

Pope. Who is the pope, said the natives, we never heard of him? The European priests were yet more alarmed, when they found that these Hindoo Christians maintained the order and discipline of a regular church *under episcopal jurisdiction; and that for 1300 years past, they had enjoyed a succession of bishops appointed by the patriarch of Antioch.* We, said they, are of the true faith, whatever you from the west may be; for we come from the place where the followers of Christ were first called Christians."

It appears, from the narrative of this eminent traveller, that the Syrian churches "upon the sea coast," after a series of persecutions, were compelled to admit the supremacy of the pope. The grounds of these persecutions cannot but be flattering to the reformed Church of England:—"they were accused of the following practices and opinions; that the clergy had married wives; that they owned but two sacraments, baptism and the Lord's supper; that they neither invoked saints, nor worshipped images, nor believed in purgatory; and that they had no other orders or names of dignity in the church, than BISHOP, PRIEST, and DEACON.

But although the churches on the coast, as more exposed to the power of their enemies, submitted to the Romish hierarchy, those in the interior of the country would not submit to the imposition, but "fled to the mountains and sought the protection of the native princes, who had always been proud of their alliance."

Dr. Buchanan further informs us, that when "two centuries had elapsed without any particular information concerning the Syrian churches in the interior, and when it was doubted by many whether they existed at all, he conceived the design of visiting them. This design, as his narrative explains, was put into execution, and the churches were discovered in all their original simplicity and purity. After minute inquiries as to their founder, he came readily to the conclusion that there was every cause for belief in their assertion that their churches were established by the Apostle Thomas. But what chiefly concerns our argument is the fact of his discovering in those churches the three orders of Bishop, Priest, and Deacon, as maintained in the Church of England. On one occasion, the traveller asserts, he "was received at the door of the Church by three Kasheeshas, that is, presbyters or priests, who were habited in like manner, in white vestments. There were also present two Shumshanas, or deacons." On another occasion, he visited, "Mar Dionysius, the metropolitan of the Syrian church," and, after a long interview, in which the conversation turned upon Protestant Episcopacy, he observes, "The bishop was desirous to know something of the other churches which had separated from Rome. I was ashamed to tell him how many they were. I mentioned that there was a Kasheesha or Presbyter church in our own kingdom, in which every Kasheesha was equal to another.—Are there no Shumshanas? (deacons in holy orders.) None. And what, is there nobody to overlook the Kasheeshas? Not one. There must be something imperfect here, said he."

Here, then, is a coincidence between a church intact by the errors of Romanism and only recently discovered, and the church of England as reformed in the 16th century, which cannot but bring to the mind of every one of its members the most heartfelt joy and satisfaction. It is another—and a strong testimony too—to the mass of evidence which the Scriptures and Ecclesiastical History furnish in behalf of that form of Church Government to which we conscientiously adhere.

Members of the Church of England, therefore, are EPISCOPALIANS, not from expediency, but from principle. As Scriptural Christians, they *must* be Episcopalians. Let none, then, of our communion lightly regard this bond of attachment to the church of Christ; but let him thank God that His providence has placed him in a church, where to purity of doctrine there is annexed another grand essential, adherence to primitive order in her ministry. When he brings his child to the font of Baptism,—when he hears the message of God, conveying warning to the impenitent and consolation to the contrite,—when he accepts the consecrated emblems of his Redeemer's dying passion,—it is a comfort, vast beyond any calculations of mere earthly import, to reflect that the accredited organ of these dispensations holds his commission according to the rule, and order, and condition which Christ left to his church, which Christ's Apostles used, and which the church of Christ, in all its purest ages, steadfastly maintained.

C. R.

[The author of the above proposes, shortly, to proceed with other views of the bulwarks of the Christian Zion,—and will next take up a defence of the Liturgy of the Church of England.]

#### THE CHURCH PRAYERS.

A DIALOGUE.

(Continued from page 38.)

Old Steady.—Ah, Mary! the "potsheds of the earth" can but ill counsel one another in the solemn business of worship. To get a 'spirit of grace and supplication' from above, before you quit your own house for God's, is the first great consideration. Without that you will most likely do nothing. To enter upon public worship without due preparation is a most presumptuous sin; for, we have need at all times to mind in what trim we go before God; but, when it is to his own house, and on his high day, there is a double call for all our care and self-collectedness. Just ask yourself, Mary, 'where am I going, and why, and for what?' To answer that little question may require more thought than you at first perhaps imagine. You will say, you are going to worship God, and hear his Word—be it so,—and, as you are going to worship after the manner of the Church of England, one of the first things which you will have to do, will be, to join in a *public confession of sin.* But let me ask you, what are your sins, when were they committed, where, and under what circumstances? Have you well considered them all, with their different aggravations? If not, how can you venture to cry out, "Spare thou them, O God, which confess their faults?" Confession of sin, without caring about it, or having your sins before you, shews a heart hardened to it, and them, and what must God think of such *lip-mockery?*

Then again, if you do not truly mourn over your sins, and hate them, and abhor yourself for committing them, as sins

against a holy God, a God of love, the God and Father of our Saviour, with what face can you say, "Restore thou them that are penitent?"—You call yourself by the name of *miserable offender*, but where is your penitence? In a more solemn moment you wouldn't pass off such a state of mind as the one I am supposing you to be in, (and in which so many go to worship,) for penitence,—would you, Mary? I am sure not,—and if one of your own little rebels at home were, after some offence, to tell you he had done wrong, and was penitent, in such a spirit and manner as this, you would feel more shocked at his hardihood, and hypocrisy, than you were even by his first offence?

Then again, you are going to join in a prayer, "that it may please God to forgive you all your sins," and that "the pitifulness of his great mercy" may loose you from their chain. But, if you be in the state of *indifference* which I am speaking of, what do you *really care* about forgiveness? You didn't seriously feel the want of it before you came, and therefore, you have no reason to expect that you shall feel it *just at the moment when you are uttering the words.*—God "will be inquired of" for *worship-graces*, as well as for the blessings, and he is "the rewarder only of them that *diligently seek him.*" And then, as for wishing to be loosed from the chain of your sins, why, to all appearance you *cling* to them: and if they *do* chain you, (which is an unhappy truth,) they seem neither a *heavy*, nor a *galling* chain—you do not feel that they have *taken hold* on you, neither do you speak as one *made to possess her iniquities*, in the Scripture-sense of those fearful words.

But, oh! Mary, just think of that earnest pleading with the Divine Saviour, by his "agonies and bloody sweat," by his "cross and passion," to *deliver* you! What state of heart ought that to be which gives forth such a cry as this? And how do the words and your feelings answer to each other? Haven't you got the rent *garment*, with the *heart* untorn? Do not take offence, Mary, at my honest dealing—let these few hints just open your eyes to the secret of your unprofitable worship—you can now see why "you ask, and have not?"—and whenever the Church of England lifts up a complaint of, "my leanness, my leanness," let her think of a *mis-used* Liturgy, and see at least half the cause! This is Mr. Lovechrist's mind about it, and I believe it to be true.

Mary.—Oh, James! I see it, I see it all!—Talk of taking offence, why you have bestowed upon me a blessing, that I shall have to thank you for, as often as the Sabbath day comes round. And if I rightly understand St. James's beautiful words, about "converting a sinner from the error of his way," you will be blest indeed! I can now see how presumptuously I have behaved, in making no more preparation to go before God, than as though I was going out for a *morning walk*, or to pay a *common call* to one of my neighbours.

Old Steady.—That is it, Mary, that is it exactly. Time was when I did the same myself, but I trust I have "obtained mercy," and if you sincerely seek it, so will you.

The recollection, that God is *always* on a "throne of grace," often quiets me with the risings of *unbelieving fear.* If I know the meaning of the word, I see no cause to doubt but that we may find mercy for, and grace to help against, *even those transgressions* which we have committed in our approaches to that very throne—only, let us be careful to redeem *worshipping-time.* And now, Mary, after I have dropped a word or two more on this matter, I believe I must beg you to let me go; for I like to have some time to myself before the last bell begins.

I would advise you, Mary, to study well some of the Scripture precepts about public worship,—they are very solemn. (Psalm lxxxix. 7. and Eccles. v. 1. 2.) Consider what God called out to Moses from the midst of the bush—"put off thy shoes." The very ground, you see, round his presence was holy. Hear also Jacob at Bethel cry out, "how dreadful is this place." This was because God was close to him. And then, think of God's awful words to Aaron, after destroying Nadab and Abihu, for offering strange fire to him,—"I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified." Even the bereaved father had nothing to say against it, and "Aaron held his peace."

Now these are all so many lessons, sent to us by mercy, to get instruction from; and do they not all come to this?—"Remember what you are about—who God is, and what you are." Why Mary, the highest archangel *folds his wings over his face*, when he is in that awful presence; and the angels have no need of a mediator to protect them, as we have. The very blood, that we must come sprinkled with by faith, speaks volumes of advice and reminders about our manner of coming before God.

For the matter then of our public worship, be diligent in self-examination *before* you come to it. Call to mind the sins of your whole life, as far as may be, but especially those of the past week—"Judge yourself" in them, "that you may not be judged of the Lord." Inquire into your heart's sincerity in religion—see if your faith waxes stronger—if your love to God increases—if Christ becomes more precious to you—whether you are getting the better of besetting sins, advancing in divine knowledge, and growing in meekness for a heavenly world.—Then, too, strive to get thoughts suitable to the great business you are going upon—set God before you in the character which the Bible gives him, and as we see him *in the face of Jesus Christ*—go to his house *expecting* to meet him there, and to obtain much from him. Call to mind the promises belonging to public worship—He "loved the gates of Zion," where his temple was," more than all the dwellings of Jacob." Wherever his "name is recorded," there he is *pledged* to "come and bless," and the "prayer of the upright is his *delight.*" Go therefore "hungering and thirsting" after the pleasures of his house. The Lord Jesus will be there—(Matt. xviii. 20)—it is his "banqueting house," and the "banner of love" waves over it. We all know David's delights in public worship, but most of us are content to let David have them all to himself, and so we lose a world of heavenly enjoyment. But do you take example from that pattern of worshippers, and make that your "one thing to desire and seek after" this day, which was his; to "behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple."

By steadily using means of this kind, Mary, in dependence

on the teaching and quickening spirit, I doubt not but things will very soon alter with you. The Lord will "command his blessing." You will get the temple of *your own soul* cleansed before you go into the *public* temple—the "buyers and sellers," who may have got entrance into it during the week, (for there is often a sad traffic going on there, with Satan buying, and corruption selling,) will be driven out. To do this, you must strongly use the rod of *prayer*, which, like that of Moses, makes Egyptians and all flee before it. The little collect before the ten commandments, if you like a form, is an useful prayer for this purpose; for, without a *spirit cleansed* heart, you will never "perfectly love God, or *worthily* magnify his name" in any place. Having, however, spent an hour or so with Him in private, you will be eager to see more of him in the full assembly of his people, where his most glorious presence is. The spirit of devotion will be up—with a heart fixed, and a soul longing, you will go forth to the Lord's house, just in that state which our form of prayer expects you to be in—ready to give vent to your feelings, thoughts, and desires, in the language provided for that purpose. The Liturgy is, to my mind, like a noble river, into which all the streams of our devotions must flow. You know Farmer Frenchwell's water meadow—there the little rills all run through from different quarters, into the great brook in the middle, and so all the field is watered. This must be the case with us in our worship. We should come to it with our hearts *full*, ready to burst out, so to speak, in a flow of devout worshipping; and then, *down the broad stream of the Liturgy*, faith should pour forth all our confessions, and sorrows, and petitions, and praises, and thanksgivings; and thus they would flow, in *one* channel, directed by the Mediator, to the throne of God! Do you understand me, Mary?

Mary.—I am in hopes I do, James. You mean that, as our Prayer-Book, or Liturgy, as you call it, contains what a believing sinner ought to have to say to God in public worship, we should come in what you may call a *Liturgy-frame of mind*; and that each worshipper should throw all the feelings, and thoughts of his heart towards God, into that form of words which is made on purpose to speak them: and so,—though numbers should be saying the very same words,—that you, or I, or any body else, *sincerely* worshipping, should make them take in, and carry to the heart-seeing God, all our inward meanings, just as the brook, as you say, carries along all the little streams that come in from the trenches in the farmer's meadow.

To be concluded in our next.

#### THE CHURCH.

COBOURG, SATURDAY, AUGUST 26, 1837.

THE VOLUNTARY SYSTEM.—In adhering,—conscientiously as we may,—to the only view of the vexed question of the Clergy Reserves which, after an attentive and honest examination of the Constitutional Act, we cannot but entertain, we are well aware that we expose ourselves to the reiteration of that charge of cupidity and of every other sordid passion which so many are pleased, we believe hastily and inconsiderately, to ascribe to the members of the Church of England for firmly, though temperately, defending their legal and undeniable rights. But we are by no means to be deterred from a faithful declaration of our settled opinion upon this important subject, either from the unhappy delusions under which others may labour, or from the uncharitable constructions with which our honest sentiments may be arraigned. We are actuated by a simple conviction of the right and justice of our cause, and by the settled and irrefragable belief that, in no other way than by a public and established provision, can the maintenance of the Gospel, in the purity and in the unity of its faith, be hoped for;—that, in no other way, can we expect to see the kingdom of Christ extended and perpetuated throughout these spiritually destitute Provinces,—the remote settlers provided with a resident pastor and with the stated ministrations of religion,—and society trained to a regular and conscientious observance of the ordinances of God.

If there existed the slightest probability or even chance that the VOLUNTARY SYSTEM would ever prove adequate to the religious instruction of a whole people, we would freely yield to those who are labouring for the alienation of our church property from its legitimate object, all the wisdom and sincerity which their opposition can claim. Upon testimony the most indisputable,—and here we would especially refer our readers to the speech of a Wesleyan minister on Church Rates quoted in our paper of the 5th August,—the voluntary principle is found to be utterly insufficient in the mother country, a country admitted to be the richest in the world;—how then can it be averred, with a shadow of consistency, that the same precarious system would ever place *this* country under an universal religious teaching, or maintain its fast increasing population in the knowledge of sound Christianity.

Against the *principle* of a religious establishment,—in other words, of a public provision for the maintenance of Christianity,—we have never yet, amidst the much that has been said and written upon the subject, observed a sound or tenable argument. But we do not propose to enter into any defence of that principle at present:—we shall be content with offering to the advocates of the Voluntary System, or to those who ground their opposition to an establishment upon the doctrine of *expediency*, a few testimonies to the inefficiency, and to the injurious working of the principle which they defend.

The following are extracted from a late Charge of the Rev. Dr. Dealtry:—

So ineffectual is the Voluntary System in Wales, where dissent is sometimes represented as eminently flourishing, that the "greater part of dissenting ministers there are either actual farmers or tradesmen, and most of those who are not so employed, are assisted annually from the dissenting fund in London."—*Brit. Magazine.*

If the reader would wish to learn how the voluntary system acts abroad, he will do well to see its operation in the case of that excellent man, Oberlin. "At the revolution, Oberlin, like the rest of the established clergy in France, was deprived of his scanty income. This was in 1789. At first his parishioners came forward with *generous alacrity*, and declared that their *excellent* minister should be none the worse,—that they would raise 1,400 francs,