

The Church.

THEREFORE I WILL NOT BE NEGLIGENT TO PUT YOU ALWAYS IN REMEMBRANCE OF THESE THINGS, THOUGH YE KNOW THEM AND BE ESTABLISHED IN THE PRESENT TRUTH.—2 PETER, I, 12.

VOL. I.]

COBOURG, U. C., SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1837.

[NO. XX.]

Original Poetry.

For the Church.

THE CHILD AND MOTHER.

Mother, I've heard you speak of One beyond those starlit skies,
Whose mercy, like Eternity, flows on, yet never dies,—
Around whose throne bright seraphs stand, with eyes of joy and love,
And Angel voices hymn his praise in that far world above:—
I've heard you say that Earth and Sea and Sky perform his will,
He whispers and the winds are hushed; he speaks, the waves are still;
The proudest of Earth's countless hosts bows down beneath his sway,
Kings reign through him, and princes rule, and subject realms obey:

But tell me, mother, will he deign from his immortal Throne,
To cast one glance of light on me to mark me for his own?
Will He, whose finger guides each star, revolving in its sphere,
Lend to the prayers which children breathe, a kind attentive ear?

For I have often heard it said by men with silver hair,
Earth may not know the terrors here that God above can wear,
That man is like a sepulchre, a faithful type of sin,
Without all beautiful to the eye, all foul decay within.

Oh! surely, God who fashioned him in his all perfect form,
Unaided hath not left him to the fury of the storm,
But as of Him man's frame doth seem to bear an earthly part,
So is a ray of deathless light from Him shed o'er his heart.

My child, look out upon the world, its voice will tell thee true,
Its woods of song, its vales of love, its skies of changeless hue,
Its silver streams, whose murmurs creep the golden meads among,
Its sunlit flowers, upon whose sweets the summer bee hath hung.

Its sparry caves, amid whose depths the broken billows moan,
Its forest wilds, through whose dark shade no sun hath ever shone,
Its sounding sea, whose crested waves leap up with shouts of mirth,
Its mountain heights, whose brightness seems too beautiful for earth,—

Yes, these will tell thee, listen now, their murmurs seem to blend,
In one deep tone of harmony whose sound shall never end,
From wood and stream and field below, from sky and stars above,
In one undying voice they sing a strain of deathless love.

Then pray, my child, through air shall float thy faintest breathing tone,
And Angel wings shall waft it up before that shining throne,
And He who suffers not unseen one form of life to die,
Shall send His Spirit down on thee from His bright world on high.
J. C.

For the Church.

PSALM CXXXVII.

We sat by the waters of Babel, and wept
As we thought us of Zion: unstrung and unswept
Our harps on the willows were hanging, while they—
The foe that had hurried us captive away—
Soft music demanded, the sounds of good cheer
From the heavy in spirit:—"A song we would hear,
"One of Zion's own songs."—O how seek to accord
In the land of the stranger, the harp of the Lord!
This right hand her cunning forget, ere I be
O Salem, my country, forgetful of thee!
Cleave this tongue to the roof of my mouth, when my voice
For aught, but for Salem, shall know to rejoice!
Remember, O Lord, in the day of her pride
How the children of Edom insultingly cried:
"Down, down with Jerusalem!—down to the ground
"With her turrets; and let not a vestige be found!"
Ah daughter of Babel!—the doomed!—blessed he,
Who the wrong thou hast done us, shall visit on thee,—
Who thy children shall tear from their mother's embrace,
And dash on the stones the hope of thy race.
October 6th, 1837. G. M.

THE ENGLISH LAYMAN.

No. IV.

THE PRAYER BOOK.

The zeal which Archbishop Grindal, Bishop Ridley, Dr. Taylor, and other the holy martyrs and confessors in Queen Mary's time, expressed for this excellent Liturgy, before and at the time of their death, defending it by their disputations, adorning it by their practice, and sealing it with their blood, are arguments which ought to recommend it to all the sons of the Church of England for ever, infinitely to be valued beyond all the little whispers and murmurs of argument pretended against it.—*Ep. Jeremy Taylor.*

The sublimest truths conveyed in the most chaste and exalted language, throughout a Liturgy which must be regarded as the genuine offspring of piety impregnated by wisdom.—*Dr. Johnson.*

Although a Protestant Dissenter I cannot be insensible of its merits. I believe that the evangelical purity of its sentiments, the chastised fervour of its devotions, and the majestic simplicity of its language, have combined to place it in the very first rank of uninspired compositions.—*Robert Hall.*

What words can describe the full value of her incomparable Liturgy?—*Jackson.*—(Wesleyan Methodist.)

How often do we take up our Bibles and Prayer Books, and heedlessly and coldly turn over their leaves, without a feeling of thankfulness for the unmolested enjoyment of such a privilege! How few are aware, and, if aware, how few do recollect that, in the earliest ages of Christianity, imprisonment, torture, and death, were the frequent penalties attendant on the reading of the inspired writings! Kings and Governors vainly imagined that they had entirely obliterated the indestructible word of God, by persecuting the Christians who "chose rather to give up their bodies, than their bibles, to be burnt;" and it is but little more than three hundred years ago, since bonfires were kindled at Paul's Cross in London with printed copies of the Holy Writings, and the study of the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue was

forbidden under pain of death. The Christian who had once tasted the living waters of the Gospel, and whose unquenchable thirst urged him, regardless of worldly consequences, to repair to that inexhaustible fountain, was compelled to secrete himself on the housetop, in the sequestered chamber, or the recess of the forest, for fear of incurring detection. The husband dared not even trust the wife of his bosom with a secret which the wily priest, hot on the scent of heresy, might extort from her in confession; and the parent could not venture to make his offspring partakers of the glad tidings, lest, in the unguarded loquacity of childhood the fact should transpire, and the Church call in the secular arm to repress the dangerous innovation. "Entire copies of the Bible, when they could only be multiplied by means of amanuenses, were too costly to be within the reach of very many readers: but those who could not procure the volume of the book, would give a load of hay for a few favourite chapters, and many such scraps were consumed upon the persons of the martyrs at the stake. They would hide the forbidden treasure under the floors of their houses, and put their lives in peril, rather than forego the book they desired; they would sit up all night, their doors being shut for fear of surprise, reading or hearing others read the word of God: they would tend their herds in the fields, and still steal an hour for the drinking in "the good tidings of great joy;"* the pauper blind would board their scanty earnings to purchase a Bible, and when purchased, hire persons to read it; and ladies of the court could only procure the sacred writings by employing a faithful female emissary, "who used to tie the books with strings under her apparel, and so pass with them into court."

In addition to the far weightier reasons we have for cherishing the Bible as our dearest earthly treasure, these historical recollections ought to serve as secondary aids in promoting reverence for the book of books. Every page, as it were, has been crimsoned by the blood of martyrs; every scripture promise has been contended for at the stake; a Rogers, a Bradford, a Taylor, a Latimer, and a Cranmer have sprinkled their ashes over many a text; the strangling of a Tindal was the forfeit paid for the printed translation of the English Testament. In these merely human claims to reverential affection and respect, our inestimable Book of Common Prayer most fully shares. Second only to the Bible in spiritual wealth, it is second only to it in the calamities and sufferings it has brought upon those who, in the season of persecution, still clung to its use, and made bold avowal of its doctrines.

In the reign of Mary the Mass Book regained its lost sway, and the Protestant formulary, as based on Scripture, and in many parts, clothed in its language, was a sure conductor to the dungeon, and much more frequently to the faggot.

In the unhappy times of Charles I, when the English Parliament disgraced the nation by purchasing the rebellious assistance of the Scots at the expense of Episcopacy, commenced the imposition of the Presbyterian Covenant, and the second proscription of the Liturgy. While the illiterate soldier, and the presumptuous mechanic mounted the pulpit, demolishing in their way some ornament or effigy, and then thrust out the minister, and forced from him, and tore his book,—while irreverent schismatics contemptuously sat in church with their steeple hats drawn firmly down over their austere brows,—while God was addressed and expostulated with in terms of the grossest and most revolting familiarity, and the Lord's prayer was stigmatized as "a rotten prayer,"—while religion ran so mad as almost to drive moderate men into a chilling scepticism,—the celebration of divine service according to the Book of Common Prayer was performed at the risk of incurring a severe penalty; and a person frequenting meetings held for this purpose was liable to a fine of five pounds for the first offence, of ten for the second, and a year's imprisonment for the third. Under the veil of darkness, the faithful members of the Church of England gathered together to listen to the word of God from the lips of some unsilenced clergyman; and it is left on record by the grandmother of Hannah More, that "at midnight pious worshippers went with stealthy steps through the snow, to hear the words of inspiration delivered by a holy man at her father's house: while her father with a drawn sword, guarded the entrance from violent or profane intrusion."

In the spoliation and desecration of the cathedrals and churches throughout the land during the civil wars, the Book of Common Prayer did not escape the unhallowed malevolence of the sectarians. If the organs were broken or sold, the communion-plate plundered, and the fonts used as troughs for horses, or for the baptism of swine,—if the pulpits were turned into shambles for meat, and the remains of the dead kicked insultingly about,—if every sacred vessel and object, even to the senseless monument and painted window, bore marks of the infuriate hatred of the republicans,—so did the Prayer Book sustain its share of indignities. In many places it was burnt as "idolatrous," as "a popish mass-book;" at Chichester the soldiers and sectaries tore the eyes from a picture of Edward VI, exclaiming that all the mischief arose from his establishing the Common Prayer; and when Cambridge was occupied by the Parliamentary forces, St.

* *Rev. J. J. Blunt's Reformation in England*, p. 95.—This admirable little volume ought to be purchased by every true son of the Church of England. It is one of the numbers of *Murray's Family Library*, and five shillings sterling will put any one in possession of a work, which combines a quaint, but powerful style, with lucid order, and the fruits of laborious research most pithily condensed. The tone of the book frequently reminds the reader of the homely sayings of Latimer and Rowland Taylor, and the simple pathos of the martyrologist Fox.

† See the anecdote of Joan Waste in *The Church*, No. 9, p. 44.

Mary's Church witnessed the sacrilegious tearing of the Bible and Prayer Book, while Cromwell stood by and "rebuked the clerk for complaining of the desecration." Thus was our Liturgy held in equal abhorrence by the two extremes of Popery and Puritanism!

Even when the grave was about to close upon the poor harassed Episcopalian, and some slight momentary truce to religious animosity, some softer trait of character to relieve the harsh features of civil discord might reasonably be expected, the same unmitigated persecution and proscription of the Liturgy was carried on. The learned Chillingworth, driven "like a hare whom hounds and horns pursue,"—buffeted and insulted by those around his captive bed-side,—expressed a wish, before closing his eyes, to be buried with the rites of the English Church. The Roundhead chaplain of the rebel garrison at Chichester, the Presbyterian Cheynel, who had professed a friendship for the illustrious victim, refused his request, reviled him over his remains yet scarcely cold, and threw a copy of his matchless work, *The Religion of Protestants*, into the grave of its author, with this imprecation; "Get thee gone thou cursed book, which hast seduced so many precious souls: get thee gone, thou corrupt rotten book, earth to earth, dust to dust; get thee gone into the place of rottenness, that thou mayest rot with thy author, and see corruption." Nor was the indignance denied to the subject, extended to the sovereign. When a few faithful followers of Charles I. conveyed his body to Windsor for interment, "they desired that His Majesty might be buried according to the form of the Common Prayer Book, the Bishop of London being present with them to officiate, but Colonel Whicheot, the Governor of the castle, positively and roughly refused to consent to it, and said 'it was not lawful: that the Book of Common Prayer was put down, and he could not suffer it to be used in that garrison where he commanded;' nor could all the reasons, persuasions, and entreaties, prevail with him to suffer it. No wonder that a Liturgy breathing so holy, so peaceful, so forgiving a spirit, should be wormwood and gall to such tyrannous bigots, as Hugh Peters and Cheynel,—to such saints militant, as Colonel Whicheot and Cornet Joyce.

Though Cromwell issued, in November, 1655, a Declaration which, among other things, made it penal for ministers to use the Book of Common Prayer, yet under his government the Church of England enjoyed a respite from severe persecution. He himself was born in the bosom of that Church; his children had been baptized, and two of his daughters married according to its rites; and one of them, the Lady Falconbridge, interceded earnestly, but ineffectually, for the life of Dr. Hewett, whose ministry she had secretly frequented. But although he bore no antipathy to the church as a religious body, yet he dreaded the political principles of its members, and, in the words of Lord Clarendon, "looked upon them as his mortal enemies,"—as men attached to monarchy, and only waiting for an opportunity to attempt the restoration of the lawful sovereign. Regarding Episcopalianism in this light, his conduct towards them must be pronounced tolerant and lenient. Leave was occasionally obtained for the interment of a deceased person according to the Church office; Episcopalianism were suffered to listen to their own ministers in private houses; and in London, which was more immediately under the Protector's shelter, a clergyman here and there, who had succeeded in retaining the use of his own pulpit, ventured on publicly using the proscribed Liturgy. In Oxford, 300 students heard the Liturgy read every Sunday by the Vice-Chancellor; and Usher extracted from Cromwell a verbal promise, that the clergy should not be molested in their use of the Common Prayer, provided they meddled not with state affairs; and the Archbishop himself continued in the preachingship of Lincoln's Inn until his death. Sometimes indeed armed soldiers would interrupt the assemblage, and commit individuals to prison; but these molestations were the acts of his satellites, rather than of Cromwell himself.

On this continent also, and even during so late a period as the American Rebellion, did the Liturgy encounter republican proscription and persecution. Those of the Virginian clergy,—and they were more than two-thirds of the whole,—who kept inviolate their oath of allegiance, and who, undeterred by menace or unmoved by entreaty, continued to solemnize worship after the English ritual, did so at the risk of great personal danger. On one occasion it is related that a clergyman, before mounting his pulpit bade farewell to his family, and concealed pistols in his bosom to be used in the event of an anticipated danger occurring.

Rarely, it is to be feared, does a feeling of gratitude steal across our worldly thoughts for the peaceful times in which Providence has been pleased to cast our lot,—for the liberty we enjoy of worshipping God under the shadow of our own vine, after a form of sound, scriptural, and spirit-stirring words. Persecution visits not us, either in its severer, or mitigated form. The Book of Common Prayer, instead of being an illegal, a forbidden book is seen in the cushioned pew of the rich, in the latticed window of the poor. Its circulation is promoted by a Society formed for the express purpose. No longer confined to our own noble language, it walks the earth in tongues the very names of which but few have ever heard. At the sound of the Liturgy the Caffer chief, the tattooed Zealander, and the Mohawk Indian cast aside their idol Gods and superstitions, and awake into a new, a spiritual existence. In every city of Europe, in the chapel of the Ambassador, or the house of the Consul, on the hill of Mars, at Athens,—on the scites of pagan temples, mosques, and pagodas, its thrilling strains are poured from pious lips, elevating the debased soul, and shedding on its darkness rays of un fading