

THE COLONIAL CHURCHMAN.

"BUILT UPON THE FOUNDATION OF THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS, JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF BEING THE CHIEF CORNER STONE..... Eph. 2 c. 20 v.

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For the Colonial Churchman.

MESSRS. EDITORS,

What is the precise reference of the well known expression in the Burial Service of our Church, "We commit (his or her) body to the ground, &c. in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, &c.?"

"These words have been objected to not only by the dissenters in general, but also by many of our Church. For say they, how can we have any well-grounded hope of those committed to the ground, who have led ungodly lives, that they will rise to the life eternal: if, as the scriptures assure us, eternal life means an everlasting duration of happiness in Heaven, and of which they only that have died in the faith of Christ will receive?"

"Some contend that this passage in the Burial Service does not mean the resurrection of the person interred, but the general resurrection; it is in sure and certain hope of the resurrection not his resurrection. Where the deceased is really spoken of, the expression is very different,—'as our hope is, this our brother doth' (rest in Christ)—a mode of speech consistent with every thing but absolute certainty that the person departed doth not rest in Christ, which no one can be assured of without immediate revelation from Heaven. In this view of the subject 'eternal life' does not necessarily mean eternity of bliss, but merely the eternity of the state; whether in happiness or in misery, to ensue upon the resurrection."

A writer in the 2d vol. of the Scottish Episcopal Review, from which I have taken the above, differs in his opinion from these authors on this passage, and states his reasons why he differs from them, and what he conceives to be the true meaning of the words in question. "It is said in the first place," says this writer, "that the 'resurrection' here declared to be the object of 'sure and certain hope,' is not the resurrection of the individual departed, but the general resurrection. But if words have any meaning, surely in the general resurrection, that of every individual is implied. Besides in the general resurrection we cannot correctly be said to 'hope' for 'the life everlasting,' is a doctrine of faith, not an object of hope; it is assured to us by the truth of Christ's declaration, that 'all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth.' Again, the expressions in the Burial Service relate to a state where 'our vile body shall be changed by the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, and made like unto his glorious body.' Now we know that there are some who will at the general resurrection 'come forth unto the resurrection of damnation,' and of these although they will be 'changed,' we have no reason from Holy Scripture to suppose that their bodies will be made 'like Christ's glorious body.' So that it would appear from the whole context of the passage, that the general resurrection to a future state of all without exception, was not in the contemplation of the composers of our Liturgy, when the Burial office was drawn up; but the 'resurrection of life,' spoken of by our Saviour, and of which they only 'that have done good' will be partakers.

"I have no hesitation then, in expressing my humble opinion, that 'the resurrection to eternal life' in the 'sure and certain hope' of which our Church teaches us to 'commit the bodies' of her departed members 'to the ground,' is that state of future and everlasting happiness, promised through our blessed Lord and Saviour, to all who by his grace, live and die in the faith and fear of God. His hope is 'sure and certain,' rested on our confidence in the truth of God's promises in our holy Redeemer. That it is intended to direct the minds of the mourners round the grave to this sublime and elevated doctrine, at the moment when they must feel most keenly the sorrows of mortality, is evident, from the immediate introduction of that glorious passage from the Revelation of St. John, 'I heard a voice from Heaven,' &c.

It is evident also, from the language of the beautiful and affecting prayer directly following,—'Almighty God with whom do live the spirits of them who depart here in the Lord,' &c. I cannot suppose that any one can without prejudice, read our Burial Service, and not be satisfied of this intention in the arrangement of these devotions; and I am sure, under the impression of recent affliction, ever listened to the service without feeling the wisdom, and piety, and charity of our Church."

Which of these writers, as quoted above, is correct in his views of this subject I leave to your readers, Messrs. Editors, to determine. This much I will venture to say, whatever differences of opinion there may be respecting the passage in question (which perhaps could be altered and so worded as all would perfectly understand and subscribe to, as has been done with the said service of the Episcopal Church in the United States,)—yet take the Burial Service of our Church as a whole, it is a most sublime, solemn, and beautiful service. And I fully agree with Southey, in declaring it to be the "finest and most affecting ritual that ever was composed—a Service that finds its way to the heart when the heart stands most in need of such consolation and is open to receive it."

For the Colonial Churchman.

A CHRISTIAN'S DAILY MEDITATIONS.

Thursday.—Lord open my eyes that I may see the wonderful things of Thy law.—119 Psalm, 18.

O heavenly Father! I humbly beg Thy Holy Spirit so to help me to read and understand, and to remember and practise Thy word, that it may make me wise to salvation.—*Kenn.*

Friday.—Hail king of the Jews.—19 John, 3.

Hail Israel's King, enthroned in light!
Whose glory never shone more bright
Than when, by trembling friends betrayed
Thy foes insulting homage paid.

Saturday.—There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel; thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you.—7 Joshua, 13.

The entertaining of any worldly lust, and indulgence of any known, wilful sin, is the accursed thing, by which we are deprived of the power of God, and cannot stand before our spiritual enemies.—*Golden Treasury.*

Sunday.—This do in remembrance of me.—22d Luke 19.

I thank Thee O my dying Lord
For thine appointed feast;
Vouchsafe to meet me at Thy board,
And smile upon Thy guest.—*lb.*

Monday.—Make no tarrying to turn unto the Lord, and put not off from day to day: for suddenly shall the wrath of the Lord break forth, and in thy security shalt thou be destroyed, and shall perish in the day of vengeance.—5 Eccles.

Let us follow the counsel of the wise man. These words I desire you to mark diligently,—because they do most lively put before our eyes the fondness of many men, who, abusing the long-suffering and goodness of God, do never think on repentance or amendment of life.—*Homily.*

Tuesday.—I will rejoice in the Lord; I will joy in the God of my salvation.—3 Habak. 18.

O my God! in all my dangers, temporal and spiritual, I will hope in Thee, who art Almighty power, and therefore able to relieve me; who art infinite goodness, and therefore ready and willing to assist me.—*Nelson.*

Wednesday.—Lest any of you be hardened, through the deceitfulness of sin.—3 Heb. 13.

A tender conscience give me Lord,
And put thy fear within;

That I may tremble at Thy word,
And 'scape the snares of sin.

S I N

Appears fair, but is.....deceitful.
Appears pleasant, but is.....pernicious.
Promises much, but.....performs nothing.
If one is allowed, prepares.....others.
December, 1836. SIGMA.

From the Missionary.

MINISTERIAL.

Excellent Counsels for the Clergy.—Beware of being more anxious to add numbers to the communion of the Church, than to add 'such as shall be saved' and will glorify God. There is enough already of such zeal in the christian community, and grievous is the incubus it is placing upon the bosom of the Church of Christ, and sad the harvest it is rearing for posterity. If we sow to the flesh, we must of the flesh reap corruption. Remember it is the faith of the Church, not its multitude, that constitutes its strength. A little band, 'full of the Holy Ghost and of faith,' will do more to 'overcome the world,' than a 'mixed multitude,' however immense, of the faithless and unholy, the worldly-minded and unstable. The former have God to go before them, and His strength made perfect in their weakness. The latter are a dead weight upon the host—the more helpless, as they become more numerous. When in the array of Gideon there were tens of thousands, it was not ready for the battle. 'The people that are with thee, (said the Lord,) are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands; whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him depart.' Not till the thirty and two thousand had diminished to three hundred true men, did they become 'mighty through God.' 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.'

Remember the word of the Lord: 'Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.' It is not the number of branches upon the vine, but their fruitfulness, that glorifies God and honours the gospel. We may multiply branches and they may be dead, mere deformities and encumbrances, hindering the growth of better, and such as the Lord 'taketh away.' One vine bearing fruit in its season and well pruned 'that it may bring forth more fruit,' is of more honour to the husbandman than a thousand, having 'leaves only.' Here, then, you see your calling, brethren.—To win souls to Christ, and then to build them up in Him, that they may be well established in the faith, and 'not soon moved away from the hope of the Gospel.'

To this end, labour that your people may be well-grounded in the knowledge of evangelical doctrine and in discriminating views of great practical principles in religion. No broad and settled foundations can be laid without such knowledge. Neither faith, hope, nor charity, will long abide in the Church militant, when 'knowledge shall vanish away.' Labour to fix in your people's minds clear views of the lost state of man as depraved by nature and condemned for sin—clear views of his remedy in the renewal of the Holy Ghost and in justification by faith; clear views of the office of faith in our instant reconciliation, and of its fruits in our progressive sanctification; clear views of our need of the Holy Spirit to work in us both to will and to do of God's good pleasure, and of our duty, by that working to give all diligence to work out our own salvation; clear views of Christ, as 'made unto us of God, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.'

Labour to inculcate clear, discriminating views of the essential life of a christian as a hidden life—'hid with Christ in God'—a life, the springs of which are fed by human excitement; nor dependent upon human instruments: nor subject to the changes of earthly things—a life that draws its nourishment from within the veil; does the chief of its work within the