

# The Church.

"HER FOUNDATIONS ARE UPON THE HOLY HILLS."

STAND YE IN THE WAYS, AND SEE, AND ASK FOR THE OLD PATHS, WHERE IS THE GOOD WAY, AND WALK THEREIN, AND YE SHALL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.—JEREMIAH VI. 16.

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## Poetry.

JACOB BRYANT.

[He was a distinguished scholar of King's College, Cambridge, England, where he was made Master of Arts in 1774. He wrote many learned and critical works, as well as others of a religious character, vindicating the truths of Revelation against the assaults of sceptics, sophists and heretics. After devoting himself for some years to the instruction of the two sons of the Duke of Marlborough, he was enabled to spend the latter part of his life in the quiet meditation and learned ease which he loved, and improved to his own enjoyment and the benefit of his fellow men. He died in 1804 at the age of 89 years, and the manner of his death is worthy of note. It was occasioned by a mortification of his leg, which was produced by striking it violently against a chair in attempting to reach a book from a shelf.]

The following ode was addressed to him in 1774 by Dr. Roberts. If more inquiry were made after such men, and more attention given to their works, we should have less of that taste for the miserable flummery, and pattery, as well as poisonous trash, which is sickening and polluting the world.]

The sophist spins his subtle thread;  
On Liberty and Fate,  
With heart deprav'd and puzzled head,  
Prolongs the dull debate;  
Till Virtue, Truth, his Saviour, and his God,  
By Metaphysic's mighty lore,  
At once lose all their essence, all their power,  
Charmed to eternal sleep by that magician's rod.

O shame to prostituted parts!  
Was time, was genius given,  
To darken by dishonest arts  
The clear decrees of Heaven?  
Tell me, my Bryant, burns not all thy soul  
With indignation's holy zeal?  
Tell me, thou Patriot of the Christian weal,  
Feel'st not, thyself secure, what dangers wait the whole?

Thou dost. To vindicate the ways  
Of God to man, is thine;  
And all thy nights, and all thy days  
In Truth's neglected mine,  
By thee discover'd in these latter times,  
Thine hand digs deep for solid ore;  
Thy hard-earn'd treasure spreads to many a shore,  
And claims its honour due, the praise of distant climes.

Where'er thou com'st, discerning sage,  
Detected falsehood flies;  
Though sanctified by many an age,  
The creed of centuries,  
Thy torch is rais'd, and lo! the historic muse  
Rears from the dust her mangled head,  
Tells the true story of her mighty deed,  
And through each people land her wand'ring tribes pursues.

Now stronger glows the blaze of light,  
The darkness melts away  
Which wrapt Egyptian realms in night,  
And long obscur'd their day.

In vain from Ham's wise sons did Greece of old  
Aspire to tear iniquity's crown;  
In vain she hop'd to gain a sure renown  
On tales of dragon's teeth, and fabled fleece of gold.

The arm is o'er. Thou to her source  
Dark Error first didst trace:  
Thou, marking all her winding course,  
Shalt free the human race  
From prejudice, imbib'd in earliest youth;  
And sweeping all the mists away  
Which fiction rais'd to lead thy steps astray,  
Firm on her throne shalt fix historic Truth.

Proceed, my friend; so shalt thou find  
In these dark paths thy God;  
His works, his word, with steady mind  
From stern oppression's rod,  
From quibbling words, from lying lips retrieve;  
And while thou talk'st of ancient days,  
Erect monuments to Jehovah's praise,  
Till sceptics cease to doubt, and Infidels believe.

## COMMON PRAYER.\*

### PART I.—ON THE TEMPER OF MIND PROPER FOR THE HOUSE OF PRAYER.

In setting forth the claims of the English Church to the attachment and strict conformity of her members, as well as in recommending the Scriptural character of her ordinances to the candid consideration of those by whom that title is disclaimed, it would be doing less than justice to her admirable Liturgy if we did not make it the subject of a separate examination. It is by this, perhaps, more than by any other characteristic, that the Church of England is generally known and distinguished. It is therefore very important that so marked and peculiar a feature should be seen, from the first, fully and correctly.

I propose to treat the subject *practically*: that is to say, as it involves a question of duty, in reference to existing circumstances and actual wants. I shall, therefore, hope to be excused if I commence with a few words on the feelings and views with which, as I think, the inquiry should be prosecuted.

In the words addressed by the Samaritan woman to our Lord, we have a striking instance of the perplexity occasioned, even in a worldly mind, by opposing systems of worship, each advancing exclusive pretensions, and alleging plausible reasons in their support. "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain, and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Here is a natural prepossession in favour of a local and hereditary practice, met by the claims of a rival scheme, supported by many evident proofs, and recommended by the most respectable authority. In referring this national controversy to the decision of a Jewish doctor, however surprised by his courtesy and encouraged by his condescension, "a woman of Samaria" could hardly have anticipated an answer favourable to her own views. What could be expected from a Jew, however gentle and amiable in his personal character, but a re-assertion of that uncompromising creed which excluded her countrymen from the covenant of promise, as heretics and schismatics, almost as heathens and as strangers? But he was a prophet with whom she spake, though he came from Jerusalem; and an openness to receive conviction on reasonable grounds, seems to mark her conduct throughout the whole of the transaction. Our Saviour does not resolve her doubts by involving both systems in a common censure, or even by representing them as *similarly* abrogated. "Woman, believe me," thus the mysterious stranger replies, "the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.—Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews." As if he had said, salvation does indeed originate with God's ancient people, but it will now go forth into the world in a manner equally unexpected and surprising, through the establishment of a comprehensive dispensation, intended for all mankind. "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him."

Meanwhile, that humble, submissive, trustful disposition of mind, which is a main constituent, and an indispensable condition of faith, considered as a Christian grace, is sacrificed at the very outset. If, to learn, and to pray, be the first objects for which we visit the house of God, the temper which we take with us, will be far removed from the pride of self-dependence, or the questionings of a jealous doubt.

The time has arrived, when the narrow household of faith, of which Jerusalem is the centre, shall be expanded into a universal church, characterized by a spiritual worship, corresponding to the nature of that Being to whom it is addressed. "God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

Alas! the contest between Gerizim and Jerusalem is still unsettled. On the one hand, we have arbitrary modes of worship, wilfully set up, and resolutely maintained, till at length they have grown into fixed institutions, upheld by a faithful band of hereditary adherents, many of whom evidently content themselves with the Samaritan plea, "We serve God as we have been taught by our fathers. They had doubtless good reasons for what they did, and we, their descendants, do well to walk in their steps." Be it so. We admit your principle; we have no quarrel with your feeling. Only follow up the same reasoning a little further, and we are content to abide the issue. If your fathers had thought as you do, they would never have been the authors of a separating church. They would have continued to worship at Jerusalem.

On the other hand, there are those who contend that the form of worship which they observe, is of divine appointment; that they occupy a peculiar position, and are favoured with exclusive privileges. And if, as all external evidence goes to prove, the temple in which they offer up their prayers be indeed situated on the holy hill of God; if it be the same in which the Lord has declared that he will dwell, and which should be called a "house of prayer" unto all nations, who shall discredit their claim? "Salvation is of the Jews." The means of grace are confided to the visible church. But is it the form of Godliness on which we rely? Is it a mere frame-work of ordinances which we regard with so much reverence, and preserve with so much jealous care? God forbid. We believe that to these externals there is attached a worship of spirit and of truth,—not by man's wisdom, but by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,—of God, the loving Father of our spirits, who in this, his own good way, is seeking the true worshippers from every nation under Heaven, that he may gather them into one. We believe that "the desire of all nations has come, and has filled his latter house with glory."—[Haggai ii. 7.]

Let it not be thought that in thus classing the Dissenter with the worshippers on Mount Gerizim, the churchmen with those who worshipped at Jerusalem, I display an uncharitable or presumptuous spirit. It is not my meaning to set a mark of reprobation on the one, while I fix the seal of divine favour on the other. I would rather set forth the palliating circumstances, amounting almost to a justification, under which the first perseveres in the religion of his fathers,—the faith of his childhood; admitting, to a certain extent, both the soundness of his principle, and the reasonableness, the propriety of his feeling; while I warn the other of the peculiar dangers of his position, bidding him remember that the sign of his profession, though in one sense "outward and visible," is still of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter only, "whose praise is not of men but of God." Oh! that each might discern in this very parallel, and in the divine words with which it is introduced to our notice, the method and terms of reconciliation! Let the Dissenter admit that though "it is the spirit that quickeneth," it has yet pleased the great Head of the Church to connect his Gospel with a visible ministration, appointed by himself;—let but the churchmen feel that "the letter killeth," and that the true worshippers whom the Father seeketh, are those who "worship in spirit and in truth." Let both confess, that all sectarian distinctions, whether connected with Gerizim or Jerusalem, have been abolished, and that the "true worshippers" are our church; and we may yet "take sweet counsel together, and walk in the house of God as friends." But between the confirmed Dissenter and the decided Churchman, there are found a number of religious inquirers, perhaps a considerable proportion of what is called, strangely, yet not inappropriately, "the religious world," whom it is my more immediate purpose to address.

Multitudes of Christian people, so accounted by their neighbours, and far be it from me to give them a less charitable appellation, to whom the nature of a church in the abstract is unknown, and church communion, in a strict sense, disregarded, are in anxious search for "a place of worship," where they may meet with such an exhibition of doctrine, as may correspond with their notions of scriptural truth, and such a system of devotional exercise, as may fulfil their expectations of spiritual edification. In their own phrase, they are ready to go wherever they can get most good; and although such a mode of speaking rarely indicates a proper temper for inquiry, yet the principle itself must be confessed to be most just and reasonable. They ought to worship in whatever way, and in whatever place, the benefits of public worship can be best assured to them; and of this they must themselves be the judges, at least in the last resort. Let us pray that every one may acquit himself of the heavy responsibility hereby incurred.

That every man may judge for himself in religious matters, nay, that he *must* do so; in particular, that he both *may* and *must* choose for himself a house of prayer, is a position as true in one sense, as it is false and dangerous in another. That he must trust to his own judgment in every controverted question; that he must dictate, upon his own authority, the doctrine which he will receive, or direct after his own experience, the manner in which he will pray, can be maintained by those only who would make the end independent of the means:—who would leave the disciple nothing to learn, and the seeker nothing to find.

To carry out such a scheme in practice, is of course impossible; it is a contradiction in terms: but the attempt is constantly recommended, and frequently made. That the result upon the whole is a total failure; that errors the most extravagant, delusions the most pitiable, have been the general consequence of this self-guidance wherever it has been encouraged, and in proportion as it has obtained, must, I suppose, be evident to every one (whatever success each may attribute to his own inquiries,) from the inconsistency of opinion, and the diversity of practice, on every point of religion, even the most essential, which it has every where produced.

Meanwhile, that humble, submissive, trustful disposition of mind, which is a main constituent, and an indispensable condition of faith, considered as a Christian grace, is sacrificed at the very outset. If, to learn, and to pray, be the first objects for which we visit the house of God, the temper which we take with us, will be far removed from the pride of self-dependence, or the questionings of a jealous doubt.

On the other hand, it is not merely the *right*, but the *duty* of every man to render to his God a *reasonable* service, and to walk in the light of his own conscience. To reconcile this position with the preceding, may be thought difficult in speculation, but will never be *felt* so in practice. In fact, nothing is more common in life, than to submit the understanding to authority at the instance of reason itself, and as the most reasonable manner of proceeding. In the pursuit of letters, in the study of arts, and even sciences, in the management of our health, and the disposition of our worldly estate; in short, on all occasions in which peculiar skill or experience is requisite, we either form no opinion of our own, or we postpone it, at least for a time, and to a given extent, to that of others, whom we have reason to believe better informed on the subject than ourselves. We confide in the wisdom of another, rather than in our own, and willingly submit to dictation and control: this, too, not in the expectation of meeting with an infallible director, but as the most prudent course upon the whole, notwithstanding some risk of failure. In the choice of our guide, we are influenced partly by the force of circumstances, partly by our free discretion; but having made our election, we submit ourselves with considerable unreserve, to the rule under which we have placed ourselves, nothing being found so unfavourable to ultimate success, as a suspicious, tentative spirit, for ever passing judgment on the process, instead of waiting patiently for the result.

The position in which we stand to the church, considered as a spiritual ministration, (if indeed we attach that character to any religious body,) is but faintly indicated in the above parallels. Yet the analogy is sufficient to suggest to the sincere inquirer, the frame of mind in which he must join in holy exercises with his fellow-worshippers, in the "House of Prayer," which he has adopted, in order to fulfil his own intentions, and justify his own choice. He must be prepared to receive, not to give direction; and if any part of his object be to discipline an evil and rebellious nature, he must not at once conclude that which is most agreeable, to be in every case most profitable. Having attached himself, on whatever grounds, to a particular religious institution, he must not bring its economy, point by point, to the standard of his immediate experience, but must take it as it were on trust, at least for a while, and till he has given it a fair trial.

With regard to the church, the mutual relation between a child and its parent, furnishes, I am well aware, a far more complete and instructive illustration, both of her office, and of our obligations. It is indeed as a mother, a holy spiritual mother, that the church rears, instructs, and cherishes, the children committed to her care. The entire dependence of the infant nursing, in the first stages of his natural life, the confidence and simplicity of his early feelings, the gradual expansion of his faculties, checked it may be, from time to time, to prevent a too early luxuriance, but never really discouraged, his understanding being progressively brought to bear upon those truths, which were at first received perhaps without examination, certainly without suspicion, first upon one, and then upon another, as it becomes able to cope with them, till at length the wisdom of the affectionate teacher is made manifest to the willing disciple, in all its fulness; he enters into her motives, he is admitted to her counsel, and that instruction which began in faith, is converted into perfect knowledge,—all of these states have their counterpart in the rearing and nurture of our souls. The whole process is, as it were, acted over again in a more excellent manner in our spiritual training, supposing it to be carried on, from first to last, in the maternal bosom of the church. And here it is that the parallel so often fails us. The child does not choose his parents. He finds himself placed by Providence under their care and guidance. His feelings and conduct flow originally from sources placed beyond his control; and it is only by degrees that he becomes *conscious* either of his privileges or his duties. He enjoys the one and practices the other, let us not say blindly, but for awhile without reflection. He is not bid to question what he has no inclination to dispute,—happy indeed if he might arrive at rational conviction, without passing through the pains and the risks of doubt. Is there any thing in this which implies an unworthy bondage of the intellect? Shall we say that the child is not treated from the first as a reasonable being, or that this trustful docility, this occasional and temporary submission of the understanding to an authority grounded on love, is not a dictate of reason itself? Would that it were so with every child of God! Would that we all grew up together as one family, under the fostering care of one spiritual Mother, sensible of her love, docile to her precepts, and obedient to her commands!

Where however the grown up man, already perhaps conversant with religious subjects, if not matured in religious knowledge, yet enrolled in no society of believers, belonging to no Christian brotherhood, living in no household of faith, is casting about for some one communion, out of so many, in which he may set up his rest,—(a case of extreme frequency in this country.)—we cannot expect to produce, by mere admonition, that teachable reciprocity of mind, which, on the former supposition, is our precious birthright and portion by inheritance.

Yet surely a state of mind, in some degree resembling that of the child, must be attained, if we hope either for edification or comfort from any system of social worship, (for it is to this that our attention is at present directed.) If we be driven to choose for ourselves a house of prayer, (a sad, but how often an inevitable necessity!) when we have once settled in our minds the grounds of our preference, so far as that is possible, while we remain *without*,—then, if we would really know by blessed experience, that we have chosen wisely, we must lay aside our sceptical spirit.—We must enter the congregation "believing all things, hoping all things," or if this be not possible, if such a preparation of feeling, though the condition of all eventual improvement, be unattainable as a preliminary, yet must we assume a submissive attitude, and make the humbled will minister to the pious wish.

The preceding remarks are addressed to those who profess their readiness to join that form of worship from which they can derive most benefit. And though, for my own part, I consider it most unfortunate that any persons arrived at years of discretion should have such a question to decide, yet when this is the case, I am willing that it should be tried upon the principle which they have themselves adopted. I admit that the best devotional system is, that which confers most spiritual advantage, every man being judge in his own case. But if it be inferred from this, that a man is to go here and there, by way of experiment, and form his judgment from his own estimate of the effects produced in his own case,

or even from a comparison of what he sees and hears, with his own preconceived opinions, then I maintain that the end is defeated by the very means which are taken to pursue it; that so distrustful a spirit can never be devout, so indolent a temper can never be instructed.—That which is really submitted to his examination, and which alone, if he be sincere and reasonable, he will, in the first instance, seek to ascertain, is the *authority* of the different schemes. "Where can I put my trust?" is the only question which he needs ask, in the sure belief that in this way he will eventually receive, not only most consolation, but most light.

I say that I am willing to try the question on the ground of personal benefit, as a matter of fact, because all truth is ultimately coincident in whatever direction it may be approached: but with respect to the parties by whom it is proposed, how much better would it be, if every one were to lay aside this continual self-reference, this egotism of piety, if piety it can be called, where self, not God, is the ultimate object, and inquire at once, "What is the will of Heaven? What is the mind of Christ in this matter? Whatever He has appointed, whatever most fully represents His desire, most truly fulfils His purpose, *must* be the best for me."

Following up this thought in reference to the present subject, the Liturgy of the English Church, our first inquiry should be, by what body of believers it is used, and under what circumstances has it obtained? Does it carry with it any *peculiar* sanction, or is it merely a set of forms such as might be adopted by any other society? Who were its authors? Under what authority did they act? Have we any reason for believing that they had "the mind of the spirit?" How did the family of Christ worship in earlier times? When did set forms first begin to be employed by Christians in their assemblies? Can this practice be referred to the primitive times? or is it a mere apostolical origin?

To one really bred in the communion of the church, all these questions have long ago received at least an implicit answer. The Liturgy speaks to him with authority; it has an antecedent claim to his respect, and he regards it with reverential feelings. He does not indeed look upon it as a divine and perfect work. He takes it on the whole as a human composition, but received by him under such circumstances as place it above the range of casual or ordinary criticism. If his opportunities lead him to examine the subject, he finds abundant reason for his prepossession; but he is not willingly disposed to submit its merit, either for approval or condemnation, to his private judgment. Whether it be too legal or too spiritual in its nature, too general or too little exclusive in its application, whether too much or too little attention has been paid to ceremonial worship and outward ritual, whether it bears the mark of unlicensed innovation or of a slavish submission to the precedent, are points which he does not pretend to discuss as a disinterested party. He regards them as already decided, at least to a certain extent; and though he is far from believing improvement impossible, yet he limits this to partial modifications, and considers an entire change as out of the question. In a word, he would be a candid, but he cannot be an indifferent reasoner. Such is the inevitable result of his position; and if the view taken in this discourse be correct, it does not make him a worse, but a far better judge of the matter. It is in this way that all knowledge is really attained; all moral, all religious, all revealed knowledge. It is first believed, then examined, then explicitly known. It would not be difficult to extend the principle yet further, if the discussion belonged to this place. Even in the world of sensible experience, we arrive at knowledge through the gate of faith.

## THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER.\*

Diligently to mark, and carefully to treasure up in our minds, the special providences of the Almighty, which to preserve and nourish our faith and hope in him; it furnishes the grounds of our thankfulness and praise; it stirs up our finest feelings and very best affections towards him, holy joy, humble reverence, and hearty love; it supports us under all our sufferings, and affords us comfort in all our sorrows. When adversity presses hard upon a man; when he is stripped of his possessions, and threatened with torture; when enemies persecute, and friends betray or forsake; or when pain and sickness harass him upon his bed, and sleep departs from his eyelids—gracious Lord, what shall become of him, if, at such an hour, a writheless informant there is no help for him in his God; that there is neither Redeemer nor Creator; that the universe is the sport of contending demons, a scene of savage and desolation; and, instead of being "full of the loving-kindness of the Lord," is peopled only with fiends and furies? What sort of a being must the writer be who could give such a representation of things; and what does he deserve at the hands of mankind?—Before guilt of this infernal deed, that of cheating and thieving, of perjury, robbery and murder, melts away and vanishes into nothing.

On the other hand, and by way of contrast, look into the collection of divine hymns, which have been recited in the church, to the unspeakable instruction and consolation of the faithful, from age to age. I mean the book of Psalms. See there how the people of God, whenever any calamity befel them, either as a nation or as individuals, sustained, comforted, and cheered themselves, and each other, by recollecting and meditating upon the works of the Lord, which he had wrought in old times for their fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the children of Israel, his servants; the miracles in Egypt, the wonders in the field of Zoan; the division of the waters at the Red Sea, and again at the River Jordan; the fall of Jericho, the discomfiture of Sisera and Jabin at the river Kishon, and the overthrow of all the idolatrous kingdoms of Canaan. While they were employed in chanting forth the praises of God for special providences formerly vouchsafed them, their minds were comforted, their spirits were raised, their hearts were warmed, their faith was revived and invigorated; it grew strong and mighty; and they no longer supposed it possible, whatever their present sufferings might be, that he who had so often made bare his holy arm in their cause, could "ever leave them or forsake them."

The use which they made of the mercies vouchsafed them in old times, should we make of special providences vouchsafed to us, in the deliverance and preservation of our own church and nation from the various schemes concerted for the destruction of both. Among the first of these may be justly reckoned the deliverance this day commemorates.

The Scriptures relate many events of a strange kind; that is, strange compared with the ordinary course of things, or the natural influences of causes, when the means are disproportionate, unsuitable, nay, seem even contrary to the effect. Such events speak God to be their cause, by his invisible power supplying apparent defects in the means. In the Scripture histories, we are, as it were, admitted beyond the scenes, and informed that the hand of God was there.

\* From a Sermon by Bishop Horne.

God was more immediately concerned. Thus the stars in their courses fought against Sisera: the Lord thundered upon the Philistines, and discomfited them: he made the host of Syria to hear a noise of chariots, and horses, and a great host: he made the children of Ammon and Moab to destroy one another: he smote in the camp of the Assyrians 185,000 men: under his direction one chased a thousand and two put ten thousand to flight: a stripling, with nothing more than a sling and a pebble, destroys a mighty giant, armed from head to foot: the cunning schemes of worldly and treacherous politicians, such as Abimelech, Ahithophel, and many others, are suddenly baffled and blasted, and the mischief intended falls upon the heads of those who intended it: plots with all possible caution and secrecy, contrived in darkness, are, by improbable means and unaccountable accidents, disclosed and brought to light: "A bird of the air," as the wise man speaks, "telling the matter;" or, "the stones in the wall," as it is in the prophet "crying out treason!" In the book of Esther we read, that the king cannot sleep; to direct him, the chronicle is called for; Mordecai's service is pitched upon, and enquiry made concerning his recompense; honour is decreed him: so the cruel device of Haman to destroy the Jews comes out, and he himself is hanged on the gallows which he had erected for Mordecai.

Thus, in the desperate wickedness of this day, the plot was laid deep and dark, the implements of destruction prepared, and all ready, when the heart of one of the conspirators relents towards a friend, who must have been involved in the common ruin: a letter is sent to warn him: in that letter the nature of the destruction is alluded to: the letter is carried to the king, who conjectures the meaning: a search is made, and the villain seized upon the spot, who declared, that if he had been advanced a few steps farther, he would have set fire to the train, and sacrificed himself, rather than the design should have failed.

Occurrences like these, containing in them somewhat, though not strictly miraculous, yet truly admirable; turning out of the ordinary stream of human affairs, as miracles surmount the course of nature, most reasonably may, most justly should, be ascribed to the special operation of His most holy and glorious arm, who breaketh the arm of the wicked, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty; who spurneth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise; who is known by the judgment that he executeth, when the wicked is snared by the work of his own hand.

To entitle every little trifling thing that happens to us a special providence, would be levity; to father upon the Almighty the mischiefs issuing from our own sin and folly, would be something worse; but to ascribe every grand and beneficial event to his good hand, has ever been reputed wisdom and justice. It was a prevailing opinion even among the Heathens, that whatever did bring great benefit to mankind, was not effected without divine goodness toward men. We know, indeed, that God doth not disregard any thing, but watches over all by his general and ordinary Providence. He thereby "clothes the grass of the field; he provideth for the raven its food, and the young lions seek their meat from him;" without his care "a sparrow does not fall to the ground;" and by him "the hairs of our head are all numbered." But the hand of his more special providence is chiefly employed in managing affairs of moment and consequence to us; such as great conquests and undertakings; revolutions and changes of state; war and peace; victory and good success; the protection of princes, and preservation of his people. When, therefore, any remarkable event, highly conducing to the public good of church and state, doth manifest itself, the accomplishment of it should be attributed to God's own hand. When any pernicious enterprise, levelled against the safety of prince and people, is disappointed and brought to nought, surely it is fit we should profess and say, "The righteous Lord hath hewn the snares of the ungodly in pieces."

And if the preservation of the king and royal family, with the three estates in parliament assembled; if the freeing our country from civil disorder and confusion of the worst kind, from the yoke of usurpation and slavery, from the most grievous extortion and rapine, from bloody persecutions and trials; if the upholding from utter ruin our church, which was so happily settled, and had so long flourished; if the securing our profession of God's holy truth and faith, with a pure worship, and edifying ministration of his Word and Sacraments, with a comely, wholesome, and moderate discipline; if being rescued from impious errors, scandalous practices, and superstitious rites, with merciless violence forced upon us; if a continuance of the most desirable comforts and conveniences of our lives; if all these are benefits, then was the deliverance of this day one of the most beneficial and important that ever was granted by heaven to any nation. And notwithstanding the obscurity or intricacy that may sometimes appear in the course of Providence; notwithstanding any general exceptions that may, by perverse incredulity, be alleged against the conduct of things here below; there are marks very observable, and this event is full of them, whereby, if we consider wisely, with due attention, diligence, and impartiality, we may discern and understand that it was "the Lord's doing, and it was marvellous in our eyes."

For these and all other benefits which have been in old time conferred, and often since preserved and handed down to us of the present generation, let us rejoice and be glad, and give honour to him who hath so conferred and so preserved them.

## CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN HIS MAJESTY KING CHARLES I. AND MR. ALEXANDER HENDERSON.

(Continued from our last.)

For Mr. Alexander Henderson.

HIS MAJESTY'S FOURTH PAPER.

I shall very willingly follow the method you have begun in your third paper; but I do not conceive that my last paper multiplies more controversies than my first gave occasion for, having been so far from augmenting the heads of our dispute, that I have omitted the answering many things in both your papers, expressly to avoid raising of new and needless questions; desiring to have only so many debated as are simply necessary to shew whether or not I may, with a safe conscience, give way to the alteration of Church-government in England; and indeed, I like very well to begin with the settling of the rule by which we are to proceed and determine the present controversy; to which purpose, as I conceive, my third paper shews you an excellent way; for there I offer you a judge between us, or desire you to find out a better, which to my judgment you have not yet done, though you have sought to invalidate mine. For if you understand to have offered the Scripture, though no man shall pay more reverence, nor submit more humbly to it than myself, yet you must find some rule to judge betwixt us, when you and I differ upon the interpretation of the self-same text, or it can never determine our questions; as, for example, I say you misapprehend of 2 Cor. i. 24, to me—let others answer for themselves; for I know not how I make other men to have dominion over my faith, when I make them only serve to approve my reason: nor do I conceive how I

\* Such is the language in the rubric in the form of service for this day; whence it must occur to the reader, that the doctrine which makes the king one of the three estates in parliament, is an innovation, introduced by republican writers, who diminish the crown to raise the people, and in the end to overturn the government.

\* From the "Scriptural Character of the Church," by the Rev. Derwent Coleridge.