

The Church.

"HER FOUNDATIONS ARE UPON THE HOLY HILLS."

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 1, 12.

VOLUME II.]

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Poetry.

THE VISITATION OF THE SICK.

I.
The chamber's gloom grows more profound—
A hush comes o'er each household sound,
And stifled sigh, and whisper low,
And silent flitting to and fro,
Speak to all hearts of mortal clay
Fast wearing unto dust away.

II.
'Peace to this house'—how sadly dear
Enters that voice of blessing here!
That voice, to share with glad employ
Of prayer and praise, in quiet joy
Oft walk'd the sufferer forth, when high
The Sabbath bells chimed through the sky.

III.
There breathes a sound of murmur'd prayer—
The faint response scarce stirs the air,
Meek as the heaven towards which they steal,
As round the dying couch all kneel;
His household's parting prayer with one
Wending to God his way, alone.

IV.
Spread forth a sacred feast appears—
Yet blame not though 'tis shar'd in tears;
(For was there heard no sorrowing sound
(That night when first such cup went round?)
Nor strange the thought that there hath birth—
'This is with him our last on earth.'

V.
But woe most for that hour too near,
When slow comes forth the muffled bier—
When loud is heard, 'mid crowding din
A voice of mourning far within—
As graveward moves man's stronger kind,
The wail of woman left behind!

VI.
Be past all this, and ask me why
(And well such question claims a sigh,
From all such forms in this our day
Why falls our England's love away,
The forms that graced her church's prime,
The rituals of her elder time?

VII.
The noblest with which man could bring
His praise before th' Almighty King;
The sweetest when his lips would move
In blessing all a Father's love;
The humblest when the soul would pray
For chastening wrath to pass away.

VIII.
All beauteous service! who, as while
He gaz'd up through some minster's aisle,
Where day, to crimson glory turn'd,
Strained through the tinted oriel, burn'd
Thy solemn chant yet idly heard,
His heart, his heart of hearts, unstirr'd?

IX.
Or better, where the church tower green
Look'd meekly o'er some hamlet scene;
Where in the breeze the rose amain
Bent forth to kiss each ivied pane;
Who 'mid the rustic choir hath stood,
Yet felt not to be there was good?

X.
Oh! pray that soon, all wandering o'er,
We ask for our old paths once more—
The paths in which our fathers walk'd,
And with our giant spirits talk'd,
Deeming with such they scarce could err,
With Ridley and with Latimer.

Dublin University Magazine.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.*

Every Government is entrusted with the guardianship of the public morals; and accordingly, the world's history presents no people or nation in any state of civilization without Religion. There must be some standard of moral feeling, in order to keep society together. Indeed Religion, either true or false, has been at all times intimately connected with the government and polity of nations; and the farther back we trace any one people, the greater will be found the influence of its modes of worship on its civil administration. Even in the smallest republics the sentiment of a common religion was found necessary as a bond of union among their citizens. All other bonds were liable to be broken by the dissension of parties: but the bitterest political opponents acknowledged that they were the children of one mother when they assisted at the customary rites of their native gods, and worshipped in the temples erected by the piety of their ancestors.

In all the confederations of antiquity, Religion was, in a special degree, the principle of unity, and infused into them all a spirit of nationality. Thus the temple of the Tyrian Hercules became the centre of the Phœnician league;—that of Jupiter Latiaris of the Latin confederacy; and the Greeks, notwithstanding their perpetual contests, felt that they were one people when they were assembled to celebrate the Olympic Games.

In the great monarchies, which were composed of a mixed multitude of nations of different forms of worship, Religion could not act with equal force as a bond of union; but it was nevertheless of the greatest importance, as it checked the despotism of military rulers, and produced an order of men who, from their superior talents and supposed intimacy with the Gods, possessed a veneration of character and a degree of influence which kept the most absolute tyrants under restraint.

If, then, the wildest superstitions were found useful and necessary to preserve the very form of society, two things follow.—1st. That without religion social order cannot long exist in any country. 2d. That as Religion becomes pure, the body politic becomes happy.

* From 'Letters on a General Union of the British North American Provinces.'

Now among the nations acquainted with Christianity, the question is between it and the absence of all religion: for no sort of Pagan superstition can ever prevail among them. It is therefore justly inferred that no government can continue long either prosperous or happy, where Christianity is known, unless it be publicly professed and acknowledged.—The truth of this is as certain as the truth of the Gospel, and may be easily proved from history, which uniformly shews that nations are exalted or debased as they revere or reject God's revealed will.

Look at the ancient world, and with the exception of one little spot, it was lying in wickedness. But in that spot there lived a people some thousand years ago, of manners singular and retired and repulsive to strangers; and yet while every other nation was enslaved by superstition of the most odious and degrading character, the Jews were not idolaters, but sublime and pure in their worship of the only true God. Some countries advanced farther than they did in the arts and sciences, and some individuals among the heathen attained an eminence in personal virtues: but in religion, other tribes made no favourable progress, and in piety and virtue there was no comparison between the most celebrated and disinterested of ancient nations and the inhabitants of Judea. And what is remarkable, as we recede from this favoured country, superstition gets more revolting and civilization gradually disappears. And if we talk of general comfort and happiness, in these the Jews stood vastly pre-eminent. For elevation of sentiment, purity of manners, social enjoyment and personal liberty, no contemporary people could offer any such spectacle of popular felicity.

In Judea a teacher of righteousness arose, announcing himself a messenger from Heaven, and wielding all the attributes of the Divinity. The religion which he communicated to mankind, though he perished in the cause, was rapidly spread by his followers, and all the wickedness and splendour of superstition fell before it. Through its propagation Judea now embraces half the world, and will in time cover the whole. By what means?—Not by the force of arms, but by the progress of sound opinion.

All the nations of Europe, one after another,—Greek, Roman and Barbarian, gloried in the name of the crucified Galilean, and made national profession of the faith. And at this hour, the east and the west, the north and the south, are throwing down their treasures before his manger. This blessed religion is still proceeding, and is gradually making all nations one people, notwithstanding their difference in colour, language and climate, and whether they inhabit the mountain or the plain, the coasts of the ocean or the recesses of the forest. It is breaking down by degrees all corrupt distinctions, and shall yet tame the wild, and restore Ishmael to his father's house, giving him an equal portion, without diminishing that of the son of Sarah.

Christianity will go forward whether we hear or whether we forbear, but we shall inevitably overtake the nations and individuals who hinder its progress and place themselves in hostility to its holy requirements.

It is a fact of singular importance, that no nation known to history, with the exception of the United States, ever existed without an established form of worship: and that some signal judgment has not already destroyed that exception, may be accounted for from the circumstance that Christianity prevails to a considerable extent among the people, and therefore a space may be given for repentance: but already symptoms of destruction appear. Anarchy is making rapid strides, and the foundations of the social compact are giving way.

The devout believer in the Bible can have no more patience or sympathy with professing Christians who place themselves in opposition to religious establishments, than with the avowed infidel: for such institutions are scriptural and sanctioned by heaven. An ecclesiastical establishment was ordained among the Jews by God himself, and though in some respects inapplicable to the Christian revelation, it involves the great principle of National Religion, and may with some modifications be adapted to all nations believing in the Gospel. It would indeed be monstrous if a religious establishment moulded by the hands of God yielded no instruction—no practical example for human guidance. Far from admitting so profane and impious a supposition, we boldly avow that no sincere and enlightened reader of his bible can be opposed to National Church Establishments, or hesitate in admitting that the Jewish Church, separated from what was evidently special and temporary, furnishes the best ground-work of a national religious polity, and will operate in every sanctified mind as a clear revelation of the will of God, that every nation professing Christianity is bound to make provision for its being taught to all its people.

Nothing can be more clear than that the enemies of ecclesiastical establishments never read their Bibles with a sincere view of ascertaining the truth.—For in every page such an institution stands forth in bold relief, and presents a brief but complete refutation of all their objections.

Nor are the Scriptures less conclusive against making the Clergy dependent for their maintenance on the voluntary offerings of those whom they are appointed to instruct. The divine economy placed the ministers of religion in absolute independence of popular will or caprice, as well in regard to pecuniary support as to appointment and removal.

But although the ministers of religion among the Jews were secured in a comfortable maintenance adequate to their wants and station in society, scope was still left for the manifestation of the spontaneous affection of the people towards them, and to their zeal also on special occasions when public spirit was likely to meet the demand. There was an annual gratuity to the Priests, left to the liberality of the people, and such as might give excitement to pious regard towards them and open the way for a reciprocal feeling on the part of the Clergy. It was also the usage of the Jewish Church, following the example of Moses, to appeal to the generosity of the nation whenever the house of God needed extensive repairs, or was to be rebuilt, or synagogues erected. A generous enthusiasm was thus enkindled and

always surpassed the necessities of the occasion.

The Jewish polity, as established by God himself, likewise furnishes a complete refutation of the monstrous dogma of modern infidels and political dissenters, that governments ought to have no business with religion. "Thou shalt provide out of all the people, able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness, to be rulers of thousands, &c., and let them judge the people at all seasons." In the teeth of this, modern reformers in Church and State prefer men without religion. Whether they or God be right, judge ye.

The administrators of government ought undoubtedly to be religious. They are individuals amenable to God, and being appointed to act in high trusts, it is their duty to sanctify their acts as public men by the offices of religion, otherwise their acts cannot be acceptable, but displeasing to God, and destructive to themselves. Irreligious men are in truth incapable of discharging the functions of government. When a nation is piously administered, it possesses the means of conveying religion to every one of its families; it has all the qualifications and conscientious inducements, spiritual and secular, to make its people religious—those who cannot afford to pay as well as those who are indifferent and disinclined; and to all it offers a prevailing example.

An established Church is therefore of infinite advantage to the well being of any nation. It preserves the purity of doctrine which ought to be the first consideration in every christian country, and sanctifies the State by maintaining the purity of political practice. In private life it gives confidence and uniformity to virtue and true dignity of manners. It secures the religious instruction of the whole population and fixes their minds on the purest principles, from which they cannot be easily shaken. Spread over the whole land, they cannot be influenced by any sudden wind of doctrine. Moreover, fortified by their creeds and Liturgies, standards of truth resting on the Bible, and with forms sanctioned by apostolic usage, they are kept steady in the true path, and proceed with a regularity eminently conducive to right-mindedness and holiness of life.

It is the duty of an Established Church to present religion with authority, to be what it really is, the first object of every man—his noblest interest—and what ought ever to be nearest his heart. Such an institution affords a general refuge for and defence of religious truth—a magnificent example of purity of doctrine, and a model of clerical manners and learning. Accordingly, among no class of men will there be found such exemplary purity of manners and conduct in all respects, as among the established Clergy of Great Britain and Ireland.

There is perhaps no greater blessing possessed by any nation than that which the mother country enjoys in having so many men whose behaviour and attainments are unquestionably far above the average, established as permanent residents all over the kingdom. The Protestant Church of the British Empire is the ballast of the state, the sheet anchor of its power, and the dispenser of the only sure principles of action—principles which, professed and steadily adhered to, must produce prosperity and felicity, and from which to depart is to fall. These principles embodied in the forms of the Church, and engrained in the hearts of the people, offer a permanent and formidable check to vice and folly in every shape. It is too large to be suddenly acted upon, and too much controlled by long established habits of feeling and opinion and complicated discipline, to yield to transient impressions, however general they may be for a time.

In fine, an established Christian Church is essential to the permanent existence of every government, and to the public good, and teaches those principles only on which all governments ought to be conducted. Completely independent in her spiritual character, she yields not her principles to the will of kings, ministers, statesmen or the people: and therefore it becomes essentially necessary that she should be allied to the State. She is the only fixed body in any country, able to influence its proceedings, to give it strength and an inclination of steady obedience to the people.

THE TRINITY.

By Bishop Jeremy Taylor.

He that goes about to speak of, and to understand the mysterious Trinity, and does it by words and names of man's invention, or by such which signify contingently; if he reckons this mystery by the mythology of number, by the cabala of letters, by the distinctions of the schools, and by the weak inventions of disputing people; if he only talks of essences and existences, hypostasies and personalities, distinctions without difference, and priority in co-equalities, and unity in pluralities, and of superior predicates of no larger extent than the inferior subjects, he may amuse himself, and find his understanding will be like St. Peter's upon the mount of Taber at the transfiguration: he may build three tabernacles in his head, and talk something, but he knows not what. But the good man that feels the power of the Father, and he to whom the Son is become wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption; he, in whose heart the love of the Spirit of God is spread, to whom God hath communicated the Holy Ghost, the Comforter; this man though he understands nothing of that which is unintelligible, yet he only understands the mysteriousness of the Holy Trinity. No man can be convinced well and wisely of the article of the holy, blessed, and undivided Trinity, but he that feels the mightiness of the Father begetting him to a new life, the wisdom of the Son building him up in a most holy faith, and the love of the Spirit of God making him to become like unto God.

He that hath passed from his childhood in grace under the spiritual generation of the Father, and is gone forward to be a young man in Christ, strong and vigorous in holy actions and holy undertakings, and from thence is become an old disciple, and strong and grown old in religion, and the conversation of the Spirit; this man best understands

the secret and undiscernible economy, he feels this unintelligible mystery, and sees with his heart what his tongue can never express, and his metaphysics can never prove. In these cases, faith and love are the best knowledge, and Jesus Christ is best known by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; and if the kingdom of God be in us, then we know God, and are known of him; and when we communicate of the Spirit of God, when we pray for him, and have received him, and entertained him, and dwelt with him, and warmed ourselves by his holy fires, then we know him too; but there is no other satisfactory knowledge of the blessed Trinity but this; and therefore whatever thing is spoken of God, metaphysically, there is no knowing of God theologically, and as he ought to be known, but by the measures of holiness and the proper light of the Spirit of God.

But in this case experience is the best learning, and Christianity is the best institution, and the Spirit of God is the best teacher, and holiness is the greatest wisdom; and he that sins most is the most ignorant, and the humble and obedient man is the best scholar: "For the Spirit of God is a loving Spirit, and will not enter into a polluted soul; but he that keepeth the law getteth the understanding thereof, and the perfection of the fear of the Lord is wisdom," said the wise Ben Sirach. And now give me leave to apply the doctrine to you, and so I shall dismiss you from this attention.

Many ways have been attempted to reconcile the differences of the church, in matters of religion, and all the councils of man have yet proved ineffective: let us now try God's method, let us betake ourselves to live holily, and then the Spirit of God will lead us into all truth. And indeed it matters not what religion any man is of, if he be a villain; the opinion of his sect, as it will not save his soul, so neither will it do good to the public; but this is a sure rule, if the holy man best understands wisdom and religion, then by the proportion of holiness we shall best measure the doctrines that are obtruded to the disturbance of our peace, and the dishonor of the Gospel.

* Eccles. xxi. 11.

THE TWENTY-NINTH OF MAY.

OR

THE RESTORATION OF THE ROYAL FAMILY IN 1660.

From Bishop Atterbury's Sermons.

The blessing was of itself vast and comprehensive; for it took in all that was valuable and dear to us, either on a religious, or civil account; and re-settled a ruined church and kingdom on that firm basis, on which they stood, till violent and wicked hands removed them; and on which may they stand for ever! It is natural for men to think that government the best, under which they drew their first breath, and to propose it as a model and standard for all others. But, if any people upon earth have a just title thus to boast, 'tis we of this island; who enjoy a constitution, wisely moulded out of all the different forms and kinds of civil government, into such an excellent and happy frame as contains in it all the advantages of those several forms, without sharing deeply in any of their great inconveniences. A constitution, nicely poised between the extremes of too much liberty and too much power; the several parts of it having a proper check upon each other: by the means of which they are all restrained, or soon reduced, within their due bounds: and yet the peculiar powers, with which each is separately invested, are sure always, in dangerous conjunctures, to give way to the common good of the whole. A constitution, where the prince is clothed with a prerogative, that enables him to do all the good he hath a mind to; and wants no degree of authority, but what a good prince would not, and an ill one ought not to have: where he governs, though not absolutely, yet gloriously, because he governs men and not slaves; and is obeyed by them cheerfully, because they know that, in obeying him, they obey those laws only which they themselves had a share in contriving. A constitution, where the external government of the church is so closely interwoven with that of the state, and so exactly adapted to it, in all its parts, as that it can flourish only, when that flourishes; and must, as it hath always hitherto done, decline, die, and revive with it. In a word, where the interest of prince and subject, priest and people, are perpetually the same; and the only fatal mistake, that ever happens in our politics, is when they are thought to be divided.

It is objected indeed to this admirable model, that it is liable to frequent struggles and convulsions within, from the several interfering parts of it: but this, which is reckoned the disease of our constitution, may rather be thought a mark of its soundness, and the chief security of its continuance. For 'tis with governments exactly contrived, as with bodies of a nice frame and texture; where, the humours being evenly mixed, every little change of the proportion introduces a disorder, and raises that ferment which is necessary to bring all right again; and which thus preserves the health of the whole, by giving early notice of whatever is noxious to any of the parts: whereas in governments, as well as bodies of a coarser make, the disease doth not often begin to show itself till it hath infected the whole mass, and is past a cure; and so, though they are disordered later, yet they are destroyed much sooner. Accordingly, we know that, under this disadvantage, if it be one, our constitution hath now lasted pretty entire through many ages: for, excepting the short interruptions which conquest gave (which, however, have not been either so many, or so great, as some would make them) it hath continued much the same, in the main parts and branches of it, from the earliest times of our Saxon ancestors, down to these days. A clear proof, that it is a government suited every way to our temper, and to our climate; that it is perfectly made for us, and we for it: and that God, therefore, never punishes us more sorely, than when he deprives us of it for a time; nor