

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.

VOLUME III.]

Original Poetry.

For the Church.

THE VISION OF WICLIFF.

Rich summer eve! the sunset heaven was flush'd and kindling all,
From cloister tower the holy bells came soft and musical;
And gray old Oxford from her throne of shrine and storied pile
Look'd on her sleeping Isis down, and seem'd with it to smile.

Within a dim monastic hall, high arch'd and fretted o'er,
A student beat o'er gloomy tones of old and solemn lore;
A wayward beam fell on his page, his toilworn glance he rais'd,
And toward the sun-flush'd world beneath with musing sadness gazed.

A change came o'er his thoughtful brow, a lustre fir'd his eye,
For strange deep tones were in his ear, wild shadowy forms swept by—
And visions, such as bled'st the seer on Pisgah's mountain height,
Cheer'd from the Future's misty world our first Reformer's sight.

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A wailing voice was o'er the land, a dark prophetic sound—
A mighty funeral pile arose, a fear-struck crowd was round;
There mid the range of helm and spear, of monkish cowl and hood,
The victims of that bloody day, two gray-hair'd martyrs stood.

Calm as the murder'd Stephen's brow was fix'd each aged look—
Wild rose the sweeping flame around, no tortur'd muscle shook—
"Courage", cried one, and prophet-like flash'd his expiring eye,
"The glorious torch we light to-day, in England cannot die!"

Then loud a warning trumpet blew, on swept the tempestuous crowd,
A thousand sail bore o'er the waves the giant hosts of Spain;
There came the spoils of Indian mines, the chain and torturing wheel,

The thunders of Imperial Rome, the lances of Castile.

The chivalry of England rose, her flag was on the breeze—
And proud and long its crimson wav'd to guard her native seas;
And deep a grateful people bled'st what Victory left their own—
The altars of their fathers' God, their country's stainless throne!

Ages swept on—the land grew dark beneath a thunder cloud,
And trump, and rout, and battle-shout, broke through the misty shroud,
Then ceas'd—o'er England's startled vales a fiend's wild laughter peal'd,
And told how truth and Freedom fell on Naseby's bloody field.

The lightnings rent the murky cloud—up rose a ghastly scene,
Where, on a dark-hung scaffold, stood a form of kingly mien;
A saintly Prelate by his side of comfort seem'd to tell,
For his dying glances were calm and bright—so proud Stuart fell!

The nation's cry to Heaven was heard—there came a glorious morn,
When kingly right and Gospel light came back triumphant borne;
Years fleeted on—twas dark again—a despot rul'd the land,
And altars quak'd, and Truth look'd pale, beneath his iron hand.

A barque sped o'er the sunny Thames to seek a dungeon's cell,
With sev'n gray fathers of the Church, like felons guarded well;
And thousands throng'd the mourning shore with blessing, prayer,
And tear.

And watch'd their latest martyrs pass with calm and holy cheer.*

A war-drum beat—a shout was heard—on Devon's grassy shore,
The flag of long-lost Liberty a welcome victor bore;
And merry bells from village fane and old cathedral pile,
Told that the fight of truth was won, that Freedom bled'st our isle!

Long ages swept their shadows on, sunshine and passing storm;
At Britain's helm of empire stood a stout and youthful form—
The waves grew black before her path, the far off tempest broke,
But the spirit of a line of Kings her kindling glances spoke.

The storm grew wild—the monarch call'd—uprose a glorious band,
The trust of England's hour of need, the stainless of the land;
And foremost in their noble ranks a stately form appear'd
Whom Victory call'd her brightest one, whom Time himself re-ver'd!

* * * * *

The voices died upon his ear, the vision left his sight,
Its parting hour was beautiful, it pass'd away in light—
Outspake our first Reformer then in high and solemn tone,
"STAND BY THINE ALTARS, ENGLAND! THY GOD WILL GUARD
THY THRONE!"

ZADIG.

Toronto, June, 1889.

* See Hume's account of the imprisonment of the Bishops by James II.

THE ENGLISH LAWMAN.

NO. XXII.

THE TRIAL OF THE SEVEN BISHOPS.

One of those tragic spectacles of justice violated, of religion menaced, of innocence oppressed, of unarmed dignity outraged, with all the conspicuous solemnities of abused law, in the persons of men of exalted rank and venerated functions, who encounter wrongs and indignities with mild intrepidity.—Sir James Mackintosh.

Of all the studies calculated to engage the attention, to enlarge the mind, and to strengthen and purify the heart, there is none more delightful or instructive, than the biography of the worthies of the Anglican Church. There is no species of the highest human excellence, of which these holy men have not left us an exemplar; there is no field of learning or science which they have not extended and adorned; there is no rampart of the Christian Faith which they have not either reared or fortified by their matchless and accumulated erudition; and so great and so various are the treasures of theological literature which they have bequeathed to the world, and more especially to their fellow-countrymen,—for they spoke in the common tongue,—that were the writings of Dissent entirely consumed by some modern Omar, and the works of the Divines of our English Establishment, alone remained extant, the loss would be but little felt, and but a mere stone would have been dislodged from the unshaken fortress of Christianity. Reverse the case, however,—suppose the Literature of Dissent preserved, and that of the Church destroyed,—where would be the glory of our English Theology?—where those noble and impregnable defences, constructed by the hand of a Pearson, a Bull, a Waterland, a Butler, and a Magee, against which the Infidel and Socinian level their objections and cavils, only to be shivered into a thousand fragments?

Take our divines from the cloistered study, and the halls of learning, and observe how they demean themselves in times that prove the temper of a man, and refine, or consume him, in the fires of persecution. Behold the fabric of our Reformed Church slowly rising under the patient care of Cranmer, and subsequently watered by his blood. How beautifully, as we sit abstracted from the external world, with our eyes open but not employed, and with our mental vision thereby rendered the more intense, do a thousand mired and crooked forms glide across our path, and suffice the surrounding imaginary scene with a mellow and celestial light! Weekly and thoughtfully, the kindred spirits of Usher, Leighton, and Sancroft seem to hold solemn converse. Juxon irradiates his martyred monarch's scaffold with the mild lustre of faith and hope. Jeremy Taylor, the earliest champion of toleration, indulges in his divine contemplations, and hangs not his harp upon the willows, though he weeps, and remembers Zion. The much calumniated, the munificent, the sincere, the good Laud lays his grey hairs upon the block, committing his soul to God, and his fame to the charitable judgment of posterity. Hall, the

asserter of the Divine Right of Episcopacy, is buffeted by indignities, which his learning, moderation, and piety provoked. Kenn and Lake withstand the tyrant James, and oppose their crozier and "unsullied lawn" to the axe and blood-dyed garments of Jefferies. Wilson traverses the Isle of Man, and the deserted Manxmen are only restrained by the Bishop himself from bursting the prison doors, within which a godless and arbitrary Governor had dared to thrust him. Barrington, Burgess, and Van Mildert appear before us laying the foundations of Institutions, dedicated to the service of Christ and expending sums, such as monarchs might give, noiselessly and secretly in the alleviation of human misery. But where would be the limit, if we were to recount each name that has adorned the annals of our English Hierarchy? Here and there a solitary exception,—a worldly, an ambitious, or an unlearned, prelate is thrust unworthy by court-favour, or some sinister means, into the apostolic seat; worse even than this, there have been bishops, but few, very few, indeed, fit peers for Judas Iscariot, but in no greater proportion to the rest of their brethren, than he to the twelve disciples—yet making all these dedications and recollecting that the chief pastors of our Church, are after all, but frail men like ourselves, we may safely assert that the Bishops of the Church of England, as a body, by their courage at the stake, their learning in the closet, their eloquence in the pulpit, their labours in their dioceses, and their presence in the senate, have faithfully discharged the duties of their awful calling, and drawn down the blessings of Heaven upon their country.

It would be difficult to say which is the brightest period of our Episcopal annals,—whether the reign of Mary, when five of the Bishops joined the "noble army of martyrs" in Heaven; whether the era of the Grand Rebellion, when our venerable and loyal prelates, with their inferior clergy, were either incarcerated, compelled to fly or abscond, and in many instances harassed unto death; or whether the crisis of the Revolution, when the holy and fathers of our Church resisted the King in his might, and yet rather than violate their conscience, involved themselves in his downfall to which their firmness had mainly contributed. The details of the two former periods are perused with more of a painful and shuddering interest, and more strongly excite our horror, indignation, and compassion; but the latter is a spot in English history, on which we can gaze with not less of interest,—albeit of a nature different and not so harrowing,—while at the same time we can survey it with a degree of rejoicing and patriotic exultation, to which we could not give way, when recalling the Popish fires of Oxford, or the Puritan atrocities of the tyrannical Long Parliament.

James II., in his infatuated attempt to subvert the civil and religious liberties of England, was fully aware that the principal barrier to his unhallowed project was the Church of England. Having therefore assumed the guise of toleration, as a mask to his designs, and as a snare to entrap the Dissenters into his support, he issued, on the 27th April, 1688, the celebrated Declaration for Liberty of Conscience, in which he claimed the illegal power of dispensing with the penal laws against Dissenters and Roman Catholics, and which had for its real object the destruction of the Protestant faith, and the restoration of Popery to its long-lost ascendancy and power. A subsequent order from the King was directed to the Bishops, commanding them to cause his Declaration to be read at the usual time of divine service, by the clergy in their respective dioceses. The Bishops, as the sentinels of the national religion, took alarm at this arbitrary violation of the law, and after due consultation determined not to comply with the royal mandate, but presented a respectful petition to James, remonstrating against the illegality of the power which he had assumed. The days appointed for the reading of the Declaration soon drew nigh, and so nobly and faithfully were the Bishops sustained by the great body of the clergy, that "not more than two hundred in all," states Sir James Mackintosh, "are said to have complied out of a body of ten thousand." Irritated at this disobedience, the King, on the 8th June, ordered the Seven Prelates who had signed the Petition to be committed to the Tower, on the plea of having published a seditious libel against the Sovereign and his government.

The names of these venerable champions of our faith, are William Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury; William Lloyd, bishop of St. Asaph; Francis Turner, of Ely; John Lake, of Chichester; Thomas Kehn, of Bath and Wells; Thomas White of Peterborough; and Sir Jonathan Trelawney of Bristol. Had they but lifted up a finger, the people would have risen in a mass to their rescue. But in meekness, and lowliness, without any attempt to excite the popular sympathy, nay with the strongest desire and effort to suppress it, they proceeded to the barges that were to convey them to the Tower. The populace expressed their feelings in tears and prayers. Thousands begged the blessing of the Bishops, even running into the water to implore it. Multitudes, kneeling and supplicating Heaven for their deliverance, lined the banks of the Thames as they passed. On landing at the Tower, several of the guards, and even some of the officers, knelt down to receive their blessing; and it was observed at the time, and deemed a mark of special Providence, that on the evening of the bishops' commitment, when they attended divine service in the chapel of the Tower, the second lesson was the sixth chapter of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, wherein they were exhorted, "to approve themselves ministers of God, with patience, in afflictions, in imprisonments."

The same manifestation of popular feeling continued unabated throughout the following days. The nobility, of both sexes, hastened to proffer their solace and assistance to the venerable prisoners, and to beg their blessing; the soldiers on guard, despite the reprimand of their commanding officer, drank their healths; and dense masses of true-born Englishmen thronged around the Tower, as if ready, should occasion arise, to do battle for the passive guardians of the common liberties. Even the dissenting ministers, though so long silent in behalf of the Protestant cause, now came forward in many instances, with a noble forgetfulness of all past dissensions, and sent a deputation to visit and encourage the Prelates, whom they had before opposed.

On the 15th June, the Bishops were brought before the Court of King's Bench, by a writ of Habeas Corpus; and after having pleaded "Not Guilty", to the charge alleged against them, were liberated on their own undertaking to appear on the trial, which was appointed to take place on the 29th of June. On this occasion, both when repairing to, and when leaving the Court, they were greeted with undiminished symptoms of the general affection, and enthusiasm in their favour. Weeping crowds kneeling in a lane to receive their apostolic benediction—

* Wordsworth, who on account of his Ecclesiastical Sketches, may well be called the Laureate of the Church, has the following sonnet on the Acquittal of the Bishops—its introduction here will, I hope, relieve the prolixity of this paper:

"A voice from long-expecting thousands sent,
Shatters the air, and troubles tower and spire—
For Justice hath absolved the Innocent,
And Tyranny is balked of her desire:
Up, down, the busy Thame—rapid as fire
Coursing a train of gunpowder—it went,
And transport finds in every street a vent,
Till the whole City rings like one vast quire.
The fathers urge the people to still,
With outstretched hands and earnest speech—in vain.
Yea, many, haply wont to entertain
Small reverence for the Mitre's offices,
And to Religion's self no friendly will,
A Prelate's blessing ask on bended knees."

I would here remark, that I have borrowed my facts, and sometimes the language in which they are clothed, from Sir James Mackintosh's History of the Revolution in 1688, and D'Oyley's Life of Sancroft.

twenty-nine peers offering to be their sureties, and, together with numerous gentlemen, attending them in Court,—shouts and huzzas unrestrained even in the presence of the judges—the bishop of St. Asaph detained in Palace Yard by a multitude, who kissed his hands and garments,—the Archbishop received with military honours, and on bended knees by the soldiers posted at Lambeth to guard him—the bells of Westminster Abbey, ringing out a jubilant peal,—bonfires, and festivities in the streets at night, and outrages offered to Roman Catholics,—all these were prophetic incidents which were doubtless conveyed to the Bigot King. How great, therefore, must have been the infatuation, that led him to disregard the MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSHIN, which the hand of a nation was writing on his palace-walls!

The day of the ever memorable TWENTY-NINTH of June, beheld the Bishops entering the Court, supported and attended as before. The four Judges were on the Bench; the Attorney and Solicitor Generals, and two other eminent lawyers appeared for the Crown; while among the counsel retained for the prisoners, were the names, so dear to every Protestant, of Finch, an ancestor of the present Earl of Winchelsea, and of Somers, afterwards, the great Lord Chancellor and Statesman. The trial which proceeded in the usual form, and lasted over two hours, was frequently interrupted, by unusual and irrepressible outbreaks of the feelings of the audience. On every turn of the case, unfavourable to the prosecution, a triumphant laugh, or a shout of joy, which the Chief Justice soon gave over attempting to check, rang ominously through the Court. Lord Sunderland, the king's prime minister, who had already become a secret Romanist, appeared as a witness; and after having gone through the ordeal of being hooted, and hissed, and denounced as a "Popish dog" by the clamorous multitude around the doors, came into the Court colourless, trembling, downcast, bowed beneath a load of public obloquy and self-reproach. Williams, one of the crown lawyers, on making some indiscreet allusion, was also received with a general hiss.

At length the counsel on either side had done their part, and the Chief Justice proceeded to sum up the evidence to the Jury. Two of the Bench, Wright (the Chief Justice) and Allybone, considered that the petition amounted to a libel; Holloway and Powell, pronounced it to be no libel. The Jury retired in the evening, and could not concur in a verdict, until six o'clock on the following morning. At ten the prelates were brought into Court, and the Jury through their foreman delivered in their verdict—Nor Guilty.

The shouts that arose within the court at the announcement of this glorious result, were instantly caught up by the assembled thousands from without. With the rapidity of the fiery-cross,—the war-sign of the Highlands,—stunning acclamations of triumph rushed from one end of the metropolis to the other, and were not long, before swelled by the thousand voices of the soldiers, they thundered in the ears of the monarch himself; then occupied in the camp at Hounslow. The jurors were caressed as national deliverers, with a warmth of gratitude that it would be cold-hearted to call extravagant. The Bishops, preserving the same equanimity which they had evinced throughout every stage of the proceedings, and inciting submission and respect to the higher powers, escaped as privately as possible from the overwhelming gratulations which the exultant metropolis was desirous of pouring upon them. Some renegade and faithless Churchmen fared according to their deserts, and were assailed with the reproaches and derision of the multitude. Nothing could stem the tide of universal joy. Its first ebullition was such as did honour to the piety of a Protestant nation: for the people, grateful for so signal a deliverance, crowded to the churches, and performed their devotions with an earnestness and ecstasy, and vehemence of gesture, unwonted in the character of English worship. Other more usual exhibitions of public rejoicing succeeded in the evening. Bonfires blazed, even before the King's palace, and were not quenched till the morning of Sunday; windows were illuminated; bells pealed; the Pope was burnt in effigy; feasting filled the streets; fire-works and fire-arms added to what a witness of the scene described as "a very rebellion in noise"; and the excessive exuberance of delight, as might have been expected, in too many instances ran over into licence and disorder. The country was infected with the contagious and boisterous transports of the city; and the principal towns in the kingdom shared in the triumph; and the grand jury of Middlesex, although sent out no less than three times, refused to find bills against several persons who had been indicted for the disorderly kindling of bonfires.*

This was frustrated the attempt of James to bring back England under the papal yoke! From this failure did the nation take courage, and steel its heart for the struggle that it perceived was so rapidly approaching to a consummation!

We all know how that struggle ended in the virtual dethronement of the monarch, and the preservation of our religion and laws: and though the politician, who bases his principles upon the precepts of Scripture, must ever regret that the safety of the Church involved the dis-crowning of its temporal head, yet God in his infinite mercy grant that, should the folly and wickedness of the Second James be re-enacted in our day, Seven Bishops may be found ready to lay down their lives in maintenance of our religion, our liberties, and our church!

Five of the venerated prelates who suffered and who triumphed in 1688, conscientiously refusing to transfer their allegiance to William of Orange, were deprived of their bishoprics; and whether we consider them as right or wrong in this respect, we cannot but point with the honest pride of Churchmen, to their sorely tempted but incorruptible integrity. England has still the worthy successors of her Sancrofts and her Kenns; and Hovey and his Summers are fraught with the spirit

that would teach them to resist meekly, and to suffer courageously; and the English people—let the hour of trial, of imminent Protestant danger arrive,—will again be found faithful to the divinely-authorized Bishops of the national Establishment.

ALAN FAIRFORD.

Cobourg, 28th June, 1839.

SCRIPTURAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

NO. XXI.

THE SEA OF TIBERIAS.

St. JOHN vi. 1.—"The sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias."

About eight o'clock we reached Tiberias, having travelled about two hours along the side of the lake: we had occasion to observe that more pains appeared to have been taken to construct the road where it was very rocky, than in most parts of Syria which we had visited. The modern town of Tiberias is very small, it stands close to the Lake of Gennesaret, and is walled round with towers at equal distances. At the northern extremities of the ruins are the remains of the ancient town, which are discernible by means of the walls and other ruined buildings, as well as by fragments of columns, some of which are of beautiful red granite. South of the town are the famous hot-baths of Tiberias; they consist of three springs of mineral water. We had no thermometer; but we found the water too hot to admit of the hand being kept in it for more than fifty seconds. We endeavoured to boil an egg, but without success, even out of the shell. Over the spring is a Turkish bath, close to the lake's side, which is much resorted to, particularly by the Jews, who have a great veneration also for a Roman sepulchre which is excavated in the cliff near the spot, and which they take to be the tomb of Jacob. Beyond the baths, a walk runs from the lake to the mountain's side, which rather perplexed us when we were taking the measures of the ancient walls of Tiberias; but it since appears evident that the walls did not extend so far to the south, and that this was the fortification of Vespasian's camp, as appears from Josephus (Wars lib. iii. c. 10. § 1.), who places it in this position. The lake of Tiberias is a fine sheet of water; but the land about it has striking features, and the scenery is altogether devoid of character.—*Iby and Mangle's Tour.*

SERPENT WORSHIP.

NUMBERS XXIV. 1.—"And when Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, he went not as at other times to meet Nachashim."

"He went not to seek for enchantments." So it is translated in our English Bibles; but the word "Nachashim" means, more properly, serpents. The ancient Hindoo supposed the infernal regions to be tenanted by these Nagas, as they called them, and the sovereign of those realms bore the title of Seshanga, or the king of serpents. The Egyptians, who borrowed many of their religious, or rather superstitions rites from them, seem to have entertained the same opinion upon this point. Nothing is more common in Egyptian monuments than such representations; and the serpents have often been the symbols of government and royalty upon their heads, denoting the important niche which they occupy in the mysterious pantheism of that people. A learned work was published not long since, entitled "Serpent Worship Universal," which proves very clearly that almost every nation has fallen into the awful error of doing homage to the very symbol of the prince of darkness! But this fact, while it exhibits very forcibly the lamentable extent of sinful principle, shows us not only the value of that word which teaches us to deny ungodliness, but proves that it was known in very remote times, and is consequently as ancient as we believe it to be, since the practices of which we have just spoken seem to have originated in mistaken and perverted views of those matters which it