

For the Colonial Churchman.

Messrs. Editors,

Being of rather a pacific temperament, and occupied, I trust, in promoting peace, by the proclamation of the blessed tidings of salvation,—I feel a great reluctance in these gainsaying days, to leave my own peculiar circle of duties, in order to prepare a column or two for your excellent paper, though I know well that we ought all to aid you in your laudable efforts to edify your fellow churchman, at a great sacrifice to yourselves. Still I feel constrained, powerfully constrained, to offer you and your readers a few remarks upon one of the many evil practices of those who would subvert the constitution of our country in Church and State, and certainly none is more conspicuous than that of ridiculing, or holding up to contempt the existing authorities of the country.

In every place on which the fomenters of our political evils have had occasion to appear, the ordinary respect for rank, and station, and official dignity, has been attempted to be set aside. The customary forms of respect are infringed, and every effort is made to raise a suspicion or a laugh (it matters little which) against those who bear the least rule. It was well observed by that meek and wise defender of our ecclesiastical polity, Richard Hooker, that "he who goeth about to persuade a multitude that they are not so well governed as they ought to be, shall never want attentive and favourable hearers; because they know the manifold defects whereunto every kind of regimen is subject;—but the secret hindrances and difficulties which in public proceedings are innumerable and inevitable, they have not ordinarily the judgment to consider: and because such as openly reprove supposed disorders of the State are taken for principal friends to the common benefit of all, and for men of singular freedom of mind—under this fair and plausible colour, whatsoever they utter passeth for good and current.

That which wanteth in the weight of their speech, is supplied by the aptness of men's minds to accept and believe it. Whereas, on the other hand, if we maintain things that are established, we have not only to strive with prejudices, deeply rooted in the hearts of men, who think that herein we serve the time and speak in favour of the present state because thereby we either hold or seek preferment—but also, to hear such exceptions as minds so averted beforehand usually take, against that which they are loth should be poured into them." Actuated probably by considerations of this kind, there are those among us whose reiterated and only theme is, the "grievances," real or imaginary, under which we labour: and it is but too true, that they seldom or never want attentive and favourable hearers. The brighter side is, by many, not thought worthy of exhibition. To descant upon our great and numerous mercies—to shew how highly we have been favoured nationally and individually—to dwell upon our creation and preservation, and all the blessings of this life, but above all upon the inestimable love of God in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ—would be far less welcome to the ears of many, than to give a misanthropical view of our condition, and to represent even our privileges but as the badges of slavery.

Certain it is, that the indecorous conduct in question is but too well received among those who mistake arrogance for honest boldness, and audacity for truth. Even the most common-place dulness is contrived into wit when the object of its attack is invested with official dignity.—The more grave or sacred the occasion, the more credit is assumed, for the violation of the rites of ordinary deference and decency.

A sneer at a Bishop, or a petulant reply to a judge, is retailed from lip to lip as a happy instance of patriotic ability, while a jest upon the Bible itself, or a profane application of its sacred words to common discourse is considered more poignant still. Under circumstances like these, it becomes important to recollect that a respectful

demeanour to constituted authorities is a christian duty, and one which ought especially to be encouraged and enforced in this age of unbounded innovation. Names, it has been said, are things: and it is very certain that the exterior forms of respect for any office have seldom been violated with impunity, without the office itself being soon exposed to contempt.

It may at first sight appear somewhat invidious, (that however I will at once disavow) and at all events unnecessary, to transmit observations like these to the public, through the pages of a religious journal: but if we consider how deeply the germ of this propensity is seated in almost every heart, and how much need there is of christian humility wholly to extirpate it, it will not appear unnecessary in times like these to have touched upon the subject.

Men naturally dislike the superiority of a neighbour, and too easily learn to feel a secret pleasure when those who are more privileged than themselves are exposed to any little inconvenience or mortification which appears to reduce them to their own level. Hence the propensity to exult over the insults cast upon constituted authorities.

The misplaced repartees of the most worthless characters are frequently treasured up with satisfaction, by many who have neither ear nor heart for the maxims of sober wisdom. To those who really wish to know their duties to constituted authorities, the Scriptures furnish an unequivocal guide. The obligation to decorum and respect, even towards evil Governors, is there so frequently and so forcibly displayed, especially in our Lord's own recorded observations, and in the writings of the apostles, that any further remark upon the subject on the present occasion would be quite superfluous.

But to the christian the conduct of his Saviour must ever be the strongest argument; and what that conduct was, in reference to the subject in question, needs not to be formally recited. It is impossible to read his life without observing how completely he performed the part of a loyal and obedient citizen, and that not only in the more substantial points, such as "rendering to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," but even in the minutest forms of respect and civility to every recognized authority. His meekness, his submission, his patience before that tribunal that condemned him, form a noble contrast to the conduct of many in the present day, who hope to ingratiate themselves with the unreflecting multitude.

It is very obvious, Messrs. Editors, that the spirit of the present age is, generally speaking, too little inclined to those respectful usages which are necessary to the very being of civilized society. The language and conduct of the young to the old, the servant to the master, the child to the parent, have undergone a remarkable change within the last century. In some respects the change may be for the better. But in others it is fraught with evil: for to mankind at large, the prescriptive usages of distant respect are a more powerful safeguard to the just balance of society, than the deductions of reason and political expediency.

The times imperatively require that every parent should teach his child, and every preceptor his pupil, that "to order himself lowly and reverently" to all his betters, is not an unmeaning part of his catechetical instructions, and that much less is it a mark of a servile and degraded mind.

He who is our great Exemplar pities while he corrects his wayward creatures: how little then does a disposition prone to accuse, and backward to justify, become those whose very existence depends upon the exhibition of the exact contrary of such a line of conduct toward themselves on the part of their omniscient Judge.

The christian learns his duty to his fellow creatures in the reflections that humble him before his Creator.—Conscious of his own sins, "negligences, and ignorances," he can in some measure be touched with the feeling of the infirmities of others, as his all meek and merciful Re-

deemer is with his own.—Such an habitual feeling will lead to the very contrary of every thing like petulance of speech, or harshness of construction. It will employ that restless activity which too many evince in scrutinizing the failings of others, to discover and amend our own.

A disposition like this will lead to the best of all reforms;—a reform radical as our sins, and coextensive with our evil passions. Arduously engaged in casting the beam out of our own eye, we shall have little leisure or inclination to insult our brother for the mote that may be in his.

The gentle graces of the christian character—the kindness, the forbearance, the candour, which we all need, and should all learn, in return, to bestow—will exercise more extensive influence over our hearts. Thus will society be united by closer bonds, and thus will the period advance when all discords shall for ever cease.

PASTOR.

To the Editors of the Colonial Churchman.

Sirs,

In compliance with your request made in the Colonial Churchman of November 14th, a sermon was preached by the Rector of St. Mary's Church, Aylesford, in behalf of the New Church to be built in Grand Manan, and the sum of £3 10s. was this week remitted, to the Rev. Mr. Dunn as an expression of our sympathy with this afflicted minister and his congregation. This fact is communicated, not as being in itself worthy of publication, but in the hope that it may stimulate the ministers of wealthier congregations to bring this case before their people.

I remain, Your's, respectfully

HENRY L. OWEN.

Aylesford, January 18, 1840.

I AM A CHRISTIAN,

Not only because I am convinced that a divine revelation is absolutely necessary, to make known to mankind the proper object of their faith and worship, as well as to instruct them in their present duties and future expectations;—but also, because there is such evidence for the genuineness and authenticity of the bible, as can be produced for no other writings, pretending to be revelations from God to man;—because the history contained in the bible is credible or worthy of being believed;—and because the miracles and prophecies recorded in it, as well as the excellence and sublimity of the doctrines and morality which it inculcates, the harmony subsisting between every part, the astonishing and miraculous preservation of the scriptures, the tendency of the whole to promote the present and eternal happiness of mankind, as evinced by the blessed effects which are invariably produced by a cordial reception and belief of the bible, together with the peculiar advantages possessed by the christian revelation over every other religion,—are all of such a nature as incontrovertibly prove it to be, indeed, the inspired word of God.

Reader, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," Acts xvi. 31. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." John v. 10, 11.

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W. E. Painter, 342, Strand.

This is a very good and cheap little periodical.—We should be glad to see rather more original matter in its future numbers, as readers of magazines and sometimes also readers of other publications. The article on Infidelity, No. VI., is really hardly anything more than a sketch, and dilution of Robert Hall's sermon on that subject. The History of Mr. Faulstich we have somewhere seen before. It is, however, a very good tale, and deserves to be repeated.

Cons. Jour.