

FIRST SUNDAYS AT CHURCH.*

It may already have been supposed by the readers of these Conversations, that it was the practice of Mr. Hargrave's family to attend both Services of the Church on a Sunday, and not to content themselves with appearing once only in the Lord's house on the day which is entirely set apart for God's honour and worship. They conversed at home, as we have seen, respecting what they had heard in the morning; but this was not made to serve as an apology for their absence from Church at the time of the second service.

When through the peaceful parish swells
The music of the Sabbath-bells,
Duly tread the sacred road
Which leads you to the house of God;
The blessing of the Lamb is there,
And "God is in the midst of her."

BISHOP MANT.

No conversation, however, had yet taken place between William and his papa respecting the Evening Service of the Church, because Mr. Hargrave thought it better to review with his little boy one service only at a time, and to go through the Morning Service entirely before he proceeded to the other. Indeed, little remained to be said in connexion with Evening Prayer, after the Morning Prayer had been carefully examined and explained.

"The Order for Evening Prayer," said Mr. Hargrave, after the family had returned from attending that service on the Fourth Sunday in Advent, the twentieth evening of the month, "is, in substance, as far as it goes, so much the same as the other for Morning Prayer, that we shall not have occasion to employ much time upon the discussion of it. Indeed, the Hymns after the Lessons, and the Prayer for All Conditions of Men, are the only two portions of it to which I will request you to refer."

William having now opened his Prayer-book at the Hymn after the first Lesson, called the Magnificat, Mr. Hargrave proceeded with the following remarks:—

"These Hymns are of undoubted excellence, being all of them extracted from Scripture; and three, at least, of them have been used from ancient times in the Catholic Church. The Hymn of the Virgin Mary comes in very well after the first Lesson, not only on account of its general tenour of praise and thanksgiving, but especially by reason of the concluding verse, "He, remembering his mercy, hath holpen his servant Israel, as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed for ever." And the Nunc Dimittis, or Song of Simeon, has always struck me as being very aptly introduced after a Lesson from the New Testament, when the "eyes" of our faith have just seen the "salvation" of the Lord, which he has "prepared before the face of all people." We ought surely to repeat these words with great fervour and devotion, after having heard some portion of that Gospel, the enjoyment and participation of which is the ground and foundation of the whole Hymn."

"Mamma," said Maria, "I remember you told me the other day that all people, and especially women, ought to be humble and meek, but that none should call themselves humble, or boast of their meekness. And I am quite sure that this is right, because you have told me so. But then I cannot understand how it is that the Virgin Mary spoke of her own 'lowliness' in public, as we read in the second verse of this Hymn."

"It is natural enough that you should find a little difficulty here," replied Mrs. Hargrave, smilingly, "and I shall be very happy to remove it. 'Lowliness,' in this place, signifies low estate or poor circumstances, and not humility of mind, which, it has been truly observed, the holy Virgin was too humble to ascribe to herself. You may remember, that in the New Testament, (Luke i. 48,) the word corresponding to this is 'low estate,' and this may at all times remind you of the true meaning. In like manner, the New Testament correctly reads, 'them of low degree,' instead of 'the humble and meek,' in the seventh verse of the hymn."

"I think, mamma," said Alice, "you have informed me that the Papists make a very wrong use of the third verse of this hymn: 'For, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.'"

"They appeal to it, my dear," replied Mrs. Hargrave, "as some warrant for their false and idolatrous worship of the holy Virgin. Well, indeed, may we call her blessed, as being the mother of Jesus Christ, according to the flesh; and well may we admire her as a pattern of true meekness and piety, and purity of manners. But further than this, as it has been well remarked, we dare not go. To invoke her as the Queen of Heaven;—to pray to her and worship her as one having divine power;—is an act of profaneness and impiety,—a direct breach of the first and great commandment. How must her meek and humble spirit have been offended and shocked, could she have foreseen the idolatrous adoration of the Church of Rome, which not only calls her blessed, but places her upon an equality with him who is God over all, blessed for ever; nay, which, in some sense, addresses her even as superior to our Saviour, in beseeching her 'to command her Son' to grant the petitions which are offered!"

"The second and third Collects at Evening Prayer," said Mr. Hargrave, "the former for Peace, and the latter for Aid against all Perils, are both very ancient, and both equally scriptural and pious. The prayer for the King's Majesty, the Royal Family, and the Clergy and People, are in substance the same as others which we have already noticed in reviewing the Morning Prayer and Litany. These latter prayers, together with that for All Conditions of Men, form a body of intercessions which are needful to complete the service when the Litany is not used. In the last-mentioned Collect we pray, you perceive, for our Church, not as distinguished from all others, but as included in the whole Catholic (that is, Universal) Church of Christ."

"We have great reason to admire the truly Catholic spirit of our Church in all her services. In this point of view, I delight especially in this prayer for All Conditions of Men,—the prayer in the Litany on behalf of all who have erred and are deceived, together with the petition for mercy upon all men,—and that truly Catholic petition, the third Collect for Good Friday."

"This, and other such passages in our Liturgy, remind me of a good saying of a certain old writer:—

"I doubt whether he will ever find the way to heaven who desires to go thither alone. They are envious favourites who wish their king to have no loyal subjects but themselves. All heavenly hearts are charitable.—Enlightened souls cannot but disperse their rays."

"And surely," continued Mr. Hargrave, "the real spirit of prayer is an excellent antidote against every opposite temper;—against every thing like envy, hatred, malice, and uncharitableness! 'Evil thoughts and desires,' says old Chrysostom, 'fly from the mind when it is in a state of prayer, just as some beasts of prey retreat to their dens at the rising of the sun.'" (Ad Pop. Antiochenum; Hom. 32.)

"There was one prayer, papa," said William, "which I could not understand exactly, when Mr. Davison repeated it this afternoon. It was the prayer before the sermon. I could not tell why we should pray God to prevent us in all our doings; because I thought that it is only from bad actions that we desire to be preserved."

* By the Rev. J. E. Biddle, M. A.

"I am not surprised," replied Mr. Hargrave, "that you did not perceive the meaning and propriety of that expression; but as you have seen that all which you do understand in our Church Prayers is very good, I suppose you have no doubt, whenever you find any thing which you do not understand, that this also has some good meaning, and is very fit to be used."

"Oh no, papa, I have no doubt whatever concerning that. I was sure that it was a very good prayer, and I knew that you would point out its meaning to me, and then I should be able to use it properly whenever I may hear it at Church again."

"Do you know where to find it in the Prayer-book, William?"

"No, papa. I do not think that I have ever seen it there."

"Perhaps not," replied Mr. Hargrave. "But you may find it among some other very excellent Collects at the end of the Communion Service; and I beg that you will turn to it, and read the whole of the first part of the prayer."

"Prevent us, O Lord, in all our doings with thy most gracious favour, and further us with thy continual help." "Now, it is true that we commonly use the word 'prevent,' in the sense of 'to hinder;' but this is only one meaning of the word, and that a very modern one. To prevent (which is in its origin a Latin word) means properly, to go before. Now one person may go before another, either to prepare his way, or to obstruct his way; and accordingly, in its figurative sense, the word 'to prevent' means both 'to make way' or 'assist beforehand,' and 'to hinder.'" Now turn to our friend Johnson, and see what meanings he assigns to this word, and his authorities for them."

"To prevent. 1. To go before as a guide; to go before, making the way easy.—Common Prayer.—2. To go before, to be before.—Bacon. 3. To anticipate.—Pope. 4. To pre-occupy; to pre-engage; to attempt first.—King Charles. 5. To hinder; to obviate; to obstruct.—Atterbury. This is now almost the only sense in which it is used."

"There then, William, you have a very correct account of the meaning of the word as it is used in the Collect of which we are speaking. In this prayer we beseech God to go before us as a guide in all our doings, and to further (or assist) us with his continual help."

"Oh, that is just what we want!" exclaimed William.

"How beautiful! Thank you, papa. I shall always be glad to join in this prayer, indeed."

"Right, my dear," replied Mr. Hargrave, "I think you perceive the meaning now, as clearly as I do. However, for the advantage of memory, I will quote one or two other sentences in which the word is used in this sense, both in the Common Prayer (as Johnson says) and also from the English Bible, which he might have added.—In another Collect we pray that God's grace 'may always prevent (i.e. go before) and follow us.' In the Bible we find, 'Thou predestinest him with the blessings of goodness.' Ps. xxi. 3. 'The God of my mercy shall prevent me.' (Ps. lix. 10.) 'We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.' (1 Thess. iv. 15.)—And I will mention to you a passage which I have seen quoted from old Isaac Walton, with a view to exhibit the original meaning of the word. 'I mean,' says he, 'to be up early to-morrow, to prevent the sun-rising;' meaning, of course, before sun-rise."

"There is one connexion, my dear," said Mrs. Hargrave, addressing herself to her husband, "in which William will not unfrequently hear the word used in this sense. Perhaps it may not be amiss to take this opportunity of explaining to him the phrase to which I allude,—'preventing grace.'"

"True, my dear," replied Mr. Hargrave; "Mr. Davison, and other Clergymen, do very often speak of preventing grace; retaining, in fact, from the Bible and Prayer-book, the old signification of the word. It is a doctrine of Scripture and the Church, my dear William, that 'we have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have this will.' (Articles of Religion. Art. 10.) Our ministers accordingly often remind us that we need the grace of God to go before us in all good actions. And this is what they call preventing grace; that is, grace going before us. Let us always be alive to the truth and importance of this doctrine of the Gospel; and may we never want the heart to join sincerely and fervently in that excellent, comprehensive, and powerful prayer of our Church: 'Almighty God, who through thine only-begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; we humbly beseech thee that, as by thy special grace preventing us, thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.'" (Collect for Easter-Day.)

"Thank you, papa," said William.

"How kind of you, papa," added Maria, "with an evident feeling of gratitude, 'to take so much pains in instructing us!'"

"I am always most happy to do so, my dear," replied Mr. Hargrave, "and so is your dear mamma also; and indeed it is to her that you are indebted for this last explanation."

"Oh yes, papa," answered Maria, "and we thank you and love you both."

"And I have yet another favour to request," said Mrs. Hargrave to her husband, "which I think you will readily grant. When our dear William was an infant, a few days only after he had been baptized, I very well remember that you were much pleased with some lines on Prayer which you met with in the course of your evening's reading; and after you had read them once or twice to me, you looked on the baby, and said, 'Happy shall I be, my dear child, when you can enjoy the beauty, and enter into the feeling, of these lines!'" You transcribed the verses the same evening in the drawing-room, and no doubt they may now easily be found among your manuscripts. Let me suggest to you that the time is come in which the dear boy can enter into the spirit of those beautiful verses, and request the favour of your presenting him with a copy of them."

"Well timed, very well timed, my dear," replied Mr. Hargrave, "is your mention of those beautiful lines.—I remember having transcribed them from 'The Edinburgh Literary Journal,' and they will form a very fit present indeed for our dear William on the present occasion. I thank you for your calling to my recollection that piece of poetry, and those happy moments in which I transcribed it."

Mr. Hargrave then retired to his study, and in the course of a quarter of an hour brought with him a very neat copy of the following

LINES ON PRAYER.

Go when the morning shineth,
Go when the moon is bright,
Go when the eve declineth,
Go in the hush of night;
Go with pure mind and feeling,
Fling earthly thought away,
And in thy chamber kneeling,
Do thou in secret pray.

Remember all who love thee,
All who are loved by thee;
Pray too for those who hate thee,
If any such there be.
Then for thyself, in meekness,
A blessing humbly claim;
And link with each petition
Thy great Redeemer's name.

Or if 'tis e'er denied thee
In solitude to pray,
Should holy thoughts come o'er thee
When friends are round thy way.
Even then the silent breathing
Of thy spirit raised above,
Will reach His throne of glory,
Who is Mercy, Truth, and Love.

Oh! not a joy or blessing
With this can we compare,
The power that He hath given us
To pour our souls in prayer!
Whene'er thou pinest in sadness,
Before His footstool fall;
And remember in thy gladness
His grace who gave thee all.

INCREASE OF CRIME IN SCOTLAND.

Scotland is the great example to which the advocates of secular education constantly point, as illustrating the effect of intellectual cultivation upon the character of mankind; and boundless have been the eulogiums pronounced upon the moral virtues, steady character, and provident habits of that once held the most intellectual portion of the European population. Doubtless as long as Scotland was an agricultural or pastoral country, and education was based upon religion, when the school-house stood beside the church, and both trained up the same population, who afterwards were to repose in the neighbouring churchyard, Scotland was a virtuous country, and its population deservedly stood high in the scale of European morality. But, since manufactures have overspread its great towns, and a population has grown up in certain places—educated, indeed, but without the means of religious instruction, and almost totally destitute of religious principles—the character of the nation in this respect has entirely changed; and it is a melancholy fact, that the progress of crime has been more rapid in that part of the British dominions, during the last 30 years, than in any other state in Europe. It appears, from the evidence laid before the combination committee, last session of Parliament, that the progress of felonies and serious crimes in Glasgow, during the last 16 years, has been beyond all precedent alarming; the population having, during that period, advanced about 70 per cent, while serious crime has increased 500 per cent. Crime over the whole country is advancing at a rapid rate, and far beyond the increase of the population. In England the committals, which, in 1813, were 7,164, had risen, in 1837, to 23,612—that is to say, they had tripled in 24 years. This advance will probably be considered by most persons as sufficiently alarming in the neighbouring kingdom; but it is small compared to the progress made by Scotland during the same period, where serious crimes have advanced from 89, in 1805, to 3,418, in 1838; being an increase in four and twenty years of more than thirty fold.—*Alison's Principles of Population.*

HOUSES IN PALESTINE.

The way in which many of the houses in Palestine are built, even in the present day, may help to explain some of the circumstances mentioned in the cure of the paralytic man, as given to us in St. Luke's Gospel, ch. v. ver. 18.

The houses have flat roofs, with a trap-door fastened inside, through which the people of the house can get out upon the roof, which they are very fond of doing in the evening, to enjoy the cool air. When many houses are built of the same height, it is easy to pass from one to another, sometimes along the whole length of a street, and thus to reach the roof of any particular house without passing through the house itself.

We may therefore suppose that the friends of the poor sick man, finding it difficult, if not impossible, to force a passage through the crowd into the house itself, passed up through one of the neighbouring houses, on to the roof of that in which the blessed Jesus was. Finding the trap-door fastened, they would, no doubt, force it open, and so be enabled to let down, by means of ropes, the couch on which the sick of the palsy was laid, without injuring the roof so as to endanger either themselves, who were standing upon it, or those who were in the chamber beneath.

The faith of these kind friends was proved by the pains which they took to bring the sick man into the presence of our Lord; and great must have been their joy when they heard that gracious Lord pronounce his sins to be forgiven, and his disease cured! When the crowd saw the man, who had thus been brought before Jesus, borne of four in a miserable helpless condition—when they saw him take up his couch, ready to carry it away without assistance from any, it is easy enough to imagine that room would be made for him to pass. Amazed they would give way on the right hand and on the left, "glorifying God" for this "strange thing" which they had seen.

The Garner.

BLASPHEMOUS THOUGHTS

Of all inward traits, there is none that more disquiets a serious mind than the injection of some impious or blasphemous thoughts of God, which are sometimes so presented to them, that they can scarce avoid them; and though they hate them, and struggle against them, yet they still fear they have some way consented to them, and will be apt to imagine they must have a strangely defiled imagination that can receive such phantasms; or that they have highly provoked God to leave them to the tyranny of those impressions, which grow stronger by how much the more they are resisted. This I have known a torment, perhaps equal to a rack; and having had a full experience of it, shall speak plainly about it. It is certain, this is one of the chief temptations of our enemy, and may produce the worst effects. But he that is assaulted with it must consider, that it is not to be doubted, but an evil spirit can impress a phantasm on our imaginations, as well as present an object to our outward senses; and that such an impression of itself is no more our act, than the hearing any wicked discourse, which, if we receive with a just horror, certainly does no way defile us; and therefore those phantasms when presented to us, but at the same time fled from, as we would do from a fiend if it appeared to us, cannot be our acts; and the great trouble we find they give us, and the horror we conceive at them, may abundantly secure us from the fears of so black a guilt. It is true it is safest to mourn for any secret consent we may have, perhaps, given to such notions; but they ought not to afflict us to an excess of sorrow. And when we are troubled with these, we ought not to make much ado about them, but divert our thoughts from too fixedly considering of them, which only drives the impression deeper.—*Rev. H. Scougal.*

THE SOLDIER'S PROFESSION LAWFUL.

We read that among those many penitents that came to John the Baptist for instruction, when soldiers came he did not bid them lay down their arms, or their commission: He preached not to them, "fight no more, kill no man," but gives them directions how they should demean themselves in their calling: which

he would not have done if he thought their calling itself unlawful. He bids them "do no violence, accuse no man falsely; but be content with your pay, or wages." (Luke iii. 14.) Neither did our Saviour, when he so highly commended the centurion for his faith, rebuke him for his profession, but extolls him for taking the ground and argument of his faith from his military calling; (Luke, vii. 8.), "I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me; and I say unto one, Go, and he goes; and to another, Come, and he comes; and to my servant, Do this, and he doth it." This very calling of his he urges Christ with and makes it an argument to strengthen his faith, that certainly Christ was able to cure his sick servant; because if he was but a captain had such authority over his soldiers, to command them to come and to go at his word, how much more absolute power had Jesus, as Lord both of life and death, over all bodily diseases, to command them to come and to go at his pleasure? This I take to be the force and reason of his words: upon which Christ gives him this large testimonial and encomium, (ver. 9), "when Jesus heard these things he marvelled, and turned him about, and said unto the people, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." But not to multiply more instances, that one place may seem fully convincing and satisfactory, (John xviii. 36) when Christ was examined concerning his kingdom, he answered, "my kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight that I should not be delivered unto the Jews;" which clearly implies, that although wars and fightings were not proper means to advance the spiritual nature of the kingdom of Christ, yet if the methods of his humiliation had permitted him to assume the royal sceptre, his servants and followers might lawfully have sought to defend his claim and title.—*Bishop Hopkins.*

SIX REASONS WHY TIME SHOULD BE REDEEMED.

1. Because it is the most precious thing in the world; and this God seems to have pointed out to us by the very manner of his giving it; for many of his gifts we can keep store by us, but of time it is not so. There is but a moment in the world at once, which is taken away when another is given; and doubtless time is thus dealt out to us by heaven like some invaluable cordial, in single drops, to the end that not one of them should be lost. 2. Because, when once gone, time never returns; for where is yesterday? It is "with the years beyond the flood," and we can as soon bring back one as the other. 3. Because it is to be accounted for. Time being one of the most precious gifts of God, will, of a surety, be accounted for at the last day with a strictness proportionable to its value. 4. Because it is so short and uncertain. No man knows precisely when his accounts will be called for; but this he does know most infallibly, that it cannot be very long, and it may be very soon. 5. Because of the work we have to do, and the difficulty of doing it. Is it not madness for any man to waste his hours in idleness, and say that he has nothing to do, when perhaps the work of his salvation, that greatest of all works, is not yet so much as entered upon, or even thought of? The heart lies fallow, over-run with evil affections; the ground not yet broken up, much less the seed sown; and the time of harvest approaching! 6. Because we have already lost so large a portion of the time allowed us to do it in. For when we seriously consider how many of our first years passed in childhood; how many were played away in the folly of youth; how long it was before we sat down to reflect upon the works which Christ had done for us, and those which he had enjoined us to do, through his grace, for ourselves; and how high we might, by this time, have stood in the scale of virtue, had we well employed the numberless hours which we certainly might have well employed, we shall think it but reasonable that we endeavour by double diligence to repair former neglects—reasonable did I say? We shall embrace every opportunity with joy, and on our bened knees adore that mercy, so much beyond all we could hope for, which still vouchsafes us time and opportunity of being reconciled to God, and bringing forth fruits meet for repentance.—*Bishop Horne.*

THE ADVANTAGES OF RELIGION.

One of the greatest advantages, one of the most attractive attributes of religion, is the protection it affords to all the faithful against the saty of wealth, and the horrors of indigence; against the fury of persecutions and against the agonies of death itself.—It must be admitted that the most sublime and perfect philosophy is very far from offering to man the same assistance. In ruling him with the iron sceptre of necessity, in teaching him to look on death as the final term of his existence, unbelief leaves the moralizer in the most frightful despair. The more just, virtuous and honourable this man may be, so much the more will he grieve for the accumulating crime that surrounds him, for the wicked men who strive to injure him, for the iniquitous schemes of which he is the victim. But faith, on the contrary, infusing into mortals celestial truth, upholds and strengthens their courage. She remanitates them, and though they be tried in this life by afflictions, which may render their path more rough and difficult, yet nothing shakes their hope, which is, to use the expression of sacred works, full of immortality. *Spes eorum immortalitatis plena.—Linguet.*

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October 10, 1840. 14

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TORONTO AXE FACTORY.
JOHN C. CHAMPION, MANUFACTURER OF CHAMPION'S CAST STEEL WARRANTED AXES, Hospital Street, Toronto. EVERY DESCRIPTION OF EDGE TOOLS MADE AND REPAIRED, AND ORDERS PROMPTLY ATTENDED TO. Toronto, August 28, 1840. 8-4f

A CARD.

J. HUGHES begs leave to intimate to visitors to this city, and the public generally, that at the solicitation of several gentlemen in the habit of temporarily residing at the principal Hotels, he has opened a commodious room, in Church Street, adjoining the Ontario House, for SHAVING, HAIR DRESSING, &c. A select assortment of Perfumery, Stocks, Collars, and every other article in his line, will be kept on hand. 12-4f

Wigs, Scissors, and Razettes, always on hand, or made to order on a short notice. Toronto, September 17, 1840. 12-4f

BANK OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA.
THE COURT OF DIRECTORS hereby give notice that a Half Yearly Dividend of Fifteen Shillings, Sterling, per share will be payable on the shares registered in the Colonies, on and after the Third day of August, during the usual hours of business, at the several Branch Banks announced by circulars, and at the respective parties.

The Dividend is declared in Sterling money and will be paid at the rate of Exchange current on the third day of August, to be then fixed by the Local Boards. The Books will close, preparatory to the Dividend, on the Nineteenth day of July, between which time and the Third day of August no transfers of Shares can take place. By Order of the Court, (Signed) G. DE BOSCO ATTWOOD, Secretary. 21f

DR. CAMPBELL will attend to professional calls at the house occupied by the late Dr. Carlie. Cobourg, June 19th, 1840. 51-4f

To be Sold or Let in the Township of Seymour.
THE South-East half of Lot No. 16, in the seventh Concession, containing 140 acres, more or less, of good old wood-land, 25 of which are cleared and well fenced, with a small house and barn thereon. Apply to B. Dougal, Esq., Belleville, or to Robert Elliot, Cobourg. If by letter, post-paid. January 1st, 1840. 271f

REMOVAL.

CHAMPION, BROTHERS & Co. IMPORTERS OF HARDWARE, MANUFACTURERS OF CHAMPION'S WARRANTED AXES, AND AGENTS FOR VANNORMAN'S FOUNDRY, HAVE removed their business from 22, Yonge Street, to 110A, King Hardware, Cutlery, &c., suitable for this market. Toronto, December, 1839. 29-4f

VANNORMAN'S STOVES.
CHAMPION, BROTHERS & Co. HAVE ALREADY RECEIVED TONS Vannorman's celebrated Cooking and other STOVES, of new patterns