

Poetry.

My Prayer Book.

BAPTISM.

"The washing of regeneration."—Tit. iii. 5. "Born of water and of the Spirit."—John iii. 5.

How water, word, and grace combine
To work creative spells divine,
In vain let reason ask;
Children are awful mysteries,
Within whose depth no spirit sees
But His,—who owns the task
Of overcoming, through celestial birth,
That born corruption, which is bread from earth.

Hence! reas'ning sceptic, harsh and cold;
For, never will thine eyes behold
Tokens which sense defy:
Nature in secret works her plan,
Her growth escapes the sight of man;
Then, hush thy heartless cry,—
As if the weakness of the water could
Deprive the soul of sacramental good.

True wisdom loves the word "obey,"
And loving hearts but live to pray,
Believing Christ as true;
Safe in His arms, thou mother mild,
With hope baptismal place thy child,
And doubt not! He will do
A work mysterious for that infant soul,—
Baptising nature with divine control.

Henceforward, as a Priest and King,
Thy babe becomes a sacred thing,
An heir of grace and glory;
Mother! to whom such charge is given,
Now rear it for that throne in heaven
Scripture unveils before thee;
So discipline the dawning mind and will,
That each some priesthood unto God may fill.

"Our Father!" now thy babe may cry,
Whose Elder Brother rules the sky,—
The Man Divine, who came
By bleeding merit to atone
For all the guilt sad earth must own,
And give the child a name,
New as the sacramental birth, which then
Through water and by Spirit dawns in men.

Blest privilege! both deed and pure,
Which might our trembling hearts assure
That we are Christ's indeed:
Our robe baptismal,—keep it white,
And never wilt thou lose the right
Which marks the heavenly seed
Of all who, grafted into Christ by grace,
Born in the Church, are God's adopted race.

Oh, that on man's expressive brow
Baptismal pureness beaming now
Maturer life might see!—
How should we bless that rite of heaven
Where grace is felt, and sin forgiven
By mercy, full as free;
And find God's Spirit ne'er that man forsook,
Who kept in age, the vow his childhood took.

But, soil'd and stain'd by sin and crime,
Corruption deepens with our time,
And thus our hearts o'erlay
That seed of heaven, Thy Spirit granted
When the new birth was first implanted
On our baptismal day:
Yet, not for this, let souls profanely try
From faith to hide what holy means supply.

Rather, repent we; till the soul
Shall yield to that sublime control
Which heals the broken-hearted,
Who in atoning blood begin
To bathe the soul, and wash their sin;
Mourning they e'er departed
From that blest Lord, whose interceding love
Reigns on the glory-throne He rules above.

DIOCESE OF FREDERICTON.

Extracts from a Charge delivered in the Cathedral of Christ Church, Fredericton, to the Clergy of the Diocese, assembled at the second Triennial Visitation of JOHN, BISHOP OF FREDERICTON.

ON SANCTITY.

The differential, if I may so speak of Sanctity is Separation. All baptized Christians are called to be separate: separate from the world in its Heathenism, and in its wickedness, placed in a new relation to God, to Eternity, and to each other, and invested, by their Heavenly membership, with the attributes of Kings and Priests unto God. But as the separation of the whole body of Israel admitted of an inner line of separation in the tribe of Levi, and that again of an interior line of Priesthood, so out of the Lord's heritage, the Apostles chose some to be Clerks, and separated them to special offices, over and above those of ordinary Christians.

And our vocation is this: to publish with Authority and defend Christ's Gospel amongst Mankind; to recommend it by our lives; to gather in to His fold all that are to be won; and to prepare His members by teaching them their duties, by the right exercise of discipline, by imparting to them the Sacramental gifts which Christ has imparted to us, and by presenting their Prayers and Praises with our own at the footstool of His Mercy-seat on Earth, for the possession of that glorious Kingdom, which, of His Infinite Mercy, He has "prepared for them, before the foundation of the World."

Will you indulge me so far as to give me your attention, whilst I dwell on some of these weighty matters, with especial reference to the peculiarities of our own Times.

I will not insult your understandings or your hearts, my Brethren, by a lecture on morality. From the gross and grovelling vices which deform our nature, you, who listen to me, are I trust, set free. But there lies between open immorality, and holiness, a large debatable land of self-indulgence

and sloth, in which thousands dream away their lives, and which is fatal to the Sanctity of the clerical character. Let me not be thought to dwell on things too small. Nothing is little, when measured by Heaven and Hell: no duty is mean, when it is paid to the Most High.

1. A Clergyman should be a man of known moderation in his appetites. If Timothy was not only permitted, but exhorted not wholly to abstain from wine, it was only "a little wine," and that little required by Nature, and used to remedy, or to prevent disease. But of the hilarious banquet, and the repeated glass, the Apostle is silent. But excess of eating, or delicate eating, is a part of the same evil with "excess of wine." A Clergyman cannot be too careful to avoid even the imputation of greediness. He who is seen eagerly to partake of dainty food, may talk of Heaven as he pleases, but people will not forget that his desires, on one point at least, have a lower aim. Here, possibly, I may be expected to utter my sentiments on the propriety of wholly abstaining from the use of stimulating liquors. That it is lawful and right so to abstain, from a sense of religious duty, or with a view to avoid temptation, I shall not discuss, because it cannot, I think, be reasonably doubted. Whether it be desirable to form societies for this purpose, or to join those which are already formed, admits, in my judgment, of very grave question. The supposition, that it is only a fear of self-denial which prevents the Clergy in a body from joining these societies, may be met by silence. Those who impute motives are not always the purest of mankind. But the doubt, in my mind, lies here. Are these societies the legitimate modes by which we, as Clergy of the Church, can arrest the evil of drunkenness? Are they the most safe and effectual modes? And are they free from the introduction of false principles, which are as pernicious as drunkenness itself? I have never been able to return an affirmative answer to these questions. To the first, I must reply, that the Church is to me the Divinely-constituted Temperance Society; her baptismal vow is the sacred, binding pledge: her ordinances, blessed by the Spirit of God, are the appointed means of preserving Temperance, or where Abstinence is necessary, Abstinence. If this pledge will not hold, I shall only weaken it by substituting another. To the second, I reply, that the mode recommended does not appear to me always safe, or on the widest range, effectual. Either it is universally binding, or it is not; if not, each man is left to do what he likes; if it be binding, I am persuaded that few weak constitutions, in severe or damp climates, would survive the trial. And in the neighbouring States, where the pledge is sometimes made almost compulsory, it is notorious, that drinking secretly goes on, which adds hypocrisy to the old iniquity. I rejoice over every soul rescued from sin, by any means, regular, or irregular; but this is a question of union for a religious purpose in a corporation, and before I join it, I must be satisfied not only that single souls are benefited, which I believe, and at which I heartily rejoice, but that it will work well on a consideration of the general infirmities and necessities of mankind; and on the survey of the religious influences likely to be brought to bear upon the whole matter. To the third question, therefore, I reply, that the working of such societies does not seem to be free from false principles which I eschew. It may be said, that the processions of men, somewhat boastfully proclaiming their liberation from one kind of sin, are accidents, not essential parts of the system. It may be so. But there has always been a tendency in these practices, to rest the duty of abstinence from certain things on the ground that they are not God's creatures, which seems to me to be Manichæism revived; and to lay so much stress on abstaining from much drinking, is to forget that there is sin in over-eating, and other sensual practices. I doubt the emancipation of men of this character from the lusts of the flesh; or whether they have not bartered one sin for another, or are bettered by the exchange. These are my reasons; sufficient to my own mind, possibly insufficient to some who hear me. Let each of us act according to our sense of duty.* My own conviction is, that if the Clergy, and the Laity of our Church would observe the fasts of the Church, which are not many, and which at regular periods, call for some kind of abstinence, left to each man's conscience as to the amount, and if they would practise and inculcate strict temperance and moderation in their ordinary meals and feasts, it would be better than all the Abstinence Societies in the world. Better, because fasting is enjoined, proposed, and even supposed in the Bible: is recommended to us by the Highest example, is distinctly mentioned in the Prayer-book, and has been practised by all men who have ever been eminent for Holiness, in the Old Testament or in the New, among Churchmen, and even among dissenters. I exhort the Clergy therefore, in reason and moderation, to fast: and to teach others to do so likewise; and above all, to put a bridle on the appetites of their children, and not to accept invitations to public feasts, on days set apart for fasting, and for prayer, by wiser men and of higher authority than themselves.

* To guard myself against misapprehension, I observe, that these remarks are not meant as an attack upon any man, or body of men, here, or elsewhere. They are made strictly in self-defence, against imputations which are very commonly thrown out. If any man differ from me, let him differ in the same spirit in which I desire to speak, and there will be no breach of charity by either of us.

2. A Clergyman should be a man of moderation in his personal expenses. This caution you may perhaps suppose, from the scanty means placed at your disposal, to be needless. It is, however, given from the knowledge, that those who have the smallest means are not always the most prudent. And as you are surrounded by persons who are obliged to make the most of every thing, prudence and economy will do much to make small means go a great way. There are those among the laity, though I fear they are few, who with very limited incomes, enjoy food, raiment, and comfort, and yet "give liberally of their little," and keep out of debt. No clergyman with a large family can live on the income ordinarily allowed without feeling himself pinched and straitened; but it is remarkable that the only unhappy example of a clergyman arrested for debt, has occurred in the case of a young unmarried man, with a sufficient professional income, and with some private resources; a case happily no longer existing among us.

3. A Clergyman should be a man of diligence and punctuality in his appointments. The only way to make the people punctual, is to be punctual ourselves: and though in country places many things combine to prevent it, as want of a standard of time, snow storms and bad roads, yet on ordinary occasions, punctuality is a part of the decent and reverent performance of Divine Worship. A Minister who is always late, is like a Church clock which always strikes the wrong hour.

4. A Clergyman should abstain from secular employment, except in matters of charity or necessity. In the management of a glebe, it may be called a matter of necessity: but it is dangerous to sink the clergyman in the farmer: still more dangerous to fall into habits of barter and sale. Of course the produce of our glebes must either be used, exchanged or sold. But as nothing sooner steals upon us than a habit of trafficking and money changing, it is prudent, where we can, to avoid it. Nothing is more injurious to the character or reputation of a clergyman than worldliness: nothing more likely to promote it than constant buying, selling, and bartering. We see what cautions our Lord gave even to His Apostles, about being "overcharged with the cares of this life," and how Saint Paul dwells on the like in his first Epistle to Timothy.

5. A Clergyman should be a Peace-Maker. He who publishes Peace must not be fond of litigation, nor mix himself up with the feuds of families, but keep aloof, if he cannot compose them. We are to "speak truth," and to "make Peace;" a very hard and perilous task, when we are surrounded by those who will have no Peace but at the sacrifice of Truth. Let us at all events "have salt in ourselves, and have Peace one with another."

6. A Clergyman must be a constant and persevering visitor of his flock. His duty is not only to "teach them publicly, but from house to house;" and no clergyman who neglects to visit his people, can expect to be beloved, or indeed respected by them. In very large towns the duty is indeed more difficult to be discharged: but the difficulty of performing the task aright, will not remove the responsibility from those who undertake it. Parishes containing more souls than the clergyman can visit, should either have more labourers, or be divided, for if the people be not visited, many of them will, it is to be feared, leave us for those who will visit them. I strongly disapprove of the practice of not going to see sick persons until we are sent for, although it is clearly the duty of the relatives of the sick person to inform us, and in many cases, we may not otherwise know that they are ill. To heal sickness was the daily work of our blessed Master, and should be our delight.

Let us consider then how little benefit the best and most stirring Sermons carry to the hearts of the multitude, how drowsy men are, immersed in business, swallowed up with cares and troubles of this life, surfeited with politics and love of mammon. Consider too how much must be left unsaid in Sermons: how ignorant we must be of many peculiar difficulties that belong to each separate soul, how impossible it is to remove them without constant visiting, how kindly a visit is always taken. Each clergyman should keep a register of his Parish, in which the name of every family, and especially of the communicants, is entered, their ages, and their needs. Happy are those who have a flock so small, that they can comfortably and thoroughly discharge this great, this necessary duty. I confess, that, when I look back on years past, there is no part of my life to which I recur with so much joy, as the record which I still possess, of the names of my earliest pastoral care, and no subject which weighs more heavily on my mind, than the omission of which I fear I must have been guilty, in not having with sufficient system, exactness, and self-denial, discharged the same duty, in more difficult and extended spheres of action.

Providence relieves and blesses us by compensation. The country clergy have long and fatiguing distances to travel in search of their Parishioners, but they have air and exercise, which are much more conducive to health (even with great fatigue) than the continual confinement in close and unwholesome rooms. Without constant visiting, the young can never be properly prepared for Confir-

mation, and I impute to some little deficiency in this respect, the scanty numbers who presented themselves to me in some places in the Province, as compared with less populous districts. In one or two Missions, the number was painfully small. The complaints which have been occasionally made to me on this subject by respectable Communicants of our Church deserves just consideration, for, after all, they amount to no more than a wish for spiritual benefit from the person appointed to bestow it. I will enlarge no longer on this point, only entreating you to bear in mind, that if visiting be neglected, the most important part of your parochial work is left undone.

7. But above all, the Clergyman must be a Man of Prayer. Not only prayerful in his own closet, and in his family, praying for all the graces which he needs, and against all the sins which "easily beset him," never reading the Scriptures, never composing his Sermons, never visiting the sick, without humble earnest prayer, as the best preparation for his duty: interceding for his family, and his brethren, and the Church of God: but frequent in offices of prayer in the House of God. Church-prayers should be his heart's delight, Church-praises his most cheering songs; he should meet his flock in the Sanctuary, not only when a great multitude assemble to hear his discourse, but when a few, "who fear the Lord," come "to seek the face of God:" twenty, or ten, or five, or even two or three, for the promise is made to the smallest number, not to the greatest.

It is a great defect among us, which I hope to see remedied, that so few Churches are ever open for Prayers on any day but Sunday. I know at present of only six or seven out of 78. Now, where a clergyman serves several Churches, as most of you do, there is an evident reason for his not holding such services in more than one Church; but very little reason for a total absence of prayer, especially in Towns. Suppose only the clergyman's family, and four or five aged and infirm persons meet together, shall we despise this small company when the Great "Master of Assemblies," prayed with twelve, and even with three? If people only once feel that we are in earnest, they will think it worth while to attend: but if they see us seldom attend ourselves, or pass the House of God while prayer is being made, we cannot wonder that they fail. Let us not be discouraged by ill names from being Men of Prayer. He who deserts the Throne of Grace for fear he should be censured by man, had better ask himself why he ever prays at all, or why he promised to be "diligent in Prayers, laying aside the study of the world and the flesh." Remember, Brethren, this is no Party Question. It concerns our account to God, our life of faith, our Preparation for Eternity.

I have now given you a few, not, I trust, useless hints on the life of the Clergy. May the Author and Finisher of our faith enable me to live as I have now taught you.

ESTHER MERLE; OR THE NURSERY MAID.
CHAPTER VIII.

As soon as she thought she might venture, Esther asked leave to go and see her sister. She was just in time; the very next day Margaret was to return to Ellerton. How much of mingled joy and sorrow was there in that meeting! Joy to be together again—joy to put her arms round Margaret's neck and see her sweet smile. And yet sorrow to find her so altered, and no better for the care she had received. The hours flew rapidly away, and Esther's tongue went fast, telling Margaret all she had seen and heard, and asking questions of home. Margaret's answers were in a low voice, but her manners were cheerful, and she said she hoped the mistress would allow Esther a few days' holiday, that they might be once more together again at Ellerton; "and try and let it be before I am too weak to go to church, dear Esther—I should like to go there again with you!"

Esther looked earnestly at her. "Margaret, you think yourself very ill then; you think you are in a consumption?"

"Don't say anything to mother," returned Margaret, "I thought you knew. But I have long felt how it was, and only came here to please mother. I shall be very glad to go back, and see the green fields and see Mr. Grove. Don't fret, Esther—you must comfort mother and Anne, you are able to help and to do for them. I could never do much, and so I am taken first; and sometimes I think perhaps in this way I may be of use to you, just as Sarah's death was to me. It will make you always be thinking of the next world—it will seem less strange to you like—you will feel I am there, you know."

Some one coming in, no more was said, and Esther with streaming eyes and aching heart was obliged to say good bye; and glad and thankful was she to find, on her return, that the children were having their tea in the parlour, and that the nursery was quiet.

A week passed before Esther heard again of her sister, and then it was a bad account. The journey had made her worse, and she had not left her bed for two or three days when the carrier left Ellerton.

Just at this time Mrs. Parker's mother died, and in consequence of this there was no company, and