

far as he is concerned, he authorizes and encourages; and because, if nothing greatly superior is, in a fair prospect of human events, likely to succeed, all the guilt of disturbing without mending, of exciting confusion with no adequate countervailing advantage, will be at his door."—[Serm. by Rev. D. Wilson, now Bishop of Calcutta, before the Prayer Book and Homily Society.]

What is here said by another on the subject of dissent from, with a desire to change the government of the church, is equally applicable to those who are given to change in matters of state. And putting these questions to those weak, and in some cases, wicked innovators, both in our mother country, and in these provinces, I would ask,—*Do you desire to subvert altogether the existing civil Establishment?*

Some reckless spirits would answer, yes! but the far greater portion of these evidence too plainly to deceive, that their object is, not so much the substitution of something better as the pulling down that which exists, to find materials wherewith to build up themselves. Such, deeply dyed in guilt already, have no scruples about giving an additional tinge to conduct as black as night. Their overt acts have now thoroughly drawn aside the veil, and exhibit them to every moral man, the fallen and ruined spirits, "for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."

But honest visionaries there may be; to these I would say, *Should the British Constitution be overturned, have you a fair probability of substituting a better?*

I am aware that a mysterious influence has bedimmed the perceptive faculties of some, so far as to lead them to offer, as a substitute, the constitution of a neighbouring republic.

The most charitable construction which can be given to such is that of ignorance—"they know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm!"

In again considering that gradual development of power, which, in the Providence of God, has been witnessed in human governments, I would say,—as well might one living at that period of the world have offered the patriarchal government for that of the Judges; or this latter for the kingly power; when the wants of society, grown older, stronger, and more wicked, plainly evidenced the need of it, for "the punishment of wickedness and vice and the maintenance of true religion and virtue." Under a form of government, where every man chooses his own governor, virtue, industry, and disinterestedness would live happily, and prosper; because uniting together for the common good. But let vice abound—let ignorance, idleness, and selfishness, root out the former virtues; then man needs "the bit and bridle equally with the horse and mule"; and from the same cause, being "without understanding";—for his unruly passions become rampant, and might becomes right, the will of the many becomes the law for the few; forming a many-headed despotism far more cruel and bloody than that of Nero.

Brethren, this is no fancy-sketch, but a picture of every day life in many parts of the United States, as he who addresses you, from a long residence there, can testify.—There, law has yielded to the iron sway of licentiousness; and the very law-givers become the first to infringe them, where interest or lust make the demand! And shall any dare, but at the expense of being charged with madness, to compare a constitution, which, so far as it is peculiar, is the creature of a day—a mere babe in age—and, when tried thus far, has shown a child's weakness? Shall a form of government which possesses no adequate control over the governed, and which even now totters to its centre from the kicks of its unruly subjects? Shall a constitution unable, though boasting of its power, to protect the "life and liberty and their pursuit after happiness" (Declaration of Independence) of thirteen millions only? Shall it, I repeat, be put in the scales and weight with ours which throws the shield of protection over more than 125 millions; which has stood the united shock of the whole civilized world in arms; which is the workmanship of time, from materials gathered from the experience of all ages; hammered out, as it has been, on his anvil, to suit the peculiar need of man; and which, by the blessing of our nation's God, has made Great Britain a "terror to evil doers; and a praise to them that do well"; as a friend, beloved, and trusted; as a foe, dreaded!

Lastly,—Consider the motive, with which Solomon urges his advice—the ruin attending neglect; "for their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knoweth the ruin of them both?"

This ruin is marked,—

1. By its suddenness;—2. By its coming when least expected.

These are characteristic of God's judgments in general; and, therefore, might be expected of his particular visitations against rebellion: "He that being oft reproved hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." Not that they are sudden, i. e. coming without any previous notice; for reproof is administered frequently first. As in the natural, so in God's moral dealings with mankind, the storm is long seen gathering; yes, and for some time, heard at a distance, before the bolt of his indignation light down on the guilty head.

The disobedient to constituted authority might have received warning from the voice of all past history.

The question of Queen Jezebel to Jehu contains the decision of God on the sin of rebellion against his anointed:—"Had Zimri peace who slew his master?"—No, "with what measure" the perjured parricide murdering his country's peace, metes out to her, it "is measured to him again." The experience of all ages, the lights of all history, are but the fulfilment of the declaration of God,—"his mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down on his own pate."

And who shall say that the present disorganized condition of that great confederacy is but a requital of their own sin against the mother country? From no adequate cause they rebelled; rebellion against a kind parent was their sin;—and is it too much to expect that rebellion will be their punishment! And what even now is their social condition? If not in open rebellion, yet is the General Government a man of straw; and the reception of its commands fitly represented by the ocean's obedience to Canute!

In conclusion, *experiment*, as that form of government is admitted on all hands to be, after sixty years trial, it has proved a failure, for all the purposes for which a government should exist. Incompetent to protect virtue, or restrain vice, it is not beloved at home by the thinking, disinterested portion. False to its engagements, it cannot be trusted by the judicious of all nations. Whilst its loud and annually repeated "Declaration" of "the inalienable rights" of man, heard at the same moment with the lash of a slave-driving President, or the groans of the down-trodden aborigines, as they are driven, at the point of the bayonet,

from lands theirs, not by right of inheritance only, but by solemn national compact, holds it up as a term of reproach, like the *Punic Faith* of old,—a by-word and a proverb to all nations.

Can we, then, wish that it should longer deceive the nations of the world; or, rather, does not love to them, as well as to ourselves, suggest the fervent prayer, that "He by whom kings rule," should speedily put an end to its present form, and mould it more after the pattern of his own kingdom?

It has now been shewn, that should they "who are given to change" effect their object, no adequate form of government could be placed in its stead. Certainly not *Republicanism*, for the united voice of history proves them to have been any thing but *commonwealths*, a term which they arrogate to themselves. And to prefer to our well-posed separate authority of Kings, Lords, and Commons, united for all national happiness and prosperity, the speciously imposing principle of self government as exemplified in the United States, would be little less than tempting the Lord our God to give us up to anarchy, or bring us under slavery.

No excuse need to be urged, my brethren, for thus departing from my usual pulpit instructions. "Is there not a cause?" Let the ignorance which prevails, among loyalists even, of the blessings we derive, under God, from Britain's rule, answer;—forced, as that answer is, on our attention, by the ease with which every, even the most childish objection against us, is received; urged, as it is at this moment, by the eloquence of a disturbed community, pleading for instruction on a subject so nearly concerning, not its happiness only, but the happiness of unborn millions.

May He who has hitherto protected you from the machinations of wickedly designing men, continue you in your allegiance; and enable this and every succeeding generation of Britons to hand down, as their dying advice,—"*MY SON, FEAR THOU THE LORD AND THE KING; AND MEDDLE NOT WITH THEM THAT ARE GIVEN TO CHANGE; FOR THEIR CALAMITY SHALL RISE SUDDENLY; AND WHO KNOWETH THE RUIN OF THEM BOTH.*"

For the Church.

#### PICTURE OF THE CHURCH IN VIRGINIA AFTER THE REVOLUTION.

The following affecting picture of the desolations of the Church of England in Virginia is from the pen of the distinguished Dr. Hawks of New-York. The perusal of it will doubtless be interesting to Canadian Churchmen; and is calculated to suggest many salutary reflections. Indeed it can hardly be questioned that the entire history of the Church in the United States presents a subject peculiarly instructive and interesting in these days when the enemy appears to be coming in like a flood.

H. C.

Brockville, December 11th, 1838.

"The history of the Church for the next few years presents a picture of but little variety; when we catch a new feature in it, it is but to remark that it is in melancholy keeping with the rest, and differs only by the introduction of a deeper shade. With roofless and deserted churches, with broken altars, and a clergy, some of whom were reduced to the hard alternative of flight or starvation, it may readily be conceived what was its suffering condition. It existed, but more than that can hardly be said of it with truth. \*\*\*\*\* In the present prosperity of the Church in Virginia it is well to look back on its condition as it emerged from the Revolution, and by a contemplation of the difficulties which stood in its way, be moved to the exercise of gratitude. When the colonists first resorted to arms, Virginia contained ninety-five parishes, one hundred and sixty-four churches and chapels, and ninety-one clergymen. When the contest was over, she came out of the war with a large number of her churches destroyed or injured irreparably, with twenty-three of her ninety-five parishes extinct or forsaken, and of the remaining seventy-two thirty-four were destitute of ministerial service; while of her ninety-one clergymen, twenty-eight only remained who had lived through the storm, and these, with eight others who came into the State soon after the struggle terminated, supplied thirty-six of the parishes. Of these twenty-eight, fifteen only had been enabled to continue in the churches which they supplied prior to the commencement of hostilities; and thirteen had been driven from their cures by violence or want, to seek safety or comfort in some one of the many vacant parishes where they might hope to find, for a time at least, exemption from the extremity of spring.

For the destruction of the sacred edifices, most of which were substantial buildings of brick, every fair allowance should be made because of the confused and lawless state of affairs inseparable from war. The buildings were in some instances required by the necessities of the public, and appropriated to objects foreign from the purpose of their erection. It was not, therefore, to be wondered at, that, if used at all, they should sustain injury at the hands of a soldiery which, like all others, was not remarkable for reverence of things sacred. But there was often a wantonness in the injury done, a deliberate desecration which admits of no apology, and offers no better excuse than that it was the work of passionate ignorance which identified the very stones of the temple with support to the crown of England. The evidences of this work of needless ruin are still visible but too often in Eastern Virginia. It is scarcely possible for the Churchman, even now, to look without tears upon the venerable remains of mouldering churches which meet his eye. As he gazes upon the roofless walls, or leans upon the little remnant of railing which once surrounded a now deserted chancel; as he looks out through the opening of a broken wall upon the hillocks under which the dead of former years are sleeping, with no sound to disturb his melancholy musings save the whispers of the wind through the leaves of the forest around him, he may be pardoned should he drop a tear over the desolated house of God; and if he be a pious Churchman, the wreck around him may awaken thoughts of submission and humiliation, which will send him from the spot a sadder and a better man."

#### THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONISTS.

From Alison's History of the French Revolution.

It was a rule in one of the republics of antiquity, that no public monument should be voted to any person who had been engaged in the administration of affairs, till ten years after his death, in order that the ultimate effect of his measures, whether for good or for evil, should be first fully developed. Judging by this principle, to how few characters in the French Revolution will the friends of freedom, in fu-

ture times, rear a mausoleum; to how many will the abettors of arbitrary power, if their real opinions could be divulged, be inclined to erect statues. Looking forward for the short period of only eighteen years, not a month in the life-time of a nation, and seeing in the servility and sycophancy of the empire, the necessary effects of the vehemence and injustice of the Constituent Assembly, what opinion are we to form of the self-styled patriots and philosophers of the day who thus, in so short a time, blasted the prospects and withered the destiny of their country? Who were the real friends of freedom? Mr. Pitt and Mr. Burke, who, by combating the ambition of democracy and coercing its extravagance in this country, have bequeathed to their descendants the glorious and enduring fabric of British liberty; or Mirabeau and Danton, who, by achieving for its votaries a bloody triumph on the banks of the Seine, plunged their children and all succeeding ages into the inextricable fetters of a centralized despotism? It is fitting, doubtless, that youth should rejoice: but it is fitting also that manhood should be prosperous and old age contented; and the seducers, whether of individuals or nations, are little to be commended, who, taking advantage of the passions of early years or the simplicity of inexperience, precipitate their victims into a course of iniquity, and lead them, through a few months of vicious indulgence or delirious excitement, to a life of suffering and an old age of contempt!

#### THE CHURCH.

COBourg, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1838.

We read of subterraneous regions in some of the countries of northern Europe, in which—engaged in the working of mines—hundreds of families take up their abode; that generation after generation are born there and die; and that thousands of these people have never seen this upper world in which we live. The bright and joyous light of the sun they have never beheld; the moon and stars are strangers to their sight. No grassy meadows meet their view; no trees, nor shrubs, nor flowers, are beheld in the scenes amongst which they dwell; no birds are carolling there their happy songs; no perfumed breeze brings coolness and refreshment to the feverish brow. The dark, overshadowing canopy of mineral or rock, which artificial lights alone illumine,—rude pillars of spar,—the glittering ore, or translucent gem,—constitute the features of their scenery.

Now, if we imagine some inhabitant of this damp and sunless region,—born and nurtured amidst its gloom, and reaching there the age of manhood,—if we imagine him to be transplanted to this upper earth on which we live, and to behold at once, expanded before his view, the vast and varied magnificence of landscape with which the world abounds,—the storm-tossed ocean, the flowing rivers, the grassy meads, the verdant forests, the blue overarching sky, and the sun pouring down upon all the richness of his beams; if we fancy such an one to be a sudden spectator of these bold and beautiful scenes, we can form, it is true, but a poor conception of what his wonder and delight would be, but it will help us, in some degree, to realize the bright shining of heavenly truth into the darkened soul—to understand the force of these words of the prophet, "THE PEOPLE WHICH SAT IN DARKNESS SAW GREAT LIGHT; AND TO THEM WHICH SAT IN THE REGION AND SHADOW OF DEATH, LIGHT IS SPRUNG UP."

We have brought forward this similitude as appropriate to the present interesting period of the religious year,—when we commemorate the "great light" which the Sun of Righteousness diffused over the once deep night of the moral world.

In that darkness, uncheered by a ray of spiritual light, generations after generations had lived and died. The abominations of idolatry, the cruelties of superstition, constituted the moral picture with which alone they were familiar.—Imaginary deities, and gods even of their own fabrication, received their blind adoration; they knew nothing of one Supreme and Holy Being, in power and wisdom and love all perfect, to whom to pay their vows and address their prayers. Their fictitious Jove was to them clothed with the thunder only, and no attribute of mercy was mingled with the perfections which they ascribed to him. Sinners they felt themselves to be; and while all the terrors of retributive justice were feared, no way of expiation, no plea for pardon and redemption was known. And when their contemplations were thrown forward to that awful future of which they had some indistinct idea, no ray of hope brightened the gloom with which that future was shrouded: their ideas of a hereafter were as doubtful and dismal as their creed.

But this gloom and wretchedness was viewed with pity by the compassionate Father of the universe: "upon them that sat in darkness,"—upon the deluded, superstitious heathen, groaning so long under the slavery of sin and Satan,—our merciful God caused a "great light" to shine. Like those who are transported from subterraneous regions, into which the orb of day never penetrates, to a sudden view of all the wonders and beauties of God's creation, these subjects of spiritual darkness were translated into a new moral world, discovering beauties and marvels there to which they had before been strangers,—discerning attributes of mercy and love encircling that divinity from which they had shrunk in terror and despair,—rejoicing now in their pilgrimage through life, and looking forward to eternity with hope.—Upon the "shadow of death" itself, there beamed a brightness from the heavenly throne; its gloom was dispelled, and the travellers through its dark valley have the "rod and staff" of a heavenly guardian to support and comfort them.

The means by which this change of scene, from spiritual darkness to brightness, from death to life, was effected, are revealed in that great event which the church is now about to commemorate,—the NATIVITY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST. The beginning of that plan of love, by which an apostate world were to be reconciled again to the favour of their offended God, is celebrated on that day, by Christians so universally welcomed under the familiar term of CHRISTMAS-DAY.

On the particular circumstances accompanying this great mystery of divine love, "God manifest in the flesh," we need not here dilate; but we may advert briefly to the personal responsibilities of those who have been made partakers of the "great light" which the world's Redeemer has revealed. In the knowledge that we possess of the Saviour,—little as the influence of that knowledge may have been upon our hearts and lives,—we are nevertheless sharers, in some degree, in the light which his coming has unfolded, and undoubtedly we shall be held responsible for the privileges and advantages which we thus enjoy. What then do the Holy Scriptures point out as our obvious duty?—"To walk as children of the light;" so to use the knowledge we possess

and the privileges in our power, that the fruits of them may be made manifest in changed hearts, and in improved lives. For would he,—to recur to the similitude we adopted at the commencement of these remarks,—would he who, from a subterraneous region, had been translated to the glories and beauties of the world upon which God permits his sun to shine, prefer the damps and darkness of the place he had left? Would he, who has been released from the gloom of a dungeon, after having tasted the sweets of liberty and breathed the pure air of heaven, desire the darkness and chilliness of his prison-walls again, and wish his limbs to be fettered once more with the manacle and the chain?—While they condemn such an infatuation, Christians are, at the same time, condemning themselves, if, while they possess the light of the Gospel, they prefer the darkness from which that Gospel has set them free. If the spiritually enlightened persist in adhering to the darkness from which Christ has delivered them,—if the spiritually free cling to the bondage from which they have been redeemed,—if they manifest in their lives a predilection for the gloom and the slavery from which the Saviour of the world has ransomed them,—what is to be inferred, but that God will leave them to their blindness and folly, and make them partakers hereafter of a darkness which no ray of light will ever cheer, of a bondage from which there will be no deliverance? But happy they, who cling to the light and life of the redemption which their Saviour's blood hath purchased! Every spiritual illumination now enjoyed is but the prelude to a glory about to be revealed. The light of life so often dimmed and darkened, shall be succeeded by an everlasting day. This land of shadows and gloom, shall be followed by a heavenly country where "there is no darkness at all, but the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

The public papers have given an account of the execution of three of the individuals who, in violation of the laws of the land and in contempt of the law of nations, have waged a piratical warfare against the properties and persons of Her Majesty's peaceful and unoffending subjects in this Province. They have expiated their crime by an ignominious death; and they have gone to appear before the tribunal of that God whose revealed will they have equally despised and trampled upon. May they have experienced from the Judge of all the earth that mercy which human tribunals, consistently with the paramount obligation to preserve the order and peace of society, were unable to extend!

VON SCROULTZ, the Polish leader of that brigand crew, evinced, at his last hours, a becoming contrition for the enormity of the crime for which he suffered; and a pleasing proof of the reality of his repentant sorrow, is furnished in the fact of his leaving, by will, a considerable sum of money for the relief of those whom his own lawless conduct had served to deprive of husband and father, of sustenance and home.

His partners in crime, and partners too in his ignominious punishment,—GEORGE and ABBEY,—were Americans by birth, and brought up, confessedly, without either religious predilection or religious belief. A clergyman at Kingston proffered them his Christian services after their condemnation; but at first the offer was peremptorily refused—one of them, Abbe, professing himself a decided unbeliever. As the awful moment of death approached, there was, however, some relenting; and an intimation was conveyed that the visit of the clergyman alluded to, would not be unwelcome. GEORGE was much affected during the interview, and sought the prayers of his Christian visitor; but his companion, ABBEY, maintained his infidel principles to the last.

It is also a striking fact, that of the other prisoners, nearly the whole seem to have been brought up without any religious instruction whatever; scarcely any of them have ever been baptized, or have joined themselves to any religious denomination; and there is too much reason to believe of the majority of them, that, if they deny not the existence of a God, they have no belief in a future state of retribution.

In good old Christian England,—with all its faults, real and alleged,—we question much if a gang of unbelieving desperadoes, equal even in number to that which has already invaded our soil, could be found. The means of religious instruction are there widely and universally diffused; and as a consequence, moral sanctions and duties are held in general respect. The denial of a future state of retribution is amongst the population of the mother country extremely uncommon, and never almost to be met with amongst the humbler classes of society.

We, in Canada, have various lessons to learn from the facts thus brought to view. In the first place, what should we have to expect from the success, if such were possible, of men like those described,—without a solitary constraining principle of religion? What should we look for but the enactment of precisely the same scenes of outrage and carnage which marked the progress of the revolution in France at the end of the last century; for to the prevailing infidelity—the rejection of a future state and the denial even of a God,—were alone to be ascribed the horrors and atrocities by which that Revolution was marked?—Again, what beneficial change could we hope for, by the substitution of the government under which those infidel brigands have been reared, for that which dignifies and adorns Christian Britain, and under which, if we will, we shall be equalled honoured and happy?—And further, what the moral and religious influence is, which a "free-trade" in Christianity is calculated to beget, the facts just developed will powerfully explain. Let no man, then, who feels that anarchy is not preferable to stable government, and infidelity to Gospel truth, heed the cry of those deceivers who would leave the religious instruction of this fair Province to those of whom it is said,—"The imagination of the thoughts of their hearts is only evil continually,"—who by nature are averse to the principles which by this system they are expected to support.

The Editor of the *Christian Guardian* states that thirty years after the passing of the Constitutional Act, that is, in the year 1821, there were but ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-ONE Communicants of the Church of England in Upper Canada! If this be true, then the present number of the communicants of that Church in this Province, contrasted with that small amount, proves an increase in the members of her communion scarcely paralleled in the annals of any Church. At the present moment, there are not less than TEN THOUSAND communicants of the Church of England in Upper Canada; so that in seventeen years, if such was her real position in 1821, they have increased more than fifty-fold! Ordinary calculators affirm that to double our number every ten years, were a wholesome evidence of increase; but that in less than twice ten years we should be enabled to witness a fifty-fold augmentation, is far beyond what the most sanguine usually anticipate. Assuming, then, the data furnished by the *Christian Guardian* to be correct, we ask, do facts