

To the Editors of the Colonial Churchman.

Gentlemen,—The following beautiful remarks on the different services of the Church, are taken from a little tract entitled 'Claims of Sunday Schools upon Churchmen.' The contents of the tract were originally printed in the Episcopal Watchman, having been written by Mr. Doane, it is believed, when professor in Washington College, Hartford. Mr. Doane is now the active, pious, and distinguished Bishop of the State of New-Jersey. I think every lover of the chaste simplicity and reverential piety of our holy mother church will be pleased with the remarks of the excellent author.

New-Brunswick.

A.

It has been often remarked, and by those who were not of her communion, that for the purposes of domestic religion, and especially for the religious education of the young, the Protestant Episcopal Church is unrivalled. Like an anxious and affectionate mother, she embraces all her children within the arms of her thoughtful and provident affection. There is not a condition, a chance or change of this mortal life, for which she has not benevolently provided. The little infant, guiltless of its parents' sins, and therefore not held to answer for them, she kindly takes into her maternal bosom, and, after the example of her gracious head and Lord, embraces him in her arms, lays her hands upon him, and blesses him. From that moment, he is her child, her charge, her care.—Upon the sunny brow of ripening youth, again she lays her hand (in the apostolic rite of confirmation) to invoke for him the spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and ghostly strength, of knowledge and true godliness and holy fear, and sends him out into the wide and wicked world, with her counsels in his heart and her prayers and blessings on his head. In all the stormy and eventful voyage of his manhood, her sacred services, her spiritual instructions, her heavenly consolations, go with him. In sickness and sorrow, she comes to him with winning invitations, and comfortable prayers and blessed promises; and with returning health and joy, she puts into his mouth words of thanksgiving, and songs of praise and devotion. She decks with becoming homage and service the fireside altar. She makes his heart warm and his lips eloquent with the voice of public confession, and supplication and praise. She admits him to the devout and grateful commemoration of his Saviour's sufferings and death, and setting before him the sacred symbols of the body broken, and the blood poured out, bids him welcome to the "banquet of that most heavenly food." And when the troubles and trials of his mortal pilgrimage are overpast, and for him the day of grace has faded away for ever, with sacred lesson, and solemn anthem, and fervent prayer, that the living may lay it to heart, she commits his body to the silent house, earth to its fellow-earth, with the charitable, comfortable hope, that, in the resurrection of the last day, it may be raised in glory, and the saying that is written be brought to pass, death is swallowed up in victory.

And the Church not only offers to her members all these advantages, but she offers them in a way especially suited to attract the attention, impress the understanding, and win the affections of the young. Her services, while they are undeniably spiritual and reasonable services, are emphatically sensible also—appealing directly and powerfully to the senses, as avenues to the understanding and the heart.

As soon as the child can read, his curiosity is excited, and his ingenuity exercised, by that little manual which next to the word of God, he sees even in the hands of parents, and brothers and sisters and friends, the guide of their public devotions, the solace of their private hours. His first feeble intellectual flights are essayed upon its venerable pages. The first music in his infant ear is breathed from its tender hymns and noble anthems. And proud is the triumph when his boyish eye can detect the ready place, and the trembling undertones of his boyish voice, are but just heard in the pauses of his father's full manly response, or low murmured prayer.

Thus does the beauty of holiness win its imperceptible way into the young heart, long before the strong passions have disturbed its placid fountain, or the seductions of the world have gained it over to their own foul purposes. As his judgment is ripened,

his taste matured, and his piety confirmed, new beauties, new treasures present themselves. The longer it is used, the better it is understood, and the more it is endeared to him. And the same simple, fervent strains that first won his infant ear, are the last that keep their hold upon his blunted sensibilities, and continue still to charm when all the daughters of music have been brought low.

In the decent order and appropriate beauty by which all her public services are characterised, there is continual evidence of their fitness to attract and impress, and, by the divine Spirit, ever present to bless his own appointed means, to renew and sanctify the youthful heart.

From the house of prayer to which the young Churchman is led up, the word of God is never sent away in inglorious exile. It is daily read in his attentive ear. By turns he is made familiar with its whole sacred circle of doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness. From a child, it is his privilege, like pious Timothy, 'to know the holy Scriptures, which are able to make him wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.'

The house of prayer to which the young Churchman is led up, is a house of "Common Prayer." It is not the devotions of the ministers that the people are called to witness. It is the minister, 'clad in the fine linen of the temple, and his feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace,' leading the devotions of them who kneel, fellow sinners with him, at the same gracious footstool, partakers of the same hope, expectants, through the same merciful intercession, of the same blessed rewards.

There may be but one voice heard, but it is the blended voice of the whole congregation of the faithful—blended in common confession, in common supplication, in common praise. Aptest emblem of that glorious worship of the saints in light, of which the apocalyptic vision affords us the only glimpse! Fittest preparation for that church triumphant, which, 'as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder, shall sing the new song before the throne!'

For the Colonial Churchman.

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

"How precious is the Book divine,  
By inspiration given;  
Bright as a Lamp its doctrines shine,  
To guide our souls to heaven."

The word of God shines bright in the soul of the sincere christian; but to the soul of the sinner it is all darkness and a hidden mystery. With the desire to know God aright, and with the assistance of his holy Spirit, that word is sufficient to guide the soul of every christian to his heavenly home—there to dwell with the divine author of that precious volume for ever and ever. What is there which doth more highly concern us to know than God himself, and there is nothing certainly which should more commend the scriptures to us, than that thereby we may become more acquainted with God. We may there see and understand the great wisdom of God. In the scriptures we read the most rich and admirable discoveries of divine goodness, and all the ways and methods He useth in alluring sinners to himself. With what majesty he commands. With what condescension He entreats. With what importunity He desires the souls of men to become reconciled to Him. With what favour He embraceth, and with what tenderness He chastizeth; and what love and mercy He shows to them who have chosen Him to be their God. That Book divine most plainly and truly reveals a Judgment to come, in which God will judge the sincerity of every heart; at which solemn time man must 'give an account of his stewardship,' and of all the talents he possessed while here below. Therefore, reader, delay not to search the Scriptures, so that you may rightly understand them, and, so that you may know how to live in the world, that you may be prepared for that terrible day of Judgment. Continually pray to God to remove the veil from your eyes and the covering from your sinful heart, that you may rightly see and understand His holy word, and be assured that His ears are at all times open to hear the prayers of a penitent sinner. Seek God earnestly now that he is to be found,

and call at once upon Him now that He is near.—Read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest, the contents of that blessed volume, for it truly points out the way to heaven. Are you afflicted by poverty, sickness, loss of friends, or in any other way? Then search the Scriptures, for they contain a sovereign balm for every wound, and the richest cordial for every fear. And with the christian light of the Gospel shines brightest in the night of affliction. How truly happy must that man be whose thoughts, words, and actions, are guided by the word of God, and who walks in that path pointed out therein, and whose trust is constantly in the Lord his God. But how different is the state of him who knows not God, who never reads his holy word, and who lives without God from day to day. Without repentance and without a knowledge of the precious Book divine, what must be the condition of such a man on the bed of death? Reader! Are you prepared to meet God? Let your answer be directed by the word of life. I recollect some time since going into a house, and seeing several books lying on a shelf, some of the most light and trifling among them were carefully covered to protect them from injury; but be-ide these lay a Bible covered, not with cloth, but with the dust of time, and as though it were a sealed volume to the inmates of that house, which I fear was the case. The day must come, if it has not already, when they will regret having allowed the word of God to remain there so neglected, and be sorry that they had not become better acquainted with that precious Book, which might have pointed out to them the way of salvation. True, they were an illiterate family; but that was no excuse why they should not either read for themselves, or have the Bible read to them, for that blessed volume contains quite enough that is plain, simple and easy to be understood by the most unlearned. It contains enough that is full of comfort to the heavy and broken heart. The way of salvation is so plain, that he who reads it with a willing mind may easily understand it. It is most certainly the bounden duty of every parent to see that his offspring do frequently search the Scriptures; and no sight is so pleasing to the christian mind as to see, which I have often seen, parents with their children old and young, seated round a table on the Sabbath evening, reading aloud by turns, portions of the word of God, and hearing it explained by the head of the family. Surely God is with such a family at a time like that, for He says that where 'two or three are met together in his name, that he is in the midst of them.' To all Parents therefore I would say, encourage that holy exercise.\* Reader! delay not yourself, and induce all others over whom you have any controul, to become well acquainted with the light of the Gospel. Soon your day of grace may terminate, suddenly, unexpectedly, for ever. To-morrow's sun may bring no light to you, and you may then be beyond the light of the word of God. And if you die in sin, the lamentation will be yours. "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved."

1st May, 1836.

D.

\*We heartily respond this wholesome advice of our correspondent. We fear that in the 'march of intellect,' which distinguishes the present day, the godly instruction of the domestic circle which was the good old practice of our fathers, has been left behind. The sight of parents with their children and servants around them on the Sabbath evening or afternoon, hearing them read in God's word, catechizing them, and in other ways improving the Lord's Day to their religious instruction,—is now, it may be feared, but rarely met with. Until it is more general, and each family thus becomes a nursery for the Church of God, the advancement of true religion must be slow, and the fruit of preaching and all other ordinances comparatively small.—Ed. C. O.

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MISSIONARY ANECDOTE.—No. 2.

"Thus saith the Lord! who hath given unto me, and it shall not be returned unto him again?"

The Rev. Samuel Parker, missionary to the Far West, to the westward of the United States, thus writes from the Rocky Mountains, in August last.

"A Nez Perces Indian with his chief, came to our tent and wished us to take his only son to the East, and teach him to worship God. Dr. W. has engaged to take him to Ithaca. The parting of the