

The Church.

THEREFORE I WILL NOT BE NEGLIGENT TO PUT YOU ALWAYS IN REMEMBRANCE OF THESE THINGS, THOUGH YE KNOW THEM AND BE ESTABLISHED IN THE PRESENT TRUTH.—2 PETER, I, 12.

VOL. I.]

COBOURG, U. C., SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1837.

[NO. XXVIII.]

Poetry.

HYMN FOR CHRISTMAS-DAY.

O Saviour, whom this holy morn
Gave to our world below;
To mortal want and labour born,
And more than mortal woe!
Incarnate Word! by every grief,
By each temptation tried,
Who lived to yield our ills relief,
And to redeem us died!
If gaily clothed and proudly fed,
In dangerous wealth we dwell;
Remind us of Thy manger-bed,
And lowly cottage-cell!
If prest by poverty severe,
In envious want we pine,
Oh! may the Spirit whisper near,
How poor a lot was thine!
Through fickle fortune's various scene
From sin preserve us free!
Like as Thou hast a mourner been,
May we rejoice with thee!

Bishop Heber.

THE ENGLISH LAYMAN.

No. VII.

CHRISTMAS.

And well our Christian sires of old
Loved when the year its course had roll'd,
And brought blithe Christmas back again,
With all his hospitable train,
Domestic and religious rite
Gave honour to the holy night:
On Christmas eve the bells were rung;
On Christmas eve the mass was sung.

England was merry England, when
Old Christmas brought his sports again.
'Twas Christmas broach'd the mightiest ale;
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale:
A Christmas gambol oft could cheer
The poor man's heart through half the year.

Sir Walter Scott.

Festivals, in commemoration of national blessings and deliverances, have flowed alike from the ordinance of the Almighty, and from the natural instinct of man to commingle the gratification of the senses which his Maker has implanted in him, with the rejoicings of a gladdened heart. Under the Jewish polity almost every important occurrence in the history of God's chosen people was perpetuated in their remembrance by an annually recurring feast; and when their idolatrous abominations had provoked the wrathful denunciations of the prophets, those inspired monitors were commissioned to proclaim that, among other visitations of his displeasure, Jehovah would cause their "mirth to cease, and all their solemn feasts." When our Saviour came to fulfil the law, he scrupulously observed these Mosaic institutions, because their continuance was in no ways opposed to the propagation of his Gospel, but, on the contrary, tended to soften the hearts of the perverse Jews by recalling the mercies shewn unto their forefathers, and thus rendered them more susceptible of the influence of a purer dispensation. Besides the participation of our Saviour in these legal ceremonials, we find him, on several occasions, encouraging by his presence an indulgence in innocent festivity. His first miracle was wrought at a wedding-banquet, and contributed to the social enjoyment of the guests. When Matthew, (Levi) shortly after his becoming a follower of our Lord, made "a great feast" in his own house, Jesus honoured it by his attendance; and far from disdaining to eat and drink with publicans and sinners, took advantage of the occasion to pour a lesson of wisdom into the ears of those, who, but for this opportunity, might never have been privileged to hear his voice. In one of his parables, also, the kingdom of Heaven is likened unto a supper made by a great man, and there is not a single act in our Saviour's ministry, or a single word recorded as having fallen from his lips, which can be construed into a prohibition of the temperate enjoyment of the creatures and fruits over which God has given man dominion, or which represses that impulse of the human heart, which leads us, when a temporal blessing is vouchsafed to us, to bring forth the best robe, to kill the fatted calf, and to eat, and be merry.

It cannot, therefore, be reasonably doubted that, in the very earliest ages of the church, the Christians were in the habit of solemnizing so joyful and important an event, as the nativity of our blessed Saviour. The commencement of the custom is lost amid the mist and obscurity of time, but we have distinct allusion to it in the second century, and some even assert that traces of it may be found in the reign of the Emperor Antoninus Pius, who died in 161, after a sway of 23 years. In the reign of Dioclesian (A. D. 283—304) the observance of the day receives melancholy proof from the massacre of the Christians at Nicomedia, who, while celebrating the Nativity, were by the tyrant's orders confined within the church in which they had assembled for worship, and inhumanly burned to death. As we approach nearer to modern times, evidences of the observance of the Nativity, as a Christian festival, thicken upon us. In the fourth century it was the custom of pious persons to date any remarkable event from the festival of the Incarnation; in 741, it was adopted as the epoch from which Christians should date, rather than from the Pagan epoch of the building of Rome; its observance was enjoined by the Anglo-Saxon church, the eighteenth

of King Alfred's laws allowing twelve days holidays at Christmas; and in 1431, Pope Eugenius rendered its adoption obligatory in all Christian countries. The Waldenses,—that pious remnant who fed the pure flame of Christianity when Rome had nearly extinguished it,—have solemnized the day from time immemorial, and so also have the Greek, the Swedish, and the Lutheran churches. At the period of the Reformation in England, when an innumerable swarm of saints was dislodged from the Calendar, the principal festivals of the church, and among them the Nativity, were judiciously retained, and sanctioned by Parliamentary enactment. From the churches disciplined after the Calvinistic model, the solemnization of all Festivals is entirely excluded, though it appears that there were some, of which Christmas was one, that Calvin himself would willingly have retained. Neither do the Quakers pay any respect to this or any other anniversary of the Christian Church.

The simple festivity, combined with religious services, with which this day was first celebrated by the primitive Christians, was soon exchanged, in the general corruption of manners that ensued, for boisterous revelry, and gorgeous superstitions and pageants. The Roman Saturnalia, called December Liberties, were held at the close of the year, and when Christianity and Paganism clashed in close conflict with each other with forces almost equally balanced, the Clergy strove to gain the ascendancy by converting those superstitions they could not eradicate, into auxiliaries to their cause. Thus unhappily disregarding the means, and looking only to the end, they engrafted the licentious rites of polytheism upon the customs of the church, and sullied the purity of the Christian worship by an introduction of grotesque mummeries and profane amusements, very evident vestiges of which are still to be met with in all Roman Catholic countries. At the season of Christmas the churches were converted into theatres, and dramatic representations of Scripture history called *Mysteries*, were enacted by the priests and their pupils. Even when the revival of the long-buried Truth had banished most of the Popish innovations and superstitions, "remnants of the old time" lingered in the manners and amusements of the people. Religious plays, and costly masques on a scale of magnificence almost incredible, were still enacted before the court at Christmas, and would probably have stood their ground much longer, had not the stormy times of the first Charles overshadowed the land with gloom, and, amid strife, confiscation and bloodshed, left little space for the display of pageantries, and the observance of ancient customs.

A violent reaction then took place, and the reformation, or rather the indiscriminate subversion, that followed the outbreak of civil war, was considered incomplete, until the axe of change had been laid to the root of the most insignificant and harmless custom, as well as of the most vital principle of the Constitution. Mince-pies, then made long in the shape, and in imitation (so says the learned Selden) of the cratch, or cradle, in which the new-born Saviour was laid, were pronounced abominations not to be tolerated, and Christmas, with all its time-honoured festivities, with all its endearing interchanges of Christian fellowship, and its temporary forgetfulness of earthly distinctions in one promiscuous scene of happiness, was robbed of its honours by the gloomy Puritans. In their stern and morose bosoms the Poet's noble saying that "what is grey with age becomes religion," found no responsive echo, and England, once merry England, emancipated from the "Egyptian bondage of Holydays," was merry no more.

In the year 1644, Christmas Day happening to fall on the day appointed by Parliament for the monthly fast, it was resolved, after some discussion by the commons, that the festival should be merged in the fast. Calamy, the eminent nonconformist divine, who, some years before, had left his sick bed on this solemn anniversary, and declared from the pulpit "that he thought himself bound in conscience to preach that day, lest the stones of the street should cry out against him,"—now launched out into the severest censure of "the superstition and profaneness" of this day, which he affirmed to be so rooted into it, that there was no way to reform it, but by dealing with it as Hezekiah did with the brazen serpent. A curious Parliamentary debate, which took place about this time, has been preserved by Burton, a Puritan chronicler, and introduces us into the very presence of that revolutionary assembly, which, as well as its French successor and imitator of 1789, though starting from very different principles, sought to metamorphose the moral and social framework of the nation, by "laying irreverent hands" upon those cherished hereditary customs which time had consecrated, and interwoven into the "people's pious nursery faith." The debate is but short, and I will therefore introduce it:—"Colonel Matthew observed, 'The House is thin, much, I believe, occasioned by the observation of this day. I have a short bill to prevent the superstition for the future.' 'I could get no rest all night,' said Mr. Robinson, 'for the preparation of this foolish day's solemnity. This renders us in the eyes of the people to be profane. We are, I doubt, returning to Popery.' 'It is a very good time, (said Sir W. Strickland) to offer the bill this day, to bear your testimony against it, since the people observe it with more solemnity than they do the Lord's day.' Major General Packe remarked, 'if ever bill was well timed, this is. You see how the people keep up these superstitious observances to your face. One may pass from the Tower to Westminster, and not a shop open, nor a creature stirring.'—The Bill accordingly passed into an ordinance, and the people of England were no longer permitted

To hail with uncontrol'd delight,
And general voice, the happy night
That to the cottage, as the crown,
Brought tidings of salvation down.

But the heart of England was still sound and loyal at the core, and the national cheerfulness, dimmed and tarnished as it was by civil bloodshed, rose up in resistance to this Puritanic invasion of the good old customs. Some of the Established clergy read the Liturgy, and prayed publicly for the bishops, and even many Presbyterian ministers preached. The shops were generally shut, while many tradesmen who kept theirs open, were abused by the populace. When an attempt was made to enforce obedience to the obnoxious ordinance, riots and insurrections occurred in several places. "At Canterbury, the Mayor, endeavouring to keep the peace had his head broken, and was dragged about the streets; the mob broke into divers houses of the most religious in the town, broke their windows, abused their persons, and threw their goods into the streets, because they exposed them to sale on Christmas Day."

After the murder of the King had cast its darkness over the whole land, the austere genius of Independency at last succeeded in stripping Father Christmas of his legitimate and long-worn honours. The churches were closed by public authority, and the steadfast sons of the Establishment, who clung to her the more affectionately in her adversity, performed "the devotions of that blessed day with their family at home," there being "penalties on observers" of the public offices of the Church. Undeterred, however, by Cromwell's edict of 1655, Episcopalians were still found who gathered together on Christmas Day, and Evelyn, that model of a Christian gentleman, has left on record, a lively account of a scene that occurred on one of these occasions:—"25th December, 1657. I went to London with my wife, to celebrate Christmas-day, Mr. Gunning preaching in Exeter Chapel, on Micah 7, v. 2. Sermon ended, as he was giving us the Holy Sacrament, the chapel was surrounded with soldiers, and all the communicants and assembly surprised and kept prisoners by them, some in the house, others carried away. It fell to my share to be confined to a room in the house, where yet I was permitted to dine with the master of it, the Countess of Dorset, Lady Hatton, and some others of quality who invited me. In the afternoon came Colonel Whaley, Goffe, and others from Whitehall to examine us one by one; some they committed to the Marshal, some to prison. When I came before them, they took my name and abode, examined me why, contrary to an ordinance made that none should any longer observe the superstitious time of the Nativity (so esteemed by them,) I durst offend, and particularly be at common prayers, which they told me was but the Mass in English, and particularly pray for Charles Stewart, for which we had no Scripture. I told them we did not pray for Charles Stewart, but for all Christian Kings, Princes, and Governors. They replied, in so doing we prayed for the King of Spain too, who was their enemy and a papist, with other frivolous and ensnaring questions and much threatening; and finding no colour to detain me, they dismissed me with much pity of my ignorance. These were men of high flight and above ordinances, and spake spiteful things of our Lord's Nativity. As we went up to receive the Sacrament the miscreants held their muskets against us as if they would have shot us at the altar, but yet suffering us to finish the office of Communion, as perhaps not having instructions what to do in case they found us in that action. So I got home late the next day, blessed be God."

At the Restoration, old Father Christmas,—so long proscribed as a Royalist and a Malignant,—was reinstated in all his honours, and has never since been exiled from his favourite Isle. I am afraid that during the profligate reign of Charles II. the day was equally dishonoured at court with every other in the calendar, and was only pre-eminent over other festivals by being disgraced with a greater degree "of inexpressible luxury, profaneness, gaming, and all dissoluteness, and total forgetfulness of God." Time, however, and the greater purity of public morals has corrected this evil throughout all classes of society; and excesses, incidental to the general manners of a by-gone age, rather than to the celebration of the Festival itself, no longer mar the decent mirth of our winter holydays; while the grave and sombre livery that Christmas wears in these our own days, so utilitarian and so unpoetical, would scarcely offend the severe eye of even Calamy himself. Washington Irving, a son of the new world, but whose genius never shone with its full lustre until kindled by "the traditional customs of golden-hearted antiquity,"—even he, with a feeling rarely found in a phlegmatic American, has sighed over "the havoc that modern refinement has made among the hearty old holiday customs," and with a sweet and chastened humour, a pathos, an elegance, and a kindly warmth, that Addison or Goldsmith alone can equal, has touched admiringly upon the most beautiful points of the sterling old-fashioned English character, when seen by the light of a Christmas fireside. I will conclude this article, which throughout is but little more than a compilation, with two quotations of exquisite beauty, both in point of sentiment and language: the author whose praises I have so feebly echoed supplies the one, — a popular writer of our own communion,* the other:—

"Of all the old festivals, that of Christmas awakens the strongest and most heartfelt associations. There is a tone of solemn and sacred feeling that blends with our conviviality, and lifts the spirit to a state of hallowed and elevated enjoyment. The services of the Church about this season are extremely tender and inspiring. They dwell on the beautiful story of the origin of our faith, and the pastoral scenes that accompanied its announcement. They gradually increase in fervour and pathos during the season of Advent, until they break forth in full Ju-

* Horace Smith, in his work on Festivals, Games, &c.

bilee on the morning that brought peace and good will to men. I do not know a grander effect of music on the moral feelings, than to hear the full choir and the pealing organ performing a Christmas anthem in a Cathedral, and filling every part of the vast pile with triumphant harmony. It is a beautiful arrangement, also, derived from days of yore, that this festival, which commemorates the announcement of the religion of peace and love, has been made the season for gathering together of family connexions, and drawing closer again those bonds of kindred hearts which the cares and pleasures and sorrows of the world are continually operating to cast loose; of calling back the children of a family, who have launched forth in life, and wandered widely asunder, once more to assemble about the paternal hearth, that rallying place of the affections, there to grow young and loving again among the endearing moments of childhood."

"Let the external decorations and the superficial forms of this anniversary fade and fall into desuetude, or be replaced with newer glories as fashion and caprice may dictate; but let not the spirit of Christmas, at once holy and festive, ever evaporate from our feelings, or be chilled by a non-observance of this happy season. Let the laurel—the symbol of peace and good will—be green in our hearts, though it no longer adorn our parlours. A proper observance of the prescribed religious duties, hospitality and social brotherhood; an interchange of love-promoting presents; the festive board; the blazing fire; the moderate bowl, enlivened by music, wit, and song; the harmless sports and pastimes for which none are too old who find a reflected pleasure from delighting the young, or who can renew, even for a single evening, the pleasantest memories of their own childhood; but above all, that enlarged philanthropy which prompts us to look beyond our own circle of smiling faces, and to light up a similar gladness in the cottages of the poor by seasonable acts of charity—these are the observances which every man, to the extent of his ability, is strictly bound to maintain; for they constitute the noblest way in which a Christian can commemorate the Founder of that religion which inculcates universal love."

ALAN FAIRFORD.

Toronto, December, 1837.

"What I do, thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter"—is the unvaried language of God, in his Providence. He will have *credit* every step. He will not assign reasons, because he will exercise faith.—*Cecil*.

LETTER 4.

Toronto, 30th November, 1837.

TO THE HONBLE. WILLIAM MORRIS:

Sir, In support of your general accusation against the Provincial Government, "That with a few exceptions the Scots Inhabitants have met with the most discouraging obstacles to their applications for grants of land for their several Churches," you depend most unfortunately upon a letter with a table and remarks compiled by the Rev'd William Rintoul, Moderator of the Synod, from answers to queries transmitted to certain congregations. With these documents it is very difficult to deal.—They exhibit such an absence of courtesy, and indulge in such recklessness of assertion, that it is no easy matter to speak of them in terms of decent respect. I should not have considered them deserving of the slightest attention, had they not been brought officially under the notice of Lord Glenelg by a gentleman of your rank and respectability in the Colony, and might, from their formal appearance and supposed accuracy of research, obtain a weight which they by no means deserve.

What Mr. Rintoul asserts in his letter about the arrogant claims of the Episcopalians, I pass over in silence; but when he ventures to stigmatise the new members of the council of King's College as being of the most intolerant grade, and attacks Her Majesty's Attorney General of the Province in the language of extreme rudeness, I may be permitted an expression of honest indignation. It is too much that a comparative stranger should thus speak of gentlemen of the first talents and influence in the colony—natives of the soil and universally esteemed,—but it presents a melancholy, though true specimen of the spirit which attends the violent opposition of the Scotch Presbyterians to the Established Church. One of the college councillors, thus calumniated was, till very lately, a distinguished Professor and Captain of Engineers at Woolwich: the other was selected by the most respectable Presbyterian congregation in the colony, namely that of Kingston, to present their petition on the subject of the Rectories to the Legislative Council; a duty which he faithfully discharged.

The Attorney General, Mr. Hagerman, employed his splendid eloquence and personal influence last winter to produce harmony on the subject of the Clergy Reserves, and offered the only resolution that met with general concurrence, or was calculated to calm the rising dissensions of the House of Assembly. If he gave umbrage to the Scotch Presbyterians, it was by an honest exposition of their true object; namely, the aggrandisement of their own church at the expense of the Establishment. This he did in language which was mildness itself compared to that employed by their own members against the church of England; and for so doing he has been applauded by the most respectable and intelligent portion of the community not belonging to the church of Scotland, for all other denominations are becoming disgusted with their violent and selfish pretensions. I perceive that Mr. Rintoul's letter has been omitted in the Pamphlet, and the Table only inserted; and I deeply regret that the same prudential considerations did not induce a gentleman of your known sagacity to withhold a paper so disrespectful; for, by placing it before Lord Glenelg, you have become, in some measure identified with its misstatements and calumnies.

From Mr. Rintoul's table, as it was presented to Lord Glenelg, (the printed one not being exactly the same) I subjoin columns 8 and 9, being the only portions connected with the present discussion.

Columns eighth and ninth of the Rev. Wm. Rintoul's Table.

TABLE 1.

Name of Congregations.	8th.		9th.	
	Land from Government.	Application to Government & result.	Land from Government.	Application to Government & result.
Ramsay,	None,	Unsuccessful.		
Smith's Falls,	None,			
Brockville,	None,	Unsuccessful.		
Kingston,	One acre,	Unsuccessful.		
Belleville,	One acre and a half.	No application.		
Cobourg,	None,	Unsuccessful.		
Peterboro' & Cayon,	Two acres,	Unsuccessful.		
Otanabee & Dum-mer Township,	Three hundred acres.	Successful.		
Scarborough,	None,	Unsuccessful.		
Streetsville,	None,	No application.		
Toronto City,				
Oakville,	None,	No application.		
Cornwall,	Two one acre lots, Glebe 100 acres,	Successful.		
Amherstburg,	None,			
Aldborough,	None,	No application.		
Niagara,	Four acres,			
Ancaster & Dundas,	One & one third acre,			
Zorra,	Two hundred acres,	Successful.		
Galt,	None,	No application.		
Thorold, Chippawa,	None,	No application.		
Hamilton,	None,	No application.		

This portion of Mr. Rintoul's table is intended to prove your accusation against the Provincial Government, "that with very few exceptions, the Scots Inhabitants have met with the most discouraging obstacles to their applications for grants of land for their several Churches," and contains twenty one applications of which three only are marked successful. Now it must be confessed that if this statement be correct, the justice of the accusation is fairly made out. But notwithstanding the table of the ninth column, it appears, on examination, that nine only applied to Government for land and therefore the remainder could not have been refused what they never asked. Of the nine it will be proved that seven, and not three as Mr. Rintoul has it, were successful; and two not refused, but deferred; so that one application met with a denial. The Reverend compiler has, indeed, entered a sort of saving clause in his remarks on the ninth column of his table, and I am not disposed to deprive him of its benefit. He then says, "in this column, viz. the ninth, applications are sometimes marked unsuccessful, although they had been in the first instance favourably entertained by the Governor in Council."

TABLE 2.

Of applications made by congregations in connexion with the Kirk of Scotland for land, and the result to September 1837, extracted from the records of the Executive Council and Surveyor General's Office.

Names of the Congregations.	Granted on	Result
KINGSTON.	Granted on 1st Oct. 1817,	one acre in the Town of Kingston, very valuable, and containing five building lots. Patents issued.
BELLEVILLE.	Granted 24th July 1822,	lots 30 & 31 east side of Church street. Patents issued.
OSNABURGH.	Granted on 6th Oct. 1826,	the western half of the centre common in the Township of Osnaburgh, 24 acres. Patents issued.
WILLIAMSBURGH.	Granted on 6th Oct. 1826,	the westerly half of a strip of land situated in the centre of the Township of Williamsburgh, 70 acres. Patents issued.
MARTIN TOWN.	Granted on 7th Dec. 1830,	west half of lot 16 on the south side of the River Aux Raisin Township of Charlottenburgh, 100 acres. Patents issued.
MONO.	Granted 11th Oct. 1830,	west half of lot 13 in 6th concession east Hurontario street.
PERTH.	Granted on 12th Feb. 1831,	a piece of ground in the Town of Perth being part of what is called Mount Myers, —again on the 10th Jan. 1833, lot number 26 in the 10th concession of the Township of Elmsley, 200 acres—a most valuable tract of land. Patents issued.
CORNWALL.	Granted 7th June 1831,	easterly half of No. 5 in 2nd concession Township of Cornwall, in all 100 acres—besides two acres formerly given in the centre of the Town which is of great value. Patents issued.
DUNDAS OR COOTE'S PARADISE.	Granted on 3rd April 1834,	Block B south of Ancaster street, village of Dundas or Coote's Paradise. Patents issued.
LANARK.	Granted on 3rd Feb. 1834,	lot No. 22 north side of Clarence street on the 2nd concession of the Township of Lanark, and again on 2nd June 1836, Park lot No. 4 and westerly half of lot No. 2 in 2nd concession of the Township of Lanark. Patent for the 200 acres issued.
RICHMOND.	Granted on 11th Jan. 1834,	lot No. 11 west side of Maitland street in the Town of Richmond, and lot 11 east side of Fortune street and a Park lot.
TORONTO.	Granted on 3rd Sept. 1835,	southerly half of lot No. 2 in the 4th concession east Yonge street, 100 acres again 7th April 1836—on relinquishing the above, the Commissioner of Crown Lands is instructed to set apart 200 acres in some convenient place for the purposes prayed for—besides the Govt. lot north side of Dutchess street containing half an acre; granted a tract on 1st Dec. 1824, for a burial ground.
PUSLINCH.	Granted 8th Dec. 1835,	half lot 28 in 8th concession of Puslinch 100 acres. Patent issued.
ELDON.	Granted 8th Dec. 1835,	No. 6 in 4th concession of Eldon 200 acres. Patent issued.
THORAL.	Granted 30th May 1835,	easterly half of 10 in 4th concession of Thorol. Patent issued.
BINBROOKE.	Granted 5th Nov. 1835,	any crown lot which may be vacant—no selection yet made.
BROCKVILLE.	Granted 200 acres 2d June 1836,	not yet located.

PETERBOROUGH.—Granted on 22d July 1836, 200 acres besides lot F fronting on Brock street, and lots 12 and 13 north of Brock street, Town of Peterborough. Patents issued.

PICKERING.—Granted 27th Oct. 1836, 200 acres not yet located.

ZORRA.—Granted No. 25 in 5th concession of Zorra 200 acres clergy Reserves on 20th Oct. 1836.

NICHOL.—Granted 13th June 1836, No. 8 in 1st concession of Garrafraxa clergy reserves. Patent issued.

BYTOWN.—Granted 19th May 1836, part of lot H in concession C Township of Nepean. Patent issued.

GANANOQUE.—Granted on 28th July 1836, No. 5 in 2d concession Leeds Township clergy reserves. Patent issued.

FREDERICKSBURGH.—Granted lots 9 10 11 & 12 east side Richmond street in village of Fredericksburgh on 25 Aug 1836.

CAVAN.—Granted 22d July 1836, 200 acres, not yet located.

DUMMER.—Granted 9th March 1837, west half of 6 in 4th concession.

CHATHAM.—Granted 7th July 1837, ten acres adjoining Town of Chatham. Patent issued.

SMITH'S FALLS.—Granted lot No. 17 in 7th concession Township of Montague, 11th May 1837. Patent issued.

The answer to the following applications by the Governor in Council was "that in the present state of the Clergy Reserve question, the council do not think it advisable to recommend any further appropriations."

Name	Read in council	Date
RAMSAY	Read in council	10th December 1836.
SCARBOROUGH	Petition read in council	10th Dec. 1836.
WHIT CHURCH	" "	23d May 1836.
KING	" "	10th Dec. 1836.
LOCHIEL	" "	22d Dec. 1836.
ORO	" "	16th March 1837.
OSGOODE	" "	23d Feb. 1837.
CUMBERLAND	" "	21st Jan. 1837.

By this table it will be seen that the applications are thirty-six:—that nineteen were successful, having located their Glebes; four have not yet selected their Glebes; five have received valuable town or village lots; and eight are not refused, but deferred, pending the discussions on the question of the Clergy Reserves. On comparing the two tables, every honest man must be amazed at the gross deception which Mr. Rintoul attempted on the Secretary of State for the Colonies and to which you have had the misfortune to become a party.

It is material to remark that of all these applications only seven were made previous to 1833: three were made in 1834; and five in 1835. All the rest were made in 1836 and 1837,—thus proving that the Scotch Congregations are of very recent organization and can therefore have had as yet little moral influence on the colony. It is farther manifest, from the second table, that the local Government has been so far from throwing obstacles in the way of applications for land, that it has been peculiarly favourable to all coming from Scotch Congregations; and I can testify, from long experience, that the colonial authorities never failed, when in their power, to satisfy all applications for Glebes from congregations connected with the Church of Scotland.

It farther appears that there are nineteen churches in connexion with the Kirk of Scotland endowed with Glebes in the Province of Upper Canada; which is a greater number, in proportion to the adherents of that church, than the fifty-seven Rectories to those belonging to the church of England; and this has been done by the local Government without the slightest authority. Is it not therefore passing strange that, with a church better endowed in proportion to its claims and numbers than the church of England, you and your constituents should be so blind to your own interests as to cry out against the Rectories?

Had you succeeded, it is quite evident that the Government would have been compelled, in common justice, to resume all the lands conferred on your church and on other denominations, at the same moment that they abolished the Rectories.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obt. humble servt.

JOHN STRACHAN.

THE CHURCH.

COBOURG, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1837.

There is not perhaps a class of men in any community who undergo a greater share of labour, both of body and mind, than do the Protestant Episcopal Clergy of America, whether in the United States, the Canadas, or the Provinces of Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. We do not intend now to speak of the success of that labour,—how far the fruit is, in general, commensurate with the toil bestowed,—but we affirm, without fear of contradiction, that there is no class of men, amongst all the grades of society, who encounter more to wear out the energies of the physical and moral constitution than the Clergy of that Church which, for the sake of embracing our revered sister communion in the United States, we shall term the Episcopal Church.

This will be the ready admission of any who have had opportunities of observing the manifold and harassing occupations of the Missionary or parish Clergyman in a new country,—while he pursues, in all weather and in all roads, his weekly round of toilsome duty; fulfilling, with calm and unabated zeal, his multiplied engagements far and near; and employing every hour which he is permitted to spend by his fireside at home, under every fluctuation too of health and spirits, in preparation for those Sabbath duties which a becoming sense of his solemn commission will not suffer him lightly or without deep and anxious thought to undertake.

But while such are the unwearying occupations of those who fill the humbler posts in the sanctuary of the Lord, it is not to be supposed that they who occupy the highest stations there experience one jot less of the same incessant toil. Who that looks, for instance, to the vast amount of labour accomplished in a single year by one of our Colonial Bishops, or by one of the prelates of the sister Church in the United States, but must feel himself carried back to the days when those Missionary Overseers of the Church, the Apostles, traversed every known land

to scatter the good seed of the Word; and when the round of journeying was complete, renewing, without a respite, the same toilsome travel, to observe the growth of the planted seed, and water and foster it with their preaching and their prayers, with their tears and their blood?

A perusal of the Episcopal acts of the Bishop of New York, as detailed at the late meeting of the Convention of that Diocese, awakens in us as much astonishment as delight at the vast amount of the labour performed by that indefatigable prelate in a single year,—the thousands of miles which his journeys embrace, and the sermons, confirmations, consecrations, &c. which take place, not in the intervals of travel, after body and mind are refreshed by repose, but almost daily, and often twice, and even three times in a day!

From the 'Churchman' we abstract the following brief synopsis of the Episcopal Acts of the Bishop of New York, during the year ending at the late Diocesan Convention; and we annex the refreshing statement which the Bishop furnishes of the general reception of those services he was so actively engaged in fulfilling, as well as of the general prospects of the Church over which he so faithfully presides:

- Ordained 19 deacons.
- Ordained 17 priests.
- Instituted 7 rectors and 1 assistant minister.
- Confirmed 1252 persons on 96 occasions.
- Laid the corner-stone of 3 churches.
- Consecrated 16 churches.

On all occasions of the performance of episcopal duties, on which sermons were preached, that duty was performed by myself, except where otherwise particularly noted.

It has been to me a source of devout gratitude to God to perceive, in my visits to the congregations of this Diocese, through the past year, evidences of a state of general prosperity,—temporal, far beyond what I feared would be the consequence of the prevailing temporal distress, but mainly spiritual, never, I believe, surpassed in the history of our Diocese. Our parishes were never more generally supplied with ministerial services, and our clergy never more actively engaged in their Master's work. The blessed spirit of Christian unity and affection is strongly cherished and extensively prevalent; the spirit of true godliness is evidently increasing among us; and certainly I have no recollection of a year in which the services connected with my visitations have been so uniformly well attended. God be blessed for this happy state of things! and may he overrule it to the praise of the glory of his sanctifying and saving grace!

After this account of the Episcopal labours of the Bishop of New York, it becomes us to look at the evidences of a kindred zeal nearer home. None who knew the Lord Bishop of Montreal as a parish clergyman—who knew his exemplary devotion to every department of that interesting duty—but would be well prepared to hear that, in his higher office, he had become the watchful and never tiring overseer. But we shall adduce his own acts to speak for themselves.

STATEMENT of the Ordinations and Confirmations held in the Diocese of Quebec, since the assumption of the Episcopal charge, upon the spot, by the Lord Bishop of Montreal.

ORDINATIONS.

- In the Cathedral Church at Quebec:—
- 1836.
- Oct. 28th, (St. Simon and St. Jude)—DEACON, W. M. Herchmer, B. A., of Queen's College, in the University of Oxford: Appointed Chaplain to the Penitentiary at Kingston.
- Nov. 1st, (All Saints)—PRIESTS, The Rev. Harvey Vachell, Travelling Missionary in the District of Quebec: The Rev. S. S. Strong, Acting Chaplain to the Forces at Quebec, (since appointed to the charge of Bytown and Hull): The Rev. A. Knight, Missionary at Frampton and parts adjacent, in the District of Quebec: The Rev. C. P. Reid, Assistant Minister at St. John's, L. C.
- In Christ Church, Montreal:—
- 1837.
- Jan. 15th, (Sunday)—PRIEST, The Rev. J. C. Usher, Acting Missionary to the Mohawk Indians, Grand River, with the charge of Brandford annexed.
- In the Cathedral Church at Quebec:—
- May 21st, (Sunday)—DEACONS, H. D. Sewell, M. A. of Trinity College, Oxford, to a temporary charge in settlements adjacent to Quebec: W. Brethour, B. A., of Trinity College, Dublin, to the Chateaugay Mission, L. C.: R. H. Bourne, formerly Student in the University of New York, to the Mission of Rawdon, in the District of Montreal.
- June 4th, (Sunday)—DEACON, H. Scadding, B. A. of St. John's College, Cambridge, at present engaged as tutor in the family of Sir John Colborne. PRIEST, The Rev. F. L. Osler, B. A. of Catharine Hall, Cambridge, Missionary from the U. C. Clergy Society, appointed to the charge of Tecumseth and West Gwillimsbury, in the Home District, U. C.
- Sept. 24th, (Sunday)—DEACONS, F. J. Lundy, S. C. L. of University College, Oxford, Head Master of Quebec Classical School: F. G. Elliot, formerly Theological Student at Chambly, at present serving the congregation at Colchester, near Amherstburgh, U. C.—PRIEST, The Rev. W. M. Herchmer, (see ordination 28th Oct. 1836)
- Nov. 5th, (Sunday)—DEACON, E. Cusack B. A. of Catharine Hall, Cambridge, to the Mission of Gaspé Bay, in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

CONFIRMATIONS.

1837.

WINTER-VISITATION.

- Jan. 10th. At William-Henry or Sorel—No. of persons 22
- 12th. Township of Rawdon.....27
- 16th. Montreal.....151
- 18th. St. Andrew's, (Ottawa River).....20
- 19th. Grenville, (Ottawa River).....20
- 26th. Vandreuil, (Ottawa River).....25
- 28th. Coteau du Lac.....14
- 29th. Ormestown, (Chateaugay River).....72
- Feb. 2nd. Chateaugay Basin.....26
- 4th. Chambly.....29

- 5th. St. John's.....10
- 7th. Clarenceville, (near the Isle aux Noix).....31
- 9th. Philipsburgh (St. Armand West, Missisquoi bay) 12
- 11th. Frelighsburg, (St. Armand East).....21
- 12th. Township of Dunham.....32
- 16th. Abbotsford, (Yamaska Mountain).....21
- 19th. Froste Village, Township of Shefford..... 4
- 21st. Charleston, Township of Hatley.....10
- 23rd. Township of Eaton.....11
- 26th. Sherbrooke, (Township of Ascot).....22
- 28th. Township of Shipton.....13
- March 2d. Drummondville, Township of Grantham.....16
- 12th. Frampton, (District of Quebec).....55

Summer-Visitation in the District of Gaspé in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

- June 25th. Gaspé Basin.....80
- 27th. St. George's Cove, (Gaspé Bay)..... 4
- 28th. Mal Bay.....14
- 29th. Percie..... 6
- 30th. L'Anse au beau-Fils.....15
- July 2nd. New Carlisle, (Bay of Chaleurs).....39
- 4th. Hopetown, do. do. 4
- 4th. Pessebiac, do. do. 9

The whole number of persons confirmed is exceedingly small in proportion to the Church of England population in Lower Canada: but a variety of circumstances concurred to produce this effect. The late Bishop of Quebec had recently held confirmations at Quebec (which furnishes a larger number of candidates than any other place in the whole Diocese,) and at Three Rivers, the confirmation at the latter place comprehending the candidates from Nicolet. These three stations, therefore, were omitted. The Riviere du Loup was twice visited by the Bishop of Montreal for the purpose of confirming the young persons of the church at that place and in the settlements in the rear—but in both instances the clergyman in charge and the catechist acting under his direction, had been prevented, by the extraordinary state of the roads and weather, and other accidental causes, from bringing forward the candidates. The joint Mission of Bytown and Hull was visited by the Bishop; but there were untoward circumstances which had precluded the preparation of the young persons of the flock. The Mission of Stanbridge had been for some time vacant, and there had been no person there to prepare them. In the township of Leeds and the adjacent tract of country, (in the District of Quebec,) some unavoidable impediments to the satisfactory preparation of the candidates had occurred, and the Bishop, at the instance of the ministers, postponed the confirmation for some months.

Independently of these deductions from causes which prevented the holding of confirmations, they were greatly thinned by different circumstances, in some of the places where they were held. The winter was remarkable for snow-storms; and in many instances, in the eastern townships, the roads communicating with the back settlements were so choked up, that the people could not go out to meet the Bishop. In the District of Gaspé, it having been impossible, from the uncertainties of the voyage, to fix a precise time beforehand for the confirmation, many persons who would have presented themselves, being engaged in the fisheries, were obliged to be out at sea. Some, however, who were within reach of the intelligence, came in again for the purpose of receiving the rite.

But more than all, it is to be remembered that there are unhappily many places in different parts of the Province, where large congregations of the Church of England are totally destitute of the services of a clergyman or even of a catechist, and consequently will not be so assisted as to be prepared for the important solemnity of confirmation.

We understand that, in the anticipation of a division, at no distant period, of the Diocese, the Bishop of Montreal has signified his intention to confine his official labours, as it respects Upper Canada, to those matters which can be disposed of by correspondence, till the result of the negotiations for the object just stated shall be known. This decision, however, is subject to alteration, should any urgent occasion present itself, requiring the presence of the Bishop in the Upper Province; but should no such occasion occur, his Lordship conceives it best to leave it to the new Bishop to take up the charge, as far as concerns the duties of visitation and personal inspection, where it was left by the late lamented Bishop of Quebec, and to put every thing in train from the first, according to his own judgment.

In a late number we acknowledged the receipt of a Sermon by Bishop Doane of New Jersey, entitled, "The Apostolical commission the Missionary charter of the Church." This important and well sustained position is very naturally deduced from the text adopted by the Right Reverend preacher, viz. Matthew xxviii. 18—20. Apart however from internal evidences, which so clearly establish the proposition which the learned Bishop assumes, a mass of practical proof is brought forward to shew that this settled principle of the apostles was duly seconded by their acts.

We have already mentioned that this excellent sermon was occasioned by the ordination of the celebrated Missionary, Mr. Joseph Wolff, but we cannot better introduce this portion of the subject to our readers than in the words of the eloquent Bishop himself:

Brethren of this congregation, it is by virtue of the commission given by Jesus Christ to the apostles, and in furtherance of the great trust reposed in them for this most glorious object, that we are gathered here to-day. And strange, beyond the fondest dreams of a poetic fancy, the circumstances of the case. There is a little village (Weilersbach) in Bavaria, the residence, it may be of an hundred Jews. The Rabbi has a son, whom he instructs "after the most perfect manner of the law of his fathers." Even from four years old, he is accustomed to regard the Christians who surround him as worshippers of a mere cross of wood. But God has better things in store for him. He leads him in a way of which he did not know; and, through the instructions of a village barber, he is brought, at eight years old, to the determination to be a Christian. It was, of course, a child's conclusion. But with his growth it grew, and strengthened with his strength. Difficulties could not daunt it, opposition did but confirm it. Even the

love of parents and of kindred could not overcome it. And, at fourteen years of age, he solicits Christian baptism. His first acquaintance with Christianity is in the Church of Rome. His first determination is to be a Missionary. From the bosom of the pious family of a German nobleman, who dignified his station by humility and piety, he proceeds to Rome, to prepare himself at her most distinguished seat of learning, the College of the Propaganda, for the work to which he is devoted. But still, the Lord has better things in store for him. His unsophisticated mind discovers soon that the Christianity of Rome is not the Christianity which, in Count Stolberg's family, had won and satisfied his youthful heart. Litanies to the Virgin, pretended miracles, the suppression of the Scriptures, the infallibility of the Pope, are to him quite inconsistent with the simplicity of the Cross. Alarmed at the corruptions of doctrine, and disgusted with the corruptions in practice, which deform the Church of Rome, he openly denounces both, and determines to go from her. "I will go to the East," he says, "and preach the Gospel of Christ!" After a residence of between two and three years, during which he received what the Church of Rome, without the least shadow of authority from Scripture, denominates the *minor orders*, he is sent away, by the Pope's express command, as one who would taint the scholars of the Propaganda with his sentiments; the Cardinal to whom this office was invested, and who was his personal and intimate friend, performing it with tears, and assuring him, in his parting letter, of his unqualified affection. Cast off by the mother of his adoption, and sent adrift among the errors of German infidelity, it had been but natural, if he had so made shipwreck of the faith; and passed, as so many pass, from the slavery of believing too much, to the far sorer bondage of believing nothing. But still, the Lord has better things in store for him. "The providence of God," as he himself expresses it, "conducted him to some English Christians." His feet are turned to England. He arrives at London, not yet twenty-four years of age. He finds in the Church of England the Gospel, which for sixteen years he has been seeking. He repairs to Cambridge. He enjoys the patronage, the instructions, and the confidence of the Rev. Charles Simeon and the Rev. Professor Lee. He sets out, two years after, in the Spring of 1821, on that errand of Christian love to his benighted brethren of the Jewish faith, which, from Gibraltar and Malta and Alexandria and Cairo and Jerusalem, has carried him through Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, Georgia, Persia, Tartary, Koordistan, Bokhara, Thibet, Arabia, Abyssinia, and India. He has been, with the apostle, in weakness and painfulness and watchings and hunger and thirst and cold and nakedness. With him, he has been beaten with rods, and in perils among false brethren. He has been thrice sold as a slave, and twice condemned to death. And he is now here, to receive—what he has never yet received, nor professed to receive—the Scriptural authority to preach the Gospel; and, though in learning, in experience, in wisdom, in sufferings for the Gospel's sake, so greatly my superior, to go forth, from the laying on of my hands—such is the order of God's providence—the recipient of that lowest order of the ministry which Christ has established in his Church, the office of a deacon; and, thus entrusted with a portion of that high commission, to "make disciples of all nations," which Jesus gave to his apostles, to resume his wanderings, and renew his efforts, and prove, in suffering and toil and self-denial, that, with Paul—like him, a convert from the old Mosaic faith—his "heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they may be saved."

There is not a sentence of this beautiful and impressive sermon which we should not be glad to transfer to our columns; but further extracts, especially the exquisitely fine allusion to the ashes of Wickliff, we faithfully promise to our readers at no distant date.

The following letter, from being forwarded to us, we presume was designed for insertion in 'The Church,' and we publish it accordingly. Much as we regret that any cause for dissension should have arisen between the Churches of England and Scotland, we rejoice that there is one common ground on which the members of both can plant themselves side by side, animated with a kindred zeal,—the suppression of "the enemies of our country." And while we know that, in its hour of danger, the Archdeacon of York was amongst the most fearless and energetic, we feel as well assured that the Hon. William Morris will be found equally prompt and intrepid at the call of duty.

PERTH, 13th December, 1837.

SIR,—To the politeness of the Rev. Editor of "The Church," I suppose I am indebted for Nos. 25 and 26 of that paper which reached me by the mail this night. In them I perceive numbers 1 and 2 of a series of Letters which you are addressing to me through the medium of that journal, and this is briefly to say that when you have completed the series—and when the enemies of our country are subdued, you shall receive a reply from

Sir,
Your obd't humble servt.
W. MORRIS.

To the Hon. & Ven. the }
Archdeacon of York. }

SIR MATTHEW HALE'S OBSERVANCE OF CHRISTMAS DAY.

He had for many years a particular devotion for Christmas Day; and after he had received the sacrament, and been in the performance of the public worship of that day, he commonly wrote a copy of verses on the honour of his Saviour, as a fit expression of the joy he felt in his soul, at the return of that glorious anniversary. There are seventeen of these copies printed, which he writ on seventeen several Christmas Days, by which the world has a taste of his poetical genius; in which, if he had thought it worth his time to have excelled, he might have been eminent, as well as in other things: but he writ them rather to entertain himself, than to merit the laurel. ***** Thus he used to sing on former Christmas Days; but now he was to be admitted to bear his part in the new songs above: so that day, which he had spent in so much spiritual joy, proved to be indeed the day of his jubilee and deliverance; for between two and three in the afternoon [of Christmas Day, 1676], he breathed out his righteous and pious soul. His end was peace; he had no strugglings, nor seemed to be in any pangs in his last moments.—*Ep. Burnet.*

DIED,

At the Rectory, Bath, on Saturday the 16th inst. Robert Pascal, infant son of the Rev. A. F. Atkinson, aged 2 days.

LETTERS received to Friday, Dec. 22d:—

John White, Esq. rem.; Rev. A. F. Atkinson, rem.; Rev. R. Blakey, [the mistake has been rectified and the required Nos. sent.]—Mr. James McLaren [the papers shall be sent.]

In Letter 3, of the Ven. The Archdeacon of York, inserted in our last, 2d column, line 40 from the top, there is an error in the punctuation. It should read thus, "many of them have been divided into Parishes, and the patronage retained in the Crown; and in all Commissions, Instructions to Governors &c."

Poetry.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

Star of the East, whose beacon light
A gleam on Bethlehem threw,
And thither by that wondrous sight
Arabia's sages drew;
On thee in thought we love to gaze
In western climes afar,
And think on thy mysterious rays,
Thou lovely eastern star.

Fair is the star of eve that sheds
Her light betokening rest;
And fair the morning star that leads
The day in glory drest:
But still more fair thy form arose,
And lovelier to behold,
Which of a more serene repose,
A brighter glory told.

Hail thou, whose silvery radiance led
Those Magian chiefs to bring
Their choicest gifts, in worship spread
Before Judah's King:
That glorious Sun, whose harbinger
Thy light was made to shine,
And like the pillar'd flame, to bear
Aloft salvation's sign.

Hail thou, appointed to adorn
The rising King of Heaven,
The promis'd child to Judah born,
The Son to Israel given:
In whom the peaceful empire seal'd
Should more and more increase;
In Him, the mighty God reveal'd,
In Him, the Prince of Peace!

So on thy beacon light we gaze
In western climes afar,
And note thy heav'n-directed rays,
Thou lovely eastern star:
With praise to Him, who in the sky
Thy wondrous cresset hung,
Prompt to inform the observing eye,
Apart from speech the tongue:

Him who permits to all to see
The light their stations need;
Who chose the star-verse'd sage by thee,
Star of the east, to lead;
Who made by shepherd swains at night,
The angel's voice be heard;
And gives to us his Scriptures' light,
His own recording word.

Saturday Magazine, 1833.

CHURCH CALENDAR.

Dec. 24.—Fourth Sunday in Advent.
25.—CHRISTMAS DAY.
26.—St. Stephen's Day.
27.—St. John's Day.
28.—Innocent's Day.
31.—Sunday after Christmas.

1833.

Jan. 1.—Circumcision.
6.—Epiphany.

THE PROFLIGATE RECLAIMED;

OR, THE HISTORY OF BOB SMITH.

"Bob Smith is come home, Sir," said my house-keeper one Saturday evening; "he was not expected until to-night; but George Brown, the guard of the Royal Charlotte, who was an old school-fellow of Bob's, overtook him on the road yesterday, when he was quite knocked up, and gave him a lift; so he got home the sooner. I hope he won't prove a trouble to his mother, poor woman. It would have been better for her, I think if he had not got off."

Bob Smith was the son of the hostess at the White Lion; and had been notorious while a lad for his profligacy. He was unquestionably the idlest boy in the school, and known to be a habitual liar. His parents had done every thing to reform him, but in vain. He had been twice before the magistrates at the petty sessions; once on the accusation of poaching, and once of theft; but though there was little doubt of his guilt, on neither of these occasions was he convicted. One night, after a strong expostulation from his father, he left home. He made his way to Liverpool, where he went on board a merchant-vessel, and was soon afterwards pressed. After remaining some time in the navy, he was out in a boat, with five or six of his comrades, and was taken by the enemy, carried into France, and detained as a prisoner. He was now set at liberty by an exchange, and lost no time in returning to his native village. He had not heard of the death of his father, until Brown, the guard, informed him. He had written to tell of his arrival in England, and poor Mrs. Smith was quite overwhelmed with joy at the prospect of again seeing him; for, notwithstanding his many faults, he was her only surviving child, and "she was a widow."

The return of Bob caused, as may be supposed, a considerable sensation in the village. A greater number of persons than usual called at the White Lion, and among them some of his old school-fellows; but Bob did not appear, much to the disappointment of those who wished to see him after his long absence, and to hear about Buonaparte and the French.

The following day, as I was leaving the vestry for the reading-desk, a paper was put into my hand. It expressed the wish of Robert Smith to return thanks to Almighty God for his great mercies lately vouchsafed to him in his deliverance from captivity in a foreign land. I was much pleased and interested with the circumstance, and, on entering the desk, I perceived Mrs. Smith in her pew as usual; for she never missed attendance on divine service, or suffered her worldly calling to interfere with her religious duties. The White Lion was conducted by her with great propriety; and Mrs. Smith testified how compatible attention to a business not very favourable for spiritual improvement, was with a strict observance of the law of God. Seated beside her, there was a sickly-looking, youngish man, whose clothes bore ample marks that they were not made for him; it was, in fact, a suit which belonged to his father. I had no doubt that this was Bob; and I was forcibly struck with his serious demeanor both during the prayers and the sermon.

"They say that Bob Smith is quite altered," said the clerk in the vestry after service, "and that he is now very religious. A sad chap he was; he tormented his mother nearly out of her life, and he heeded not the reproofs of his father. He seems, however, quite another thing now. I am sure it will do the Rector's heart good to hear of this; for seriously and kindly he used to speak to Bob, and warn him of the evil of his ways; and I did hear that Bob was much vexed when he was told that the old gentleman was away."

"I trust Smith is altered," I replied. "I am quite pleased with the public testimony of his gratitude to God. I should like to see him."

As I was returning the following day from a visit to the mother of a deceased young parishoner, I met Smith in the fields. He bowed most respectfully, and was about to pass on. I stopped and spoke. I was pleased with his civil manner, and expressed a wish that he should call at the rectory in the evening. He did so; and the visit was a most interesting one.

After alluding most feelingly to the fearfully wicked life he had led, in answer to my inquiries, he informed me that, while in the merchant service, he had been, on two several occasions, very nearly shipwrecked; and that while in the navy, he had been in two engagements, and had seen his comrades falling around him, while he was unhurt: but, notwithstanding his preservation, he confessed that he had never once thanked his Almighty Preserver. "I was, Sir, in fact, all this time living 'without God in the world.' I never prayed. I was noted for my profligacy amongst the profligates; for my profanity amongst the profane."

"But when," I asked, "did you begin to think seriously?"

"Not, Sir, until I had been in a French prison," was his reply.

"What led you, while there, to think on religion?"

"There was one of my comrades, a Protestant Irishman, who was taken prisoner with me, and who was known in the ship as the *saint*, and sadly persecuted he used to be reading his Bible, when he had a spare half hour. When on shore he would never keep company with the loose characters which swarm in our seaports, or frequent the low-tipping-houses, where the poor sailor often spends in a day or two all his hard-earned wages.—And yet he was the bravest fellow on board. Well, sir, two nights after we were in the prison, I exclaimed, with an oath, that we might be there all our days, and that probably we should be butchered to save the expense of our living, and that we had not a friend to look upon us, to pity and to relieve us."

"I think," says Jack Hill, for that was my comrade's name, 'you're quite wrong, Bob; I am sure we have a friend;' and he repeated a verse or two of one of the same Psalms read at church yesterday; and I confess I felt quite touched when I heard it."

"What was that?" I asked.

"It was from the 102d. 'He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. ***** For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth; to hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death.' My comrades and I laughed heartily at Jack Hill, even in the midst of our misery; and we told him plainly, we wanted to hear no more such methodical stuff. I can't tell how it was, Sir, but during the same night I had very little or no sleep, and I could not help thinking again and again on these passages of Scripture. Jack was lying near me fast asleep. I could not make it out. 'Here,' I said, 'is this fellow, that we used to laugh at for his seriousness, he is now far the most contented and happiest amongst us; surely religious people cannot be so melancholy.' The words that he had repeated occurred to my mind again and again during many days, nay, weeks; and when I used to see Jack reading a small Bible, which had been in his pocket when we were taken prisoners, I could not help envying his contentment, while my other comrades were cursing and swearing, and repining at their hard lot. I need not weary you, Sir, with my own affairs: I can only say, thanks be to God, Jack was the means employed by him to make me think more seriously; and it is my constant prayer that I may be humble and thankful."

I was much interested in this simple detail; and, on further inquiry, I found that Hill had died, after two years' confinement; that he had, in his dying moments, given ample testimony to the power of the Gospel; and that he had departed in peace.

He had bequeathed his Bible to Smith, as the only legacy he could leave; and I felt convinced that Smith was seriously impressed with a sense of religion. He expressed to me the unspeakable comfort he had experienced in reading the Bible and talking with Jack in prison; how many hours, that would otherwise have been solitary and gloomy, were rendered most delightful and profitable by communion with this true christian friend. He again and again expressed his thankfulness that he had been taken a prisoner; for, he said, "I am sure, if I had not, I still, if alive, should have been a wild profligate." I could not help thinking of the prison-house of Philippi, where Paul and Silas sang praises to God.

I took frequent opportunities of conversing with Smith; and I had no doubt of his entire sincerity. I saw the Bible which had been bequeathed to him, and it bore evident marks of having been no unread volume. The total change which had taken place in his character, was a wonder unto many who remembered him in the days of his youth, and his utter recklessness of all that was holy,—and a subject of ridicule to not a few. Some went even so far as to charge him with hypocrisy; and I myself felt that perhaps he used sometimes to talk of his religious feelings in a manner somewhat enthusiastic; and I was afraid lest he might be induced to leave my ministry for that of some sectaries, who dissented from the doctrine and discipline of our Church, and who were then very active in seeking proselytes. But Smith gave increasing evidence of sincerity and of attachment to the services of the Church. He proved a comfort and support to his mother during her declining years. He took a small shop, by the aid of some friends, and with a little money his mother had saved. The old Rector's liberality was, as usual, apparent on this occasion. By dint of industry, civility, and scrupulous honesty, under His blessing, for which prayer was

continually offered, Smith got into a decent business. The last time I saw him, he was clerk of the parish; undertook the gratuitous instruction of a number of poor children; and as the incumbent, with whom I spent a day, informed me, he was the great prop of all that was good in the parish. He had married a respectable and serious young woman, and had a large family.

In considering this case of *conversion*, for by no other name can such a striking change be described, I have often been led to admire the wisdom and goodness of the Almighty in overruling temporal calamity for spiritual and eternal benefit. The dreariness of a wretched prisoner, in a foreign land, was the scene of the richest blessings to the soul of this poor, licentious, depraved profligate. The word, "spoken in season," was instrumental in bringing this ignorant sinner to the saving knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus; and he who entered the walls of the place of his captivity groaning under the bondage of a more fearful than any earthly slavery, that of Satan and of sin, departed from those walls rejoicing, not only in bodily freedom, but in that "wherewith Christ maketh his people free." I have often thought, when I have reflected on this incident, that we are, indeed, poor judges of what is good for us; and that the way wherely God leads us is indeed mysterious. How important, then, that we should cultivate patient submission, unreserved obedience to the Divine will; that we should cast our care upon Him who careth for us, and who bringeth good out of evil. It was a bitter portion in the cup of Joseph when he was sold as a bondman to the Ishmaelitic merchants; but that very circumstance of his being carried into Egypt, was overruled by Infinite Wisdom for his exaltation in honour and power.

The change which was wrought on the character of Smith was a real, and momentous, and total change. It extended to his whole deportment, to his daily walk, to the minutest circumstances of his life. The mother, whose heart he had nearly broken, found him the solace of her declining years. She departed this life in the arms of that son who had long been to her as dead, but was alive again; who had been to her as lost, but had been found. The lips, that had opened only to utter the language of profanation, were opened to celebrate the praises of God. The house of prayer which had never been entered, was now the delight and comfort of the true penitent. The Sabbath of the Lord, once habitually desecrated, was now esteemed honourable and hallowed; and a life of many years, devoted in a comparatively humble sphere to the service of Jehovah, and in the furtherance of the best interests of his fellow-creatures, has afforded the most satisfactory evidence, that a great and saving change was wrought in this poor sinner's heart. And such a change, I would remind the reader, is nothing less than life from the dead. It is not mere reformation. It is not mere improvement. It is not mere amelioration of character, a more correct view of the duties of life. It is real conversion. "If any man be in Christ, he is a *new creature*: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."—*Recollections of a Country Pastor.*

If I meet a man with a beautiful pearl in his hand—he says great things of the brilliancy, value and beauty of this pearl—I follow him a little way—I observe him exchanging his pearl for a few poor pebbles; what shall I think of this man and of the value he set upon the pearl? Why, what I think of you who say great things of Christ, and part with Him for the poor baubles of the world; who talk much of his value, and give your hearts to some earthly pursuit or pleasure.—*Rev. T. Jones of Creaton.*

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