

From the Church.

THE WANT OF A BISHOP IN UPPER CANADA.

Whatever may be thought of the claim of Episcopacy to be considered as the only Apostolic system of ecclesiastical order, one point, it is presumed, will be acceded to by all. It is this; that among those who hold to its propriety and necessity, there should be no unnecessary delay in furnishing to a distant church an officer so important as a Bishop. A community of Episcopal churches without a Bishop to preside over them, must be viewed, upon the system of Episcopals, as a body without a head.—Dr. Hawks's History of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia.

That system which places a living centre as the personal object of reverence and love in the room of a presbytery, or a convocation, secures an advantage which, so long as human nature remains what it is, ought to be esteemed of the highest price. It is granted indeed that ecclesiastical business may be managed efficiently, and economically, and equitably, by a Presbytery; but it is affirmed, on the strength of the known motives of our nature, that such a management foregoes benefits of a refined sort, which spring up around a patriarchal chair. Let all the abuses and corruptions belonging to the history of proud prelacy in all ages be summed up, and they will fall to invalidate the assertion that a paternal sway vivifies the system over which it is exercised in a manner not to be attained by the government of a corporation.—Spiritual Despotism (by a Dissenter.)

EPISCOPACY OF DISSENTERS.

Shape a commonwealth how you will, you can never reduce it into the form of a circle. It must have a head. If you erect a republic you must, as in the United States, surmount it with a President, or, in other words, an elective sovereign. If you resort to democracy, the most adroit intriguer, or the noisiest brawler of freedom's cant, attracts the eye of all observers, cozens them out of their suffrages, and gains a temporary influence over the unwieldy mass, greater than an hereditary and law-bound monarch exercises over his subjects. In ecclesiastical affairs the bias is the same. You may call your polity Presbyterian, Congregational, or Independent; but some one man or other, either pre-eminent for talent or worth, or formed for a successful pursuit of popularity, takes the lead of all his nominal equals, and becomes, though not a Bishop in name, more than a Bishop in pride, power, and influence. Did not Calvin and Knox, rule with a more arbitrary and irresponsible domination over the churches which they founded, than either Cranmer or Laud over the Church of the Reformation? Is not Dr. Chalmers in ecclesiastical influence,—and fortunately, we will add, for the Kirk,—as much the Primate of all Scotland, as Dr. Howley of all England? Wesley, the autocrat of the Methodists, impressed more of his own individual character and opinions on the sect of which he was the originator, and exercised more real and substantial authority among his followers, than ever was assumed, or attempted to be enforced by any Bishop of the English Hierarchy. Go where you will, into a private company, or a public meeting—into a Methodist conference, or a Presbyterian Synod, you will find one individual acquiring an influence and supremacy over the rest, and confirming the position advanced by the philosophical author of Spiritual Despotism, that 'monarchy and episcopacy may be considered as the forms into which the social system will spontaneously subside.' There may not be a person bearing the title of King or of Bishop, but there will always be found one exercising the power attached to the sceptre and the crosier.

EPISCOPACY IN THE UNITED STATES.

It may now be said of our sister communion, that while, in regard to the number of its clergy, it ranks fourth in the list of religious denominations in the United States, it is second to none in the intelligence, virtue, and wealth, that it embraces within its fold. As other sects are weakened, it gains strength. Many a minister, like Mr. Colton, whose feelings and education as a gentleman, and whose conscience as a Christian, will not suffer him to bend beneath the inquisitorial despotism of a thousand self-constituted masters and mistresses, has of late transferred his valuable services to the cause of Episcopacy, and gladly taken shelter beneath the paternal rule of pre-

lacy. 'In the early history of New England,' (I quote from Mr. Colton) 'a non-conformist minister from the old country is represented to have said, after a little experience on this (the American) side of the water, 'I left England to get rid of my Lords the Bishops; but here I find in their place, my Lords the brethren and sisters; save me from the latter and let me have the former.' ' A republican writer of the present age, in remarking on Lord Clarendon's assertion that the Scotch (Presbyterian) pulpit was 'a tribunal the most tyrannical over all sorts of men, and in all the families of the kingdom,' admits the truth of it, and deduces this corollary that 'a democratic clergyman from the common people will far exceed in spiritual pride and arrogance the most lordly bishop.'

THE BISHOPS OF ENGLAND.

A cursory view will suffice to show how great a debt of gratitude we owe for a long and uninterrupted line of apostolical prelates. From the infancy of our Reformed Church down to the present period, the Bishops, as a body, have stood true to their God, their country, and their Sovereign.—They shrunk not from the fires of persecution, and abandoned not their standards in the hour of trembling and flight, for five of them suffered death during the brief and bloody reign of the Bigot Queen. When brighter days returned how many of them, like Jewel, sunk beneath a premature old age, in resisting the sacrilegious attempts of rapacious courtiers to despoil the Church, in defending Protestantism against the incessant attacks of Jesuits and Romanists in traversing the country, cleansing the remaining stains of a soul superstition, and in leading the people into that safe and happy path, that lay between the old corrupt faith and the new-fangled doctrines of the Puritans! Here and there a servile, or an unfaithful, or a domineering prelate brings disgrace upon the mitre, and exposes his order to contempt; and the most is made of the dark spot by an historian like Hume, indifferent to all religions, or by other writers inimical to the Episcopal form of church government. Take them, however as a body and the lasting obligations that we owe to them, greatly counterbalance the transient ill that a few neglectful or wicked brethren may have wrought in their generation. In the stormy times of Charles I. they faithfully clung to the tottering cause of monarchy, and deserted not this saint-like master 'in his utmost need.' When his profligate and heartless son disgusted the nation by his unbridled licentiousness and profusion, and sold the liberties and glory of his country for French gold and French pleasures, the Bishops nobly stemmed the tide of corruption and infidelity, that drew down vengeance from heaven in pestilence and conflagration. When James II., aided by Papists and Dissenters banded in one common league against the Church of England, had almost succeeded in reinstating his banished faith in our Colleges and Cathedrals, and in trampling the power of Parliaments, under royal dispensations, the opposition to his arbitrary rash proceedings arose not from ancient peers of England, not from the sturdy Commons, the middle classes, or the bulk of the people,—but from the bench of Bishops. There is not a page in English history so attractive to the true Episcopalian as that which narrates the magnanimous and Christian bearing of the Seven Bishops, when compelled to resist the unconstitutional mandates of their Popish King. Thoroughly was their devotion to the doctrines of the Reformation and the liberties of the nation appreciated by the lowest classes of the community, and in the most sequestered districts of the kingdom! As they landed from the barges that conveyed them to the Tower, thousands thronged around them with a mingled homage of compassion and veneration, and they entered the prison gates, as martyrs, not criminals, amid the prayers and blessings of kneeling multitudes. When the tidings of their acquittal reached the camp at Hounslow Heath, a shout of gratulation rung in the ears of James, that proclaimed to him in a knell-like tone, 'Thy kingdom is departed.' Even had the Jury been base enough to find these venerable persons guilty, all England would have risen as one man:— And shall Trelawney die, and shall Trelawney die? Then thirty thousand Cornish boys will know the reason why;

is the remnant of a song that was generally sung in this period; and, as ballads are said to give the indication of popular opinion, (and I think they did before the age of newspapers) furnish a proof, that Bishop Trelawney, and his six brethren were looked upon by the people of England as champions of the laws and religion of the land. In the reign of William whether as conscientious jurors, or as supporters of the Protestant Establishment in Church and State, the Bishops maintained the high and holy character of their sacred office. While the two first Georges were constantly assailed by invasions from the successive Pretenders and their foreign allies, a Herring or a Secker was wanting to rouse the country, and prevail upon the wealthier classes, by example as well as precept, to rally round the Government with moral and pecuniary contributions. Full many a time has been rung on the Vicar of Bray, and demagogues and Jacobins have immemorially designated a Bishop a waiter on Providence, or, in other words a parasite to the ministerial dispenser of ecclesiastical patronage. But let Lord John Russell, the head of a family, that raised its fortunes on the plunder of Church-property, and who would bear reluctant testimony to the falsehood of the charge. In a recent debate in the House of Commons, on Dr. Lushington's motion for depriving Bishops of their seats in Parliament, his Lordship admitted that time-serving and venality could not, with justice, be charged upon the Right Reverend Prelates, for he had ever found them consistent and unchangeable in their opposition to the ministerial system which he formed a part.

NECESSITY OF BISHOPS.

Think of a family without a father, a man without a king, an army without a general, a fleet without an admiral, or a legislative body without a speaker, and then we have a pretty accurate idea of the state of an Episcopal Church that has no Bishop at its head. The authority of a Bishop residing in the Lower Province, when exercised is weakened by distance; to his person we are strangers,—and consequently, however much he may live, he has no good repute, he cannot, being absent and unknown, inspire us with any personal affection. We want a living centre, as the personal object of reverence and love, to dwell among us. We have the shadow, but we require the substance. Actually is a compound of attachment to the king, devotion to the monarch, and of devotion to the monarchical principle, without reference to the individual in whom it reside, so attachment to Episcopacy can only be formed from a living centre—an embodied representative of the Episcopal principle. Enough, it is hoped, has been adduced to prove that a good Bishop wins a regard, and a reverence of affection, that men, in corporate capacity, are incapable of exciting. A Bishop, in Upper Canada, would, for half his salary, at least, be a Missionary Superintendent. In his visitations he would become familiar with the poorest settlements, and his steps would be welcomed as the rejoicing of the backwoodsman, destitute of actual food.—Wherever he went, the settlers would eagerly press around him, and make known their wants and their yearnings after the ministrations of the Gospel; and he, in return, exhorting them to fast the faith, and as the best human means of doing so, to remain steadfast to their own communion, would leave an impression behind that, if opportunely renewed by succeeding visits, would create a strong abiding feeling in favour of the Church. The want of the many cases of religious destitution that would be his painful lot to encounter, he would find it impossible to render assistance but to few, in an elevated situation in society, and the respect in which he would be held by the ruling powers, would enable him to obtain some aid from the richer classes, to call the attention of government, in a tone of solemnity and weight, to the lamentable want of Christian instruction, that has already produced such a fearful and wide-spread mischief. Thus beneficial, thus endeared to the Laity would a Bishop become, and thus would the Church, watered by his toil, and revived by his ceaseless care, lift up her drooping branches, and put forth new branches, to bless and fertilize