

The Church.

"HER FOUNDATIONS ARE UPON THE HOLY HILLS."

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.

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Original Poetry.

For the Church.

"WHEN SHOULD PRAYER BE MADE?"

When the morning ray is streaming
Its light upon the earth,
When the trembling dew-drop's gleaming
With gladness for its birth,
When the birds to song are waking,
From leaf and bending spray,
With air sweet music making,—
Then, mortal, kneel and pray.

When the sun on high is burning,
In noontide night enshrined,
When man from man is learning
The lessons of his kind,
When things of earth are weaving
Their visions of a day,
When all are all deceiving,—
Then, mortal, kneel and pray.

When the fleecy clouds are veiling,
With rainbow-tints at eve,
When the last faint hues are dying,
As loth the world to leave,
When night's dark pencils shading
The beauties of the day,
When rest seems all pervading,—
Then, mortal, kneel and pray.

When the moon is vigil keeping
With her gentle smile above,
When the silent stars are weeping
Glad tears of hope and love,
When sleep in visions bringing
Fond memories past away,
Joy o'er sad hearts is flinging,—
Then, mortal, kneel and pray.

ALVAR.

THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE.

"We will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

"Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil."

The people have brought forth an image vain,
From the old pagan shrine of Liberty,
With stormy acclamations raised it high,
And throned it in a new and gorgeous fane,
And bid us fall and worship at the strain
Of cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery;
Priests of the true church, pass that idol by,
Nor let the popular mark your foreheads stain,
Signed with the Holy Cross, that ye might own
CHRIST and HIM crucified; and though the crowd
Sport with deceivings of their weak self-will,
Stand all undaunted, though ye stand alone;
No thought be wavering, and no knee be bowed;
Mid thousands faithless, be ye faithful still.

A CONTRAST OF CHARACTER BETWEEN BISHOP MIDDLETON AND BISHOP HEBER.

From the life of Bishop Middleton by Rev. C. W. Le Bas.

The imagination can scarcely, perhaps, picture a contrast, in some respects, more striking, than that which was exhibited in the characters of Bishop Middleton and his successor. It is, nevertheless, such a contrast as may well exist between two great and good men. Many qualities they had in common with each other. Each was distinguished by rich and various mental accomplishments, by a noble and almost saint-like disregard of mere personal interest, and by an entire dedication of himself to the holy cause which called them forth from their country. But, in the general "form and pressure" of their minds, they were totally dissimilar. The soul of Heber was essentially poetical. He surveyed with the eye of a poet all the regions both of art and nature,—the achievements of man, and the works and word of God. The power of poetry descended upon his dreams, and visited him in his private meditations and devotions, and often shed a celestial radiance over his ministrations in the sanctuary. In Bishop Middleton the imaginative faculty was far less predominant. His chief endowments were a profound and penetrating sagacity,—a vast strength of purpose,—a robust frame of mind, less fitted to pursue the bright creations of fancy, than to wrestle with severe truth, or to grapple with the stubborn realities of life. The characters of these two men may, perhaps, be said to have borne towards each other a relation somewhat resembling that which painting bears to sculpture. The canvass delights in the glow and richness of vivid colouring, the intricate vicissitudes of light and shadow, and the endless combination of objects and variety of distances. All these the marble rejects. It may be able, indeed, to bear the impress of every passion which can agitate our nature, or of every excellence which can dignify it; but the effect is always, more or less, accompanied by something of a sober and austere simplicity. It is, perhaps, scarcely too fanciful to surmise that, of those who intimately knew each of these eminent worthies, there might be some, who would so far enter into the spirit of this comparison, as to desiderate a painting of Heber, while they regarded a statue as the more appropriate representation of his great predecessor.

The same contrast which ran through their moral nature, prevailed in their intellectual. The souls of both were thoroughly pervaded by a solemn sense of Christian duty; but this principle was displayed according to the different temperaments of the men. In the one, it often took the form of steady and inflexible resolution; in the other, the aspect of facility and mildness. The one seemed incessantly watchful over himself, lest the pleasure of compliance should betray him into the surrender of something which duty commanded him to maintain: the other appeared fearful lest the responsibilities of public life should make him insensible to the feelings and the wishes of men whose worth entitled them to respect. The one was on his guard against the suggestions of easy and mistaken benevolence: the other was fearful lest official integrity and firmness should petrify, at last, into obstinacy and self-will.

Different, however, as these individuals were, it would seem to have been providentially appointed that two such men should appear in India, in the order which actually occurred. Without the unbending constancy of Bishop Middleton, it is very doubtful whether the foundations of the Episcopal Church could have been so solidly and permanently laid. But when that great work was once accomplished, the same degree of stern energy might not, perhaps, be so absolutely essential for carrying on the superstructure, and applying the decorations, and executing the details of that mighty and glorious design. When Bishop Heber arrived, the most enlightened portion of the Anglo-Indian public had been taught to regard the episcopal establishment with deep respect. The commanding qualities of the first bishop had secured for it the veneration of the community. It is not, therefore, altogether surprising that his successor should feel himself the more at liberty to follow the native impulse of his temper, and to choose the kindlier office of engaging in its behalf their cordial attachment and fidelity. And never surely was any human being more consummately adapted, than that successor, for the office of winning the affections. The singleness of his heart, the simplicity of his manners, the heavenly sweetness of his temper, the passionate devotion of all his faculties to the work of an evangelist,—seemed to bend towards him the hearts of all the people, as the heart of one man. They who were, at first, surprised at the unostentatious plainness of his demeanour, were soon overpowered by the vast resources and genuine dignity of his mind. The result has been, that in the course of twelve years the labours of these two men have surrounded the Indian Church with reverence and affection, and have associated Episcopacy in the public mind with everything that is admirable in learning and genius, or sublime in piety and virtue.

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA.*

No. VI.

SARDIS.

"And unto the angel of the Church in Sardis write; These things saith He that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches."—Rev. iii. 1-6.

The epistle to the Church of Sardis commences with the melancholy assertion, by Him "who hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars," that its members were in the deplorable condition of having "a name to live," while in fact they were "dead:" for their works were not perfect before God. In the estimation of others, and probably in their own, their spiritual state was very flourishing; for men are apt to form most erroneous judgments of the character of others, as well as of their own: but the scrutinising decision of that Being, who looketh not to the outward appearance, but who judgeth the heart, and who can discriminate between the wheat and the tares, was far from favourable; and he sought, by the expository language of this epistle, to withdraw the veil of self-complacency which blinded them to their true character; to point out the danger of having the form of godliness, while the power thereof was denied; and to arouse them, while yet their situation was not altogether hopeless, to return to him in penitence and humility. He exhorted them to be watchful, to keep a strict guard over their thoughts and desires, no less than over their outward conduct; to strengthen the things which remain; to fan the spark of heavenly grace bestowed upon them, ere it was finally quenched; and he uttered the solemn warning, that if they did not watch, he would come upon them to destroy them, as a thief, at an hour when they least expected it, while they were indulging a carnal security, and regarding all as safe. The picture of the general circumstances of this Church is indeed painful, and reminds us forcibly of the necessity of ever being on the watch, lest we suffer our languid graces to expire, lest we tempt God to withdraw his gifts from us. A state of spiritual death is a very dangerous state; and if not aroused by the life-giving Spirit, it must inevitably be exchanged for death eternal.

Even at Sardis, however, God was not without a people. Amidst the dead embers were to be found some whose breasts kindled with a pure and holy flame. "A few names" in Sardis, amidst the impurity and ungodliness which prevailed, had not defiled their garments, but had been enabled to keep themselves pure. And so it has been in every age; God has always had those who were his, on whom the light of divine truth shone, even while around was darkness that might be felt; who worshipped the Eternal Spirit in spirit and in truth, even while the idol's shrine was surrounded by hosts of deluded votaries. To these few faithful at Sardis three gracious blessings are promised; and not to them only, but to all who should overcome:—The being clothed in white raiment,—that fine linen which is the righteousness of saints; the being retained in the book of his remembrance, their names enrolled in heaven; and their being acknowledged at the last great day, before Jehovah and his angels, as those who have witnessed a good confession while on earth, and shall be raised to the blessedness conferred on the true followers of the Lamb.

Sardis was the capital of Lydia, and a city of great antiquity. It was situated in a rich plain at the foot of Mount Timolus. The river Pactolus flowed through the Forum. To the south of the plain stood the magnificent temple of Cybele, composed of white marble, and of which two columns, together with a few fragments of others, remain.

* From the Church of England Magazine.

Sardis became a flourishing and important city in the reign of Croesus, king of Lydia; on whose overthrow by Cyrus (B. C. 545), it continued to be the chief city of the Persian dominions in this part of Asia. It was burnt to the ground by the Ionians, aided by the Athenians, on the revolt excited by Aristagoras and Histæus; but it was again rebuilt. It afterwards surrendered to Alexander the Great, who restored the Lydians to their ancient privileges; and at length, after various changes, it became subject to the Romans. In the reign of Tiberius it was overthrown by an earthquake; a calamity in which many other cities were involved, and which is described by Tacitus as having happened in the night, and on that account more disastrous in its consequences, no warning being given, and no time allowed for escape: but by the liberality of the emperor the city was soon restored.

No account is given of the introduction of Christianity into this city; and as little do we know of the immediate effects produced by the exhortation contained in the monitory epistle addressed to it. In the second century the Christians were under the spiritual jurisdiction of Melito, a learned and pious man. The city underwent strange vicissitudes during many hundred years; and at length, in 1304, the Tartars and Turks came as "a thief" upon it.

Sardis at the present day presents a melancholy picture of the instability of all human grandeur. The once opulent city is now reduced to a wretched village, called Sart, consisting of a few hovels, occupied by Turkish herdsmen, and erected in the midst of extensive ruins. At some distance from this village, and about a furlong to the south of the Acropolis, stand the two remaining pillars of the temple of Cybele. When Mr. Chishull visited the spot, in 1700, there were "six lofty Ionic columns, all entire, except that the capital of one was distorted by an earthquake." Mr. Peyssonnel, in 1750, found three columns standing with their architraves, besides other large fragments. In 1812, Mr. Cockerell, who visited the place, thus describes it:—"To the south of the city, in a small plain, watered by the Pactolus, stood the temple, built of coarse whitish marble. The western front was on the bank of the river; the eastern, under the impending heights of the Acropolis. Two columns of the exterior order of the east front, and one column of the portico of the pronaos, are still standing, with their capitals; the two former still support the stone of the architrave, which stretched from the centre of one column to the centre of the other. The columns are buried nearly to half their height in the soil which has accumulated in the valley since their erection, chiefly, it is probable, by the destruction of the hill of the Acropolis, which is continually crumbling, and which presents a most rugged and fantastic outline."—In 1828, Mr. M'Farlane visited the spot, and found that decay was rapidly prosecuting its work.

Mr. Arundell thus feelingly speaks of the decay of this now desolate spot:—"Sardis, the capital of Lydia, identified with the names of Croesus, and Cyrus, and Alexander, and covering the plain with her thousands of inhabitants, and tens of thousands of men of war; great even in the days of Augustus, ruined by earthquakes, and restored to its importance by the munificence of Tiberius;—Christian Sardis, offering her hymns of thanksgiving, for deliverance from pagan persecution, in the magnificent temples of the Virgin and Apostle;—Sardis, again fallen under the yoke of a false religion, but still retaining her numerous population, and powerful defence, only five hundred years ago: what is Sardis now? 'Her foundations are fallen, her walls are thrown down.' 'She sits silent in darkness, and is no longer called the lady of kingdoms.' 'How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people?' . . . The objects of greatest interest to the Christian traveller are the ruins of two churches; one at the back of the mill, said to be the church of the Panagia, and another in front of it called the church of St. John. Of the former there are considerable remains, and it is almost wholly constructed with magnificent fragments of earlier edifices. Of the other there are several stone piers, having fragments of brick arches above them, and standing east and west. When Smith wrote, a Christian church, having at the entrance several curious pillars, was appropriated to the service of the mosque."

Utter desolation, in fact, is the character of this now neglected spot, which, like that whereon Nineveh and Babylon once stood, proclaims in loudest accents, even amidst its natural melancholy stillness, the utter overthrow of those who hearken not to the Almighty's voice. Desolation, be it remembered, is the threatened woe to be inflicted on the enemies of God; they "shall be made like the heath in the desert." The church of Sardis, indeed, presents one among the many visible proofs of the fulfilment of the Divine denunciation, but none can surpass it; and hardened indeed must be that man's heart, and obstinate that man's disposition, and blinded that man's understanding, who does not behold in such devastation the arm of an avenging God. Sardis did not watch, she did not hold fast her profession, she did not seek to strengthen the things that remained; she turned a deaf ear to the voice of reproof, and sudden destruction, "as a thief, came upon her," and there was no human arm could deliver her, or oppose the avenging arm of Omnipotence.

And may not the professing Christian ask himself this solemn question, May not the charge brought against the church of Sardis be fairly brought against me, that I am actually dead, in a spiritual sense, in the sight of God, even though I may seem to others to live, and may suppose my state to be one of vitality and safety? "All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord weigheth the spirits." Even at the very moment that I am obtaining the applause of my fellow-creatures, and the smiles of the world may be upon me, may not I be worthless in God's sight?—There is, indeed, a state of spiritual death, from which we must be aroused, and which is represented as a state of trespasses and sins; and this must be exchanged for a life of practical godliness. But how is this resurrection to be accomplished, how is this change to be effected? By no

power short of the omnipotent Spirit of God. He alone can impart life to the dead soul. He alone can render fruitful the barren stock. For that Spirit let us earnestly pray—pray that we may have a perfect knowledge of our condition in the sight of God, that the veil of deception may be removed; that we may become abundant in the fruits of vital godliness.

God has had a few names of sincere worshippers in every age of his Church, of those who have sighed and cried for the dishonour cast upon his divine Majesty. And he has a few names at the present day. The profession of religion is widely spread abroad. The visible Church ranks within its pale a host of members. But is there not reason to fear that, comparatively speaking, but of few of these professed believers it can with fairness be asserted that they are really on the Lord's side? How important, then, is the individual inquiry! Am I one of God's people, one for whom is reserved in store the robe of unsullied purity, washed in the blood of the Lamb—one who has reason to rejoice because my name is written in Heaven,—one whom the Son of man shall confess before an assembled and admiring world, nay, before his Father and the angels, as one of his? How is the point to be ascertained? No voice from Heaven can be expected to reveal to us a knowledge of this fact, or supernatural agency be employed for the purpose. We are to seek in earnest prayer for the illumination of the eyes of our understanding, that we may be guided into the clear perception of the truth; and then we are solemnly to try our hearts, and to investigate what evidence we have that we are among the number of those whom the Gospel points out as the true children of God. And as unquestionably the inquiry is one of vital importance, so unquestionably the blessings to be conferred on the servants of God are well worthy our earnest endeavours to procure. For the loss of these blessings, nothing in time or in eternity can ever compensate; and of all deluded men, he is the most miserably deluded, who barter for the simple gratifications of a perishing world the imperishable inheritance of the saints of God; and that he may walk "according to the course of this world," and after the lusts of his own impenitent and unclean heart, is willing to forego the unspeakable blessedness of those of whom the exalted Saviour now speaks in the language of approbation, "they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy."

THE INGRATITUDE OF PROTESTANTS FOR THE REFORMATION.

By Bishop Bull.

Let us bless God that we yet breathe in a pure air, free from the noisome and pestilent fogs of those superstitious vanities, where none of those fooleries and impieties are intruded on our faith or practice; that we live in a church, wherein no other name is invocated but the name of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; nor divine worship given to any but to the one true God, through Jesus Christ the only Mediator. O happy we, if we knew and valued our own happiness! But alas! alas! many of us do not. We despise and trample upon that Reformation of religion, which by a miracle of God's mercy was wrought in this nation in the days of our forefathers, and run to schismatical assemblies under pretence of seeking after a better reformation. We abandon that church, and can hardly forbear to call it anti-christian and popish harlot, the foundation-stones whereof were laid and cemented in the blood of God's holy martyrs, that died in defiance of the errors and superstitions of the Romish synogogue. And yet these men call themselves Protestants, yea the only true Protestants, and will scarce allow us of the Church of England a share in the title. God grant, that by this our horrid ingratitude, we do not provoke him to recall that mercy, which ourselves indeed throw back into his face, as if it were not worth our acceptance, and to cause a dark night of popery to return on us; wherein a superstitious and idolatrous worship shall be thrust upon us, yea, and we shall be compelled to forbidden and idolatrous worship, or to death; wherein our Bibles, that we now, not only with liberty but encouragement, carry about us, shall be snatched out of our hands, and fabulous lying legends put in the room of them; wherein our excellent Liturgy, in a tongue we all understand, which many of us now leathe, and call pitiful pottage, yea and popish mass, shall be abolished, and the abominable Roman mass indeed placed in its stead; wherein the cup of blessing in the holy eucharist shall be sacrilegiously taken from us, which is now openly and freely held forth to us all, and that in so excellent a way of administration, that the whole Christian world beside is not able at this day to show the like; but we scorn to take it, and refuse to receive it, unless it be given us by an unhallowed hand in a factious conventicle. If ever these and the other ill effects of popery, which I cannot now mention, happen to us, (which God avert,) and I trust it will never come to pass; but, I say, if ever these things should befall us, we should then, when it is too late, clearly distinguish between light and darkness, and discern the vast difference between the established religion, which many now call popery, and popery itself. We should then cast back a kind and mournful eye upon our dear mother the Church of England, whose very bowels we now tear and rip up by our wicked schisms. We should then wish ourselves in the safe arms of her communion once again, and resolve never more to depart from it. Let us do that now, whilst it is seasonable, which we shall then wish we had done, but cannot do.

MORAL OBLIGATIONS AND SOCIAL DUTIES OF RELIGION.

These are, indeed, the tests of real piety. No one must fancy herself religious, who is careless of moral obligations. She may be perpetually engaged in the discussion of duty, and liberal in her application of incentives; she may not even shrink from the reproach of religion, nor from public exertions in its behalf; but she is greatly in the wrong, if