

# The BEREAN.

THEY RECEIVED THE WORD WITH ALL READINESS OF MIND, AND SEARCHED THE SCRIPTURES DAILY, WHETHER THOSE THINGS WERE SO.—ACTS xvii. 11.

VOLUME II.—No. 5.]

QUEBEC, THURSDAY, MAY 1, 1845.

[WHOLE NUMBER 57.]

## FELIX NEFF TO HIS FLOCK.

My friends—my Alpine flock! On you  
My dying looks are cast;  
For soon the voice of him ye know  
And lov'd, shall speak its last.

But, though a shadow scarce remain  
Of this elastic form,  
That once could brave the hurricane,  
And meet the freezing storm—

I am not weak! Celestial strength  
Supports me in my pain—  
Upheld by Him, whose arm at length  
Shall raise me up again.

And though beneath our snowy rock  
My earthly labours cease—  
Another to my cherished flock,  
Shall break the bread of peace.

Yes, though my fleeting hours be told—  
'Tis I, the watchman, sleep;  
A better watch I leave my fold—  
"The Shepherd of the sheep!"

GAMBIER OBSERVER.

## CIRCULAR TO THE CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF QUEBEC.

CONCLUDED.

Let us now examine some authorities.

The writers on Ecclesiastical Law, whom I have had the means of consulting, such as Gibson, Burns, and Grey, although they all treat, of course, of Clerical habits, and Burns sometimes descends to details, speaking, for example of hands, as an irregularity in his judgment, to be referred for its origin to the times of puritanical sway,—"afford no light, that I can find, upon the present question. Their mention of the surplice does not touch the point of preaching or not preaching in it. The historians, annalists and biographers who treat of the affairs of the Church of England, such as Fuller, Collier, and Strype, all of whom furnish a mass of information and many minute particulars respecting the puritanical objections to the prescribed habits, and the proceedings of authority in relation to the difficulties thence created, supply nothing, so far as I believe from having searched those portions of their works which seemed most to my purpose, which can help to determine the question, unless it be found in the Advertisements drawn up by Archbishop Parker, given by the last of these three writers, and issued in 1564, from which an extract is here subjoined:—

"Item.—In the mynstracion of the Communion in Cathedral and Collegiate Churches, the Executor, with Pistol and Gospeller, mynster the same in coopes; and at all other praters to be said at the communion-table, to have no coopes, but surplices.

"Item.—That the Dean and Prebendaries wear a surplice with a silke hood in the quier, and when they preache in the cathedral church, to wear their hoods.

"Item.—That everie Mynster, saying any public prayers, or mynstringe the sacramentes, or other rites of the Church, shall wear a comely surplice with sleeves, to be provided at the chargis of the parishes. And that they provide a decent table, standing on a frame, for the communion-table."

I think it is the plain and natural inference from the direction that the Cathedral dignitaries are to wear a surplice with a hood in the quier, and when they preache to wear their hood, that the hood in this latter case, is understood to be worn without the surplice. And I farther think that when a direction immediately follows that every minister saying any public prayers or ministering the sacraments or other rites of the Church shall wear a surplice, this ministering of rites cannot be understood to include preaching, which act if it had been in contemplation here, would have been mentioned nominatim, as in the article immediately preceding. Preaching, as is well known, was far from being any standing concomitant in those days, of the public services, nor was it an act which the Clergy at large were qualified to perform. The Advertisements and the 58th Canon seem to me to throw light upon each other.

I am much confirmed in these impressions by a document in a detached form which is in my own possession, and to which I am unable to affix a precise date, but which appears evidently to belong to the time of the Stuarts, and which I regard as curious and valuable, because, while it will be seen to contain a positive injunction from the Royal authority, to be carried into effect through the Bishops, to preach in the gown, it affords most convincing evidence, at the same time, how little (as I have above pointed out), the maintenance of this practice ought to be confounded with puritanical leanings,—the whole of the Instructions (for so they are called), to which I here refer, which are of a stringent character, being manifestly levelled against those very tendencies; and whereas we now hear the gown in the pulpit, stigmatized by the prefix of Geneva, it is here

• This was pointed out to me by a friend.  
† These advertisements are given as below in modern spelling, in Neale's History of the Puritans:—

In the ministracion of the communion in cathedrals and collegiate churches, the principal ministers shall wear a cope, with Gospeller and Epistolator agreeably; but at all other prayers to be said at the communion-table, they shall wear no coopes but surplices only: deans and prebendaries shall wear a surplice with a silke hood in the choir; and when they preache a hood. Every minister saying the public prayers, or ministering the sacraments, &c., shall wear a surplice with sleeves; and the parish shall provide a decent table standing on a frame for the communion-table.  
• I have given away the original; but I have a fac-simile.

the gown for preaching, not the surplice, which is set in opposition to the Geneva cloak. I have been unable, thus far, to find these instructions in any book. They are in black letter and contain what here follows:

"2. That every Bishop ordaine in his Diocesse, that every Lecturer doe read Divine Service according to the Liturgie printed by Authority, in his Surplis and Hood before the Lectures.

"3. That where a Lecture is set up in a Market Towne, it may be read by a company of grave and orthodox Divines neere adjoining, and in the same Diocesse, and that they preach in gounnes, and not in Clokes, as too many doe use."

Among the authors who have explained and defended the whole system, ceremonies and usages of the Church of England, the great Hooker treats in his fifth book of *Altire* belonging to the Service of God, and Nichols has a chapter on the surplice and other ecclesiastical habits; but I can trace nothing which indicates the garb used in preaching.

The same remark may be made upon the works on the English Ritual which I have consulted namely, those of Sparrow, Wheatley, Comber, Mant, Shepherd, Palmer and Jebb, with the exception of the last. This writer by whose beautiful work on the Choral Service of the Church of England, published in 1843, I hope that this Diocese, as well as others, may derive profit, and whose recommendations I have already in some instances of a slighter kind adopted in my own practice, stands opposed to the use of the gown in preaching. I am little desirous of breaking a lance with so accomplished a champion, but after exhibiting his sentiments upon the question, I shall shew also some reasons in addition to those which have been already adduced, for inclining strongly to the opinion that he is mistaken.

Respecting the vestment and cope which the officiating minister is directed to put on when he passes to the administration of the communion, he speaks thus:—

"I must honestly confess that I can find no argument to justify the disuse of these ancient vestments, so expressly enjoined by authorities to which all clergymen profess obedience, except that rule of charity which, as Bishop Beveridge expressed it, is above rubrics; that loving regard for the edification of the people, to which every rite and ceremony should tend."

The use of the gown in the pulpit, he notices thus:—

"A few words must be added, upon the use of the gown, which most improperly has come to be considered as an official vesture of divine service, instead of what it really is, nothing more than the private dress of the Clergy, which they used formerly, and at no very distant time, to wear on all common occasions, just as the resident members do at the Universities, but the use of which has been gradually more and more curtailed. At least it is now only the full dress of the Clergy. It is, however, now commonly regarded as the preaching robe: and thus, while the change of dress, prescribed by the Church when passing from the Matins or Liturgy to the Communion, is altogether neglected, this absurd practice is considered as regular and legitimate. It has been alleged, indeed, that while preaching, the minister is teaching in his private capacity, and therefore, that he ought to wear a less official dress. But it ought to be remembered that though permitted a discretion in the sermon not allowed in the prayers, of using his own words, this is a public official act, just as much prescribed as any part of the office, and that (except in Colleges, where there is a special exemption by the Act of Uniformity) it is as great an irregularity to omit the Sermon on the mornings of Sundays and Holidays, as any part of the Liturgy. Now, in Cathedrals and Colleges the surplice is always worn when preaching. Why should it be different in Parish Churches?"

Archdeacon Sharpe, in one of his well-known Charges, vindicates the custom of preaching in the surplice, then common within his jurisdiction, on the ground that it is the privilege of the Clergy; the surplice being, of course, a garment of superior dignity to the gown.

"The use of the gown, however, it is most likely, had its origin in a puritanical dislike to the surplice."

Now the first observation which it here occurs to make in the application of these ex-

• The work of Dean Comber is hardly of a nature to afford information upon a point like this.  
† Wheatley treats the vestment and coopes the same thing under different names. The difference between them, however, is shown in Palmer's Origines Liturgice. The Canons of 1603 mention only the cope, and differing in this from the regulations prescribed by 2 Ed. VI., (which also give the option between them), limit the use of the cope to Cathedral and Collegiate Churches. I should, for my own part, feel no sort of objection to see them again generally in use, if ever the subsistence of prejudices should make it expedient.

The mistake of the Presbyter in supposing that the practice in Cathedrals must be a pattern for Parish Churches, will appear from a comparison of the 24th and 25th Canons, with the 58th. It is important to this whole argument to observe the distinction made between the two cases. The Cathedral practice would naturally enough obtain in the Chapel Royal at Edinburgh, where it is stated by Mr. Jobb that the Dean was ordered by Charles I., to preach in the surplice. I would hazard a conjecture, that the practice of preaching in the surplice in Cathedrals which does not appear to agree with the Advertisements of 1564; may possibly be traced to the 25th of these Canons of 1603, although the direction there given by no means necessarily includes the preacher himself.

• It is however, questioned, I think rather feebly, by Grey on Ecclesiastical Law, and by Sharpe on the Rubric.

† I. e. since the services have been bleaded in one, which were originally distinct.  
‡ The Presbyter appears to doubt whether it be not a part of the sacrament of the Holy Communion. If it can be proved to be that, I shall certainly concede that it is a rite.

• This work comprehends notice also of the Canons which affect the Archial Clergy.

tracts to the remarks of the Presbyter, is that if the Clergy are bound in conscience to wear the surplice in preaching upon the principle of obedience to rubrical authority, the same principle will more distinctly bind them to the adoption of the alb and cope in administering the holy Communion, the intention of the rubric being much less questionable in this instance than in the other. And if the salvo of Bishop Beveridge can supply an exemption from the use of those obsolete vestments, the recent occurrences in England, in relation to the use of the surplice in the pulpit, shew that it would be equally available in this case as a dispensation, even if the arguments were much stronger than I consider them to be in favour of the rubrical authority for the practice.

I would also observe that whereas a change of dress made during the service is much insisted upon in certain quarters, as an objection to preaching in the gown,—it will be seen here that upon the very principle of following, at all hazards, the letter of the rubric, another change of dress is found to be imposed, and the omission of it is mentioned in the foregoing extracts, as a neglect. Now if the change be proper in passing from one portion of what may more properly be called the sacerdotal acts of the clergy, to another (although one indeed of a higher order) it would seem, a fortiori, to be admissible in the transition to a performance which is the minister's own, interposed between different parts of the prescribed forms. I conceive, in opposition to the view taken by the Presbyter, that preaching in itself, is very obviously distinguishable from a rite, properly so called. A rite is described, indeed, in one of the definitions of Johnson, of which the correctness, as far as it goes, cannot be disputed, as a solemn act of Religion. But although every rite is a solemn act of Religion, every solemn act of Religion is not a rite. The Latin rite and the French rit, from whence the word rite comes to us, would not, I think, be accurately used in an application simply to the act of preaching, although they might be applied to its prescribed circumstances.

In the consecration of Bishops, both according to rubric and received practice, a change of dress is made during the services. I have only two works at my command written exclusively upon the Rubric. One of these is the collection of Charges by Archdeacon Sharpe, to which the reference is made by the Rev. Prebendary Jebb: the other is a work published in 1841, under the title of *An Appeal to the Rubric* by the Rev. S. Rowe, Vicar of Crediton, and is designed practically to enforce a greater rubrical exactness.

Mr. Jebb, I apprehend, must have spoken only from recollection, and that slight and imperfect, when he represented Archdeacon Sharpe, as vindicating the custom of preaching in the surplice. The Archdeacon, it will be seen, so far vindicates it, as to use his endeavours for reconciling the clergy to the practice, within his particular jurisdiction, where it had, at that time, prevailed from having been formerly introduced by a higher authority; but his own judgment, is very decidedly and strongly on the other side. He speaks as follows:

"I cannot dismiss this article, without giving you another remarkable instance of the prevalence of custom in these sort of usages, under the approbation of the Ordinary; and rather, because it is an instance that falls within the subject of the present Canon, (the 58th) and is also of peculiar consideration to us of this diocese; in which alone it is to be met with.—It is the constant use of the surplice by all preachers in their pulpits; and it is said to have taken rise from an opinion of Bishop Cosins, that as surplices were to be worn at all times of the ministracion, and preaching was properly the ministracion of the word of God, therefore surplices were to be worn in the pulpit as well as in the desk, or on other occasions of the ministry.

"One cannot speak otherwise than with reverence and due respect to the authority of so great a ritualist as Bishop Cosins was.—Yet it is manifest there is nothing in our Rubrics, that doth directly authorize this usage, or in the Canons that doth countenance it; nay there is something in both which would discourage, if not forbid, such a practice. The Canons limit the use of the surplice to the public prayers, and ministering the sacraments, and other rites of the Church; so doth our Rubric concerning habits, if it be strictly interpreted of King Edward's order in the second year of his reign; for there the surplice is only used at matens, evensong, in baptizing and burying in parish churches. And then there immediately follows this permission that in all other places every minister shall be at liberty to use any surplice or no; and also a recommendation to such as are Graduates, that, when they preach, they should use such hoods as pertained to their several degrees. Here then is sufficient warrant for using a hood without a surplice, as is done to this day at the Universities, but no appearance of authority for the use of surplices in the pulpit. If it be said that a custom has prevailed over the Kingdom, for Bishops to wear their habits of ministracion whenever they preach, whether they officiate in other respects or not; and that the inferior Clergy cannot follow a better ex-

ample; it may be answered, that what the Bishops do in this respect is founded on ancient Constitutions. By the Canon Law they were obliged to wear rochets, as their distinguishing habit, whenever they appeared in public; though since the Reformation they have not used to wear them any where in public but in the Church and in the House of Lords. And it is more proper they should continue the use of their public habit, whenever they preach, for the better distinction of their characters on that occasion from those of the inferior pastors: seeing there is no sufficient distinction preserved in their ordinary habits.

"All, then, that I would observe upon this custom of preaching in surplices, is, that none of us are obliged to it; though at the same time I intend no censure of the practice.—For it is certainly decent, and with us without exception, though it be nowhere authorized, otherwise than by a prescription within this diocese."

In the work of Mr. Rowe, the following remark appears, in the form of a note:—

"There appears great propriety in the custom followed by some clergymen of wearing the surplice on the three great festivals of Easter, Whitsuntide and Christmas, in the pulpit as well as in the reading-pew and at the Communion."

I am by no means prepared to subscribe to the opinion here expressed; but that is not the question: what I wish you to observe is that this writer on the rubric, manifestly regards the occasions to which he refers as exceptions, and therefore approves upon all other occasions of the use of the gown in the pulpit.

And here I close my authorities, which have been pressed forward more hurriedly, and therefore with less advantage than I could have desired; but they may be sufficient to satisfy you, that in recommending to you a year ago, that you should not hastily, and upon your individual responsibility, introduce in the matter here under consideration, what was a marked novelty in this Diocese, I was not recommending what was calculated to do violence to your consciences, or painfully to place you between conflicting claims upon your obedience. I was not acting in a manner to warrant the venting up and down through the Province for discussion in taverns and steamboats, the statement of a Clergyman, that if he and his brethren take the authorized directions of the Church for their guide, they will be acting contrary to the recommendation (farther on called the unhappy recommendation) of the Bishop, although he too is bound by the same directions, and therefore they must obey the orders of the Church, however much it may pain them to neglect a recommendation from so high a quarter: And, again, that it is most unfortunate that our venerated Diocesan should have committed himself so fully in opposition to the plainest directions that could be penned, &c., and once more, that deeply and even with tears must it be lamented that our beloved Chief Shepherd should have issued any recommendation like this, &c.

It is very obvious that all these strictures, whether just or otherwise, will apply to the Letter of our Metropolitan, as well as to my own Circular. To him, however, I doubt not that the Presbyter would apply, with all the heightened meaning which is due, the terms of affection and respect serving to qualify the censure which he has undertaken to pass upon his Bishop. For these I am obliged to him. But coupled as they are with that censure, conveyed in such expressions as are quoted above, I hope that I shall not be making an ungracious return, if I say that he may find some cause for weeping nearer home than in the proceedings of the authority set over him; some reason, but not *hinc*, that *ille lacrymæ* should flow. I speak this in no unfrankly spirit towards my unknown assailant. His best friends, I believe, would wish such a conviction to be wrought within his mind.

If the lot of the Presbyter had been cast in a Diocese, where the fences of order and unity had been thrown open, observances deprecated, or solemnity of effect in the ministrations of Religion disregarded by its governing authority,—there might have been more colourable plea for his proceeding. But I may appeal, I think, with some confidence to my brethren, to shew that no such plea as this can be advanced. No example has ever been set by the Bishops of this Diocese, of laxity in Church principle or accommodation in religious proceedings to latitudinarian and pseudo liberal views. And long before any movement was made in the Church to carry us along with it in the correction of neglect and irregularity in the points just above stated, your present Bishop, being then your Archdeacon, addressed you thus:

"Lastly—I now come to a subject which falls within my peculiar province,—we must be faithful in the correct and reverent performance of the ordinary and prescribed duties of our office. An obligation which is indeed closely connected with the tenor of the last preceding observations: for the beautiful forms and offices of the Church, purged as they are from the gorgeous pageantry of superstition, yet clothed with a reverential solemnity of exterior, and strictly edifying and evangelical in their matter, will often be found to recommend themselves and procure respect, even in quarters where there is a predisposition to condemn them; if her ministers in their manner of officiating, and the regard which they have to accessory circumstances, preserve the wise spirit in which they were framed. I do not speak only of our performance of public worship. I maintain that in admitting infants by baptism into the covenant of Christ,—uniting man

and woman as one flesh in the Lord with the form of prayer and benediction—consigning the dead back again to the dust from which they sprang—or administering, in cases where it is right to do so, the comfort of the Lord's Supper to the sick and dying—our feelings of seriousness and devotion, instead of prompting us to treat externals with contempt, should teach us to prevent all offensive contrast between the sacredness of the occasion, and the circumstantial of the performance. Let us avoid, therefore, every appearance of haste, of irreverence, of slovenliness,—every tendency towards the disuse of grave and decent formalities and distinctions in dress or otherwise, which were prescribed by the Master-builders of our Zion; and not be too ready to construe any incommensurable circumstances of a local character as furnishing a dispensation to depart from rule; nor suffer precedents to creep in which may produce undesirable alteration in the received usages of the Church.

"I will take one example only, to come more closely to the point and distinctly to illustrate what I mean: I will suppose a baptism to be performed—one of the infants whom our Redeemer would have folded in his arms,—to be presented to his Minister that it may be marked for his own:—Some trifling inconvenience is alleged, (I would yield the point if it were severe), as an objection to bringing it to the Church: this sacrament is therefore administered perhaps in a tavern—some vessel is produced which is in daily use for household purposes—the clergyman is in a hurry, and he appears without any distinction to mark his office:—I ask whether the associations which attach to the ordinance are likely to be as serious, as if the rite were administered within the consecrated walls of the House of God, the water marked in a decent font, the clergyman raked to the eye of the beholder, as one who is appointed to minister in holy things?"

—*Visitation Sermon preached before the late Bishop, 1832.*

Again, quite independently of any action of a party or echo of a strain raised in other quarters, but simply and purely as the result of reflections of very long standing in my own mind and of my own sense of duty; I spoke thus to you in my primary Episcopal Charge:

"In seeking to recommend the Church, according to our bountied duty, in the eyes of our own people or of others, and to give the fullest effect to the beautiful offices of her Liturgy, there is a principle to be observed of which I have taken notice upon former occasions in addressing my brethren in a different capacity, but which I am prompted briefly to touch upon, because it is in danger from local circumstances, of partially falling into disregard.—I mean the principle of rendering the services of the Church more impressive by the manner of performing them, and by the exterior reverence and decorum with which they are clothed. The preface to the Common Prayer-Book, the Canons and the Rubrics, more particularly in the Communion-office, afford sufficient evidence of the care which was wisely taken by our holy Reformers, while they purged away from our worship the cumbrous pageantry of superstition, to preserve the utmost gravity, solemnity, and order in the public ministrations of the Church; and to shed over them a venerable air fitted to remind men of the awe with which they should approach the things of God. The forms and ceremonies of the Church, the prescribed postures of worship, the habits of those who officiate, the vessels of the Sanctuary, the several appendages and distinctions of our National Churches, are all designed to aid in this effect; and, as servants of the Church, we ought to act in the spirit and, whenever we can, according to the letter of her regulations. The disuse upon the ordinary occasions of life, of a distinguishing ecclesiastical dress, is a departure from wise and venerable rules, from which our Clergy ought never to take licence to depart farther than, according to the now received usage, they are obliged to do. They should never betray a disposition to secularize the character and office which they hold. And in the actual performance of any ecclesiastical function, no deviation can be justified for which the plea of necessity cannot be advanced. No needless irregularity should be suffered to creep into our performance of official duty, which may settle by degrees into a precedent."—*Charge, 1838.*

I might refer to passages in an Ordination-sermon preached last year and published by desire, in the Church Newspaper of the 13th Sept., (Vol. VII, No. 10.) But I have already brought forward more than enough, perhaps, to appease any uneasy suspicions of episcopal remissness in this Diocese, in matters of exterior or distinctive principles and usages of the Church. And the Presbyter, if he is one who held a charge in the Diocese in 1843, can hardly have forgotten the Questions, in a numbered series, proposed to the Clergy individually in my last Visitation, part of which related to their conformity to rule in certain forms and observances belonging to their ministrations.

Whether, however, it is either possible or if possible, matter of expediency or of duty, at all hazards and in all cases to adhere to the letter of the Rubrics, or whether in an ill-considered and imperfectly examined endeavour to do so, we may not be liable to be betrayed into some signal mistakes respecting the spirit of the Liturgy itself as a whole, and the plain intentions of its compilers,—are questions upon which I shall not here enter. And willingly indeed do I leave the chief subject of this letter, and, gladly, after the letter of His Grace of Canterbury, would I

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