

A SCENE OF ANCIENT HERMONAT.

—“ Why dost thou not turn
Unto the beautiful garden, blossoming
Beneath the rays of Christ !”—

Dante. Divina Commedia.

Catechisms, the Directory, the *Form of Government* and discipline, and other valuable appendages? Is it not solely because Presbyterians fear that people will not find in the Bible this mode of government by ministers, ruling elders, and deacons, the three grades of the Presbyterian hierarchy? Is it not because they have a suspicion that people will not, without the help of the Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms find out that God in the beginning made some men with the design of beautifying and glorifying them, and others with the design of making them the prey of eternal fire? Is it not because they are afraid that the dogma, that God leaves sinners, and sometimes even just men, without the gracious assistance necessary to enable them to keep his law, will not be ferreted out by the reader of Scripture, unless it is propounded to them in the Confession and Catechisms, since Presbyterians or Calvinists are the only ones who find out that this and the other articles of the Calvinistic creed are clearly taught in Scripture? They hold their Confession of Faith, their directory, their plan of government, their catechisms, and their discipline to be necessary; hence, they ordain that no one shall be licensed “as an elder, or a minister, unless he adopt the Confession of Faith, and approve of the Government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church. If these be necessary, and Scripture alone contains every thing necessary, how happens it that it does not contain these, and in the precise form in which they are to be adopted and approved by the candidates for license? Did the Holy Ghost forget himself and hence the necessity of the Westminster divines to supply his deficiency?

There are some Protestant sects who are far from being guilty of the particular species of hypocrisy chargeable upon Presbyterians; sects which do not uphold the sufficiency of Scripture with one hand and demolish it with the other by imposing creeds and confessions drawn up by men, which discard all creeds even the Apostles' Creed, every discipline and directory as a curse, and hold up the Scriptures alone as sufficient, as the sole rule of faith without gloss, note, or comment. In one sense, these do admit the sufficiency of Scripture, for this is all they admit; since they do not agree on a single article taught by the Scriptures, as must be the case with all who assert the sufficiency of the Bible alone;—another and a conclusive proof to Catholics, that Scripture alone is not sufficient and that Christ and his Apostles did not intend to write every thing necessary, but left every thing in the hands of a *living* body subsisting always unto the consummation of the world, always supernaturally assisted and able to transmit both what was written, with its true interpretation, and what was not written. Hence the command and the promise,—“Going, teach all nations, . . . teaching them to observe all things *whatsoever* which I have commanded you; for, behold, I am with you all days unto the consummation of the world.” St Matthew, xviii. 19, 20.

But we come now to another point in the Protestant creed, namely, the *clearness* of Scripture. Here the Presbyterians seem to surpass even themselves in mystification, and in that peculiar skill in deducing proofs from Scripture, which reminds us of the etymology of *lucus* from *non lucendo*. We quote the article entire, with its proofs.

“Art. VII. All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all; yet those things which are necessary to be known, to be believed, and to be observed, for salvation are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that, not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them.

“2 Pet. iii. 15. As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned, and unstable, wrest, as *they do* also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ps. cxix. (cxviii.) 105, 130. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.—The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.”

(To be continued.)

PALESTINE! what recollections myriad-fold throng and thrill at that hallowed name! The land possessed so long of Jehovah's “chosen people;” where David and Solomon sung and ruled; where God's band of mystic seers pierced futurity with prophetic glance, and guided it with wondrous lasting word; where Jesus taught, healed, suffered, and died;—the mighty battle-field, whereon man's great fight was fought, and Hell was conquered. Truly it is a “Holy Land.” Little wonder that for nineteen ages pilgrims have reverently sought it—consecrated, as it is by associations more proud than those of the Vatican or Lateran.

Physically, too, it is a fair land—almost worthy, you would say, to be the theatre of such a drama! In early times nature and art combined to make it what Tasso sings of it, and crusaders thought of it.

But it is changed now-a-days.

The traveller, who after “passing through the desert,” is “coming down from Damascus,” sees from a far off, a lofty sterile mount, and around it a bare uncultivated country; he is told the mount is Hermon, the country is Palestine. Nearer approach but reveals greater desolation. The widely extended limestone valley before him, appears scarcely capable of supplying a parched herbage for the Arab horses, or of supporting a few sycamore or mulberry trees which here and there have struggled into stunted existence. Two ruined villages and some burned houses mark where man did live; a few Arab tents, a few peasants' huts, and a wretched village called Nain, or Naim, (an antique sound, making the pilgrim's ears tingle!) and inhabited by a few Mahommedan traders, show where they did live. A canal through which no stream flows, embankments long made useless, the remains of cisterns, and the yet uncrumbled walls of some massy edifice, would indicate, however, that at no very distant period the country was under cultivation, and possessed by an active and industrious population.

On an autumnal morning eighteen centuries ago, how different was the scene! In place of that mean hamlet a proud city raised its thick and lofty walls, and many a turret and bright pinnacle glanced in the sun-beam. That arid valley was covered with golden wheat, rich in the promise of abundance, and irrigated with countless brooks, and streamlets, and fountains. Around the basis of the