

lives. If you hope for future exemption from the calamities from which we have so recently escaped; if you look for the continued favour and mercy of God, strive and pray to avoid those transgressions which provoke his righteous anger.

In endeavouring to avoid, and provide against the disorders with which we have lately been afflicted, it becomes us to look to their causes, and to striketh the root of these disorganizing attempts. We may appeal—as well we may—to the might and majesty of our laws; we may refer to the excellence of our political and religious institutions, unrivalled in the world; and we may point to all these as the safeguard of property and life, and the guarantee of order and quiet in the land;—yet I need hardly assure you that the best of laws, and the most perfect of institutions, yes, and the utmost rigour in putting them into execution, will never alone secure the peace and stability of any country. There must, amongst the subjects of these laws and of this government, be sedulously cultivated that *moral and religious restraint and discipline*, which, by producing the *temper of obedience*, affords the best, nay, the only security for the maintenance of authority and the preservation of order and law. A religious people,—a nation of *real Christians*,—will always be found obedient to their country's laws and rulers, because such an obedience is inculcated amongst the plainest precepts of the holy religion by which they are influenced. Our care and exertion, therefore, ought to be to plant and diffuse, as widely as possible, those Christian principles which afford a security so certain for the maintenance of social order and of public quiet. And let those of you, my Brethren, who are in the habit of standing forth in defence of our government and laws, and who are so sincere and earnest in the endeavour to ensure to them respect and obedience, be equally forward and prominent in setting that Christian example, which if the great bulk of the community should follow, we need have little apprehension that "dignities will be evil spoken of," or that "principalities and powers" will be trampled under foot. But if the influential and the prominent in the land should be found negligent of these religious duties, or should unhappily afford an example of their violation, we cannot hope for any general moral or social improvement:—on the contrary, that baneful example will be found to be fearfully contagious; and the loosened restraints of moral and religious principle must inevitably lead to the social disorganization which we all so much deplore.

But independent, my Brethren, of the influence of our own individual examples in the cause of truth and good order, it is our duty—yes, and our interest—in order to the diffusion of that influence, to forward, as far as we are able, the spread of Christian principles around us. It becomes us, especially, to think of those who are out of the reach of the religious advantages which it is our own privilege to possess,—who hear not the regular proclamation of those good-tidings by which ourselves are cheered, nor the reiterated declaration of those solemn duties by which we all are bound. The diffusion far and wide of the principles of our saving faith is, in reality, the diffusion of the means of fostering, on the surest grounds, loyalty to the Sovereign and attachment to the laws. Neglect this, and all security for the maintenance of either of them is gone. It is a circumstance for heart-felt regret that means are not provided,—or rather that they are not employed,—for disseminating in every part of the land we live in the sound and converting principles of our holy faith; but until something towards this inestimable object can be more extensively and permanently done, let us strive to do our part towards at least their partial diffusion. The system of employing *ITINERANT MISSIONARIES*, to convey to remotest parts the solid and saving truths of our religion, is one from which the most admirable effects have flowed; and, as a support of the line of argument I have been employing, I entreat your earnest co-operation, as opportunity may be offered, in providing the means of sending forth these heralds and ambassadors of a crucified Saviour. Nor can I omit a recommendation earnestly to labour to counteract the influence of those pestilent, seditious and demoralizing publications, which have long been carefully diffused amongst our population, by aiding also in the means of providing a more suitable and improving character of reading to our community. We have a Society here established—that for *PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE*—which, if duly supported, would go far in its influences towards the correction of that unhappy taste, and present to the literary appetite or curiosity a more legitimate and wholesome means of its gratification.

In short, if we would—as Christians ought, and as they are expected to do—testify a real and heart-felt thankfulness to God for all his recent mercies, we shall best shew it by zealously adopting the best, I may say the only means, of maintaining the honour due unto his Name. We shall best prove the sincerity of the gratitude we profess to feel to-day, by acting, with earnest zeal and without delay, upon one petition in that prayer with which we are all so familiar:—*THY KINGDOM COME: THY WILL BE DONE IN EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.*

THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH.

THE ESTABLISHMENT ADVERSE TO SOCINIANISM.

It is often said, that as a sect we are dwindling away from the public observation, which is not true. We make progress in our own country, though it is but slow, because we have to contend against a host of prejudices, and the enormous influence of a wealthy and corrupt Establishment. But in the east the cause is advancing; and in the United States, where there are no obstructions to the progress of knowledge and truth, the spread of liberal doctrines has exceeded our most sanguine expectations.—(Sermon by Mr. Charles Berry, a Socinian teacher, at Leicester. Brit. Mag. Feb. 1833.)

TESTIMONY OF A PRESBYTERIAN.

He had been asked if he was friendly to the Established Church? His reply was, that he was friendly to all scriptural reform in any Church, but that he was always friendly to the Established Church in Ireland. In God's name let it reform itself, when reform is needed, but let not others spoliolate, and then call that reform! He had learned to love the Church of Ireland

at a very early period of his life. When a boy he had frequently to pass over a wild barren heath; but there stood there a beautiful hawthorn bush, which appeared to have been the growth of centuries. In the spring it put forth its green leaves, and was covered with beautiful white blossoms. In the summer it was loaded with its red berries. Its branches afforded shelter for the birds of the air. A green seat was placed beneath it, where he frequently sat with his book, conning over the classic lessons of Greece and Rome. In the summer it afforded him a pleasant shade; in the winter it defended him from the pelting storm.—but there came a sharp-set Radical and cut it down. Then as he passed over the heath in the sultry sun there was no shelter; as he encountered the pelting of the winter storm there was no protection. From that period he had always been friendly to the Church of Ireland. That Church stood before him as a refuge from the cold and from the heat; and as soon should he have consented to have his favourite hawthorn cut down, as consent to have the Church of Ireland destroyed.—(Dr. Cooke's Speech, 13th May, 1835.)

THE PURITANS, NO DISSENTERS.

It is amusing to hear modern dissenters glory in their being the descendants of the Puritans. In no instance, however, do they copy their example. The early Puritans conformed to the liturgy, a few things excepted; they contended for an established church; most of them remained in the Church until the day of their death; and in their printed works they frequently allude to the formularies of the Church. At the restoration, the non-conformists occupied nearly the same position, and would have been satisfied with a few alterations. Modern dissenters differ as widely from the early Puritans and the non-conformists of 1662, as they do from the Established Church. By the Puritans they would be deemed schismatics for gathering separate Churches. Modern dissenters denounce establishments as unscriptural; but the puritans and non-conformists contended that they were necessary. In 1662, a few alterations would have satisfied the ejected ministers; but no alterations would satisfy dissenters. The former would have retained a moderate Episcopacy; by the latter, it is viewed as an offset of Popery. Were the puritans and non-conformists to revisit the earth, they would denounce dissent as the engine of Satan. It is an absurdity for modern dissenters to claim any relationship with the puritans, whose principles were diametrically opposite to their own.—(Lathbury's History of the English Episcopacy.)

RELIGIOUS DISSENTERS FRIENDS OF AN ESTABLISHMENT.

If it be lawful to institute Christianity, it is lawful to perpetuate it. Because there is a decayed beam in the roof, is it necessary to pull the barn down when it can be removed, and a sound one substituted? It is much better to heal, if possible, a diseased limb, than at once to amputate; and I call upon the advocates for Church annihilation to point out an equal substitute for it. With anything less than its utter destruction I am fully persuaded that neither popery, nor infidelity will be satisfied, and I implore my brethren to keep an equal distance from them both: they stand not in need of their assistance to advance and carry their claims. The people of God have but one common interest; many a holy devoted minister in the establishment is labouring to promote the glory of God in the salvation of souls; and it is but solemn mockery to bless God for their success, and to pray for its increase, while their hands are stretched out to unroof the building that covers them. If the Church be a field, the tares are not to be rooted up to the destruction of the wheat. Where there is one faithful holy minister of the establishment, I would to God there were a hundred. Churchmen and dissenters, we should all find enough to do. Because my fellow-shopman gets more custom at his counter than I do at mine, that's no reason that I should quarrel with him; so that the master gets the profits. * * * * *

There are thousands and tens of thousands of holy devoted people in the establishment, and who there received their first impressions; many of whom would be deprived of those means if the Churches of the establishment were swept away; and I again repeat that to sweep them away is the great object to be obtained by the combined operations of infidelity and popery."—(Letter of D. Warr, dissenting minister of St. Leonard's near Hastings.)

We cannot, Sir, be silent spectators of the haughty and ambitious proceedings of the dissenters generally, seeing, as we do, the Papists, the Deists, the Unitarians, and, we regret to add, many who call themselves protestant Dissenters, all join in one common league against what they call one common enemy, and by which, by their conduct, they appear to mean the Established Church. We cannot but express the alarm we feel, and, as Christians, enter our solemn protest against their presumptuous proceedings.

We beg to assure your Majesty we dare not join with infidels, and those who deny the divinity of Christ, nor with those who acknowledge a foreign supremacy—no, nor with those who treat with contumely the doctrines of the Church of England, the leading articles of which we view to be in accordance with the Scriptures, which are the foundation of the Protestant Faith.—(Petition to the King from the Protestant Dissenters of Jireh Chapel, at Lewis, 1835.)

I am grieved to know that some of you have been lately told by a popular minister, from a pulpit in this parish, that it is your duty to resist the payment of this rate, notwithstanding the defect in opposing the grant: such declaration, with others, equally opposed both to scripture and every principle of good government, made me exclaim with some degree of horror, 'If this is dissent, I am no dissenter!' Though I am, for the time being, your pastor and teacher, in all spiritual things, I claim no right, nor would I make the least attempt, to impose upon you any system of politics not in accordance with your own convictions: I nevertheless feel it an incumbent duty, from the relation in which I stand to you, to point out the error to which you are now exposed, and to beg that you will listen to me, and weigh the force of my arguments on this subject, with the same dispassionate and respectful attention as you have heretofore paid to me

on other points. Allow me, then, dear Brethren, to call your candid attention, in the first place, to the apostle's declaration on this point, Rom. xiii. 1, 2.—'Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God; whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.'—(Rev. Mr. Pickering, a Dissenting Minister. Standard, 26th Nov. 1836.)

A WESLEYAN'S TESTIMONY.

Mr. Wesley was a man of profound sagacity, of inflexible uprightness, and of deep piety; and hence his regard for the Church of England is not to be considered as a mere sentiment, the result of prejudice and early habit, of which no rational account can be given. He saw that it had already been an incalculable blessing to the nation, and was still capable of benefiting it to an immensely greater extent. For nearly three hundred years it has been an impregnable barrier against Popery, which, next to heathenism and infidelity, is unquestionably the bitterest curse that ever afflicted mankind. The Church of England is a standing testimony in the land, in favour of apostolic Christianity—in opposition to every species of vice and error; and its literature is the richest that any section of the Church of Christ ever produced. Who that has in him the heart of an Englishman and a Christian, can forbear to venerate a Church which has nurtured such master-minds as those of Jewell, and Jackson, and Barrow, and Farindon, and Hammond, and Walton, and Pearson, and Cudworth, and Stillingfleet, and Bull, and Waterland,—to say nothing of men of more modern times? To this list may be also added the more distinguished of the puritan and non-conformist divines; for these men, also, were trained in an Establishment. Nor did the ejected ministers in general leave their several cures because they objected to a union between the Church and the State; but because they could not comply with the terms of communion which were imposed at the Restoration. Richard Baxter defended tithes, and other peculiarities of an Establishment, as earnestly as the most rigid Episcopalian. The great body of the ejected ministers, in the reign of Charles I., scarcely differed more widely from the Episcopal Church, than many of the violent adversaries of all religious Establishments, in the present day, differ from that venerable band of confessors. Where is the dissenting minister, or the methodist preacher, if he be a man of any reading, the shelves of whose library do not declare his deep obligation to the Protestant Establishment? And it is because she is an establishment, that she has been able to cultivate learning, both theological and classical upon a scale so splendid and extensive, and so immensely honourable and advantageous to the country. It is one of the peculiar excellencies of the theology of the English Church, that it reflects all that is orthodox in principle, and devout in sentiment, in the writings of the fathers, without their passion for allegory, and their defective mode of explaining scripture. But what words can describe the full value of her incomparable Liturgy?—so admirably adapted to express 'the sighings of a contrite heart, and the desires of such as are sorrowful;' and the joyous emotions of those who experimentally know that 'he pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy gospel.' Let every thing that is practicable be done to adapt the Church more perfectly to the present state and wants of society; and above all, the spirit of primitive piety and zeal be diffused among her functionaries, in every district of the land; but 'destroy her not, for a blessing is in her.' Let the 'voluntary principle' be carried as far as it possibly can, in the advancement of Christian instruction; yet, after all, the country cannot do without the Establishment, either in resisting Popery, Socinianism, and Infidelity,—or in the maintenance of true religion and public virtue.—(Jackson, 'the Church and the Methodists'.)

TUE CHURCH.

COBOURG, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1838.

The accusation is often made that Church Establishments are advocated only by those who benefit directly by the advantages which they offer. Were this the whole truth, we know not why it should diminish the strength or soundness of the arguments advanced in their favour, if those arguments be not illogical in themselves, if the position they are employed to sustain possess the sanction of Scripture and antiquity, and if centuries of trial have tested their practical expediency. If the imputation of interested motives should be allowed to invalidate the testimony of the defenders of any public cause, then the attachment which is felt, for example, by the subjects of monarchy, limited especially by the provisions of our unrivalled constitution, and all the reasons which are so zealously advanced as the ground of this attachment, are not to be admitted as evidence of the worth and excellence of the government which we prefer and praise.

But from several testimonies given in a preceding column, and from a mass of others which it would be as easy as it must be superfluous to advance, it very clearly appears that the approbation of at least the established Church of England, and the testimony borne to the efficiency of its workings, is by no means confined to the individuals whom that establishment more immediately comprises. Sincerely religious people of every Protestant denomination in England—at least a very large proportion of them—regard the Established Church as, under heaven, the best and perhaps the only safeguard of pure Christianity in the realm; and religious people there of every name well know that were that church done away, there would be a tenfold facility given to the pernicious and destructive influences of false religion and infidelity. If natural deduction and the simplest ratiocination fail to produce, on this point, all the conviction that is necessary, we are by no means without testimonies à fortiori to shew that neither are our reasonings fallacious nor our fears visionary. We quote the words of an able and well-informed periodical, "The Church of England Gazette," to prove how far the anticipated subversion of our Ecclesiastical Establishment should awaken even the apprehensions of the conscientious and orthodox Dissenter:—