

P O E T R Y.

SELECTED.

ON LAYING THE FOUNDATION OF A VILLAGE CHURCH.

O Lord! amid Thy glorious works,
Of wood and stream and blossoms fair,
Thy servants raise
An house of praise,
And dedicate a house of prayer.

Here, where no incense hath arisen
Save hymn of bird, or breech-bent spray,
Or cheerful strain
Of homebound swain,
Waking his evening roundelay.

Now shall the holy anthem swell
At morn, and noon, and evening hour,
And, by Thy word
Shall hearts be stirr'd,
To own Thy wisdom and Thy power!

Here, when the poor and needy come
With the soul's feverish thirst oppress.
Incline Thine ear,
Their cry to hear,
And bid them from their yearnings rest.

Here oft shall suffering woman bring
Her aching head and sinful heart;
O! look on her,
Sad wanderer,
And bid her with Thy peace depart!

Saviour of men! Thou bearest prayer,
Thou lovest those who trust in Thee,
O let Thine eye
Be ever nigh,
Thine ear attentive to our plea.

Lord! we are weak, but Thou art strong,
Shelter Thy church when storms are near;
O bless this house,
Accept our vows,
And meet us when we seek Thee here.

MEMOIR OF THE REV. BASIL WOODD.

By the Rev. S. C. Wilks.

From Mr. Woodd's public ministrations, we next advert to his personal character, which was eminently worthy of the imitation of every christian minister. His conduct was accordant with his principles; his practice accredited his preaching: and, during a long and active life—much of which was passed in the eyes of his fellow men—not a stain is known to have attached to his character. This long course of consistent deportment tended to shed lustre on his religious profession; for even men of the world "took knowledge of him, that he had been with Jesus," and learned to "glorify his Father which is in heaven." It was impossible to meet him, in the most casual manner, without being attracted by his suavity and urbanity. He was neither ruffled himself, nor ruffled others; and, in the midst of surrounding agitation, he would throw oil upon the troubled waters, and assuage the tempest.

But this suavity was not a mere artificial virtue, the smooth surface of varnished insincerity; it was true christian courtesy, springing from a constant feeling of love to God and to man. Benevolence was his prominent characteristic: had he not been a religious man, he would have been a philanthropist, but christianity turned his philanthropy into a purer channel than mere worldly beneficence, and taught him to do good to the souls of men, while he relieved their bodily necessities. His benignity, being thus grounded upon principle, was habitual and uniform, it shone not less in the cottage of the poor, or in a passing conversation with a beggar, than in his intercourse with his most esteemed and honoured friends. Even to a child he seemed to speak with an air of respect; and a pauper, receiving a tract from his hands, treasured it up as a memento of personal kindness. He inculcated these habits of respect and courtesy, and exemplified them in all the intercourses of life.

This spirit smoothed his passage through the asperities of daily life, and enabled him to effect much good, with less of the wear and tear of irritating friction than is ordinarily experienced by a righteous man in a wicked world. He had seldom any thing to unsay or undo: the chaffings of others passed by

him unheeded; the passions did not cloud the reason, or chill the affections: and, though he might seem to lose ground sometimes by his easiness, he ever won it back, with additions, by his patient continuance in well doing.

He was also a persevering man. The habit of the present age is to form new plans, new societies, and to neglect the old; but Mr. Woodd always persevered in what he had once undertaken, and thus often in the end succeeded, where more volatile spirits would have failed. The difficulties which he sometimes met with, in keeping up his schools, re-establishing decaying institutions, or effecting some valuable object, were such as would have soon wearied out an ardent, impatient mind; but in these cases he usually laboured on with quiet, unflinching perseverance, till he had obtained his object. Few men have been more imposed upon, or met with greater discouragements in their benevolent efforts; yet he ever returned to his beloved employment as if nothing had happened, and the only indication that all had not been right, was, perhaps, a passing remark to the effect that, in a world like this, we must look to principles, and not to results,—must be prepared for vexation and disappointment; and that if, with much labour and great sacrifice, we were the honoured instruments of some little good, we ought to feel ourselves abundantly rewarded. He was thus often led to espouse the cause of persons whom every one else had well-nigh abandoned; for in such cases, if he could discern any trace of contrition, he would not break the bruised reed, but endeavoured, and often, he believed, with success, to repair past evils, and lead the offender to newness of life. He was, perhaps, sometimes deceived; but he thought it the safer side to be defective in discrimination, rather than in charity;—a principle which he carried into all things, and not least into religious controversies; frequently lamenting that truth should ever be clothed in the language of asperity, or that a brother should be converted into an enemy by irritating discussion. While others were admiring the cogency of the argument, or the wittiness of the invective, his first remark always was, that he disliked the spirit; and he would rather, he said, that even truth should not be vindicated, than vindicated in an evil temper.

Yet, while he thus obeyed the injunction, "Study the things that make for peace," he did not forget the remainder of the charge, "and things whereby we may edify one another;" for no man was more firm where he considered principle at stake: his mildness never degenerated into servile timidity; and many occasions might be mentioned, on which he vindicated his views of christian truth, under very discouraging circumstances, with an honesty and boldness which proved that his aspect of mildness by no means sprang from fear of the world. This conscientious firmness, united with his conciliating spirit, effected much good in quarters where ruder passions would have repelled, or given offence, to no beneficial purpose, so that some, who had the strongest possible dislike to his religious sentiments, avowed, that their antipathies would, practically, be much softened, if all who held them exhibited the meekness and candour of Mr. Basil Woodd.

The above features in his character led him to be much appealed to as a peace-maker; especially as he possessed a calm and sound judgment; and, though not much versed in what is called a knowledge of the world, he was usually right in his decisions in matters of importance, particularly those which respected his own sacred profession. By his kind advice, he often succeeded in composing serious differences, to the mutual satisfaction of the contending parties. Some of our public societies, as well as many private individuals and families, are thus much indebted to his healing offices. Alas! how are such men needed in this day of rebuke and blasphemy; and, not least, in the Church of Christ itself, amidst the unbrotherly contentions which rend the mantle of the Redeemer, and expose the common cause to the common enemy.

Mr. Woodd was also an humble man: for though few persons had been more respected, almost to flattery, he evinced a constant spirit of self abasement, both before God and before man; as those well know who have heard him speak of his own ministrations, or of the state of his heart, or his spiritual deficiencies; or have bowed the knee with him before the throne of Divine mercy;—a throne, he would say,

and therefore demanding deep humility in the worshipper, even though a throne of grace. If, indeed, further proof were wanted of his humility, it would be found throughout his daily intercourse, and especially in his condescension to men of low estate; for, many as were the mourners around his tomb among the rich, they were far outnumbered by those among the poor.

It were easy to speak of the defects of this excellent man's character—for what human being, what disciple of Christ, has not defects as well as sins?—but who would have the heart to dwell upon the defects of one, who was ever ready to cover the defects of others? And, in truth, Mr. Woodd's defects sprang very much out of those milder qualities of his nature, which rendered him more prone to verge to the extreme of indulgence than of severity; he judged, perhaps, too much of others by himself; and his failings were the weaknesses of a good man, not the overflowings of ungodliness. But the strongest proof of the general excellence of his character was the universal tribute of respect and regard paid to it by all who knew him. In the extensive and wealthy parish of Mary-le-bone, in which his chapel was situated—a parish equal to, or exceeding in riches and population, our largest extra-metropolitan cities—he was so generally beloved and respected, that, after several new parochial churches had been built, and evening lectures opened in all of them, which induced the vestry to withdraw the pecuniary assistance which they had rendered towards a third service at several of the private chapels in the time of extreme exigence, Beninck chapel was made an exception, on account of the general veneration for Mr. Woodd's character and the important services he had long rendered to the best interests of the parish; having been the first clergyman to institute an evening service many years ago, when scores of thousands of the inhabitants were wholly destitute of church accommodation. And when, at length, the vestry thought they could no longer with propriety support an evening service at one private chapel, after the others had been closed by the withdrawing of their assistance, friends spontaneously stepped forward, from their high respect for Mr. Woodd, and contributed funds to support the lecture in a manner most honourable to themselves and their beloved pastor.—*To be continued.*

THE HOLY COMMUNION.

The sacrament of the Lord's supper is administered, you are aware, on the first Sunday of every month; and also when they do not occur on that day, on the great festivals of Christmas, Easter, and Whitsunday. The time will come I hope, when, like the primitive disciples of our Lord, we shall assemble for "the breaking of bread" on every Lord's day. I grieve to think how many of you slight this gracious ordinance, and turn away from "the communion of the body of Christ."

"Was not for you the victim slain?
Are you forbid the children's bread?"

"When God calleth you, are ye not ashamed to say ye will not come? When ye should return and come to God, will ye excuse yourselves and say ye are not ready?" You have observed that it has not been my practice to dismiss the congregation before the administration of the holy communion. I am not author sed to do so, nor do I wish it. Christ desires, the Church invites, all who "do truly and earnestly repent them of their sins, and are in love and charity with their neighbors, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways," to draw near with faith, and take "his holy sacrament" to their "comfort." It would ill become the servant who bids, to send the guests away. Let it be understood, then, henceforward, that all, whether they communicate or not, are welcome to remain—that, in my judgment, it is best that they should remain; most for their edification, most in accordance with the proprieties of the time and place. But, if any prefer to go, the proper time is directly after the sermon is ended.—*The Rector's Christmas Offering.*

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