

The Church.

THEREFORE I WILL NOT BE NEGLIGENT TO PUT YOU ALWAYS IN REMEMBRANCE OF THESE THINGS, THOUGH YE KNOW THEM AND BE ESTABLISHED IN THE PRESENT TRUTH.—2 PETER, 1, 12.

VOL. I.]

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[NO. XLIX.]

Original Poetry.

For the Church.
THOUGHTS

SUGGESTED BY THE SUDDEN DEATH OF A YOUTH OF MUCH PROMISE.

"IS NOT DEAD BUT SLEEPETH."

Weep!—for the angel of the Lord
The ear, still tender reapeeth;
Full sudden falls the rip'ning gourd,—
Parent with parent weepeth!

The spirit, summon'd of the Lord,
From fleshly rampet leapeeth
As leapeeth from its sheath the sword,—
Behold, the father weepeth!

The mother's soul that piercing sword
In bitter anguish steepeth;
Acknowledging—"It is the Lord"—
She prayeth while she weepeth.

They weep, yet "not as without hope,"
But as the Christian weepeth,
Of over grief not swallowed up;
Their child's not dead, but sleepeth.

Should fell Despair insinuate
(For still the serpent creepeth.)
This charm doth seal the viper's fate—
"He is not dead, but sleepeth."

God trieth sore with sudden death—
Grief upon grief He heapeth,
Yet, giving grace the while, He saith—
The child's not dead, but sleepeth.

Both—flesh dissolv'd and spirit fled—
The God of Abraham keepeth,
"God—of the living, not the dead"—
Thy son's not dead, but sleepeth.

Thus, through affliction's wat'ry cloud
Hope's hallowed sunbeam peepeth,
And writeth on the Christian's shroud—
"HE IS NOT DEAD, BUT SLEEPETH."

Oct. 19, 1837.

E. D.

THE ENGLISH LAYMAN.

No. XII.

THE WANT OF A BISHOP IN UPPER CANADA.

Whatever may be thought of the claim of Episcopacy to be considered as the only Apostolic system of ecclesiastical order; one point, it is presumed, will be accorded to by all. It is this; that among those who hold to its propriety and necessity, there should be no unnecessary delay in furnishing to a distant church an officer so important as a Bishop. A community of Episcopal churches without a Bishop to preside over them, must be viewed, upon the system of Episcopacy, as a body without a head.—*Dr. Hauck's History of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia.*

That system which places a living centre as the personal object of reverence and love in the room of a presbytery, or a convocation, secures an advantage which, so long as human nature remains what it is, ought to be esteemed of the highest price. It is granted indeed that ecclesiastical business may be managed efficiently, and economically, and equitably, by a Presbytery; but it is affirmed, on the strength of the known motives of our nature, that such a management foregoes benefits of a refined sort, which spring up around a patriarchal chair. Let all the abuses and corruptions belonging to the history of proud prelacy in all ages be summed up, and they will fail to invalidate the assertion that a paternal sway vivifies the system over which it is exercised in a manner not to be attained by the government of a corporation.—*Spiritual Despotism* (by a Dissenter.)

The tendency of man is to look upwards, as well with his mental, as with his bodily eye: and from this root springs that reverence for rank, which all the republicans in the world will never be able to eradicate from the human breast. It is a great mistake to suppose that the noble in birth, the gifted with intellectual or moral superiority, or the favoured with wealth, are enviously regarded by their remote inferiors and far less fortunate brethren. A person one step higher in the world than his neighbour may be looked upon with jealousy, because moving, as it were, in the very next orbit, and yet not touching, he possesses a greater share of good fortune, without exhibiting that commensurate proportion of excellence, with which, imaginary or real, we invest men, between whom and us there lies a gulph-like distance and disparity. But high station, whether it be conferred by legal enactment, by personal merit, or the accident of birth, will ever command the respect of the majority of mankind; and that such should be the case, is one of the wisest ordinations of Providence; for were there no social inequalities in the world, men would quickly forget their allegiance to God, and seeing no one in their pilgrimage below uplifted beyond their own level, would rebel in their hearts against the majesty of heaven. Thus, in civil polity, man may be considered as a monarchical,—and, in ecclesiastical government, as an episcopal,—being. Shape a commonwealth how you will, you can never reduce it into the form of a circle. It must have a head. If you erect a republic you must, as in the United States, surmount it with a President, or, in other words, an elective sovereign. If you resort to democracy, the most adroit intriguer, or the noisiest brawler of freedom's cant, attracts the eyes of all observers, cozens them out of their suffrages, and gains a temporary influence over the unwieldy mass, greater than an hereditary and law-bound monarch exercises over his subjects. In ecclesiastical affairs the bias is the same. You may call your polity Presbyterian,

Congregational, or Independent, but some one man or other, either pre-eminent for talent or worth, or formed for a successful pursuit of popularity, takes the lead of all his nominal equals, and becomes, though not a Bishop in name, more than a Bishop in pride, power, and influence. Did not Calvin and Knox rule with a more arbitrary and irresponsible domination over the churches which they founded, than either Cranmer or Laud over the Church of the Reformation? Is not Dr. Chalmers in ecclesiastical influence,—and fortunately, we will add, for the Kirk,—as much the Primate of all Scotland, as Dr. Howley of all England? Wesley, the autocrat of the Methodists, impressed more of his own individual character and opinions on the sect of which he was the originator, and exercised more real and substantial authority among his followers, than ever was assumed, or attempted to be enforced by any Bishop of the English Hierarchy. Go where you will, into a private company, or a public meeting—into a Methodist conference, or a Presbyterian Synod, you will find one individual acquiring an influence and supremacy over the rest, and spiriting the doctrine advanced by the philosophical author of *Spiritual Despotism*, that "monarchy and episcopacy may be considered as the forms into which the social system will spontaneously subside." There may not be a person bearing the title of King or of Bishop, but there will always be found one exercising the power attached to the sceptre and the crosier.*

Such is the tendency of the human mind, even in those ecclesiastical systems which do not formally recognize any gradation of rank, and thus indirectly does the Episcopal principle work out its way, and elude every attempt to thwart the course of nature, to destroy the analogy between the moral and external world, and to introduce an equality which we are not led to expect even in a state of immortality. In Episcopacy, instead of counteracting, we wisely follow the guidance of this principle. We not only conform to the rule of Scripture, and the apostolical practice, but we act in accordance with the laws of nature herself. We admit in effect, what none will deny in the abstract, that there is a diversity of gifts among men,—that some are born to command, and others to obey;—that as, in the scale of creation, there is a descending link from man to the most sagacious and semi-human of the irrational tribes, and from thence downwards to the scarcely animated zoophyte, so among men, even in a state of refined civilization, there exists a variety of intellectual gifts which can only be brought into full and beneficial operation by a corresponding diversity of situations, each ranking below the other.

Admitting then that we have faithfully adhered in theory to the directions of Holy Writ, and the dictates of nature, in maintaining Episcopacy, we cannot deny that we are practically deprived of all its benefits, since our Church in Upper Canada presents the anomalous spectacle of an Episcopal polity without a Bishop, of an ecclesiastical monarchy without its head, and lacks that perfect organization which can alone ensure its efficiency. We are even in a worse position than that in which the Province would be placed, were it suddenly deprived (quod Deus avertat) of its Lieutenant Governor; for in such a case the presiding or Executive Council would instantly assume the reins of Government, whereas there are several acts of the highest importance both in a spiritual and temporal point of view which none but a Bishop can perform. It is a mockery to say that there is a Bishop in Lower Canada, and that he can occasionally visit the Upper Province, and discharge those functions which he cannot delegate to another. Did the insignificant revenue attached to the Episcopate of Montreal furnish pecuniary means, or the cares of an extensive and scattered diocese permit the time, the duties of a Bishop could never be satisfactorily fulfilled by a hurried and occasional visit. "I dwell among mine own people," is the motto of every true Bishop; and the responsibilities that his name "overseer" implies, can only be discharged while he resides and moves frequently among his flock. The diocese is the parish of a Bishop, and non-residence, in his case, injuriously affects, not only a single limb, but the whole body of the church from crown to sole.

If therefore the Episcopalians of this Province wish the church of which they are members, to flourish, they should bestir themselves immediately in a spirit of earnestness and zeal, and make every attempt to procure the appointment of a Bishop, whose labours should be exclusively confined to Upper Canada. If they look to the history of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, they will find how it languished for many a weary year without the superintendence of a chief shepherd,—how mischievous were the results of the lax discipline to which the clergy were subject,—and how, from the want of an "overseer," lukewarmness and irregularity prevailed, where a vigilant and patriarchal bishop might have called forth zeal, and maintained uniformity and propriety. From the days of Laud down to the consummation of Independence in 1783, attempts were frequently made in America to obtain, and in England to send out, a Bishop to the Colonies; but always ineffectually: had they succeeded, how different might have been the workings of government in

* "Christianity fully brought to bear upon human nature, and allowed to sprout into its service all gifts, and talents, natural and divine, will spontaneously tend to the Episcopal model."

"We may decry Episcopacy: but the Lord sends us bishops, whether or not we will avail ourselves of that boon."

"We may stop short in a government by a council, or committee, or presbytery. But we do better in following the indication of nature, and the analogy of civil affairs, and in placing the supreme administrative power in the hands of a Father and Shepherd. Such, as we cannot doubt, was the practice of the primitive Church." *Spiritual Despotism, Section IV.*

the adjoining republic at this present moment; nothing, it is probable, would have prevented the Revolution, and its successful termination; but had the Episcopal Church obtained the same, or even a less stable footing in all the other colonies that it did in Virginia, and had there moreover been two or three Bishops, endowed, like Berkeley, with "every virtue under Heaven," it is no rash conclusion to arrive at, that a large proportion of the colonists would have become members of the Church, and that their adherence to Episcopacy, involving, as it ever must, a theoretical attachment to the principle of monarchy, would have prevented the democratic element from entering so largely into the composition of the federal Constitution.

At last, however, the time did arrive when every obstacle to the appointment of American Bishops was removed, and Doctors White, Provost, and Madison, the two former in 1787, and the latter in 1790, were consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury. From that era the American Church received an impulse, and has never since slackened in its onward progress. In 1801 the number of Episcopal ministers in the United States was 192—in 1820, 310—and in 1837, 893. Altogether it may now be said of our sister communion, that while, in regard to the number of its clergy, it ranks fourth in the list of religious denominations in the United States, it is second to none in the intelligence, virtue, and wealth, that it embraces within its fold. As other sects are weakened, it gains strength. Many a minister, like Mr. Colton, whose feelings and education as a gentleman, and whose conscience as a Christian, will not suffer him to bend beneath the inquisitorial despotism of a thousand self-constituted masters and mistresses, has of late transferred his valuable services to the cause of Episcopacy, and gladly taken shelter beneath the paternalism of the Church. "In the early history of New England," (I quote from Mr. Colton) "a non-conformist minister from the old country is represented to have said, after a little experience on this (the American) side of the water, 'I left England to get rid of my Lords the Bishops; but here I find in their place, my Lords the brethren and sisters; save me from the latter, and let me have the former.'" A republican writer of the present age, in remarking on Lord Clarendon's assertion that the Scotch (Presbyterian) pulpit was "a tribunal the most tyrannical over all sorts of men, and in all the tribunals of the kingdom," admits the truth of it, and deduces this corollary that "a democratic clergyman from the common people will far exceed in spiritual pride and arrogance the most lordly bishop."

There may be some members of our own communion, who, after all that has been here advanced, do not fully estimate the benefits which Episcopacy affords, particularly, and the Province at large, would derive from the appointment of a Bishop in Upper Canada; and who, if they do not conjure up visions of ecclesiastical courts and spiritual encroachments,—the weak inventions of the enemy,—are but little aware of the political, as well as religious, blessings which we owe to the English Hierarchy. If any such there be, let them cast a glance at the annals of our Episcopacy, and a cursory view will suffice to show how great a debt of gratitude we owe to a long and unintermitted line of apostolical prelates. From the infancy of our Reformed Church down to the present period, the Bishops, as a body, have stood true to their God, their country, and their Sovereign.—They shrunk not from the fires of persecution, and abandoned not their standards in the hour of trembling and flight, for five of them suffered death during the brief and bloody reign of the Bigot-Queen. When brighter days returned how many of them, like Jewel, sunk beneath a premature old age, in resisting the sacrilegious attempts of rapacious courtiers to despoil the Church, in defending Protestantism against the incessant attacks of Jesuits and Romanists, in traversing the country, cleansing the remaining stains of a foul superstition, and in leading the people into that safe and happy path, that lay between the old corrupt faith and the new-fangled doctrines of the Puritans! Here and there a servile, or an unfaithful, or a domineering prelate brings disgrace upon the mitre, and exposes his order to contempt; and the most is made of the dark spot by a historian like Hume, indifferent to all religions, or by other writers inimical to the Episcopal form of church government. Take them, however, as a body and the lasting obligations that we owe to them, greatly counterbalance the transient ill that a few neglectful or wicked brethren may have wrought in their generation. In the stormy times of Charles I. they faithfully clung to the tottering cause of monarchy, and deserted not this saint-like master "in his utmost need." When his profligate and heartless son disgraced the nation by his unbridled licentiousness and profusion, and sold the liberties and glory of his country for French gold and French pleasures, the Bishops nobly stemmed the tide of corruption and infidelity, that drew down vengeance from heaven in pestilence and conflagration. When James II., aided by Papists and Dissenters banded in one common league against the Church of England, had almost succeeded in reinstating his banished faith in our Colleges and Cathedrals, and in trampling the power of Parliaments under royal dispensations, the opposition to his arbitrary and rash proceedings arose, not from the ancient peers of England, not from the sturdy Commons, the middle classes, or the bulk of the people,—but from the bench of Bishops. There is not a page in English history so attractive to the true Episcopalian as that which narrates the magnanimous and Christian bearing of the Seven Bishops, when compelled to resist the unconstitutional mandates of their Popish King. Thoroughly was their devotion to the doctrines of the Reformation and the liberties of the nation appreciated by the lowest classes of the community, and in the most sequestered districts of the kingdom! As they landed from the barges that conveyed them to the Tower,