

The Church.

COBourg, CANADA, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1843.

[WHOLE NUMBER, CCCXXII.]

VOLUME VII.—No. 10.]

Original Poetry.

(For The Church.)

THE WANDERER BROUGHT HOME.

Trov'd thro' a forest both grey and old,
Where but tangled trees did misse eye behold;
And the king of the storms on the whirlwind came,
And the lightning crested the clouds with flame,
And the thunder-blast thro' the branches burst,
And the loud found yell'd with his cries accurst:
And night, as the outer darkness of hell,
In its blackness of gloom o'er that forest fell;
But the frequent flash from the lightning cloud,
That warn'd o'er the leaves as it mark'd abroad,
Suffic'd with its funeral light to show
That my way was lost and my lot was woe.

I wander'd, alone, along, away,
With none to guide me as I did stray;
And the home where my soul desir'd to be,
That throbb'd with my heart and my brain to see,
Rose not upon my enlightened view;
Mine eye was darkness, my hopes withdrew.

Full many a path since the morning-hour,
Pleasant with green and the wild wood-flow'r,
Had I trod,—still deem'ing, as I rovd,
Each would conduct to the land I lov'd;
Full many a sparkling stream I cross'd,
But found at e'en that my way was lost.

The friends that near my full long were found,
That sat with me, the pensive m'nd;
And lonely and sad as my steps I plied,
Grim darkness and fear were at my side;
No star look'd bright from the frowning heav'n,
No guiding ray to my soul was given.

Weak child of dust! on the wet, cold soil,
I sank, while my soul look'd to the light;
Upluck'd to Him, who, enthron'd on high,
Still hears and beds when th' afflicted cry;
While sank my form upon kindred clay,
My spirit arose in strength to pray.

What was my pray'r, while the whirlwind came,
And circled my brow the lightning's flame,
While the thunder roar'd from its throne the cloud,
And the tempest threaten'd both deep and loud,—
What was my pray'r, as howl'd by the blast,
And the darkness of death o'er the heav'n was cast?

There sped no sound from my pulseless breast,
The heart stood still in its fearful rest;
No accents of mine to the gate were heard,
No voice, nor breath, in my human chord;
But my spirit was strong in silent pray'r,
And soar'd 'bove the shadows of black despair.

I pray'd,—that the light of love divine
As a lamp to my feet and my soul might shine;
That He, who for sinful man did bleed,
Thro' the tangled forest my way would speed;
And bring me at last to the wild "I" for home,
Whence my wearied spirit no more should roam."

While lowly thus unto God I pray'd,
A silver beam thro' the forest play'd,
Like the moon's sweet ray when at midnight lone
Her gentle light o'er the world is shown;
Hush'd was the storm; o'er my feeble frame
A vigour more than mortal came.

I rose, and look'd thro' that forest grey,
For the path whereon my feet ought no longer stray;
I sought mid its tangled thickets old
If the home of his heart might mine eye behold;
Fled was my fear,—as a bird in spring
Hope hover'd around on buoyant wing.

Then came, as from heav'n, a white-wing'd dove,
With liquid lapse thro' the skies above;
And as like a star it before me went,
A light, and the words, "thou art my friend sent
To guide me thro' maze of that forest lone,
With its thousand paths and thickets w'grown.

Onward I sped, the gloom was gone;
A beauteous light o'er the prospect shone;
And glid'd with gold of morning's ray,
And bright with the beam of new day;
I view'd the home where my soul would be,
That throbb'd my heart and my brain to see.

Oh! Church of God! where the wearied rest,—
Home of the spirit, hallow'd and blest!
When wanders the soul thro' forests dark,
Or when ocean's wild waves surround our bark,
May mercy still beon our course to thee,
Our home, our haven, by land, by sea!"

Frankford, C. W. J. H.

inconsistent with the plain import of Scripture, and its uniform texture. It is about twenty years since he entirely withdrew himself from all connexion with Unitarians. Previous to this decisive step, his mind had appeared dissatisfied with many of their statements, as being repugnant to the clear testimony of Scripture. But one discourse, in particular, which he heard, seemed to him so entirely at variance with the Bible, that he determined, on that very Sunday evening, to write a statement of his own views, with a declaration of his intention to discontinue his attendance at his accustomed place of worship. The authority of the Divine word, and the doctrines he had embraced, he clearly saw could not be held together; and as he had no alternative, but the rejection of one, he surrendered the last;—“a course of conduct,” remarks Mr. Jerram, “which is not always pursued; for it far more frequently happens, in similar dilemmas, that the Scriptures become the sacrifice, and infidelity the retreat;—a result, indeed, so natural, where Socinianism has been identified with Christianity, and found at length to be untenable, that it is somewhat surprising that it does not universally take place. It does, however, occur with sufficient frequency, greatly to swell the number of infidels from the deserted ranks of Socinianism.”

But this change in his theological opinions, important as it was, was not the whole transformation which, by the blessing of God, he eventually underwent. It might not be easy to trace the exact date or progress of his spiritual renewal of character; but certain it is, that he experienced a most momentous change of heart and life. He truly verified the declaration of the Apostle, “If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature; old things have passed away, and all things are become new.” There was a gradual, yet to those who knew him intimately, a very perceptible increase of real piety and Christian affection manifesting itself in his whole conduct, for some years past; but especially during the latter years of his life. In evidence of this might be mentioned the increasing ardour and intense spirituality of mind which he conducted the devotions of his family every morning and evening. The punctuality of his attendance upon public worship also was for some years past very remarkable; and the more so, considering his important professional engagements, which so many medical practitioners make a plea for absents themselves from the house of God. For many years he made a point of greatly exerting himself on the Saturday, that he might be able to attend the worship of God on the Sunday, and have the day as quiet as possible for his sacred and delightful duties; and he exercised much self-denial for this purpose. It was rarely also that he did not present himself at the altar when the dying love of his Saviour was to be commemorated. His self-denying kindness to the poor was also very great; and he evinced a growing benevolence of character, and willingness to embrace every opportunity of doing good, professionally or otherwise. It would be unnecessary to allude to the various works of Christian charity in which he was actively engaged; among which the Church Missionary Society was especially dear to him. His advice, both professional and paternal, to the missionaries of that society, and his services in the committee, have for some years been found peculiarly valuable.

To spare the feelings of his family he avoided speaking particularly of himself, and of those sufferings which it is now known he must have endured for some time previous to his departure. He had of late been much engaged in looking over his affairs and arranging his papers, not apparently from any apprehension of the rapid progress of the disease he laboured under, or of the nearness of his departure, but in a spirit of watchfulness, that he might be habitually ready for that day and that hour in which the Son of man cometh. During his last illness, extreme pain incapacitated him for speaking much, but he was sometimes heard to utter broken sentences, such as—“O the folly of putting off religion to a dying bed!” but without seeming to have any immediate reference to his own case, because he expected, at this time, to recover from the present attack. Again: “O the vanity of human learning!” The nurse, who sat up with him in an earlier part of his illness, says that great part of the night was spent by him in prayer. Sometimes he would speak to her, and the purport of his observations, there is reason to believe, was an exhortation not to put off religion. Unwilling, as we have said, to grieve his family by any expressions of the agony he endured, his very delirium served to show the kind feelings of his mind. He had alternate seasons of self-collection and mental wandering; and he was exceedingly anxious lest, during the latter, which he seems to have attributed, in part at least, to the opiate which his disorder rendered necessary, he should speak unwisely with his lips. Thus, on one occasion, after solemnly blessing his grandson in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, he added, instantly, “Now, no more:—go, I dare not trust myself.” This conscientious watchfulness over himself gives to his deliberate statements of his views and feelings the same weight which they would have deserved, had they been delivered whilst he was in possession of his entire health and vigour of mind.

Dr. Good gave public evidence that he had not “received the grace of God in vain.” Numerous illustrations of this have already appeared in the preceding details; but a few additional notices may not be unacceptable without profit to the reader. He had always been a kind husband and affectionate father; but Christianity greatly quickened and refined all his feelings, and gave them a more holy direction. The same observation is applicable to the manner in which he discharged the offices of friendship and Christian charity. He was, as before remarked, highly disinterested and affectionate. His purse was always ready to promote any charitable object, and his professional talents to administer gratuitous relief to such as needed it. Among his manuscripts have been found some papers entitled “Occasional Thoughts,” written generally on texts of Scripture, and discovering great originality of thinking, point in expression, and, above all, fervent piety and devotion of heart.

Still, notwithstanding his many excellencies, Dr. Good deeply lamented that he had not taken a higher standard, and aimed at greater Christian attainments. The truly humble and spiritual frame of his mind in this respect, will be best seen in a few brief notices relative to his last days and hours. On the Saturday night, three days before his death, he woke from sleep remarkably composed, and expressed great pleasure on seeing his friend, the minister of the parish where he died, enter the room. Mr. R. said to him,—“I am come to improve the blessing of the Redeemer upon you. Dr. Good inquired if his family were present; and on being answered in the affirmative, replied, “I cannot say I feel those triumphs that some Christians have experienced. But I have, I trust, resigned myself to the will of God. I have endeavoured to perform the duties of religion; but I have unhappily done what too many Christians do,—I have taken the middle walk of Christianity: I have lived below my privileges. I believe all the articles of the Christian faith as contained in our Church.” Some remark being made respecting the righteousness of Christ, he replied, with great energy, “No man on earth can be more convinced than myself of the necessity of Christ’s righteousness, and that there is nothing good of ourselves. If I know myself, I neither presume nor despair. There is a certain sense in which St. Paul’s expression, chief of sinners, applies to all; but there

are some to whom it applies particularly, and I fear it does so to me. I have had large opportunities given me; but I have not improved them as I might have done. I have been led astray by the vanity of human learning, and by the love of human applause.” He was agitated and almost overcome by his feelings, in saying these words. The grace of the Saviour being again mentioned, he replied, “O do not think that I despair. I trust I neither presume nor despair: I am sanguine in my whole constitution is sanguine: I am sanguine in every thing, and this makes me afraid of myself.” Mr. R. read John i. 16, dwelling upon the words “of his fulness.” He then asked him if he should pray. Dr. Good again inquired if all his family were present, and said, “I have given you a transcript of my mind, not as a matter of form, but in the sight of God.” Mr. R. asked if there were anything in particular that he would wish him to pray for: “I want,” he replied, “to be more humbled under a sense of sin; I want more spirituality, more humility.” The family then knelt down, and Dr. Good, greatly fatigued, fell into a sweet sleep. He was not at this time considered in any imminent or immediate danger. Throughout his illness, with the exception of mental wanderings, he evinced an unruffled and truly Christian composure. “No man living,” said he, the day preceding his death, “can be more sensible than I am that there is nothing in ourselves in which to trust, and of the absolute necessity of relying on the merits of Jesus Christ.” “All the promises” (he again remarked with great emphasis) “are yea and amen, in Christ Jesus.” When one who was holding his cold convulsed hands, said to him, Do you remember your favourite hymn, “There is a fountain filled with blood, &c.” he repeated the first five verses with quivering lips, and when the exhausted powers of nature seemed scarcely capable of such exertion. The circumstance deserves the rather to be noticed, because it affords satisfactory evidence of his complete renunciation of Socinian principles, and his entire reliance for salvation on the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This faith in his Saviour yielded him a well-grounded hope of everlasting life. His hope did not indeed rise to that degree of assurance which fills the soul with joy, as well as peace; he observed, “I cannot say that I feel those triumphs which some Christians have experienced; and he seemed rather to check than indulge what might lead them to; for, according to his own words, he thought his constitution sanguine, and he was afraid of trusting himself. But he often repeated that text, and dwelt upon it with evident satisfaction:” Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever;” and even after the power of distinct articulation was gone, on the very morning of his decease, when a clerical friend said to him, “Behold the Lamb of God!” he added, with an effort that surprised those around him, “who taketh away the sin of the world.” These were the last words he intelligibly uttered. He soon after fell asleep, and his spirit ascended to God who gave it, thence to join with kindred spirits, in ascribing “unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

The lesson, as Mr. Jerram has justly remarked, which this narrative seems peculiarly calculated to teach, is the insignificance of the highest intellectual endowments and the most extensive erudition, when compared with Christian character, and an experimental knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The greatest attainment of man is a conformity to the Divine image, and his highest destiny is to be “partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light.” Whoever comes short of this standard, forfeits his claim to that heavenly inheritance; he is poor in the midst of his mental wealth, and without resource for the day of need. A death-bed will expose both his poverty and wretchedness; and the opening of a world, where nothing can be admitted that does not bear the character of holiness and the stamp of the Divine image, will in a moment disclose the utter worthlessness of all that the world admires and idolizes. The prince and the scholar here stand on the same ground as the humblest peasant. They have precisely the same wants, they need the same supports, and must be cheered with the same promises. They feel alike, and they express themselves alike. They both need forgiveness; and the prayer which befits both alike is, “God be merciful to me a sinner!” They both stand on the verge of the same world, and both must cry, “Save, Lord, or I perish.” They both want the same omnipotent support, and both must lay hold of the same “hope set before them in the Gospel.” That hope this lamented individual had truly obtained, and is now experiencing its blessedness, in a world where hope is lost in enjoyment, and faith is swallowed up in the unclouded visions of eternal glory.

THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN THE EUCHARIST.

(From Calvin’s Institutes.)

After God hath once received us into his family, and not only so as to admit us among his servants, but to number us with his children; in order to fulfil the part of a most excellent father, solicitous for his offspring, he also undertakes to sustain and nourish us as long as we live; and not content with this, he hath been pleased to give us a pledge, as a further assurance of this never-ceasing liberality. For this purpose, therefore, by the hand of his only-begotten Son, he hath favored his Church with another Sacrament, a spiritual banquet, in which Christ testifies himself to be the bread of life, to feed our souls for a true and blessed immortality. Now, as the knowledge of so great a mystery is highly necessary, and on account of its importance, requires an accurate explication; and, on the other hand, as Satan, in order to deprive the Church of this inestimable treasure, long ago endeavored, first by mists, and afterwards by thicker shades, to obscure its lustre, and then raised disputes and contentions to alienate the minds of the simple from a relish for this sacred food; and in our time also has attempted the same artifice: after having exhibited a summary of what relates to the subject, adapted to the capacity of the unlearned, I will disentangle it from those sophistries with which Satan has been laboring to deceive the world. In the first place, the signs are bread and wine, which represent to us the invisible nourishment which we receive from the body and blood of Christ. For as in baptism God regenerates us, incorporates us into the society of his Church, and makes us his children by adoption; so we have said, that he acts towards us the part of a provident father of a family, in constantly supplying us with food, to sustain and preserve us in that life to which he hath begotten us by his word. Now the only food of our souls is Christ; and to him, therefore, our heavenly Father invites us, that being refreshed by a participation of him, we may gain fresh vigor from day to day, till we arrive at the heavenly immortality. And because this mystery of the secret union of Christ with the faithful, is incomprehensible by nature, he exhibits a figure and image of it in visible signs, peculiarly adapted to our feeble capacity; and as it were, by giving tokens and pledges, renders it equally as certain to us as if we beheld it with our eyes: for the dulled minds understand this very familiar simile, that our souls are nourished by Christ, just as the life of the body is supported by bread and wine. We see, then, for what end, this mystical benediction is designed; namely, to assure us that the body of the

Lord was once offered as a sacrifice for us, so that we may now feed upon it, and feeding on it, we may experience within us the efficacy of that sacrifice; and that his blood was once shed for us, so that it is our perpetual drink. And this is the import of the words of the promise annexed to it: “Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you.” The body, therefore, which was once offered for our salvation, we are commanded to take and eat; that seeing ourselves made partakers of it, we may certainly conclude, that the virtue of that oblation will be efficacious within us. Hence, also, he calls the cup “the new testament,” or rather covenant, in his blood, [Matt. xxvi. 26, 28; Mark. xiv. 22, 24; Luke. xxii. 19, 20; 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25.] For the covenant which he once ratified with his blood, he in some measure renews, or rather continues, as far as relates to the confirmation of our faith, whenever he presents us that sacred blood to drink. II. From this considerable satisfaction and confidence; because it affords a testimony that we are incorporated into one body with Christ, so that whatever is his, we are at liberty to call ours. The consequence of this is, that we venture to assure ourselves of our interest in eternal life, of which he is the heir, and that the kingdom of heaven, into which he has already entered, can no more be lost by us than by him; and on the other hand, that we cannot be condemned by our sins, from the guilt of which he absolved us, when he washed them to be imparted to himself, as if they were his own. This is the wonderful exchange which, in his infinite goodness, he has made with us. Submitting to our poverty, he has transferred to us his riches; assuming our weakness, he has strengthened us; his power: accepting our mortality, he has conferred on us his immortality; taking on himself the load of iniquity with which we were oppressed, he has clothed us with his righteousness; descending to the earth, he has prepared a way for our ascending to heaven; becoming with us the Son of man, he has made us, with himself, the sons of God.

III. Of all these things we have such a complete attestation in this sacrament, that we may confidently consider them as truly exhibited to us, as if Christ himself were presented to our eyes, and touched by our hands. For there can be no falsehood or illusion in this word, “Take, eat, drink; this is my body which is given for you; this is my blood which is shed for the remission of sins.” By commanding us to take, he signifies that he is ours; by commanding us to eat and drink, he signifies that he is become one substance with us. In saying that his body is given for us, and his blood shed for us, he shews that both are not so much his as ours, because he assumed and laid down both, not for his own advantage, but for our salvation. And it ought to be carefully observed, that the principal and almost entire energy of the sacrament lies in these words: “Which is given for you;—which is shed for you;” for otherwise it would avail us but little, that the body and blood of the Lord are distributed to us now, if they had not been once delivered for our redemption and salvation. Therefore they are represented to us by bread and wine, to teach us that they are not only ours, but are destined for the support of our spiritual life. This is what we have already suggested; that by the corporeal objects which are presented in the sacraments, we are conducted by a kind of analogy, to those which are spiritual. So, when bread is given to us as a symbol of the body of Christ, we ought immediately to conceive of this comparison, that, as bread nourishes, sustains, and preserves the life of the body; so the body of Christ is the only food to animate and support the life of the soul. When we see wine presented as a symbol of his blood, we ought to think of the uses of wine to the human body, that we may contemplate the same advantages conferred upon us in a spiritual manner by the blood of Christ: which are these, that it nourishes, refreshes, strengthens and exhilarates. For if we duly consider the benefits resulting to us from the oblation of his sacred body, and the effusion of his blood, we shall clearly perceive that these properties of bread and wine, according to this analogy, are most justly attributed to those symbols, as administered to us in the Lord’s Supper.

IV. The principal object of the sacrament, therefore, is not to present us the body of Christ, simply, and without any ulterior consideration, but rather to seal and confirm that promise, where he declares that his “flesh is meat indeed,” and his “blood drink indeed,” by which we are nourished to eternal life; where he affirms that he is “the bread of life,” and that “he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever;” [John. vi. 35, 56—58.] in order to do this, it sends us to the cross of Christ, where the promise has been fully verified, and entirely accomplished. For we never rightly and advantageously feed on Christ, except as crucified, and when we have a lively apprehension of the efficacy of his death. And, indeed, when Christ called himself “the bread of life,” he did not use that appellation on account of the sacrament, as some persons erroneously imagine, but because he had been given to us as such by the Father, and shewed himself to be such, when becoming a partaker of our human mortality; when, offering himself a sacrifice, he sustained our curse, to fill us with his blessing; when, by his death, he destroyed and swallowed up death; when, in his resurrection, this corruptible flesh of ours, which he had assumed, was raised up by him, in a state of incorruption and glory.

V. It remains for all this to be applied to us; which is done in the first place by the gospel, but in a more illustrious manner by the sacred supper, in which Christ offers himself to us with all his benefits, and we receive him by faith. The sacrament, therefore, does first not constitute Christ the bread of life; but, by recalling to our remembrance that he has been made the bread of life, upon which we may constantly feed, and by giving us a taste and relish for that bread, it causes us to experience the support which it is adapted to afford. For it assures us, in the first place, that whatever Christ has done or suffered, was for the purpose of giving life to us; and, in the next place, that this life will never end. For as Christ would never have been the bread of life to us, if he had not been born, and died, and risen again for us; so now he would by no means continue so, if the efficacy and benefit of his nativity, death, and resurrection, were not permanent and immortal. All this Christ has elegantly expressed in these words: “The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world;” in which he clearly signifies, that his body would be as bread to us, for the spiritual life of the soul, because it was to be exposed to death for our salvation; and that it is given to us to feed upon it, when he makes us partakers of it by faith. He gave it once, therefore, to be made bread, when he surrendered it to be crucified for the redemption of the world; he gives it daily, when, by the word of the gospel, he presents it to us, that we may partake of it as crucified, when he confirms that we are accomplished with the life of the Supper; when he accomplishes within us that which he signifies without. Here it behoves us to guard against two errors: that, on the one hand, we may not, by undervaluing the signs, disjoin them from the mysteries with which they are connected; nor on the other hand, by extolling them beyond measure, obscure the glory of the mysteries themselves. That Christ is the bread of life, by which the faithful are nourished to eternal salvation, there is no man, not entirely destitute of religion, who hesitates to acknowledge; but all are

not equally agreed respecting the manner of partaking of him. For there are some who define in a word, that to eat the flesh of Christ, and to drink his blood, is no other than to believe in Christ himself. But I conceive that, in that remarkable discourse, in which Christ recommends us to feed upon his body, he intended to teach us something more striking and sublime; namely, that we are quickened by a real participation of him, which he designates by the terms of eating and drinking, that no person might suppose the life which we receive from him to consist in simple knowledge. For as it is not seeing, but eating bread, that administers nourishment to the body; so it is necessary for the soul to have a true and complete participation of Christ, that by his power it may be quickened to spiritual life. At the same time, we confess that there is no other eating than by faith, as it is impossible to imagine any other; but the difference between me and the persons whom I am opposing, is this: they consider eating to be the very same as believing; I say, that in believing we eat the flesh of Christ, because he is actually made ours by faith, and that this eating is the fruit and effect of faith; or, to express it more plainly, they consider the eating to be faith itself; but I apprehend it to be rather a consequence of faith. The difference is small in words, but in the thing itself it is considerable. For though the apostle teaches that “Christ dwelleth in our hearts by faith;” [John. vi. 53.] yet no one will explain this inhabitation to be faith itself. Every one must perceive that the apostle intended to express a peculiar advantage arising from faith, of which the residence of Christ in the hearts of the faithful is one of the effects. In the same manner, when the Lord called himself “the bread of life;” [Eph. iii. 17.] he intended not only to teach that salvation is laid up for us in the faith of his death and resurrection, but also that, by our real participation of him, his life is transferred to us, and becomes ours; just as bread, when it is taken for food, communicates vigor to the body.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND NOT A SECT.

(From the Montreal Courier.)

In certain documents recently published in the newspapers, and signed by several religious teachers in this city, the University of McGill College is represented as sectarian and exclusive, because, as alleged, it is under the management of the Church of England, and conducted upon her principles. Now, on what grounds gentlemen of intelligence and education, acquainted with the history of the Church of England, a sect, I confess myself wholly unable to conceive. It surely will not be denied that the Church was planted in that country by Apostolic men,—by men having indisputable authority to administer the word and sacraments derived uninterceptedly from Christ through the Apostles and their successors, and that the Church thus planted has continued to the present hour. Was then the Church when first established among the Britons, and afterwards among the Saxons, and subsequently when the two branches coalesced, a sect? For whatever character she then bore, with respect to the universal Church, that she sustains at the present moment.—But that she was then not a sect, is evident from the simple meaning of the term. A “sect,” I suppose, means a distinct party recognizing some particular leader and holding, as a whole, distinctive tenets, or homogeneous doctrines. But the primitive Church in England owned no leader but Christ, nor authority but His transmitted through His own constituted channel, and held no doctrines excepting those which were believed and taught by the whole Orthodox Church. She was in communion with every existing National or Diocesan Church; her priesthood was acknowledged as a part of the Christian hierarchy; and her lay people admitted to the Sacrament without question in the East and West. If this, then, be true, and true it is, if there be the slightest dependence upon historical evidence, at what particular time did she lose her catholic character and become a sect? Not, surely, at the Reformation; for the existing Church was not destroyed, but restored to its primitive purity. Not a single principle necessarily entering into the constitution of a society, two of whose characteristics are visibility and perpetuity, was touched. The divinely appointed channel through which all legitimate authority is retained in the church was maintained inviolate. The Bishops who previously to the reformation had been raised to the Apostolic office, continued in the exercise of all their spiritual functions throughout the stormy period of change, and after the Church had been mercifully delivered from foreign oppression, and from the superstitions and errors of a thousand years. Thus, through these men we have Apostolic authority, a valid ministry, and true Sacraments; and are thus indissolubly connected with the Universal Church. Had Cranmer and his coadjutors in the blessed work of Restoration been merely laymen, and had they as such assumed authority to ordain and to administer the Word and Sacraments, and had they succeeded in such sacrilegious usurpation, then might the Church of England be termed a sect, for then could we clearly point out the precise point at which that body ceased to be connected by the golden chain of authority with Christ’s mystical body. But such we know, was not the case; these good and great men held a divine commission when in communion with Rome, and they retained it and lawfully acted upon it after that portion of the Universal Church excluded them as heretics from her pale. The Church of England, then, is not a sect, but a sound part of that one, Holy Church—that one congregation of all faithful people which Christ himself established, and against which He assures us the gates of Hell shall not finally prevail. Men may promote their personal and party plans by terming her a sect; they may delude their unhappy followers, who cannot examine for themselves, into a belief that she is a sect; they may indulge and gratify an envious and evil nature by attempting to drag her down to their own level, but never can they rob her of her undoubted catholic character, or truly reb her with that mass of schism and blasphemy which an all wise God, for the promotion of His own plans, has permitted to desolate the land.

AN ANGLICAN CATHOLIC.
Montreal, August 31, 1843.

A VILLAGE CHURCH-YARD.

(By Wm. Wordsworth Esq.)

A village church-yard, lying as it does in the lap of nature, may indeed be most favourably contrasted with that of a town of crowded population; and separately therein combines many of the best tendencies which belong to the mode practised by the Ancients, and which are peculiar to itself. The sensations of pious cheerfulness, which attend the celebration of the sabbath-day in rural places, are profitably chastised by the sight of the graves of kindred and friends, gathered together in that general home towards which the thoughtful yet happy parishioners themselves are journeying. Hence a parish-church, in the stillness of the country, is a visible centre of a community of the living and the dead; a point to which are habitually referred the nearest concerns of both.

As, then, both in cities and in villages, the dead are deposited in close connection with our places of worship, with us the composition of an epitaph naturally turns, still more than among the nations of antiquity, upon the most serious and solemn affections of the human mind; upon departed worth—upon personal or social sorrow and admiration—upon religion, individual and social—upon time, and upon eternity. Accordingly, it suffices, in ordinary cases, to secure a composition of this kind from censure, that it contain nothing that shall shock or be inconsistent with this spirit. But, to entitle an epitaph to praise, more than this is necessary. It ought to contain some thought or feeling belonging to the mortal or immortal part of our nature touchingly expressed; and if that be done, however general or even trite the sentiment may be, every man of pure mind will read the words with pleasure and gratitude. A husband bewails a wife; a parent breathes a sigh of disappointed hope over a lost child; a son utters a sentiment of filial reverence for a departed father or mother; a friend perhaps inscribes an eulogium recording the companionable qualities, or the solid virtues, of the tenant of the grave, whose departure has left a sadness upon his memory. This and a pious admission to the living, and a humble expression of Christian confidence in immortality, is the language of a thousand church-yards; and it does not often happen that any thing, in a greater degree discriminate or appropriate to the dead or to the living, is to be found in them. This want of discrimination has been ascribed by Dr. Johnson, in his Essay upon the epitaphs of Pope, to two causes; first, the scantiness of the objects of human praise; and, secondly, the want of variety in the characters of men; or, to use his own words, “to the fact, that the greater part of mankind have no characters above the generalities of common conversation; but does not become a critic and a moralist speaking seriously upon a serious subject. The objects of admiration in human nature are not scanty, but abundant; and every man has a character of his own, to the eye that has skill to perceive it. The real cause of the acknowledged want of discrimination in sepulchral memorials is this: That to analyse the characters of others, especially of those whom we love, is not a common or natural employment of men at any time. We are not anxious unerringly to understand the constitution of the minds of those who have soothed, who have cheered, who have supported us: with whom we have been long and daily pleased or delighted. The affections are their own justification. The light love in our hearts is a satisfactory evidence that there is a body of worth in the minds of our friends or kindred, whence that light has proceeded. We shrink from the thought of placing their merits and defects to be weighed against each other in the nice balance of pure intellect; nor do we find much temptation to detect the shades by which a good quality or virtue is discriminated in them from an excellence known by the same general name as it exists in the mind of another; and, least of all, do we incline to these refinements when under the pressure of sorrow, admiration, or regret, or when actuated by any of those feelings which incite men to prolong the memory of their friends and kindred, by records placed in the bosom of the all-uniting and equalising receptacle of the dead.

The first requisite, then, in an Epitaph is, that it should speak, in a tone which shall sink into the heart the general language of humanity as connected with the subject of death—the source from which an epitaph proceeds—of death, and of life. To be born and to die are the two points in which all men feel themselves to be in absolute coincidence. This general language may be uttered so strikingly as to entitle an epitaph to high praise; yet it cannot lay claim to the highest unless other excellencies be superadded. Passing through all intermediate steps, we will attempt to determine at once what these excellencies are, and wherein consists the perfection of this species of composition.—It will be found to lie in a due proportion of the common or universal feeling of humanity to sensations excited by a distinct and clear conception, conveyed to the reader’s mind, of the individual, whose death is deplored and whose memory is to be preserved; at least of his character as, after death, it appeared to those who loved him and lament his loss. The general sympathy ought to be quickened, provoked, and diversified, by particular thoughts, actions, images,—circumstances of age, occupation, manner of life, prosperity which the deceased had known, or adversity to which he had been subject; and these ought to be bound together and solemnised into one harmony by the general sympathy. The two powers should temper, restrain, and exalt each other. The reader ought to know who and what the man was whom he is called upon to think of with interest. A distinct conception should be given (implicitly where it can, rather than explicitly) of the individual lamented.—But the writer of an epitaph is not an anatomist, who dissects the internal frame of the mind; he is not even a painter, who executes a portrait at leisure and in entire tranquillity; his delineation, we must remember, is performed by the side of the grave; and, what is more, the grave of one whom he loves and admires. What purity and brightness is that virtue clothed in, the image of which must no longer bless our living eyes! The character of a deceased friend or beloved kinsman is not seen, nor ought to be seen, otherwise than as a tree through a tender haze or a luminous mist, that spiritualises and beautifies it; that takes away, indeed, but only to the end that the parts which are not abstracted may appear more dignified and lovely; may impress and affect the more. Shall we say, then, that this is not truth, not a faithful image; and that, accordingly, the purposes of commemoration cannot be answered?—It is truth, and of the highest order; for, though doubtless things are not apparent which did exist; yet, the object being looked at through this medium, parts and proportions are brought into distinct view which before had been only imperfectly or unconsciously seen; it is truth hallowed by love—the joint offering of the worth of the dead and the affections of the living! This may easily be brought to the test. Let one, whose eyes have been sharpened by personal hostility to discover what was amiss in the character of a good man, hear the tidings of his death, and what a change is wrought in a moment! Enmity melts away; and, as it disappears, unsightliness, disproportion, and deformity, vanish; and, through the influence of commiseration, a harmony of love and beauty succeeds. Bring such a man to the tombstone on which shall be inscribed an epitaph on his adversary, composed in the spirit which we have recommended. Would he turn from it as from an idle tale? No; the thoughtful look, the sigh, and perhaps the involuntary tear, would testify that it had a sane, a generous, and good meaning; and that on the writer’s mind had remained an impression which was a true abstract of the character of the deceased; that his gifts and graces were remembered in the simplicity in which they ought to be remembered. The composition and quality of the mind of a virtuous man, contemplated by the side of the grave where his body is mouldering, ought to appear, and be felt as something midway between what he was on earth walking about with his living frailties, and what he may be presumed to be as a Spirit in heaven.

APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION.

(From the Banner of the Cross.)

The Boston Recorder gravely relates the following anecdote, which is eagerly copied by other dissenting journals: “When the venerable Lyman Beecher was a young man, and returning on a certain occasion to his native town in Connecticut, he fell into conversation by the road-side with an old neighbour, an Episcopalian, who had been mowing. ‘Mr. Beecher,’ said