

Poetry.

THE BLACKBIRD.

BY ALFRED TENNYSON.

O Blackbird! sing me something well;
While all the neighbours shoot thee round,
I keep smooth plats of fruitful ground,
Where thou may'st warble eat and dwell.

The espaliers and the standards all
Are thine; the range of lawn and park;
The unsettled black-hearts ripen dark,
All thine against the garden wall.

Yet though I spared thee, kith and kin,
Thy sole delight is, sitting still,
With that gold dagger of thy bill
To fret the summer genetrix.

A golden bill! the silver tongue
Cold February loved is dry;
Plenty corrupts the melody
Had made thee famous once, when young.

And in the sultry garden squares,
Now thy flute notes are changed to coarse;
I hear thee not at all, or hoarse
As when a hawkers hawks his wares.

Take warning! he that will not sing
While yon sun prospers in the blue,
Shall sing for want ere leaves are new,
Caught in the frozen palms of spring.

IRISH CHURCH.

(Concluded.)

In another point the Irish Church did not adopt the practice of the Church of Rome,—the celibacy of the clergy. Saint Patrick tells us, that his father, Calphurnius, was a deacon, and that his grandfather, Phocius, was a priest, and he laid down rules for the conduct of the priest and his wife.* The Priests of the Irish Church continued to marry until a late period. Amalgaid, who was Primate of Armagh in the year 1021, who was a married man, and the Father of two bishops of that see. Celsus, who died A.D. 1129, was a married man. The eight Primates who preceded him were married. The Primacy, in fact became an inheritance,† and when Papal power was sufficiently established to act authoritatively, Innocent the Third wrote to John Sacernitanus, his Legate in Ireland A.D. 1104, advising, amongst other things, "that he should abolish that bad usage in Ireland by which sons and grandsons succeeded to the benefices of their fathers and grandfathers." Oblations for the dead, Purgatory, Invocation of Saints, were further points of difference between the early Irish and Romish Churches. Saint Patrick says,§ "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, for he who in his lifetime does not deserve to receive the sacrifice, how can it assist him after his death?" Again, he says,|| "There be three habitations under the power of Almighty God: the first the lowermost, and the middle; the highest whereof is called the kingdom of God, or the kingdom of the heavens; the lowermost is termed hell; the middle is named the present world." Following up the subject, he says, "In this world there is a mixture of good and bad, but in the kingdom of God none are bad, but all good; but in hell, none are good, but all bad; and either place is supplied from the middle one." Columbanus¶ follows in the footsteps of St. Patrick, and exhorts that we should "live believing in God, following the precepts of Christ while life remains, while the times for obtaining salvation are certain;" and Sedulius** declares "at the end of life either death or life succeedeth," and "that death is the gate by which we enter into the kingdom."

So much for Purgatory. On the Invocation of Saints the evidence is as clear. Saint Patrick†† declares that "no creature is to be adored or invoked but only the Creator." And Sedulius says‡‡ to pray to any other beside the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is the crime of impiety.

We have thus shown, that on leading points of doctrine the Irish Church was completely at issue with the Church of Rome, and not only stood independent of it in doctrine and discipline, but fearlessly resisted its innovations and encroachments until long after every other country in Europe was covered with the mental midnight of the Romish Church.

Various controversies arose between the two Churches. The first was that of the "Three Chapters," which awakened the fears of the Romish See, and formed one of the subjects for discussion at the fifth General Council held at Constantinople, A.D. 553. On this controversy Cardinal Baronius§§ informs us that "all the Bishops that were in Ireland rose up jointly for the three Chapters; and when they perceived that the Church of Rome did both receive the condemna-

tion of the three Chapters and strengthen the fifth Synod with her consent, they departed from her and gave to the rest of the schismatics."

Up to this period, indeed, the independence of the Irish Church cannot be questioned, as at the time the Bishop of Rome, so far from having made any claim to the supremacy, had actually disavowed any pretensions to it; whilst John, Bishop of Constantinople, claimed and assumed the title of Universal Bishop. This occurred at a time when Italy was in a very unsettled state, and John, in his correspondence with Gregory the Great, then Bishop of Rome, styled himself "Universal Bishop."—Gregory remonstrated mildly, but John persevered, and a correspondence upon the subject ensued between the Emperor and Empress. In a letter to the latter he says, "It is a lamentable thing that his brother and fellow-bishop should endeavour to be called sole Bishop. But, indeed, what else is manifested in this his pride, but that the times of Antichrist are nigh at hand even now?"

ON THE ROYAL SUPREMACY.

In the foregoing tract on "The Origin of the British Church," reference has been frequently made to the acts of the Sovereign in connection with the proceedings affecting the reformation in the Church, and as at this time the enemies of the Faith are everywhere busily engaged in disseminating untruths with regard to the power of the Crown over the Anglican Church, we have deemed it a duty to submit to the Church in Canada, the letter of Dr. Wordsworth on the Royal Supremacy as containing the best digest of the subject with which we are acquainted. Soon after the Reformation an attempt was made by the Roman schismatics to asperse the character of the Anglican Church, by publishing false charges against the Sovereign, accusing the Crown of claiming and exercising ministerial offices; and so successful was the libel, that even in the present day many of the national churches in communion with that of Rome remain impressed with the idea that the Sovereign of Britain is by virtue of that office also permitted to profane the holy office of the Priesthood, forgetting even if the charge could be proved to be true that the Bishop of Rome claims to unite and exercise in his own proper person the double office of Priest and King, professing to be "Ruler of the world," both in a spiritual and temporal sense. This wicked device of the Romanist has been as usual zealously taken up by those who professing to hate the Pope yet act in concert with him against the Church, and hence we find the slander greedily digested by all those sects which, in this age of masked infidelity, so plentifully abound. The sectarian denying "That the Powers that be are ordained of God," gainsays the Scriptures by declaring all Rulers to reign by "the will of the people," thus refusing to acknowledge their divine right to rule, as well as their accountability to God for their conduct. They heed not the declaration of Isaiah that Queens should be the nursing mothers and Kings the nursing fathers of the Church; they heed not the example of our Lord and only Saviour, who gave tribute to whom tribute was due, who submitted himself to every ordinance of man for God's sake, who sent the cleansed sinner to show himself to the Priest and pay the gift that Moses commanded should be offered; and the disciple to the sea to procure the tribute due to the State.

"Bp. Sanderson on Episcopacy, xvi. p. 41. Says the rest [i. e. the other Religious Communities, Popish and Puritanical] not by remote inferences, but by immediate and natural deduction out of their own acknowledged principles, do somewhat or other deny the King's supremacy in matters Ecclesiastical; either claiming a power of jurisdiction over him, or pleading a privilege of exemption from under him. The Papists do it both ways; in their several doctrines of the Pope's Supremacy, and of the Exemption of the Clergy. The Puritans of both sorts (who think they have sufficiently confuted every thing they have a mind to dislike, if they have once pronounced it Popish and Antichristian,) do yet herein (as in very many other things, and some of them of the most dangerous consequence) symbolize with the Papists, and after a sort divide that branch of Anti-christianism wholly between them; the Presbyterians claiming to their Consistories as full and absolute Spiritual Jurisdiction over Princes (with power even to excommunicate them, if they shall see cause for it,) as the Papists challenge to belong to the Pope; and the Independents exempting their Congregations from all spiritual subjection to them, in as ample manner as the Papists do their Clergy. Whereas the English Protestant Bishops and Regular Clergy as becometh good Christians and good subjects, do neither pretend to any Jurisdiction over the Kings of England, nor withdraw their subjection from them; but acknowledge them to have Sovereign Power over them as well as over their other subjects."

The Sovereign's office as "supreme Governor over all persons in all causes" in the Church, is "to maintain it in the unity of true religion;" not to suffer "any unnecessary questions to be raised;" "have a princely care, that Churchmen may do the work which is proper to them;" to contain within

their duty all estates and degrees committed to his charge by God;" and "to restrain the stubborn and evil-doers with the power of the civil sword."

But does not the ascription of these powers in Ecclesiastical matters to the Civil Magistrate lead to what is called Erastianism?

Erastianism (so called from Erastus, a physician of Heidelberg, whose work on Church government appeared in 1589, after the author's death) appears to have owed its rise and influence to the domineering claims of the Genevan Ecclesiastical Regimen in the infliction of Church censures.—This Genevan Regimen, seeing no other mode of overthrowing Episcopacy, (and perceiving that this mode might probably be successful,) enlisted the Laity on its side by associating Lay Elders with Presbyters in the exercise of spiritual discipline, contrary to all former practice in the Church. But by so doing it led the way to destruction; for it thus lent its countenance to the principle of Erastianism, which being exasperated by the spiritual pride and tyranny of the Calvinistic discipline turned the Calvinistic weapon of the Lay-eldership by which Presbyterianism had overthrown Episcopacy, against Presbyterianism itself, and proceeded to transfer the power of Excommunication entirely to Lay hands, and to vest it in the Civil Tribunals.

Erastianism about the year 1645, went on still further to maintain that all the authority of the Church consisted only in persuasion; that no Church government was of divine right, but was merely of human constitution, depending wholly on the will of the secular magistrates. The Erastians, then, having made a league with the Independents, overthrew the Presbyterian power in England. But the assertors of Erastian opinions were powerful not so much by their own arguments, as by the errors of their adversaries the Presbyterians; and if they had enjoyed such a form of government as that of the English Constitution in Church and State, where the spiritual power is vested solely, by divine right, in spiritual persons, and where the Civil magistrate has such a general external control "over all persons in all causes" as to check all unlawful exertion of authority, Erastianism would either never have existed at all, or would never have gained the influence which it did.

"We are taught by God's Holy Word that the hearts of kings are in his rule and governance and that he doth dispose and turn them as it seemeth best to his godly wisdom." We believe that the powers that be are ordained of God, and that whoso resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God, and so believing in the language of our xxxvii article, we declare, that the Queen's Majesty hath the chief power in this Realm of England and other her dominions unto whom the chief government of all Estates of this Realm, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Civil, in all causes doth appertain and is not, nor ought to be, subject to any foreign jurisdiction. Where we attribute to the Queen's Majesty the chief government, by which titles, we understand, the minds of some slanderous folk to be offended. We give not to our Princes the ministering either of God's Word or of the Sacraments, the which thing the injunctions also lately set forth by Elizabeth our Queen do most plainly testify; but that only prerogative, which we see to have been given always to all godly Princes in the Holy Scriptures by God himself, i. e., that they should rule all estates and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Temporal, and restrain with the civil sword the stubborn and evil-doers. The Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this Realm of England.

This is the Supremacy which the Sovereign power is allowed by God's Law to exercise over his visible Church, and no more or less. The Sovereign has no right whatever to interfere in the spiritual functions of the Church, He or She cannot ordain to the holy Priesthood, nor administer the Sacraments, it cannot consecrate to the office of Bishop. The Sovereign power, be it monarchical or republican, cannot, dare not, with impunity tamper with any of the sacred duties of the Church. It is perfectly true that a state may become unmindful of its duty, it may become so far heedless of the Almighty God as to presume to trifle with His holy church, but as He has always made the wrath of man to praise, and restrained the remainder of wrath, so will He even now make all things work together for the good of that Church. Henry VIII. wrathful against a foreign Branch of the Church, not for the sake of the National one, and consequently his Master's, but angry because his own evil desires were opposed, had his wrath turned to the praise of that God whom he served not. And should the Crown in these latter times, pander to the cries of a credulous faction, and, as a matter of expediency, allow God's heritage to be spoiled, we may confidently predict that the spoiler's arm will be stayed and his work wrested to his own destruction and the Crown be made to feel severely. And do we not see strong indications of such things actually now taking place—has not the State been forgetful of its highest duties? Has it not been tampering with its first-love and holding meretricious converse with harlots? and to render these wrongs more painful does she not hold in servile bondage that glorious and holy help-mate which alone made the nation the wonder and admiration of a world. But a gleam

of hope is beheld in the gloomy distance, and hope, that maketh not ashamed, a merciful God will not forsake His Church, and for His Church's sake will not forsake her earthly Ruler, He will yet give the King his judgments and will teach his Senators wisdom. He will turn the heart of our Sovereign and open her eyes that she may see; and identified as the Crown is with our holy religion, existing as it does by that religion, we believe that ere long she will rise in all her former beauty; that she will obey the voice sounding in her ears "awake, oh! dreamer, why sleepest thou!" The dangers through which the Anglican Church is passing are as nothing compared with those which have beset her in times past. Do we forget that she was at one time nearly Arian? Do we forget that she was at one time nearly Roman? Shall we forget also that both these trials have well nigh passed? If then the Prince of this world be once again arming—if the attempt to Erastianize and Romanize, the Church is again being made; be not dismayed, for it is written "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." For says the Lamb "I am with you always even unto the end of the world."

That there is greater need for circumspection at this present time every sincere Christian must admit, and it behoves each one of us to try what manner of spirits we are of. We know from Scripture that false prophets and false teachers shall arise, shall of themselves and unauthoritatively go about saying, see! here is Christ, and lo! he is there; we know that they shall appear to be so nearly angels of light—true messengers of the Gospel—that, if it were possible, they should deceive even the elect; let us then be more vigilant and pray God to preserve us from their snares, and to give us grace to believe them not—let us avoid them that are given to change, who speak evil of dignities, who are blown about by every wind of doctrine, who create divisions, and let us hold fast the profession of our Faith without wavering, let us strive to fear God, honour the King and love the brotherhood, and, above all, let us pray for that faith which hopeth all things, believeth all things, walking as children of light, remembering always our own infirmities and weaknesses, and God's our Saviour's strength.

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* Synod of St. Patrick, canon 6, directs "that the clerk's wife shall not walk without having her head veiled." "Et ux ejus non velato capite ambulet." &c.
† Bernard's Life of Malachy, cap. vii. Harris's Ware, pp. 49, 54.
‡ Crasson's Life and Acts of the Pontiffs Rom. 1601 P. 515: "Mons inter cat. ra. ut eum in Hibernia absum tollat, quo filiet nepotes patribus et avis in beneficiis succedebant."
§ Canons of St. Patrick, chap. 12. || Idem de tribus habitaculis.
¶ Syl. p. 11:—"Vive deo fidens, Christi precepta sequendo Dummodo vita manet, dum tempora certa saluti."
** Usher's Religion of the Ancient Irish, p. 21.
†† Accredited Synod of St. Patrick, canon 23:—"Non adjurand esse creaturam aliam nisi Creatorem."
‡‡ To Romanis, l. c. 2:—"Adorare alium, præter Patrem, Filium et Spiritum Sanctum, impietatis crimen est."
§§ Quoted by Usher, p. 69.