

THE CHRISTIAN SENTINEL.

THREE-RIVERS, FRIDAY 29th OCTOBER, 1830.

We this week present our readers with a part of the account of the Martyrdom of St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, which will be followed by the remainder, and by his Epistles to several Churches, which he wrote on his journey from Antioch to Rome to be devoured by wild beasts. It will be seen that the account was drawn up by persons who accompanied him from Asia to Rome, out of that respect which they held towards him both as their Bishop and Father in God, and for his most exalted piety and zeal for the honor of his divine Master. Both the account and the Epistles are documents of the most interesting description, and can hardly fail of being read with a feeling of deep veneration. The interest excited by them is the greater by the circumstance of the time in which they were written, so near to the days of the holy apostles of our blessed Lord, and by a man who spent the greater part of a long life with "the disciple whom Jesus loved,"—who was by him converted from "dumb idols to serve the living God," and by him consecrated Bishop of the Church at Antioch. They bring us almost into the Canon of Scripture—into the venerable company of "holy men of old who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," and present us with a specimen of the spirit of those primitive and good times, when it was esteemed the greatest honor to be obtained this side eternity, to suffer for his sake who "burst the bars of death, and triumphed o'er the grave."

These precious remains of Christian antiquity are valuable also as evidences of the most decided and satisfactory character, as to the orders left by the Apostles in the Christian Ministry, and the leading features of the Government of the Church. The testimony is so clear and strong to the three degrees of Bishop, Priest and Deacon, and the censures so severe against those who refuse to acknowledge them, that no pains have been spared by some to destroy their authenticity and authority, and to torture and twist and misquote them so as to establish inferences from them in direct contradiction to their plainest assertions. They are valuable also on another account. They are most explicit and pointed in regard to the reality of a malignant being called in Scripture *the devil*, whose object it is to "deceive the nations," and ruin the souls of those who are "taken captive by him at his will":—a doctrine which is blasphemously denied in these days of daring impiety by persons whose eyes are willfully closed against the truth, and blinded and sealed up by "the God of this world."

The ardent and simple piety that breathes through every sentence of these primitive Epistles, must, we think, affect the heart of every one who reads them. There is something in them so touching—so affecting—so like words from a being not of mortal mould, that we can hardly persuade ourselves that he who wrote them had been the slave of a foul and besetting idolatry, whose impious rites were, in the last degree, degrading to its miserable votaries. How beautifully do they illustrate what our Lord said to the Jews: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make ye free." Such is the power of that good seed when received in an honest and good heart, and suffered to have its "fruits unto holiness"; such is the transforming influence which it brings to bear on those who are dead in their trespasses; and such is the exalted character which it is able to form in the soul of a sinful and corrupted creature. Well might the Apostle say: I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto Salvation to every one that believeth.—And once for all we beg leave earnestly to recommend the substance of these Epistles to the serious consideration of all our readers: to the friends of Episcopacy, as a means of settling and grounding their minds more firmly in "the old paths:" and to those who are in doubt on so important a subject, as a means of removing doubt, and coming to a cordial agreement with "the noble army of Martyrs" of the days of old.

Last week appeared in the Sentinel some literary notices of Standard Theological Works now in a course of publication at the Protestant Episcopal Press, New York. It must be highly gratifying

to the members of our own Church to see such an invaluable body of Divinity coming before the American public in a cheap form, so admirably calculated to furnish correct information on many points now in dispute—points of vital importance to the best interests of our holy Religion. Such a work is and has long been a desideratum for the common people. It must at once be seen that it serves to connect the history of the Church with the Canon of Scripture, and exhibit things as they were immediately after the Apostles. For as St. Paul declares the Church to be "the pillar and ground of the truth" to her we must look for her own history and condition at all periods subsequent to the New Testament, and look too with full confidence of correct information, or we must distrust the Apostle's words. With most men, there is a dreary chasm of many hundreds of years immediately succeeding the times of the New Testament; and they generally look upon the whole of that period as an age of darkness and deep corruption, without reflecting that the Church was kept comparatively pure for almost three hundred years by the fires of persecution, and that for nearly one half of this time there were Bishops in the Church who had been made such by the Apostle John, who lived till about the year 98. And hence arises, in a great measure, a powerful auxiliary to the disposition so common among mankind, to make their own private fancies a paramount rule for deciding on all things connected with Christianity. Finding themselves in the dark on some points they have recourse to striking up their own light, which never fails to increase real darkness. This chasm is, for the American people, now likely to be illuminated with the pure light of historic truth, and filled up and paved over with the stable materials of well-authenticated fact: and may the God of truth prosper the undertaking.

The Editor of the SENTINEL tenders his thanks to his brethren of the Clergy and others from whom he has received communications. It is both gratifying and encouraging to find that they generally speak of the paper in terms of approbation, and exhibit a strong desire to exert themselves in procuring it patronage. It is fondly hoped that, by practice in his new calling, he may become more perfect, and more competent to manage to advantage.

As most of the first impressions are gone, we are under the unpleasant necessity of sending to new subscribers a few papers which have been returned to the office, and of course are more or less soiled.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN SENTINEL.

ANCASTER, October 11th, 1830.

REV. SIR.—In a late communication I gave you a short account of his Lordship's visit to Fort Erie, Niagara, &c.

On Friday last the 5th instant, the Apostolic rite of confirmation was administered in the Church at St. Catharines to 35 persons. Yesterday, being Sunday, St. James' Church in this village was consecrated, and 34 persons confirmed. The day being remarkably fine the Church was crowded in every part by persons from the surrounding neighbourhood, assembled to witness these solemn services of our Church. St. John's Church is a commodious building, capable of accommodating a large congregation; and is very respectably finished in every essential part.

The Bishop holds a confirmation on Thursday next (Deo Volente) in the Church at Woodhouse; and His Lordship proposes consecrating the Mohawk Church on the Grand River, and confirming there also before his return to York.

I remain, Rev. Sir,

Yours, &c.

R. D. CARTWRIGHT.

Ancaster is a beautiful Village situated above the mountain, about seven miles from the head of Burlington Bay, and three from Dundas. It is a delightful spot, and commands an extensive view of the Country round to the northward, and may be called the key of western travel. Several spirited individuals of the place deserve great praise for their exertions in regard to "St. John's Church."—*Ed. Sent.*