

try Congregation in — shire.* The doctrine of this "week-day lecture" is, that the Apostles were like Christ, and that the living Bishops are Apostles; and the moving APPROPRIATION consists of the following complaints,—a little expanded, indeed, but not relieved by a single intelligible allusion to "the common salvation."—"The day may come, when the representatives of Christ," the Bishops, "are spoiled of their sacred possessions, and degraded from their civil dignities; "the day when each of the "inferior" Clergy,—even the Lecturer himself,—"may have to give up" his "church, and be among" his flock, "in no better temporal circumstances than" their own; "with no larger dwelling, no finer clothing, no other fare, with nothing different beyond those gifts which" he trusts he "received from the all-gracious God, when" he was "made a Minister." Alas for the "country congregation!" Is this "to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with His own blood?" Is this "to do the work of an Evangelist?" Is this the example that shows the Preacher to be a true descendant of Apostles, who "determined not to know anything among" men, "save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified!"

II. The temper of arrogance which it is calculated to inspire, and to which incidental reference has been made, is another objection to the modern claim. Among those evidences of religious truth which are styled collateral, we have been rightly taught to number its subduing and hallowing influence. The temper of arrogance is truly and immeasurably remote from the charity of the Gospel. But it can scarcely fail to result from the Tractarian notions of the Clergy's mystical grandeur and exclusive powers. They who regard the apostolical "authority" as "perpetuated" in the church, and "the jurisdiction" as "conveyed to Bishops and Priests," have quoted, in reference to their favourite topic, the words of Bishop Collier:—"I can't help saying, that, in my opinion, a Prince made but a lean figure in comparison with an Apostle. What is the magnificence of palaces, the richness of furniture, the quality of attendance, what is all this to the pomp of miracles, and the grandeur of supernatural power? A Prince can bestow marks of distinction, and posts of honour and authority; but he can't give the Holy Ghost, he can't register his favourites among the quality of heaven, nor entitle them to the bliss of eternity. No; these powers were apostolic privileges, and the enclosure of the church." How many of our contemporaries are captivated by the idea of sharing such grandeur and power, it is not our province to decide: but their ecclesiastical exclusiveness shall be rebuked by another Bishop, quoted with approbation by Archbishop Branchhall, and thus, singularly enough, found in the "CATENA":—"Nevertheless, if our form (of episcopacy) be of divine right, it doth not follow from thence, that there is not salvation without it, or that a church cannot consist without it. He is blind who does not see churches consisting without it: he is hard-hearted who denieth them salvation."—"Where now, we ask, is the "charity" which is "the end of the commandment," "out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned?" Surely it dwells not with those who, for a theory of no practical value, unchurch Lutherans and Presbyterians, Baptists, Congregationalists, and Methodists. The kindred of such bigots is with Rome; for Rome advances only another step, by declaring in "The Tablet" that the Archbishop of Canterbury, is a mere layman. But in vain do they talk of "Apostolical descent:" the sainted spirits of John and Paul would not acknowledge them; and their own Peter would say, "Be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."

A more serious question arises, which may be suggested in passing. Does not this theory, which excommunicates millions of the servants, likewise reflect on the wisdom and tolerance of the great Master? The New Testament gives the principles and not the minor details, of church government. And surely this is an indication of divine wisdom and goodness. Christ is the King of the church, and his legislation affords ample proof of his prescient and merciful regard to the varied circumstances of his disciples. Why should any, professing

to follow such a Master, insist on the exact uniformity of the churches in every point. Why not cease to dispute about the scaffolding, and unanimously tend to build the temple of the Lord?

III. The doctrine revived in the Oxford Tracts, assumes much that has never been proved; and, indeed, rests on the assumption. An example occurs in the notion of the "Three Orders:" implying the prelate of Bishops. Those who are resolved, without regard to THE BOOK, to believe that the Apostles had successors, will not be very scrupulous in exacting scriptural proof that the primitive Bishops were, in origin, superior to the Presbyters. But to more candid men the following compendious statements are submitted!

We have already regarded "Apostles," "Prophets," and "Evangelists," as the extraordinary officers of the primitive church. Of its other functionaries, some titles appear to all parties to be indiscriminately used in the New Testament; e. g., those of "Teacher" and "Minister." The sacred authors also speak of "Bishops," "Presbyters," and "Deacons." As our controversy does not immediately respect Deacons, we dismiss them with the single remark, that it is the business of other Tractarians to show how the original appointment of these officers* agrees with the deaconship of our national Church. "Episcopus" is a name indicative of the duty to be discharged, the supervision of the flock. "Presbyteros" (literally, elder) is a title of age, or of respect. It was given by the Jews, and other ancients, to members of public councils; as a similar custom obtains with us, in favor of those who discharge the higher municipal offices, and who are called "aldermen," or "elder men." The transition from the idea of age to that of influence, wisdom, experience, or eminent office, is obviously easy.

We hold that the two titles, Bishop and Presbyter, are, in sacred phrase, interchangeable. In one text, "the elders of the church" are addressed as those whom the Holy Ghost has made "overseers" (literally, Bishops) of the flock of Christ.—In another, "Bishop" and "Elder" must be identical, if the Apostle's writing is consequential. In a third, Peter calls himself the fellow-elder (*synpresbyteros*) of the Elders; and charges them to "feed the flock of God, taking the oversight thereof," (*episcopantes*), "episcopating," as John Milton renders the word; or discharging the office of bishops. It is replied that, in the Old Testament, the High Priest is occasionally called the Priest, and that a similar substitution of title may occur in the New. But where is an ordinary Priest called the High Priest? Such an instance would exactly nerve our opponent's purpose; for, in the citations just given, the Presbyters are honoured with the title which he considers distinctive of the higher order. Every High Priest is a Priest; but every Priest is not a High Priest. Every Methodist Superintendent is a Preacher; but it does not follow that every Preacher is a Superintendent.—The reference to Scripture so signally fails, that many of our high Episcopalian descend to the inconclusive plea, that, after the death of the Apostles, the title "Bishop," which had been first used indifferently with "Elder," was exclusively appropriated to the highest class—a distinct order—of church-officers.

The scope of the adverse opinion is, that none but Bishops can lawfully ordain to the ministry. But its defenders have not yet explained these inconvenient facts:—In instances are recorded in which Presbyters have ordained Bishops. The Church of England cedes much in our favour, by associating Priests with a Bishop in the imposition of hands on the candidate for Priest's orders. The English Reformers inclined to our main opinion. In the office for the ordination of Presbyters, under Edward VI., the text above quoted occurs:—"Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers:" but, after the theory of distinct orders prevailed, this unmanageable text was omitted.

On the whole, we think it apparent, that Bishops, Presbyters, and Pastors, were originally the same. Hence affectionate salutation is sent to a church, with its "Bishops and Deacons,"** no mention being made

of its Presbyters or Pastors,—a thing very strange, if they were not the same with Bishops. And further, when the distinction was first made, the Bishops were regarded as eminent in station, but not prelatial in order; *primi inter pares*; the presidents of clerical councils; the chairmen of presbyteries.—If these remarks are just, the very basis on which rests the modern claim of "apostolical succession" is swept away.

IV. The same perilous doctrine is made to imply the natural and necessary efficacy of the Christian sacraments. These are to be dispensed by the Clergy of a certain line; and then the act of receiving them avails salvation.

It is an affecting coincidence, that the Council of Trent, often quoted as giving just occasion for the unchurching of Rome, strenuously maintains that very dogma of sacramental virtue which the Tractarian zealots hold. We are not, indeed, prepared to depreciate the Christian sacraments. They are "seals," as well as "signs," of the gracious covenant; means of grace, as well as remembrances; and a special blessing may be well expected to accompany them. But the assertion of their necessary efficacy, when they are administered by a lineal ecclesiastic, is to be rejected with horror. It casts a reflection on the truth, as though that were not the means of renewing and emancipating the human spirit. It magnifies a form above living faith. The most blessed ordinance of the church,—that which is most eminent in degree, and which brings the Lamb of God most intimately and most pathetically before our eyes,—is no longer prized as a help to saving faith, but is made its substitute. Infants and idiots may receive the consecrated elements of bread and wine. Christianity has lost its ancient character; it is no longer a "reasonable service." It is proposed to admit to the communion those who cannot "do this in remembrance of" Jesus. And the modern system "fills up the measure of" its doctrinal "iniquity," by enacting the awful part of placing the Church, that is the Clergy, between the compassionate Redeemer and the suppliant sinner.

V. The exclusive tenet allows no provision for the spiritual wants of multitudes who are beyond the reach of the Clergy whom it accounts regular. Bold and profane is the oft-repeated allusion to "unconquerable mercies;" and it shall be accordingly dismissed, till its authors find its warrant. But what becomes of the solitary sufferer who is placed out of the reach of Anglican or Romish ministers? of the mariner, who looks up from the immensity of waters, to the holy hull of God? of myriads, in Christendom, who have never heard the voice of any one in the famous line? Will it be affirmed that a shipwrecked company, cast on some Juan Fernandez, must abstain from all public religious worship, because there is not among them a man of the "succession?"

VI. The inconsistency of the Tractarian is apparent in their want of a Missionary spirit. An excellent Clergyman* has publicly complained that, among a considerable number of his junior brethren whom he knows to have imbibed the teachings of the Oxford Tractists, there is not one who has not entirely or in great part withdrawn his countenance even from the Church Missionary Society! Now it is fatal to the pretensions of any party to lack the aggressive or Missionary character. But in the present case we go farther. The obligations to evangelize the world ought to be felt, by THE EXCLUSIVES, more solemnly, more deeply, more impressively, than by any parties of more liberal views. Were the advocates of "apostolical succession" animated with a spark of apostolical charity, they would be above all men active in Missionary work. The songs of Mr. Keble would resemble those of the son of Jesse:—"Let the whole earth be filled with Thy glory!" Dr. Pusey's classes would be taught that oriental learning is especially valuable, as preparing them for foreign and evangelical labours. Oriel College would become a school of Missionaries. Scarcely able to conceive that salvation can be found under any ministry but their own, these gentlemen would be eager to plant the standard of mercy, and to station men of "apostolical descent," in every clime of the redeemed earth! But, alas! these degenerate sons of Apostles think little of the aspects of the great Missionary work; or of the exigencies of infant churches; or of the re-

markable adaptation, to this really apostolical service, of a thousand men given to our various Missionary Societies. While the mysterious rights of the English Clergy are defended, the world is forgotten, and for the sake of this elaborate trifling, millions for whom the Saviour "poured out his soul unto death" are left unperished; groaning under the tyranny of Bel and Nebo, of Rimmon and Moloch; or sinking into the grave before they learn to say, "I know that my redeemer liveth!"

VII. The countenance given to obscure and unsatisfactory views of Christian privilege and enjoyment, is the final objection to the claim of "uninterrupted succession." The pompous theory removes our anxiety from questions which belong to personal godliness, to those which concern the genealogy and the testimonials of our Clergy. May the mercy of our God arrest the delusive and fatal error! Ye disciples of the Oxford-Tract School! hear a remonstrance, offered in sorrow and solemnity, but not in that spirit of bitterness and revenge which your demands are too evidently adapted to awaken. You argue, from a mere speculation, that Christ is with you; but do you feel his bliss-inspiring presence, and thus enjoy a better proof of a true communion? Is not your view highly perilous to the interests of spiritual religion? Have you not laboured to explain away regeneration? Have you not denied the evidence of grace in the believing soul? Have you not asserted, in defiance of consenting testimonies which we are ready to bring in myriads, that the supper of the Lord "can afford no comfort to any" who "receive it at" our "hands!"* O rend not the Church of England in pieces! If she fall, the ruin will be at your door.

But we pause. We dare not, we will not, resign "the ministry which" we "have received of the Lord Jesus." Calmly, but firmly, we take our stand. We desire the consolations of peace; but we cannot betray truth and conscience. We wish to cultivate the innocence of the "dove;" but these times call for the wisdom of the "serpent." Above all we devoutly seek "the wisdom that is from above;" which "is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."†

LIFE AND IMMORTALITY BROUGHT TO LIGHT BY THE GOSPEL.

(From Kichey's Sermons.)

In order to form any thing like a proper estimate of the importance and value of those disclosures of "the world to come" which peculiarly distinguish the Gospel, it is highly expedient to glance at the state of knowledge on this subject among the nations of Pagan antiquity. What did the oracles of reason teach of an hereafter? What light was reflected on the vale of death, and on the regions of futurity, by those philosophers who were so much venerated while living, and to whom all subsequent ages have concurred in awarding a niche in the temple of fame? Let their respective systems furnish the reply.

The immortality of the soul was rejected by Epicurus, as dissonant to reason and sound philosophy. With his theory of its origin, the belief of its existence after death is indeed perfectly incompatible. He conceived, according to Lucretius, who has admirably delineated the Epicurean system, that the soul is formed of the most rarefied parts of the atmosphere,

Ventus et aer Et calor..... inhaled by respiration, and blending in the frame with elements of a still more sublimated and active quality.

Notions equally abhorrent in their legitimate inferences were entertained by many of the Peripatetics. It is true that no express negation of the soul's existence after death occurs in the writings of their distinguished founder, yet the doctrines he inculcated concerning its nature are by no means auspicious of the opposite conclusion.

Plato and Pythagoras avowed their credence of the immortality of the soul; but like the gymnosophists of India, from whom they most probably derived the elements of metaphysical science, they mixed it up with speculations calculated, if not entirely

* Oxford Tracts, No. 16. † Oxford Tracts, No. 74. ‡ See Acta vi. § 1. Acto xx. 17. Titus 1. 5-7. § Peter v. 1, 2. § Stillinger's Treatise, chap. vi. 11. ¶ Ordination Service. ** Edition of a Christian Ministry, ascribed by the Archbishops, Bishops, and Clergy, 1537. † Phil. 1. 1. * The Rev. the Vicar of Harrow on the Hill. † Oxford Tracts, No. 33. † James iii. 17. 13.