

THE CHRISTIAN SENTINEL.

THREE RIVERS, FRIDAY 17th SEPTEMBER, 1830.

IN presenting our readers with the Proclamation of His Majesty King WILLIAM THE FOURTH, for the suppression of vice and immorality throughout his dominions, (which will be found below) we are persuaded that we are performing a religious duty both to them, to the Government to which we owe our allegiance, to the country which gave us birth, and to the Church, of which we are the unworthy-servants: and therefore we beg leave to solicit attention to a few prefatory remarks.

It is generally agreed by those who have attentively studied the Constitution of Great Britain, and become intimately acquainted with its various and combined excellencies, that it is the most perfect of any on earth. In no other state under heaven is to be found a greater measure of practical liberty, interwoven with an equal measure of security, energy, strength, and efficiency; adapted to meet the most pressing exigencies, both domestic and foreign, with promptitude, firmness, and effect: properties which are calculated to insure both prosperity and permanence. Under it civil and religious liberty are secured to all; the rights of person and property are inviolable; every encouragement and facility is afforded to enterprising adventure; and genius of every class is generally sure of being nursed into life and activity. Hence the British Isles alone, within the last three hundred years, have produced a greater number of truly eminent men, in the various departments of useful learning and solid acquirements, than the whole world besides has ever done in double that period of time.

1. The Government of Great Britain is a *Monarchy*. As such, we may not improperly call it the Government of *nature*. The best possible form of Government is an *absolute monarchy*, where the wisdom, the will, and the power of the Sovereign are fully competent to provide for, and secure the happiness of his obedient subjects. Such a Government is the *divine*, for which we all, as Christians, ought to be training our minds and dispositions after the example of "God our Saviour." The ancient *patriarchal* government is evidently a copy of the divine; and time was when the whole human race were governed by one man. Every head of a family still, in his own little kingdom, preserves the patriarchal form of government, and rules absolutely in his own house. If he did not, he could not keep together his family; at least in any order and regularity. Two individuals can hardly be together without one being the superior. So when God made man, he made them male and female, and gave to one the superiority over the other; and this superiority was placed in the hands of one endowed with qualities better adapted to *provide* and to *protect*, than the "weaker vessel." To secure the inferior from a tyrannical use of power, and the superior from the effects of rebellion, he made them *one* flesh, and bound them together with a chain of mutual affection. The parents' love descends to the children; they are "his bone and his flesh;" and while he retains a proper feeling of humanity, he is really the *father* of his household. Such should be the patriarchal king,—the prince and father of his tribe, the careful guardian of their best rights—the true promoter of their welfare and happiness. The bonds of affection make their interest, their prosperity, their happiness his own.

2. The English Monarchy is *hereditary*, not elective. The crown is too great a prize to be contended for on a claim set up upon the abstract principle of *merit*. This would bring too many competitors into the arena of contention for the glittering prize—competitors whose *ambition*, not their merit, was the sole cause of their appearing as candidates; and thus endanger the public peace in the contests for power, to the risque of tyranny and bloodshed instead of public protection. The well-known fate of unhappy Poland is too fresh in the memory of the present generation to render it necessary for us to travel far for a striking practical illustration of the dangers attendant on an elective Monarchy. And the hostile ambition of her rival chiefs would probably never have invited the cupidity of her grasping neighbors to a conquest and partition of her fertile provinces, had the crown descended in lineal succession. Indeed, public commotions, as we conceive, are too apt to be concomitants of very frequent elections; particularly to the higher departments of the state. The seat of state is hardly warm under its occupant, before he must give place to another. The ferment of one election is scarcely subsided before the alarm is sounded for another. And the abstruse science of government is scarcely proceeded in beyond the introductory lessons, ere a

new hand is called to the helm of public authority. The Laws of Great Britain decide who shall be her Sovereign,—enactments made venerable by time, and held sacred in the hearts of the wise and the good;—laws which stifle the breath of private ambition ere it be reared in the cradle of popularity; and which secure to the country, peaceful crown, inviolable by the touch of an unauthorized and unlawful hand. And the *written law* being decisive on the question, as to who shall succeed to the departed Monarch, competition for the Crown is wholly precluded, and the inconveniences of popular commotion wholly prevented.

3. The English Monarchy is *Constitutional* or *limited*. As the law prescribes who shall be *King*, so it determines what shall be the *extent of his power*. It is true that he is not considered as a *subject*, or amenable to human authority; yet, without the sanction of the same law which seats him on his throne, he cannot pass the threshold of his meanest subject. The winds of heaven, said LORD CHATELAIN, may penetrate it in every direction, and the blast of the sky may prostrate it in the dust: but the King cannot—he dare not, unbidden, enter the cottage of the humblest peasant. It is to him his castle; and behind its simple latch he is as strongly entrenched, as though surrounded by fleet and armies. The King, however, has a prerogative—that of *MERCY*; and though he cannot add one iota to the severity of the law; yet, if need be, he can arrest the stroke of Justice, and save that life to which she had the fullest claim.

4. The British is a *religious* Monarchy. In conformity with the example of ancient religious kings, such as David, Hezekiah and Josiah, the Constitution decides that "Kings shall be the nursing fathers, and Queens the nursing mothers" of the Church: thus fulfilling prophecy, as well as following the example of those monarchs who won of old eminent for their piety and zeal for the glory of God. The King is appointed guardian of the interests of religion, as Lord ELLENBOROUGH said, not to make the Church *political*, but to make the State *religious*. And since "righteousness exalteth a nation," perhaps we can find no method more appropriate for effecting so desirable an object, than let the Government take the lead in the work of its own and that of its people's exaltation, in lending all needful assistance to the promotion of religion. It was thus that the most eminent of the kings of Israel and Judah immortalized their own names, and made their people prosperous and happy under their religious Government. By the terms of his engagements made, and the oaths taken by him at his Coronation, he is most solemnly bound to maintain the cause of God and the Church—engagements in their letter and spirit in strict conformity with the word of God. His Proclamation on his accession to the throne is consequential upon the principles by which he is permitted to ascend it, and an act necessary towards appearing at the outset in the true character of a Constitutional British Monarch. For since it is by Divine appointment that kings reign, how fit and becoming is it in them to acknowledge God distinctly and openly in their official character. In that character a British King appears on the side of the cause of God, and lends his name and authority as the guardian of public virtue, to the promotion of the best interests of the people committed to his charge. His chiefest dignity arises from the proximity of his throne to the temple of the God of his fathers: and though he wears a diadem glittering and resplendent with the gems of empire; yet these gems shine with a borrowed lustre, and their brightest irradiations are but the reflected beams of the Altar of the Lord of Hosts.

It is true the practical effects resulting from this state of things fall far short of what they ought to be. But so far from this being a fair objection to the thing itself, it is rather what were to be expected from the nature of man. If a law from heaven, and the Divine presence manifested in the temple at Jerusalem for so many centuries in succession could not preserve the nation from idolatry and ruin, why should we look for more in proportion from a king of England who is temporal head of the church and her defender from her external enemies; or contumaciously assert that the principle is unsound because practical results are deficient in an arithmetical calculation? Who can maintain that much of the national prosperity of Britain, and especially the amount of her labour expended in the successful propagation of the gospel, are not to be set to the account of the substantial support the church has derived from the protection of the state? At the lowest calculation these things are valuable. They are documentary evidence that the government of Great Britain is in theory strictly Christian: and if in practice she has fallen below this high standard, the Constitution of Church and State is no more chargeable therewith than was the Mosaic economy with the sins of Israel and Judah.—Happy indeed, and exalted as a nation should