

CONTEMPLATIONS ON THE LITURGY. No. IV.

ENTRANCE INTO THE CHURCH—VESTMENTS OF THE PRIEST.

"Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not," said Jacob on awaking from his dream at Bethel: and then he added, "This is none other than the house of God, this is the gate of heaven." Jacob knew that God is at all places and at all times; but this place he regarded as witnessing the Divine presence in an uncommon manner. He called it the House of God, and said, "How dreadful is this place!" But he knew him to be a God of mercy, and therefore he vowed a vow, and promised him tithes of all he should possess. So now we may say of God's house, Surely the Lord is in this place; but we cannot say that we know it not. We have his promise that when two or three gather together in his name, there is he. How terrible is this place! Here we hear read the law given by Moses from the burning top of Sinai. Not however to deter us from his presence and fill us with hopeless dread, but to beget becoming reverence in our minds, and dispose us to serve him in sincerity. Though the law came by Moses, and is in itself full of terror, yet grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, which are able to deprive the law of its power over *repenting* sinners. In this confidence—in the name of the Lord Jesus, we enter this house where a God of mercy is worshipped, under the assurance that the humble and the contrite are acceptable before him. This assurance is manifold. We have it in the blessed gospel: we have it in his ministering ambassadors: we have it in his holy Sacraments, by them administered: we have it in the Church which is his body.

This is the house of God: this is the gate of heaven. Here we are in his special presence, before his footstool, at the throne of grace and mercy. Here he descends to meet those who have met in the name of Christ; descends by the Eternal Spirit, to help our infirmities, and to sanctify our unworthy services, and to fill the heart of faith with the joy and the peace of believing. This house, in a figure, we may call the gate of heaven. Here stands the holy font, the laver of regeneration, where baptism is administered in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; where new members are added to the body of Christ, and their names registered in the list of the soldiers of the cross. It is a solemn thing to be called into the service of the holy Lord God, and vow to him the allegiance of the heart of life. Still it is the strait and narrow way pointed out to us: it is his will that we should serve him in his holy Church.

But here comes his ministering servant. This is another mark of his good will. We look on him with reverence, because he is the ambassador of peace from the Prince of Peace, bearing his commission. He comes to assist us in our devotions, to read to us the word of God, and to apply that word to our hearts and consciences. A vestment of white is upon him. This is an emblem of peace the world over. Even hostile armies, engaged in the work of death and mutual destruction, will suspend the bloody contest on the appearance of the white flag. So this white vestment of the priest seems to admonish us of the errand of the wearer, and say, in the words of inspiration: "As though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God." It is for reconciliation we here are met, if we know our errand; and the sensible objects that present themselves to our view call upon us from without, and preach to us of the peace making Jesus and all the royal benevolence of his compassionate heart. How can we look upon the white robe, and not remember its significance? And how can we hold back the spontaneous surrender of our hearts to that Saviour who is thus beseeching us by so many sensible means, and so many alluring motives?

The priests of the temple were dressed in white, both for glory and for beauty. The glory was to strike the eyes of the worshippers, and move them with awe of that Being whose ministers they beheld: the beauty was to add comeliness to that in itself grand, and point to the beauty of holiness before the Lord. The ministers of the new covenant may not lay aside those badges of office which point them out as the messengers of the Lord of life, nor neglect altogether the glory and beauty of external appearance. We are still creatures of sense, and must be wrought on by sensible

means; and the mean appearance of one serving before the Christian altar could not serve to "magnify his office."

White is also an emblem of purity. It points to the purity of that Being whom we meet to worship: it speaks of the clean linen pure and white, which is the righteousness of Saints: it tells us of the needful purity of our profession and views; and it admonishes both priest and people to seek after the wedding garment in which we are commanded to appear, when summoned to sit down in his presence in the kingdom of God, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the holy prophets and Apostles.

A DRUID.

TEMPERANCE.

Not far from the year 1796, a brig from Russia laden with iron, ran aground on a sand bar, that makes off from Newport, R. I.

The master was disposed to unlash and get her off; but the weather was extremely cold, and none could be found to undertake the task, as the vessel was at a distance from the shore covered with ice, and exposed to the full effect of wind and cold.

Capt. G——a packet master of Newport, respected for his integrity, and who abstained from the use of spirits, at length engaged to unlash the brig and procure his own hands. Six men were employed in the hold, which, (the vessel being bilged,) was full of water. They began the free, but *temperate* use of spirits; thinking they should use it then if ever. But after two hours labour, they all gave out chilled through. After refreshing and warming, they made a second attempt, using cider only the remainder of the day. They now proceeded better, but still they suffered much from cold. —The second day they consented to follow the directions of Capt. G. and drank nothing but milk porridge, made rich and taken as hot as the stomach could bear it. The weather was equally severe as before, but they were now able to continue their work from four to seven hours at a time, and then came up as Capt. G. expressed it, 'smoking hot.' With this simple beverage handed round every half hour they continued their work from day to day, with not one drop of spirits, till the iron was handed out and brought to shore, and not a man had a finger frozen.—*N. Y. Journal of Commerce.*

THE LITURGY.

Our Liturgy is so framed as to be a continual check upon the preacher; a corrector of his errors, if he venture to teach any thing inconsistent with it, a reprover of his negligence, if he omit or slightly pass over any important doctrine, a guide to direct him to spiritual truth, a pattern of zealous and earnest, yet sober-minded, and calm, and rational Christian exhortation: in short a standing monitor both to the minister and his congregation.

We must beware of taxing with wilful blindness, those whose views are limited only by the lowness of their position; as they rise in abilities and attainments, the horizon will gradually widen around them, and a larger and a larger prospect will be spread before their eyes of the boundless extent of divine wisdom and perfection.—*Whately.*

The Church.—The £11,000 usually voted by the Imperial Parliament in aid of the Church missionaries in these Colonies, has this year been disallowed: a circumstance which will seriously affect the interest of the Church in this country. We understand that his Lordship, the Bishop of Quebec, has in consequence, determined on proceeding to England, and that he will leave York for London on Monday next. When we view the above circumstance in connection with the strenuous efforts which are continually making by a party in this country to divest the Church of England of its privileges, and all its sources of support in this colony, we really cannot help viewing that Church as being in a state of a persecuted, rather than that persecuting body which the party in question so assiduously strive to represent it.—*E. C. Courser.*

Point not too much upon time to come: it's possible thou may'st live to old age, because some few do so; but it's more likely thou shalt not, because there are more that die young.—*Falck.*