

question; but we trust that to every unprejudiced mind the reasons we have advanced cannot but prove satisfactory.

It is, we believe, pretty well understood that, in order to guard against the dissemination of strange doctrines amongst her people, the pulpits of the Church of England are closed against all but her own accredited ministers; and we know of no reason why the same principle of exclusiveness should not, on similar grounds, be adhered to in the *weekly journal* which is sent forth as the organ and advocate of her interests and claims. Moreover, to admit replies and rejoinders from all who may choose to object to the matter contained in our paper were to bring it down to the degradation of a mere polemical print;—a mortifying and injurious position, to which we at least shall never lend a hand in reducing it.

If it be thought that we have relaxed from this principle in giving admission to the letter of the Rev. W. Rintoul, which appears in our columns to-day, we have to observe that, although from the apparent encouragement to controversy which the publication of this letter affords, we give it a place with some reluctance, it appears to us in its bearing and spirit rather explanatory than controversial, and to acknowledge error without seeming to bring accusation. Under such circumstances, we are not unwilling that its author should have the benefit of its promulgation amongst the readers of "THE CHURCH;" for where our consistency is not compromised, we are ready enough to oblige. Upon this letter, however, as well as upon the published Reply of Mr. Morris we feel ourselves at full liberty to offer such animadversions as they may seem to call for.

On the present occasion, our space being limited, we shall confine ourselves to a few remarks upon some alleged inaccuracies in the tables of Glebe Lots stated by the Archdeacon of York to have been granted to congregations in connection with the Church of Scotland. The statements thus furnished, from having been obtained from official sources, must be presumed to be correct; but should it in any case be proved that they are not so, such inaccuracies are certainly not to be laid to the charge of the Archdeacon, but of those who were employed to compile them, and who, from haste or inadvertence, may possibly, in some instances, have committed mistakes. But again we say, that for such, if they do exist, the Archdeacon of York is not accountable: he received his information from the Government offices, and he gave it precisely as it was furnished to himself.

Yet, in comparing the respective tables of the Archdeacon and Mr. Morris, the apparent discrepancies between them we find are fully explained by the circumstance that some lots which had been granted to congregations of the Church of Scotland, were not located by them. And although this may be a distinction very material as respects the advantage to those congregations, it affects not, on the one hand, the credit of the Archdeacon's statements, and it proves, on the other, the readiness of the Colonial Government to accede to the applications of such congregations. If a tract of land, in all respects suitable or convenient for location, were not to be found, such was the misfortune of the applicants, not the fault of the Government. Moreover, it is very evident that, although the Archdeacon of York had access to the requisite documents for shewing what lands had been granted to congregations of the Church of Scotland, he had not the means of ascertaining whether the lots thus granted had been located by them or not.

That suitable locations were not always to be obtained, can in some degree be explained by the fact of the lateness of the applications. It appears, for instance, that prior to the year 1833 there were only seven applications for glebes from congregations of the Kirk of Scotland, and since that year nearly thirty have been made. Now as these applications have come generally from congregations established in towns, or in townships long settled and populous, the difficulty of finding suitable locations in contiguous places was naturally much increased. It appears in short—and we would have our readers bear that fact in mind—to be the main tendency as well of the argument of the Archdeacon as of the facts adduced, to shew the friendly intentions of Government towards that body, and to exonerate them from the charge of partiality attempted to be fastened upon them.—This argument has been most fairly and satisfactorily sustained; and if these good intentions of the Government have not always proved availing—if the lands granted were not deemed worthy of acceptance—we can only say that congregations of the Church of England have, in many cases, experienced precisely the same inconvenience, and that very many of the lots constituting the so much talked of Rectories are as valueless as those which have been rejected by the Church of Scotland.

It would appear that the Lots assigned by the Archdeacon to the Presbyterians of the Kirk of Scotland in Williamsburg and Osnabrock, were in reality granted to congregations of Presbyterians comprised under what is termed the Synod of Canada.—This was a distinction very likely to be overlooked by the compilers of the tables furnished to the Archdeacon, and is an error for which he is evidently not accountable: at all events, it rather strengthens than diminishes his argument, as proving that the friendly intentions of the Colonial Government extended farther than to one denomination of Presbyterians. However, to balance any advantage to the Archdeacon's opponents from this inaccuracy, there is to be adduced in his favour an omission of a valuable Lot at the mouth of the River aux Raisin in Glengary, in possession of the Church of Scotland, on which or contiguous to which we believe the flourishing village of Lancaster is growing up.

These are facts which will shew, to the satisfaction we trust of our readers, that—notwithstanding all attempts to impugn their accuracy—the statements of the Archdeacon of York in relation to grants to Presbyterians, are substantially correct; that for the slight inaccuracies which have occurred in their compilation, he is not accountable; and that his argument, the leading object in short of his Letters to Mr. Morris, in exculpation of the Provincial Government from alleged neglect of the Presbyterians of the Church of Scotland, stands unshaken.

LENT.

ECCLESIASTES III. 4.—A time to laugh; a time to mourn.

The wise author of these brief but impressive sayings furnishes us, in the first few verses of this chapter, with a very solemn and very affecting comment upon the position with which he sets out; "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."—If the gay and thoughtless, who form unhappily too large a portion of the rational world, conceive that during the days of this speedily passing life it is their "time to laugh," it is but natural to suppose that the contemplation of its fast approaching end would also induce an occasional "time to mourn."

In the varied circumstances of ordinary life, there are times in which mirth would be unbecoming, and mourning unseasonable. It would be a grievous outrage upon the customs of propriety to assume the look of jocund gaiety, or to utter the words of inconsiderate mirth, while attending for example the funeral procession to the grave; and, on the other hand, the interruption would be incongruous and unbecoming, were the social company which had professedly met for innocent hilarity and recreation to be saddened by the voice of weeping and a countenance in tears.

A confused blending of these useful and becoming alternations would be equally unsuitable in religion. Even religion has, as it were, its "time to laugh,"—moments of spiritual joy, when the experience of our heavenly Father's love warms the soul into holy transports—when the heart bounds at the joyous foretaste of heaven's bliss—when the spirit, in the fulness of its thankfulness, "breaks forth into singing."

There are times, again, when this holy transport cannot be felt, and when these joyous sounds should not be expressed. There are hours of sadness, when the whole soul is mournfully engrossed by the recollection of manifold and multiplied offences against our merciful and indulgent God—when the weeping spirit can scarcely raise its penitential voice to his throne of grace—when, in distress and sorrow beneath the burden of unatoned sin, the conscience-stricken transgressor "goeth heavily all the day long."

Such, too, are alternations of joy and mourning which are fitly introduced into our ordinary exercises of devotion. In our incomparable Liturgy, the sinner who comes to the house of God to hear the mingled words of warning and consolation is furnished with appropriate exercises for these changing moods of the spiritual frame. In language of chastened "truth and soberness," he is taught to bend meekly on his knees as the vilest of offenders, trusting for pardon only to the merits and mediation of a crucified Saviour; and there, too, he is instructed to raise his thankful voice to the heavenly throne, for those glad tidings of salvation with which his sorrowing heart is cheered in the pages of God's own book.

As the Church of Christ, we are also furnished with stated seasons of public joy and public mourning. When we hail our Redeemer's advent as a weeping babe in the stable at Bethlehem, it is with a joyous participation in the angels' song;—but when we see this persecuted 'martyr of the world,' with his crown of thorns and mangled limbs, dying for our sakes in agony upon the cross, our joy is "turned into the voice of them that weep."

We are approaching the commemoration of the 'cross and passion' of our blessed Saviour; but our apostolic church will not suffer us to enter upon the duties of that solemn day, without a previous chastening and preparation of the soul. For this reason the season of LENT is appointed; and to this ordinance of the Church, so wisely and judiciously established, it becomes all her faithful children to adhere. In our 'pure and reformed' communion, all those rigid, unmeaning and superstitious austerities, which owed their introduction to the dark ages of Christianity, have been swept away from the season of Lent. But in pruning away these excrescences of a darkened day, our Church has been careful to maintain the customs and hold fast the institutions which have been sanctioned and hallowed by the appointment and approbation of the earliest and purest ages. The dress has been burnt away—burnt away, indeed, in the fires of martyrdom; but no sacrilegious hand was stretched forth to injure the pure gold that was left. Stripped of those unedifying forms and ceremonies into which, in the dark ages of Christianity, the whole spirit and power of religion had been thrown, the season of Lent is retained by our Church as a propitious time, says an illustrious prelate, for "inquiring into the state of our account with God, of reviewing our past and present way of thinking and acting with a critical and a searching eye; of looking well if there be any way of wickedness in us; of turning from it, if there be; of confessing and lamenting our disobedience and ingratitude to our heavenly Father; of imploring his pardon; of entreating the assistance of his Holy Spirit; and under his guidance forming the most serious resolutions to correct and amend, without delay, whatever we find amiss in our temper, principles and conduct. This is the true spirit and meaning of the religious solemnities of the season of Lent: this is the substance and essence of what is called in Scripture language, 'turning to the Lord with weeping, fasting, and mourning.'"

"The earliest account," says Shepherd, "of the fast before Easter, is given by Irenæus, in a fragment preserved in Eusebius. Irenæus was the disciple of Polycarp, and Polycarp the disciple of the evangelist St. John; so that Irenæus was what some of the Fathers have termed him, a *man almost apostolic*." An allusion to this fast by him proves, therefore, its great antiquity, and that it had its origin antecedent to the corrupt days of the Church. From the earliest accounts we possess, it appears that, originally, only the two days preceding Easter Sunday were observed as days of fasting and mourning, and were thus kept in allusion to the expression of our Saviour that, "in those days the bridegroom was taken away." This space of time comprehended about forty hours, and bore a general resemblance to the forty days during which our Lord himself had fasted in the wilderness. But the Lenten fast soon came to be extended; we find that before the close of the second century it comprised a period of two weeks; and in the course of the fourth century it embraced the six weeks preceding Easter. It was in the ninth century that four days were prefixed to that period,—thus making

Lent to commence on the Wednesday preceding the sixth Sunday before Easter. This day was subsequently named ASH WEDNESDAY, from the custom which prevailed in some churches of sprinkling the heads of the penitents with ashes. From Ash Wednesday, therefore, until Easter—deducting the Sundays which were never accounted or kept as fast-days—there are just forty days; and the resemblance of this period of abstinence is thus preserved to the fast of our Saviour in the wilderness.

The institution of Lent is, therefore, very ancient; and altho' not formed upon any express precept of Scripture, is sacred from its intention and hallowed by its antiquity. In those days, it was the custom of Christians to abstain from food, as far as their infirmities permitted, during a portion of every day in this season,—for that fasting is a scriptural duty, proof need not be advanced;—yet full liberty was permitted to all to guide themselves in this abstinence by the faculties with which they were endued, and to make those periods of fasting, whether long or short, subservient to a due regard to health and natural infirmities. In the primitive days of that usage, there was also a laudable custom of bestowing upon the poor the food which was thus saved by this voluntary abstinence; so that to the conjoined exercises of extraordinary self-denial and devotion, there was added a peculiar attention to the wants of the indigent. As to the precise nature of the fast to be exercised during the season of Lent, our Church hath laid down no particular rules, but it seems to be left to every one's own conscience. One thing, however, is certain, that a fast is appointed; and that, according to the judgment of the Church, some spiritual observance of this season is requisite. The amount of abstinence from the usual luxuries and delights of life which, during this season, is becoming, we shall not—because the Church does not—undertake to define. Most Christians, however, concur in the propriety of appropriating, during its continuance, more than an ordinary portion of their time to exercises of public and private devotion; and in the opinion also we heartily concur, that the season of Lent should be marked, if possible, by a complete abstinence from those gaieties and amusements of life in which many Christians feel that they can ordinarily, without any violation of conscience, indulge. This, at least, is a species of self-denial which none can refuse who look to the voluntary mortification of our blessed Lord for our sakes, or who pay due regard to his own injunction, "if any man will come after me, let him deny himself."

An account of the Meeting of the Midland Clerical Association held at Belleville last week, was ready for this day's publication, but we have discovered, to our regret, that from want of room it must be postponed to our next.

We learn from Toronto papers received this week, that on Monday last a Resolution passed the House of Assembly re-investing the Clergy Reserves in the Crown, to be applied to religious purposes in this Province.

The following has been obligingly furnished to us for publication; and we feel assured that none who knew the late excellent Bishop of Quebec would neglect the opportunity of obtaining a record of him which promises to be so interesting as the one we announce. The Editor of this paper will be happy to receive orders for the work, if communicated within a month, and transmit them to the proper quarter:—

UPPER CANADA TRAVELLING MISSION FUND.

In the Press, and speedily will be published, by Hatchard & Son, PRICE TO SUBSCRIBERS NOT EXCEEDING 7s.

THE STEWART MISSIONS, Being a series of Letters and Journals showing the deplorable SPIRITUAL DESTITUTION OF THE EMIGRANTS IN UPPER CANADA.

To which is prefixed a short biographical sketch of the late Honourable and Right Reverend CHARLES JAMES STEWART, Bishop of Quebec, and the Primary Charge delivered by him to his Clergy, on the 9th of August, 1826, at Montreal, in Lower Canada, and on the 30th August, at York, in Upper Canada. Edited by the Rev. W. J. D. Waddilove, A. M. St. John's College, Cambridge.

THE PARISH CLERGYMAN.

Never interfering in the concerns of any family, unless his interference was solicited, he was consulted upon all occasions of trouble or importance. Incipient disputes, which would otherwise have afforded grist for the Lawyer's mill, were adjusted by his mediation; and anxious parents, when they had cause to apprehend that their children were going wrong, knew no better course than to communicate their fears to him, and request that he would administer some timely admonition. Whenever he was thus called on, or had of himself perceived that reproof or warning was required, it was given in private, or only in presence of the parents, and always with a gentleness which none but an obdurate disposition could resist. His influence over the younger part of his flock was the greater, because he was no enemy to any innocent sports, but on the contrary was pleased to see them dance round the may-pole, encouraged them to dress their doors with oaken boughs on the day of King Charles's happy restoration, and to wear an oaken garland in the hat, or an oak-apple on its sprig in the button-hole; went to see their bonfire on the fifth of November, and entertained the morris-dancers when they called upon him in their Christmas rounds.—*The Doctor.*

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE EASTERN CLERICAL SOCIETY.

Reverend Brethren, You are hereby reminded, that the next Meeting of the Association is appointed to be held at Carlton Place, on Wednesday, March 7th, 1838. Your faithful Brother, HY. PATTON, Sec'y.

LETTERS received to Friday 23d Feb:— Rev. B. H. Bourne, rem. in full for vol. 1; Rev. J. Deacon, rem. in full for vol. 1.; Rev. A. F. Atkinson, com. & rem.; Richd. Athill, Esq. (2); Rev. H. Patton; Rev. H. I. Grassett, rem.; Archdeacon of York, with parcel; S. C. Keyes, Esq. rem.; Rev. J. Bethune, rem. in full for vol. 1. C. Seadding, Esq. rem.