

man, professing political opinions, contrary to yours,—and you cannot deny that some such men there are,—were such a man a candidate on the one hand, and were Satan himself to profess your principles, and avow your pledge on the other, would you not, in preference to the religious man, be bound to vote for Satan? 'Yes,' was the instant but deliberate reply.—'Yes, on such conditions, I should vote for the Devil himself, and consider him the fittest representative.' Will any one be surprised that our conference and our intercourse here terminated? And yet, is not this the ultimate and reckless conclusion to which the separation of politics from religion must inevitably conduct! Few, indeed, there may be, with the honesty and hardihood to avow it; but if the principle of separation be once adopted in theory, there is no other limit to its application in practice."

(To be concluded in our next.)

THE BURIAL SERVICE.

No. II.

We now proceed to perform the promise which we made in regard to the passages in the Burial Service to which exceptions have been made. We shall first take the exact words of the prayer itself, which is the chief ground of objection. It is as follows:—

"Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God of his great mercy to take unto himself the soul of our dear brother here departed, we therefore commit his body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be like unto his glorious body, according to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself."

This is the whole of the prayer. In the two prayers which follow it, there are two sentences which the Nonconformists choose to connect with this prayer, and to make the one the commentary on the other. The sentences are these—

"We give thee hearty thanks for that it hath pleased thee to deliver this our brother out of the miseries of this sinful world."

And again,

"We meekly beseech thee, O Father, to raise us from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness, that, when we shall depart this life, we may rest in him (i. e. in Jesus Christ), as our hope is this our brother doth."

We have extracted these passages verbatim, because every thing depends on the very words used, as our readers will see when we shew the manner in which the words have been quoted by our adversaries. The objections made to them we shall take from Baxter and Calamy, as the chief authorities among the Nonconformists, as well as from the Nonconformists' own account of the Conference in 1661.

The two former writers unhesitatingly assert, that we pronounce those whom we bury thus to be certainly saved. They argue this from the phrase of God's taking to himself the soul of our brother—which they interpret, taking that soul to heaven; whereas it only means, his taking that soul into his own hands or disposal. It is taken from the Scriptural expression, (Eccles. xii. 7.)—"the spirit (or soul) unto God who gave it."

So far, therefore, we do not find these objections of much weight; but the whole force of the argument is thrown into the exception taken against the word "in sure and certain hope," &c. The following extract will shew their mode of arguing the question:—

"Now they" (i. e. the Nonconformists who objected to this service) "durst not damn a known adulterer, fornicator, and drunkard, while he was living, and yet save him when he was dead. Nor yet again could they commit his body to the ground in a sure and certain hope of a happy resurrection to eternal life: which words must necessarily be spoken with reference to the person then interred, inasmuch as they are the continuation of the foregoing declaration, viz.—God's taking his soul to himself. Besides, it follows (which puts it out of doubt) in the last Collect or Prayer, That when we shall depart this life, we may rest in him (viz. Christ) as our hope is this our brother doth."

Our readers will perceive that the words are here altered into "a sure and certain hope of a happy resurrection," and their connexion with the words "we commit" carefully kept in the background. This is disingenuous enough, for this little alteration changes the whole sentence. In the words of our Liturgy we surely simply express our conviction of one of the articles of the Creed, "The resurrection to eternal life." And if any doubt could remain on the subject, it would be removed by comparing the similar passage in the burial service used at sea. The corresponding words in that service are these—

"We therefore commit his body to the deep, to be turned into corruption, looking for the resurrection of the body, (when the sea shall give up her dead,) and the life of the world to come, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

We cannot think it needful to add any thing more to shew how unfounded an assertion it is, that our Church pronounces those whom she buries to be certainly saved. She does express a hope afterwards, but the words *we* and *certain* are not found in connexion with this expression of her hope of the salvation of the individual; and the attempt to connect the two passages, and interpret the one by the other, as Baxter and Calamy have done, is a piece of patch-work reasoning, that carries with it its own refutation.

The only question which now remains for discussion, is the propriety of expressing a hope of the salvation of the individual; viz. in the words, "as our hope is this our brother doth." Be it remarked, that the word is not here "our belief," but "our hope," and it is perfectly consistent to hope, even where we have reason to fear that our hope may be deceived. It must be remembered, also, that the officiating minister is here speaking in the name, and as the servant of the Church, and is not, therefore, expressing his own private feelings or hopes merely. The Church, as a body, is surely entitled to hope for the salvation of those of her members, who have never been excommunicated or proved worthy of that punishment. This consideration, we think, might be enough to quiet any scruples as to the use of these words, even in cases where there is but very small room

left for hope; but it must be candidly confessed, that these words have sometimes been objected to by our own orthodox liturgical writers. Bennet and Wheatley wished for a discretionary power to omit these words. We must say that nothing could be less advisable, in our opinion, than such a discretion—nothing more odious to the minister himself, and nothing more likely to bring him into an unpleasant relation with some of his flock. If there were another review of our Liturgy, we could consent, though most reluctantly, to have these words expunged entirely; but we should deprecate beyond measure any alteration which made it imperative on the clergyman to express his individual opinion, publicly, as to the salvation of those whom he buried. As it now stands, he reads the service, as a servant of the Church, over all whom the Church has not ejected from her communion, and expresses merely that general hope which Christian charity suggests, although his individual feeling, from private knowledge, may lead him to doubt, in some instances, the applicability of the words to the individual. In the other case, he would be constantly exposed to refuse the use of these words solely on human judgment and fallible private knowledge, with a constant disquietude of conscience on the subject, and often with the certainty of causing a grievous breach of Christian charity, at a moment when all men of gentle and Christian feelings would prefer to err upon the side of charity and mercy than to run the smallest risk of erring on the other.

To the Editor of the Church.

REV. AND DEAR SIR;

Will you kindly permit me the use of your popular and widely circulated journal for the purpose of drawing the attention of the members of the church to an important suggestion of a highly valued brother. You are not insensible of the tendencies to republicanism which have recently been exhibited in these Provinces, that is, to the worst despotism which can be inflicted, the despotism of the mob; now how anxiously we should endeavour to counteract this downward propensity, and to keep alive and cherish a grateful sense of the inestimable value of the British Constitution and the Protestant ascendancy in Church and State. How so essentially should we serve the State, keep up a sense of oneness between the mother country and her colonies, cultivate loyalty to the Queen, and infuse truly Christian principles of politics into our congregations, as by the observance of Nov. 5, Jan. 30, May 29, and June 20, according to the mode appointed by the church, and with sermons appropriate to each occasion and to the passing events of the day in connection with the events commemorated?

I should like to be informed whether it be at the option of each clergyman to observe these days if he please; for if it be so, many would probably see the propriety of thus shewing that, though "4000 miles off," we still consider ourselves Britons, and members of the Established Church of the Empire.

As it is probable that this subject may be formally brought forward for discussion in friendly meetings of the Clergy, it would be well for each clerical brother to consider it with the attention its importance deserves.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

April 20, 1838.

J. P. H.

THE CHURCH.

COBOURG, SATURDAY, MAY 5, 1838.

Our readers will have observed with much satisfaction that, in consequence of the recent rebellion, the minds of people in the mother country have been very anxiously directed to the moral and religious condition of these Provinces. While those means are in vigorous preparation, which first present themselves to the statesman, of checking any renewed attempt at rebellion by providing an increase of military force in the Colony, it is gratifying to see that many persons, both in and out of Parliament, are looking beyond the mere present and temporary control of this insurrectionary spirit, and are earnestly employed in devising plans for its thorough and permanent eradication. That this is mainly to be effected by a moral influence, none can deny; the elements of disorganization and the principles of rebellion are, undoubtedly, to be most effectually removed by the counteracting power of religious truth, deeply and generally diffused. The individual whose temper has undergone a proper subjection to the spirit of the Gospel, will be the last to array himself against the authorities of the land; but without a stronger and more abiding impulse than a sense of interest or the force of habit, we cannot hope that men will always be proof against those machinations by which their fidelity to the crown and the laws is so often attempted to be shaken. The late outbreak is an appalling proof of the consequences which must result from the absence or deficiency of a constraining principle of religion; and many who, by gross and palpable misrepresentation, had been lured into that wicked conspiracy, have been heard to express their regret that they possessed no access to a sound and steady religious instruction.

While reflecting upon the means of better fortifying the minds of our people against the wiles of the demagogue and the devices of the traitor, our attention has been forcibly drawn to a late recommendation of the enlightened Grand Jury of the Gore District,—that a more efficient system of public instruction should be provided in this Province. This recommendation is, undoubtedly, judicious, as far as it goes; for we can believe that the more extended diffusion of a very ordinary education would, in many cases, have prevented the mad and unaccountable delusion under which, during the late disturbances, we have found so many to labour. We can easily understand that this, by helping to a more correct exercise of the judgment, would have prevented the implicit credence often given to those flagrantly false and absurd statements, propagated by the wicked and the designing, for the purpose of creating in the public mind a contempt for authority and law. But this would by no means strike at the root of the evil. The heart—the temper—the sources of that pride

and of those prejudices which unsettle the moral restraints and disorganize the machinery of society,—these must be corrected and improved; and these can only be corrected and improved by the influence of genuine and undefiled Christianity. Any system of education that is not based upon, that is not intimately connected at least with religion,—so far from remedying the evils complained of,—would only serve, in time, to impart to them a greater magnitude and virulence. Hand in hand with, or rather subservient to religion, education becomes one of its best allies; but independent of it, or disdaining conjunction with it, it is sure soon to assume the attitude of hostility and assert its rival pretensions in a mischievous scepticism or a philosophical infidelity. The tragic history of the French Revolution, stamps this with an evidence which the world shudders at while it contemplates.

We know not whether this fact—admitted to be so, we believe, by the mass of Christians—had fairly been taken into account, when it was proposed to sequester the legitimate endowments of religion for the spread and maintenance of education that was to be independent and irrespective of religion; but of this much we have a suspicion that many professed friends of religion, in countenancing such a scheme, seemed to forget that they were tacitly pandering to the malevolent devices of the enemies of Christianity. The religious world have spoken out so plainly upon this question, and the persuasion amongst them is so generally and deeply grafted, that education, unless as an adjunct to and controlled by religion, is mischievous in proportion to its prevalence,—that we may be sanguine in believing that the unhallowed effort to sequester the property of the church for the support of such a system, will never again be repeated.

But as an ally, grafted upon and inseparably connected with religion, education is invaluable and indispensable. So that while every township at least is furnished with its religious pastor qualified to instruct its population in the great principles of Christian truth, let every township too possess those important coadjutors to the minister of Christ,—well-informed, loyal, and pious school-masters. It is not for us to devise any specific plan for effecting the fullest benefit of this auxiliary to religion; but let the provision for the schoolmaster's support be such as will ensure the services of a well-educated and high-principled man, and not of that insufficient and stunted kind which must, unless in rare instances, deter every competent person from undertaking the office.

With a general and well directed system of education,—the handmaid, as it should ever be, of pure and undefiled religion, we might hope soon to observe the rebellious propensities of the heart to be corrected, and the mind and temper turned, by wholesome tuition, into that reverence for law, order and religious obligation which will, more surely than fleets and armies, preserve the quiet and concord of any people.

We readily give insertion to the communication of our correspondent J. P. H., in order that the subject to which it refers may engage the general attention of which it is manifestly so worthy; nor ought we perhaps to attempt to prejudice the question by offering any remarks of our own. Although we are not quite sure that the religious observance of all the days thus alluded to would bring about the desirable result proposed by our valued correspondent, we are decidedly of opinion that many of the extraordinary services of the Church, which have been allowed to drop into disuse, might very profitably be resumed. If it be recollected that those alluded to by our correspondent were the consequence, in some degree, of passing events, which were local in their character and bearing,—the interest and pertinency of which, from lapse of time and change of circumstances, would naturally become diminished,—there would seem to be some justification for the state of desuetude into which they have been permitted to fall. Circumstances, notwithstanding, may arise to which most, if not all of them, would again become adapted; and we are disposed to agree with our correspondent, that the character of the present times is such as to bring them home with an unwonted freshness to every Protestant and every loyal heart.

There are, however, services in our invaluable Book of Common Prayer, of which no length of time nor change of circumstances can affect the force, or diminish the pertinency;—we mean the days set apart in commemoration of the living and dying of Apostles and holy men of old, and of events having a direct reference to the stupendous plan of salvation. For such days, Collects, Epistles, and Gospels, and even proper Lessons, are appointed: all is Scriptural, simple and edifying. It would seem, indeed, to be one design of the Church, by the appointment of these services, to add something to the religious privileges of her members beyond the stated exercises of the Sabbath-day, and to annex to these increased occasions of religious improvement a reference to events in Scripture calculated to awaken the soul to more effectual energies for the "prize of our high calling."

And why should they be neglected and unemployed?—If it be in deference to the worldly engagements of the members of our church, in order that the business of life may not experience interruption by these religious exercises,—we should say that the means ought rather to be welcomed and adopted by which the too-constraining spirit of 'mammon' may be checked, and the Christian habituated to a greater self-denial in the profits and pleasures of this unending world. The increase of religious exercises furnished by the observance of these days, while it could not operate seriously against the Apostolic injunction, "not to be slothful in business," might produce a better obedience to another portion of the same important precept, to be "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

It appears that a Petition transmitted to England in 1833 by the members and friends of the Established Church in this Province, praying for a confirmation of their right to the Clergy Reserves, was not presented to the House of Lords until very lately, when it was introduced, with some appropriate remarks, by his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury. The very proper observations, in the Toronto 'Commercial Herald' of Monday last, relieve us from the necessity of demonstrating that this Petition