

Church, "that its members had left their first love," or been seduced to follow other teachers, and to relinquish the simplicity of the Gospel.

In the solemn charge contained in the message to the Church of Ephesus, we find a correct delineation of the character of that Church in its infancy. Its work, its labour, its patience, its determined opposition to evil, its scrutiny into the claims of those who pretended to be apostles, and to the last its hatred of the works of the Nicolaitans, men who gave license to the practice of gross sins, were all subjects of merited commendation. Still, however, the charge was brought against the Church, that she had left her "first love;" that she was not in the same position of devoted attachment for which she had been peculiarly distinguished.

In consequence of this desertion, the call is here made to the Church of Ephesus, to recollect her former spiritually prosperous state. She is exhorted to compare her past with her present condition, and with penitence to seek to regain the high situation which she formerly maintained. She is called upon to do her first works, to be conspicuous as formerly for labour and patience; and she is threatened, that if she did not comply with the injunction, and did not amend, her "candlestick" should be removed out of his place; that is, the light of Christianity would be darkened, and her members return to their former state of delusive error. And this denunciation against her was uttered by that Saviour who holdeth the seven stars, which are the angels of the seven Churches, in his right hand; who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, or Churches themselves; and was thus qualified to ascertain the true character and condition of each individual Church. It will be observed, that in each of these epistles the Lord Jesus speaks of himself under some peculiar character, which will be found to have an especial bearing on the contents of the epistle itself.

How fully the threatening against the Church of Ephesus has been realised, the present condition of Ephesus fully testifies. The warning was unheeded; and Ephesus at the present moment presents the spectacle not merely of a city from which the light of divine truth has been removed, but of which there is scarcely a vestige left, to mark its former grandeur, as the chief town of Lesser Asia.

In proof of this assertion, we have the following account of the present state of this once-famous city:—

"In twelve hours' ride from Smyrna, (says an American missionary) we reached Aiasaluck. Strabo says that Ephesus was 320 stadia, i. e. 40 miles, south of Smyrna. Our journey corresponded well with this statement.

"We found at Aiasaluck three English gentlemen, who had been travelling in Egypt and Syria, and were now on their way to Smyrna. The only coffee-house in the place furnished lodgings for us all: its walls were of stone and mud; its roof was thatched with grass and straw, and almost filled with swallows' nests: the establishment consists of two apartments, one for travellers, the other for their horses: the only passage to the stables leads through the centre of the bar-room, or dining-room, it may be called. Before the coffee-house is a sarcophagus with an inscription on it, now almost entirely illegible. Beyond the sarcophagus is a mosque. The ruins of several Turkish baths are in sight. Around the coffee-house are a few miserable huts, which constitute the village of Aiasaluck.

"We went to the church of St. John, at the foot of the hill on the west. It was probably built by the Greek Christians who settled at Aiasaluck when Ephesus was destroyed. When the Mahomedans took possession of the country, this, like many other churches, was converted into a mosque. It is now entirely deserted, without doors, windows, roof, or floor. It is divided into four apartments: one embraces half the building, and seems to have been the churchyard: in this yard some large trees are standing. The other three apartments are nearly equal: and rank weeds are now growing undisturbed where Christians first, and afterwards Mahomedans, offered their prayers. In the church are some immensely large pillars of granite, said to have been taken from the temple of Diana; having thus served, successively, in a Pagan a Christian, and a Mahomedan place of worship.

"At seven o'clock the next morning we mounted our horses, and, leaving the sarcophagus and the old mosque on our right, rode to Mount Prion; and then sent our horses back, and set out on foot to survey the ruins of Ephesus.—The ground was covered with high grass or grain; and a very heavy dew rendered the walking rather unpleasant.

"On the east side of the hill we found nothing worthy of notice, no appearance of having been occupied by buildings. On the north side was the circus or stadium; its length from east to west is forty rods, or one stadium: the north or lower side was supported by arches, which still remain: the area, where the races used to be performed, is now a field of wheat: at the west end was the gate: the walls adjoining it are still standing, and of considerable height and strength. North of the stadium, and separated only by a street, is a large square, enclosed with fallen walls, and filled with the ruins of various edifices: a street running north and south divides this square in the centre. West of the stadium is an elevation of ground, level on the top, with an immense pedestal in the centre of it. Between this and the stadium was a street, passing from the great plain north of Ephesus into the midst of the city.

"I found on the plains of Ephesus some Greek peasants, men and women, employed in pulling up tares and weeds from the wheat. It reminded me of Matt. xiii. 28. I addressed them in Romic, but found that they understood very little of it, as they usually answered me in Turkish. I ascertained, however, that they all belonged to villages at a distance, and came there to labour. Not one of them could read; but they said there were priests and a schoolmaster in the village to which they belonged, who could read. I gave them some tracts, which they promised to give to their priest and schoolmaster. Tournefort says that, when he was at Ephesus, there were thirty or forty Greek families there. Chandler found only ten or twelve individuals. Now, no human being lives in Ephesus; and in Aiasaluck, which may be considered as Ephesus under another name, though not on precisely the same spot of ground, there are merely a few miserable Turkish huts.—The candlestick is removed out of its place.—How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people!"

"While wandering among the ruins, it was impossible not to think with deep interest of the events which have transpired on this spot. Here has been displayed all the skill of the architect, the musician, the tragedian, and the orator! Here some of the most splendid works of man have been seen in all their glory; and here the event has shewn their transitory nature! How interesting would it be to stand

among these walls, and have before the mind a full view of the history of Ephesus from its first foundation till now! We might observe the idolatrous and impure rites, and the cruel and bloody sports of Pagans, succeeded by the preaching, the prayers, the holy and peaceable lives of the first Christians—these Christians martyred, but their religion still triumphing—Pagan rites and Pagan sports abolished, and the simple worship of Christ instituted in their room. We might see the city conquered and reconquered, destroyed and rebuilt: till, finally, Christianity, arts, learning, and prosperity, all vanish before the pestiferous breath of 'the only people whose sole occupation has been to destroy!'

"The plain of Ephesus is now very unhealthy, owing to the fogs and mist which almost continually rest upon it. The land, however, is rich, and the surrounding country is both fertile and healthy. The adjacent hills would furnish many delightful situations for villages, if the difficulties were removed which are thrown in the way by a despotic government, oppressive agas, and wandering banditti."

How fearfully does this description of the condition of modern Ephesus, which entirely corresponds with that of other travellers, set forth the accomplishment of the Divine threatenings! How fully do we behold in her overthrow the consequence of departure from the living God, and of inattention to his warning voice calling to repentance!

The chief accusation brought against the Church of Ephesus was, that she had left her "first love." She was in a declining state. Spiritual decay had already manifested itself. The flame of holy zeal and devoted attachment which once burned brightly, now emitted only a feeble and languid light, although there might be an external show of worship, and an outward observance of moral decency.—And may not the Christian often have cause to trace with alarm the progress of decay in himself, and to exclaim in the language of Job, "O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness; as I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle." "The truth as it is in Jesus" is brought home to his heart, and for a season, perhaps, he continues to run well. Religion seems to impress his mind, to occupy his thoughts, and to govern his actions, and under the constraining influence of its power, as of a new affection, he is full of zeal and devotion and anxiety for the furtherance of the Divine glory. But here lapses into his former state of carelessness as to spiritual concerns; and the accusation may be fairly brought against him, that he has forgotten his "first love."

Alas! how often has the believer cause to mourn over his backslidings, his inconsistencies, his declensions from the faith! How often is he called upon, in penitence and humility, to approach the throne of the heavenly grace, to implore pardon for past failings, and strength to enable him to regain and to maintain his former state; nay, rather to advance even to higher degrees of spirituality than those from which he has declined!

The Christian state is to be one of continual progress towards perfection. It is to be a growing state; and he is to be prayerfully and sedulously cautioned, lest there should be a worm at the root, in the shape of some darling sin, some unchaste desire, some indulgent propensity, which causes him to wither,—lest, through the abounding of iniquity, his love should "wax cold." Let him recollect that the state of the backslider is uniformly spoken of in Scripture as a state of imminent danger, and that "no man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

The warnings of the Bible must not be unheeded. The same Divine Being who removed the candlestick from Ephesus, and made her city a desolation, is able, and he hath declared that his purpose is it, to destroy all those who wilfully continue in a backsliding state. Let the backslider then earnestly pray that the gift of true repentance may be granted unto him; that he may return to the Lord with full purpose of heart never more to swerve from the path of his commandments. Let him take to his comfort the gracious promise annexed to the gracious invitation, "Return unto me, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings, and love you freely, and mine anger shall be turned away from you." Let him be earnest in his supplications at the throne of grace, that such a measure of divine strength may be imparted to his weakness, that, overcoming every difficulty, and being proof against every temptation, he may, through the merits of his adorable Redeemer, enter on the full enjoyment of that everlasting state of joy unspeakable and full of glory, which shall be conferred on those who overcome, and which is represented as eating "of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."

RESPONSES IN CHURCH—PARISH CLERKS.

From the British Magazine.

SIR,—It is a complaint almost universal in our churches, that the congregation will not make the proper responses. In the parts of the service which are assigned to the people, they are either silent altogether, or repeat the answers in a low and scarcely audible whisper. I need not point out to you how serious is this evil; how much it detracts from the beauty of our service, and how much it tends to deaden the feelings of devotion. I would rather turn to the inquiry, whether we may not find some remedy for an evil which, although too inveterate to be easily abated, is not, I trust, placed beyond all hope of cure. In this, as in other cases, the first thing to be done is to investigate the causes of the evil; and one cause I have long thought to be the abuse of the office of the parish clerks. This is not the place to enter into the history of those functionaries, or to show how from having been in reality, as in name, clerks—clergy—clergy-assistant to the principal minister, they are now generally men of inferior education, and sometimes calculated, from their ignorance and vulgarity, rather to mar than to promote the purposes for which we assemble in church. The point on which I would now insist is the impropriety of the clerk having become the organ to respond for the whole congregation. There is not a word in the Rubrics, from one end of the Prayer-Book to the other, to direct him to be the spokesman for the people; indeed, his office is not once mentioned. It is the people who are to say Amen; it is the people who are to repeat the Lord's Prayer; it is the people who are to rehearse the Creeds, as well as to pronounce the alternate verses of the psalms, and to take all the other parts in correspondence with the minister. And yet I believe it is from the practice of the clerk assuming to himself the whole of this office, (a practice which probably arose in rude and illiterate times, when few of the congregation had books or could read,) that the people at large have generally considered their part to be performed for them, and themselves to be at liberty to keep a

profound silence during the whole service. And if this be really a cause of the evil, I would recommend as a remedy, (as is begun to be done in more than one church in the metropolis,) that the clerk, if he be retained, should be taught to make the responses in no louder tone, or in any other manner, than an ordinary member of the congregation.—The awful stillness which would then ensue in the parts of the service assigned to the people, would remind them of their duty, and lead them to use their own voices in praising and praying to God.

I believe that, in the churches in the metropolis to which I allude, not only is the clerk deprived of his dignity of responding for the whole congregation, but the minister gives out the psalms, as well as all notices, in conformity with the special directions of our Liturgy.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
D. C.

THE CHURCH.

COBBOURG, SATURDAY, SEPT. 1, 1838.

In the 'Church of England Gazette' of the 23d June last, we find a Memorial to the House of Commons from the Rev. W. Bettridge, on the subject of the Spiritual Destitution of this Province. His states, at the commencement of his Petition, that he had communicated to her Majesty's Government the extent and character of the spiritual destitution of Upper Canada, and that his appeal for an effectual alleviation of it has been acknowledged to be just in its principle by Lord Glenelg himself, as appears by the following extract from a note addressed by the order of that noble lord to Mr. Bettridge:

"Lord Glenelg subscribes, without hesitation, to many of the grounds on which the claims of the Church of England are enforced in your memorial and letter. He adopts your opinion, that the provision at present made for the maintenance of the Bishop of Quebec and the Clergy of his Diocese, is inadequate to the great end of maintaining the Episcopal Church where it at present exists, and of extending its operations throughout the Canadian provinces. His Lordship deprecates, not less decidedly than yourself, the system which would leave the ministers of religion dependent on the precarious support of their various congregations. He is of opinion that the permanent appropriation of funds sufficient for their decent maintenance is to be classed amongst the highest and first objects of national policy."

This is an important admission; upon which, however, Mr. Bettridge remarks, that "these Christian and Constitutional principles, so ably and satisfactorily propounded by her Majesty's Government, must necessarily remain inoperative unless your Honourable House decide that the appropriation of funds necessary to alleviate the spiritual destitution complained of, be a 'legitimate use of the revenue of the United Kingdom.'"

The Petition then goes on to recapitulate the Constitutional Act,—the claim advanced by the Church of Scotland, and subsequently by various sects, to share in the lands allotted, under that Statute, to a Protestant Clergy,—the various proceedings relative to the Clergy Reserves that resulted, both in England and in this Province, from this sudden assertion of a long-undiscovered right,—and then alluding to the withdrawal of the annual Parliamentary Grant, concludes by making the following incontrovertible statements:

"That, in consequence, at a time when, from the vast influx of poor emigrants from the parent state, additional succour was needed by the Church to fulfil its high duties to the people, a sudden and insurmountable obstacle was raised to its future usefulness; that several of the Clergy have been released from their earthly labours, and their places remain unoccupied; that hundreds of new settlements, composed exclusively of indigent persons, have reiterated their urgent demands for the ordinances of the Church; that, on the lowest computation, one hundred thousand members of the Church of England are utterly destitute of religious instruction; that these individuals are located in distant places, accessible chiefly through the worst possible roads, that, according to the declared opinion of the late Rev. Bishop of Quebec, supported by the written testimony of many of the Clergy, one hundred travelling missionaries, at least, are needed for the present exigencies of the Church; that the Church of England in Upper Canada, moreover, is suffering incalculable injury from the need of a resident Bishop, it being obviously impossible that one Bishop (of Montreal) should execute the functions of the Episcopate over a territory of 1400 miles in extent, and containing a population of more than one million souls; that her Majesty's government have expressed their readiness to issue the royal mandate for the consecration of a Bishop exclusively for Upper Canada, but have distinctly refused to grant him an income; that the nation, having chosen the divinely appointed episcopacy of the Church of England for its religion, appears bound, and at least in all cases where the poverty of the people, as in Upper Canada, obviously requires it, to provide for the administration of all its ordinances; that the refusal to do so must issue, although your petitioner is far from imputing any such intention to her Majesty's government, in a continuous infringement of the religious liberty of the poor members of the Church; that Christians of every other denomination are at liberty to exercise their peculiar discipline over their flocks; that the Roman Catholics of Upper Canada have a Bishop paid by the Government, and large sums also for the maintenance of their priests, independent of their right of tithes from their own people; that a salaried Bishop is refused to the Church of England; that thousands of her people cannot, therefore, enter into the privilege of full churchmanship, as they are deprived of the right of confirmation, which the church holds to be of Apostolic authority and usage; that numbers of churches are yet unconsecrated; that the scattered clergy are without an overseer and counsellor, and that, unless a Bishop be appointed, and effectual pecuniary aid be given to him to increase the numbers of the Clergy, in some measure proportionate to the wants of the people, until the Clergy Reserves be sufficiently productive to afford them a decent maintenance, the Established Church of England in Upper Canada must decrease in efficiency, and her members necessarily lose that high character of devotion to the time-hallowed and blood-bought institutions of the land for which they have ever been distinguished."

We have much pleasure in giving insertion to the following; and are happy, at the same time, to assure our respected and zealous correspondent that the suggestion upon which he represents certain of his parishioners to have acted, has already induced a very considerable number of persons to subscribe for extra copies of 'The Church.' We shall probably state, in a future number, the exact amount of success with which this praise-worthy suggestion has been attended:—

ANOTHER MODE OF INCREASING THE CIRCULATION OF "THE CHURCH."

REV. SIR,—I have been highly gratified while reading in late Nos. of the Church, the praiseworthy exhibitions of zeal manifested by some of our friends, in promoting by their liberality the more extensive circulation, and consequently the more extended usefulness of your valuable paper. We need more of this zealous spirit infused amongst our laity, before the Church will prosper as she ought to do, but it is

to be hoped that by making such examples public, others may be provoked to similar zeal in so good a work. That such an effect has in a slight degree been produced, the incident I am about to mention will tend to prove. Two of my parishioners (subscribers to 'The Church') profiting by the hints of Alan Fairford, on the influence of the Press, and stimulated by the liberal examples lately recorded in your columns, have shewn their disposition to imitate that liberality which their circumstances would not permit them to equal, by subscribing for an extra copy for gratuitous distribution. They have paid half the price in advance, for which I desire you to credit them, and transmit the copy thus ordered to W. H. B.—, P. M. K.—. To every subscriber to 'The Church' I would say, go and do likewise. If you cannot do much, at least try to do something. If you cannot afford to distribute one or more copies yourself, try to persuade a neighbour to join with you, or if still too poor, associate a third, and where there are three subscribers to 'The Church' so poor, that they cannot afford an additional dollar a year for so good an object. But you may also advance the interests of the cause by a little personal exertion, as well as by pecuniary efforts. In your intercourse with your neighbours, never fail to improve every favourable opportunity of recommending our periodical, and if possible of persuading them to become subscribers. Suppose every present subscriber were earnestly to strive to procure an additional one, what a mighty amount of good might be thus effected. And nothing is wanting but the effort. It was but the other day that I was informed by a worthy citizen of Toronto that he had in this manner procured four or five new subscribers within a very short time. Again therefore I say, go and do likewise. I remain, Mr. Editor, with best wishes for your welfare, and the prosperity of 'The Church,'

Yours very truly,

UNUS.

The Lord Bishop of Montreal held a Confirmation at Cornwall on Tuesday the 14th ultimo; and in the course of his visit, the following address was presented to him by the Rector and Congregation. Although the feelings of Christian esteem and regard which, throughout the Diocese at large, are entertained towards his Lordship, gave rise primarily to the present token of respect, yet we are authorized to state that it was from the circumstance of Cornwall's being the first spot in Upper Canada in which the Bishop was called upon to exercise his Episcopal ministrations—"the threshold of the Province," as his Lordship expresses it—that its inhabitants were induced to tender this more formal expression of their welcome. And as such it was received, and permitted to be made public by his Lordship.

TO THE RIGHT REVEREND THE LORD BISHOP OF MONTREAL.

We, the Minister, Church Wardens, Vestry, and other Members of the Church of England of this Parish, beg leave to avail ourselves of the opportunity now afforded by your Lordship's first visit to this Province since your elevation to the high and responsible office which you now hold, of offering our most sincere and hearty congratulations on this auspicious event, and of expressing the very great pleasure and satisfaction we feel at your appointment, and the gratification we enjoy in welcoming your Lordship to this part of your Diocese.

Our knowledge of the unremitting attention and indefatigable zeal with which your Lordship has at all times discharged the laborious and onerous duties which devolved on you as Archdeacon of Quebec, and examining Chaplain to our late revered and much beloved Diocesan, as well as the Pastor of one of the largest Parishes in the Diocese, which were directed to the temporal comforts as well as the spiritual consolation of your Parishioners, fully assures us, that in the discharge of your present higher office of a Bishop of the Church, nothing will be wanting on your part to sustain the very high and exalted character which the overseer of Christ's flock ought ever to uphold; and we confidently hope that, by the blessing of Almighty God in answer to our fervent prayers, your Lordship's future labours will be as effectual in promoting the true interests of the Church in this Diocese, and the advancement of sound religion and piety amongst the several congregations committed to your charge, as were those of your much lamented and pious predecessor.

We are fully sensible that in these Provinces much remains to be done towards establishing the Church on a sure and permanent foundation; and we trust that your Lordship's presence in the different missions may produce the effect of stirring up both ministers and their congregations to mutual zealous exertions and hearty co-operation in the great work of advancing the Redeemer's Kingdom.

We pray that your Lordship's journey on the present interesting occasion may be prospered to the glory of God, and that His providence and grace may accompany you and bring you safely back to your family and home.

[Signed by the Rector of the Parish and a number of the Parishioners, including the Church Wardens and Vestry.]

Cornwall, August 14th, 1838.

REPLY.

GENTLEMEN,

Circumstances having been so ordered by the Providence of God as to place me in charge of this Diocese, and many causes conspiring to render that charge even more than ordinarily responsible and arduous, it cannot but be encouraging to me to be greeted by your friendly and christian address at the threshold, if I may so express it, of the Upper Province.

The time, I trust, is not far distant, when this Province will enjoy the individual care of a resident Bishop.

I should have extended my visitation in this direction at an earlier period, had I not been withheld by the hope of seeing such an arrangement carried into effect. Whatever space may yet elapse before the accomplishment of this hope, I shall be thankful for your prayers that the confined and imperfect services which I can render, may, by the divine blessing and grace, be not rendered in vain; and that God may deign to use me as an instrument, in some measure, to strengthen the Churches, and to promote the kingdom of his Son in this portion of the Diocese.

You are pleased to advert to my past labours in terms which indicate your good will, far more, the truth compels me to assure you, than they accord with the retrospect which I can take of them myself. But let us all, forgetting the things which are behind, reach out to those which are before, and press forward to the mark of our high calling in Christ Jesus.

I pray God to bless you in all things, and to continue his blessing upon the relation which so happily subsists between you as Pastor and Flock.

G. J. MONTREAL.