

The Church.

grand event which lies at the foundation of all our relation to the Supreme Being. The statement is not so diffuse as to become intricate and bewildering—not so short as to be uninteresting and unintelligible—not so labored as to occupy the mind about words instead of things. There is nothing defective and nothing superfluous, and the simple declaration of the fact gives to the mind a more sublime conception both of the architect and the performance, than could have been conveyed had the writer's own mind been so little taken with his subject as to make him spend his time in search of expressions to describe it.

Let there be light, and there was light, has been quoted with the highest commendation by Longinus in his treatise on the sublime, as most of my readers well know. And indeed the expression does produce an irresistible effect upon the mind the moment our attention is turned to it. That the words of Jehovah should produce the effect of most strenuous exertions is wonderful. But when he is described as merely opening his lips and calling light out of darkness; when he is represented as attaining an end to which no power of which we can form a conception is adequate, by a means to which we ordinarily ascribe no real efficacy whatever, our astonishment is beyond measure increased. The same simple means is represented as calling forth into existence the heavens and all the host of them, the earth and the fulness thereof. Where, I would ask, is so sublime a picture of Deity to be found in any other volume except the Bible? We see the Everlasting God employed about a work to which Omnipotence alone is equal, the work of creation. But his greatness is without effort, his labour without weariness:—*he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast.*

The short description which God gives of himself to Moses is the most sublime definition of deity that ever was given; I AM THAT I AM. It is an expression calculated to throw as much light upon the subject as the human intellect can bear, and, at the same time, draw the thick veil of obscurity over the greater part of the character of the Incomprehensible Jehovah. *I am that I am*, proclaims at once Self-existence, Eternity, Immutability, and the rest of the infinite perfections of Godhead in the abstract; but it lays a solemn interdict on the prying curiosity of mortals, and bids them not attempt to find out the Almighty to perfection. I have yet confined myself to what may be called the *simply sublime*—that which is sublime without the aid of figure, or of poetry. Instances of this latter and more complicated kind are very numerous in Scripture.

The former part of the 18th Psalm is a most striking specimen of sublime poetry. God is represented as having heard the prayer of the Psalmist, and is coming down from Heaven to his assistance. How finely is his descent described! *He bowed the Heavens and came down, and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly; yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.* It is to be observed that, in this description of the Deity, there is a remarkable union of serene composure, and of stupendous majesty and power. And how is their combination effected? By the most simple and natural of all processes. God is not made to go forth in ungovernable fury—to hurl thunderbolts of vengeance, and to sweep all before him. He calmly advances; but such is the dignity of his mind that the earth trembles and shakes at the sight of him. The presence of Jehovah is by the Psalmist made more formidable than all the actions of the gods of heathen poets; and then while all is in confusion and dismay before him, he alone is serene and unmoved. *He bowed the Heavens.* When he comes down to earth he brings the Heavens along with him. He must not be attended by any of the pomp and splendour of his court. *And darkness was under his feet.* There is real sublimity in thus rendering darkness palpable and substantial, and making it the footstool of Him who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto. To pourtray his majesty, he is exhibited as riding upon cherubim; and to indicate his swiftness, as flying upon the wings of the wind. If we had merely been told that he flew upon the wind, this would have been a striking illustration of his speed; but the sublime picture is perfected, when wings, the great poetic emblem of swiftness, are added to the wind, in order to compose a vehicle of sufficient rapidity for the divine Majesty.

J. K.

VIEWS OF OUR ZION.

PSALM lxxviii. verse 12 13.—Walk about Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generations following.

No. 1.

THE MINISTRY.

ZION, a word which often occurs in, and is always affectionately dwelt upon by the sacred writers, was no doubt, in the passage here quoted, primarily applied by the Psalmist to the city of Jerusalem, the endeared seat of the sanctuary of God, which the conjoined ties of religion and country, all the associations of their altars and their firesides, caused them to regard with intense interest and love. But the word Zion is unquestionably susceptible of a spiritual application: and it may be, as it often is, rightly appropriated to that spiritual but visible society which embraces the followers of the blessed Lord Jesus,—to the hallowed fold into which the chief shepherd of the sheep gathers together his ransomed flock,—to that CHURCH which is "built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone."

Gladly, therefore, do I seize the opportunity, which the present long needed publication offers, to invite my fellow churchmen to a consideration of the distinctive characteristics of our Zion; anxiously do I invite them to a contemplation of the strength and beauty of those bulwarks and fortresses which constitute her graces and defences; and earnestly do I pray them, with an application to our beloved communion of the striking and beautiful words of the Psalmist, to "walk about Zion, and go round about her; to tell the towers thereof; to mark well her bulwarks, to consider her palaces; that they may tell it to the generations following;"—that their children and their children's children may be made acquainted with those peculiar privileges and advantages which the faithful and devout enjoy

in belonging to a Church which is justly termed the bulwark of Protestantism and the glory of the Reformation.

In fulfilling what I propose, to lay briefly before my fellow Churchmen our distinctive polity, doctrines and worship, I shall commence with a succinct defence of that EPISCOPAL jurisdiction which we conceive to be essential to the proper constitution of the Christian Ministry.

It can scarcely be necessary that I should point out the benefit and importance of a standing order of men whose peculiar office it should be to "declare the counsel of God," and administer the various ordinances of religion; their great and acknowledged utility was expressed by Him who best knew the wants of his redeemed creatures; and this provision of "ministers and stewards of his mysteries" was early made by our blessed Saviour himself. Soon after entering upon his ministry, he chose twelve Apostles to preach the Kingdom of God and baptize the converts to the faith; and subordinate to these, he not long after appointed seventy Disciples to be propagators of his doctrine.

But it will be anxiously asked, was this salutary provision of heralds and stewards of the Gospel to cease with the earthly sojourn of its holy author? Was no mode suggested; was no principle settled by which the benefits of this ministry were to be secured to all future times? After his departure from the world, was the dissemination of the Glad tidings of truth to depend on the casual zeal of any convert who might start up and preach to others the conversion which he had himself experienced and "strengthen his brethren" in the faith in which he himself was confirmed?

While such an uncertain and unsettled mode of propagating the Gospel and administering its ordinances would create the perpetual recurrence of this question to self constituted teachers; "By what authority doest thou these things, and who gave thee this authority?"—while it would violate this rule which heaven itself once fearfully interposed to sanction; "No man taketh this honour to himself, except he be called of God as Aaron was;"—it would be at open variance with the prudence and caution which seemed to have guided the first preachers of the Gospel in requiring those invested with authority to "commit the same to faithful men who should be able to teach others also;" and to "lay hands suddenly on no man." But the divine wisdom of the holy author of our faith graciously fixed upon an established and certain basis the means of perpetuating "to the end of the world" the heralds of his will and the guardians of his Church. "As my father sent me, so send I you," was the solemn mode of his appointment of the Twelve: I leave you the high office which I myself shall no longer visibly and personally perform; "and lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world;"—my perpetual presence will for ever aid and encourage those whom, by virtue of this commission, you may depute, and whom they, after you, may authorize to be preachers of my gospel.

Accordingly, after the ascension of our Saviour into heaven, the eleven apostles, with the utmost preparatory solemnity, chose Matthias to fill the vacancy caused by the apostasy of Judas. Soon after we find them with a similar solemnity of preparation, appointing seven Deacons to assist in the duties of the ministry;—in process of time, presbyters or elders were ordained in every Church;—presently we discover Timothy and Titus invested with the authority of "overseers of the Church," and commissioned to appoint and superintend inferior ministers and coadjutors in their office;—and in the latter days of St. John, the last of the apostles, we find "seven Angels," who were no other than seven overseers or bishops, presiding over the "seven Churches" of Asia Minor.

In the works of early Christian writers and immediate successors of the Apostles, we observe the same principle uniformly established and acted upon:—we observe in the acts and records of every church, the names of Episcopal presidents or BISHOPS, as supreme;—of PRESBYTERS or PRIESTS, as subordinate to these: and of DEACONS as inferior to both.

For an evidence of this gradation of ranks in the earliest constitution of the Christian ministry, we may go back to the days of our Saviour himself. There we will observe the twelve Apostles superior in office and rank to the seventy Disciples; and in subsequent times, as a testimony of the truth of this distinction, we find that Matthias, who was elected into the body of the twelve, had according to the most authentic evidence of Christian antiquity, belonged previously to the seventy. This is a circumstance which would clearly prove the superior rank of the twelve. Some time after, we have another discovery of the pre-eminence of the Apostles over the ministers of the Church in the circumstance of Peter and John being sent for to lay hands upon, or to confirm, those converts whom Philip the deacon had baptized. St. Paul, too, had evidently an authority over Timothy, and Titus; and Timothy and Titus were certainly superior in rank to the elders whom they were required to "ordain in every city," and whom they were authorized to overlook, to admonish, to encourage and to rebuke.

But let us more closely observe this distinction and gradation of offices to which our church hath endeavored, in her ministry, faithfully to conform. While every thing in nature attests the propriety of such gradations, and every maxim of human policy shews its reverence for this dictate of nature;—while we observe that an all-wise providence does not confer upon ourselves, at once, the perfection of bodily strength and of intellectual capacity, but advances us to both by slow degrees; while we discern and admit the propriety of this rule, that every candidate for human distinctions should be proved in a humbler office before he is advanced to a higher sphere;—we shall perceive that our Saviour himself acted upon the same principle in his selection of the ministers of his religion.

First, he invites to follow him certain persons whom he esteemed most fitted for the work of the ministry he was engaged in. After a certain state of probation, he solemnly calls them together and selects twelve out of their number to do the work of evangelists.

Some time after he called the same twelve together and gave them authority to preach and baptize, to heal diseases, and to cast out devils. A little before his crucifixion he makes an addition to the authority conferred upon them by presenting to them the consecrated symbols of his body and blood, and in re-

quiring them to do the same in future "in remembrance of him." And lastly, after his resurrection, he further enlarges the power of his Apostles by conferring upon them authority to invest others also with the like office of teaching and baptizing.

From these successive commissions conferred upon the Twelve; from their successive investment with increased authority and a more extended trust; is it not evident that our Lord himself designed, nay established gradations of rank and authority in the ministry? At the first appointment of the Twelve their charge was similar to that of DEACONS in the succeeding times of the Church; afterwards upon a solemn convocation of them together our Lord enlarged their authority; then & more especially in their subsequent charge to commemorate & dispense his last supper, they having become what PRESBYTERS were soon after in the order of the Ministry: and lastly, when he himself was about to ascend into heaven, he gave them the commission to ordain others which has since been entrusted to BISHOPS, the first order in the ministry.

It is, too, a striking fact, and one which ought not to be overlooked, that upon the first advancement of the Apostles in their spiritual charge, the seventy Disciples were ordained by our Lord to perform the inferior duties which had been committed to the Twelve. It will appear, therefore, from this, that even in our Saviour's time there were three orders in the ministry; CHRIST himself, then the personal overseers of his church; THE TWELVE APOSTLES: and the SEVENTY DISCIPLES.

C. R.

(To be Continued.)

THE CHURCH.

COBOURG, SATURDAY, MAY 6, 1837.

TO THE FRIENDS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

In commencing so important and arduous an undertaking as the Journal now presented to the public, we shall be excused for appealing, with earnestness and anxiety, to the zealous co-operation and support of all the friends of the Church of England throughout these Provinces,—both lay and clerical,—upon whose influence and exertions the success of the present effort mainly depends. We trust that among the members of our Church few will deny the absolute necessity in some cases, & the expediency in all, of such a vehicle of religious intelligence and instruction as is now proposed to be established. And presuming upon the general prevalence of that conviction, we venture to express a hope that no diligence or activity will be spared by them to procure for THE CHURCH an extensive patronage.

Upon a reasonable computation of the resources which we conceive to exist within our communion, we have considered that a list of one thousand subscribers in Upper Canada alone,—of persons who could, without inconvenience, comply with the proposed terms of our publication,—is an attainment which it only needs a vigorous and simultaneous trial immediately to accomplish. We naturally, however, look for corresponding patronage in Lower Canada,—the interests of our venerable Church being in both Provinces the same;—but we would beg to have it understood, that with less than a thousand paying subscribers, from the low terms of the paper and the absence of the usual profit derived from advertisements, the necessary expenses of publication could not be defrayed. The additional charge of five shillings per annum to subscribers at a distance will barely cover the cost of postage and the other expenses attending the transmission of papers by mail,—expenses, too, which must in all cases be paid in advance by the conductors of the paper. The necessity of soliciting from all our subscribers payment in advance,—at least for six months, where payment for a year may not be convenient,—will be apparent to every person who will for a moment contemplate the very considerable expenditure which must, at the outset, be incurred in a publication like the present.

Several copies of this Specimen Number are sent to the different Clergy of the two Provinces, as also to certain lay-members of the church, upon whose aid and co-operation we have ventured to rely. These copies we beg those gentlemen to circulate in their respective neighborhoods, according to their discretion; and after affording opportunity for due inspection of the plan and contents of the paper, to proceed with the filling up of the accompanying Subscription-lists. These lists it is requested may be forwarded as early as possible to THE EDITOR OF THE CHURCH, COBOURG, UPPER CANADA, that no unnecessary delay may intervene between the issue of the present and succeeding numbers.

We shall only add a request,—equally essential to the successful prosecution of this work,—that the literary friends of the Church of England in these provinces, Laymen as well as Clergymen, would, to the best of their power and convenience, contribute to the supply of materials necessary to the conducting of this paper; for it will immediately be apparent that no single Editor, especially when to this gratuitous labor are added the undiminished duties of an extensive parish, can be supposed equal to the mental and bodily exertion requisite for the respectable progress of such a Journal. While, therefore, the conductors of this paper, according "to their power, yea, and beyond their power, are willing" to labor, they entertain a confidence that many of their brethren, in like affectionate concern for the welfare of our beloved church, will add their contributions towards its support and efficiency. Upon our mutual endeavors in this good cause we heartily implore the blessing of Him "from whom all good counsels and all just works do proceed."

THE RECTORIES.

It is now some fifteen or sixteen years since the CLERGY RESERVES became the subject of public discussion in this Province, and we have no desire nor intention to trace the progress of the angry disputes to which it gave rise. Suffice it to say that as far as respects the Kirk of Scotland, all intemperate feeling on that topic seemed, until within the last few months, to have died entirely away. The ostensible cause of its unhappy resuscitation was the endowment by Sir John Colborne of certain Rectories in this Province;—a measure which, amongst others, various members of the Kirk of Scotland have condemned,—first, because of the appropriation of any portion of the Reserves pending the general question; and secondly, from the apprehension that