

The Church.

THEREFORE I WILL NOT BE NEGLIGENT TO PUT YOU ALWAYS IN REMEMBRANCE OF THESE THINGS, THOUGH YE KNOW THEM AND BE ESTABLISHED IN THE PRESENT TRUTH.—2 PETER, I, 12.

VOL. I.]

COBOURG, U. C., SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1837.

[NO. XIV.]

Original Poetry.

STONEHENGE.

Enormous skeleton of dateless birth!
Mysterious chronicle of infant earth!
Each cloud-capt dome that mock'd thy roofless pile
When Rome's proud genius trod Britannia's isle,
The tyrant's boast thro' many a vanish'd year,
Dreamlike hath pass'd—but thou art here!
'Mid verdant tombs where nameless monarchs' rest
Still rears the peerless wreck its champion crest;
And oft as Dian with her starry train
Pours a mild radiance o'er the shadowy fane—
The trembling peasant, lost in legends wild
Of stranger crags by Merlin's spell-work piled,
Breathless admires—then turns with hurried glance
Nor counts † the shapes that lead "the Giant's Dance."
But not to Merlin's art or age belong
The gloomy terrors of that monstrous throng;
Ere Ambri plain a Saxon's treachery knew,
Or Caesar's eagles o'er the wide waste flew,
Stonehenge arose! 'mid circling groves of oak
With time coeval superstition spoke—
The Druid voice her fire-eyed votaries heard,
And rifled mountains rued th' electric word.
'Twere vain to guess where grew the ponderous spoil—
No kindred relics boasts the neighbouring soil,
Save one rude rock, that rests its time-worn side
On Avon's bed, and curbs his struggling tide.
Lo! girt with trench, that erst from lawless tread
Secured the central fabric's precincts dread,
In mystic circle darkling and erect
Colossal guards of stone the cell ‡ protect;
On massive pillars pois'd terrific gloom
Huge blocks unchisel'd as from earth's rent womb,
A pendant quarry! emulous to show
Triumphant o'er fierce havoc couch'd below.
Tho' many a link of each tall chain be torn,
Still hails the front|| the golden hues of morn,
As loath in desolation to disown
The primal glories of Belinus ¶ throne.
For here in bigot pomp and proud array
The oak-crown'd Pontiff hymn'd the God of day,
While countless harps attun'd the joyous strain,
To drown the victim captive's shrieks of pain;
And here, as roll'd the storm, such orgies held,
The thunder's voice was hush'd, the whirlwind's fury quell'd.
No more the direful pageant Heaven could brook—
Earth's outraged bosom in convulsion shook—
And when the glory pure religion wore
Beam'd on that altar red with human gore,
To hide such stain yon ** conscious pillar fell
In mournful mockery of the rites of Hell.

F. B. EX. COLL. OXON.

* "The Burrows round Stonehenge are assuredly the single sepulchres of Kings and great personages."—*Dr. Stukeley's account of Stonehenge.*

† According to the popular notions respecting these stones, called by our old historians *Chorea Gigantum*, or *The Giant's Dance*. Aurelius Ambrosius, King of the Britons, procured Merlin, by supernatural means, to bring them from Ireland into Britain, and set up in memory of the noble Britons treacherously murdered at Hengist's banquet, near the Monastery of Ambresbury.—*See Jeffrey of Monmouth, Giraldus Cambrensis, and Camden.*

‡ "The vulgar think it an ominous thing to count the number of the stones."—*Dr. Stukeley.*

§ The interior of this temple, representing two-thirds of an oval, is commonly distinguished by the name of the *Cell*, or *Sanc-tum*.

|| The grand east entrance of the Ruin is still perfect.

¶ The sun was worshipped by the Druids at Stonehenge under the name of Belinus.—*See Henry's History of Britain.*

** The altar is now scarcely visible in consequence of the fall of one of the pillars and impost constituting the chief *Tritihon* of the cell.

REASONS FOR EPISCOPACY.

BY THE REV. CALVIN COLTON,

Late a minister of the Presbyterian church in the United States, and now a clergyman of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of New York.

From the *British Critic*.

"God sends us bishops, whether we will have them or not."—These are the words of one whose writings, of late, have attracted no inconsiderable notice; * and they are cited by the author of the little volume now before us, as illustrative of his own recently adopted views, on the subject of Episcopacy. They might, with singular propriety, have been prefixed, as a motto, to his publication. They really may be said to contain nearly the whole pith and marrow of his very important and interesting work.

Mr. Calvin Colton is already well known, as a writer, to the British public. The readers of this journal, more especially, may remember that, so long ago as the year 1832, during his residence in England, he put forth a small volume, intitled, "History and Character of the American Revivals of Religion;" which volume formed the subject of somewhat copious remarks in this journal. We may, perhaps, be forgiven for repeating, here, the sentences with which our observations were closed; since they briefly describe the temper which, in our judgment, ought to preside over all such inquiries and discussions; and which, as we venture to hope, was, in no instance, violated or forgotten by us, throughout the whole of our strictures on his work. Our words were as follows:—"We earnestly entreat Mr. Colton and his brethren to be assured that, if we have occasionally used some honest freedom of speech, in our examination of his book, we have not been prompted to it by a spirit of ungracious disregard for his principles, and his convictions. We may perhaps, in his judgment, be too powerfully influenced by

* The author of the *Natural History of Enthusiasm, Spiritual Despotism, &c.*

an attachment to the time-honoured institutions and practices of our own country; but we are totally unconscious of any motive so utterly hateful, as a desire to insult and exasperate the Americans, or a pitiful ambition to be numbered among their detractors."

If it were possible that the exercise of charity and moderation could be worthy of reward, that reward we should most abundantly find in the present publication of Mr. Colton: for this publication has brought us into contact with one endowed with that rare species of moral courage, which enables a man to stand forward, boldly, in the face of the world, and to say, that he has seen good reason for a material change in the opinions which he formerly cherished and professed. In 1832, Mr. Colton was not only the avowed advocate and defender of Revivalism,—he was a firm and honest believer in Revivalism, as something little short of a new and divine dispensation. In 1836, he appears again before the public, to apprise them of certain very important modifications, which intervening experience has effected in his original persuasion; and to administer a solemn caution to the world against the evils, unspeakable and manifold, which the spirit of wild fanaticism is, at this moment, inflicting on the land of his fathers; and which can scarcely be contemplated, without sorrow and dismay, by the whole Protestant world.

Now, this is as it should be; but this is not the whole. Mr. Colton was bred among the Sectarians,—(we protest against the supposition of our using this term in any invidious or ungracious acceptance.)—he was reared and nurtured at the feet of the Gamaliels,—first of the Congregational, and next of the Presbyterian Schools. In fact, he came over to this country a sturdy Presbyterian; he is now a member, and a minister, of the Episcopal Church of America, and addresses to his countrymen his "Reasons for Episcopacy."

It was quite impossible that a testimony like this, should fail to arrest the earnest attention of his countrymen. We are accordingly informed, from unquestionable authority, that his book, though it has raised up many calumniators, has not called forth a single antagonist to answer it; that it has already passed through three copious editions; and that it is producing no inconsiderable effect upon the public mind in America. We should, therefore, be deeply grieved, if his candid and manly exposition of this revolution in his own sentiments, should be received with indifference and apathy by the members of the Anglican Church; for this would seem to prove that the mother had cast away her child from all place in her affection; and that like the unreasoning fowls of the air, she was content to leave her brood "to prey at will," so soon as their strength of pinion should enable them to brave "the stormy wind and tempest," by their own unflinching and independent might. Evil and dark indeed would be the day, which should witness this calamitous disruption of the sympathies which ought ever to unite, in holy and inseparable bonds, the Apostolic Church of England, and her noble progeny of the Western World.

The process by which Mr. Colton was conducted to his present scheme of thought, relative to ecclesiastical matters, is singularly interesting and instructive. In the year 1831, circumstances brought him to this country. His excursion, it seems, was considered as an affair of somewhat evil augury, by one of his ministerial brethren; who intimated to him, very plainly, that to visit England and the continent, was usually regarded as prejudicial to the piety and christian character of American ministers. "Indeed," added the man of dark omens, "the adventure sometimes spoils them!" In spite of this vaticination, however, Mr. Colton persisted in quitting the United States, for a residence of four years on the dangerous soil of Great Britain. In 1835 he returned, in a condition which seemed to verify the awful predictions of his friend and brother: for, according to his own confession, either going abroad had spoiled him, or else his country had, somehow or other, been spoiled during his absence! Not, indeed, that he found his country in a state of irretrievable ruin, either as to her political or religious interests; but that he had to witness the infliction of very grievous damage in certain quarters, where every thing had been left by him comparatively sound and flourishing. "I mean," he says, "that the Presbyterian and Congregational denominations of Christians, to which I had ever been attached, and in which I felt the deepest interest, seemed to me, to a very great extent, lying under the blight and desolation of the new and extravagant measures by which religious excitements had been attempted and managed, on the one hand, and of endless and bitter theological controversy, on the other. I will not say that I was shocked, because it came upon me gradually. I was partly prepared for it, by what I had heard, yet I had not conceived the extent of the evil. *** Almost the entire mass of the body of Christians to which I belonged, was pervaded by one or the other of two great evils, and their cognate ramifications,—(to me, evils from which my taste, my habits, and my feelings revolted,)—extravagance and controversy. It seemed as if I was, indeed, spoiled, for enjoyment or usefulness, in that connexion. For the first time in my life, driven by the considerations of these great and afflicting results staring me in the face, I began to question the expediency and adequacy of that system of church organization, which had not kept out these evils, and, apparently, could neither remedy nor abate them."

From all this, it was quite clear that Mr. Colton was entirely spoiled for a Congregationalist or a Presbyterian. To use his own language, he had been, for four years, standing at a "distant point of observation." He was thus enabled to form a juster estimate of relative dimensions; his mind was emancipated from

the tyranny which is usually exercised, over the eye and the judgment, by mere juxtaposition. So that, when he found himself once more immersed into the system, from which, for a time, he had escaped, he was, of necessity, much more forcibly struck by its monstrous disorders and perturbations, than he could possibly have been, if he had continued, all the while, to live in the midst of its thickening confusion. The result we have now before us; namely, a distinct, and (so far as we can judge,) an impartial exhibition of the "confounding odds," by which the elements of his original connexions are perpetually "tumbled all together;" and, moreover, a luminous display of those inextinguishable principles of order, and consequently of power, which, at length, have won him over to the Episcopal Government and discipline.

[After some remarks upon the exposure of the spirit of litigation which characterizes, according to Mr. Colton's account, the government of the Presbyterian churches in the United States,—rendering the proceedings of their different courts, to use his own language, "singularly unedifying, uncomfortable, and vexatious,"—the Reviewer thus proceeds,]

The first question which naturally suggests itself, on the contemplation of these evils, is, to what cause are they to be ascribed? And here, Mr. Colton appears to find the way "plain before his face." For he tells us, confidently, that "THE EQUALITY CLAIMED FOR ALL ITS MINISTERS is the immediate occasion of all the dissensions" which are tearing the Presbyterian body to pieces. They refuse, he says, to invest proper persons with supervisory and executive powers. Every person claims to have an equal part in the legislative, judicial, and executive functions; and the consequence is, that every time they meet together for these purposes, they meet for dissension. "It is not in man," he continues, "to govern himself in this way. It never was, and it never can be. And yet this is the way of the Presbyterian church. Every meeting of its constituted authorities is a parliament; every parliament is a judiciary; and every judiciary is an executive. And the consequence is, that each, and all, become an arena of perpetual strife." [pp. 61, 62.]

Another awfully prolific source of confusion and unrest, is the perpetual conflict between the spirit of intolerance, on the one hand, and the spirit of licentious independence, on the other. The spirit of independence provides each several community with a separate creed. The spirit of intolerance fiercely and inflexibly exacts an implicit submission to the creed, which happens to have got a local possession, as the only standard of truth. And hence it is that "Churches are divided; Presbyteries are divided; Synods are divided; the General Assembly is divided; and the whole denomination is in violent agitation and conflict with itself,—party against party." *****

It may, possibly, be thought strange, that these elements of disorder should be in such pernicious activity throughout a religious community, like the Presbyterian Church, the principle of which is, that all its separate congregations shall subscribe to the Creed of the Directory. But Mr. Colton, nevertheless, assures us that, whatever may be the principle, the practice is at mortal variance with it. He tells us, that a diversity of confessions is, by no means, a peculiarity of the Congregational or Independent Churches. On the contrary, he estimates the variety of creeds, within the Presbyterian pale, to be not less than some hundreds; each of them shaped, with minute exactness, according to the theological model of the head that formed it; as for instance a *Hopkinsian*; a *New Light*; a moderate Calvinist, or a high Calvinist; an *Old* or a *New School* man; with all the grades between these extremes, from the time of Jonathan Edwards to the present moment. "One can hardly go," says Mr. Colton, "from one town to another, although within the same denomination, without finding a different creed. **** I have, myself, organized from ten to fifteen churches, giving them creeds drawn up by my own hand, which varied from each other, according as, by thinking more upon the subject, I supposed I could improve their forms. How different this," he very justly exclaims "from the practice of a Church which has the same creed; and that creed in the hands of every man, every woman, and every child!" *****

A further objection to the whole Presbyterian system in America—(an objection at least equally applicable to the Congregational system)—is this, that it robs the pastoral office of its essential and reasonable influence. In the estimation of Mr. Colton, indeed, it does much more,—it robs the pastoral office of its legitimate and primitive influence. This latter consideration, however, he is content, for the present, to waive; not because he questions the strength of the argument from the principles and practice of primitive antiquity; but simply, because his more immediate purpose is to discuss the whole matter, purely upon those open grounds, which lie without the boundaries of historical or theological controversy. ***** The Presbyterian pastor has a session of ruling elders associated with him in the pastoral office, each of whom has equal voice with himself, except that he is, *ex officio*, moderator. In the Congregational Churches, there are associated with the minister, certain officers called deacons, and, in some instances, a standing committee, whose influence is often still more oppressive than that of the ruling elders of the Presbyterians, inasmuch as their powers are more imperfectly defined. These functionaries, for the most part, are men whose attainments are narrow, and whose self-confidence is proportionably vast. Woe be to the preacher who ventures an inch beyond the circle of their vision in theology, or ventures upon a line of scriptural interpretation which may sound new or strange in their ears! The slightest digression from the common track, instantly brings his orthodoxy into suspicion. And, what is