

Poetry.

My Prayer Book.

BAPTISM.

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

Thou little trembler, robed in white,
Nursling of heaven! sweet neophyte
Before the font arriving,
The birth-dawn of thy spirit's life
With holy fulness be it rise,
While hearts for thee are striving
With God in prayer; that soon thy shielded charms
May rest secure in Christ's baptismal arms.

A silence breathed from God above,
A halcyon of celestial love
Now broods with blest control,
Under the Throne of Him who came
In form as weak as thy young frame,
Thrilling the inmost soul
Of all, whose unflin'd eye of faith perceives
More than mere water on the forehead leaves.

Bright students of the ways of God!
Who, since Incarnate Mercy trod
The forlorn earth of man,
Bend your adoring eyes to learn
Truths deeper than your thoughts discern,
Shrined in redemption's plan,—
Yet viewless Seraphim, this rite attend,
And your calm watch with Christian worship blend.

Thou innocent! with man compared,
Thou hast eternal Truth declared
A child of wrath and sin;
But here, adopted, seal'd, and sign'd
By Him who hath redeem'd mankind,
For thee will now begin

That second birth renewing grace imparts
Through this deep sacrament to infant hearts.

Oh, if Emmanuel ne'er had said
"Let children to Mine arms be led,"
Parents might shrink aghast
A creature into life to bring,
Whose soul the curse of God might wring
When time and earth are past!—
But for the promise of baptismal grace,
What sight so fearful as an infant's face?

All that a birth of flesh can give
What is it,—but a doom to live.
A heritage of woe,
A destiny of guilt and death,
A curse inhaled at every breath
Life breathes from sin below?
By grace uncharm'd, destruction seems to lower
On the sad babe, ere time can count an hour.

But, at the font where Jesu stands
With greeting heart and gracious hands,
Ready to clasp the child,
Pale infant! there, a breath from heaven
May to thy dawning soul be given
Through Him, the Saviour mild,

Who, while He thunders from His regal Throne,
Loves the sweet age on earth, He call'd His Own.

The root of sacramental grace
Is the new Adam of our race,
The MAN DIVINE who bled;
Hence cometh our celestial birth,
Beyond the parentage of earth,
From our generic Head,
The Lord from heaven, whose vital spirit gives
All force by which the mystic Body² lives.

More than our first-born parents knew
Before they proved to God untrue,
Works this celestial gift;
Angels, who on their trial stood,
Exceed not this majestic good
That may thy soul uplift:
A child of God!—can seraphim aspire
To aught sublimer in their sinless choir?

From thee the curse is roll'd away;
Thy soul's new birth begins to-day;
A cov'nant-right to all
Immunities and blessings high,
The heart of Jesus can supply
To those who heed His call:
Now, to the stillness of thy soul is given,
Like breezeless water, to reflect a heaven.

A city and a crown are thine
If thou be true to grace divine,
Bearing thy destined Cross;
Lo, on thy forehead lies the seal
Where the symbol both and sign reveal
That Life must gain by loss:⁴
Firm to thy vow, beneath God's banner fight,
And keep thy panoply of graces bright.

Christ guard thee now, thou little one!
His glory be thy shield and sun
Whate'er thy lot may be;
Incorporate with the Church thou art,
To thee may life and love impart
The truth which maketh free:
New prospects ope, new principles and powers
Rise into play, and rule thine unborne hours.

And, if in secret darkness lie
The seeds of heaven, which none decries,
Dormant and cold within,
May God's reviving breath awake,
Till such dark bond of slumber break,
And grace o'er-master sin:
That latent germ baptismal life bestows
Doth oft in elder hearts its burial power disclose.

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.

The work which Churchmen, whether they be clerks or lay brethren, have before them, is either the promotion of the spiritual growth of the living members of the Church, which is its *Internal Work*; or the building up of its fabric, that is, the fabric

¹ 1 Pet. i. 12.
² "Seeing now that this child is regenerate and grafted into the Body of Christ's Church."—*Baptismal Service.*

³ "Seeing now that this child is regenerate It hath pleased Him to acknowledge this infant with Thy HOLY SPIRIT, to receive him for His own into adoption, and to incorporate him into Thy Holy Church."—*Baptismal Service of the Church of England.*

⁴ Col. i. 12.

⁵ Matt. x. 29.

of its material walls, or the fabric of its economy, by a provision for its Ministers, and by the maintenance of its services. This is its *External Work*. I say, this is the work which all churchmen have to do; though all are not appointed to do it in the same way. We have received a peculiar call and commission to execute some parts of this work in a way that belongs not to lay-people, yet this hinders not their being called to execute their offices, which they may perform more effectually than ourselves. And in most of the Duties that I am now about to notice, unless they work with us, the work will never be well done. We are not the Church, we cannot stand, nor work alone.

Our first duty then appears to me to be UNITY: our second, SANCTITY: our third, PROGRESS.

By Unity, I do not mean uniformity only, though without some uniformity, Unity cannot exist; neither do I intend a skeleton outline of Apostolic succession, unaccompanied by the proportions of Apostolic doctrine and practice; nor am I thinking of distinctive dresses, open seats, painted windows, or Gregorian chants. If the world suppose that this is what we mean by Unity, they utterly mistake, or artfully pervert our meaning. Nevertheless, in their place, these things do not deserve a sneer. A distinctive dress is a decent respect which we all pay to each other, and may most properly pay to the House of God; open seats gather together more of Christ's living members, without distinctions which belong to the world: painted windows invite sacred historical recollections, or become memorials of departed worth: and simple chants enable the greatest number of the faithful to sing together the praises of their Lord.

Still these things are not Unity, singly, nor altogether; for Unity existed without them; and it will exist where they have no place.

Our Unity consists in the oneness of our faith: in the oneness of our Scriptures: in the fellowship of the sacraments, in one Church, and in a general agreement of heart and judgment on the doctrines and duties of the Christian Religion.

Infinite diversities of mind and action there must be; even schools of Theology are admissible, if we understand them to mean not opposing systems, but habits of contemplating the same truth from opposite points of view: but where perfect Unity exists, they will be blended and softened as the colours form one ray of light, as innumerable rays are blended in one landscape.

Yet surely it is important to remember, that we have not Unity to seek, but Unity to preserve.—Whatever differences exist, let them not obscure the broad fact, that we are united in one Church, built professedly on one confession of faith, and that confession Scriptural, Apostolic, and Primitive, that we have been made Ministers by one ordination, and that by our own Voluntary Subscription we are bound, as far as any subscription can bind us, to one general Interpretation of Scripture, in respect to certain great propositions. We have then the Materials, if we could not acquire the Spirit of Unity.

Viewing Unity then from this single point, it will obviously occur to you that it will be promoted by our abstaining from bitter language and contentious provocations of each other, from all that needlessly wounds a brother's feelings, or character, "provoking one another" rather to a peaceful rivalry "in good works," endeavouring to discover the points of agreement, and to practise these, and if others differ, labouring to bring them over, not so much to our own mind, as to the mind of the Church, and above all, where the Church has given her judgment, following with a glad mind and will her godly admonitions, "and submitting ourselves to her godly judgment." For he who is not ready to submit himself to the Church of which he is a member, must be in danger of grieving that Holy Spirit who dwells in the whole body. His case is not that of the "hand saying to the feet, I have no need of you;" but of the hand saying to the whole body, "I have no need of you."

If indeed we read and reflect upon the solemn words of our Ordination Service, (and the least that we can do is to read that service, with self-examination, once a year), we must see the necessity of such a course of conduct as I have prescribed.

The distinct promise made before God and the congregation, to give our "faithful diligence always so to Minister the Doctrine and Sacraments, and the Discipline of Christ, as this Church and realm hath received the same," cannot be fulfilled by those, who set up their own way of action against the way prescribed for them. Such a procedure is as contrary to Scripture as to the Church, for, says the Apostle, "let us walk by the same rule," or canon, "let us mind the same thing." I would beg therefore earnestly to caution you against that most needless violation of Unity, the mutilation of some of the Services. If we are at liberty to alter and omit, where shall we stop? There are a few parts in our Liturgy which might possibly admit of abbreviation, but when a service like the Marriage Service, is heard so seldom, and by the same individuals sometimes only once in their lives, it appears to me that the mutilation of it is tantamount to a positive declaration that we are wiser than the Church of God. The concluding address every one ought to be the better for hearing: the commencement contains truths which the Church deems it

right to utter, because they are built on the declarations of Scripture. It is not the purer class of minds who are offended by plainness. And if we begin the work of omission in deference to the scruples of others, we may in the end omit half the doctrinal parts of our Service, or large portions of the Lessons appointed to be read. I must therefore enjoin you, as a matter of canonical Duty, to read this Service and the other services entire. I also trust that you will urge on your Parishioners when they come to be married, to ask God's blessing on "the holy estate of Matrimony" in God's House, and that you will, in the Towns especially, endeavour to uphold the rule.

I deem it my duty to give a precise and positive injunction on another point. There is, I understand, a custom in some Parishes, of which I was not, until lately, aware, of offering up extemporaneous prayers over the dead, in private houses, instead of bringing the corpse to Church, so that, in fact, the Clergyman substituted his own prayers for the prayers of the Church. I am not desirous to speak too strongly of any custom which has existed for some time: but I must, in duty to the Church and to the laity forbid this custom, as not only inconsistent with the use of our formularies, but contrary to them. Of what benefit is a prescribed and common form, if our own prayers, however well prepared, are to take their place? We might as well offer up an extempore prayer at our Sunday School, in place of the ordinary service for the day, and of all parts of our Prayer Book, the Burial Service is the last which can with propriety or advantage to the survivors be omitted. Many persons attend Funerals who do not belong to our Communion, and it is not improbable that some benefit might be produced in their minds by our affecting and instructive prayers. I must also express my disapprobation of the practice of reading the funeral service at the grave in a gown. Even when the grave-yard is at a distance from the Church, there is no great difficulty in the Sexton or attendant carrying the surplice. It is the appointed vestment for offering up our public prayers, and I consider it both disrespectful to the memory of the dead, and to the plain injunctions of the Liturgy to do otherwise. We might with as much propriety read the Sunday prayers and lessons in the preaching gown. I hope your good feeling will resort to what is the universal practice of our Church at home, and could not in reason offend any one, whose scruples deserve consideration.

I have not deemed it necessary to make any general order in reference to the weekly Offertory, which in some Churches has been customarily collected. But I think it will be admitted, that we should all make our public and extraordinary collections, whenever they are made, in the same manner. It is a source of needless confusion, and needless remark on the part of the laity, when they find the custom of collecting different in divers Churches.* And as no believer in the truth of Scripture ought to be offended by hearing the words of Divine truth read in his ears, there can be no reasonable objection to our reading the "Sentences," whilst the Churchwardens, or other fit persons, collect the Alms of the people. The custom is seemingly, rational, Scriptural, and surely more edifying, than listening to some secular melody played by an Organist.

I trust that the meeting of the several Deaneries have been (for the most part) pleasant and profitable. Whatever brings the Clergy together, enables them to know each other, to communicate their thoughts, wishes, and plans freely, and to interchange kindly offices, must do good; and it must be their own fault if such meetings are not found useful, and I earnestly request you not to absent yourselves from them. There are no moments of my life to which I look back with more unfeigned pleasure, than those which I was thus permitted to spend in the society of some of my much-loved brethren, many of them, alas! "early called to rest," in my native land. But I should strongly advise you not often to introduce controverted subjects of doctrine into these little resting-places of friendship. Surely Life is short enough, and sad enough, without being embittered by never-ending strife. Spiritual improvement, not party contests, should be the object of all our assemblies.

It will afford you pleasure to hear, that the Bishop of Toronto and the Bishop of Newfoundland have divided their Dioceses into Deaneries, so that we do not stand alone. Let me return my sincere thanks for the zeal with which the Deans Rural have discharged their gratuitous offices, and tender these words of Scriptural advice in reference to the future. "Be not high-minded, but fear;" "For-sake not the assembling of yourselves together;" and, "See that ye fall not out by the way."

To return to the great subject of Unity. I know not how it is possible to look back to the foundation of the Church, or to that awful hour (recorded in the 17th chapter of St. John) when our Divine Master looked upon it as so founded, formed, collected, and perfected, gathering to itself all that is fitted by his grace on Earth for God's Eternal Praise, without looking beyond ourselves: without remembering that no distinctions of climate, caste, or race, formed part of His heavenly contemplation:

* The same observation applies to the manner of administering the Holy Communion.

that He gathers in the wide embrace of His Love all people and all tongues, sinners and saints, the penitent and the fallen, the loving John, the erring Peter, the weeping Magdalene, the doubtful Thomas, the forgetful Philip: and even the crucifiers of their King, even the fallen Ephesus, the defiled Sardis, the cold Laodicea, were cared for, and beloved by Him: and that He, whose "gifts and calling are without repentance," can never coldly forget nor cruelly pass by the places where His love was first published by Angels to mankind, the cave of His nativity, the valley of His agony, the "little hill" which He ascended to die for us men and for our salvation, the spots to which His angel led St. Paul, or where St. Peter blotted out the memory of his former grief by another crucifixion. And if we see our brother "fallen among thieves, stripped" of his "glorious raiment, wounded, and half dead," we should not, with cold averted eye, pass him by without sympathy, or heap curses upon his head, but should extend to him at least a brother's heart, a brother's prayers.

If a much deeper and holier spirit than any which exists at large in our own Church be wanted to heal our own wounds, and bring back Unity, how certain must it be, that the unity of the parts of Christendom can never be effected without the unity of the whole: and that though, unhappily this union seems as far off as ever, Union is the thing we want, the want of which we lament with all our hearts, and whilst "we dare not sacrifice truth to peace, nor separate ourselves from the Gospel in order to be conformed to the Church," Roman, or Oriental, we endeavour to "conform ourselves in all things both in credendis et agendis, to whatsoever is uniform in the belief or practice of the Universal Church: and hold an actual communion with all the divided parts of the Christian world," in all things lawful, "and in votis, according to our desires, in all things."⁶

With such sentiments, I hold it impossible to attempt to overlook the existence, or to be content with ceaseless vituperation of the Roman and Oriental Churches. Both originally descended from the "root of Jesse; both have their witness in the Scriptures: both have made us their debtors by "imparting spiritual gifts;" both profess to worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity: both acknowledge one Redeemer, one Spirit, and one Baptism: both unite in the three Ancient Creeds, except in one Article, and that capable of a milder interpretation: both own the weight of the moral duties of the Gospel, and look forward to the coming of the Lord to judge the quick and dead: both have the witness of the Spirit "working with them," by the possession of great Saints, and illustrious Luminaries. We know indeed full well the injustice, and the narrowness of the Tridentine decrees: we know how that famous synod (for council it can hardly be called) was gathered together, awed, and silenced: nevertheless I maintain, that not to extend to the great body of the Christian world our sympathy, our wishes, and our prayers, to repeat for everlasting ages the same hard and bitter words, to mistake the thunder of the English guns for the rights of Bishops, and to trample on the rights of Ancient and Apostolic Churches, by reason of our might, and our knowledge, and our wealth, is as unwarrantable as were the canons of the Council of Trent. But that we, even the purest of us, should set ourselves up as pattern-Christians to the whole world, and deny the graces which others really possess, is such an instance of unholy pride, as I pray God, may not be visited upon us in judgment. What are we, as an English Church and Nation, that we should "boast ourselves against all other branches?"—We who founded an Empire in India, and while we heaped up treasure for ourselves, forgot for a long time, that there was such a thing as Christianity! We, who resisted to the uttermost the affecting supplications of the Americans for Spiritual help, and then, by the righteous judgment of God, lost that mighty Empire by our obstinacy and folly! We, who (to be consistent in our inconsistency) weaken, continually weaken, as much as in us lies, in all our Colonies, the hands of Protestant Prelates, while we loudly exult in the superior lustre of the Protestant Religion! Our duty is humility, not boasting: to read the awful sentences in the Book of Revelation, and to tremble; to read the gracious assurances of Christ's love, and not to despair.

Let us then, my brethren, be intercessors for Christ's Church in all her branches throughout the world: even for those who deny our Priesthood, reject our Sacraments, and excommunicate us for adhering to such terms of Communion as IGNATIUS, IRENÆUS, and CYPRIAN would have embraced.—And, blessed be God, this is not the case with the Oriental Church. The prejudices which exist against us in that quarter, arise chiefly from not knowing what we are. Our translations of the Scriptures, and of the Prayer-book, will tend to remove this veil, and will bring us into friendly communion with each other. Nor ought we to forget that pure and venerable branch of the Episcopal Church in Scotland, to whose reverence for primitive Antiquity, the Sister Church in America owes an important part of her Communion Office, and one link of her Apostolic descent. And with what unfeigned joy, my Brethren, may we hail the

⁶ Bramhall. Answer to Müllers.