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W. C. Johnson

Her Foundations are upon the Holy Hills.



Quod Semper, quod
Ubique, quod ab Omnibus
Creditum est tenemus

In necessariis Unitas,
In dubiis Libertas,
In omnibus Caritas.

THE CHURCHMAN'S FRIEND,

FOR THE DIFFUSION OF INFORMATION RELATIVE TO THE

United Church of England and Ireland Her Doctrine and Her Ordinances.

EDITED BY CLERGYMEN.

VOL. II.—No. 8.]

WINDSOR, C. W., MAY, 1857.

[Published Monthly.

Church News.

CANADA.—The Bishop of Toronto, with the consent of the Governor-General, has summoned the Clergy and Lay-Delegates of the proposed Western Diocese to assemble at London on Wednesday, May 13th, for the purpose of organizing the Diocese and electing its first Bishop. We have already on two occasions written fully on this subject, and exhorted those, who are to bear a part in these most momentous deliberations, to approach them in a spirit of prayer, and in a Christian temper. There are two candidates for the Episcopate;—although this is perhaps hardly the right word to use, inasmuch as they both disclaim the idea of putting themselves forward for the high office, and rather yield to the solicitations of those friends, who consider them well qualified to fill it with honour to themselves, and advantage to the Church. They are the Venerable A. N. Bethune, Archdeacon of York, and the Reverend Dr. Cronyn, Rector of London. The latter has many warm personal friends, and the zeal and activity with which they have been advocating his cause, speak highly for his amiable qualities.

But we, on such an occasion, feel constrained to lay aside all personal considerations, and to take into account nothing but the fitness of the men proposed for our choice, and the claims which they may respectively possess upon the

clergy and laity of the diocese. And in this point of view we cannot conceive how any churchman of sound views and with a warm zeal in behalf of those distinctive principles which are so clearly enunciated in our liturgy and articles, can hesitate between the two.

And irrespectively of this important consideration, the qualifications and the claims of the Archdeacon are, we feel bound to say, immeasurably superior. If thirty-three years laboriously and faithfully devoted to the service of the Canadian Church; if the confidence and friendship of his Bishop, who has placed him in the highest offices which he had to bestow; if the esteem and affection of his parishioners to whom he has so long and so zealously ministered; if the ability he has displayed and the experience he has gained as the Head of an Institution for training theological students; if persuasiveness as a preacher, clearness and distinctness as a writer, judgment and tact as a man of business, moderation and impartiality in the many important matters which have been entrusted to him;—in a word, if fitness for the office, and services rendered to the Church, are to be the ground upon which each vote is given,—we do not fear the result. Of Dr. Cronyn we desire to say nothing but what is kind and respectful, but we cannot discover upon what plea his claims can for a moment come into competition with those of the Archdeacon of York.

Besides the election of a Bishop, other important questions will have to be decided by the assembled clergy and lay-delegates. It is to be presumed that no subject will be discussed except those which bear upon the organization of the diocese, and that all others will be deferred until a regular Diocesan Synod can be summoned. But there are some such questions which must engage the attention of the meeting, and it is of much importance that they should be fully and fairly considered.

The first of these is that question which so unprofitably occupied much valuable time at the last meeting of the Synod of the Diocese of Toronto; namely, the relative rights of clergy and laity in the election of a Bishop. We say, unprofitably; for we cannot see what advantage would accrue to the clergy from confining to them the right of election, and giving to the laity merely a negative or affirmative vote. If there is any advantage we ought not to ask it; for the two houses, the clerical and the lay, ought to meet in Synod on a footing of perfect equality; and if there is no advantage, why raise a question which is sure to excite feelings of jealousy and ill-will. To us indeed it seems that a better mode of proceeding might be adopted; that the Bishops of all Canadian Dioceses should elect the Bishop of any diocese that becomes vacant, and that upon the confirmation of their choice by the clergy and laity of the diocese, he should be declared elected. Upon the present occasion such a mode of proceeding is, we fear, out of the question; but we still hope, that when the Diocese of Kingston has been organized, and Canada thus obtains a house of five bishops, some such method, which undoubtedly would be the nearest approach to the primitive model, will be adopted.

The next question that will come up, is that of the majority to be required for the successful candidate. The general impression seems to be that in order to a choice, it should be necessary that one of the candidates should obtain a majority of two-thirds of each house. Much may doubtless be said in favour of this proposition; but it would, generally, be found impossible to elect the most distinguished men among our clergy; and where the number is so small, this is, we conceive, a fatal objection.

It is a fact which we cannot alter, even if we should desire it, that there are, and always have

been, two different schools of theology,—for we will not call them parties,—in the Church. And it is a fact that the ablest, the most devoted, the most zealous men, are found among the foremost champions of one or the other of these schools. The men who hover in vague uncertainty between the two, are generally men of no fixed principles, no energy, activity, or usefulness. We say *generally*, for there may, of course, be exceptions.

Now if the two-thirds rule be adopted, it will, in practice, be found impossible to elect any one of these able, devoted, and zealous men; and we shall have to compromise by uniting upon a man who is unobjectionable, simply because he has no marked character or opinions. No; let us have for our Bishop the best man of whichever school has the numerical majority. The simple majority is, we take it, the ancient and natural rule by which all electoral assemblies, except the college of cardinals, have been ever guided.

There is a third question to be settled; namely, the persons among the clergy to whom the right of voting is to be extended. With regard to those who have a distinct parochial charge, there is of course no question. But it is uncertain whether this right should be given to those who are superannuated, and to assistant ministers. We would withhold it from the one and grant it to the other; and that upon the same broad principle. We would withhold it from superannuated clergymen, because they have really no longer any interest (except such interest as every member of the Church has) in the character of their Bishop; they do not necessarily come into contact with him, or have any intercourse with him. We would give it to assistant ministers because they, on the other hand, have perhaps the strongest interest of all in the character of their Bishop; they are most dependent upon him; and their comfort, success, and happiness in their ministerial career will be very much influenced by his character.

We have briefly touched upon the subjects which must necessarily come up for discussion on the 13th of May, in order that such of our readers as will bear a part in that discussion may have time for mature and calm reflection, which in the heat of a debate is not always possible. And we would be permitted to give one necessary caution. Let them not be de-

cided by any one with reference to their supposed bearing upon the present election. We do not know that they have, or can have, any such bearing; but even if they should appear to have, let that consideration be left entirely aside. Determine each point as it comes up, upon the broad principles of equity and wisdom; and trust in God that He will make all things work together for the good of His Church.

Church Matters at Clackington in 1875.

CHAPTER XXI.

CLACKINGTON was in a flutter of excitement. An arrival of such importance as a second clergyman who was to reside permanently in the place, and to preside over a separate and independent parish, called up a feeling of interest in almost every mind, although the source of that interest was very different in different persons.

The ladies especially were on the tiptoe of expectation; and when it was authoritatively ascertained that he was a bachelor, there was, especially in the minds of the junior members of the sex, a strong conviction of the wisdom of the Bishop's proceedings in dividing the parish.

Poor man! how he *was* criticized during the days that intervened between his arrival and the following Sunday. Mrs. Slowton, notwithstanding her efforts to be civil, could not help showing her teeth when any favorable opportunity presented itself, but Mr. Evenley seemed perfectly impassible and unmoved, and indeed Mrs. Slowton began to think that he must be almost stupid, so little did he seem to feel or even comprehend her thrusts.

Mr. Slowton was as usual kind, but constrained in spite of his efforts to the contrary, while the new comer was respectful and even deferential in his manner towards him, and at the same time he was so open, cordial and natural, that Mr. Slowton could not but feel favorably disposed towards him.

Mr. Crampton, Mr. Jackson, and all those who were the leading persons in the new parishes of St. John and St. Jude, lost no time in paying their respects to the new Incumbent, and were on the whole very favorably impressed with Mr. Evenley. There was, as may be supposed, some difference of opinion on the

part of some of all the multitude who called upon the new parson, or who met him at an evening party, which Mr. Slowton invited to his house to do honor to his guest.

"Well," asked Mrs. Glumpington next day, after the party, as she chatted to Mrs. Brown, with whom she was discussing recent events, "what do you think of this Mr. Evenley?"

"Why to tell you the truth I hardly know what to think," replied Mrs. Brown. "I had not much opportunity of talking to him last evening; but his address is good, and his manner, though grave and quiet, is, I think, pleasing."

"Do you think so? Well, I really got so frightened by looking at his stern face while he was silent, that I could not muster up courage to speak to him at all."

"He did not strike me as looking stern as you say: on the contrary, I thought his laugh particularly prepossessing. I am afraid he'll make havoc among our young ladies if they don't take care."

"I'm sure you don't think him handsome," said Mrs. Glumpington.

"Why, no, not exactly; but his looks are good enough to ruin the peace of half the girls in the place if he is given to flirting."

"No danger of that I should say; he looks anything but like a ladies' man; and, besides, he is no doubt a Puseyite, and they are great advocates for the celibacy of the clergy."

"Does any one know any thing of his doctrine?" asked Mrs. Brown in a different tone. "I have asked several if they have heard him say anything that indicates whether or not he is likely to preach the Gospel."

"Gospel indeed!" echoed Mrs. Glumpington, tossing her head, "its very little Gospel you'll ever hear from him, or I'm much mistaken."

"Ah, my dear, that is truly lamentable; but as to my hearing him, I don't think there is much chance of that—of course I mean habitually. I am not going to desert dear Mr. Slowton, and the Gospel, and the most respectable pew in the church to sit on a vulgar open bench in a railway storehouse, I can tell you."

"I should think not," remarked Mrs. Glumpington; "but I hear half the town are going down there next Sunday to hear him. I'm sure I shant go to be crushed up among a low set of railway people."

At this moment Miss Tibbins made her appearance, looking quite excited.

'Oh Mrs. Brown, I am glad to have found you at home; for I'm in a puzzle, and I can't see my way through it—I suppose because I'm so short-sighted'—observed the worthy spinster, parenthetically falling into the accustomed formula without observing its inapplicability. 'Here is this new clergyman come who I heard was to be a terrible Puseyite, and who was going to turn Mr. Slowton out of house and home, and yet here they are living quite friendly with one another, and he does not seem anything so much out of the way either,' and here Miss Tibbins had to take breath.

'And how do you know that he is not a Puseyite?' asked Mrs. Glumpington.

'That is just what I came to speak to Mrs. Brown about; for do you know, Mrs. Brown,' said Miss Tibbins, turning to that lady, 'as I was coming down the street just now, I saw Mr. Evenley coming out of that little house in the lane where the Jenkins live, who came here last winter from some of the Lower Provinces, and who were so poor.'

'What could he be doing there?' asked Mrs. Brown; 'he has not begun proselyting already, I hope, for that lane is in our parish.'

'Why you see I was anxious to find that out myself,' said Miss Tibbins with a sage and important air, 'and I determined to do so. Well; after I had seen him a good way off, I turned back and went into the lane and called on Mrs. Jenkins, whom I know very well, and who seemed in a strange state between laughing and crying, and she burst out before I had time to say a word, and told me *such* a tale about Mr. Evenley.'

'Dear me,' exclaimed Mrs. Glumpington with open eyes, 'what did she say? do tell us. Was he trying to bribe her into false doctrine?'

'Why she said that she was beside herself with joy for that "Good Parson Evenley"—that's the way she spoke of him—whom she had known so well in the Lower Provinces, and who had been their best friend, had met her little girl in the street, and had recognized her and made her lead him to their cottage, and how he was the same dear kind gentleman he always was, and she cried again with joy, and told me such wonderful stories of his goodness that I am puzzled about it; and can't make it out how

he can be so very good as this poor woman says, and be the terrible person that Mrs. Cryson said the Bishop was going to send here to persecute dear Mr. Slowton.'

'Why there's Mrs. Cryson herself just crossing the street and coming in,' observed Mrs. Glumpington, whose face was turned towards the window.

After the usual greetings, Mrs. Cryson was informed of the latest intelligence as brought by Miss Tibbins, touching Mr. Evenley's reported goodness.

'I don't believe a word of it,' said Mrs. Cryson.

'But why not?' asked Miss Tibbins, looking over her spectacles.

'Because it *can't* be.'

'But Mrs. Jenkins is a very truthful and respectable woman,' said Miss Tibbins, 'and wouldn't say what was not the case.'

'I don't care what she is,' said Mrs. Cryson with more excitement of manner than that pious lady would, under other circumstances, have perhaps exhibited. 'I am sure, from what Mr. Cryson has told me, that he is a thorough going Tractarian; and if he seems as good as your Mrs. Jenkins would make out, then it must be on the principle of Satan transforming himself into an angel of light.'

'But what has Mr. Cryson found out?' asked Mrs. Brown, while Miss Tibbins looked anxiously over her spectacles, and Mrs. Glumpington was all eager attention.

'Why he got into the loft of the storehouse to-day, which they have been fitting up for a church, and he says that it is nothing better than a mass house. They have got a credence table, as they call it, and the communion table raised I can't tell how high from the floor, and there is a cross against the end wall, and Mr. Evenley is said highly to approve of all these arrangements; and when Mr. Cryson exclaimed against them, Mr. Jackson put his hands into the very bottom of his pockets, and asked him where he had been this last twenty years, for that it was that long at least since the Privy Council declared all these things and many more to be the law of the English Church.'

'Oh!' sighed Mrs. Brown.

'Shocking!' exclaimed Mrs. Glumpington.

'But what did he mean?' asked Miss Tibbins.

'I hardly know,' replied Mrs. Cryson, 'but some twenty years ago, before Tractarianism had spread half as widely as it has done since, they tell me that some good Protestants tried to put a stop to the doings of some of these half popish clergy, and got an order to pull down the cross, and take credence tables, and pull off the fine covers of the communion tables; and the Privy Council, whom every body looked upon as the hope of the Protestant faith, went, and to the dismay of all truly pious people, declared that all such things were allowed by the law of England, and O dear me!'—Mrs. Cryson added dolefully—'it's awful to think of the way such things have spread since then—and now only fancy that they are going to be set up in Clackington: dear! dear!'

Leaving these worthy ladies to mourn in concert over the impending innovations which they made up their minds were about to be made upon the time-honored jogtrot of Clackingtonian churchmanship, we must carry our readers over the intervening days, and bring them at once to the eventful Sunday when, according to the announcement made by handbills on the walls, and in the columns of the Clackington newspapers, the temporary church of St. John's parish was to be opened for divine service.

It was as fine a morning as could be desired, and long before the hour of service every available portion of the temporary church was crammed to the utmost. The service was read very pleasingly, because naturally and devoutly, by the new clergyman. The singing, in the absence of any organized choir, was confined to a couple of well known psalms, and one or two familiar chants which were simply but heartily joined in by most of those who were present, and nothing extraordinary or remarkable took place until the end of the ante-communion service. Just before he gave out the last psalm, Mr. Evenley gave notice that the following Wednesday being a holiday, was appointed by the Church to be religiously observed, and consequently that there would be service and a sermon at an hour which he specified as one which he thought would probably be most convenient to the greatest number.

He further added that in accordance with the requirements of the Book of Common Prayer, there would be daily morning and evening

prayer when not reasonably hindered by sickness or some other urgent cause.

Mr. Evenley made the announcement in a peculiarly matter of course sort of way; his words were clear and distinct, so that it was impossible to misunderstand them; but they were as few and commonplace as was consistent with his object, that, namely, of being understood. It would have been impossible to have gathered from the expression of his face that he considered the notice he had given to be any thing but the merest matter of course; but his was almost the only countenance in the whole assembly that was unmoved. Such looks of surprise—such popping of one bonnet into another—such raising of eyebrows and snirking of lips—such whispers of horror and muttered determination of going out of the place, which however were overcome by the power of curiosity in some cases, and by the hope of finding something further to carp at, in others. On the faces of others there was a quiet expression of deep gratification, as though their hopes and expectations were in this particular more than fulfilled.

Another little flutter passed through the congregation, when Mr. Evenley passed at once to the lectern, and without any preliminary prayer began his sermon without changing his surplice for a gown. A few more little nods and looks of significance were duly exchanged among those who belonged to Mr. Slowton's congregation, of whom a great many were present, but these things were soon lost sight of in the greater interest of listening to the sermon.

And very well worth listening to it was, though it is not our purpose to inflict it at second hand upon the readers of this veracious chronicle. There was exceedingly little in it of a personal nature, and few professions of his own intentions for the future; there was an earnest setting forth of the duty of preaching and receiving and acting upon the *whole* truth of Holy Scripture, of believing the unmutated Gospel, and the great help in doing this which earnest-minded churchmen would find in the plain teachings and holy system of the Church herself. He showed with great clearness how she ever set forth the Redeemer as all in all to fallen and guilty man—her divine ordinances as the appointed means whereby God's heavenly grace was conveyed to the souls of men, and a

holy life the great end and object of all her teachings, rites and sacraments. To attain this end, however, it was plain that her teachings must be unequivocally declared and her system faithfully carried out; and he concluded that part of his discourse which had any reference to himself, with a simple declaration that, as an English churchman, his effort would of course be to set forth *that* view of the doctrine of Holy Scripture which was contained in the Prayer-Book, and to comply as far as possible with her ritual requirements—that beyond this limit he had no wish to go, but that short of it he was not willing to fall.

The style of his sermon was plain and unadorned, but exceedingly clear and forcible. His manner very quiet, but marked by a peculiar earnestness that irresistibly riveted the attention of all hearers and impressed them deeply.

When the sermon was concluded, there was the confused pause which takes place when a congregation does not exactly know what is to be done next. Some stood up at the doxology at the end of the sermon, some knelt down, some sat down, and every eye was fixed upon the clergyman, who went back to the Communion Table and commenced the Offertory sentences. Mr. Crampton and Mr. Jackson collected the alms which were reverently presented upon the holy table, and the service concluded with the prayer for the church militant, a collect and the blessing.

All this, though now-a-days the common and usual way of conducting the service, *because* that way which the Prayer-Book *commands*, was a novelty in Clackington. The old-fashioned mode of curtailing the service as much as possible, and saving people's pockets by omitting the Offertory and the prayer for the church militant, had always prevailed in Mr. Slowton's church, and all these changes and notices struck the old parishioners as very terrible, and a pretty hubbub there was among them when the service was at an end.

Time however will not permit us in this chapter to enter further upon the history of the tempest which now commenced in the parochial teapot, and we therefore must reserve it till the next.

Is the Church Thoroughly Distinctive?

WE hear so much respecting the "broad platform of the Church that we are ready to ask ourselves; Have, or have we not, any clear, dogmatic, distinct faith and practice, doctrinal and organical, worth "contending for?" or is the Church simply a human establishment the doctrines and practice of which are to be "pared down" to suit the weakness, the ignorance, or the worldliness of all sorts of religionists, in order that thus making the Church popular we may swell the number of her adherents?

Now if anything will drive earnest and *honest* men from the Church it is such untruthful latitudinarianism. Rome is determinately distinctive, Presbyterianism is bitterly distinctive, the Baptists are bigotedly distinctive, Methodism is very earnestly distinctive; but, perhaps, as churchmen we hope, by sinking our creeds and ignoring our polity, to gain all the religious world—except the earnest!—truly an end right worthy of those, but of those only, who profess to be 'evangelical' or 'moderate' *par excellence*; their 'evangelicalism' being manifested by practically denying the blessed humanity of Christ as He has been so gloriously pleased to share it with His Church; their 'moderation,' by denuding the Church of those humbling truths which are so repulsive to this worldly, intellect-worshipping age.

TRUTH is, in its very nature, the most uncompromising thing in existence; it cannot yield one iota, for that were falsehood. Hence the Church, being Christ's exponent of truth to the world cannot veil one particle of the "faith as once delivered to the saints." But what is the faith? It is trust in Christ wheresoever and howsoever He has promised to reveal Himself. This, without all doubt, is in the membership of His Church, and through her ordinances,—private devotion, communion of saints, confession, fasting, absolution, priestly blessing, baptism, confirmation, the Lord's Supper, episcopacy, priestly orders, &c.,—thus at least does our Reformed Anglican Church teach concerning the faith, or, the TRUTH as it is in Christ Jesus." Nor do her Articles and Services in anywise contradict each other, though they may exhibit different phases, or features, of the truth;—thus the services may more clearly teach us the necessity of the 'obedience of faith,' in the believing adherence to Christ in all the ordinances of

His Church, in order to assured and elect salvation; while the Articles, seeing the corruptions of Rome, may take good heed to remind us that we are 'saved by faith alone,' that is, by Christ alone; with whom our obedient faith unites, yea, identifies us.

Hence it is evident, that they who represent the Church as having little distinctive doctrine, or as contradicting herself, do foully slander her; in order, it may be, to hide their own untruthfulness in substituting Calvinistic, falsely called 'evangelical,' teaching for that which the Church so clearly unfolds throughout the entire Prayer-Book; or, on the part of others, to screen their unfaithfulness in adopting a cowardly 'moderation' in place of the positive and Scripturally uncompromising teaching of the Church herself. From our hearts we thank God, that, however self-seeking or mistaken men may endeavour to prove her so, the Church is not 'broad', in the sense in which they seek to represent her as being; she is as positive and dogmatic in her teaching—though not as exclusive—as are Rome, Geneva, or the Baptists. Hence, we repeat, no semi-papist, presbyterian, or methodist can faithfully minister at her altars.

'Not as exclusive,' however; hence *laymen*, with very painfully defective views, may be her sincere members, because not being called to teach, or to minister salvation to the people of God, they are not so absolutely required to believe all the distinctive doctrines of the Bible, or to make those unflinching subscriptions to every thing contained in the Services and Articles of the Church which it is so essential alike for the glory of God and the spiritual safety of the flock to demand from one who is to be a priest of the Most High God. Thus, while something very nearly allied to moral perjury is committed by one who, being a semi-papist or presbyterian, continues to officiate as an Anglican clergyman, the Church herself is ever ready in the spirit and name of her Divine Master to receive within her social fold, as private members, all those who 'believe and are baptized'; herein manifesting a scriptural and purely catholic conduct altogether unlike that 'exclusiveness' and that arrogant bigotry which leads both Rome and the Protestant sectaries, to require conditions, in order to their supposed church membership, entirely unwarranted by either the Bible or Primitive Christianity.

Truly the Anglican Church, with her branches in America and the colonies, is unrivalled in her genuine charity and her large-hearted love;—her Lord died for the world, and she weeps to bring all the world within her arms; seeking no other conditions from them than that of obediently seeking Him.

The conclusion then, which we draw from the whole, is, that the English Church is most strict in requiring from her clergy a hearty and honest adherence to every title of her doctrine and practice; and, consequently, that to attempt to serve at her altars without giving this, is—dishonest; while for the laity, being with them a matter of *individual* salvation, she removes every barrier, with the most enlarged liberality that her inherent truth and holiness will permit.

These things being so—exclusive truth staring the clergy in the face in every page of the Prayer-Book—it is vain to expect to restore unity to the Church by any compromise; what we need, is more well-informed doctrinal conscientiousness in the candidates for Holy Orders; and an increased fearless truthfulness on the part of our church dignitaries, in sifting the sincerity of those professions of adherence to all the teaching of the Prayer-Book, which the lax polemical morality of the day leads many to make, whose after teaching shows that when they did so, they—we sincerely trust unwittingly—'held a lie in their right hand.'

Whenever the time comes that we again get a weekly Diocesan Church Paper in Canada, as we see is already spoken of, we do pray that it may be a fearless, though loving, exponent of the Church and her principles. A trimming, milk-and-water journal we are disposed to think would be as great a mistake financially, as it would truthfully. A religious paper will not *pay*, unless its supporters take an earnest interest in it which they will not do except they feel that vital interests are at stake. With all its faults, this is an *earnest* age, and men will not concern themselves with indifferent matters; and perhaps the very secret of the Church's depressed condition on this continent, is that too many of her children, imagining that it is of small importance whether the Church, Presbyterianism, or Methodism, &c. &c., be in the ascendant, have felt little earnestness in siding the extension of any of them. Oh Rome and the Protestant sectaries are wise in their generation!

We find, at all events, no uncertainty in most of their popular teaching, and verily they have their reward.

It is the very thorough-going, earnest teachery—considered as a Church paper—of the *Beck*, that has given it that degree of success to which, unhappily for the accountability of its promoters, it has attained.

The Crater of Daybut.

THE evening of a summer day. A wild scene it is among mountains: we are standing on the edge of a huge crater, the bed of an extinct volcano. Yet not so wholly extinct but that far below us, a mile away, down in the very centre of the gorge, there is a jet of smoke, which, as evening darkens into night, will, like the pillar of cloud that went before the Israelites, kindle into fire. See how the peaks, all round, toss themselves up in the wildest confusion; those two, sharp, needle-like points to the left, that bluff, stern-looking precipice,—in the centre of which one little white cloud has anchored itself,—straight before us, and then to the right, and towering far above us, that conical mountain, over the shoulder of which winds a narrow mule-path, cut out by years of labour, through the solid rock. And notice how beyond it, where it falls back from its neighbour mountain, and gives a vista of the horizon, a building of white marble has caught the now almost level rays of the sun, and lights up the hill which it crowns.

That is the temple of the god Daybut, for we are in Japan: and a great day to-morrow will be (so they think) for the worshippers of the idol. Then these mountains, now so lonely, then all the edge or rim of the crater,—and it must measure four or five miles across,—will be thronged,—will be alive with worshippers. For this volcano is sacred to Daybut; and it is held that whoever should be foolhardy enough to descend into it and to cross it, would pay for his sacrilege, not only with his own life, but with the destruction of the whole empire. For the priests of Daybut affirm that though the fountains of fire which lurk beneath it would be broken up, the chain of mountains, as far as the eye can reach, would be shattered in pieces, and the whole kingdom of Meaco be overwhelmed with a deluge of flame. So they preach, and so their hearers believe. To-morrow then, there will be a concourse of people from all parts of the empire: not only from great Nippon, the chief of the Japanese Islands, but from the outlying portions of the empire, from Sitkof, from Krousiou, yes, and from those distant rocks against which the waves of the Pacific are waging continual war, Firando, and Timoura, and Osima. They say the Emperor will not be here himself: he is so busied with

his new erections in the Capital, that he will be content with an embassy to the god. But I do hear that the Christians,—for there have been Christians in Japan for these forty years,—are in expectation of some great event. Father Froes, the Missionary of Meaco (he will be a martyr at a future time, being frozen to death for the Name of CHRIST), will be here: and the report goes, that this prerogative of Daybut will not pass altogether unquestioned. For more than one valiant heart among those who follow—as the common expression goes—the “Law of the Portuguese,” are determined to vindicate for themselves the honour of the God of the Christians, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and to teach the whole Empire that the strength of the hills is His also.

Now let the sun set behind the western range. You may catch—so high is the ground on which we are standing,—a narrow strip of silver; it is the inland sea between Nippon and Sitkof: On those shores the standard of the Cross was first planted; they have already sent multitudes of martyrs to glory: before the conflict is ended, and the Church crushed out in Japan, they will send thousands more. And, as the night thickens, we may catch to the north a great glare, as from a mighty city. That shows where, in Meaco, the Emperor Tayeosama is entertaining half the priests of his empire, at a banquet in honor of Daybut: and every one of the six thousand temples in the Capital is illuminated in honour of the festival. That glare will last all through the night, and then in the morning, by thousands and tens of thousands, the pilgrims to this volcano will pour forth.

Let the night have passed. Let the sun have just risen over the eastern mountains: and see how the whole scene is changed. Multitudes thronging and pressing on all sides, and girding in the crater with a living chain. From this knoll we shall have the best view of the whole. Here they have set up the standard of the Green Dragon, which shows that the principal men of the day have chosen this for their own position. Here, too, is a pulpit of sandal wood, from whence the most celebrated and most learned *Bonze* of the Empire—his name is Morindono,—will preach of the greatness and glory of Daybut. Here he can best be heard, perhaps by some two or three thousand spectators: but, at intervals, through the whole circle of the multitude, other pulpits are reared up, from which other *Bonzes* of inferior name will each address his own congregation. Crowded as they are through such a vast extent, it is not wonderful that the numbers should be variously reckoned; but he that rates them at the fewest sets them down at a hundred and fifty thousand, and there are not wanting those who are ready to wager that they amount to more than double that sum. I see that Father Froes has kept

his word. Like a brave general he will take up his own position where the enemy is strongest. He is standing near the pulpit, and those about him are the principal Christians whom he has led to the scene of action. A little aloof, and mingling with the worshippers of the idol, are the three or four hundred who have accompanied him hither; most of them men, but some women and children, ready, they say, to die with him, or to die for him; eager to give glory to their own God, and to make manifest that, as for all the gods of the heathen, they are but idols, the work of men's hands.

Now there is a flourish of trumpets: one of the princes, the son of Taycosama, takes his seat under the canopy of cloth and gold; the Bonze, a venerable looking old man of seventy, in his rich robes as a doctor of his religion, ascends the pulpit: a great silence falls on the crowd: the standard, which has been hitherto only half-mast high, is run up to the top of the pole: six cannon prepared near this knoll are fired at once, and all round the crater, at the given signal, the crowd fall down and do homage to Daybut. Now you may count the Christians. Like the army of Israel in olden time, they seem indeed a little flock of kids, while the Syrians fill the country. One or two of the fainter hearts among them had proposed that,—not to give (as they said, and as weak people always will say) unnecessary offence—at the moment when the multitude fell down and worshipped Daybut, they also should kneel and adore the God of Heaven. But Father Froes was firm. 'If I stand up alone,' he said, 'among the whole assembly, I will not bow my knee, when I may be thought to bow it to an idol. On this fashion it had been easy for the three Holy Children to deliver themselves from the burning fiery furnace. And though I read of Naaman, that for a while he had leave to bow down himself in the house of Rimmon, I know of the same Naaman that, after a brief space, he disdained to use that license, and so died a martyr to the God of Israel.'

But we must listen to what the Bonze is saying. He is magnifying the power of Daybut, he is showing the mercy and bounty of that god towards his clients, more especially at the hour of their death. He goes on, almost in the words of Holy Scripture, (for the Japanese religion is perhaps the masterpiece of Satan) to show how he will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth: and then he dilates on the history of the crater below him, and the impenetrable fence with which it is walled about. 'You know,' such are his words, 'that from the beginning of time, no mortal feet have ever dared to cross this most holy place; that to the end of time none will ever be sacrilegious enough to risk the venture. You know that, according to our law, if any man will attempt it, free licence

must he have, that he must not be let nor hindered in any way; that either our god will strike him dead before he reaches the fountain of fire, or, if the fatal time of the earth shall have come, he will be the occasion of its return to chaos, and will be tormented with torments beyond all imagination, for ever and ever. Just indeed is our god, and wonderful are his works! He might have commanded us to hinder any miserable wretch from that sacrilegious attempt. But he chose rather to leave the way open, to the end that the greatness of his own power might be made manifest. You know, furthermore,—we all know,—it is to our shame and confusion that I speak, that not so many years ago, the Law of the Portuguese was first preached in this land. You know how that, instead of adoring the true and immortal gods, they worship One Whom they affirm to have been crucified hundreds of years ago. Whereupon it pleased former emperors of their great clemency to crucify many of them. But this pestilential sect still increasing, it seemed good to our great and glorious Taycosama, whom the gods long preserve! rather to turn them over to that contempt and ridicule which they merit, than to expose them either to the fire or to frozen tanks, or to wild bulls, as hath in times past been done. But observe this: of all those hundreds of Christians who profess that the power of our gods is as nothing, not one has ever dared, often as they have been challenged, to descend into his volcano. For they know that however they may ridicule our worship with their lips, they believe it in their hearts. Yes,' he continued, perceiving that Father Froes was anxious to address him, 'I know what their teacher would say: that he himself or any of the Portuguese are ready to make the attempt. But this I have told them, and I tell you, that the law laid down for our own country applies not to strangers. They have free leave to go down into the crater: if they do, their punishment is reserved for the other world. But I challenge now, as I have heretofore challenged, any Japanese who calls himself by the name of Omusr, to descend into the volcano if he dare. We shall not oppose him; and if he believes that in his heart which he professes with his lips, now is the time to overthrow our superstition,—superstition forsooth!—and to prove that the power is in the hand of his God, and not of ours.'

He ended, and great terror fell on all the multitude.—Father Froes turns round and speaks to a young man that is standing close behind him. The conversation grows more and more animated. Shall I tell you what it is about?

The truth is that the Bonze had advanced nothing beyond the very fact. The Christians had been unwilling to descend into the enchanted ground. They spoke of the certainty

of their own death from an infuriated crowd; they talked of the necessity of time to abolish an inveterate superstition; but in very deed so ingrained, even in them, was the belief, that the faith which had led many to martyrdom was not sufficient to face the possible dissolution of the earth. So this great argument of the worshippers of Daybut remained unanswered: for as soon as the Bonzes were persuaded that these terrors were no terrors to the Portuguese, they gave out, as we have seen, that the law of their god applied only to natives, and that foreigners were, at least in this world, exempt. This time, however, twenty or thirty of the younger Christians, some few of them sprung from the principal families in Meaco, had determined that the challenge should be accepted: and, truth to say, Father Froes, who knew their weakness better than they did themselves, was more alarmed than edified by the boastfulness of their talk; how they would do that which none had hitherto dared to achieve in Japan; how they would show the worthlessness of the great idol; how they would win for themselves an everlasting name in the Christian annals of the empire. The good priest, though his more abundant labours had left him but comparatively little time for the study of Church history, could not but remember how, when the temple of Serapis was destroyed at Alexandria, and that in a Christian reign, and (as we should now speak) under a Christian establishment, and when there was a similar prophecy that, should the idol itself be destroyed, earth would return to its original chaos,—but one Christian out of many thousands ventured to take hatchet in hand, and smiting the idol in pieces, to give exit to that swarm of rats which was afterwards the ridicule of paganism throughout Egypt.

‘I accept the challenge,’ said Father Froes. ‘Here is a company of those who believe in Christ, born Japanese, who will descend into the valley, and set your idol and all its worshippers at nought.’

‘Not so,’ said Morindono, after a moment’s pause. ‘It is expressly written that but one may have licence to pass at a time. Go, any one of you that will; Daybut commands that we should give him passage; but more than one shall not go; and the multitude is on my side. Said I not well?’ and he looked around on that part of the crowd nearest to him.

A low murmur of applause ran through the auditory. ‘Well,’ said the good Father, ‘it matters very little. That which all are prepared to do together, each is ready to do separately. You, my son,—will you go?’

He spoke to the young man with whom he had been conversing. His Christian name was Joaquim; and he was descended from one of the first families in Meaco.

‘I will go, my Father,’ said the young man, in a trembling voice, ‘if you judge it to be

necessary. But are there not others here better qualified both by age and rank, to face the danger?’

‘The danger!’ repeated Father Froes, in a half contemptuous voice (for he was naturally of a quick temper). But then correcting himself he said, ‘If from any reason you had rather not go, there are enough, I doubt not, who will thankfully run the risk. You, Manoel, what say you?’

‘What if my own faith should fail?’ asked the young nobleman addressed.

Father Froes felt that he had trusted too much to the faith of the converts. He looked round on those who stood nearest to him, and there was the same hesitation in all. He himself, as you have just heard, could do nothing; and among all those for whom he had laboured, among all those who had promised to stand by him, who was there that did not now desert him?

‘You see how it is,’ said Morindono, who observed the hesitation. ‘The Portuguese,—they are governed by different laws from ours, and may safely despise the danger in this world. But if I counted them right when they but now refused to bow their knees to the god of the emperor, there must be at the very least three or four hundred Christians present, and not one has courage by so easy a proof to show that his faith is the true faith. We have challenged them before; I challenge them now; and you see what is the result.’

‘I will go down,’ said a low voice from among the outermost of the Christians.

‘Who spoke?’ asked Father Froes.

‘I heard nothing,’ said the Bonze. ‘It is time to dismiss this assembly, giving glory to him who has made this world and the heavens above it.’

‘I will go down,’ said the voice again. And the crowd opening, right and left, to permit a passage, a girl came forward—for she could not be more than eighteen or nineteen—and stood in the midst of the assembled princes and nobles.

‘You, Agalha!’ said Father Froes, in astonishment. ‘Why, it was but last week that you were made our Lord’s by baptism!’

‘Even so,’ she replied, very modestly, and yet very firmly. ‘But I have no fear. I trust in no merit of my own, but only in the grace of God; and as you told me of the young shepherd in old time, so I say now, All this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not by human strength; for the battle is the Lord’s, and He will give them into our hands.’

‘You hear, Morindono,’ said the good Father; ‘your challenge is accepted. And now I claim a fair trial for our faith.’

The Bonze seemed perplexed. ‘I do not know,’ he said, ‘that a woman has any right to come forward as your champion. It may be that our books speak only of men.’

'It may not be so at all,' returned the Father, who was an excellent Japanese scholar. 'Your challenge, by the very words of your books, is open to man, woman, or child. I defy you to prove it otherwise. It is true, and I own it with all shame, that, partly no doubt through my fault, the worshippers of the true God have been content to leave the honour of this day with your wretched idol. But now—all praise be to Him!—it is so no longer; and I demand, according to your own law, free passage for this woman, who is minded to take the risk upon herself.'

Morindono might perhaps have hesitated longer, but there was a kind of suppressed murmur in the crowd which showed him that the Christian challenge could not be suppressed, and must not be trifled with. However he tried one last appeal to the multitude.

'Are you content,' he said, 'men of Meaco, that we should risk the annihilation of all that we hold most dear, because one silly girl is minded to provoke the indignation of our god?'

'It is not so,' interrupted Father Froes. 'You said yourself but now, that there was an alternative. Let him—or, rather let the power whom you all serve, Satan, slay her, if he can, before she can pass the valley. I defy your god and your master, equally. And let all this multitude be assured that the meanest and unworthiest Christian among us, and I myself may be he, has more than power to put to flight all the host of evil spirits who are with you, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by virtue of His Cross. Be of good cheer, Agatha,' he continued (for the poor child was very pale, not from fear but from excitement), 'and rest assured that our Lord will, by your means, win Himself great glory this day.'

Morindono perceived from the increasing murmur that ran through the crowd, that it would not be possible to avoid accepting the challenge. 'At all events,' said he, 'time shall be given on both sides. An hour before sunset you shall make the attempt. But remember, that as surely as we are here assembled this day in the presence of our god, so surely if you yourself do not fall a sacrifice to his indignation, you will bring about the end of all things.' And he proceeded to dilate on this return to chaos, hoping that the lapse of some hours and time for thought might put a stop to a momentary enthusiasm. Nor had he chosen that precise period without good reason. For as the sun declined behind the mountains the jets of fire assumed a more formidable appearance; and the gloominess gathering in over the scene might well be thought sufficient to strike terror into a firmer heart than that of Agatha.

Proclamation was accordingly made; and the news spread like wildfire through the vast multitude. All through that day,—and a long day it seemed to the spectators,—the subject

was discussed in larger or smaller knots; the usual games failed to excite their accustomed interest, the wonted ceremonies went on as a matter of form, and without spirit. The appointed time began to draw near. A general move was made to every point which seemed to command a better view of the descent from the knoll on which floated the standard of the Green Dragon.

The sun wants an hour to his setting. The Bonze has already ascended the pulpit. The prince has again taken his place under the royal canopy. Father Froes has encouraged and comforted to the best of his ability, (and he was no untried champion in this kind of warfare,) her who had thus come forward as the champion of the faith. The little band of Christians drew up close to the knoll, some with looks of shame, some of terror, all with the deepest interest.

'Now, then, said Morindono, seeing Agatha unshaken, 'now, then, foolhardy, miserable girl, there is the path to your destruction. Now, then, men of Japan, take your last look of her who thus goes deliberately to tempt the fury of our god, and to prepare for herself a place compared to which those fountains of fire would be but cooling streams.'

'Now, then,' said Father Froes, on the other side, 'you are called upon to do such honour to our Lord as no Japanese maiden has been able to win for Him before. Go forth, my child, with a good courage, and the God in whose hands is the strength of the hills be with you.'

She knelt for one moment before him, received his blessing, and then with a reverence after the Japanese fashion, to the prince, advanced to the edge of the crater. The crowd by one simultaneous movement pressed close to the very verge. It was not so steep but that with careful footing you might descend without using your hands. No track was there to point out the way to the adventurer; no foot of man had ever trodden that valley: and Agatha might have thought, and perhaps did think, of that saying of old, 'Ye have not passed this way heretofore.'

She came to the very edge, turned once round and gave one hurried glance at the sea of heads which circled in the declivity, and then steadily and carefully began to descend. Great rocks lay here and there scattered about on its steep sides; the vegetation was scant and thin, and the volcanic fragments crunched and ground beneath her feet. Among the crowd above, such was the intensity of their suspense, you might have heard a pin fall; and still she descended lower and lower, and still every glance among the multitude was fixed on her progress. Long before she had finished the descent the sun dipped behind the western mountains. A purple gloominess settled in over the crater; the wreaths of smoke began to assume a red terrible glow; it needed a good sight now clearly to distinguish

Agatha herself; and so for the first time voices to be heard, here and there, demanding from those that had the quickest eyes how she proceeded.

'She is all but at the bottom,—she is close to the smoke,—she has passed it,—she is in the very centre of the crater,—she is beginning the ascent.' Such were some of the sentences that passed here and there through the multitude. Darkness gathered in thicker and thicker, but still, patiently and unweariedly, the crowd waited for the event. An hour passed,—an hour and a half passed. Judge how the spirits of darkness must have longed to burst their chains, and to wreak their vengeance on her who was thus destroying their empire!

'I see her—I see her,' shouted a man who was standing near the prince's canopy. 'There she is, by yonder rock,—there, now just between it and the withered tree.'

And a few more moments sufficed to bring Agatha to the foot of the knoll.

It seemed for one instant as if amazement had swallowed up every other emotion. But when she approached Father Froes, and said, 'I thank God, and I thank you too, my Father!' and when the priest exclaimed, 'Now, men of Japan, who has proved Himself the true God this day?' there burst from that part of the crowd a shout so loud, so long and so wild, that you might hear it echoing from peak to peak before it was taken up by the more distant parts of the multitude, and so ran round the arena of this strife between the true faith and the worship of devils.

'The Lord,' said Father Froes, turning to the people who stood by him, 'the Lord hath sold Siserá into the hand of a woman!'

[*Tales Illustrative of the Prayer-Book.*]

A Visit to the Catacombs of Rome.

THE catacombs are large subterranean passages and rooms which exist beneath the city of Rome: some suppose them to be the quarries whence stone was hewn for the buildings of the Ancient City.

In these the early Christians used to assemble for Holy Worship, when the heathen Emperors persecuted all who bore the name of Christ. They were also used in the early ages of the Church for burial places; niches being cut in the rock on each side to admit the bodies.

A recent traveller, a lady, thus describes a visit to a catacomb which had been newly discovered and opened up, and from which, consequently, a great portion of the bodies had not yet been removed. Of course the interest attaching to these remains was far greater in such a case as this; since one not only saw the place

where they had been laid, but in two instances, at least, we looked into the freshly opened tomb.

Several times we saw the little phials which had been placed beside them, still red with what is supposed to be the blood of the Saints of God, slain in the cause of truth.

'In the centre of a vineyard, some way beyond the walls, we came to a low door with an inscription on it, to the purport, that none were to enter without the permission of those authorized to give it. Each of us in succession received a long wax taper, the guide providing himself with several, and we proceeded in silence along the narrow vaulted passages. There was something awful in thus penetrating into the abodes of the dead. After a very little advance, we came to places where were the bones and skulls of those who had been buried there in times when even the tomb, unless thus concealed, secured not the senseless clay from the bitter fury of relentless persecutions. Sometimes there are three or four tiers of shelves on either side, entirely covered with these mouldering remains.

'Who could stand in such a place and not feel the very nothingness of earth and all its interests, its pleasures, pomp, and splendour, compared with the inheritance purchased by Him, whose promises alone can take the sting from that king of terrors, whose worthless power was evidenced at every step?

'The guide stopped before a tomb; and Dr. Grant, calling us round him, pointed out the sign of a martyr's resting place,—one whose very name at once carried the thoughts beyond the gloom and darkness of the grave, beyond even the fiery trial of the last earthly scene. A palm-branch was the chosen emblem; and was it not expressive?—was it not that surviving friends might dry the tear which dimmed the eye, and learn to look, in faith renewed and strengthened, into that heaven above, where rest and triumph is now their portion—to think of them there, clothed in the white robes which are given them that are slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony that they held,—with crowns of gold upon their heads, and palms in their hands, crying, 'Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever!'

'Dr. Grant directed the guide to take from several of those opened sepulchres of the martyrs, a little roughly formed lamp, which seems to have been placed beside each tomb, probably by those friends who may have lighted it when they visited the spot where those dear to them were laid,—when they came to the grave to weep there. Even this little earthen vessel seemed to speak of comfort, and to remind one, amid the dark and gloomy recesses, that where the blessed spirits now are, they need no light, neither the sun, nor the moon, for the Lord God doth give them light.

'It was touching to notice marks of affection sometimes found recorded. How strange was it to

read words traced, in all probability, either at the time or very shortly after St. Paul lived in Rome! In many places crosses were the only marks upon the tombs,—an emblem then, which it needed Christian courage and constancy to own!"

And who shall say that it does not need like courage, and like constancy, really to own the Cross now?

Why should there be God-Fathers?

John.—I have just come in, Philip to ask if you will be so good as to stand godfather to our little one next Sunday; I see the Prayer-Book says that we ought not to put off having our children christened longer than the first or second Sunday after their birth, and ours will be a week old to-morrow.

Philip.—Why, John, to say the truth, I had rather not. I used to be ready to stand godfather to the child of any one who asked me, because it was a neighbourly kind of thing to do, but I never thought much about it. However, I was talking to a man the other day, who set it before me quite in a new light; he said there ought to be no such things as godfathers and godmothers, and so I am inclined to think now myself.

John.—I am sorry to hear you talk in this way, Philip, for it makes me afraid you have been listening to some of these new-fashioned teachers who are not satisfied with the good old ways, with having the Bible, and the Prayer-Book to explain it, but must be for making a religion for themselves. It seems to me that the time has come which St. Paul prophesied of in his 2nd Epistle to Timothy. Do you remember his words? "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lust shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and be turned into fables." However, if you do not like to stand for my child I will try to get some one else; but I would rather have had my own brother.

Philip.—Oh! I have not made up my mind about it, but it seemed to me that there was a good deal in what this man said. I shall be very glad if you can clear it up for me. First of all, he found fault with there being godfathers and godmothers at all, because he said no one could answer for another person.

John.—Supposing you happened to be away from home, and some one were to come and offer you a good situation, provided you, or some one for you, would promise that you should do your best to please your employer; should you not think it unkind if none of your relations or neighbours would make the promise for you?

Philip.—Of course I should.

John.—Well, the case of a child is something like this. A poor little infant cannot speak for

itself, any more than you could if you were away from home; and yet we know from our Saviour's own words that He loves to have little children brought to Him. But then it is not enough to have them baptized; if they grow up they must live like Christians, or else they will lose all the benefit of their baptism. And so it seems very fit that they should make a promise that they will do so. You see Baptism is in one point of view a covenant or agreement between God and man, and therefore there must be two sides or parties in it: God, on His part, mercifully promises to give eternal life, and the infant, by its sureties, promises to renounce what God hates, to believe what God teaches, and to do what God commands.

Philip.—Yes, but if I stand godfather to your child, how can I tell that when he comes to grow up, he will approve of having had the promise made for him.

John.—It will be his own loss if he does not. We must do all we can to teach him what a blessing he will lose if he does not keep his promise: but if, in spite of all we can do and say, he still persists in going his own ways, (which God of His mercy forbid,) his blood will be upon his own head.

Philip.—But how can I say for the child, "I will?" If he turns out ever so well, and lives ever such a good life, still there will be many times when he will break God's commandments.

John.—I think you mistake the meaning of the words "I will." To "will" to do any thing, means to wish heartily to do it; so that when the child by your mouth says, "I will," it is the same as if he said, "I wish with all my heart to keep God's holy will and commandments." We read that St. Paul approved of Christians' "readiness to will," even when it was doubtful whether there would be a performance suitable to it.

Philip.—Where do we read that?

John.—In the 2nd Epistle to the Corinthians, the 8th chapter.

Philip.—Well, you have made it clear so far, but there was another thing this man said the other day: he said, "Show me any thing about godfathers and godmothers in the Bible."

John.—There are many things which all Christians, from the time of the Apostles till now, have agreed to observe, of which there is no direct mention in the Bible. There is no passage of Holy Scripture which tells us to observe Sunday instead of Saturday, and yet you would think it very much like returning to the old Jewish law if any one were not to do so. So you see it is not altogether necessary that every thing which Christians do should be spoken of in the Bible. I recollect I was talking to our minister one day about keeping Saints' days, as it is ordered we should in the Prayer-Book, and he told me that nearly two hundred years ago there were some dissenters who found

fault with our Church on that very account, and said that there was nothing written about Saints' days in the Bible. And the Bishops of the Church at that time answered them something like this: "That though Saints' days might not be named in the Bible, yet there was nothing said against them; and that there were many things of the same kind which all Christians were agreed in observing. For, they said that so long as any thing was *not contrary* to the Holy Scriptures, and helped to make people better Christians, no one ought to object to it. You know our Saviour observed many things that were not ordered in the Bible, such as the feast of the dedication of the Temple, (St. John x. 22.) which was only instituted between one hundred and two hundred years before He was born into this world.

Philip.—It may be so, but what has this to do with godfathers and godmothers?

John.—I was going to say the same might be said for them. Although they may not be spoken of by name in the Bible, yet you cannot say that anything is said against them; and we know that the custom of having them began most likely in the time of the Apostles themselves, or at any rate very soon after their death, when of course, Christians, were much wiser and better than they have been since. Indeed we have very nearly, if not quite, as much authority for them as we have for keeping Sunday instead of Saturday as the Jews did.

Philip.—Well, I begin to think you are in the right, and that it is well to have godfathers and godmothers, if only for the sake of keeping to the old rules of the Church; for I am not one to be wishing to break through any laws, unless I am persuaded they are quite wrong. But what is the use of having more than one? Why cannot one answer as well as three?

John.—If answering were all that they had to do, one would be enough, but besides that, they have to "see that the child be taught" its duty, and take care "that it be virtuously brought up to lead a godly and Christian life."

Philip.—That is said at the end of the Baptism service, isn't it?

John.—Yes. Well you see of course it is the parents' duty to do all this; but if they should die or neglect their child, then the godfathers and godmothers are bound to take care of it. And so every Christian child, instead of having only two persons, "to see that it be virtuously brought up," has five. It seems as if the Church appointed that there should be so many, in the hope that at least one out of the five would be able and willing to take a Christian care of the little one; and this I suppose is one reason why it is not thought well that the parents themselves should stand for their own children.

Philip.—I have heard people say that no one could be so fit to be godfathers and godmothers

as the parents, but now I see that it is very wisely ordered they should not.

John.—Some persons have got a notion that if they stand for a child, they will have to answer for all its sins until it is confirmed; but this is a very foolish mistake indeed. It seems to me that nothing can be plainer than this, that from the time we first began to know right from wrong, every one of us will have to answer for his own sins. So long as godfathers and godmothers do all they can to keep the child they have answered for from sin, there will be nothing laid to their charge.

Philip.—Well, John, I do not remember that I had any other objections to make; and as you have eased my mind about all these, I shall be very willing to answer for your child. God grant that I may do my duty by him.

Bishop Potter on the American Bible Society.

We transfer the following article to our columns from the 'Episcopal Recorder.' The editor says of it:—"As springing from a source peculiarly authoritative, it is entitled to be received with grave consideration, not only by our own communion, but by the American Bible Society itself, of which the writer has been heretofore one of the most efficient supporters." The author of it is the Bishop of Pennsylvania, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Pennsylvania Bible Society. We think his article will cause some little alarm among the managers of the American Bible Society.

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY AND ITS NEW BIBLE.—In its infancy there was nothing on which this society more insisted, than that "its sole object was to promote a wider circulation of the Holy Scriptures without note or comment." This is its own avowal; and, to the words sole object, it gave all the prominence, by capitals which is given above. It also pledged itself at the outset that the "only copies in the English language to be circulated by the Society, shall be the version now (1816) in common use." Anxious to promote the diffusion of the Scriptures, and able, under such a system, to do it by fraternal co-operation, Protestant Christians united extensively for the purpose. Our own American Society has been the recipient of immense funds, and of these funds its managers have doubtless intended to be faithful trustees. They have scattered the leaves of this Tree of Life far and wide, and the spectacle of Christian unity and concord which they have presented has been most grateful to catholic hearts.

But in proportion as they are charged with larger funds and a more extended influence, in the same proportion it is important that they

should maintain unimpaired the fundamental principle of their organization. In no other way can they possibly retain confidence or be a bond of union among those who, with a common allegiance to Christ and Him crucified, have conscientious differences respecting the best means by which His faith is to be extended and upheld. In respect to our *English version* especially, this is transcendently important. There is nothing over which some errorists more mourn than "the uncommon beauty and marvellous *English* of the Bible," which make it "one of the greatest strongholds" of what they term "*heresy*." "It lives," says an English parvert, "in the ear like music that can never be forgotten, like the sound of the church bell, which the convert hardly knows how he can forego. Its felicities seem to be almost things rather than words. It is part of the national mind, and the anchor of national seriousness. The memory of the dead passes into it, the potent traditions of childhood are stereotyped in its verses." Nations that possess such a version of the Scriptures have a bulwark of blessings, both temporal and spiritual, which they should guard most jealously. Against such advantages of style and such all-powerful association, a few mistranslations (most of which are confessedly unimportant) and a few questionable punctuations, are to be reckoned as nothing. We are not of those who would deprecate in advance, and denounce all revision of the English Bible. The time may come, when, without damage to its matchless dignity and beauty, and to the venerable associations that cluster around it, a few amendments may be made, by the universal consent of those who name the name of Christ, and on authority which few would question. Till then, let text, punctuation, capitals and headings stand as they have stood for more than two hundred years; and, wherever one speaking our tongue may go over the globe, let him have the consoling assurance that when he finds what is called King James' Bible, he finds one and the same book.

If there is any body which should consider its self specially pledged to this course, it is the society that has received funds expressly in order to circulate that one book, and that, in doing so, acts as the agent and representative of Protestants of every name. To such a board belongs, in no sense, the office of annotator or commentator of the Scriptures, but simply that of distributor; and, in respect to the *English version*, distributor only of that which was in "common use" in 1816. Errors of the press they may of course correct, but only by some standard book; and, of standards, where is there one better or more authoritative than that of 1816? universally recognized in England, and according to which the Oxford and Cambridge presses now print all their editions. To go behind such a standard, and to allow collators to choose

at random,—here from one edition, there from another,—and now and then to introduce that which has never been found "*in any edition hitherto*," is simply to charge them with the authority of interpreters, which no more belongs to the American Bible Society than it does to the American Philosophical Society.

Metrical.

"How old art Thou?"

Count not the days that which have idly flown,
The years that are vainly spent,
Nor speak of the hours thou must blush to own
When thy spirit stands before the Throne
To account for the talents given.

But remember the hours redeemed from sin,
The moments employed for Heaven;
Oh few and evil thy days have been—
Thy life, a toilsome but worthless scene,
For a nobler purpose given.

Will the shade go back on thy dial plate?
Will thy sun stand still on his way?
Both hasten on, and thy spirit's fate
Rests on the point of Life's little date.
Then live while 'tis called To-day.

Life's wasting hours, like the Sybil's page,
As they lessen in value, rise;
Oh rouse thee and live! nor deem that man's age
Stands in the strength of his pilgrimage,
But in days that are truly wise.

Miscellaneous.

EXTRACTS FROM WESLEY.

"I had appointed to preach at seven in the evening, at Bradford; but when I came, I found Mr. Hart was to preach at six; so I delayed till the Church service was ended, that there might not appear (on my part at least) even the shadow of opposition between us.

1761.—"We had a long stage from hence to Swadale, where I found an earnest, loving, simple, people whom I likewise exhorted not to leave the Church, though they had not the best of Ministers."

1763.—"I then related what I had done since I came to Norwich first; and what I would do for the time to come, particularly that I would immediately put a stop to preaching in the time of Church service." Vol. III, p. 152.

1766.—"I see clearer and clearer none will keep to us, unless they keep to the Church. Whoever separates from the Church separates from the Methodists." Vol. III, p. 260.

1767.—"I rode to Yarmouth, and found the Society, after the example of Mr. W——p, had entirely left the Church. I judged it needful to speak largely upon that head. They stood reproved and resolved, one and all, to go to it again." Vol. III, p. 272.

1768.—"I advise all, over whom I have any influence, steadily to keep to the Church." Vol. III, p. 337.

1770.—“ We had a poor sermon at church. However, I went again in the afternoon, remembering the words of Mr. Philip Henry: ‘ If the preacher does not know his duty, I bless God that I know mine.’ ”

Puritanism.

The following extracts are taken from “ The Puritan Commonwealth,” by the late Mr. Oliver, a Boston Lawyer, himself belonging to a family which occupies a distinguished place in the whole history of Massachusetts. It is a work of very deep interest, and we hope to quote more largely from it at a future time.

Rapid spread of dangerous errors among Puritans:

“ In the Primitive Church, when faith was bright and strong, Christianity shrunk from the presence of a doubt. A single heresy, whenever it exhibited itself, was sufficient to summon from the four corners of Christendom a cloud of witnesses, who, mighty in truth, would cast it forth as an unclean thing! Behold these zealous Puritans, hardly yet weaned from the mother that bore them, and with the experience of scarcely ‘ a lustre of years,’ sitting in judgment on ‘ eighty-two blasphemous, heretical and erroneous’ principles, which, under their own system of culture, had sprung up on the virgin soil of Massachusetts! Three weeks of heated discussion were consumed by this synod. The angerings of disputation was relieved only by the obscenity of expression. The controversialists lost themselves in the most cloudy regions of abstruse theology, and dealt in terms as vague as they were incomprehensible.”

The Church of England:

“ The Church of England was no phantom, conjured up by the diseased imagination of a victorious monarch. Its chauns were sung before the barbarians of the North had swept like a tempest over the fertile provinces of degenerate Rome. Traditions, revealing glimpses of truth through the darkness of those early ages, still delights to recount how the great Tentmaker himself carried the laws of Christianity not only to the Romans, but also to the Saxons, the Huns and the Britons. Legends are still extant which relate how British kings, though vassals to Rome, voluntarily submitted to a nobler servitude at the foot of the Christian Church. And the venerable Bede narrates with pride the triumph of the first British martyr, ere the light of Christianity had dawned upon the hearts of the Pagan tyrants of the world.”

SUPERSTITION.—They that are against superstition oftentimes run into the wrong side. If I will wear all colours but black, then am I superstitious in not wearing black.

They pretend not to abide the Cross because it is superstitious: for my part, I will believe them when I see them throw their money out of their pockets, and not till then.

TRADITION.—Say what you will against tradition, we know the signification of words by nothing but tradition. You will say, the Scripture was written by the Holy Spirit, but do you

understand what language ‘twas written in? No. Then for example, take these words (*In principio erat Verbum*). How do you know these words signify (*the beginning was the Word*) but by tradition, because somebody has told you so?

PARITY.—This is the juggling trick of the parity; they would have nobody above them, but they do not tell you they would have nobody under them.

LITURGY.—There is no Church without a Liturgy, nor indeed can there be conveniently, as there is no school without a grammar. One scholar may be taught otherwise upon the stock of his acumen, but not a whole school. One or two that are piously disposed, may serve themselves their own way, but hardly a whole nation.

To know what was generally believed in all ages, the way is to consult the Liturgies, not any private man’s writings. As, if you would know how the Church of England serves God, go to the Common Prayer Book, consult not this nor that man.—*Selden’s Table Talk*.

If you forget God when you are young, God may forget you when you are old.

As it sometimes rains when the sun shines, so there may be joy in a saint’s heart when there are tears in his eyes.

INFLUENCE.—The truest way to aid the cause of religion is—to be religious.

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