

In the morning service, the *Litany* or general supplication is introduced; which is the most solemn and affecting composition that can well be conceived. Throughout the whole, our appeal is to the divine mercy, flowing through Jesus Christ our Saviour; and in the language of Dr. Paley, there is nothing which a Christian petitioner can wish to ask or deprecate, that is not there expressed with admirable solemnity and simplicity.

Indeed, I have found that pious and sensible men of all denominations speak highly of the Liturgy of the Church; and this of itself is a convincing proof that it is an excellent form of sound words; and I trust that there are thousands and tens of thousands now in the paradise on high, crying with saints and angels, 'holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts,' and hymning praises to the Lamb that was slain, who knew no other services in the temple of God below than those in which the members of the Episcopal Church unite. They were compiled by saints and martyrs, prophets and apostles;—for many hundred years they composed the whole of the public devotions of the Church, and they still remain, having escaped the corruptions of popery and the innovations of heresy, pure and unadulterated. Cold then must be the heart, and lifeless the affections of those who cannot, in the worship of the Church, pray and praise with the spirit; who, in the prayers of saints and the halleluiahs of angels, cannot rise above this fleeting, transitory scene, and hold sweet communion with their God and Saviour.

In vindication of the postures practised by the church in public worship, I need say but little to you. They are rational, significant, and scriptural. In prayer, *Churchmen* kneel after the example of Moses, and Solomon, Daniel, Paul, and Christ. It is said by some, that the posture is of no consequence, provided the heart be right. But this in my opinion is incorrect and absurd, and if carried to its full extent, would destroy every appearance of religion. The same assertion in regard to one external may be applied to all the rest, and with equal propriety can it be said, that if the heart be right, it is no matter whether a person attend public worship, receive the sacrament, or perform all or any other outward duty, although prescribed by the law of Christ. In this, as in all other things, Scripture is to be the test of propriety as well as of truth, and I do not believe we shall find in the Bible a single instance of a prayer being offered to God in any other posture than that of kneeling. It is true we read of some who stood and prayed.—Solomon was one of these. "He stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the congregation of Israel," and prayed. "And it was so, that when Solomon made an end of praying—he arose from before the altar of the Lord, from kneeling on his knees with hands spread up to heaven." This then was his *standing*—not upon his feet, but upon his knees, and as the word expresses simply a general disposition of the body, and not the precise posture, we may from analogy suppose, while the universal custom in the east confirms the hypothesis, that in every instance where *standing* is mentioned, *kneeling* was practised. The heathen kneel before their deities of wood and stone, and shall Christians, when they address the God of heaven, shew less respect than pagans who worship at the statues of dumb and senseless idols!

Standing in praise is a posture preserved in the Church.—Prayer humbles us and brings us upon our knees in view of our own unworthiness; praise exalts us in contemplation of the perfections of that God whom we adore. In the one, a sense of guilt and the need of pardon are expressed; in the other, we give vent to the grateful emotions of the soul, and rejoice before the Lord our King.

When the Scriptures are read, it is the custom of the Church to sit, which is the proper posture for hearing with attention, and one in regard to which there is but little difference of opinion.

These are all the ceremonies of the Church, and although they may appear strange and unpleasant to such as have always been used to a different mode, I trust they will be found, upon examination, proper in themselves, and agreeable to the will and the word of God.

I will conclude this letter with an extract from the celebrated Mrs. Hannah More, upon the service of the Church, and leave you to make your own comments both upon that, and upon what I have offered.

"Most sincerely attached to the Church myself, not, as far as I am able to judge, from prejudice, but from a fixed and settled conviction, I regard its institutions with a veneration at once affectionate and rational. Never need a Christian, except when his own heart is strangely indisposed, fail to derive benefit from its ordinances, and he may bless the overruling Providence of God, that, in this instance, the natural variableness and inconsistency of human opinion is, as it were, fixed, and settled, and hedged in by a stated service, so pure, so evangelical, and which is enriched by such a large infusion of sacred Scripture. If so many among us condemn the service as having been to us individually fruitless and unprofitable, let us inquire whether the blessing may not be withheld because we are not fervent in asking it. If we do not find a suitable humiliation in the *Confession*, a becoming earnestness in the *Petitions*, a congenial joy in the *Adoration*, and a corresponding gratitude in the *Thanksgiving*, it is because our hearts do not accompany our words; it is because we rest in the form of godliness, and are contented to remain destitute of its power. If we are not duly interested when the select portions of *Scriptures* are read to us, it is because we do not, as new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby. Perhaps there has not been, since the age of the Apostles, a Church upon earth, in which the public worship was so solemn and yet so cheerful, so simple and yet so sublime; so full of fervour, and at the same time so free from enthusiasm; so rich in the gold of Christian antiquity, yet so astonishingly exempt from its dross. That it has imperfections we do not deny; but what are they compared with its general excellence? They are as the spots on the sun's disk, which a sharp observer may detect, but which neither diminish the warmth, nor obscure the brightness."

These are the sentiments of a person who, in the opinion of the serious of all denominations, has fought valiantly, through a long life, for the Lord her God, and who deserves for her labours in the cause of Christ the highest honours of the Church mili-

tant. That they may have their due influence upon your mind, is the ardent prayer of

Your affectionate friend and well wisher,  
S.

#### TESTIMONY OF THE INFIDEL ROUSSEAU TO THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST, AND HIS GOSPEL.

I confess to you that the majesty of the Scriptures strikes me with admiration, as the purity of the Gospel has its influence on my heart. Peruse the works of our philosophers, with all their pomp of diction: how mean, how contemptible are they, compared with the Scripture! Is it possible that a Book, at once so simple and sublime, should be merely the work of man? Is it possible that the sacred personage, whose history it contains, should be himself a mere man? Do we find that he assumed the tone of an enthusiast or ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in his manners! What an affecting gracefulness in his delivery! What sublimity in his maxims! What profound wisdom in his discourses! What presence of mind in his replies! How great the command over his passions! Where is the man, where the philosopher, who could so live and die, without weakness, and without ostentation? When Plato described his imaginary good man with all the shame of guilt, yet meriting the highest rewards of virtue, he describes exactly the character of Jesus Christ; the resemblance is so striking that all the Christian fathers perceived it.

What prepossession, what blindness must it be to compare the son of Sophroniscus to the son of Mary! What an infinite disproportion is there between them! Socrates dying without pain or ignominy easily supported his character to the last; and if his death however easy, had not crowned his life, it might have been doubted whether Socrates, with all his wisdom, was any thing more than a vain sophist. He invented, it is said, the theory of morals. Others, however, had before put them in practice; he had only to say, therefore, what they had done, and to reduce their examples to precept.—But where could Jesus learn among his competitors, that pure and sublime morality, of which he only has given us both precept and example?—The death of Socrates peaceably philosophising with his friends, appears the most agreeable that could be wished for; that of Jesus expiring amidst the most agonizing pains, abused, insulted, and accused by a whole nation, is the most horrible that could be feared. Socrates, in receiving the cup of poison blessed the weeping executioner who administered it, but Jesus in the midst of excruciating tortures, prayed for his merciless tormentors. Yes! if the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage; the life and death of Jesus were those of a God. Shall we suppose the evangelic history a mere fiction? Indeed my friend, it bears not the mark of fiction; on the contrary the history of Socrates, which nobody presumes to doubt, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ. Such a supposition, in fact, only shifts the difficulty without obviating it; it is more inconceivable that a number of persons should agree to write such a history, than that one only should furnish the subject of it. The Jewish authors were incapable of the diction and strangers to the morality contained in the Gospel, the marks of whose truth are so striking and inimitable, that the inventor would be a more astonishing character than the hero.

### THE CHURCH.

COBOURG, SATURDAY, APRIL 14, 1838.

At length the worst is o'er, and Thou art laid  
Deep in thy darkness bed;  
All still and cold beneath yon dreary stone  
Thy sacred form is gone;  
Around those lips where power and mercy hung,  
The dews of death have clung;  
The dull earth o'er Thee, and thy foes around,  
Thou sleep'st a silent corpse, in funeral fetters wound.

Sleep'st thou indeed? or is thy spirit fled,  
At large among the dead?  
Whether in Eden bowers thy welcome voice  
Wake Abraham to rejoice,  
Or in some drearier scene thine eye controuls  
The thronging band of souls;  
That as thy blood won earth, thine agony  
Might set the shadowy realm from sin and sorrow free.

Such are the beautiful words of the poet of the 'Christian Year,' applicable to this particular time in the Church's annual round of sad and joyous commemorations. The sacrifice upon the cross is completed: Jesus, with a loud voice, commends his spirit into his Father's hand, and dies; and his lifeless body is deposited in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. But where, in this interval,—while the body of Jesus lies inanimate in that tomb,—where is his soul; where the spiritual part of his human nature?

The prophetic words of the Psalmist, declared by St. Peter in the second chapter of the Acts to refer to our Saviour,— "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell,"—would render the conclusion natural that the soul of Jesus, from not being left in hell, had once been there; and upon this declaration is founded the doctrine thus expressed in the third Article of our Church, "As Christ died for us and was buried, so also it is to be believed that he went down into hell." Upon the same authority, it is contained also in the Apostles' Creed, in these words, "He descended into hell."

The question then would seem to be, not as to the fact of Christ's descent into hell, but what is really meant by the term which is thus rendered,—what the place really was which received the disembodied spirit of our Lord.

Here, then, we must premise that although the word *hell*, in the present times, is perhaps universally used to express the place of the future punishment of the wicked, as opposed to *heaven*, the future abode of the righteous; yet this sense of the word, as thus exclusively applied, is neither consistent with its original meaning and derivation, nor with the application which is sometimes made of it in our translation of the Scriptures. It is derived from the Saxon word *Hil*, which signifies to *hide*, or from the partici-

ple thereof *Helled*, meaning *hidden* or *covered*; from whence, as a learned writer observes, in the western parts of England at this very day, to 'helle' over any thing signifies amongst the common people to *cover* it; and he that covereth an house with a tile or slate is called an "*Helliar*." This meaning of the term we shall also find to be employed in our translation of the Scriptures. Thus, in Psalm 89, v. 47, according to the translation in our Book of Common Prayer, it is said, "What man is he that liveth and shall not see death, and shall he deliver his soul from the hand of *hell*;" but in the translation of the Bible it is thus expressed, "And shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the *grave*;"—from which we are to understand that the state of the dead in general, and not the place of future punishment, is meant in this passage. Again, in the Book of Proverbs, it is said, "*Hell* and destruction are never full;" but in another passage of that book, the same term, as employed both in the original Hebrew and Septuagint Greek, and plainly in the same sense, is translated *grave*. "There are three things that are never satisfied, yea four things say not, it is enough: the *grave*, &c." Now in the Hebrew the word *sheol*, and in the Greek the term *hades*, is employed to denote the expression which in the former passage is translated *hell*, and in the latter the *grave*. This is sufficient to shew that, in the sense of our translators, the word *hell* did not exclusively denote the place of future punishment.

But although there is this ambiguity of meaning in the term 'hell' in our language, and although indeed but one word is employed in the Hebrew to express its several significations,—a word which is uniformly translated *Hades* by the Seventy; yet, in the New Testament, the distinction of meaning is maintained by the use of two different words to denote respectively the state of the dead in general, and the state of the tormented in particular. *Hades* is the word employed to express the former, and *Gehenna* the latter; and although there is an instance (Luke xvi. 23.) in which the word *hades* is used to include both senses, yet *gehenna* is never employed except to denote the place of torment.

Thus, when it is said by St. James, "the tongue setteth on fire the course of nature, and is set on fire of *hell*;" when our Saviour says to the Pharisees, "ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of *hell*;" when he tells the same persons that after making a proselyte, they "make him twofold more the child of *hell* than themselves;" when he admonishes his disciples to "fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in *hell*;"—in these, and in some other like passages, the word 'hell,' in the original Greek of the New Testament signifies the state of the damned, and is denoted by the word *gehenna*. But in other places, where we, in our translation, make use of the same word 'hell,' the term *hades* is employed in the original, because it has reference only to the invisible state, or to the state of the dead in general. Thus, in these words of our Saviour, "Thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shall be brought down to *hell*;" the meaning is that this great and proud city should be levelled with the dust, and utterly disappear like those that have been buried in the grave. And when our Lord promises that "the gates of *hell* shall not prevail against the Church," the meaning is that the grave, death, or destruction,—the utmost persecution, in short, from the enemies of his name—should never be able to suppress his doctrine or extinguish his religion. Moreover, when it is declared in the book of Revelation, that "death and *hell* delivered up the dead which are in them;" and that "death and *hell* were cast into the lake of fire," it is evident that the word 'hell' cannot here signify the state of future punishment. The 'lake of fire' is itself that place of punishment: to confound the words, therefore, and to say that *hell* (employing the words in the same sense) 'was cast into hell,' would involve an absurdity. The term, as there used, evidently denotes the state of the dead, or of departed souls in general.

Now, the very same word *hades* is used in the passage, already cited, which has reference to our Saviour,— "Thou wilt not leave my soul in *hell*;"—so that, from the common acceptance of that term, the inference should naturally be, not that our Saviour was not left in the *place of torment*, but that he was not left in the *state of the dead*, in the place of departed spirits. Of the nature of this place we are furnished with the best illustration in his own words to the penitent thief on the cross, "To-day shalt thou be with me in *paradise*;"—a word which is generally understood to be of the same import with 'Abraham's bosom' mentioned in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus; for Lazarus, in that state of peace and honour, is represented also to be in *hades*.

The word, therefore, in the New Testament which is translated 'hell,' is not only to be applied to the state of the dead in general, but may be considered also to include the receptacle of the departed good; and from its employment in Scripture in this sense, we are fully authorized to conclude that our Saviour, when it is said he 'descended into *hell*,' entered into a state of happiness. This, indeed, is the sense in which this article of the Creed is generally understood by our Church:—enough, at least, has been adduced to remove an objection sometimes expressed, that the *place of torment* is meant when it is declared in the Creed that our Lord "descended into *hell*."

The following Circular we beg earnestly to recommend to the attention of our clerical readers. The regularity in registry &c. which so universally pertains to the solemnization of marriages by clergymen of the Church of England, is too well known to need any comment from us; and when we consider that a marriage certificate under their hand will be received as evidence in any Court in the United Kingdom, it would be a matter of extreme regret that any circumstance should arise to diminish the public confidence which has usually been placed in such documents.

The irregularity alluded to in the following Circular is one, we trust, which has not been of very frequent occurrence; nor is it difficult to account for it in those instances in which it has taken place. Amongst the arrangements for the solemnization of marriage, the procuring of a license has generally, for the sake of avoiding publicity, been the last thing attended to; and the application for it sometimes deferred almost to the very hour at