

Miscellaneous Extracts.

WORSHIP AMONG THE IRVINGITES.

The following account of the worship among the Irvingites, as practised in their Cathedral, Gordon Square, London, is from the pen of the English correspondent of the *Presbyterian Banner and Advocate*, generally understood to be a prominent member of the English Presbyterian Synod. In his concluding remarks he gives a very just and discriminating estimate of the character of this strange compound of the sensuous and the spiritual. A consideration of the whole scene may serve to show us the danger of once departing from the simplicity of the order and worship established in our Church:—

"The 'Catholic and Apostolic Church,' as the adherents of what is popularly known as Irvingism love to call themselves, continue to exercise considerable influence in London. In company with the Rev. W. Graham, of Bonn, I went to their Cathedral, in Gordon Square, this week. I had paid a visit to this place once before, but it was when but a few were present, and on an ordinary occasion. But this time, I had a thorough insight into the working of the system. It was a high day. Once a month, and on a week day, the Seven Churches (for such is their number in the Metropolis, and limited to this number in harmony with the symbolic character of the system,) assembled at Gordon Square for a full choral and Eucharistic service. To obtain an entrance on such an occasion, was a rare privilege, and I owed it to the fact that one of 'the prophets' had been formerly a fellow-student with my friend, Mr. Graham, who now invited him to be present.

"Arriving at the church at ten o'clock," we passed down the cloisters, and winding through a small door, we found ourselves in the nave of the lofty and beautiful building. The tessellated mosaic, increasing in richness as it extended into the chancel, was under our feet. Above were the arches and fluted columns, the side-aisles on either side, with the great altar, with the thrones or seats of the apostle, or others of the sacred order. These last, the apostle, (for there is but one,) the prophets, the seven angels, the chief pastor, the four evangelists, the deacons, together with various attendants, and all variously robed, were beginning, as we entered, to take their respective places.

"We were shown into a side-aisle, and the service began with a voluntary on the organ. The Seven Angels entered in procession, and took a prominent seat. Behind them were two other orders. These Seven Angels at once arrested the eye. All were portly and fine looking, evidently persons in the higher walks of life. Most of them were fifty years of age, some still older. Each was dressed in a long, white silk garment, edged with satin, with a girdle around the waist, and embroidered with gold near the ankles.

"The Prophets had each a white stole, or surplice, with a loose, black serge jacket over it, reaching to the waist. One class who, as I was informed by a lady, were attendants on the respective pastors of the churches, wore jackets of purple silk. The Apostle had a garment, profusely embroidered with gold on a white ground, and in various figures, with a golden circular plate on his breast. The Prophet of the day, and the Evangelist also, as well as the Chief Pastor, wore gorgeous dresses of the same description.

"It is the Communion service which is read to-day. Prayers are intoned by a priest from the altar. The Liturgy, or usual morning prayer, as

well as this Communion office, bears a general resemblance to the kindred services of the Church of England. But the Sacramental service is more lengthened. The responses are sung by the people, led by the organ and a choir, and the part the people take in the service, and their evident familiarity with music and singing, is remarkable and suggestive. Every time that the *gloria patri* is sung, all turn to the East.

"One feature was characteristic. The 'Seven Churches,' so called, were here in one body. The Seven Angels, therefore, have their special vocation to day. Ere the service has long begun, one of these leaves his place, and steps into a reading desk, overshadowed by one of the arches, in the body of the church. Immediately he reads aloud, and with great distinctness, the first of the Epistles to the Seven Churches, as it is written in Rev. ii. Leaving the desk, a Collect is intoned and responded to, and then a second angel takes the desk, and reads a second of the Letters to the Seven Churches. And so, with a prayer or Collect between each, the whole of the seven Epistles are read, the seventh angel closing the whole.

"Part of the service was the chanting of the Psalms, as they are found in the prose version, beginning at the Psalm cxxx. With all my educational associations with rhyme, I could not help feeling, with the English translation before me, printed in separate lines, as in the original *Hebrew*, that this mode brings out best, the meaning of the Spirit; and that this was surely more akin to the service of song in the house of the Lord in Solomon's days, than is our present system of singing, with the Procrustean construction of rhyme, and often very bad rhyme. I hope this is not heresy. Some High Church Presbyterians would call it such. I despair of the singing of the Psalms, as they are in the prose, in Presbyterian churches, in my time. Perhaps the levity of choristers and associations of the past, between chanting and formalism, may account for this. But can any one argue that there is *sacredness in rhyme*? Is not the essence of the sacred song, as well as its original form, preserved in the prose, a rendering of the Hebrew more exact than even the version of Rouse, without any of its angularity and harshness? Let any one take up a paragraph Bible, as printed by our Tract Society, and see whether the printing there given of sacred song—given as in the original, in measured lines—is not the true Scriptural ideal of what the great congregation ought to be.

"I shall not dwell long upon what remains. Suffice it to say that there is, in the 'Apostolic' service, a prayer of consecration, not Pophish in its substance, nor formally endorsing transubstantiation, yet suggestive both of the one and the other. The bread and the wine are consecrated separately, and over each the priest makes the sign of the cross; and the prayer (while it recited Christ's words, 'Do this,' &c.) was to the effect that they might 'become to us the body and the blood of Christ,' for the spiritual nourishment of the soul. This is very like the language of the Scottish Episcopal office, which Evangelists so earnestly deprecate. Before the partaking of the communion, incense was burned, and accompanying the ascending clouds was chanted, by the whole congregation, Mal. i: 11, 'In every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering.' &c.

"After a silent pause, the altar was approached by those within the chancel. The Seven Angels walked up, and others in order after them, concluding with the choristers and organist. Then followed the people, male and female, perhaps about three hundred and fifty or four hundred in all.

"After all had partaken, some prayers followed, and the service was concluded with the benediction. I neglected to mention that about the middle of the service, a short homily was delivered, from a pulpit in the body of the church.

"We were about to leave, but were told to keep our places, by two ladies. To this we assented, as we were told that the 'Fourfold Ministry' was about to be exercised. The people all crowded to the centre; the prophets, &c., all repaired to the same quarter. First entered one of the reading desks the Chief Pastor, an elderly man, who read an exhortation on Holiness, and forcibly enough did he denounce the formalism and idolatry of Rome. But he did not spare either the Greek or Protestant Churches. The latter, he said, each were worshippers of a *text*, and thus split up the body of Christ into fragments. He then gave a running commentary on the sixth and seventh chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, displayed considerable analysis, all designed to enforce the lesson, that without holiness, no man could see the Lord.

Next appeared, in the opposite desk, an Evangelist, a man of considerable oratorical power. He began somewhat abruptly, by saying that the system of Papias would not do without a purgatory, because they did not teach the people to walk in the Spirit, and so not to fulfil the lusts of the flesh; and he dwelt on the importance of adhering to the way of holiness as marked out by the way-marks of ordinances. Next came the Prophet, a grave, tall elderly man. This is the person who prefaced the Liturgy and offices found in the book put into my hands. Here are offices for the consecration of Fonts, for the ordaining of the different orders, for confession and absolution, &c., and all these this man is supposed to have prefaced, under the special help of the Holy Spirit. He reads a lesson to the Evangelists about a greater efficiency in spreading their principles, and utters something like a sneer at the popularity of those sectarians who dealt 'in illustrations and vulgarisms,' meaning thereby I presume, Mr. Spurgeon. This discourse, as a whole, was marked by great, though subdued power. Last came the Apostle, the most priest-like of all. He enforced the doctrine of obedience on the people. His premise was that the gifts of rule came through the Apostle, (himself,) the Church, and that through him they received the Holy Ghost, and that the people's responsive recognition of this rule over them, was a cheerful 'obedience of faith.' These five discourses were embraced within three-quarters of an hour. The whole services lasted three hours and a half. The variety made it not appear very long.

"I forbear to offer any lengthened reflections on this strange medley, this curious attempt to combine Ritualism and Spirituality, sensuous worship and sacramental grace, with practical holiness. The fallacy of the system—based on words, such as 'Apostles,' &c., and shown in the lack of proofs that extraordinary offices remained in the Church after the Dispensation was ushered in and established—will suggest itself to every thoughtful reader. The near approach of the Second Advent was dwelt upon, and the collection of tithes and offerings was practically illustrated. The tithes seem to be devoted to the Building Fund, for the present; the offerings go to the support of the Apostle and his subordinates. The machinery and its sustenance seems very costly. Yet, as *fas est ab hoste doceri*, I thought that as to the part the people take in public worship, and the exercise and bringing out of the varied gifts of men for the benefit of the whole body, something might be learned by Churches whose order is really simple, New Testament, and Scriptural, like our own."

NORWAY AND ITS ANCIENT PEOPLE.

The great northern plain of Europe is broken by two masses of high land, the Ural Mountains in Asia, and the Scandinavian Chain, which extends for 1,000 miles along the shores of the Atlantic down the western coast of Norway.

The Norwegian Mountains rise abruptly from the sea-shore into a table land whose general