

"CONSIDER THE LILIES."\*

Four of the psalms (xlv. lx. lxix. & lxxx.) are entitled "upon Shushan--Shoshannim--Shushan eduth--Shoshannim eduth"--that is "concerning the lily--the lilies--the lily of the testimony--the lilies of the testimony"--These titles are rendered by the Septuagint--"concerning those who are to be changed;† in this they appear to have taken the word shushan, a lily, to come from shana to change.

This view of the word strikingly coincides with natural analogy. Those psalms speak of a great change yet to take place in the Lord's people--his lilies--including the humanity of their Blessed Head. The lxix. describes his sufferings in deeply affecting terms, and concludes with a glorious change. v. 31-35.

"Let the heaven and earth praise him, the seas, and every thing that moveth therein: For God will save Zion, and will build the cities of Judah; that they may dwell there, and have it in possession--The seed also of his servants shall inherit it; and they that love his name shall dwell therein." How aptly does the lily, laid in the mire of its earthly soil and then brought forth in a resurrection glory, de- pect to us Him, who, for a season, had to complain "I sink in deep mire," but was at length to sing "I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving." The lxxx. mourns the desolated state of Israel and Judah who even in their desolation are the "Shoshannim-eduth"--the "lilies of the testimony."

They are still as the Apostle informs us "beloved for the fathers' sakes." They are a testimony to God's truth in the infliction of his threatenings--to his power in the preservation of them as a distinct people--to his unchanging love in reserving them for predestined blessedness.

True to this characteristic of the lilies this psalm also intimates the hope of a blessed change. "Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand upon the Son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself. So will not we go back from thee: quicken us, and we will call upon thy name. Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts, cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved. Ps. lxxx. 17-19.

This change is compared to a resurrection by Ezekiel "Thus saith the Lord God, behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel." Ezek. xxxvii. 12

The lx. psalm is precisely similar: but the xlv. is still more specific. It describes the second coming of Christ, in glory and majesty; and the changed state of the king's daughter in her resurrection beauty as "all glorious within" and externally as to her body "her clothing is of wrought gold."

The progress of this change from suffering to glory, from sin to holiness, from anguish and affliction, to peace and blessedness is briefly but expressively, intimated by the prophet "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him, I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow (or bud) as the lily." This intimates another feature in the progress of this change--"he shall bud as the lily."

The Lord's people shall not attain to full blown beauty by an instantaneous fiat. They shall bud: their graces shall gradually unfold--daily developing themselves under heaven's genial influences until at length in their full blown state "they shall be like him seeing him as he is."

Solomon's temple most significantly symbolized the same truth. Its stones represented the living stones of that temple of the Lord which Jesus "the man whose name is the branch" is yet to build.--Its pillars, (Jachin and Boaz--"he shall establish them in strength") represented the resurrection state of the elect who "having overcome" shall be made "pillars in the temple of my God to go no more out." Its holy of holies represented Christ's present intercessory work. Its holy place presented those who even now are priests unto God--those who from a renewed heart are enabled "to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

In the holy place and upon the pillars we meet with lilies. The molten sea we are told was "for the priests to wash in," (2 Chron. iv. 6) They could not perform the priestly duties until they had washed their feet in this sea. "He that is washed," said Christ, "needeth not save to wash his feet." Every time they went on their lawful business into the society of the world their feet received a soiling from earthly contact. This needed to be washed off before they were permitted to offer a sacrifice to the Lord. At their consecration one general washing was given to them: every time they appeared before the Lord they needed a partial washing. So has our Divine Master taught us renewally to ask for pardon every time we present ourselves before him "when ye pray say.....forgive us our trespasses."

This laver (or molten sea) had around its brim the figures of lily-buds: not full grown flowers but buds. Teaching us that while on earth our regeneration, as to reality of change, is as truly effected as the lily-bud is changed from the mass of earthiness in which it once lay entombed; and yet as to degree and development, it is as far from its perfection as the bud is from the flower in its full grown beauty. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are passed away, behold all things are become new." Yet all things are not perfected: we are being changed into the same image from glory to glory.

The lily-bud is in all things new in comparison with that state in which it was when a decaying root: it is progressing however in gradual unfoldings from glory to glory.

The next position in which we find the lily is in the chapters of the pillars in Solomon's temple. There they are no longer buds but full blown flowers, representing to us the bodies as well as the spirits of "just men made perfect." They occupy that conspicuous position in the Lord's house for which they had been prepared by the long process which gradually brought them onward from the grave of earthiness, through the incipient life of regenerated buddings to the full grown clothing of glory and beauty such as Solomon in all his glory could not boast of.

We have now only to examine the Song of Solomon, to complete a subject which the christian cannot contemplate without profit. "Consider how they grow." One was standing by them whom once they knew not--one who unceasingly fostered their growth though invisibly. "My beloved is mine and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies." The last act of his love (as far as respects this life) is depicted under the same figure. "My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies." Having watched their progress and effected their development through their various stages until their full blown ripeness, he then gathers them to his bosom and gives them a place in his heavenly house. Oh blessed completion! Happy, happy change. My soul! Mayest thou be found thus occupying a place in the temple of thy God.

One other analogy and I have done. "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters" Can. ii. 2. Where the lily is found, there may be found also the thorn. The children of light scattered amongst the children of wrath. Reader! Can you apply all this to your own soul? Have you emerged from the grave of earthly mindedness? Instead of "loading you with thick clay," does your connection with earth only supply with materials the genial energies of heaven to clothe you with resurrection graces and glory. Look at the lily, look at the thorn. Ask yourself have you the fruitlessness of the one, or the fragrance of the other. Can it be said of you, as it was of our Divine Master, "his lips are as lilies dropping sweet smelling myrrh?" Can. v. 13. Having "your speech all ways with grace, seasoned with salt."

If not, you are but too like the thorn whose end is to be burned: if you are, happy are you: the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you.

Blessed Jesus! "Shortly accomplish the number of thine elect and hasten thy kingdom," hasten that day when all thy lilies shall have been gathered together, and shall in one resplendent blaze of light show forth thy goodness who art to come again to be "glorified in thy saints and to be admired in all them that believe."

THE COLONIAL CHURCHMAN.

LUNENBURG, THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 1839.

DIOCESAN CHURCH SOCIETY.--The following Resolutions, passed at the late special meeting held at Halifax, were omitted in our last:--

1. Resolved--That the Clergy be requested to renew their exertions in forming local committees in their respective parishes, and that this resolution be added to their Report.

2. Resolved--That the THIRD Wednesdays in the months of August, November, February and May, be the days of Quarterly Meeting for the General Committee.

King's College, Windsor,

June 1st, 1839.

At a convocation held this day, the Rev. Charles Oliver Wiggins, A. B. of this University, and Rector of the parish of Prince William in New Brunswick, was admitted to the degree of A. M.

CHURCH IN UPPER CANADA.--We take the following letter of the Archdeacon of York, with the prefatory remarks, from a late number of the "Church:":--

We have much pleasure in giving insertion to the following Address from the Venerable the Archdeacon of York, to the members of our communion in this Province; and well assured we are that it must be read with satisfaction by the friends, and without disapprobation by the opponents of the Church, in which he deservedly holds so exalted a station:--

Toronto, May 27, 1839.

My brethren of the Clergy and Laity;

Now that the Legislature have determined to refer the disposition of the Clergy Reserves to the Imperial Government, it becomes necessary that the sentiments of the members of the Church of England, both lay and clerical, should be placed without delay before the British Parliament. With this view I request your immediate attention to my circular of April 29, and the petition which it enclosed. That petition, as you will have observed, is purely of a defensive character, and simply states our right to the religious ministrations of the Church of England in every portion of the Colony where her members are to be found.

The great wisdom of referring the whole question respecting the Church property home, for the decision of the supreme power,--which is the natural arbitrator, judge, and reconciler in all matters which agitate, disturb, and divide any of our Colonies,--is freely acknowledged by a vast majority of the inhabitants of the Province. It is true, a few spirits still remain discontented, because they delight in agitation; but the great body of the people rejoice that religious contentions will now disappear, and that henceforth the only rivalry amongst the various Christian denominations will be that which arises from increased zeal and renewed exertions in the cause of our common Lord and Saviour, for the glory of God, and the salvation of souls.

All men of reflection know that the waste lands of the Colony are the property of the British Crown, and that the disposition of these, whether for the temporal or spiritual benefit of the inhabitants, ought to be settled by the supreme Government. And as this will soon be done, it is our duty to lose no time in putting that Government in possession of the facts of the case, so far as we are concerned, and resting them on evidence not liable to contradiction.

In doing this, our desire is to avoid the slightest appearance of agitation, which we have always sedulously discouraged; and in pleading our cause, it is not our intention even to mention--much less to interfere with--the pretensions of other denominations. Our object is simply to state our claims, founded as they are upon the British as well as the Provincial Constitution,--to rectify the misrepresentations respecting our numbers,--and to prove from official returns that, instead of being a small

\* From the Achill (Ireland) Missionary Herald.

† Symmachus renders shushan by the generic word--flowers; Aquila more accurately--lilies.