The following quotation, from *Harris' Pre-Adamite Earth*, may be regarded as a fair specimen of all that reason can conclude from the absolute perfection and eternity of the Godhead, respecting a plurality of persons in the Divine essence:—

“But what finite mind can conceive the conditions included in Absolute Perfection! To evolve these will require eternity; for could they be evolved in less, they would not be unlimited. All that we can say, is, that whatever the amount of mystery included in the objective universe may ever be, the probability is, that the proportion which it bears to the mystery of the Divine nature, will be that of the limited to the unlimited! that if infinite perfection implies infinite mysteriousness, which it certainly does, then infinite mysteriousness must ever form one of the distinctive excellencies of that perfection: that if the operation of infinite activity (either of love, or power, or of any other excellence) be essential to infinite perfection, and if such activity could not be agent and object at the same time, and in the same act, and yet no object, ad extra, existed from eternity, then must it have existed in the Divine nature itself; in other words, the Divine nature must include a plurality of distinctions, and include it as one of its necessary conditions, or essential perfections;

that if no exercise of the Divine efficiency, ad extra, can ever be adequate to its infinite perfection, and yet such adequate exercise, in some way, must always be necessary to infinite perfection, then must it be one of the excellencies of the Divine nature, not only that it should include a plurality of distinctions, but that the adequate sphere of its infinite activity should be its own infinite perfections; that if a God in unity, without internal distinctions, or diversity of modes, be incapable of moral affection, because having had nothing, ad extra, from eternity to love, then such internal distinctions must ever have existed as elements of reciprocal, social, self-sufficient perfection; and that if such plurality be an excellence, and if unity be an excellence also; and if there be any respect in which this plurality of one kind can consist as an excellence with this unity of another, then it will certainly be included in absolute perfection. And further, this perfection implies not only that all the excellence which it includes is simple, uncompounded, one, but that God and it are identical—that it is not an adjunct of His being, but His being itself.”

AN EXAMPLE WORTHY OF IMITATION.

One of our Catechists who has been but a short time in the field thus writes:—

“You sent me two copies of the *Record* for June. Whatever was your intention I took the hint that I had been neglectful in pressing upon the people the incumbent duty of supporting your paper. We are ever ready to put forth a plausible excuse for ourselves. I was waiting, as I thought, for a more favorable opportunity, for I assure you, bare suggestions have little avail. In the meantime I send you the names of eight subscribers in addition to the five formerly sent.—Address them all to — P. O.”

We are fully persuaded that if the like efforts were generally put forth in behalf of the *Record* throughout the Church, our circulation would soon be doubled. There are very few who take an interest in the extension of our Church in this great land, who might not with small effort add to our subscription list. Indeed there is scarcely a subscriber who could not procure, in his neighbourhood, another subscriber.

WHAT ARE DR. STEVENSON'S VIEWS? AND DR. FERRIER'S?

To the Editor of the *Record*.

MR. EDITOR,—It has been avowed to me, by friends who hold voluntary principles, that their views and those of the late Dr. Stevenson of Ayr, substantially accord. The work of that very able divine on the “Offices of Christ,” is now on my table; and I have marked one paragraph on the “Kingly Office of Christ,” which I request you to insert; and with this view I send you the book. No other quotations seem necessary; and I have just to say, that if Dr. Ferrier, and those who take his views, will at once say that they homologate these sentiments, not one question more will ever be asked of them. Nay, farther; if our brethren of the United Presbyterian Synod will do the same, an union is consummated at once:—

“Even civil and political duties are moral duties, consequently all who are favoured with supernatural revelation are bound, in all moral respects, to regulate their civil and political conduct by its laws, and to act under the influence of its doctrines. That civil and political duties are moral duties, we apprehend will be disputed by none who acknowledge the moral supremacy of God and the dependence of man. They are re-