

# The Church.

THEREFORE I WILL NOT BE NEGLIGENT TO PUT YOU ALWAYS IN REMEMBRANCE OF THESE THINGS, THOUGH YE KNOW THEM AND BE ESTABLISHED IN THE PRESENT TRUTH.—2 PETER, I, 12.

VOL. I.]

COBOURG, U. C., SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1837.

[NO. XVI.]

## Original Poetry.

### THE PRAYER OF DANIEL.

"And his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees, three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did afore time."—DAN. vi. 10.

Softly o'er wide Chaldea lay  
The quiet of the evening hour,  
And sunset with each lingering ray  
Gilt the bright crests of shrine and tower:  
Glorious—beyond what mortal dream'd,  
Thy kingly domes, proud Babel, gleam'd!

Now softly on the wind swept by  
The liquid notes of distant song:—  
Now burst the joyous chorus nigh,  
As pleasure led each festal throng.  
All seem'd as Earth's awaken'd voice,  
Her thousand echoes bade rejoice.

Where now was Israel's guardian seer,  
The wanderer in the stranger's land,—  
Amid the regal banquet's cheer,  
The revel's maze, or masquer's band?  
Hath the lone captive all forgot  
His far off home,—his slavish lot?

Within his chamber's still retreat  
The Prophet, with his God alone,  
Waits low-voic'd prayer's beseeching tone:—  
Bright words of hope,—each dearest thought  
That love had fram'd, that faith had taught.

With soften'd brow, with yearning breast,  
Now hath he turn'd his ardent glance  
To where yon blue hills of the west  
Gleam 'neath the sun-set heaven's expanse;  
And visions of a glorious past  
Seem o'er his fancy's musings cast.

There was the land his fathers trod,  
There his true spirit's cherish'd home;—  
There the bright temple of his God  
Rear'd high to heaven its worshipp'd dome:  
There was each dearest, holiest place,  
Where long had bow'd his freeborn race!

Proof to the tempter's deepest art,  
The faith his youthful ear had heard,  
Still breathed its freshness round his heart  
In native strength,—unchang'd, unstirr'd:—  
And in the light it shed o'er him,  
Earth, and the dreams of earth, grew dim!

Long hath the Prophet pass'd away,  
But to his dying glance was given  
The star of hope's triumphant ray,  
Soft beaming in his native heaven:—  
Far through the mists of future time,  
The Day-spring o'er his suffering clime.

Oh wanderers in the stranger's land!  
For whom the Exile's hours are told,—  
Have ye unloos'd each gentle band,  
Bade every thought of home grow cold?  
Or will you turn like him your gaze  
Tow'rd the deep joys of other days?

Will life-like forms before ye start  
Of grassy haunts, of shrines for prayer,  
Of graves where rests each loving heart  
'Neath the low turf that swelleth there?  
Will early Faith come whispering near  
Words of light promise in your ear?

Or will the forms of memory seem  
But phantoms for the musing eye;—  
Shapes of a soft but empty dream  
Of what once was—of things gone by?  
No!—they have brighter visions yet  
Than shadowy joy, or vain regret.

The Palm that with a pure spirit caught,  
Each hope of childhood's sacred time,  
Tho' chang'd to wisdom's deeper thought,  
Yet lives to soothe your manly prime:  
To fan the flame their breathings nurs'd,  
To point the Heaven they told of first!

And the same God, whose aid was nigh  
The prophet in his fearful hour,  
O'er ye may bend a watching eye  
To guide ye on with equal power,—  
'Mid sunny hopes—or skies o'ercast—  
On to sinless home at last!

Toronto, August, 1837.

JUAN.

### REASONS FOR EPISCOPACY.

(Concluded from our last.)

Mr. Colton's third chapter is devoted to the consideration of certain objections to the Liturgy, and other forms and modes of Episcopal worship. On this side the Atlantic, we have been so long familiar with these notable topics of discontent, that any lengthened discussion of the subject, would, probably, inflict a mortal weariness on our readers. It may, therefore, be sufficient to enumerate the causes of deadly offence which the consciences of Protestant America have discovered in the great work of our Anglican Reformers. First, then, the Episcopal Liturgy is a Roman Liturgy; and can any thing good come from the Seven Hills? Secondly, it contains many tedious and unprofitable repetitions. Thirdly, there is too much getting up and sitting down; too frequent a change of posture, and of topic; too much interchange of different kinds of service, &c. &c. Fourthly, the use of a ritual by all the people is no better than a decent mantle thrown over the apathy, or the hypocrisy, of the greater portion

of them: as if there were some magic virtue in the services of the conventicle, which would strip the covering from the heart of every outward worshipper, and lay it bare to the public inspection. Fifthly, the responses of the congregation are improper, unprofitable, and tend to confusion—a charge from which, alas! most congregations in this country seem (by their careful abstention from all audible manifestation of their own personal concern in the public offices of religion,) most commendably anxious to relieve themselves! Sixthly, the liturgical form of worship is utterly powerless; since, in spite of all its appliances and means, it is notorious that the Episcopalian have no religion; they are mere formalists: an Episcopalian which causes Mr. Colton to blush for the uncharitableness of his countrymen! The seventh objection is, in fact, but supplementary to the first,—the numerous holidays, and saints' days,—the observance of which is either appointed or recommended,—are mere worthless relics of Romish superstition! And yet, how singularly curious it is, that those very persons, who loathe the solemn commemoration of apostles, evangelists, and martyrs, should be absolutely insatiable of certain stated appointments, originating in their own fantastic caprices, and usually known by the name of religious occasions! The list of these occasions, Mr. Colton tells us, is perfectly surprising. They form a calendar, which might emulate that of Rome; and, before which, our own sinks into utter insignificance. And all these holy days have received their consecration within the last twenty years. The original monthly Concert—(for that is the title by which many of the occasions are designated)—on the subject of general missions, has long since attained a very sacred estimation; and so, in its train, have several others of the same class. There are several annual Concerts, to which very great importance is attached; as, for instance, the first Monday in the year, for the world; a day in February, for colleges; another, for the cause of temperance; and various others, each with its specific design. In order to show how easy it is to be originated these occasions, Mr. Colton informs us that the above-mentioned celebration of the first Monday in the year, received its first impulse from the suggestion of a lady! It was a lady who launched it, and, by her personal influence, got it under weigh; till, at last, it sailed onward, with canvas expanded, and colours flying, into the deep and broad sea of the Presbyterian and Congregational communion. It is the same, he tells us, with nearly all the religious and benevolent movements of the day. With few exceptions they have issued forth, not from the reservoirs and fountain-heads of ecclesiastical authority, but from obscure sources, to which it soon becomes difficult, and next to impossible, to trace them.

The effect of these multitudinous, and often long-protracted religious exertions, has been—(to use the quaint expression of Mr. Colton)—the breaking up, and the breaking down, of the clergy of the land. They are broken up,—for the exhaustion of their physical and mental energies, under this excessive and perpetual demand for stimulating religious applications, compels them to seek relief, by incessant change of situation,—a process destructive of their stationary local influence. They are broken down,—because the same demand pursues them into every new locality. "There can be no stability of pastoral relation in such a state of the public mind. And, what is still more melancholy, the pastors themselves cannot endure it—they cannot live. They are, not only constantly fluctuating, literally afloat on the wide surface of the community; their spirits are sinking, and they are fast treading upon each other's heels, to the grave—their only place of rest." All this, while they have but little sympathy from the fanatical multitudes, for whom they are consuming themselves. For truly, the multitudes have, an exceedingly cheap and comfortable anodyne for the sufferings of their pastors,—even the very humane and considerate maxim, that it is better to wear out, than to rust out!

It will not appear at all wonderful, that, in a state of society like that which is here described, the grand accusation of all against any prescribed form of devotion, should be loudly and generally echoed; namely, that it fetters the freedom of the spirit—that it essays to bind the wind which bloweth whithersoever it listeth. This charge very strongly reminds us of the reply of the Jews to our Saviour,—we were never in bondage to any man: (John viii. 33.)—and this, when they were themselves trampled beneath the feet of imperial Rome. Mr. Colton shows (as many have shown before him,) that they who are so disdainful of the tyranny of forms, are, in fact, in an errant bondage to forms, as the unhappy slaves whom they affect to pity and despise. There is no getting rid of forms, in public worship. The hymns of the conventicle are, manifestly, forms. Their prayers, too, are forms. "With few exceptions," Mr. Colton justly observes, "and with little variation, the public prayers, if not prescribed, are set forms." Men of ordinary endowments, who are supposed to pray extemporaneously, do but "run through an accustomed, and, to their hearers, a well-recognized round of thought, from which they seldom depart, week after week, and year after year. Some of them cannot vary from their set phrases." Those who are more amply gifted may appear to be less confined, or, as the phrase is, to have more liberty, in addressing the Lord. "But if their prayers are rich and various, dressing into their drawers will ordinarily discover that this gift is an acquisition, not an endowment; and that this rich variety is the result of untiring pains to commit to writing and to memory, in the same manner as the best extemporaneous preachers produce their discourses. Their prayers are forms, of set sight; but they are no less forms." In fact, prayers, thus elaborately prepared, are merely sermons in another shape; and (with some rare and marvellous exceptions) no human capacity or accom-

plishment can ever be equal to this inordinate amount of preparation. "If prayers are studied, sermons will be neglected. If supreme attention is given to sermons, the prayers will be, not only formal, but meagre. Doubtless, in nine parts out of ten, both in number and quantity, these extemporaneous prayers are mere forms; and these forms—(most common, stale, and low, having all the vices of a form, without the purity of a prescribed and authorized ritual)—are stereotyped in the public mind; in the mind of the leader, and of those who are led."—p. 117.

Having thus laid before us a whole liad of mischiefs, Mr. Colton proceeds to give us the following brief and concentrated exhibition of the evil; to which we earnestly solicit the attention of our readers:—

"Never since the days of the Apostles was a country blessed with so enlightened, pious, orthodox, faithful, willing clergy, as the United States of America at this moment; and never did a ministry, so worthy of trust, have so little independence to act according to their conscience and best discretion. They are literally the victims of a spiritual tyranny, that has started up and burst upon the world in a new form—at least with an extent of sway that has never been known. It is an influence, which comes up from the lower conditions of life, which is vested in the most ignorant minds, and therefore the more unending and uncontrollable. It is an influence, which has been fostered and blown into a wide-spread flame, by a class of itinerating ministers, who have suddenly started up and overrun the land, decrying and denouncing all that have not yielded at once to their sway—by direct and open efforts shaking and destroying public confidence in the settled and more permanent ministry—leaving old paths and striking out new ones—demolishing old systems and substituting others—and disturbing and deranging the whole order of society, as it had existed before. And it is to this new state of things, so harassing, so destructive to health and life, that the regular ministry of this country—the best qualified, most pious, most faithful, and in all respects the most worthy Christian ministry, that the Church has ever enjoyed in any age—were made the victims. They cannot resist it—they are overwhelmed by it.

Doubtless, there is a redeeming spirit in reserve; I could not confide in Providence, if I did not believe it. The clergy of this land are worth too much to be lost—to be sacrificed. I trust it will not be long before they will be able to assert their prerogatives, and recover their appropriate influence."—pp. 133, 139.

In the fourth chapter, the claims of Episcopacy are considered. Of course, Mr. Colton does not attempt to embrace the whole of this high argument. He is content to refer to the great standard works, for a due exhibition of that argument, in all its impregnable strength; and, simply, to point out those more prominent considerations which have, principally, influenced him in the formation of his own opinions. Our space forbids us to do much more than intimate that, in the outset of this discussion, he plants his foot upon very lofty ground. He assumes it to be the design of Christ that there should be a permanent ministry, of some kind or other, over his church; and he argues that a ministry, without authority, is something altogether nugatory and contemptible. Authority is the inseparable attribute of office; nay, its very essence. As for the forms and modes, under which the office is instituted—these, indeed, may be merely accidents; but, even so, these accidents themselves are matters of the deepest importance; seeing that, without them, it is impossible for the world to know what, and whom to respect, as invested with authority. But, further, if such provision was originally needful it is equally needful that it should be continued in uninterrupted succession. If there has, any where, been a chasm, or a break, the gates of hell have prevailed. And the prevalence of the gates must be manifest to all the world, if the chasm should be so vast, the break so wide, that no man can see over it, or tell us what was beyond it. No matter how many may have been the "dark ages," or how dark they were; to admit that the obscurity was so deep as to involve us in utter ignorance on this essential point, is to admit that the ministry, which the apostles set up, has been lost: and with it, the visibility of the Saviour's kingdom. Now, the only definite form of administration which can be distinctly traced back, through all ages, to the apostolic times, is Episcopacy. And then the question arises—was such the polity and government established by the Apostles themselves? If it was, there is an end of the debate. If it was not—if Presbytery, or any other form, besides the Episcopal, were, in truth, the original ordinance of the apostles, then we are driven to the supposition, that the apostolic institution was thrown into a deep sleep, almost as soon as it was born; that its place was seized, and retained for 1500 years, by an illegitimate and usurping power; and that, at the end of that long period, the lawful inheritor suddenly awakened from its deadly slumbers, to vindicate its birthright—an assumption so amazing as to astound the present writer, now that his vision is purged from the dimness which had been clouding it for twenty years.\*\*\*\*\*

"The principle of Episcopacy," says Mr. Colton, "must obtain; the religious world cannot do without it; it is essential in society for the management of religious enterprises, on any extended scale. I have shown, that it now pervades and governs the American religious world throughout. It is even astonishing with what rapidity it has come over the land. It is the result of necessity in all such great religious efforts, associated and combined, as have characterized this country for a few years past.

"In view of the position which we now occupy in relation to the past and future—the workings of the religious elements in our own land—and of that free and independent thinking which characterizes the public mind, which withal must have its influ-