

# The Church.

"HER FOUNDATIONS ARE UPON THE HOLY HILLS."

STAND YE IN THE WAYS, AND SEE, AND ASK FOR THE OLD PATHS, WHERE IS THE GOOD WAY, AND WALK THEREIN, AND YE SHALL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.—JEREMIAH VI. 16.

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## Poetry.

### THE VISION OF PEACE.

From an Unpublished Poem.

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The following verses are presented as a specimen of the manner in which the things, belonging to the outward glory, may be regarded as types of the accompanying spiritual blessings—blessings already in part enjoyed. The verses are a paraphrase, it may be observed, of Rev. xxi. 18-27—xxii. 1-5.

- 1 Jerusalem had walls of wondrous height, (n. 18.)  
Which still, in beautiful strength, appeared to grow  
Of modest Jasper they; but yet so bright,  
They all around, like summer sun, did glow;  
Yet not oppressively;—they sparkled so,  
As still to cheer, but ne'er to dim the sight.  
Strong to withstand the assault of every foe,  
They were the sources of ever new delights—  
In God's pure word, be strong; let Christ be all thy might.
- 2 This wall, so beautiful, and bright, and strong,  
Was something worthy given to unfold:  
The city, which thus lay pure light among,  
Was all, itself, of precious pure gold,  
Like clearest glass:—God's truth doth treasure hold;  
And rich should be the Christian's life;—a song  
Wherein the power of light divine is told;  
Free from hypocrisy, and every wrong,  
Whether of heart or life; of hand, or guileful tongue.
- 3 The clear foundations of the enlightening wall, (n. 19.)  
Which held a city all so rich and pure,  
With precious stones were gaily garnished all;  
And joined as one, for ever to endure:—  
Let us adorn our One Foundation sure,  
With graces various and resplendent; all  
Whereby we glory may to Christ procure;  
Yea, let us cast aside all Satan's thrall;  
And let true faith in Jesus, Eden's peace recall.
- 1 As Jasper modest, yet most bright,  
Shall be the Church, in Christ, her light.  
2 Pure, powerful,—her affection true,  
Shall be like throne of Sapphire blue.  
3 In the Chalcedon, appear  
Rich mingling hues:—so Christ is dear.  
4 Around, of Emerald's cheering green,  
God's rainbow covenant is seen.  
5 Sardonyx, circling union shews;  
So reigning saints round Christ shall close.  
6 The Sardinus red, says God their Sire,  
Shall round them be like wall of fire.  
7 The Chrysolite describes the crown,—  
The golden triumph they have won.  
8 The Beryl is of heavenly dye;  
So heavenly are their works and joy.  
9 Like Topaz bright, their hearts shall flame,  
To know and tell of Jesus' name.  
10 Like gold and green, Chrysolite,  
They beauteous are, and bouyant.  
11 The Jacinth paints the life of those,  
Who God's life-giving words disclose;  
The violet, purple, Amethyst,  
The lofty—lowly—mind, of Christ.
- 4 Twelve pearls, most precious, the twelve gates were seen;  
Each in itself was beautiful and rare.  
Nor were they such as earth presents, I ween:  
Each was of One rich pearl, to saints most dear:—  
Thus high shall be esteemed the means, which are  
Prepared of God, his goodness to obtain;  
Thus high shall Christ be prized every where;  
Yea, through the One pearl of great price we gain,  
Whate'er can bliss bestow, or confidence maintain.
- 5 Nor could the pilgrim disappointment meet,  
Whene'er he through these lovely gates might pass:  
For, like the city, was the city's street, (n. 21.)  
All of pure gold, and like transparent glass:—  
So should the Christian walk in holiness,  
All free from every guile, and rich and sweet,  
Should be his shining of the righteousness  
Of Him who called away his wandering feet  
From guile and gloom immense to light and joy complete.
- 6 I saw no temple in God's city, where (n. 22.)  
The worship paid Him by the tribes might be:  
For the Lord God Almighty fully there  
The Lamb, who gave his precious blood for me—  
My God, there gives his presence, fed and free,  
Throughout the whole:—all was a place of prayer,  
Of praise, of Christian converse—all agree  
True blissful confidence in God to share,  
And each the other helps His glory to declare.
- 7 The city had no need that brightening sun (n. 23, 24.)  
Of earthly splendour upon it should shine;  
And the reflected light of the pale moon  
Fled back abash'd before its life divine:  
God's glory gave it light;—that work of thine,  
My Saviour! and of which thou art alone—  
Thyself the light; by this thou shalt combine  
The nations of the saved into one,  
To walk in that pure light, their endless joy begun.
- 8 Yet, human splendour shall not be denied; (n. 24-26.)  
For thither now the kings of earth shall bring  
Their glory and their honour:—magnified,  
Shall be, by all they have, that city's King.  
Day shall not see its gates shut, for nothing  
Like night of error shall its glories hide:  
But gladly in the ways of God they'll sing,  
Whilst thither still they bear, of nations wide,  
The glory and the praise: there shall this now abide.
- 9 But into it, shall enter in no wise, (n. 27.)  
Whatever makes God's holy place unclean,  
Whate'er doth idols work, or maketh lies;  
But only those whose names are written in  
The Lamb's own book of life.—The saints shall win  
Within those gates, to feast their wondering eyes.  
Truth cannot in the darkening sun remain,  
But, from idolatry and guile, still flies  
To cheer and guide in virtue those who light can prize.
- 10 The angel who me guided, shewed me now (xxii. 1.)  
A pure, delightful, and refreshing stream,  
Of living water, which was seen to flow  
From throne of God and of the Lamb—Redeem  
O God! thy people from each painful dream;  
That they may live thy blessings to bestow:  
May show their spirits are received from Him  
Who is enthroned in love; may saints live so,  
That by their lovely lives, men may the Gospel know.
- 11 And in the middle of that golden street, (n. 2.)  
On either side of this pure river, grew  
The tree of life; wherefrom, most fair and sweet,  
Twelve kinds of fruit, each month, did bless the view:—  
These, of the gospel, were the influence true  
As seen in action; even the leaves were meet  
To grow where all was lovely and good too:  
They were for healing of the nations great;  
The verdure of the Church, with medicine is replete.
- 12 Now shall be no more curse; for there the throne (n. 3-5.)  
Of God, and of the Lamb, shall ever be;  
Him shall his servants serve: whilst, like a sun  
Of joy-bestowing light, His face they'll see;  
Each by his life shall say—God owneth me,  
No night is there; and candle they need none;  
Nor light of other sun: for gloriously,  
The Lord God giveth light to every one:  
And to eternity, their reign in bliss shall run.

### MATTHEW PARKER, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

When Elizabeth came to the throne, her care was to foster the infant ecclesiastical establishment, the practical part of which task she entrusted to Sir Nicholas Bacon,

her lord keeper; and Cecil, afterwards the famous Lord Burleigh. Elizabeth had experienced the high merits of Parker, and she was, therefore, now enabled, from her own discrimination, to decide upon his fitness for the exalted station to which she was shortly to summon him. Her inclination to advance him would, of course, find a supporter in the lord keeper, who had been the intimate friend and fellow collegian of Parker, and had, probably, first recommended him to the queen's especial favour.

The see of Canterbury had been a short time vacant, when, on the 9th of December, 1558, Bacon signified to Parker the Queen's design to advance him to a bishopric, which he declined. He was again and again summoned to London, by the lord keeper and the secretary; but, under various pretences, constantly refused. It is a curious trait of the simplicity and superstition of the time, that Bacon should have ascribed (as appears by Parker's answer to one of that minister's letters) his backwardness to a dread inspired by a prophecy of Nostradamus: undoubtedly, however, it arose from the modesty and humility of the man, and "Nolo Episcopari," (the form in which it has been said that it was used to decline the proposition to be advanced to a vacant bishopric, the meaning of the words being "I am unwilling to be made bishop") was, perhaps, never in any other instance uttered with such sincerity of heart.

"What with passing those hard years of Mary's reign," says he in one of his letters to Cecil, published by Strype, "in obscurity, without all conference, or such letters, or such matter of study, as now might do me service; and what with my natural vitiosity of overmuch shamefacedness, I am so abashed in myself that I cannot raise up my heart and stomach to utter in talk with others, that which with my pen I can express indifferently, without great difficulty."

At length, on the 28th day of May, he received the Queen's positive command to repair to her presence, which he obeyed, and received from her his nomination to the primacy; but his consecration was deferred till the 17th of December: and it may be worth observing that the private and simple manner in which that ceremony was conducted, gave occasion to a silly report which the papists industriously propagated, that it was performed at a tavern in Cheapside. This was revived by the fanatics in the beginning of the grand rebellion: great pains, however, were taken by some churchmen to refute the story of the Nag's Head consecration, as it was called; and they proved, by positive evidence, that it took place in the arch-episcopal palace, at Lambeth. The bishops who assisted at his consecration, were William Barlow, late bishop of Bath and Wells, and then elect of Chichester; John Scory, late bishop of Chichester, and then elect of Hereford; Miles Coverdale, formerly bishop of Exeter; and John Hodgkin, suffragan bishop of Bedford. An original instrument of the rites and ceremonies used on this occasion, corresponding exactly with the archbishop's register, is still carefully preserved in the library of Corpus Christi College, and it proved of great service on the occasion above named, when the papists had recourse to such a miserable expedient to cast a slur upon the validity of Parker's consecration. The tale has been celebrated for its singularity, but has been sufficiently shown to be a mere fable by many authors; and confessed to be such even by certain Romanist writers.\* The value and necessity of documentary registration is shown by such occurrences as these; and, if any should be disposed to doubt whether Parker did really decline the being made a bishop, thinking it impossible that a "parson" should not wish to "get on in the world," and "grasp at every thing he can lay hands upon," let such doubters be at the pains to look into Burnet's History of the Reformation, where they will find it to be more than possible, by reading the letters Parker wrote to Sir Nicholas Bacon, and Sir William Cecil, setting forth his own infirmities and infirmities, and telling the lord keeper in confidence, that "he would much rather end his days upon such small preferment as the mastership of his college, a living of twenty nobles per annum at most, than to dwell in the deanery of Lincoln, which is 200 at the least." The originals of the letters in Burnet, are in the archbishop's copy of his "Antiquities," in the Lambeth Library, with many other curious MS. documents respecting him.

Parker's first care, was to secure the independence of the new hierarchy. An act had passed in the late parliament to enable the queen, on the vacation of any bishopric, to appropriate to herself such part of its temporalities as she might choose to possess, and to give in exchange such portions of abbey lands, or other estates vested in the crown, as she might deem equivalent. Convinced that no establishment could be safe, whose governors must be subject either to the absolute controul of the crown, or to the reproach of poverty, he laboured earnestly with Elizabeth to persuade her to relinquish this right; and, though she exercised it with respect to his own see soon after he was appointed to reside in it, he in a great measure finally prevailed.—He swept away gradually, and with a gentle hand, the numerous remains of the Romish system which yet clung to the church, and to render his efforts more palatable, began with the queen herself. Elizabeth, who still prostrated herself, in her chapel and in her closet, before a crucifix, and was firmly averse to the marriage of priests, yielded those prejudices to the arguments of Parker. He defended the reformation with equal zeal and moderation, in a correspondence with the ejected Popish prelates, and engaged warmly with Calvin in forming a plan for the uniformity of faith and discipline among protestants throughout Europe, the carrying of which into effect was unhappily prevented by the death of that extraordinary man. Whatever differences of opinion may exist with reference to the doctrinal views of Calvin, it is a libel upon his memory, to affirm that he was averse either to monarchy or episcopacy: to the latter, certainly, he was not absolutely averse, as Strype has brought sufficient evidence to shew. For uniformity he was as anxious as Parker, who has been so much reproached for his endeavours to promote it. It was soon after his consecration that he received a letter from Calvin, in which that reformer said, that he rejoiced in the happiness of England, and that God had raised up so gracious a queen to be instrumental in propagating the true faith of Jesus Christ, by restoring the gospel, expelling idolatry, and together with the bishop of Rome's usurped power. And then, in order to unite protestants together, as he had attempted before in Edward's reign, he entreated the archbishop to prevail

with her majesty to summon a general assembly of all the protestant clergy, that a set form and method (of public service and government) might be adopted.—Parker laid the venerable reformer's letter before the council, who directed him to return thanks for the communication, but to signify that they were resolved to abide by episcopacy in ecclesiastical affairs.

A synod having been summoned on the 12th of January, 1562, to establish the reformed faith and a church polity, Parker, in that assembly, proposed the thirty-nine articles which form the code of the Church of England, and which are but slightly altered from the forty-two of king Edward's time: they were seriously and particularly considered, and then enacted. On the same day this important convocation was held, met Elizabeth's second parliament, and its first employment was, "to pass an act for the assurance of the queen's power over all estates." The pretensions of the papacy were peculiarly aimed at in this act, and the oath of supremacy framed by the preceding parliament was recited in it, and enjoined upon various classes of persons, but particularly the clergy; who, should they refuse, were threatened with a "praemunire" (an act "hedging up," as the word implies, the property of the parties refusing to comply with a royal edict so long as they remain contumacious) at first; and in the event of a second refusal, were to be indicted for high treason.—It was ordered that the archbishops and bishops should administer this oath to the clergy; but the penetration of Parker foresaw the mischief which would follow, if it were rigorously insisted upon, and he "turned with horror from an engine which could be worked only amidst persecution and bloodshed." In a private letter, therefore, which he circulated among his brother bishops, he recommended to them to tender the oath once only; and should any refuse, to leave the recusant to be dealt with by himself. The letter was thus concluded: "Praying your lordship not to interpret mine advertisement as tending to shew myself a patron for the easing of such evil-hearted subjects, which, for divers of them do bear a perverse stomach to the purity of Christ's religion and to the state of the realm, thus by God's providence quietly reposed; and which also do envy the continuance of us all so placed by the queen's favour as we be; but only in respect of a fatherly and pastoral care, which must appear in us who be heads of his flocks, not to follow our private affection and hearts, but to provide coram Deo et hominibus (as in the sight of God and man) for saving and winning of others, if it may be obtained." This was a merciful course, and it was successful; for this law, accompanied by such tremendous penalties, became, in effect, obsolete: the oath was administered to none of the Romish bishops except the justly detested Bonner. Where mildness and kindness mark the exercise of episcopal authority, they will not be lost upon those towards whom they are evinced. It has been truly said that "unconquerable gentleness will at length disarm hostility;" and such was the case in this instance of Parker's conduct. He was, in consequence, ever beloved.—Tunstall and Throby, the deprived bishops of Durham and Norwich; Boxall, late dean of Windsor, and others who were, by the privy council, committed to his custody, passed their remaining days in his houses, "guests to his hospitality, and prisoners only to their own gratitude." "The Romanists had been vanquished by severity and subsequent conciliation; so that the Church of England had nothing to fear from that quarter: but from her own bosom issued a host of enemies yet more formidable; these were the puritans, as they were then called, whom we have since seen split into so many sects of various denominations." In the reign of king Edward many particulars of ecclesiastical costume had been laid aside; but Elizabeth issued injunctions for their revival, ordering that "seemly garments, square caps and copes;" should be again used. Many conformed entirely, but some refused the surplice and cap, viewing them as relics of popery, and therefore, both superstitious and sinful. It is not my purpose here to enter into a vindication of ministerial vestments: but it should not be forgotten that God absolutely and positively enjoined the use of such vestments to the clergy of the Jewish church saying to Moses, "Thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron the high priest, for glory and for beauty" (Exod. xxviii. 2), and "garments for his sons to minister in the priest's office" (Exod. xxxv. 19). God made it death for the Jewish priests to officiate without their vestments, which he would have never done if the use of them were "sinful." The vestments worn by the clergy of the Church of England are exceedingly plain and simple, and not alterable (as in the church of Rome) according to the circumstances of times.

Elizabeth was highly displeased with the refusal to adopt the clerical dress; but resistance was still made. Caps, hoods, and tippets, were reviled as remnants of popery; and were to be firmly rejected. Thus the queen, and a large body of the clergy, were brought into collision, the opposing faction being headed by the abandoned earl of Leicester, that unworthy favourite.—Concerning his plans with certain others of the ecclesiastical commission, Parker composed, in 1564, certain articles respecting the public administration of the sacraments, and the apparel of the clergy; but the privy council, at the instigation of Leicester, refused to confirm them. He published them, however, upon his own authority: but they were, as might be expected, disregarded. It was while engaged in these disputes, that he was deeply occupied in superintending the bishops' bible; so called, because, to each of the bishops had been assigned a portion to be revised and corrected, Parker reserving to himself the final controul of the whole. The last ten years of his life were occupied in attempts to moderate the rancour of the puritans, an effort which was attended but with small success; but his own spirit seemed to be much disciplined by the endeavour to moderate those of others, and, as his end approached, his contemplation of an immortal state became more calm and experimental. An evidence of his own state of mind appears in a letter which he addressed, in 1573, to his friend, the lord treasurer, in a severe illness. It occasioned him to write a "grave and consolatory letter to the same lord," to this effect: "Sir,—That Almighty God, whose pleasure is always most to be regarded and obeyed, hath mercifully visited your body with sickness, I doubt not but ye have an inward unction of the Holy Spirit, to accept it patiently as frail nature can bear it. I am persuaded that this light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working out for you a weight of glory. And though, that, in respect of yourself, it were the very best ye continued still your desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ; yet, for the common-wealth's sake, I doubt not

ye be indifferent to say with that ancient man, 'If, O Lord, I am yet necessary for thy people, I do not refuse the labour.' So that ye may be able to believe, with St. Paul, who saith, 'To me to live is Christ, if ye live; and, if ye be dissolved, to affirm that his further saying, 'to die is gain.' Thus, not minding to trouble your honour with long writing, I commit your good recovery to Almighty God in my prayers, wherewith I do partly hear, and thank his mercy."

Seeing his approaching dissolution, he made his last will and testament, April the 5th, 1575, writing at the same time to the treasurer, "that he trusted, that should be one of the last letters he should write to him; and it may be, said he, whereas I have a great while provided for death, yet God will, peradventure, have me continue a while to exercise myself in these contemplations of grief." And so, indeed, it proved: for he continued wasting under the sentence of his pains for nearly five weeks after, with much Christian patience, breathing out these, and such like, holy and penitent ejaculations, "Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me;" "The will of the Lord be done." Yet he had an interval of some ease; for, April 17, he was able to consecrate William Blaythyn, bishop of Llandaff. On that day month he concluded his holy and laborious life at Lambeth Palace.

The learning of Archbishop Parker was great; his extensive liturgical reading pointed him out as one of the fittest persons for revising the Book of Common Prayer, in which he had a principal share. He had a strong liking for antiquarian research, in which department of study the work on which he is generally supposed to have bestowed most time, was that "De antiquitate Britannicæ ecclesiæ." The world is for ever indebted to him for retrieving many ancient authors, Saxon and British, as well as Norman, and for restoring and throwing light upon a great deal of the early history of this island. He was a mighty collector of books, and for that end employed suitable persons to search all England over, and Wales (and probably Scotland and Ireland) for books of all sorts, modern and ancient, and to buy them up for his use. One of these agents procured, in four years, 6,700 books. A large number of these he gave to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

We might have supposed that, although the latter days of this venerable man had been full of trouble, his bones would have been allowed to rest in peace; but the anticipation would be erroneous. When the rebellion took place, Lambeth Palace was not exempted from the fate of many other ecclesiastical edifices, in being exposed to rude insult and violation. "It fell to the possession," says Dr. O'lyly, in his Life of Sancroft, "of one of the parliamentary officers, Colonel Thomas Scott, whose temper seems to have well accorded with the views of the party in whose service he was employed. He converted the chapel where Archbishop Parker's remains were deposited, and where a monument was erected to his memory, into a hall or dancing room; and, either for the purpose of showing his hatred to episcopacy in general, or else in the mere wantonness of profane and ferocious insolence, caused the remains of that venerable prelate to be dug up, the lead which enclosed them to be plucked off and sold, and the bones to be buried in a dunghill. In this state they continued for some time after the restoration. At last Sir William Dugdale, hearing by chance of the transaction, repaired to Archbishop Sancroft, and made him acquainted with it.—The Archbishop immediately caused diligent search to be made, and procured the assistance of an order from the House of Lords. The bones being at last found, were decently deposited, for the second time, in the chapel, near the same spot where the monument formerly stood. Over them are the following words cut in the marble pavement of the chapel:—

Corpus Matthei Archiepiscopi tandem hic quiescit.

(The body of Matthew, the Archbishop, at last finds repose here.) The Archbishop ordered the same monument which had formerly covered these remains to be erected in the vestibule of the chapel, and himself composed the inscription, which is still to be seen engraved on a plate of brass affixed to it. The inscription is drawn up with singular neatness, and in very pure Latin, and is calculated to convey a high idea of the correctness of the Archbishop's classical taste. The following is a translation of it:—

THE EPITAPH OF MATTHEW THE ARCHBISHOP,  
For his body (you should know, reader), formerly buried with due solemnity in the interior of this chapel,  
(when a band of traitors, in the year 1648,  
Had sacrilegiously broken open the said tomb,  
Impiously torn down the inscription over his sepulchre,  
And, with outrageous hands, stolen the lead which enclosed his remains)  
Was despoiled, dishonoured, turned out of its resting place,  
And even (criminal to relate!) hidden beneath a dunghill.  
The king at length, amid the rejoicings of heaven and earth, returning,  
By an order of the House of Lords, his body was diligently sought,  
And restored to the vestibule of the chapel,  
Where, nearly about the midst thereof, it finds, at length, repose.  
And may it repose, —  
Never again, but by the last trump, to be disturbed!  
A curse on his head whose hereafter shall violate its sacredness."

### THE POOR MAN'S CHURCH.\*

The church of England is "the poor man's church." The fact is so obvious and undeniable, that we have been accustomed to pass unheeded the foolish scoffs of Dissenting journalists, who often close their pathetic narratives of the sufferings of some "church-rate martyr" with the exclamation, "and this is the poor man's church!"

It is "the poor man's church" none the less for the voluntary seclusion of the Chelmsford shoemaker, who made at least a five years' profits of his cobbling trade by spending an idle life in the four walls of a prison for a year and a half. It is "the poor man's church" none the less for the determination of the Leicester hatter or his abettors to spend a thousand pounds in law, rather than pay thirty shillings as a church-rate. None of these things would ever be supposed by a reasoning man to have the least bearing on the question, whether the church made a proper provision for the religious necessities of the poor?

The true view of this question was eloquently given, two or three years back, by one of the few men who appear capable, in these days, of taking a statesmanlike view of mankind and their various circumstances. He asks—

"What is the true value of the church of England? Is it that we can point to splendid structures and Gothic cathedrals, with domes, and towers, and spires? Or is it, that it gives a liberal provision to a large number of intelligent clergy? Or is it, that we can go, those of us who have money, into a well cushioned pew, and there on each seventh day hear the word of God, with a service according to our own ritual? No, the excellency of

the church of England is this,—that every man, however poor, though he were the most destitute creature upon earth, though he dwell in the furthest parish in the furthest border of England, thrown, it may be, a homeless and a homeless outcast, where the winds rage upon the northern frontier of our land, or where the Atlantic rolls against the rocks of the western border, or (more homeless and desolate still) if he be plunged in a deep alley in this dense metropolis, where there is not a voice to bid him 'God speed,' and not a friend to cheer him in sickness or sorrow—that man may say, and he does say, 'Ay, but on the seventh day there is a house open to me; on the seventh day there is a door, which is free as the door of heaven; there is a bell, which peals on my ear, and calls me to that house of prayer; there is a seat free as the seats above, and into which I may enter; there is music, which rises upon my ear, and rolls its sacred melodies for me; there is a minister, cultivated, taught and trained—a man who has consecrated his life, his powers, his labours, to the work of the sanctuary—who has been cultivated by learning, who is imbued with piety, who has been trained in the school of man, and nurtured in the word of God. That man addresses to my ear the words of ancient, almost of inspired, wisdom; he directs to me the living eloquence of a human voice, and he beams upon me the living energy of a human eye; he calls me, by all the protestations of human reason, and all the appeals of Scripture promise, and all the consolations of the gospel—he unrolls them, he springs them out, he unfolds them for me. It is for me that these services are ordered—it is for me that that music swells—and it is for me that the gospel of God is unfolded, and every seventh day declared.' That is in our eyes the quality of the church of England; that is the value for which we love it. And there is another value still; there is another quality behind. Let us suppose an outcast wanderer, who lives in some bleak corner of Cumberland, or in the distant haunt of Cornwall, or in the darkest lanes or alleys of this city, without a friend, without a family, dwelling on his pallet of straw, with none to cheer him—none, when he is sick to console him; none, when he is in sorrow to soothe him; yet he can send to one man. He can say to the rich and to the great, to the peer and to the prince, 'Perhaps in all your palaces and in your courts you have not a friend; you may have many associates, but not one friend—not one into whose ear you can pour your sorrows. But I have a friend; when I am in sorrow or sickness, I can send for the minister of the parish, and though he may be mixed in the amenities of life, though he may be found in the enjoyment of a family circle, surrounded by his children, by all that makes home dear and graceful, though it may be the bleakest night of a December winter, he will leave his fireside, he will quit his family, and will come into my hovel; and, though I have no seat to offer him, though I have no couch to spread for him, he will kneel upon the clay floor, he will bend beside my pallet of straw, he will clasp his hands for me, he will lift his orisons for me; and with that eloquence which pierces Heaven's ear, and lifts man above the cares and sorrows of life,—with that devotion through which the rapt Christian can pour his heart into the ear of a listening and a favouring God, that man will utter his accents for me, will clasp his hands for me, and into my sad and solitary ear he will pour the hopes and the consolations of the gospel.'"

This is the theory, this the real character of the church of England. That the outline, in some cases, is not filled up; that in others the more powerful, middle, and higher classes have shouldered the poor man almost out of the sanctuary,—these are the corruptions and failings which creep into everything human; and in most cases the fault is with the Legislature, which professing to regard the church as a national institution, in practice often treats it as a totally extrinsic and almost alien body.

Among the corruptions of this kind which have crept in during the progress of the last three centuries, and done much to propagate and force dissent, is that general appropriation of our churches to a certain number of favoured families in a parish, which grows out of the use of pews in our churches. We are aware that the habit has now grown so universal, that our readers will be apt to start with surprise at the idea of its being treated as an impropriety; but, at the risk of being thought "exceedingly odd," we shall plainly confess our desire, and more, our hope that we may live to see the use of pews, in our parish churches at least, almost abolished.

This is no fancy of our own; it is a settled opinion, rapidly gaining ground in the church. In a charge which has just issued from the press, indited by one of the ablest members of the church, the new Archdeacon of Lewes, we find it boldly taken up in the following earnest tone:—

"The first measure which I would recommend would be to alter the distribution of the seats, by getting rid of those eyeseats and heartseats—pews, and substituting open benches with backs in their stead. Many advantages would accrue from such a change, over and above the power of seating a greater number of people. This increase in capacity would be very considerable in our country churches, where pews large enough to hold from 10 to 20 persons, in the best situations in the church, are often allotted to small families, and may be seen gaping well nigh empty; for even they who rarely come to church themselves are not seldom most rigid in asserting that they conceive to be their right of excluding others from their pews. Meanwhile the poor, who, owing to the obtuseness of their senses and perceptions, need to be near to the minister, are thus driven to the outskirts of the church, where only dim broken sounds reach their ears, the connecting links of which they are unable to supply, and where, if they are not altogether out of sight, they can but imperfectly discern those accompaniments of manner and voice and gesture, in which so much of the force of preaching lies, and which are especially requisite to persons less familiar with the power of words, and less easily impressed by them. We all know, too, how many jealousies and heartburnings are perpetually springing up from disputes about rights of pews, which would thus be extinguished at once. At the same time, for the sake of order and regularity, seats might be assigned to each family, according to its numbers; and one may feel assured that such an arrangement would be generally respected. Besides, do we not all know what facilities and temptations pews afford for irreverent behaviour during divine service, what facilities they afford to the somnolent? Moreover, the eyes of the congregation are not all turned the same way, directed towards the same object; but people sit face to face, and thus are inevitably led to look too much at each other, which interrupts the current of their devotional feelings. Above all, the tendency of pews is to destroy the character of social worship. Instead of our kneeling all side by side, rich and poor, one with another, pews keep up those distinctions of rank, which in the presence of God we should desire to lay aside, each family penning itself up within its high wooden walls, and carefully secluding itself from all contact and communion with its neighbours. Indeed, when one enters a church on a week day, and sees the strange fashion in which the floor is partitioned out into large shapeless idle boxes, one is involuntarily reminded of one of the ugliest objects on the face of the earth—Smithfield market when empty.

"I am aware that there are many obstacles which lie in the way of the change I have been urging, and which may for a time prevent its being generally adopted. All our selfish passions will resist it: indolence will resist it; the baneful love of ease and comfort will resist it. But an excellent example has already been

\* The most complete defence of Parker's consecration is to be found in Courayer's "Dissertation sur la Validité des Ordinations des Anglois."

\* From the London Times.