The Church.

"HER FOUNDATIONS ARE UPON THE HOLY HILLS."

STAND YE IN THE WAYS, AND SEE, AND ASK FOR THE OLD PATHS, WHERE IS THE GOOD WAY, AND WALK THEREIN, AND YE SHALL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.—JEREMIAH VI. 16.

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Original Poetry.

For the Church.

NIGHT.

When the fire-flies are glancing
  Like gems, in their flight—
The star-jewels blazing
  'Mid tresses of night;—
When the proud forest flingeth
  Its arms on the gale,
And dim flow'rs—soft breathing—
  Sweet odours exhale:—

When the gentle moon playeth
  Where ripples the stream—
The silver waves dancing
  With joy in her beam;
By osier-fringed border
  The calm waters glide,
And heav'n with its azure
  Their crystal hath dyed:—

When the voice of the river
  Hath sunk to a sigh
The rush of the rapids
  Like music floats by;
When the blue lake—like ocean—
  Is smooth'd by a spell,
In magic of moonbeams
  It's waters sleep well:—

While fresh on its bosom—
  Dew-spangled by night—
Each islet green-tufted
  Looks lovely in light
O'er its shadow of stillness
  Bends beauteous in rest—
Like bark moored in haven,
  Where storms ne'er molest:—

When the deer lie reposing
  By fountain and spring—
The beaver lone sleepeth,
  The jay folds its wing,
The stately stag tosses
  His antlers on high,
In slumber still dreaming
  That morning is nigh:—

When the pine lifteth lordly
  Its trunk as a tower,
In gloom of its branches
  The birds find a bower;
The hunter—toil-wearied—
  His couch spreads beneath,
Where grassy stems twining
  The moss-bank enwreath:—

Oh! then,—in her trances—
  My spirit soars high
Like falcon,—wild fleeth
  To homes in the sky;—
In that hour of deep beauty
  Revealings are given,—
My soul teems with visions—
  Love, Glory, and Heaven.

J. H.

A SERMON,

Preached in Christ Church, Hamilton, on the 13th May, 1840, before the Western Clerical Society, and published at their request.

EPHESIANS xi, 20.—"Built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."

In this portion of Holy Scripture, the inspired Apostle presents to the review of the members of the Church of Ephesus the wretchedness of their condition previous to their conversion to the Christian faith. He reminds them of that period when they were wanderers from the paths of righteousness and peace, "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." At the same time, he affectionately puts them in remembrance of the gracious change which, through the Divine mercy, had been produced in their state, and stirs them up to thankfulness by the consideration, that they, who were once far off, were made nigh by the blood of Christ; that the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles was broken down, and a union effected between them; that both were reconciled to their offended Creator by the Cross, and that they might now be compared to one new man, or body, having Jesus Christ himself for their Head.

Great must have been the gratitude of these Gentile converts on receiving the glad tidings, that the Saviour of sinners had preached peace to those who were far off as well as to them that were nigh; that they were no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God, "built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."

God hath "caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning;" and in discoursing on the text, which I have selected for our consideration on this occasion, it is not my intention to make further allusion to the persons to whom the epistle, of which it forms a part, was originally addressed: my object, at present, is to apply it to our own condition and circumstances, as members of one of the purest branches of the Catholic Church of Christ.

I shall first attempt to show that the Church of England is Apostolical in her Constitution and Government; and then make a few observations on the harmony which subsists between the doctrines of this Church and the Inspired Standard of Truth, as evinced by our Liturgy and Articles of Religion.

Our attention is first directed to the Constitution and Government of the Church.

To state the numerous and various arguments which might be produced in defence of Episcopacy, would greatly exceed the ordinary limits of a sermon. I shall, therefore, be as concise as possible.

It has pleased the Great God, whose tender mercies are over all his works, to establish a church, or society of "faithful men," for the conversion and salvation of mankind, through the merits of his blessed Son Jesus Christ. Not to mention the form of worship in the patriarchal age, it may be observed, that, under the Jewish dispensation, the Church of God was conducted and administered, according to Divine appointment, by three orders of men, the High Priest, the Priests, and the Levites. All its services, ordinances, and observances, are explained and detailed, with the utmost exactness, in the Sacred Scriptures.

When, according to the ancient predictions of the holy Prophets, our Lord Jesus Christ came down from heaven for our redemption, he was pleased to constitute his Church in conformity to this Divine model. He himself was the Great High Priest of our profession; the twelve Apostles whom he ordained to the office of the ministry were analogous to the Jewish Priests; and the seventy Disciples were appointed to fill a subordinate office, in accordance with the inferior order of the Levites. After the Saviour's resurrection from the dead, he gave a commission to his Apostles to go and proclaim the glad-tidings of salvation to the whole world, to make disciples of all nations, and baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Endued with power from on high, in obedience to the command of their Lord, they every where published the word of salvation; multitudes of sinners were converted; churches were planted and organized; and Presbyters and Deacons were ordained in every city, while the Apostles themselves exercised the Episcopal office.

It must be admitted, that those enlightened christians who lived in, and nearest to, the Apostolical age, must have been acquainted with the Government and Discipline of the Primitive Church. It is well known, that not a few of them were eminent writers, and companions and disciples of the Apostles, and that their works uniformly attest that Episcopacy is of Divine institution. St. Ignatius, who chose to die rather than desert his Lord, and was consecrated and made Bishop of Antioch by the Apostles, employs the following language:—"There is one body and one blood; one cross and one altar; so there is one Bishop with his Presbytery, and the Deacons my fellow servants." St. Clement, Bishop of Rome, another of "the noble army of martyrs," who also lived in the days of the Apostles, and whose name is in the book of life, in speaking of the three orders of the Christian University, uses these words, in allusion to the three-fold Priesthood of the Jews,—"To the High Priest his proper offices were appointed; the Priests had their proper order; the Levites their peculiar services or Deaconships."

"We are able," says Irenæus, another of the Fathers, "to number up those who, by the Apostles, were made Bishops in the several Churches, and their successors to this time."

It clearly appears, then, that there have ever been three distinct orders of ministers in the Church of God, both under the Law of Moses, and the Dispensation of the Gospel.

It is equally evident, from Ecclesiastical History, that the Church of England is a part of this Catholic Church, which stands on an Apostolical basis; and that when due allowance is made for the unavoidable change of circumstances, which has occurred in the lapse of time, she will be acknowledged to be essentially the same as the primitive Church.

Numbers of persons, it is to be regretted, who are well informed on other subjects, very erroneously suppose, that at the period of the Reformation, the English Church seceded from the Romish communion, and that it was constituted and organised by our venerable Reformers. But a very slight attention to history might convince them that this church is not a dissenting sect, and that her members cannot, in any sense, be called separatists. Sufficient evidence is afforded, by several ancient and credible writers, that in the Apostolic age christianity was made known to the utmost limits of the west, and that some of the Apostles, if not St. Paul himself, planted and organised the British Church.

It is admitted that long afterwards, in the sixth century, while the Romish Church was comparatively pure, a union was effected between it and the Church of England, and that numerous errors were, subsequently, gradually introduced into the doctrines and discipline of both; at length, however, under the guidance of Divine Providence, our English confessors and martyrs gently removed these pernicious errors, and restored the National Church to her primitive purity. But while they carefully separated truth from fiction, and uprooted corruption and superstition with an unsparing hand, they had the wisdom and moderation to abstain from doing violence to the Divine order and government of the Church. They considered it "evident unto all men, diligently reading the Holy Scripture and ancient authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been these orders in Christ's Church, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons." Unlike some of the venerated Reformers in other lands, they believed it to be unlawful for any man to execute any of these sacred offices without "Episcopal consecration or ordination."

Our Church, then, has claims superior to most other christian communities in this, that it is not a merely human institution. "Her foundations are upon the holy hills;" her origin is divine; and her Clergy uniformly receive their authority to minister in holy things from the Bishops, who are consecrated and appointed to their high office by the successors of the Apostles in office, who derived their commission from Jesus Christ himself, accompanied with the assurance, that he would be with them "always, even unto the end of the world."

Let us now direct our attention to the harmony which subsists between the doctrines of the Church of England and the Inspired Standard of Truth, as evinced by her Liturgy and Articles of Religion.

As it respects the Supreme Being, and the Incarnation of our blessed Saviour, the Holy Scriptures assert, that there is but one living and eternal God of infinite perfection, the maker and preserver of the universe; that "there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost," and that "these three are One;" that "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth."—In accordance with these declarations of unerring inspiration, the Church daily directs her members "to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity."—She teaches us that for us men and for our salvation the Son of God came down from heaven and assumed our human nature, and calls upon us ever to praise him as the King of Glory, who, when he had overcome the sharpness of death, opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers. We are assured in the Sacred Writings, that God made all things very good, and that he created man in his own image. But the first human pair soon fell from this blessed state of purity and perfection, and entailed sin and misery on all their posterity. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." In strict conformity with this lamentable description of human character, the Church attests, that "all men are conceived and born in sin, and that none can enter into the Kingdom of God except he be regenerate and born anew of Water and of the Holy Ghost." She exhorts us continually to confess, that "we have erred and strayed from the ways of our Almighty and most merciful Father like lost sheep," to acknowledge that "we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts;" that "we have offended against his holy laws," and that "there is no health in us." To whom then are we to look for pardon and peace? Can sinful men be justified on account of any thing which they can ever either do or suffer, in the sight of their Maker?—The sacred records most unequivocally assert, that this cannot be done; that God will by no means clear the guilty; and that "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." But this awful denunciation is not intended to drive sinners to despair, but to the Saviour of the world. Though we cannot be justified by human merit, yet God is not willing that any should perish.—By his word, and by his ministers, he calls upon the wicked to forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and assures him that when he turns unto the Lord he will have mercy upon him and abundantly pardon. So likewise, the Church, having led us to confess our transgressions, encourages us to look to our offended Maker for forgiveness, by daily declaring that God "desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live;" that "He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy gospel."

We are informed in the Divine Word, that we have redemption in the blood of Christ,—that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," and that he "tasted death for every man." The language of the Church sweetly harmonizes with these encouraging enunciations of infinite mercy.—She acknowledges that our heavenly Father, of his tender mercy, gave his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption, "who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and atonement for the sins of the whole world."

Another important doctrine of the sacred writings is, the influence of the Holy Spirit, without which, we can neither believe in Christ, nor repent of our sins, nor even entertain a good thought, or move a step in the way of righteousness. "No man can come unto the Father," says the Saviour, "but by me, and none can come to me except the Father draw him." "We are not sufficient of ourselves even to think any thing as of ourselves," is the language of his inspired Apostle."—"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me," is the penitent prayer of the royal Psalmist Hear the Church on the same subject. She teaches us to pray "that we may daily be renewed by the Holy Spirit; that all carnal affections may die in us, and that all things belonging to the Spirit may live and grow in us; that God may grant us the true circumcision of the Spirit; that being filled with the Holy Ghost, we may learn to love and bless our persecutors; that He, from whom no secrets are hid, may cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit, that we may ever obey his godly motives, and that all her members may daily encrease in his Holy Spirit more and more, until they come to his everlasting kingdom."

Do the Sacred Scriptures insist upon the necessity of good works as the evidence of a "lively faith?" So in like manner the Church declares, that "though good works cannot put away our sins and endure the severity of God's judments, yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God, and spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith, so that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree is discerned by its fruit." Her constant prayer is, that the most high God would "mercifully grant us such a measure of his grace, that we, running the way of his commandments, may obtain his gracious promises, and be made partakers of his heavenly treasure;" that "His grace may always prevent and follow us, and make us continually to be given to all good works," and that He may "stir up the wills of his faithful people, that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may, of him, be plenteously rewarded, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

"I exhort," says the Apostle, "that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men. For Kings and for all that are in authority." In accordance with this Apostolic exhortation, the Church daily beseeches "the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, for all sorts and conditions of men, that he would be pleased to make his ways known unto them, his saving health unto all nations." She entreats the "Divine Majesty to inspire continually the Universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord; that all who confess his holy name, may agree in the truth of his holy word, and live in unity and godly love." She commends to his "fatherly goodness" all who are under any kind of affliction; she teaches us to make intercession for "all christian Kings, Princes, and Governors, and especially for his servant, Victoria, our Queen;" and directs us daily to invoke "the healthful spirit of his grace upon all our Bishops and Curates, and all congregations committed to their charge." "With angels and archangels, and all the company of heaven," she lauds and magnifies the name of the Most High, and calls upon us to bless him "for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life, but above all, for his inestimable love, in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory."

It would be easy to show the harmony which exists between the doctrines of the Church and the Sacred Scriptures, as it respects a future state of endless existence,—the resurrection of the body,—a general judgment, and many other important articles of our holy Religion; but sufficient, I trust, has been advanced to prove that the Church of England, as to her constitution, government, and doctrines, is "built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."

Can it, then, with truth be denied, my brethren, that this Church claims and deserves the attention and veneration of all who have access to her ministrations. While we steadfastly look to our Lord Jesus Christ for pardon, acceptance, and eternal life ourselves, and direct all within our reach to his atoning merit; let us never forget, that it is our duty to represent His Church to mankind, as the divinely appointed medium for communicating the blessings of heaven. Let us put them in mind to beware of the sin of Schism and its dangerous tendency. Did it not bring down the vengeance of heaven upon multitudes of the Jews? Has it not led to infidelity, rebellion and bloodshed in christian countries? Is it not expressly forbidden in the Word of God?—That which an inspired Apostle first addressed to the Corinthian christians, is not less adapted to us: "I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment."

But in earnestly contending for the Faith of the Gospel, and calling the attention of all with whom we have to do, to the claims of our Apostolic Church, let us never indulge the slightest bitterness of spirit. Let us be able to give "a reason of the hope that is in us with meekness and fear." Towards those who gainsay and resist the truth, let us never "render railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing." "It is an honor for a man to cease from strife." Let the promotion of unity and peace be our highest ambition; so we may hope that the God of order and peace will bless our exertions. By christian kindness we may expect to conciliate the affections of our opponents, and be the means of bringing into the way of truth, such as have erred and are deceived. But "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."

A TRUE SOURCE OF CHRISTIAN UNITY.

A rule which I shall mention as proper to be observed for the preservation of concord amongst us, is to defend the just rights of our ecclesiastical establishment, which connect and cement us together in one communion, as members of a church happily freed from the errors and corruptions of Rome, and put under a government and discipline constructed, as far as the times would permit, upon the platform of primitive Christianity. Those wise and good men, who found it necessary to abolish the usurped jurisdiction of the Pope in these kingdoms, saw plainly at the same time, that religion could not be even *reformed*, as it ought to be, or indeed the very existence of it continued, without proper authority in proper hands. And to argue that, because a right may be abused, therefore there neither is, nor ought to be, any such right in a community, is a method of reasoning, which if it could ever pass in the world for sound and conclusive, would soon banish order and peace out of it for evermore. We have no cause to expect that *angels* should come down from heaven, to take upon them the administration of government; and authority in the hands of *men* must ever, like all other things, be liable to abuse. But he who therefore fancies it were better there should be none, would find himself strangely mistaken, on making the experiment. The truth is, that the great body of mankind must be directed by some or other, both in temporals and spirituals.

And the present question really is not, whether we shall subscribe to articles of religion, but as it will appear in the end, who shall draw them up, and impose the subscription: in one word, whether the Church of England will preserve in her hands the power of granting a toleration to others, or be reduced to the necessity of accepting it from others, if they will grant it to her, which it is ten thousand to one that they never will, should God, for our sins, permit them to effect a change, and get into power.

Loud were the clamours, in the seventeenth century, against the tyranny of the hierarchy. Its demolition was attempted and achieved by the advocates for what was then called *religious liberty*. When this was done, the poor, the ignorant, deluded populace expected that the kingdom of Christ should immediately appear, and that from thenceforth they should be subject, in matters of conscience, to him only. But how different was the event! The little finger of presbytery proved to be thicker than the loins of prelacy. Those who were of a different persuasion were now told, that *toleration* was the *establishment of iniquity by law*. And yet the proceedings of presbytery itself were found to be mild and moderate, when compared with the insufferable insolence and cruelty of its supplanter independency. It was proposed in those days to make Christians of one heart and mind, and to introduce a heaven upon earth by the destruction of the Church, which, though the only centre of unity, was, at that time, thought to stand in its way. But so far was this from being the case, that, in the few years between her fall and resurrection, there sprang up a multitude of religious sects, contradicting, reviling, and persecuting each other. Truth was torn in pieces, and blown about by the breath of contending factions, so that a remnant of it was hardly to be found; and men were either driven back to popery, or tempted to an atheistical disbelief of all religion.

How far the same consequences might follow the execution of a plan for admitting every man into the ministry, who will only declare in general, that "he believes the Scriptures," which all the heretics of former ages, and all the sectaries of the seventeenth century, would at any time have declared—deserves our most serious consideration.

Peace without all doubt, is an admirable blessing. But in giving up the truth for it we should, in the first place, pay too dear for the purchase, and, in the second, be defrauded after all of that for which we bargained. There are times when the most peaceable men in the world will find it their bounden duty to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints."—*Bishop Horne.*

THE CONVERSION OF THE ANGLO-SAXONS.*

The Paganism of our Saxon ancestors was not rooted in their history, nor intimately connected with their institutions and manners; it had no hold upon the reason, the imagination, or the feelings of the people. It appealed to no records, or inspired founders; in its forms it was poor and unimpressive; there was nothing useful or consolatory in its tenets; and whatever strength it derived from local superstitions was lost by transplantation; for the conquerors, when they settled in Britain, were cut off from those sacred places in their native land which they had regarded with hereditary reverence. Such a religion, without pomp and without pretensions, had nothing which could be opposed to Christianity. On the other hand, the Christian missionaries came with the loftiest claims, and with no mean display of worldly dignity. They appeared not as unprotected, humble, and indigent adventurers, whose sole reliance was upon the compassion of those whom they offered to instruct, but as members of that body by which arts and learning were exclusively possessed,—a body enjoying the highest influence throughout all the Christian kingdoms; they came as accredited messengers from the head of that body, and from that city which, though no longer the seat of empire, was still the heart of the European world; for wheresoever the Christian religion extended itself in the west, Rome was already a more sacred name than it had ever been in the height of its power.

The missionaries therefore appeared with a character of superiority, their claim to which was not to be disputed. They spake as men having authority. They appealed to their books for the history of the faith which they taught; and for the truth of its great doctrines they appealed to that inward evidence which the heart of man bears in the sense of its own frailties, and infirmities, and wants. They offered an universal, instead of a local religion; a clear and coherent system instead of a mass of unconnected fancies; an assured and unquestionable faith for vague and unsettled notions, which had neither foundation nor support. The errors and fables with which Romish Christianity was debased, in no degree impeded its effect; gross as they were, it is even probable that they rendered it more acceptable to a rude and ignorant people, a people standing as much in need of rites and ceremonies, of tangible forms, and a visible dispensation, as the Jews themselves when the law was promulgated. The missionaries also possessed in themselves a strength beyond what they derived from their cause, and from the adventitious circumstances which favoured them. They were the prime spirits of the age, trained in the most perfect school of discipline, steady in purpose, politic in contrivance, little scrupulous concerning the measures which they employed, because they were persuaded that any measures were justifiable if they conduced to bring about the good end which was their aim. This principle led to abominable consequences among their successors, but they themselves had no sinister views. They were men of the loftiest minds, and ennobled by the highest and purest motives; their sole object in life was to increase the number of the blessed, and extend the kingdom of their Saviour, by communicating to their fellow-creatures the appointed means of salvation; and elevated as they were above all worldly hopes and fears, they were ready to lay down their lives in the performance of this duty, sure by that sacrifice of obtaining crowns in heaven, and altars upon earth, as their reward.

* *From Southey's Book of the Church.*

CHURCH ESTABLISHMENTS.

By Montgomery Martin.

Man can only be redeemed from the savage state by religion: no mere human laws can hold together society; and nations, whether Pagan or Christian, find it necessary to uphold a form of religion for the maintenance of the social fabric.

There must also be some unity of thought, some concord of sentiment, some fixed principles, for the maintenance of religion: laws are as necessary to the preservation of the moral as of the material world; to the regulating of the mind, as well as to the revolutions of the planets; to calmness and profundity of reflection, as well as to the peaceful progress of the vast physical organization of the universe.

To leave all persons to adopt whatever form, system, or principle of religion their fleeting passions and imperfect understanding might suggest; or to reject, or adopt religion as caprice prompted; would be as absurd as to attempt to form men into a society, and leave each person to frame and obey such laws as he chose to invent; or to despise law and order when it suited his convenience, and enforce them when necessary to his objects.

Religion, therefore, is far more necessary for the maintenance of mankind in society than any form of government; the latter, devoid of religion, would be mainly effective by brute force, and by the terror which its punishments inspired; the former moulds the human being into a social creature, identifies his interests with those of others around him, and, by consentaneousness of thought, gives a firmness and force to all acts emanating from authority for the common weal.

Hence the veriest despots have always found religious establishments a more efficient, as well as more economical mode of governing nations, than bands of armed soldiery, or legions of domestic police. The history of every nation, Pagan and Christian, demonstrates the truth of this axiom, that *the State benefits by its union with the Church*, by the authority which is conferred on its decrees, and by the allegiance bestowed on its rule.

The monarchical government, which attempted to maintain rule without the aid of a Church Establishment, would share the same fate as the Robesperian council—the delusive dream of worshipping a self-created goddess of reason would soon vanish, and the people, in returning into the fold of christianity, would crush to atoms the false shepherds, who betrayed them to the wolves of anarchy and ruin.

INFLUENCE OF THE WOMEN OF ENGLAND.

The women of England, possessing the grand privilege of being better instructed than those of any other country in the minutiæ of domestic comfort, have obtained a degree of importance in society far beyond what their neighbouring sisters could pretend to. The long established customs of their country, have placed in their hands the high and holy duty of cherishing and protecting the minor morals of life, from whence springs all that is elevated in purpose, and glorious in action. The sphere of their direct personal influence is central, and consequently small; but its extreme operations are as widely extended as the range of human feeling. They may be less striking in society than some of the women of other countries, and may feel themselves, on brilliant and stirring occasions, as simple, rude and unsophisticated in the popular science of excitement; but as far as the noble daring of Britain has sent forth her adventurous sons, and that is to every point of danger on the habitable globe, they have borne along with them a generosity, a disinterestedness, and a moral courage, derived in no small measure from the female influence of their native country.—*Mrs. Ellis.*

THE SAMARITANS.

It was with no common interest that we entered into the synagogue of these remarkable people, as a prelude to which they required that we should take off our shoes. Their "cohen," or priest, shewed us a copy of the Pentateuch on two rollers, which they maintain to be the oldest manuscript in the world, saying that it was written by Abishag, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron. It bears marks of very great age, and is here and there patched with pieces of parchment. Some of the learned are of opinion that it is only a transcript from Ezra's copy written again in the old Hebrew or Phœnician letter, out of which Ezra transcribed it into that of the Chaldeans, then first adopted, and since commonly used by the Jews; others are disposed to regard it as an independent record, which has been preserved since the days of Jereboam, first by the twelve revolting tribes, and subsequently by the Samaritans. In either case, it affords a remarkable testimony to the accurate preservation of the books of Moses during a period of 2300 years; for as the rival sects of Christianity have acted as checks on each other to prevent the corruption of any portion of the Sacred Scriptures, since the first schism in the Apostolic Church, so the quick-sighted jealousy of the Jews and Samaritans has proved an infallible safeguard to the text of the Pentateuch since the days of their separation. In the earlier days of society, when MSS. were scarce, and the knowledge