

and the stillness of the seventh day already reigned around.

"It seemed as if the Christian's prayer  
For peace and joy, and love,  
Was answered by the very air  
That wafted it above."

We found the patient much more severely ill than we had anticipated. A sudden and violent attack had entirely prostrated her. She recognized us, and motioned with her hand for us to be seated. She did not speak, but the clear consciousness of her eye, showed that her mind was not eclipsed. It was apparent that the remedies must be powerful and immediate, or she could not survive. We inquired of the friends who stood around the bed, if a physician had been sent for. "He was here this morning," was the reply, "and said if there was any change, we must send for him again. We intend to send to-morrow, if she isn't better."

"Send now," exclaimed my friend, "do not wait till to-morrow; something must be done to relieve this pain, or she will die."

A messenger was despatched, and we resumed our seats beside the sufferer. As I looked upon her wrinkled brow, and thin, grey locks, I felt that she must soon be called to exchange worlds, even if she survived the present attack, and I wanted to say something of Him who has promised to be with His children when their "strength faileth." But she was very ill, and seemed so entirely engrossed by her sufferings, that I felt that any words would be out of season. I inwardly resolved to return on the morrow, and then endeavour to minister to the soul as well as body.

It was growing dark, and we arose to go, promising to see her again early in the morning. She looked earnestly at us as we took her hand at parting, but she did not speak. The name of her minister was mentioned. "We intend to let him know to-morrow how sick she is," said one of the attendants, "and then he will come round and see her."

The evening was so mild and lovely that we extended our walk, and returned home by a lengthened and circuitous route. We conversed on various subjects, and the impression of the sick chamber had nearly passed away. At our door, the little boy who had brought us the message two hours before, again met us. He was out of breath, and childhood's big tears rolled down his rosy cheeks. "Grandmother is dead!" he exclaimed, "aunty told me to come over and tell you—she died half an hour after you went away."

"Boast not thyself of to-morrow," I involuntarily exclaimed. "How much did we intend to do for this aged woman to-morrow, and while we were yet speaking, she has been called to that God who is without beginning of days or end of years!"

To-morrow a physician should be called. To-morrow we would speak to her of the things of God; and to-morrow we would summon a servant of Him, whom she is now beholding "eye to eye."

But she has gone where there is "no more sickness"—where "one song" employs the whole blessed company, and Jesus the great High Priest is now her Teacher.

To-morrow came, and we stood at her grave!

And is it right ever to resist or set aside an impulse to speak of Heavenly things?

The deceased was a Christian woman. She had lived with her lamp well trimmed, and she has, we trust, gone to be forever with her Lord; but would she not have entered the dark valley with greater confidence if some friend had whispered, "His rod and His staff they comfort thee."

"Boast not thyself of to-morrow," says the word of God, and the experience of every day repeats the admonition. But the low whisper of warning is disregarded, because unattended by any striking circumstances, but lessons

—such as these, that bring

A written label on their wing,

'Tis hard to read amiss.

One rose upon a bush, though but a little one, and though not yet blown, proves that which bears it to be a true rose tree.

From the London Christian Observer.

#### VIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

The English tithe commutation bill has arrived at a successful issue; and we have the consolation of hoping, as stated by his grace the archbishop of Canterbury, that it will prove "a satisfactory adjustment, relieving the land, and doing justice to the clergy." It first proposes voluntary compacts; in default of which it adopts a compulsory course, under the superintendence of proper commissioners. This being the process we have ourselves for so many years urged, we cannot be supposed to dissent from it, and we trust it will work well. The tithe owners have, however, made considerable sacrifices, with a view to peaceful adjustment; but of two evils, this is far less than the parochial litigation under the old system, added to the certainty that every year was making the matter worse, and that if public affairs proceeded as they have lately done, the English clergy may eventually be in the condition of their Irish brethren. But it must not be forgotten, that when tithes shall cease to be "incorporeal hereditaments," and become a fixed charge on a rent roll, they will be in a more tangible form for alienation, should circumstances conspire to render this robbery popular. We cannot suppose that all future landlords will remember that their predecessors received more than an equivalent; and that no future ministers of state will be unscrupulous when pressed for money; much less that the opponents of the Church of England will never wish to wrest this rent roll from its owners, to relieve the public burdens. How to guard against such a contingency should be calmly thought upon. The chief moral, and perhaps only effectual preventive will be, to strengthen the Church more than ever in the affections of the people, by the piety and zeal of its clergy; though we are far from thinking that even under all its present disadvantages, it hold upon public regard is feeble or diminishing.

The Irish tithe commutation bill, which was still more urgent than the English, is in a less hopeful condition; owing to the spoliatory principle being chained to it, like the dead to the living, to work its dissolution. The House of Lords has reduced the exaction from the tithe owner, of thirty per cent., to twenty five, and also struck out the unjust proposal for opening the old tithe commutations made under Mr. Goulburn's act. These, however, are minor points, which might have been arranged; but not so the principle of alienation, which the Lords had no alternative but peremptorily to reject. It is beside the matter to argue the possible amount of surplus which may be elicited from the gaunt purses of the Irish clergy, by cutting down their incomes to the proposed standard: the great question is the principle; for to alienate the smallest portion is virtually to give up the question of a national Church establishment, and to set an example which might be followed, with perfect consistency, by alienating the whole revenue of the Church of England, to strike off a fraction from the national debt.

The anti-pluralities and clerical residence bill has been going through its various stages, almost without opposition. We have already stated our wish that it had abolished the very name of pluralities—affording facilities for uniting whatever ought to be united—and thus getting rid of offence; but in practice, under the limitations of the bill, the name will be nearly all; for rarely can there happen such a concurrence of distance, value, deaths or resignation of incumbents, and union of patronage in one person as to lead to duality, and triality is altogether prohibited. What, however, is left of the system, besides being injurious to the Church from the scandal of the name of pluralism, even if no one instance of improper plurality occurred, may lead to much bartering of advowsons, and other proceedings not of a defensible character, in order to bring patronage within the limits allowed by law. We wish the possibility of such practices had been prevented, and the Church once for all rid of the evil; besides which, while the name of pluralities is allowed there will always be a temptation not to augment poor benefices; whereas, abolish the possibility of holding two livings, and many ways will be found of raising the value of the less endowed—especially if the statute of Mortmain were repealed. Still we welcome the measure as it is, and trust that

by the blessing of God it will produce great spiritual benefit to the nation; for though the most judicious secular arrangements are not a guarantee for piety and zeal, yet they incidentally promote them in proportion as they render the sacred office repulsive to persons who have no taste for its duties, and attractive to those who have at heart the glory of God and the spiritual welfare of mankind. With regard to non-residence, there would in general be so little desire or opportunity for it if pluralities were abolished, that more was scarcely necessary than to cut off its legal resources, and to enforce the existing laws where called for. We think that some of the pecuniary penalties wear a needlessly ungenerous aspect. What sort of a Sunday or Good Friday service is that which will be secured under a penalty of five pounds for neglect? The intended arrangements justly prescribe two full services, either positively or at the discretion of the bishop; but it is the full, free flow of the soul that is most necessary in the ministerial office; for a very large part of a conscientious clergyman's labours is voluntary, charitable and self-denying. Visiting the sick, warning the wicked, encouraging the righteous, comforting the afflicted, training and catechizing the young, instructing the ignorant, with the whole apparatus of schools, libraries, cottage lectures, and societies, cannot be adequately provided for by law; and if clergymen are to pay a fine for omitting to read prayers or preach, they may soon come to calculate their duties by a pecuniary standard, instead of by higher considerations; and the poor and the ignorant will imagine that all they do is compulsory: that they institute a cottage lecture to save being mulcted in half-a-crown; and are apparently charitable from self-interest.

The bill for the division of dioceses and the regulation of episcopal revenues has given rise to warm debates in its progress through the House of Commons. On the one hand, it has been opposed and voted against by those members who consider any readjustment of ecclesiastical property as based upon revolutionary principles; and on the other, by those who think that the bill does not go far enough; which latter class may be again divided into two principal sections: first, of those who think that the episcopal stipends ought to have been still further reduced, especially those which are somewhat coarsely called "the higher prizes," with a view to divide the surplus among the poorer clergy; and secondly, of those who wish the same, or greater reductions, in order to apply the spoils toward the liquidation of church rates. Other objections also have been pressed—such as that translations are not forbidden—but we think that the bill is not much amiss in this respect, as the archbishoprics, and the London diocese, and possibly one or two others require prelates of tried ability and large experience; and with these few exceptions the disparity of revenue is not such as to favor change. The great majority of the moderate and respectable members, both of the ministerial and opposition parties have supported the measure, which is in accordance with the suggestions of the ecclesiastical commissioners; but those who wish to reduce the proposed stipends, and devote the residue in aid of church rates, have made an embattled stand against ministers; and as their votes chanced to combine with those of their antipodes who object to the whole measure upon principle, the government would have been worsted had not condition of peace been entered into, in virtue of which, in order not to embarrass a cabinet which is to do "justice to Ireland," Lord John Russell is allowed to proceed with this bill, but is not to press during this session the cathedral bill and the clergy discipline bill, for reasons which will be evident when the objects of those bills are considered. The Episcopal bill we think likely to be salutary, as the readjustment both of dioceses and revenue has been carefully considered; though we regret to say that the limitation of the bishops to their present number, in order not to add to the tale of ecclesiastical peers, or to require increased revenues, combining with the propriety of making at least two new bishoprics, (Manchester and Rippon,) has led to inconvenient unions and prevented the addition of new sees where they might have been very beneficial for efficient episcopal superintendence.

The cathedral bill, above alluded to, is opposed, like the last-mentioned, by very different parties. It