

St. John, N. B. 13th Sept 1838.

Dear Editors,
The truth of the following remarks is so evident to every one acquainted with the numerous and various calls on the talents of the Clergy of the Church of England, (truly applicable to their brethren in the North American Colonies) and the cheerfulness, with which those duties are complied with, that I am induced to send them to you, in the hope that if you think them worthy a place in your valuable paper, the Colonial Churchman, they will contribute to refute those assertions of their want of industry, and energy, so liberally brought forward by the enemies of our Venerable Establishment.

A LOVER OF THE CHURCH.

THE VALUE OF A NATIONAL CHURCH AND CLERGY.

(From the Quarterly Review.)

It is a great public convenience, independently of the question of religious instruction, to have in a nation a body of individuals of the station, class, and character of the Clergy,—safe men, upon the whole, and intelligent from their education—pledged to a certain behaviour from their profession—known in several districts from their functions—at hand in the necessity of fixed residence—universal in their presence from the parochial divisions to which they are severally attached—and so covering every where it is wanted, that a law, or a regulation, or a private, shall penetrate. And, accordingly, it is difficult to frame an act of Parliament for the improvement whatever in our internal economy, or some appeal or other in it to the services of the Clergy—services, which they never undertook to neglect, but which, when required of them, they perform cheerfully, under a feeling that, whilst they are without any distinction of creed maintains a national establishment of which they are the ministers, they owe to the nation without any distinction of sect, whatever services their favourable position enables them to afford. Thus, if the government is called upon to meet any emergency, any calamity, or visitation or distress, the Clergy are the organs which it avails itself to act upon the prudence, the energies, the benevolence of the people. The government has occasion to ascertain the life, the habits, the character, the conduct of persons whose claims upon it, say soldiers or sailors, it is to the clergy for its information, as the most trustworthy it can procure. If the government has need of any statistical details, such as relate to the public welfare, the clergy are the persons to which it looks chiefly for satisfactory information. If, again, in private life friendly societies have need of certificates of the *bona fide* sickness of their members on their application for relief, the signature of the clergyman is that they insist upon the soldier or the sailor has any claim upon him to make to the War Office or the Admiralty, it is to the clergyman that he repairs for assistance or advice. If a poor man falls in a family disaster, his limb gets broken, or he is dead, it is to the clergyman that he goes for testimony to the truth of his tale and the value of his fame, and that testimony secures the help of the district in which he lives. If a cottager wants his little earnings deposited in a savings bank, to the clergyman he comes to negotiate the matter for him. If he desires to have his frugal will made, that the trustee he may be secured to the parties he loves best, the clergyman he solicits to draw it out. These are a mere sample of the little services of a clergyman which the clergyman renders to the nation at large, as a free gift, quite independently of his ministerial duties, and without any reference to creed, sect, or sentiment; so that none but the Clergy themselves, or those who happen to be under their roof for a season, and witness the calls of this sort, that are made on them, can have a very large portion of their time is occupied by such vocations as these, and none, but they who are so engaged, can feel the full injustice of the measure which is dealt out to them in the Colonies, by that very public, for whose welfare

they are spending themselves in most unostentatious, but effectual toil. Yet their capacity to do all this, and the justice of expecting it at their hands, arise entirely and altogether out of their being ministers of a national Church; and we are sure we are that such good offices to the nation at large, are far more than a set off against the payment of rates, which in turn are exacted from the nation at large, the only pecuniary support the nation lends to the Church; for its endowments are of private origin, as strictly as those of a hospital or an alms-house. We have sometimes amused ourselves with thinking what would be the amount of fees which the other learned professions would receive for the discharge of offices such as these—the time, the mileage, the material, all taken into strict account; the daily life of a clergyman, it should be remembered, being, in fact, the daily life of a professional man of the best education in great practice.

To the Editors of the Colonial Churchman.

EXTRACTS FROM THE LIFE OF WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, BY HIS SONS.

FIRST RELIGIOUS IMPRESSIONS EFFACED.

The religious impressions which I had gained at Wimbledon continued for a considerable time after my return to Hull, but my friends spared no pains to stifle them. I might almost say, that no parent ever laboured more to impress a beloved child with sentiments of piety, than they did to give me a taste for the world and its diversions. The strength of principle they had to overcome was indeed remarkable. When first taken to a play, it was almost, he says, by force. At length, however, they succeeded; and the allurements of worldly pleasure led his youth away from all serious thought.

DECISION FOR THE LORD.

His discussions with Isaac Milner were continued throughout this journey, until 'by degrees I imbibed his sentiments, though I must confess with shame, that they long remained merely as opinions assented to by my understanding, but not influencing my heart. My interest in them certainly increased, and at length I began to be impressed with a sense of their importance. Milner, though full of levity on all other subjects, never spoke on this but with the utmost seriousness, and all he said, tended to increase my attention to religion.' So interesting were these conversations now become to him, that his fellow-travellers complained of the infrequency of his visits to their carriage. In this state of feeling he arrived at Spa, and spent almost six weeks in that 'curious assemblage from all parts of Europe.' Amongst the rest were many of his English friends; and though on some few points he now controverted their opinions, yet in general he joined freely in their ordinary pleasures. 'Mrs. Crewe,' he says, 'cannot believe that I can think it wrong to go to the play—Surprised at hearing that halting on the Sunday was my wish, and not my mother's.' Yet though his outward appearance gave little evidence of their existence, deeper feelings were at work beneath. 'Often while in the full enjoyment of all that this world could bestow, my conscience told me that in the true sense of the word, I was not a Christian. I laughed, I sang, I was apparently gay and happy, but the thought would steal across me, 'What madness is all this; to continue easy in a state in which a sudden call out of the world would consign me to everlasting misery, and that when eternal happiness is within my grasp!' For I had received into my understanding the great truths of the Gospel, and believed that its offers were free and universal; and that God had promised to give his Holy Spirit to them that asked for it. At length such thoughts as these completely occupied my mind, and I began to pray earnestly.' 'Began three or four days ago,' he says, 'Oct 25th, to get up very early. In the solitude and self conversation of the morning had thoughts, which I trust will come to something.'—'As soon as I reflected seriously upon these subjects, the deep guilt and black ingratitude of my past life forced itself upon me in the strongest colours, and I condemned myself for having wasted my precious time, and opportunities, and talents.' Thus he returned

home; another man in his inner being, yet manifesting outwardly so little of the hidden struggle, 'that it was not,' says one of his companions, 'until many months after our return, that I learned what had been passing in his mind.'

Upon the 10th of November he reached Wimbledon, and as parliament did not meet until the following February, he was much alone and had leisure to commune with himself. The more he reflected, the deeper became his new impressions. 'It was not so much,' he has said, 'the fear of punishment by which I was affected, as a sense of my great sinfulness in having so long neglected the unspeakable mercies of my God and Saviour; and such was the effect which this thought produced that for months I was in a state of the deepest depression, from strong convictions of my guilt. Indeed nothing which I have ever read in the accounts of others, exceeded what I then felt.' These were now his habitual feelings; carefully concealed from others, and in some measure no doubt dispelled by company, but reviving in their full force as soon as he retired into himself.

OUR LIABILITY TO FALL INTO SINS WHICH SURPRISE US IN OTHERS.

Felt much devotion, and wondered at a man who fell asleep during the Psalms: during the sermon I feel asleep myself.

MAKES KNOWN HIS RELIGIOUS SENTIMENTS.

He now began to open to his friends the change which had passed upon him. His own way he hoped would be clearer when his principles were understood; and the frank avowal of his altered views was due to those with whom he had lived hitherto in levity and thoughtlessness. Some treated this announcement as the effect of a temporary depression, which social intercourse would soon relieve; one threw angrily his letters in the fire; others knowing that his past life had not been vicious imagined that he could but turn ascetic, and regretted their expected loss of his social accomplishments and political assistance. He wrote to Mr. Pitt amongst the rest; opening fully the grounds on which he acted, and the bearing of his new principles upon his public conduct—'I told him that though I should ever feel a strong affection for him, and had every reason to believe that I should be in general able to support him, yet that I could no more be so much a party man as I had been before.' On the 2d of December 'I got,' he says, 'Pitt's answer—much affected by it—to see him in the morning.' 'It was full of kindness—nothing I had told him, he said, could affect our friendship; that he wished me always to act as I thought right. I had said that I thought when we met we had better not discuss the topics of my letter. 'Why not discuss them?' was his answer; 'let me come to Wimbledon to-morrow, to talk them over with you.' He thought that I was out of spirits, and that company and conversation would be the best way of dissipating my impressions.' Mr. Pitt came the next morning as he had proposed, and found Mr. Wilberforce not unprepared for the discussion. 'I had prayed,' he says, 'to God, I hope with some sincerity, not to lead me into disputing for my own exaltation, but for his glory. Conversing with Pitt near two hours, and opened myself completely to him. I admitted that as far as I could conform to the world, with a perfect regard to my duty to God, myself, and my fellow-creatures, I was bound to do it; that no inward feelings ought to be taken as demonstrations of the Spirit being in any man, (was not this too general? 'witnesseth with our Spirit,' &c.) but only the change of disposition and conduct.'—'He tried to reason me out of my convictions, but soon found himself unable to combat their correctness, if Christianity were true. The fact is, he was so absorbed in politics, that he had never given himself time for due reflection on religion.'

VISIT TO THE PAVILION.

'November, 1815.—'The Pavilion, in Chinese style, beautiful and tasty, though it looks,' he added, 'very much as if St. Paul's had come down to the sea, and left behind a litter of cupolas. Prince Howard had read Cobbett.—Spoke strongly of the blasphemy of his late papers and most justly. I was asked last night, and to-night; but declined, not being well.' This excuse, however, would not long