

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, 1, 12.

VOL. I.]

COBourg, U.C., SATURDAY, JULY 15, 1837.

[NO. V.]

Original Poetry.

FOR THE CHURCH.
RELIGION.

What is Religion?—'Tis the light of life,
An emanation from the power Divine;
A never-dying star, which sheds its rays
Upon the soul of man, and calleth forth
Those attributes he holds in common with
The Godhead. Its rise is perfect Love
And Gratitude to Him, the Giver of all good:
Its offspring, Hope and Charity. It soothes
The angry passions of our souls, and 'midst
The storms of life and in the pangs of death,
It lifts our hearts to converse with our God.
How vain are all the joys that earth affords!
How soon they dwindle into airy shades,
And mock their poor, deluded worshippers!
What's wealth or honour? Can they purchase e'en
One hour of life? or can they still or calm
The trembling soul, when death appears in view,
Clad in his grisly terrors? Oh! in that hour of pain,
'Tis thine alone to cheer the Christian's heart
And point to happier days, when, 'mongst the
Glorious throng of Seraphim and Cherubim,
A rich reward awaits him. Spirit of God
Almighty, shed thy holy influence on
Our earth-bound souls: breathe in our hearts the flame
Of pure religion, worldly care expelling:
Fix all our hopes on Thee, that when at last
We yield our chasten'd spirits to thy hands,
The prayer of faith which moves our dying lips
May reach thy throne of mercy.

W. C.

MEMOIR OF THE LATE LORD BISHOP OF LICHFIELD AND COVENTRY.

On Thursday the 31st March, died at Hastings, the Hon. and Right Rev. Henry Ryder, D.D. Lord Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry. He was the son of Nathaniel, first Lord Harrowby, by Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Terrick, Bishop of London, and was born on the 31st of July, 1777. He was educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, where he took the degree of M.A. in 1798, and of B.D. and D.D. in 1813. His Lordship was promoted to the deanery of Wells in 1812; and consecrated Bishop of Gloucester in 1815, on the translation of the Right Rev. Dr. G. J. Huntingford to the see of Hereford: In 1824, on the death of the Earl Cornwallis, he was translated to the see of Lichfield and Coventry. In 1831 he exchanged the deanery of Wells for a stall at Westminster. He married in 1802, Sophia, daughter of Thomas March-Phillips, Esq., by whom he has had thirteen children, all of whom survive him, except one son, Charles, who was drowned at sea in 1825.—His eldest son, Henry Dudley, M.A. of Oriel College, is canon residentiary of Lichfield; his eldest daughter is married to Sir George Grey, Bart.

This lamented prelate for a space of nearly twelve years occupied the Episcopal chair of the populous and important diocese of Lichfield and Coventry. A member of a noble family, his Lordship early gave most satisfactory proofs, that in taking upon himself the important and responsible office of a Christian Minister, he had far nobler objects in view than high ecclesiastical preferment, which he might naturally expect from his powerful interest; and that his aim was to be the instrument, in God's hand, of leading many souls to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. Whether we view him in the retirement of a parochial minister of Claybrook or Lutterworth,—as presiding over the Cathedral Church of Wells,—or as Bishop of the sees of Gloucester or Lichfield,—we behold in Dr. Ryder the same unceasing devotedness to the cause of the Redeemer—the same uncompromising boldness in advocating the saving truths of the Gospel—the same ardent attachment to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England—and the same holy anxiety for the spiritual and eternal welfare of his brethren. A zealous supporter of all those institutions which have for their objects the glory of God and the amelioration of man, and frequently advocating their cause in public in the metropolis; sanctioning and fostering them by his patronage in his own diocese, and liberally contributing to their funds,—Bishop Ryder was little influenced by the opposition, too often virulent, which he not unfrequently met. He had the straight-forward path of duty to pursue; and even open, unchristian, unwarrantable attacks caused him not to swerve. His regular appearance at the great anniversary meetings of the religious societies in London was always a matter of rejoicing to the crowds whom he addressed. His eloquence and zeal were calculated to make a powerful impression; and many a heart felt sad at the Meetings of the present year, when the well-known voice no longer fell upon the ear, exciting to activity, and energy and devotedness to God. The sadness, however, was but momentary; for the well-grounded conviction was fully experienced, that, though the bodily tongue was now mute in the chambers of desolation, the disembodied spirit had joined the great multitude which no man can number.

Bishop Ryder was peculiarly distinguished for his urbanity to persons of all ranks. He always, even with the lowest, seemed to feel an equality on the one distinguishing feature of the race of fallen Adam—sinners in the sight of a holy God.—Candidates for orders found in him a kind instructor, an affectionate father, an able guide, a ready counsellor. His Clergy, even while they disapproved of his line of conduct, or regarded his movements with suspicion, and dissented from his religious views, still admired his consistency. He was a constant preacher before and after his promotion to the episcopal bench; and not a few in Gloucester and in Wells can trace their first serious im-

pressions, their first earnest enquiry after salvation, to the truths which they heard from his lips. Dr. Ryder, as Robert Hall well said, was not injured by preferment. He was the same man as a bishop that he was as the laborious parish minister. To such a bishop might be applied the apocalyptic title—an angel of the Church. We may say of him what St. John says of Demetrius, "that he has a good report of all men and of the truth itself."

His Lordship's religious views may be gathered from the six charges that he delivered, and which have been published; three in the diocese of Gloucester, and three in that of Lichfield and Coventry. They were the scriptural views, we conceive, entertained by the reformers of our Church, viz. the utter corruption of man through the transgression of the divine commandments—justification by faith alone, without the deeds of the law—the necessity of spiritual regeneration by the power of the Holy Ghost. These leading doctrines of the Gospel were invariably urged by the Bishop in his addresses from the pulpit, as well as from the Episcopal chair, as comprehending the sum and substance of Gospel truth; and the inculcation of these he earnestly pressed upon his Clergy. He preached as he felt. He addressed dying sinners as himself a dying sinner. In Christ was all his hope; he was anxious that others should find in him everlasting peace and security. He had experienced on his own heart the transforming efficacy of the Grace of God; he feared lest any should mistake amiability of character for real conversion.

Prelates there may have been more deeply versed in theology as a science, or who may have shone more brightly in the walks of literary acquirements; but it would be difficult to name one whose heart appeared to be more entirely under the sanctifying influence of divine grace; or who was more anxious to set forth, in all their purity, the great fundamental doctrines of the Gospel.

The Episcopal bench does not lack men of a kindred spirit, and of a devotedness of piety not inferior to Bishop Ryder.—We thank God that it is so. We can point to more than one Diocese, where the same spirit on the part of the Diocesan, that wrought such changes in Gloucester and Lichfield, is working a change as important. We could tell of more than one diocese, once nearly a spiritual desert, where the streams of salvation are flowing for the refreshment of the weary, and the cleansing of the polluted. We not only thank God, but we take courage.

Bishop Ryder, besides his charges, and sermons preached on public occasions, at the Anniversary Meetings of the charity children at St. Paul's, before the Church Missionary, Prayer Book and Homily, and other Societies, at their anniversaries in the metropolis, published several single sermons; three on the occasion of his departure from Gloucester.

The removal of such a bishop at such a period in the history of our Church is no common loss. May they, who in the providence of God shall hereafter be called to the high and holy office of the Episcopate, be men qualified by the Grace of God rightly to discharge their sacred duties, influenced simply by the desire of furthering the glory of God and the everlasting salvation of men! May they be such men as Bishop Ryder, following him as he followed Christ, the chief Shepherd and Bishop of our souls; then may we trust and believe that spiritual religion will be advanced in the Established Church; that the Church itself will become more deeply rooted in the hearts and affections of the people; and that there will be an increase in that "righteousness which exalteth a nation."

HOPE BIBLICAL.

NO. III.

THE SUBLIME OF PROPHECY.

The intention of the *sublime* is to astonish, and perhaps there is no language so calculated to produce astonishment in the mind, as that of *prophecy*. This is true, whether we contemplate the prophecy accomplished, or as yet unfulfilled. In the latter case, we are astonished at the boldness with which the secrets of futurity are canvassed—in the former, we are scarcely less astonished at the vast display of omniscient wisdom which is unfolded to our view. In this loftiest region of the sublime, the Scripture soars not only without an equal, but without a rival, without an associate.

I do not assert that no prophetic intimations are given in heathen classics. The writers of antiquity were aware of the effect of the marvellous on the human mind: and many are the pretended visions with which their poetry abounds. But that which renders all these prophecies of a perfectly different character from those of Scripture is that they are false, or else written after the facts which they profess to prognosticate. And this being known to the readers, their power of producing astonishment is gone.

Cursory, therefore, as my view of the whole subject is, I could not, without omitting a most important class of sublime passages in the word of God, leave the prophecies it contains altogether untouched.

The Prophets generally adopt their most elevated language when describing the advent of the Messiah. Towards this great personage every eye was turned; he was figuratively the *desire of all nations*: but literally the desire of the Jewish nation. To them was he promised, from them was he to spring, among them was he to live—and whether they viewed him as a spiritual Saviour, or as a triumphant earthly conqueror, they could not help feeling that he was the great object of their hope, and the theme of their glorying. Let us keep in mind this eager-

ness of expectation among all ranks of the Jewish people, and then we shall not fail to admire the following strikingly descriptive passage. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace: that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation: that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth!" Isaiah LII. 7. This passage is by St. Paul applied to ministers in general, but in the prophet it belongs exclusively to the Messiah. Conceive a Watchman standing on the walls of Jerusalem, appointed for the express purpose of catching the first glimpse of the approaching conqueror. After many a tedious hour of apparently fruitless vigilance—after having returned many a desponding answer to the anxious enquiries of his fellow-citizens—at length he beholds at an immeasurable distance on the lofty mountains the majestic form of the expected Deliverer: and immediately pours out his feelings of indescribable ecstasy in the passage just quoted. He begins with admiring the *feet*, because these were the rapid means of conveyance which brought the long expected blessing; and when he saw them quickly bounding over distant hills as if eager to bring what he was so anxious to receive, we cannot wonder that his first exclamation should be, "How beautiful are the FEET of him, &c."

Further, to produce astonishment and rapture in the mind of others, it is of great importance that the same feeling should already exist in that of the speaker. This was evidently the case with the prophetic Watchman. When the mind is overwhelmed by the magnitude of the object which it contemplates, it is not solicitous about the choice of words; all is plain, and simple, and easy. But as there is nothing artificial to obscure the sense, so there is nothing artificial to make it more clear. Astonishment, while it prevents the search for elegances of style, also prevents all very clear and perspicuous arrangement of the thoughts. Some leading idea becomes powerfully impressed on the mind, almost to the exclusion of every thing except itself. In this state, if the person affected wishes to communicate his feelings, he does it by a vehement utterance of the conception he has formed, and by a frequent repetition of the same idea in nearly the same words.

When Cicero by his tremendous eloquence had driven Cati-line from Rome, he thus expresses his unbounded joy in the commencement of his ensuing oration in the senate; "Ho is departed; he is gone; he has fled; he has broken forth." Any one of these words was sufficient to express the fact; but they were not all too much to give full utterance to the speaker's feelings. Just so it is with the Prophet. The Roman orator was describing his delight at the departure of an enemy; the evangelical prophet describes his joy at the approach of a friend. He feels so much that he seems afraid he shall be unable to give his enquiring countrymen any adequate conception of his feelings. He labours to impress it by a hurried kind of fervent repetition; "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE: THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS OF GOOD, THAT PUBLISHETH SALVATION!" He is conscious that human language can be exhausted sooner than his theme; and having dwelt upon the good tidings of peace and salvation, with an energy suited to the subject, he closes with anticipating the sum of that which the Messiah was to publish—"that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth."

Another representation of the same grand event is given us by Isaiah, in the most sublime of figurative language, (chap. xl. 3, 5.) *The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert: a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight and the rough places plain: and the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.*

It is by a very bold and happy figure, that a herald is here represented as coming alone through the wilderness proclaiming the approach of the Redeemer. It mattered not, that no human ear was present to attend to his communication. He had a message to the inanimate as well as the rational part of the creation. All Nature must hear, for the God of Nature was advancing. All Nature also must exert herself to prepare for His approach. The face of the earth is displayed as undergoing an amazing change. And as Eastern Monarchs, when they travelled, were wont to be preceded by pioneers and levellers, to remove obstructions and to repair the roads over which they had to pass: so the messenger of the King of Kings bids mountains sink and valleys rise, and every obstacle remove, to prepare the way for Him whose presence should be such a revelation of the divine glory that all flesh should be able to see it. But whatever view we might obtain of the dignity of that Prince whose thousands of servants were employed in preparing his way, we must obtain a much more striking view of His exalted dignity, who has only to speak, and it is done; and who by the voice of a single servant is represented as performing a work which whole nations should attempt in vain. J. K.

"Abiit, excessit, evasit, erupit."

A great man being asked, how he could transact such a variety of business, without confusion, replied—"That he never did but one thing at a time."

A little girl seeing two nestling birds pecking at each other, inquired of her elder sister what they were doing. "They are quarrelling," was the answer. "No," replied the child. "that cannot be; they are sisters."