

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.

COBOURG, UPPER CANADA, SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 1840.

[NUMBER XXXVIII.]

VOLUME III.]

Poetry.

THE BIRD-MESSENGER.

"The Imagination never conceived a more exquisite picture of beauty, than the dove of the ark gliding towards Ararat with the olive-branch, over the still, solitary, measureless surface of the waters, gazing down upon its own shadow, and listening to the music made by its own wings.—Anonymous.—[Colonial Churchman.]

THE LIFE OF HANNAH MORE.\*

To display intellectual greatness, and to maintain an able advocacy of the cause of religion, are talents which Providence has usually reserved for that sex which he has appointed to bear the burden of life, in mental as well as ordinary labour. But the world has furnished not a few instances of females, who have been conspicuously set forth as a proof that woman holds a rank in the scale of moral being nothing inferior to that of man, and that her faculties are always susceptible of reaching an exalted rank, though the province in which her proper duty lies is rather one of retired usefulness than of fame.

In 1773, or 1774, Miss More visited London, in company with two of her sisters; and the drama being her favourite taste, she lost no time in procuring an introduction to Mr. Garrick, with whom herself and sisters appear to have been wondrously captivated, and to have devoted to his society a large portion of the time passed in London. It would not be in harmony with my objects to follow Hannah More through all her dramatic predilections; still less would I be thought to express my sympathy with the tastes which at this period of her life led her to devote so much time to witnessing and contributing to scenic exhibitions. The religious sense was but partially developed in Miss More at this period of her life; or it would have taught her (what she seems to have subsequently fully known and confessed), that to be absorbed in dramatic pursuits, or even literary tastes, is incompatible with an earnest pursuit of things spiritual and eternal.

The mind of this excellent woman had long been bent upon the accomplishment of a scheme for general religious reformation; and while her thoughts were intently directed to the working out of this nobly comprehensive idea, she had become intimate with Mr. Wilberforce, and the Rev. John Newton, rector of St. Mary Woolnoth, London. Besides the general advantages to be derived from this intimacy, it gave her an opportunity of increasing her information respecting "slavery," a subject then commanding a large share of public attention.

"My dear Sir,—I rejoice that you and Mrs. Newton are in possession of the pure delight of retirement, rural scenery, health, and friendly society,—the best natural blessing of human life. 'God made the country, and man made the town,' says the delightfully enthusiastic bard you are so near—a sentence to which my heart always makes an involuntary warm response.

is good for my health; but, in reality, because it promises a sort of indolent pleasure, and keeps me from finding out what is amiss in myself. The world, though I live in the gay part of it, I do not actually much love; yet friendship and kindness have contributed to fix me there, and I dearly love many individuals in it. When I am in the great world, I consider myself as in an enemy's country, and as beset with snares; and this puts me upon my guard. I know that many people, whom I hear say a thousand brilliant and agreeable things, disbelieve, or at least disregard, those truths on which I found my everlasting hopes.

At the close of the year 1789 an interesting event occurred, which prepared the way for Hannah More to execute the intention she had long formed, of gradually withdrawing herself from general society, and indulging a closer intimacy with those whose religious sentiments were congenial with her own. Her four sisters had enabled themselves, by their prudence and assiduity, to retire from their task of education with great credit, and in affluent circumstances. Previously to their taking this step, they had built for themselves a house in Great Pultney Street, in Bath; and between this residence of their own and the retreat at Cowslip Green, they were in future to divide their time.

AN APOLOGY FOR THE DOCTRINE OF APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION: CHAPTER VII. EPISCOPACY.—SCRIPTURE. Scriptural testimony in support of Episcopacy—Churches of Asia Minor—Churches of Crete and Ephesus—all the Churches during the Apostles' lives.—The whole Church during our Lord's abode on earth.—Our Lord's Addresses to the Apostles.—Corroborative incidental passages.—Appeal to the Presbyterians. Now that, let every calm and reasonable man ask himself and well consider, what ought to avail to show or set aside such testimony as this? Not, I think, a gratuitous suggestion by men in these late ages, that these martyrs and confessors to the Christian truth, these planters, and teachers of Christian Churches, these companions of the Apostles and lights of the world, were all Jews and Anti-Christians, who, with one accord throughout the world, without remembrance from others, or hesitation on their own part, agreed to cast aside the divinely constituted order of ministry, and substitute another of their own devising in its stead;

the Holy Scriptures have recorded, (and 2 Tim., Tit.,) concerned in giving directions to single officers in the Churches of Ephesus and Crete, concerning their superintendance of those Churches, their control of the ministers in them; their ordination of the Clergy; their responsibility for the public service, and discipline. In other words, the Churches of Ephesus and Crete, in St. Paul's time, were Episcopalian. § 3. We find the Apostles exercising in their own persons the superintendance of the Churches which they founded: e.g., Philippi, Phil. i., and Ephes. i., and of the Clergy whom they ordained to them; visiting them by themselves, or by their coadjutors, (Acts xv. 36; Acts xix. 22; 1 Thess. iii. 1;) sending to them pastoral letters, uttering sentences of excommunication, and recalling them; giving directions about the public service, and discipline. In other words, all the Churches, during the Apostles' lives, were Episcopalian. § 4. We find our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, during his abode on earth, exercising in His own person the superintendance of the Church, ordaining the Clergy, of whom He had two other orders, under Him,) administering reproach to them; giving directions for the public worship and discipline. The true Head of the Church then exercised visibly and spiritually that Chief Pastorship of Episcopate which, since His departure from the world, He has spiritually continued to exercise, whence He is still styled the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls; but visibly by His servants, the Bishops and Apostles of the Churches, who will continue it till He "the Chief shepherd shall appear." In other words, the Church of Christ, during His time, was Episcopalian. § 5. Our Lord, before His departure from the world, addressed these words, not to all the ministers, but ordaining unto Himself,—who consisted of, first, Apostles; second, The Seventy;—but to the Apostles only: "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you."—"I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me."—"I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

besides Mrs. Hutchinson, and the Grindletonian Family, who preferred 'motions' to motives; and felt conveniently assumed that their spirit is not to be tried by the Scripture, but the Scripture by their Spirit.' Edwards, the author of 'Gangraena,' the adversary of Milton, whose work may still be preserved for its curiosity, though immortalized by the scourge of genius, has furnished a list of about two hundred such sects in these times. A divine of the Church of England observed to a great secretary 'You talk of the idolatry of Rome; but each of you, when you have made and set up a calf, will dance about it.'

This confusion of religions, if, indeed, these pretended modes of faith could be classed among religions, disturbed the consciences of good men, who read themselves in and out of their vacillating creed. It made, at last, even one of the puritans themselves, who had formerly complained that they had not enjoyed sufficient freedom under the Bishops, cry out against 'this cursed intolerable intolerance.' And the fact is, that when the Presbyterians had fixed themselves into the government, they published several treaties against toleration! The parallel between these wild notions of reform, and those of another character, run closely together. About this time, well-meaning persons, who were neither enthusiasts from the ambition of founding sects, nor of covering their immorality by imposture, were infected with the religious insanity. One case may stand for many. A Mr. Gresswell, a gentleman of Warwickshire, whom a Brownist had by degrees enticed from his parish-church, was afterwards persuaded to return to it—but he returned with a troubled mind, and lost in the prevalent theological contests. A horror of his future existence shut him out, as it were, from his present one: retiring into his own house, with his children, he ceased to communicate with the living world. He had his food put in at the window; and when his children lay sick, he refused to nurse one for their relief. His house, at length, was forced open, and they found two children dead, and the father confined to his bed. He had mangled his Bible, and cut out the titles, contents, and every thing but the very text itself; for it seems that he thought that every thing human was sinful, and he conceived that the titles of the books, and the contents of the chapters, were to be cut out of the sacred Scriptures, as having been composed by men.

More terrible it was when the insanity, which had hitherto been more confined to the better classes, burst forth among the common people. Were we to dwell minutely on this period, we should start from the picture with horror; we might perhaps console ourselves with a disbelief of its truth; but the drug though bitter in the month we must sometimes digest. To observe the extent to which the populace can proceed, disfranchised of law and religion, will always leave a memorable recollection. What occurred in the French revolution had happened here [in England]—an age of impiety! Society itself seemed dissolved, for every tie of private affection and of public duty was unloosed. Even nature was strangely violated! From the first opposition to the decorous ceremonies of the national Church, by the simple puritans, the next stage was that of ridicule, and the last of obloquy. They began by calling the surplice a linen rag on the back; baptism a Christ-cross on a baby's face and the organ was likened to the bellow, the grant, and the barking of the respective animals. They actually baptized horses in churches at the fonts; and the jest of that day was, that the Reformation was now a thorough one in England, since our horses went to Church. St. Paul's cathedral was turned into a market, and the aisles, the communion-table, and the altar, served for the foulest purposes. The liberty which every one now assumed of delivering his own opinions led to acts so execrable, that I can find no parallel for them except in the mad times of the French revolution.

PRAYER FOR RULERS. It is a subject of high scriptural satisfaction to us, that in the houses of God in our land we have a prescribed form of sound words, wherein, according to the commandment of God and the commandment of the king, (not according to our own fluctuating choice or treacherous memory,) we are to pray for the king, and for all who are in authority under him, that we may be quietly and godly governed. And truly this is a precious exercise! there is something in it so congenial to the heart that loves the King of kings,—there is something so affectionate loyalty so near akin to true religion, because the king is an image on earth of God's temporal authority over all men,—there is something so congenial to the soul that is subdued under the authority of the great King, and finds that subjugation of spirit mingled with true affection, the love of Jesus as the Saviour of sinners joined with submission to Jesus as "the Prince of the kings of the earth."—there is something so congenial to that soul, in pouring forth prayer for God's blessing upon the king, that I marvel not at the joy real Christians find in the liturgy of our Church in this respect. And I would affectionately and earnestly exhort you all to cultivate this joy more and more; and let the affections of your soul go forth, while your lips utter words of prayer for the king—"O Lord, save the king." You are invited to say it often in the course of our service; you are invited to remember that he is "the minister of God to you for good," and to pray "that he, knowing whose minister he is, may above all things seek God's honour and glory; and that we and all his subjects, duly considering whose authority he hath, may faithfully serve, honour, and humbly obey him in Christ and for Christ, according to his blessed word and ordinance."—The Rev. H. McNeill.

ON HUMILITY.

Bishop Jeremy Taylor, whose writings cannot be too much studied, says of Humility, that it is like the root of a goodly tree, thrust very far into the ground, and this we may know by the goodly fruits which appear above ground. Of these fruits the Bishop sums up seventeen varieties. The catalogue (with slight abridgment in some of the articles) is as follows:—1. The humble man trusts not to his own discretion, but in matters of concernment relies rather upon the judgment of his friends, counsellors, or spiritual guides. 2. He does not pertinaciously pursue the choice of his own will. 3. He does not murmur against commands and innocent commands; but believes their command to be reason enough in such cases to exact his obedience. 4. He lives according to a rule, and with compliance to public customs, without any affectation of singularity. 5. He is meek and indifferent in all accidents and chances. 6. He patiently bears injuries. 7. He is always unsatisfied in his own conduct, resolutions, and counsels. 8. He is a great lover of good men, and a praiser of wise men, and a censurer of no man. 9. He is modest in his speech, and reserved in his laughter. 10. He fears when he hears himself commended. 11. He gives no part or sassy answers when he is reproved, whether justly or unjustly. 12. He loves to sit down in private, and, if he may, he refuses the temptation of offices and new honours. 13. He is ingenious, free, and open in his actions and discourses. 14. He mends his fault and gives thanks when he is admonished. 15. He is ready to do good to the murderers of his fame, to his slanderers, backbiters, and detractors. 16. He is contented to be suspected of indelicacy, so he may really be innocent, and not offensive to his neighbour, nor wanting in his just and prudent interest. These, it may be said, are very many fruits to spring from the one root of humility. But this is so very great and excellent a virtue, that it draws with it most others.