

BRITISH AND FOREIGN SCHOOL SOCIETY.

Speakers in Exeter Hall, May 1838,—from the Rev. Mr. Clarke's letters.

BISHOP OF DERRY.—It was late before I entered the hall; and there was one at that moment addressing the chair; whose appearance and animated manner particularly interested me. Thin and spare in person, yet tall and graceful in form, and combining with marks of age and hoary venerableness, a dignity of mien, and a physical and intellectual energy, that made his remarks doubly impressive, he was holding the vast audience in breathless attention. It came in his way to pronounce an eulogium upon Wilberforce, whose memoir, just published, is producing a great sensation through the land. This animated and eloquent speaker wished that all the nobility of England were governed by the high and holy principles, and animated with the pure, and elevated, and heavenly spirit of the departed Wilberforce—that his mantle might fall upon every noble lord within the limits of the British empire. There was so much to charm one in his manner of speaking that I could not but ask my next neighbour, who stood at my side, the name of the speaker. The answer was, *the Bishop of Derry*. The Irish are certainly constituted with a peculiar temperament, and their lips seem touched with the fire and the inspiration of a native and most powerful eloquence.

CHURCH PASTORAL AID SOCIETY.

BISHOP OF RIPON—is a fine looking man, with dark eyes and black hair, and is partially bald. He spoke with occasional hesitancy for a word, but with evident good sense and pious feeling. The object of this society, as you are aware, is to furnish the means of sending additional ministers to overgrown parishes, and to supply feeble churches with the ministrations of the Gospel. The report showed that there were parishes in England with thirty thousand people, and only one minister to attend to them. Under such circumstances we cannot much wonder that dissent has hitherto prevailed. This society therefore have undertaken to multiply faithful ministers throughout the land—sending three or four to some parishes where formerly there was but a single individual. Laymen also are employed by this society, to prepare the way for clerical ministration.

The Bishop of Ripon remarked, that at first he felt some scruples in joining this society, on account of its employing lay agency. That he had paused for a while to ascertain the nature of that agency. He was now convinced, that it confined itself solely and exclusively to the province of district visiting, and in no way interfered with the ministerial office. He thought this institution most important, and it had been of essential service in his diocese. The district over which he was called to preside by his spiritual office, numbered a population of 900,000 souls, and for that enormous mass of human beings, there were at the present moment not more than 360 ordained clergymen. And of these clergymen only about 240 were affording pastoral superintendence to the people. These had under their care 700,000 souls.

The next speaker was one "whose praise is in all the churches"—The Bishop of Chester. He is a very mild and amiable looking man—rather thin in appearance, and of a comparatively feeble voice. He said, when this society was formed he did not exercise the caution of his Rt. Rev. brother—he did not pause; he felt its operations could be nothing but good, and he had from the first given to it his heart and his hand. He drew an affecting picture of the wants of the Church, of the inadequacy of the clergy to supply the land with the ministrations of the Gospel, and consequently of the vast utility of this society. The Bishop of Chester, I believe, is a truly spiritual man. He appears on the stand at Exeter Hall as the avowed advocate of most of the objects which Christian benevolence is endeavouring to set forward. He is bold and fearless in the avowal of his sentiments. It was while attending the meeting of the Church Missionary Society, held at Exeter Hall the day before I arrived, that he remarked, that certain modern divines were putting forth views of justification, over which there seemed to be drawn a veil of mysticism and dark uncertainty. 'But,' said

he, 'for my part I thank God, that the Apostle St. Paul, under the guidance of the unerring Spirit of God, has left us a mode of justification, so simple that a child may understand it, and yet so glorious and sublime that angels may well desire to look into it.'

The next speaker that rose on the stand appeared far more stout and robust than the mitred and most worthy dignitary that had preceded him, but still in the outlines of his physiognomy bearing some resemblance to him. It was the younger of the Summers—the worthy bishop of Winchester. His manner was more bold and animated than that of his brother, and accompanied with no less unction. He remarked that he felt it his duty to postpone every other engagement and avocation in order to come to this meeting to acknowledge, as a diocesan, the benefits which this society had conferred on that part of the country more immediately under his own jurisdiction. The resolution which he had been requested to present referred to the growing desire for spiritual instruction and religious ordinances in the country at large. It was doubtless true that wherever the cross of Christ was lifted up, sinners were drawn to it and those that were dying of their spiritual wounds were, by looking to that cross, made to live. Since he had come down to the meeting he had seen the model of a church by which he thought he might illustrate the point in the resolution just referred to. This model was to be used as a collecting box for the society. The church of which it was a model was the smallest in the kingdom—the Church of St. Lawrence, in the Isle of Wight. It was only large enough to contain forty individuals, and yet many a time when he had had the pleasure of personally ministering there, he found not only this sanctuary filled, but four times the number it could contain standing around the doors and windows to catch every word of life that was uttered. Holding up the little model in his hand before the audience, he added, 'In that little church, as in many others, I see the truth of my proposition—there is a growing desire for spiritual instruction.' 'But,' continued he, 'the resolution also deplores the lamentable deficiency of an adequate supply of the means of grace that still exists in many parts. Some who had visited the wild spot where that little church stands, had been surprised at the number of graves with which the churchyard was filled. This church stands on a cliff that beetles over one of the most dangerous coasts in that part of the kingdom, and many a mariner had perished on this rocky coast in full view of the tower of this little church. There were perils at sea, but no less awful breakers on the land, upon which the mariner boud for eternity might be wrecked, and we are all called upon to go and lift up a beacon or warning to our fellow men that they perish not. This was the grand object of the society whose cause he now advocated. It was not only in large manufacturing districts, but where there was a sparse and scattered population that they were trying to supply with the waters of life. He could tell them of some sixty or seventy rural hamlets in his own diocese, situated on the border of some wild moor, or amid the deep wood of an extended forest, where though there were perhaps only six or seven hundred inhabitants, it was necessary to care for them, for they were sadly destitute of religious privileges: yet had they immortal souls to save—souls that would live for ever, either for good or evil.'

SELECTIONS.

As the tempest and the thunder affect not the sun or the stars, but spend their fury on stones and trees below; so injuries ascend not to the souls of the great, but waste themselves on such as are those who offer them.

Be not like unto those who fight with the thunder; nor dare thou to deny thy Creator thy prayers because he chastiseth thee. Thy madness is on thine own head in this; thy impiety hurteth no one but thyself.

I feel disposed to treat carnal men and carnal ministers with tenderness, not to shew them that I am a spiritual-proud man. Let them see that you have some secret in possession, which keeps you quiet, humble, patient, holy, meek, and affectionate, in a turbulent and passionate world.—*Cal.*

ing earnestness—saying, "May the Lord Jesus have mercy on my poor soul!" which she often repeated during the night—her last upon earth. I spent it beside her bed, often praying with her and reading the Scriptures, and pointing her to Jesus the great fountain of redeeming love. She alternately deplored her great sinfulness (though she had lived far more purely than many around her) and expressed her confidence in the Saviour of sinners, who she said she would not cast her away from his presence, but receive her to his arms. The beautiful hymn—

"Jesus lover of my soul,
"Let me to thy bosom fly," &c.

The several times repeated with evident delight.—I had in my journal the following notice of that memorable night:—

"Upon the whole I have seldom had more comfort, and, I trust, edification, than in the dying chamber of this interesting young woman. She had always been mild and amiable and grave, but especially turned to the things of God for the last two years, and in particular since a severe thunder storm in the early part of the summer. Her husband, to whom I had united her scarce two years before, told me that often as he approached the house he heard her engaged in private prayer, and sometimes while at her work in some solitary place. The New Testament and Prayer Book were lovely and pleasant to her in life, and in death were not divided from her, being found that night under her pillow. Her conversation throughout the closing scene was remarkable, and could only have proceeded from that faith which enables its possessor to cast all care upon God, and to feel that 'to die is gain.' While every eye was fixed on her alone were dry—while every tongue either stammered or quite refused to do its office, her's was steady and firm, even when taking leave of her friends, to each of whom she addressed a few words of advice of the best kind—to seek the Lord betimes, and to leave all for a place in his kingdom. "Good bye dear husband—was her moving farewell—you are called to part with your nearest and dearest friend—yes, your dearest friend that you have in the whole world. But weep not for me—I am going to my Lord—to my Jesus.—Only try and meet me in the cradle near her, she said, "O how I wish I could take her in my arms to my Saviour!" It was affecting sight to see this babe, after all was over, looking up and smile on all about her, unconscious that she slept she had lost a mother's care forever. After many hours passed in alternate prayer to God and solemn conversation with the mourning attendants, the affecting scene was closed at day-break, by the spirit taking its flight to a better world—as it were saying to the corruptible body, "Let me go the day breaketh"—the everlasting day of peace and joy.—"Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

I returned to my house about six o'clock in the evening, penetrated with a sense of the extreme uncertainty of life, and its best enjoyments. A week before, this beloved parishioner was in my presence—three days before, she was in the possession of all the happiness she could desire. This morning how solemn the change! She stretched beside us a pallid corpse—her house the house of mourning, and stamped by the solemn sentence—"In the midst of life we are in death!" But I blessed God for the comfortable assurance which came as a cheering light over the scene of gloom and of death, that she had exchanged earth for heaven.

Two days after, it was my endeavour to improve a serious call to the good of some hundreds who surrounded her early grave, from the animating words of the apostle, "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Many good things alas! are forgotten by my unstable mind, but this death-bed scene, that solemn and yet comfortable night of my ministry, not seldom come back upon my thoughts with a holy and refreshing influence.

A MISSIONARY.

September, 1838.