

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.

VOLUME II.]

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Original Poetry.

For the Church.
THE SEA.

Thou of the mighty past, strange thoughts are stealing
Of thee and all thy wonders through my brain,
Bringing long ages back, and slow revealing
Shades of earth's lost ones in an endless chain,
As though His voice had said,
Give up thy treasured dead,
Thy power is shaken now, thou restless main!

Thou of the first creation, thou wast sleeping
Deep centred in the chaos, when the word
Of life went forth, and young day came leaping
Into quick manhood, and thy waves were stirred,
Kissing the new bright earth,
E'en at thy early birth,
Making the music that all Time has heard!

Thy bounds were set thee; thou wast marked thy dwelling,
Thy home in calm and storm, thy prison place,
Where thou might'st fret thee, when the winds were swelling
And dashing up thy tresses in thy face,
Thy bower of peace and rest,
When from thy ruffled breast,
They sighed away and left nor sign nor trace!

Thou art Earth's sister, and art ever bringing
With smiles or tears thy tribute to her feet,
Now a low shower with the night breeze singing
When eve and day upon thy bosom meet:
Now with a troubled moan,
Spreading thy wailing tone,
Far o'er the hollows where thy surges beat!

Thou laughest to the sun, when he is waking
Thy waters up from their long dreamless sleep,
And his geyserbeams, 'mid thy ripples breaking,
Sparkle in rainbow colours o'er the deep;
And thy low mists arise,
Like incense to the skies,
That Heaven may hold them o'er the earth to weep!

Thou smilest to the moon, when she is bending
Her silver crescent o'er thee like a slave;
Thou mirrorest the stars when they are sending
Their glances through thee to each crystal cave,
And one, the evening one,
E'er yet its race is run,
Sheds tremblingly its ray upon thy wave!

Thou art the same, as when the day was breaking
O'er the wild waste thy wrath, through God, had made,
And the meek Dove the holy ark forsaking,
Returned no more from the new forest's shade,
And thy wave cold and still
Sank from th' Assyrian hill
Where the earth's rescued in their gladness prayed.—

Thou art for ever; Time o'er thee is sleeping,
While nations fall and states are swept away;
Thou art thou not thought, or have thy waves been weeping,
That all, save thee, by nature meet decay,
That Persia Greece are dead,
Carthage and Rome have fled,
And thou art still the same and where are they?

Thou hast no country, where thy steps are bounding
From shore to shore, where may thy kindred be,—
Yet all are thine, thy voice alike is sounding,
For prince and slave, the despot and the free;
And the bright sunny air
Is thine too every where,
Wafting rich odors from its haunts to thee.

Who are the sleepers 'mid thy corals lying?
Children of some now scarce remembered race,—
Dream they the wild winds o'er thy waters sighing
Will wake them up from their far dwelling place,
To visit earth again,
And seek, alas, in vain,
To gaze upon some old familiar face?

Thou hast youth's freshness in thy caverns fading,
Lost with the true heart and the smiling eye,
And joyous childhood, silver age are shading
Thy depths, where strange contrasted forms they lie;
And the virtuous and good,
Upon thy troubled flood,
Feared not to meet thee, in thine arms to die.

Oh! thou the mighty, Time may not be telling
Of all thou hast been, art, and yet shalt be,
But there is one who marked thee out thy dwelling,
He set thy bounds, o'er which thou canst not flee:—
His voice shall break the chain,
That age has tried in vain,
And then thou too shalt see decay, thou Sea.

ALVAR.

HISTORY THE CONDEMNATION OF DISSENT.

From the "Practical evils of Dissent."

It will be found, I believe, that generally, Dissenters are very ignorant of the history of their own country, or of human nature in its various branches of ancient and modern history. Those who are familiar with the grand leading outlines of such studies, will moreover be discovered to be, as far as dissent allows them, moderate men in their politics. It is only the radically unprincipled man, who employs his historical knowledge of human nature to the perversion of his fellow-men from paths of rectitude, and leads them into situations, where he knows from experience, the end must be—Revolution.

Looking at them as a body however, their religious system consistently educates them in a systematic neglect of, and contempt for history. Their leaders feel the weakness of their dissent on this point, and know the strong persuasive to any truth which the mind finds, in ascertaining that the whole voice of ancient times is supporting it. The testimony of a host of witnesses, from one century to another, in a steady and uniform declaration of a series of facts, brings the powerful advocacy of a long-tried experience with great force, in support of, or against any such system as dissent. We are not therefore, to feel surprised at the sneers, neglect, and ridicule, which ancient customs, rites, or old parochial feelings experience from them. Their leaders know that the history of the church for 1500 years from the nativity of our Lord, is against their system of religious innovation and discipline. It is not that history is

merely silent on the subject, or partial in its repugnance to their cause; but that for fifteen centuries no such thing as modern dissent existed; nor was there, except amongst some of the ancient heresies, any such system as that which now rules and prescribes the devotions in their chapels. Open any history, and can you find such a thing? It cannot be argued that the immediate successors of the Apostles and their Disciples, who had been taught the Gospel by the lips of St. Paul or St. John, should not have known what kind of Church government was most agreeable to the inspired wisdom which they possessed, and best adapted to fulfil the intentions of the great Shepherd himself. And yet, we find all these men Bishops or Superintendents (the name is immaterial) in their respective cities or provinces—having Presbyters as their counsellors and chief ministers—and Deacons as a lower order of clergymen. Did these companions of the apostles, the witnesses of their miracles, and first witnesses to the truth of Holy Scripture in the New Testament, act in conformity with the will of God as known to them through the Apostles, by establishing Bishops or presidents—Presbyters or priests—and Deacons as the clergy—or did they not? If they did know it, then see the results—in every one of the cities, provinces, and nations in Europe, Africa, or Asia, where Christianity was planted, there they established these three orders of clergy. And for fifteen hundred years no such piebald government was known or admitted in any church, primitive or not, as the modern Dissenters, (Methodists excepted) defend. Deacons with them are laymen—with the apostles and primitive Church they were clergymen. Ministers are elected and called by the congregation with Dissenters; they were ordained Presbyters by the Bishops, and Presbyters, in the early church. No bishops are in existence, amongst Dissenters—no large church was without its Bishop, presiding over several or many congregations, in the first Christian Church.

This argument appears to me so irresistible, that its force can only be avoided by shunning it altogether. But the whole voice of antiquity is against them. The days of Cromwell are marked in characters of blood and fire against them. The sufferings of the Episcopal clergy, ejected from their livings by the Independents, form so strong and moving a picture of what a modern sect becomes when possessed of power, that they do wisely to draw a careful veil over it. The miserable source from which the Independents arose in the republican Brownists is seen in history. The apparent contradiction between their present and past proceedings is observed. And whereas, the old Independents under Cromwell never proclaimed open war against an Established Church, and so when in power, consistently ejected the lawful ministers from the parish churches; their modern successors make use of the cry, "No establishment," as a lever to obtain political power, that in the confusion they may repeat the same seizure of endowments, with this little difference of acting inconsistently. They could gain no step now, by admitting the principle of an establishment, unless on the ground of partition; but they think to secure much, by adopting the high-sounding model of voluntary churches.

They do refer to the history of Popery, but it is rarely done without a secret blow at our Protestant Church. They will speak of the old Nonconformity of the martyrs, and class that with their own! They will lay claim to such men as Taylor of Hadleigh, and the great host of laymen and presbyters; but they studiously avoid the names of the Bishops who died in the flames. "Here," say they, "is a noble host of Dissenters from the Established Church." Men who are but little versed in their own history may even smile at this—its absurdity provokes a laugh; but consider how it tells upon a mind totally ignorant of history. Such men are not able to reply that the great historian of the Martyrs, John Foxe, and his noble host of warriors, would have repudiated as unscriptural and unholy things, modern dissent and all its chapels. Thus, the bloody persecutions of Mary and her State-supported Church, are coupled in the mind of the ignorant Dissenter with our own Protestant, but impure, because State-supported Church! Gross ignorance and gross prejudice are thus well matched, and produce sectarian bigotry, and a hatred of the establishment. Ancient rites, as tending to preserve stability of mind, are derided. The marriage tie was surely a religious rite in paradise, when God himself presided at the holy union.—"Poh! Poh!" says a modern Dissenter, "if parliament enacted that both parties were to jump over a broomstick, as the prescribed form, in any convenient place, before witnesses, it would be quite sufficient and all that is necessary," but to the inquiry—"Why should we depart from the religious character of the institution as seen in the book of Genesis?"—he makes no reply. The churches then, which for a thousand years have been religiously and tenderly venerated by millions of our ancestors, as the places where the deepest affections of the human heart have been consecrated to God in marriage, are to be now robbed of a portion of that respect in which they have been estimated, because it forms part of the progressive assault which dissent and democracy are making on national institutions. Old parochial customs, which still linger in the country, and remind the peasant of the history of the past; his anxious and last-breathed desires to mingle his remains with the precious dust of his ancestors beneath the shadow of his Parish Church; the chimera from its ivy-crowned tower; the deep solemnity of the call made by the passing-bell for the prayers of the worshippers in secret, in behalf of the Christian soul then dying; the far-resounding bells on Sundays, or the full-toned voices of his parish peal on regal holidays, filling his ears and heart with affection for his king; and the very residence of himself and family in one parish in preference to another, because in it he was born, and in it his fathers have died—all these, and more, are assailed by open hostility, or sneering spite, or vulgar ridicule by Dissenters; until the simple-minded peasantry are persuaded that it is a mark of manliness of character to despise every thing that is ancient, and affect all that is the growth of yesterday. The system still helps to work out

its conclusions, and bring the whole population to that point, from which it can neither recede or advance without a revolution.

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA.*

No. VII.

PHILADELPHIA.

"And to the angel of the Church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches."—Rev. iii. 7—13.

The Church of Philadelphia stands pre-eminently distinguished among those of Asia for receiving unmingled commendation from the adorable Saviour. In himself infinitely "holy,"—for even in his human nature he was without sin—and "true," for he speaks of himself as "the truth,"—he bears the most decided testimony to the consistent piety of his professed disciples in this city; for they had kept the "word of his patience," or the saving doctrines of his Gospel: and it is delightful to view a Christian community, such as that presented to our notice, walking in a manner worthy of their high and holy calling, adorning the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things; so letting their light shine before men, that God might thereby be glorified, and testifying the sincerity of their discipleship by bringing forth much fruit.

The exalted Head of the Church speaks of himself, in this commendatory epistle, as possessed of "the key of David," as "he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;" that is, as the anointed and exalted Son of David, upon whose shoulder was to be the government; possessed of all rule, and authority, and power; able to admit into the regions of eternal blessedness, and able not only to exclude therefrom, but to consign the lost soul to the regions of interminable misery. What a stupendous view does this give us of the power of the once-crucified Emmanuel—of the dignity of that meek and lowly Jesus who had not where to lay his head; whose first advent was marked by the deepest humiliation, whose second advent will be marked by the most glorious exaltation, when "every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him! Even so, amen."

The Philadelphians are reminded, that "an open door" had been set before them; that they had a free and full access into the kingdom of God; a privilege of which man could not deprive them—for they had "a little strength;" they were employing the means of grace so mercifully vouchsafed to them, though weak in themselves; they had kept his word, faithfully endeavouring to conform to its requirements, and to embrace its promises; and they had not been led to that crime of deepest dye, of which even in that early age too many were guilty,—the crime of denying by word or deed the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Certain temporal blessings are therefore promised to the faithful of Philadelphia. So far from being allowed to become a prey to the enemies of the truth, and to suffer much worldly persecution on account of their steadfastness, they are assured that those of the synagogue of Satan, who so grievously opposed and oppressed the members of other Churches, should have no power over them; that, so far from suffering these enemies of the truth to prevail, these enemies would even seek their protection, and some of them perhaps be converted by their instrumentality, and be led to acknowledge that God was with his people of a truth.

Spiritual blessings are also promised—the invaluable blessing of preservation in the hour of trial—especially in that fearful trial which was to come upon the earth. This is supposed to refer to the persecution in the reign of Trajan, which was more general and violent than the persecutions under Nero and Domitian; but reference may also be made to the oppression of Mohammedan power, under which, even when the most severe, there were always some to be found faithful to the Redeemer's cause.

And eternal blessings of the highest character are also promised to those who listen to the exhortation, "hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown," and who, by the power vouchsafed from on high, are enabled to overcome. For the victorious believer is assured that he shall be made a pillar in the temple of God. It was common for conquerors to have pillars erected in the idolatrous temples of the false gods, on which were enumerated the names of the deity under whose guardian care they had fought, the name of the city to which they belonged, and the name of the general under whose command they had conquered. It was with reference to this custom, probably, that the gracious promise is made in the text. They who hold fast that which they have, that no man take their crown, shall be as pillars in the temple of God, unchangeable, unmovable, and totally free from decay, for they "shall no more go out;" on which the "new name" shall be engraven, even the adorable name of that victorious Leader who hath subdued death, and him that had the power of death; who was manifested in the likeness of sinful flesh, that he might destroy the works of the great author of sin; and in whose victorious train shall be included all who fought and overcame

* From the Church of England Magazine.

through the blood of the Lamb; and who shall return and come to Zion, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, to proclaim, through a glorious eternity, the riches and the freeness of that grace by which they were enabled to fight the good fight of faith, to lay hold on eternal life, and to become more than conquerors through Him that loved them.

PHILADELPHIA was seated on the high road between Laodicea and Sardis, on a declivity of Mount Tmolus, and on the bank of the river Cogataus. Its modern name is *Allah-Shehr*, the "city of God." Its vicinity to the district called *Catakekaumene*, or "the burned," and which extended in length about sixty-two miles, and in breadth about fifty, rendered it less resorted to as a place of residence—for the inhabitants were in constant dread of earthquakes; and it is mentioned by Tacitus as one of those cities restored by Tiberius after a calamity of this kind. It was founded by Attalus Philadelphus, the brother of Eumenes, king of Pergamos; but at what precise time, or through whose instrumentality, Christianity was first introduced into it, is uncertain. Some few records are extant of the state of the Philadelphia Church during succeeding ages, which testify that the light of Gospel truth was never completely extinguished; that there were always some found faithful, who realised, by their own experience, the blessed promise, "I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation."

When Dr. Chandler visited Philadelphia the bishop was absent; but the chief ecclesiastic, or *proto-papas*, then resident, received the travellers at the bishop's house. This priest was ignorant of the Greek language, and they were consequently compelled to converse with him in Turkish. "He had no idea," says Dr. Chandler, "that Philadelphia existed before Christianity; but told us it had become a city in consequence of the many religious foundations. The number of Churches he reckoned at twenty-four, mostly in ruins, and mere masses of wall, decorated with painted saints. Only six are in a better condition, and have their priests. . . . We were assured that the clergy, and the laity in general, knew as little of Greek as the *proto-papas*; and yet the Liturgies and offices of the Church are read as elsewhere, and have undergone no alteration on that account. The Philadelphians are a civil people."

Messrs. Parsons and Fisk, of the American Board of Missions, visited this Church in Nov. 1820. Their first visit was to Gabriel, then archbishop, apparently about seventy-five years of age. According to their statement, the number of houses in the city was about three thousand, of which not more than two hundred and fifty were Greek. Most of the Greeks were found ignorant of any language except the Turkish. The missionaries dined with the archbishop. It being *maigre day*, the diet consisted of rice, soup, boiled beans, and herbs, with a great variety of fruits, and abundance of *raki*, rum and wine.

Messrs. Arundell and Hartley visited Philadelphia in 1826. The latter thus describes the visit:—

"After a ride of four hours we arrived at Philadelphia. As we drew near, I read with much interest the epistles (Rev. iii. 7-13) to that Church. The town is situated on a rising ground, beneath the snowy mountain Tmolus. The houses are embosomed in trees, which have just assumed their fresh green foliage, and give a beautiful effect to the scene. I counted six minarets. We entered through a ruined wall, masonry, but by no means of great antiquity. The streets are excessively ill paved, and dirty. The tear of Christian pity must fall over modern Philadelphia. Were Christ himself to visit it, would he not weep over it as once over Jerusalem? Alas! the generation of those who kept the word of our Lord's patience is gone by; and here, as in too many other parts of the Christian vineyard, it is difficult to discover better fruits than those which are afforded by briars and brambles. It is indeed an interesting circumstance to find Christianity more flourishing here than in many other parts of the Turkish empire: there is still a numerous Christian population; they occupy 300 houses; divine service is performed every Sunday in five churches; and there are twenty of a smaller description, in which once a year the liturgy is read. But though the candlestick remains, its light is obscured; the lamp still exists; but where is its oil? Where is now the word of our Lord's patience? it is conveyed in sounds unintelligible to those who hear: when the very epistle to their own Church is read, they understand it not! The word of legendary superstition, and of multifarious will-worship, is now more familiar to their ears. And where is the bright exhibition of Christian virtues? Unhappily the character of Christians in these countries will scarcely bear comparison with that of Mohammedans themselves! In a word, Philadelphia has had her share in that utter apostasy from true and practical Christianity, which has been the bane of the East. 'Grievous wolves have entered in, not sparing the flock' (Acts xx. 29). There have been 'false teachers among them, who privily have brought in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them: and many have followed their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth is evil spoken of' 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2.

"But, though I am compelled by truth to speak in this manner, I gladly seize this opportunity to express my conviction, that ere long there will be a great renovation in the Eastern Churches. This is not the place for detailing the grounds of such an opinion; but I state with confidence this result of my observations during my intercourse with Oriental Christians. Nothing is wanting but perseverance in imparting instruction on every favourable occasion; and ere long we shall see the fruit of our labours. The English missionaries, who visit these countries in a zealous and affectionate spirit, will find the language once addressed to Philadelphia applicable to themselves: 'Behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.'

"We see this interesting place to peculiar advantage. For several days we have been contending with rain, cold, and adverse weather; but to-day, on arriving at Philadelphia, 'lo! the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the