

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, JULY 1, 1837.

[NO. III.]

Poetry.

PSALM cxliii. 2.—Enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.

JESUS. JUSTICE. SINNER.

Jes. Bring forth the prisoner, Justice. *Just.* Thy commands are done, just Judge: see here the prisoner stands.
Jes. What has the prisoner done? Say, what's the cause of his commitment? *Just.* He hath broke the laws of his too gracious God, conspir'd the death of that great Majesty that gave him breath, and heaps transgression, Lord, upon transgression.
Jes. How know'st thou this? *Just.* E'en by his own confession. His sins are crying, and they cried aloud; they cried to heaven—they cried to heaven for blood.
Jes. What say'st thou, sinner? Hast thou ought to plead, that sentence should not pass? Hold up thy head, and shew thy brazen, thy rebellious face.
Sin. Ah me! I dare not: I'm too vile and base to tread upon the earth; much more to lift mine eyes to heaven; I need no other thrift than mine own conscience. Lord, I must confess, I am no more than dust, and no whit less than my indictment styles me. Ah! if thou search too severe, with too severe a brow, what flesh can stand? I have transgress'd thy laws; thy merits plead thy vengeance, not my cause.
Just. Lord, shall I strike the blow? *Jes.* Hold, Justice, stay: sinner, speak on; what hast thou more to say?
Sin. Vile as I am, and of myself abhor'd, I am thy handy-work: thy creature, Lord; stamp't with thy glorious image, and, at first, most like to thee; though now a poor accurs'd, convicted caitiff, and degenerate creature, here trembling at thy bar. *Just.* Thy fault's the greater. Lord, shall I strike the blow? *Jes.* Hold, Justice, stay: speak sinner, hast thou nothing else to say?
Sin. Nothing but mercy, mercy, Lord; my state is miserably poor and desperate. I quite renounce myself, the world, and flee from Lord to Jesus; from myself to thee.
Just. Cease thy vain hopes; my angry God has vow'd abused mercy must have blood for blood.
Shall I yet strike the blow? *Jes.* Stay, Justice, hold; my bowels yearn, my fainting blood grows cold, to view the trembling wretch; methinks I spy my Father's image in the prisoner's eye.
Just. I cannot hold. *Jes.* Then turn thy thirsty blade into my sides; let there the wound be made. Cheer up, dear soul: redeem thy life with mine: my soul shall smart, my heart shall bleed for thine.
Sin. O groundless depths! O love beyond degree! The offended dies to set the offender free!

From Quarles' Emblems.

EARLY PIETY STRIKINGLY EXHIBITED

In the account given by the Revd. Mr. Merry, an English Clergyman, of his son John.

Our dear John was born April 23, 1813, and died April 2, 1819, aged nearly six years.
He was always a delicate child, and we often feared that he would not arrive at manhood. He was, from an early age, much more attentive to what was said to him on divine subjects than our other children; though we had no particular reason to think, till within the last few months, that he was under the teaching of God's Spirit. We had noticed a great change in him, as to his temper, his regard for divine things, and his views of death. At one time he was of an irritable and fretful disposition: but he latterly manifested much meekness, and a sweet, obedient, affectionate spirit. He was remarkably submissive to our will. He formerly had a great dread of death, and often wished that he might go to heaven without dying. But this dread was at length taken away: and he sometimes expressed a wish to die. On being asked, "why?" he answered, "That I may go to be with Jesus!" He often spoke with much animation on the happiness of heaven. He was delighted with the thought that there was no sin there, nor any pain: and that all who are there, are forever with the Lord, and see his face.
Near the close of his life he showed the most marked delight in prayer, in reading the Bible, in talking about Jesus and spiritual things, and the employments of the Sabbath. He manifested great hatred of sin, and an ardent desire to be made holy. He sometimes shed tears of grief for his sins, when we were speaking or reading to him, on the nature and evil of sin, or on what Jesus had done for sinners.
His manner of praying was particularly striking. In very expressive, though often in broken language, he breathed out his little prayers before God. He evidently felt the petitions he offered up. He was so earnest and fervent in the exercise, that he often reminded us of Jacob wrestling in prayer. Whenever any of the family were ill, or when he went with us to visit a sick person in the neighbourhood, or when he noticed any thing particular in the case or character of any one with whom he conversed, he was sure to remember them in his prayers at night. Latterly he always prayed very earnestly on the Sabbath mornings, before he went to the house of God, that God would give him an understanding to understand his word; and that sinners might be converted that day. He was very attentive during the time of prayer; and while his father was preaching, his eyes were steadily fixed on him with devout attention, without the least intermission. On his way home from the house of God, he used to talk over the sermon to his mamma; and could give a tolerably good account of it. One Sunday, (which was the last he was ever at a place of worship) when the sermon was on the law, he asked his mamma, as they went home, "what was the use of the law?" She answered that it was to show us our sin. He said, "Oh then, mamma, the law shews us our sins, and then we go to Jesus for the pardon of

them." As soon as he reached home from the house of God, he always went up stairs to pray over what he had heard; and he turned the parts of the sermon he could remember into petitions. The sermon one Sunday being on a conversation between our Lord and the Samaritan woman (see John iv.) he prayed every day, during the following week, that Christ would give him the water of life. After dinner, on the Sunday, he used to take his Bible and go to his mother, and say, "Now, Mamma, I want to find all the passages in the Bible which Papa mentioned in his sermon." He then generally repeated several Scripture passages, quoted in the sermon. He one day incidentally mentioned to his mother a sentence in a sermon which he had heard several weeks before. He said, "Mamma, you know Papa spoke in his sermon about a person going on a wrong road; and when he saw that he was wrong, he would turn about and get into the right one. Now mamma, is it not thus with those who have been living in sin and turn to God? They first see that they have been in the wrong road to heaven, and they turn and get into the right road." He was much struck with that passage, Isaiah xl. 11.—"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, and gather the lambs in his arms &c." and said to his mamma, that he wished very much that his papa would preach from that text. He felt peculiar delight and interest in the following chapters in the Bible:—Genesis i. ii. iii. Exodus xx. St. John's Gospel i. iii. x. xv. xvi. xvii. Romans viii.

On observing some people at the house of God, who he thought were too finely dressed, he said to his mother, when he returned home, "I wish papa would preach a sermon on pride in dress: do you think there is a text that would suit it?" On seeing a boy playing one Sunday, though naturally diffident, he went up to him and reproved him, telling him how naughty it was to play on the Sabbath. He often spoke on the necessity of repentance and prayer, to those with whom he could converse freely. After doing so one day, he went to his mother, and said, "I have been talking to — about prayer, but she gave me no answer; I am afraid she does not love prayer." He often reproved his little brothers for being naughty, and told them that they ought to pray for a new heart. One day when one of them struck at the other in a passion, John instantly fell down on his knees, and asked God to forgive his brother for being so naughty. When he saw them looking from the window at any boys playing in the streets on the Sabbath, he used to tell them that, in thus looking at the boys playing, they were as naughty as the boys themselves. When he was only three years old, he would never look out of the window at boys playing on the Sabbath.

What is mentioned above occurred previous to his last illness. The complaint of which he died, was water in the head. His illness was of short duration, only about ten days. At the commencement of it, he desired his mother to pray for him. She asked him what she should pray for? He answered, "That I may be made well." She said to him, "Do you then, my dear, rather wish to be well than to die?" He answered, "No; but I wish to be made a holy boy, and be a child of God: and then you know, Mamma, I shall go to heaven if I die; and if I was made a holy boy, I had rather die."

While his senses were retained, he was continually asking us to pray for him; and while he was delirious, he was constantly talking about prayer, and often asked God to make him holy. His sufferings were very great during his short illness; and he manifested a sweet patient spirit under them. During the three or four last days, he was unable to speak.

To the Editor of the Church.

SIR.—Upon perusing lately a work entitled SATURDAY EVENING by the popular author of the Natural History of Enthusiasm, the thought occurred to me that a series of Essays designed to represent and recommend our duties as Christians and as Churchmen, after the manner and under some such designation as the above, would not be unsuited to the columns of the CHURCH. This author happily observes that "although he dedicates his pen to the service of Religion, he would not seem to trench, either upon the season, or the office of public instruction. But there remains open to him the SATURDAY EVENING, which devout persons, whose leisure permits them to do so, are accustomed to devote to preparatory meditation."

In adopting the idea which this able writer has suggested, I do not however, however, pledge myself to a regular prosecution of the vast variety of subjects which may be embraced under the plan proposed; but entertain a hope and confidence that many of the better qualified contributors by whom you will no doubt be favoured, will feel disposed to avail themselves of the opportunity thus offered of promulgating to the world, and diffusing for the benefit of their fellow Christians, some of the valuable fruits of their leisure hours.

The subject of the SABBATH is one which I have taken at random; but it is important in itself and the duties which pertain to it cannot be too often or too earnestly dwelt upon.

THE SATURDAY PREACHER.

No. I.

THE SABBATH.

EZEKIEL xx. 20.—"Hallow my Sabbaths."
Amongst the offences and acts of guilty disobedience against which the prophet, in the present chapter, solemnly warns his countrymen, is their pollution of the sacred Sabbath-day,—a day consecrated from the very beginning of the world to a holy and religious observance,—and a day which the Jews were commanded to keep holy by the voice of the Almighty himself.

Of all the institutions enjoined upon this people, there was none better calculated to maintain amongst them the knowledge and worship of the true God and to keep them distinct from the impure customs of their heathen neighbors than this solemn appointment of the Sabbath-day. To this end, indeed, it would be highly conducive amongst all nations, in all ages, and under all circumstances; for it serves, above every other institution, as a memorial of the great truth that Almighty God is the framer and preserver of this magnificent universe. So wisely is it adapted to this end;—so strongly does it serve to keep up a sense of religious obligation;—so powerfully does it conduce to the temporal as well as spiritual benefit of mankind, that this law of God has, in most Christian countries, been annexed to the laws of man, and the religious observance of the Sabbath has been sanctioned by the wisest enactments of human jurisprudence.

In regarding it simply as a day of rest from the ordinary employments of life, there is much that is impressive and solemn,—much that is elevating and improving to the soul in the idea of one general respite, on that hallowed day, from all the usual occupations of life,—a cessation from the hum and bustle of worldly business;—all eyes, all minds, all hearts turned from earth to heaven,—leaving the world, pausing from its anxieties, forsaking its pursuits, and fixed with exclusive devotion upon Almighty God, the great Creator. Fallen as we are, we can appreciate the beauty of a picture like this,—the world and its inhabitants reposing from their stir and toil,—man leaving his more selfish occupations, and engaging himself in nearer communion with his God;—testifying thus his dependence upon, and seeking anew the protection of that heavenly parent:—the brute creation also sharers in the general repose, joining, as it were, in a mute homage and silent adoration of the Lord of all.

In such an institution we cannot fail to discern a Father and a Friend, whose "tender mercies are over all his works." The "man-servant and the maid-servant,"—the toil-worn laborer,—even the "cattle within our gates," have, by God's own appointment their stated day of rest,—a rest which the sanctity of religion itself empowers them to claim. It is one, alas! which man, undirected and unenlightened, would never have thought of;—one, no doubt, which in his native selfishness and hardness of heart, he would have denied to the supplications of the weary laborer in something of the same language as Pharaoh's taskmasters to the Hebrews; "Ye are idle, ye are idle; there shall not aught of your daily tasks be diminished."

How jealous Almighty God was of the strict observance of this hallowed rest,—and that too, as plainly appears, for our own sakes—is evident from the threatenings denounced by the prophet, in this very chapter, upon the Jews for their "pollution" of the Sabbath; and we can call to mind the unhappy person who was stoned to death in the wilderness because, in violation of the divine commandment, he had been found gathering a few sticks on the Sabbath-day.

From Christians the same literal strictness is certainly not required; to them the severity of the law has been tempered with mercy: yet they are by no means to suppose themselves excused from the most careful observance of the sanctity of a day which has a double claim upon their veneration, as well from being commemorative of the creation of the world as from being specially hallowed by our blessed Lord's resurrection from the dead. The performance, therefore, of the usual business of life on this holy day is by Christians now, no less than it was by Jews then, a positive and criminal infingement of a divine commandment: for men to proceed on this day, as on other days, with their "farm or their merchandize," is a violation of an ordinance of God which if it escape retribution on earth, will, unless repented of and corrected, be visited with his anger in eternity.

It is true that the cessation of all classes and conditions from the common business of life on the Sabbath day, is a thing so established by custom alone that it becomes indecent to violate it; yet, unhappily, we too frequently observe the divine commandment to be broken in an indirect, but in quite as culpable a manner as in those more open and notorious instances. How often for example is it the day fixed upon for excursions from home either upon business or pleasure! how often are its hours employed in those public or social recreations which the body may need, but which exclude the soul from its proper refreshment and sustenance! And how often alas! is that sacred season profaned by assemblages of the ungodly for intemperate riot and debauchery, by "drunkenness, revellings and such like!"

It might be supposed that a feeling of thankfulness, even if unaccompanied by any strong religious impression, to the great Bestower of this grateful rest, would effectually deter from such manifest insults to the divine Majesty: it might be thought that a fear of God's ultimate vengeance for so flagrant a disregard of his laws would keep them from transgressions so serious as these; but it is a melancholy fact that these are not considerations which always work their legitimate influence with a degenerate world. Nor is it an evil likely to be effectually discountenanced or removed by faint murmurs of public disapprobation. Christian individuals, and Christians in authority especially, should go forth boldly to the work of rebuke; firmness of action should be joined to earnestness of remonstrance; and where conscience and principle fail to protect the honour of the laws of God, those means should be employed, in the spirit of meekness, which the laws of man allow for maintaining at least the sanctity of his holy day.

But above all, let those who are elevated in point of rank or intelligence in a community set themselves the example of a faithful observance of the Sabbath. Let every serious and con-