

ON THE DEATH OF A MINISTER CUT OFF IN HIS USEFULNESS.

By James Montgomery.

Go to the grave, in all thy glorious prime,
In full activity of zeal and power;
A Christian cannot die before his time,
The Lord's appointment is the servant's hour.

Go to the grave; at noon from labour cease;
Rest on thy sheaves; thy harvest task is done;
Come from the heat of battle, and in peace,
Soldier, go home; with thee the fight is won.

Go to the grave; though like a fallen tree,
At once with verdure, flowers and fruitage crown'd,
Thy form may perish, and thine honours be
Lost in the mouldering bosom of the ground;—

Go to the grave; which, faithful to its trust,
The germ of immortality shall keep:
While safe as watch'd by cherubim, thy dust
Shall, to the Judgment-day in Jesus sleep.

Go to the grave; for there thy Saviour lay
In death's embraces, ere he rose on high;
And all the ransom'd, by that narrow way,
Pass to eternal life beyond the sky.

Go to the grave; no, take thy seat above;
Be thy pure spirit present with the Lord,
Where thou for faith and hope hast perfect lore,
And open vision for the written word.

We call attention to the following from "The Church."

OUR CHURCH RESPONSES.

It is matter of frequent complaint that our congregations take so small a share in the service of our Church. The Clerk, whose office it is merely to lead the responses of the people, is sometimes almost the only person whose responses are audible. Some few indeed will repeat the alternate verses in the Psalms—and an indistinct murmuring is heard from different parts of the church during the other portions of the service; but as to the responses in general, they are left to him who is officially appointed to conduct them; and scarcely any voice is perceived besides.

While, however, this defect in our public worship is so generally felt and so deeply regretted, few of our Clergymen seem to be adopting any measure for the correction of the evil they deplore. They make perhaps an allusion to the subject when speaking occasionally on the duties of public worship; but their exhortations are seldom productive of permanent benefit; and at length they hopelessly surrender the point, and suffer matters to proceed in their ordinary course.

But possibly some correction might present itself were we more diligently and perseveringly to seek it. During the early months of my residence at Cambridge, I was much struck with the almost total indifference to the service discovered by the students in their attendance on our College Chapel; the responses were repeated by only a few among them, and that with timidity and careful suppression of voice. But in a few months a most striking alteration took place; and from that time to the period in which I left college, the practice of responding in a clear, distinct and audible voice, was not only general, but nearly universal. And this change originated in a quarter we should have little anticipated. It did not arise from the more serious, steady and conscientious of the students; but from the gay and non-reading among them. A few of these (from what precise motive I am unable to determine) began the practice; and others soon adopted it; till at length, as I mentioned, it became nearly universal. And might not a similar change be experienced by ourselves? Supposing we were to fix

on 6 or 8 suitable persons from among our congregations, sitting in different parts of the Church; and to request them privately to repeat the responses throughout the whole service, for a quarter of a year or so, by way of trial; gradually adding to their number, should such addition be found requisite. And if these individuals could be prevailed on to stop for a few Sundays for a short time after the service, sitting in the irrelative seats and endeavouring to respond together, and at the same time properly to follow the clerk, greater uniformity would thus be obtained and the too common evil would be avoided, of some two or three finishing the verse long before the others. In addition to this, the congregation, might be affectionately solicited to join, and prayer books of different descriptions might at a cheap rate be procured and offered for sale; so that no one should have any excuse for not joining.

The benefits resulting from this practice are too obvious to need any enlargement. Our admirable service, deprived as it now is of much of its life and energy, would then be seen to resume its attractive comeliness and vigour, and become more deeply seated in our affections. The listless eye also, and the wandering imagination, would then be arrested, and fixed in closer attention to the service in which they were engaged.—The mere mechanism too of audibly responding would cause them, by the simple chiming and jingling of words, to remember many an edifying passage of the Psalms, and other parts of the service, which would otherwise have been completely lost to them. And though every sentence which is responded cannot be supposed to affect them, yet may we not reasonably conclude that while they are thus engaged in actually repeating, many a profitable thought will be elicited, and many a divine influence from God's teaching spirit, mercifully communicated?

MISCELLANEOUS.

PRAYER A SPIRITUAL BAROMETER.

When we awake out of sleep our wants begin, and our desires are stirred up for the supply of them. Few things mark spiritual life more distinctly than the earnest desire of the heart after spiritual blessings. When a Christian awakes to life, then the breath of prayer proves that life. We may say of every worldly man he knows not real communion with God in daily prayer. We may say of every Christian, "he prayeth." This is indeed the spiritual barometer of the soul. Whatever outward storms, whatever clouds and darkness may surround him, if the barometer of prayer be steadily rising, his soul is on the way to brighter and fairer, and happier days. My brethren, what are your prayers? What can your closets testify as to retired, fervent, continued pouring out of your souls before God? Do you make all your requests known unto him? This is the evidence that your souls live. When a man awakes up with returning light and life, he rises and goes forward, entering on his labors, and pursues them through the day. The Christian too, has a great work; he "labors not for meat that perisheth, but for the meat that endureth to eternal life, which the Son of Man giveth." And O what exertion is here requisite! Look at the racer, how he strains every nerve; look at the wrestler, how all his muscular strength is required; look at the warrior, does he sleep in all the energies of the conflict? We run, we wrestle, we fight for life and salvation; we contend not for "a corruptible, but for an incorruptible crown." Every thing is at stake, we have mighty enemies; we are weak, and all would be lost, had we not an Almighty Helper. It is his grace alone, that raises us from our falls, preserves us from being completely overthrown, and upholds us still, and enables us to go on, "faint, yet pursuing." My brethren, if you never felt that religion called for all our efforts, that it was a work wrought in us by the mighty power of God, and manifesting itself in all good works to man, you know not yet the true character of the religion of the gospel. We live in a world, the very air of which is, as to spiritual things, full of heaviness and drowsiness. Seldom do men get stirred and animated, and roused by those around them. We generally live in the chilling,

freezing, benumbing and deadening atmosphere of this world, and too often ourselves catch the spirit of slumber; but let us remember we must "press into the kingdom." "The kingdom of God suffereth violence and the violent take it by force."—Rev. E. Bickersteth.

THE BELIEVER.

I had rather be the poorest believer than the greatest king on earth. How small a commotion, small in its beginning, may prove the overturning of the greatest kingdom! But the believer is heir to a kingdom that cannot be shaken. The mightiest and most victorious prince, who hath not only lost nothing, but hath been gaining new conquests all his days, is stopped by a small distemper, in the middle of his course; he returns to his dust, and then his vast designs fall to nothing. In that very day his thoughts perish. But the believer, in that very day, is sent to the possession of his crown: that is his coronation day; all his thoughts are accomplished. How can you affright him? Bring him word that his estate is ruined. Yet my inheritance is safe, says he. "Your wife, or child, or dear friend, is dead." Yet my father lives. "You yourself must die." Well, then, I go home to my Father, and to my inheritance. For the public troubles of the Church, doubtless, it is both a pious and a generous temper to be more deeply affected for these than for all our private ones; and to be alive to the common calamities of any people, but especially of God's own people, hath been the character of men near unto him. Observe the pathological strains of the prophets' bewailing, when they foretel the desolation even of foreign kingdoms, much more when foretelling that of the Lord's chosen people: they are still mindful of Sion, and mournful for her distresses. So the Psalmist: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning." (Ps. cxxxvii. 5.) Pious spirits are always public spirited. Yet, even in this, with much compassion, there is a calm in the believer's mind. How these agree, none can tell but they who feel it. He finds, amidst all hard news, yet still, a fixed heart, trusting, satisfied in this, that deliverance shall come in due time (Ps. cii. 13), and that in those judgments that are inflicted, man shall be humbled, and God exalted (Isaiah ii. 11; v. 16); and that in all tumults and subversions of states, still his throne is fixed, and with that the believer's heart likewise. So Psalm xxix. 10: "The Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth king for ever." . . . In all commotions the kingdom of Christ shall be spreading and growing, and the close of all shall be full victory on his side: and that is sufficient for the believer.—Archbishop Leighton.

BISHOPS OF CALCUTTA.

An esteemed reverend brother of the Church of England, among other favors, has recently sent us two charges of the Right Rev. Daniel Wilson, the present Bishop of Calcutta. In the first of these charges, delivered in September, 1834, he pays the following beautiful and comprehensive tribute to his four right reverend predecessors in that inexpressibly interesting, but too extensive see. The increase of bishops for the service of British India will, it is hoped, under the divine blessing, be the means of extending the usefulness of the episcopate, and tending to the preservation of precious lives by a division of labor in that wide-spread country. Bishop Wilson, speaking of the insufficient provision in India for meeting the demands of his diocese, thus notices those exalted men who in about twelve years had been called from their labors:—

"The prodigious powers of mind, and knowledge of ecclesiastical antiquity of the first prelate (Bishop Middleton); the lovely, attractive character, and extraordinary fame and influence of the second (Bishop Heber); the elegant learning and mild piety of the third (Bishop James); with the promptness, activity, knowledge of the philosophy of benevolence, and devotedness of heart to his Saviour, of my immediate predecessor (Bishop Turner,) would have failed, perhaps, to bring the Eastern Church fully before the public mind, if the fell swoop of death had not torn up the sensibilities of our countrymen from one end of Britain to another, and forced every heart to feel for India.—Gos. Mes.