

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

By Bishop Heber.

ABASH'D be all the boast of Age!

Be hoary Learning dumb!

Expounder of the mystic page,

Behold an Infant come!

Oh Wisdom, whose un fading power

Beside th' Eternal stood,

To frame, in nature's earliest hour,

The land, the sky, the flood;

Yet didst not Thou disdain awhile

An infant form to wear;

To bless thy mother with a smile,

And lip thy falter'd prayer.

But, in thy Father's own abode,

With Israel's elders round,

Conversing high with Israel's God,

Thy chiefest joy was found.

So may our youth adore Thy name,

And, Saviour, deign to bless

With fostering grace the timid flame

Of early holiness!

LAST HOURS OF JOHN RANDOLPH OF ROANOKE.

Deposition of Dr. Parrish—concluded.

Between him and his faithful servant there appeared to be a complete understanding. He directed John to bring him his father's breast button, which was immediately produced. He then directed him to place it in the bosom of his shirt. It was an old fashioned large sized gold stud. John placed it in the button hole of his shirt bosom; but to fix it completely, required a hole on the opposite side. When this was announced to his master he quickly said, 'get a knife and cut one.' I handed my knife to John, who cut the hole and fixed the valued relic to the satisfaction of the expiring patient. A napkin was also called for, and was placed by John over the breast of the patient. For a short time he lay perfectly quiet: his eyes were closed and I concluded he was disposed to sleep. He suddenly roused from this state with the words, 'Remorse! Remorse!' It was twice repeated the last time at the top of his voice, evidently with great agitation. He cried out, 'Let me see the word.' No reply followed, having learned enough of the character of my patient to ascertain that when I did not know exactly what to say, it was best to say nothing. He then exclaimed 'get a dictionary—let me see the word.' I cast my eyes around and told him I believed there was none in the room.—'Write it down then—let me see the word.' I picked up one of his cards from the table, 'Randolph of Roanoke,' and inquired whether I should write on that? 'Yes, nothing more proper;'—then with my pencil I wrote Remorse, He took the card in his hands in a hurried manner, and fastened his eyes on it with great intensity. 'Write on the back,' he exclaimed. I did so, and handed it to him again. He was excessively agitated at this period; he repeated, 'Remorse! You have no idea what it is: you can form no idea of it whatever; it has contributed to bring me to my present situation; but I have looked to the Lord Jesus Christ, and hope I have obtained pardon.' He then said, 'Now let John take your pencil and draw a line under the word;' which was accordingly done. I inquired what was to be done with the card? He replied, 'Put it in your pocket—take care of it—when I am dead, look at it.' The original is now in my possession.

This was an impressive scene. All the plans of ambition, the honours and the wealth of this world had vanished as bubbles on the water. He knew and he felt that his very moments were few and even they were numbered. It afforded his physician an opportunity, without being intrusive, of offering to him a few serious observations, and pointing the expiring statesman to a hope beyond the grave.

My situation at this period, was serious and embarrassing. Locked in the chamber of a patient, and solemnly called upon as a witness confirming a will already made for the liberation and support of his slaves, when the only human ear that heard these de-

clarations except myself and the testator, was one of the very slaves included in the bequest, it required no unusual foresight to anticipate the construction that might be put upon such testimony: perhaps in a distant court where the witness might be personally unknown; when added to this, it was found he was a member of the religious society of Friends who long since had washed their hands from the stain of slavery and whose sentiments on the subject were universally known. I saw that even under a charitable construction of the testimony, the force of early impressions, and the bias of education, might be supposed imperceptibly to influence even an upright mind, and give a colouring to words and facts which to others, differently educated, might be viewed in another light.

Under these views, I introduced the subject of calling in some additional witnesses, and suggested sending down stairs for Edmund Badger, whose attentions were very great to him. He replied, 'I have already communicated that to him.' I stated it was my intention to be with him as steadily as possible until his death, but with his concurrence I would send for two young physicians who should remain, and never lose sight of him until he was dead, and to whom he could make the declaration. My son, Doctor Isaac Parish, and my young friend and late pupil, Doctor Francis West, were proposed to him, saying that the latter was a brother of Captain West. He quickly asked, 'Captain West of the packet?' On receiving an affirmative reply, he said, 'Send for him—he is the man—I'll have him.' From some circumstances that had come to my knowledge, I had reason to believe that Captain James West was a favourite with the patient. Before the door was unlocked, he pointed towards a bureau, and requested I would take from it a remuneration for my services. To this I promptly objected; informing him I should feel as though I were acting indelicately, to comply. He then waived the subject, by saying, 'In England it is always customary.' The witnesses were now sent for and soon arrived. The dying man was propped in bed, with pillows, nearly erect. Those only who knew his form and singular physiognomy, can form an idea of his appearance at this moment. Being extremely sensitive to cold, he had a blanket over his head and shoulders; and he directed John to place his hat on over the blanket, which aided in keeping it close to his head. The hat bore evident marks of age, and was probably exposed to the pelting of the storm during his discomforts on the day of arrival.—With a countenance full of sorrow, John stood close to the bedside of his dying master.—The four witnesses, to wit: Edmund Badger, Doctor Francis West, my son, Dr. Isaac Parish, and myself, were placed in a semicircle, in full view. It was evidently an awfully interesting moment to the patient. He rallied all the expiring energies of mind and body to this last effort. His whole soul seemed concentrated in the act. His eyes flashed feeling and intelligence. Pointing towards us with his long index finger, he addressed us: 'I confirm all the directions in my will respecting my slaves, and direct them to be enforced, particularly in regard to a provision for their support.' And then raising his arm as high as he could he brought it down with his open hand on the shoulders of his favourite John, adding these words—'especially for this man.' He then asked each of us whether we understood him. At the close of this exhausting effort, I remarked to my fellow-witnesses, that my patient a short time before informed me in private, that according to the laws of Virginia, a will might manumit slaves, yet in order for their subsequent support, it was necessary that a declaration should be made in the presence of one or more white witnesses, who after receiving it from the party, should remain and never lose sight of him until he was dead. I then appealed to the dying man to know whether I had stated it correctly; he replied, Yes—and gracefully waving his hand as token of our dismissal, he said 'the young gentlemen will remain with me.' I took leave with an assurance that I would return as speedily as possible and remain with him. After an absence of perhaps an hour or more, and about fifty minutes before his decease, I returned to his sick room; but now the scene was changed; his keen, penetrating eye, had lost its expression; his powerful mind had given away and he appeared totally incapable of giving any correct direction relative to his worldly concerns. To

record what now took place may not be required,—further than to say, that almost to the last moment some of his eccentricities could be seen lingering about him. He entered within 'the dark valley of the shadow of death,' and what was now passing in his chamber was like the distant voice of words which fell with confusion on the ear. The farther this master spirit receded from human view, the sounds became less distinct, until they were finally lost in the deep recesses of the valley, and what was mortal of Randolph of Roanoke, was hushed in death. In conclusion, perhaps it may be proper for me clearly and distinctly to state, that at the time he made the declaration in my presence to his will, he was capable of discriminating between thing and thing; and he also possessed tenacity of memory. Hence, I give it my decided belief, that he was of sound disposing mind and memory.—Early in the afternoon of the day on which John Randolph died, it was concluded by the four witnesses to commit to writing the declarations which he had made, according to their understanding of them. This I did in the room contiguous to the one wherein he died and where his corpse was then lying; and the original paper is now in my possession. The paper hereto annexed, marked (D) and subscribed with my name, is a true copy of the same.

Jos. PARRISH.

THE CHURCHMAN'S REASONS FOR BRINGING HIS CHILDREN TO BAPTISM.

Concluded.

In the year 253, a council was held in Africa, consisting of sixty-six Bishops, of which an account remains in the writings of Cyprian Bishop of Carthage, before referred to. One of the questions discussed at that council was, whether infants ought to be baptized within two or three days after their birth; some inferring from the law of circumcision, that they ought not to be baptized till the eighth day. By this discussion the council fully recognized the duty of baptizing infants, and the ground on which that duty is built, viz. the succession of baptism to circumcision, as the admission rite into the church of God. Now, though this council took place 253 years after the time of Christ, yet it was not much above a century and a half from the death of the last of the Apostles; and I need not say how easy it is to ascertain whether a custom like that in question has or has not prevailed during 150 years. If infant baptism has been an innovation, it is not to be supposed that sixty-six Bishops would have concurred in their decision, that baptism should be administered immediately after the birth of a child, without the least mention of a doubt concerning it: the question related, not to the right of infants to this ordinance, but simply to the time when it ought to be administered to them. On this circumstance an historian remarks, 'To those who say that the custom of baptizing children was not derived from the Apostolic ages, the traditional argument may fairly run in language nearly scriptural. *If any man seem to be contentious, we have never had such a custom as that of confining baptism to adults, nor the churches of God.*'

There is another point connected with my defence of my own conduct in bringing my children to the Font of Baptism, which may require a few words of explanation. But as it is a point of much less consequence, in my own view, than that which has hitherto engaged my attention, I shall employ but few words in justifying myself.

This point is the mode of administering the ordinance: whether it be indispensably required that the body should be wholly plunged in water, or whether it be sufficient that water be partially applied to it. I cannot think the manner of its application a subject of much importance. The thing signified is the cleansing of the soul from sin by the blood and spirit of Christ; and of this the application of water to the body is the outward and visible sign; but whether a larger or smaller quantity of water be employed, appears to me a subject of as great indifference, as it is whether a larger or smaller quantity of bread and wine be taken in the other sacrament. It is not actual bodily nourishment, but the representation of spiritual nourishment that is thereby intended. Had immersion been the usual practice of the church to which I belong, I should have acquiesced fully in it, as representing a burial and resurrection with Christ. But as it is the custom of the

* Milnor's History of the Church of Christ, vol. i. p. 450.