

# The Church.

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## Poetry.

LENTEN LAYS.  
(From the New York Churchman.)

"Twas within the coasts where Sidon's ancient city stood,  
That the meek and mild Redeemer, wand'ring doing good—  
Doing good was Christ's employment: doing good His bliss—  
Would that we might love our duty even as He loved His!

There a woman, broken hearted with her weight of care,  
Kneeling before Him, offering meekly low and humble prayer.  
But He turned in silence from her, answering not a word.  
They must learn to love for mercy, who would serve the Lord.

Spoke the people, "send her from us." But He onward went,  
Saying, "To the house of Jacob only am I sent."  
Then she threw herself before Him, bowing to the earth,  
Prostrate in her utter anguish, crying, "Help me, Lord!"

But He said, "Shall I leave Israel for a stranger's need?  
Is it meet to rob the children, that the dogs may feed?"  
"Nay, not so," she answered meekly but, "Thou knowest  
LORD,  
Even the dogs may gain the refuse from the children's board."

"After that the golden sunlight on Thibet's wave,  
Than the stars of Heaven was the smile He gave.  
Gentler than the forest music of Judea's birds,  
Gentler than a mother's soothing, feel His holy words.

"One such answer calls for mercy on the darkest night,  
Great thy Faith, O woman, be it even so thy will,  
Thou art worthy at My table with My sons to share,  
Got with thy Redeemer's blessing:—I have heard thy prayer!"

II  
In the path of deep contrition none hath vainly trod,  
Therefore let no doubt nor terror shake thy trust in God.  
Not a grief without a blessing, let thy heart be true;  
What though light be on the rosebud, dew-drops sparkle there!

In the lowliest things around us thoughts of Heaven there are;  
And in white minutest snowflake thou canst trace the star,  
Look on such things, keep thy spirit less in earth than Heaven,  
While thou askest more, forget not that already given.

This short lesson gives for model, all that mortal needs,  
For in this tiny Psalm, the Father's grace is seen,  
In the grace to this one sinner, dost thou pine to share?  
Wouldst thou win God's smile and blessing—persevere in prayer!

HYDE PARK, LENT, 1846.  
See the Holy Gospel for the second Sunday in Lent.

WONDERFUL ROBERT WALKER,  
THE CURATE OF SEATHWAITE.  
(From the Evergreen.)

Robert Walker, or, Wonderful Robert Walker, as he is still called in those parts of the country where he resided, was born in the parish of Seathwaite, in Cumberland, England, in 1709, being the youngest of twelve children. Robert was a sickly infant, and through his boyhood and youth continuing to be of a delicate frame and feeble health, it was deemed him according to the country phrase, "to breed him a scholar," as it was not probable that he would be able to gain a livelihood by bodily labour. At that period, few of the parishes in the dales were furnished with good school-houses; so most of the children were taught to read and write in the chapel. Robert Walker himself received the rudiments of his education in the same consecrated building in which he afterwards, for so many years, officiated both as a minister and school-teacher. By the assistance of a gentleman in the neighbourhood, he afterwards acquired a knowledge of the classics, and in time became qualified for taking holy orders. After his ordination, he had the offer of two curacies; he accepted that of Seathwaite in his native parish. The value of this curacy was at that period (1735) only five pounds per annum. When he took possession of this living, he married—his wife bringing him as her portion, a small sum of money, with which he began house-keeping. About twenty years afterwards, his situation is described in a letter written by a gentleman who had just visited him, a portion of which we here extract.

"I was, the other day, upon a party of pleasure, about five or six miles from this place, where I met with a very striking object, and of a nature not very common. Going into a clergyman's house, (of whom I had frequently heard,) I found him sitting at the head of a long square table, such as is commonly used in this country by the lower class of people—dressed in a coarse blue frock, trimmed with black horn buttons; a checked shirt, a leather strap about his neck for a stock, a coarse apron, and a pair of great woollen-soled shoes, plated with iron, to preserve them, (which we call clogs in these parts,) with a child upon his knee, eating breakfast; his wife, and the remainder of his children, were some of them employed in waiting upon each other, then in teasing and spinning wool, at which trade he is a great proficient; and whooper, when it was made ready for sale, will lay it, by sixteen or thirty-two pounds weight, upon his back, and on foot seven or eight miles, will carry it to the market even in the depth of winter. I was not much surprised at all this, as you may possibly be, having heard a great deal of it related before. But I must confess myself astonished with the alacrity and good-humour that appeared both in the clergyman and his wife, and more so at the sense and ingenuity of the clergyman himself."

The following is quoted from another letter, written about a year after the above—  
"By his frugality and good management he keeps the wolf from the door, as we say; and if he advances a little in the world, it is owing more to his own care, than to anything else he has to rely upon. I don't find his inclination running after further preferment. He is settled among the people that are happy among themselves; and live in the greatest unanimity and friendship with them; and, I believe, the minister and people are exceedingly satisfied with each other; and indeed how should they be dissatisfied, when they have a person of so much piety and worth as his pastor? A man, who, by his candour and meekness, his sober, chaste, and virtuous conversation, his soundness in principle and practice, is an ornament to the profession and an honour to the country he is in; and bear with me if I say, the plainness of his dress, the sanctity of his manners, the simplicity of his doctrine, and the vehemence of his expression, have a sort of resemblance to the pure practice of primitive Christianity."

We will now furnish the reader with Mr. Walker's account of himself, as contained in a letter of his own writing—  
"Six—Yours, of the 26th instant, was communicated to me, by Mr. C—, and I should have returned an immediate answer, but the hand of Providence, then heavy upon an amiable pledge of endurance, hath since taken from me a promising girl, which the disconsolate mother too piously laments the loss of; though we have yet eight lively, all healthy, hopeful children, whose names and ages are as follows:—Zacheus, aged almost eighteen years; Elizabeth, sixteen years and ten months; Mary, fifteen; Moses, thirteen years and three months; Sarah, ten years and three months; Mabel, eight years and three months; William Tyson, three years and eight months; and Ann Esther, one year and three months; besides Anna, who died two years and six months ago, and was then aged nine and ten; and Eleanor, who died the 23rd inst., January, aged six years and ten months. Zacheus, the eldest child, is now learning the trade of tanner, and has two years and a half of his apprenticeship to serve. The annual income of my chapel, at present, as near as I can compute it, may amount to £17 10s.  
"I am situated greatly to my satisfaction, with regard to the conduct and behaviour of my auditory,

who not only live in the happiest ignorance of the follies and vices of the age, but in mutual peace and good will with one another, and are, seemingly, (I hope really, too,) sincere Christians, and sound members of the established Church, not one dissenter of any denomination being amongst them all. I got to the value of £40 for my wife's fortune, but had no real estate of my own, being the youngest son of twelve children born of obscure parents; and though my income has been but small and my family large, yet by a providential blessing upon my diligent endeavours, the kindness of friends, and a cheap country to live in, we have always had the necessities of life.

"By what I have written, (which is a true and exact account to the best of my knowledge,) I hope you will not think your favour to me, out of the late worthy Dr. Stratford's effects, quite mis bestowed, for which I must ever gratefully own myself, sir, your much obliged and most obedient humble servant,  
ROBERT WALKER."

About this time the Bishop of Chester recommended the plan of joining the curacy of Upha to that of Seathwaite, and Mr. Walker was nominated to fill the double curacy, but he declined the offer. In a letter to the Bishop, Mr. Walker mentions as a reason for not accepting this nomination, that "the chapels of Seathwaite and Upha being annexed together, would be apt to cause a general discontent among the inhabitants of both places; by either thinking themselves slighted, being only served alternately, or neglected in the duty, or attributing it to covetousness in me; all of which occasions of murmuring I would willingly avoid." We have seen that he had at this time a large family of eight or nine children. One of his sons he afterwards maintained at Trinity College, Dublin, till he was prepared for taking holy orders, though his salary had been but little augmented. He was like his predecessors in the same cure, school-master as well as clergyman of the parish, but he made no charge for teaching the children of his parishioners: though such as could afford to pay, gave him whatever they pleased.

As a parish priest he was exceedingly hospitable. Every Sunday he had served upon a long table, "messes of broth for the refreshment of those of his congregation who came from a distance, and usually took their seats as parts of his own household."  
"He loved old customs and usages, and in some instances adhered to them to his own loss: for having had a sum of money lodged in the hands of a neighbouring tradesman, when long course of time had raised the rate of interest, and more was offered, he refused to accept it—an act not difficult to one who, while he was drawing seventeen pounds a year from his curacy, declines, as we have seen, to add the profits of another small benefice to his own, lest he should be suspected of cupidity. From this vice he was wholly free. When very young, having kept a diary of his expenses, however trifling, the large amount at the end of the year surprised him; and from that time the rule of his life was to be economical, not avaricious."

A clergyman (a great grandson of Mr. Walker) has written the following brief account of his last days: "Until the sickness of his wife, a few months previous to her death, his health and spirits and faculties were unimpaired. But this misfortune gave him such a shock that his constitution gradually decayed. His senses, except sight, still preserved their powers. He never preached with steadiness after his wife's death. His voice faltered; he always looked at the seat which she had used. He could not pass her tomb without tears. He became, when alone, sad and melancholy, though still, among his friends, kind and good-natured. He went to bed about twelve o'clock the night before his death. As his custom was, he went tottering and leaning on his daughter's arm, to examine the heavens and meditate in the open air. 'How clear the moon shines to-night!' He said those words, sighed and laid down. At six next morning, (June 25th, 1802,) he was found a corpse. Many a tear, many a heavy heart, and many a grateful blessing followed him to the grave."

He died at the age of ninety-three, and had been curate of his parish near sixty-seven years. He left behind him a sum of more than two thousand pounds, and such a sense of his various excellencies was prevalent in the country, that the epithet of wonderful, is to this day attached to his name."

"There is," says Wordsworth, "in the above sketch, something so extraordinary as to require further explanatory details. And to begin with his industry: Eight hours in each day, during five days in the week, and half of Saturday, except when the labours of his bandy were urgent, he was occupied in teaching. His seat was within the rails of the altar; the communion-table was his desk; and, like Shenstone's school-mistress, the master employed himself at the spinning-wheel while the children were repeating their lessons by his side. Every evening, after school-hours, if not more profitably engaged, he continued the same kind of labour, exchanging for the benefit of exercise, the small wheel at which he sat, for the large one on which wool is spun, the spinner stepping to and fro. Thus was the wheel constantly in readiness to prevent the waste of a moment's time. Nor was his industry with the pen, when occasion called for it, less eager. Intrusted with extensive management of public and private affairs, he acted, in his rustic neighbourhood, as scrivener, writing out petitions, deeds of conveyance, wills, covenants, &c., with pecuniary gain to himself, and to the greatest benefit of his employers. These labours, (at all times considerable,) occupied a period of the year, viz. between Christmas and Candlemas, when money transactions are settled in this country; were often so intense that he passed great part of the night, and sometimes whole nights, at his desk. His garden, also, was tilled by his own hand: he had a right of pasturage on the mountains for a few sheep and a couple of cows, which required his attendance; with this pastoral occupation he joined the labours of husbandry upon a small scale, renting two or three acres, in addition to his own less than an acre of glebe; and the humblest drudgery which the cultivation of these fields required, was performed by himself."

He also assisted his neighbours in hay-making and shearing their flocks, and in the performance of this latter service was eminently dextrous. They, in their turn, complimented him with the present of a hay-cock or a fleece; less as a recompense for this particular service than as a general acknowledgment. The Sabbath was, in a strict sense, kept holy; the Sunday evenings being devoted to reading the Scriptures and family prayer. The principal festivals appointed by the Church were also duly observed; but through every other day in the week, through every hour of the day, he was incessantly occupied in work of hand or mind; not allowing a moment for recreation, except upon a Saturday afternoon, when he indulged himself with a newspaper, or sometimes with a magazine. The frugality and temperance established in his house were as admirable as the industry. Nothing of which the name of luxury could be given was there known; in the latter part of his life, indeed, when tea had been brought into almost general use, it was provided occasionally to his roof, and had been accustomed to this refreshment elsewhere; but neither he nor his wife ever partook of it. The raiment worn by his family was comely and decent, but as simple as their diet; the housepans materials were made up into apparel by their own hands. At the time of the decease of this thrifty pair, their cottage

contained a large store of woollen and linen cloth, woven from threads of their own spinning; and it is remarkable that the pew in the chapel in which the family used to sit, remained, a few years ago, neatly lined with woollen cloth spun by the pastor's own hands. It is the only pew in the chapel so distinguished.

"It might have been concluded that no one could thus, as it were, have converted his body into a machine of industry for the humblest uses, and kept his thoughts so frequently bent upon secular concerns, without grievous injury to the more precious parts of his nature. How could the powers of intellect thrive or his graces be displayed, in the midst of circumstances so unfavourable, and when to the direct cultivation of the mind so small a portion of time was allotted?—But in this extraordinary man, things in their nature adverse were reconciled; his conversation was remarkable, not only for being chaste and pure, but for the degree in which it was fervent and eloquent; his written style was correct, simple and animated. Nor did his affections suffer more than his intellect; he was tenderly alive to all the duties of his pastoral office: the poor and needy 'he never sent empty away, the stranger was fed and refreshed in passing that unfrequented vale—the sick were visited; and the feelings of humanity found further exercise among the distresses and embarrassments in the worldly estate of his neighbours, with which his talents for business made him acquainted; and the disinterestedness, impartiality, and uprightiness, which he maintained in the management of all affairs confided to him, were virtues seldom separated, in his conscience, from religious obligations. Nor could such conduct fail to remind those who witnessed it, of a spirit nobler than law or custom: they felt convictions which but for such intercourse could not have been afforded, that, as in his practice of his pastor, there was no guile, so in his faith there was nothing hollow; and we are warranted in believing, that upon these occasions, selfishness, obstinacy, and discord, would often give way before the breathings of his good-will and saintly integrity. It may be presumed also, while his humble congregation were listening to the moral precepts which he delivered from the pulpit, and to the Christian exhortations that they should love their neighbour as themselves, and to do as they would be done unto, that peculiar efficacy was given to the preacher's labours, by recollections in the minds of his congregation, that they were called upon to do no more than his own actions were daily setting before their eyes."

"He was most zealously attached to the doctrine and frame of the Established Church. He allowed no Dissenter or Methodist to interfere in the instruction of the souls committed to his cure; and so successful were his exertions, that he had not a single dissenter, of any denomination, in his parish. Though he avoided all religious controversies, yet when age had silvered his head, and virtuous piety had secured to his appearance reverence and silent honour, no one however determined in his hatred of apostolical descent, could have listened to his discourse on ecclesiastical history and ancient times, without thinking that one of the beloved apostles had returned to mortality, and in that vale of peace had come to exemplify the beauty of holiness in the life and character of Mr. Walker."

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others, whom they knew to have been themselves commissioned, and most of them were also those who were appointed to commission others. They, therefore, testify to a fact, with which they themselves were personally conversant.

Mr. C.—But could not these men have been tempted to record as a fact what was not a fact at all?

Mr. H.—I think that you will scarcely deem it possible that they could have been guilty of such an act, when no reason can be alleged why they should have done so, and when you are informed that they were those who, in nine cases out of ten, sealed their testimony with their blood. Surely, men who, like them, had left all to bear reproach and suffer persecution in the cause of Christ, and who had daily reason to expect a martyr's death, would scarcely have placed on record, as true, what they must have known to be utterly false.

Mr. C.—I should think such a thing scarcely possible.

Mr. H.—Then I trust that whilst you listen to the testimony which I shall adduce from the writings of these men, you will bear in mind that they were competent to testify to the facts, regarding which they have written, and that, from the position which they held, their testimony must be deemed above suspicion.

CLEMENT OF ROME, the companion of St. Paul, who is mentioned by him in his Epistle to the Philippians, and who flourished about A.D. 87, says: "Our apostles knew by our Lord Jesus Christ that contentions would arise regarding the office of a Bishop. And therefore having perfect knowledge of this, they appointed certain persons, and then gave directions in what manner, when they should die, their approved men should succeed in their ministry."

TERTULLIAN, who flourished about 190, says, in reply to the heretics: "Let them produce the origin of their Churches: let them set forth the series of their Bishops so descending by succession from the beginning, that he, who was the first Bishop, may have some of the apostles, or apostolic men who were in full communion with the apostles, for his author and predecessor. For in this manner, the apostolical Churches bring down their registers; as the Church of Smyrna, having Polycarp placed over it by St. John; as the Church of Rome had Clement ordained by St. Peter; and the other Churches also set forth those who were made Bishops over them by the apostles."

IRENÆUS, who flourished in the middle of the second century, says: "We can reckon up those who were instituted Bishops in the Churches by the apostles, and their successors, even unto us; to whom also they committed the Churches themselves."

I could cite many other passages equally pertinent, but these are sufficient to show you, that the Bishops of those days were regarded, and were in fact, successors of the Apostles; for surely, the doctrine of a succession is clearly taught in the passages I have just quoted to you.

Mr. C.—But it strikes me, that if this succession for which you contend really existed, we should hear something of the lists of the Bishops who succeeded each other in the different churches, just as you say that you can give a list of the several Archbishops of Canterbury, who has succeeded one another from the time of the Reformation. This would be something satisfactory!

Mr. H.—This too we have. Irenæus says— "We have a list of the Bishops in succession to whom the apostolic church in every place was committed."—See page 16. Eusebius, the celebrated ecclesiastical historian, who flourished in the fourth century, and who every where asserts this doctrine, gives us a list of the Bishops of Jerusalem, Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria, (from the apostles) to his own time, compiled from various records, then in existence!

And now let me ask you, Mr. Clayton, as a reasonable man, to consider how absurd it is, in knowledge of these facts which I have adduced, to suppose that the succession has ever been broken. For if the ministry be a divine institution, God is pledged to continue it by his promise to those whom he first commissioned: "As my Father hath sent me, so send I you." "Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." This ought, in my humble opinion, to be a sufficient argument, if there were none other, for the doctrine of an uninterrupted succession. But we have this very afternoon seen that this doctrine was every where received, and that no man could be accounted a minister of Christ who could not trace back his succession to the Apostles. I might have also shown you, had I deemed it necessary, and my time admitted of it, that the councils of the Church held in different ages attest the same fact. These councils were chiefly composed of Bishops; and every Bishop must have been consecrated by three or at least by two Bishops. So, I think the succession could not have ended here. But, we are not confined to Christian writers in this matter: profane history affords satisfactory evidence to the same fact. Taking all these things into consideration, I cannot but deem it very absurd for any man to suppose, as many do suppose, and firmly believe, —that there ever has been any break in the succession.

For, surely, (as has been well remarked) if the succession had ever failed, something certainly would be known concerning the time, place and manner, in which it had terminated. History or tradition would tell us, who were the last Bishops in the direct line from the apostles—who were the first in the new or humanly appointed line,—and who were the laymen that appointed them. But nothing of the kind is to be found. All that we have to meet this mass of evidence in its favour, is the bare and unsupported assertion of its opponents, that there must have been a break somewhere,—that the idea of an uninterrupted succession through so many ages is utterly preposterous. But believe me, Mr. Clayton, that until your friends can bring me something more convincing than their naked assertion, I shall willingly and most fully rely on the promises of Christ, on the Holy Scriptures, and on the early ecclesiastical writers, and the councils of the Church; all of whom testify one and the same thing.

Though, Mr. Clayton, our conversation has been shorter than usual to-day, yet as I am a good deal engaged, and as it may tend to keep each part of the argument by itself, you will excuse me, if I defer the consideration of our next argument till another opportunity. I shall be glad to see you again at an early day; and I hope that I shall then have more leisure than I can command to-day.

Mr. C.—I am sure, Sir, that I have much reason to be greatly obliged to you for the great trouble you take with me: I shall never forget your kindness. Good afternoon, Sir.

Mr. H.—Do not mention it: it gives me much pleasure to consider so important a subject with so candid an inquirer. Good afternoon, Mr. Clayton.

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