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“ PROVE ALL THINGS, HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD.”

SACREDEXTRACTS.

THE APOSTLES, THE *divinely called*, AND *inspired* TEACHERS OF
THE CHURCH.

“ And (Jesus) *called* unto him his Disciples, and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named Apostles.” Luke vi. 13.

“ Then he called his twelve Disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the Kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.” Luke ix. 1, 2.

“ Paul, called to be an Apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God.” 1 Cor. i. 1.

“ Go ye therefore, (the eleven) and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost : teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.” Mat. xxviii. 19, 20.

“ And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house, or city, shake off the dust off your feet. Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of Judgment, than for that city.” Mat. x. 14, 15.

“ But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak : for it shall be given you in the same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.” Mat. x. 19, 20.

“ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me.” John xiii. 20.

“ Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.” John xvii. 20.

“ And they prayed, and said, thou Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and Apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven Apostles.” Acts i. 24-26.

“ Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, thus it is written, &c.” Luke xxiv. 45, 46.

“ I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me, &c. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them.” John xvii. 6-8.

“ I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.” John xv. 15.

“ But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” John xiv. 26.

“ And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, &c.”
“ They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Acts ii. 1, 4.

“ I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.” Gal. i. 11, 12.

“ But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit.” 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.

“ Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.” “ We have the mind of Christ.” 1 Cor. ii. 12, 13, 16.

“ For we preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen

vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." 2 Cor. iv. 5-7.

"Now then *we* are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us : we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." 2 Cor. v. 20.

"We are of God : he that knoweth God heareth *us* ; he that is not of God, heareth not *us*. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." 1 John iv. 6.

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

No. 4.

The Elements of a Kingdom.

We must understand the type, or we cannot understand the anti-type. We must understand that which is natural, before we can understand that which is spiritual. What, then, are the essential elements of a kingdom as existing among men ?

In every well regulated political kingdom, *in the order of nature*, the elements stand thus—1. Constitution ; 2. King ; 3. Subjects ; 4. Laws ; 5. Territory.

In the kingdom which God set up by Moses, the elements stood in this order. The constitution was first proposed under which God condescended to be their King, and they were to be regarded as his people or subjects ; he then gave them laws and established them in the territory before promised.

Having ascertained the essential elements of a *kingdom*, and marked the order in which they stand, before we particularly attend to these elements in order, we shall ask but why is this kingdom called the Kingdom of *Heaven* ?

The Name

Heaven, and the Kingdom of Heaven are not one and the same thing. God is not the Kingdom of God. But as the Kingdom of God is something pertaining to God, so the Kingdom of Heaven is something pertaining to Heaven, and consequently to God.—Whether always the phrases "the Kingdom of God" and "the Kingdom of Heaven" exactly represent the same thing, certain it is that both phrases are often applied to the same institution.*

* If the following passages are carefully examined and compared, it will appear that both these phrases often represent the same thing :—Math. iii. 17. Mark i. 14. Luke iv. 43.—Math. xiii. 12. Mark iv. 11. Luke viii. 10.—Math xi. 11. Luke vii. 28. To these three distinct evidences many more might be added. What Matthew calls "the Kingdom of HEAVEN," Mark and Luke call "the Kingdom of God."

This is true of them whether translated *reign* or *kingdom*; and it is very evident that frequently the original word *basileia* ought in preference to be regarded *reign*, inasmuch as this term better suits all those passages where *coming* or *approaching* is spoken of: for while reigns or administrations approach and recede, kingdoms have attributes and boundaries which are stationary.—Reign and Kingdom of God, though sometimes applicable to the same subject, never contemplate it in the same light. They are, indeed, as intimately connected as the reign of King William and the Kingdom of Great Britain. The former represents the administration of the kingdom, and the latter the state over which this administration extends.

Two good reasons may be offered why Matthew, the oldest Christian writer, generally prefers Kingdom or Reign of Heaven, to the phrase Kingdom or Reign of God: I say generally, for he occasionally uses *both* designations. (See Matthew vi. 33. xii. 28. xix. 24. xxi. 31, 43.) He wrote to Jews in Judea who expected a Messiah, a King, and a Kingdom of God on earth, a mere improvement of the Jewish system; and, therefore, to raise their conceptions, he delights to call it the Reign or Kingdom of Heaven, in contrast with that earthly Kingdom of God, of which they were so long in possession.

He also found a good reason in the idiom of the Jewish Prophets for using the word *Heaven* (both in the singular and plural form) for *God*. Daniel told the Assyrian monarch that his kingdom would be sure to him when he should have learned that "the Heavens do rule;" yet, in the preceding verse, he says, "Till thou knowest that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men"—thus using *Heavens* and *the Most High* as synonymous. The Psalmist says, "The wicked set their mouths against the Heavens." The Prodigal confesses that he had "sinned against Heaven," and Jesus himself asked whether the baptism of John was "from Heaven or from men." Thus he was authorised from the Jewish use of the word to regard it as equivalent to *God*. If, then, Matthew had meant no more by the phrase "Kingdom of Heaven" than the "Kingdom of God," he was justified by the Jewish use of the word *Heaven*, to apply it in that sense.

When compared with the earthly kingdom of God among the Jews, it is certainly the kingdom of *Heaven*: for Jesus alleges that his kingdom is not of this world; and Daniel affirmed that in the days of the last worldly empire the God of Heaven would set up a kingdom unlike all others then on earth; in which, as Paul teaches, men are "blessed with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ:" (Eph. i. 3.) for he has raised us Jews and Gentiles, and "has set us down together in the heavenly places by Christ Jesus." (Eph. ii. 6.)

But most evidently the kingdom of Heaven is "the kingdom of Christ and of God." (Eph. v. 5.) It is the kingdom of

God because he set it up, (Daniel ii. 44.) gave the constitution and King, and all the materials out of which it is erected. (Jer. xxxi. 31-34.) It is the kingdom of Christ, because God the Father gave it to him as his Son, and as the *heir of all things*; and therefore, "all that is the Father's is mine," says Jesus, "and I am his." (John xvii. 18.) "God created all things BY Jesus Christ and FOR him."

We shall now proceed to consider, in the order suggested, the Constitution, King, Subjects, Laws, and Territory of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Constitution.

God himself, after the gracious counsels of his own will, proposed and tendered the constitution of this kingdom to his own Son. This "glory he had with the Father before the world was." He that was "in the beginning with God"—"the wisdom and power of God"—"was set up [constituted] from everlasting, or ever the earth was." "Then was I with God, as one brought up with him; I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him—rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." (Prov. viii. 23-31.) Therefore, he who was to be "*ruler in Israel*" was with God in counsel "in the beginning of all his ways;" for "his goings forth were from old, even from the days of eternity." (Micah v. 21.)

It was TO DO THE WILL, or fulfil the items in this constitution, that "the word was made flesh and dwelt among us." "I came to do the will of him that sent me," and to finish "the work given me to do." "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to resume it; this commandment I received from my Father." The Father "commissioned and sent him forth into the world. He "came down from heaven." "Thou hast given me power over all flesh, that I might give eternal life to all that thou hast given me."

These, and many other passages which the reader will easily remember, unequivocally evince that an understanding and agreement existed ere time began between God and the Word of God—or, as now revealed, between the FATHER and the SON, respecting this kingdom. In consequence of which, "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us"—in consequence of which "he divested himself" of his antecedent glory—"took upon him the form of a bond-servant"—"was made in the likeness of sinfull flesh"—"took part with us in flesh and blood." In consequence of which agreement, and the promised glory, for "the joy set before him in the promise," of "seeing his seed, the travail of his soul, and being satisfied," "he endured the cross, despising the shame," and "was made perfect through sufferings to lead many souls to glory."

To the stipulations concerning eternal life, propounded in the constitution of the Kingdom of Heaven, frequent allusions are made in the Apostles' writings. Thus the believers were "elected in *him* before the foundation of the world," and "eternal life was promised before the times of the ages," "according to the benevolent purpose which *he purposed in himself* for the administration of the fulness of the appointed times, to gather together all under Christ—all in the heavens and all on the earth, under him." He formerly marked us out for an adoption through Jesus Christ to himself, according to his purpose, who effectually works all things according to the counsel of his will. Eph. i. 3-12.

From all these sayings and allusions, we must trace the constitution of this kingdom into the days of eternity—before time began. We must date it from *everlasting*, and resolve it into the absolute gracious will of the eternal God. In reference to all the prospective developements of time, "known to God from the beginning," it proposed to make the word flesh, and then to make the incarnate Word, called Emanuel, or Jesus Christ, the *King*, to give him all who should be reconciled to God by him for *subjects*, to put under him all the angelic hosts, and constitute him monarch of heaven and earth, *lawgiver* to the universe; and thus make him heir and Lord of all things.

As a constitution brings all the elements of a kingdom into a new relation to one another, so it is the measure and guarantee of all the privileges, immunities, and obligations accruing to all the parties in that relation. It prescribes, arranges, and secures all the privileges, duties, obligations, honors, and emoluments of the King and the subjects. Neither of them can claim more than it stipulates and guaranties, and neither of them can rightfully be deprived of any of them.

The King.

The Lord Jesus Christ is as we have seen the constitutional monarch of the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Subjects of the Kingdom.

They are all born again. Their privileges and honors are the following:—

1. Their constitutional King is the only begotten Son of God; whose title and honors are—image of the invisible God—effulgence of the Father's glory—Emanuel—upholder of the universe—Prophet of the Prophets—High Priest of the Temple of God—King of kings—Lord of lords—the only Potentate—Commander and Covenant of the people—Captain of Salvation—Counsellor, Lawgiver, Redeemer, Deliverer, Mediator, Saviour, Advocate, Judge. He is Sun of Righteousness, Prince of Peace, Lamb of

God, Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright and Morning Star, Light of the World, the Faithful and True Witness, Bishop of Souls, Great Shepherd of the Sheep, Head of the Church, Lord of all, Heir of the Universe, the Resurrection and the Life, the Son of Man, the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the Amen, &c. &c. &c. Such is the Christian's King, whose assistance in all these characters, offices, and relations, as exhibited under all these figures, is guarantied to him in the Constitution. Indeed it is all expressed in one promise—“ *I will be your God, and you shall be my people.*”

2. It is guarantied that “ their sins and iniquities are to be remembered no more.” “ There is no condemnation to them who are under Christ.” “ Sin shall not have dominion, nor lord it over them.” The Lord imputeth to them no sin. They are all pardoned, justified, and saved from sin.

3. They are adopted into the family of God ; made sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty ; children of God, and heirs—joint heirs with Christ. They have an Advocate in the heavens, through whom their persons and prayers are accepted.

4. They all know the Lord. “ All thy children shall be taught of God.” The Holy Spirit of God writes the law of God upon their hearts, and inscribes it upon their understanding : so that they need not teach every one his fellow-citizen to know the Lord, “ for they all know him from the least to the greatest.” They are all sanctified through the truth—separated and consecrated to God.

5. They have the promise of a resurrection from the dead, and eternal life ; an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading—new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness alone shall dwell forever.

Such are the constitutional rights and privileges of the citizens of the kingdom of heaven. And these have obtained for them the following titles and honors :—“ Kingdom of heaven : Israel of God ; chosen generation ; body of Christ ; children of God ; habitation of God ; family of God ; Jerusalem from above ; Mount Zion ; peculiar people ; the elect of God ; holy nation ; temple of the Holy Spirit ; house of God ; city of the living God ; pillar and ground of the truth ; living stones ; seed of Abraham ; citizens of heaven ; lights of the world ; salt of the earth ; heirs of God ; joint heirs with Christ, &c. &c. &c.

These privileges, honors, and emoluments belong to every citizen of the kingdom of heaven. Indeed, they are all comprehended in the summary which Paul (from Jeremiah) lays before the believing Hebrews :—“ This is the constitution which I will make with the house of Israel after those days : I will put my laws into their mind, and inscribe them upon their hearts ; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.

And they shall not teach every man his fellow-citizen, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord ; for all shall know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them ; because I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities I will remember no more." (Hebrews viii. 10-13) To this summary the reader may add these scriptures as confirmatory of the above. (Rom. vi. 5, 6, 14. viii. 1, 33-39. 1 Cor. vi. 11. Eph. i. 7. ii. 6, 19, 21, 22. Col. i. 13, 14. 1 Peter ii. 5-7. 2 Peter i. 10, 11. 1 John ii. 2.

EXTRACTS FROM VAN DYCK'S "CHRISTIAN UNION."

CHAPTER VII.—THE MEANS FOR RESTORING THE UNITY
OF THE CHURCH.

Continued.

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VII. *Let us return to the primitive mode of reading the Scriptures.*

"To prepare the way for the abolition of sect, it is indispensably necessary that we read the Holy Scriptures as they were read in the primitive ages of Christianity. The constant and prayerful reading of the Bible, and the whole of the Bible, is the principal means of preserving an harmonious faith among believers. In the present condition of the Church, we have as many standards of doctrinal belief as there are denominations of Christians ; and so long as the present idolatrous attachment to these human standards continues, Christians must always remain divided in sentiment and action. They cannot read the Bible in simplicity, because they read in the light of the standards of the Church of which they are members ; and differing as those standards do from one another, what is light to a Christian of one denomination, is darkness to his brother of another denomination. It was not so in the primitive ages of the Church. They allowed no other standard of faith or practice than the inspired writings ; and the Reformers who had been taught of God the sufficiency of the Scriptures, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, to enlighten and sanctify the Christian, believed " that the doctrine of the Bible is most perfect and complete," and being fully persuaded of the fallacy of the Popish doctrine of the rule of faith and judge of controversy, they taught that " neither may we compare any writings of men, though ever so holy, with those divine Scriptures ; nor ought we to compare custom, or the great multitude, or antiquity, or succession of times, or persons, or councils, decrees, or statutes, with the truth of God, for the truth is above

all; for all men are of themselves liars, and more vain than vanity itself."

This is in perfect accordance with the dictates of sound reason, and is sanctioned by the Saviour himself. How solicitous was he to guard his Disciples against receiving for doctrines the commandments of men, and listening to the traditions of the Scribes and Elders! Did he not forbid his Disciples to call any man their master, on the ground that they had but one Master in Heaven? He alone has the authority and wisdom to govern the judgment of his rational creatures. We may not call any man or body of men our masters, and it is the privilege, as it is the duty of every Christian, to exercise his own understanding as to the meaning of the Scriptures. * * * *

We beg leave to close this head with an extract from a late work. "The study of the Scriptures, in their native simplicity, and without the intermixture of the technical language of theologians, and of party opinions, would be of vast importance in religion. It would convince the unbiassed inquirer how little foundation there is in the Scriptures themselves, for many of those disputes about metaphysical dogmas which have rent the Christian world into a number of shreds and patches, and produce jealousy and animosity, where love and affection should have appeared predominant. He would soon be enabled to perceive that the system of revelation chiefly consists of a series of important facts, connected with the dispensations of God towards our race, and interwoven with a variety of practical and interesting truths, and that the grand design of the whole is to counteract the effects of moral evil, to display the true character of Deity, to promote love to God and man, to inculcate the practice of every heavenly virtue, and to form mankind into one harmonious and affectionate society. He would find none of the technical terms and phraseology which the schoolmen and others have introduced into their systems of theology, nor any of those anathemas which one sectary has so frequently levelled at another, applied to any one, excepting to those who do not love our Lord Jesus in sincerity."

ON THE ELDER'S OFFICE.

No. 3.

OF THE QUALIFICATIONS OF ELDER'S.

The names *Pastors*, *Teachers*, *Bishops*, and *Elders*, are descriptive of the same persons and office. They are distinguished from the extraordinary teachers, namely, *Apostles*, *Prophets*, and *Evangelists*. Eph. iv. 11. When Paul enjoins Titus "to

ordain *Elders* in every city," he adds, "For a *Bishop* must be blameless." Titus i. 5. 7. In Acts xx. 7. we are informed he sent to Ephesus, and called the *Elders* of the Church, to whom he addresses himself, verse 28, "Take heed to yourselves and all the flock over which the Holy Spirit hath made you *overseers*," (ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥΣ,) the same word which is translated *Bishops*.

These different names, however, although they signify the same persons and office, are, taken together, exceedingly descriptive of the qualifications which those ought to possess who occupy the Pastoral office. The term *Teacher* gives us the idea of extensive knowledge of God's will, and some ability to communicate that knowledge for the instruction and edification of a Church of Christ. The word *Pastor* is of more extensive signification, and at once exhibits a character, not only able to feed the people of God with the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, but of tender care to heal, protect, lead, and defend the Church of God, and to go before believers as an example of purity. *Bishop* or *overseer* affords us much the same idea, with this difference, that it rather respects oversight and rule.

I. Elder is a term, when applied to a Pastor of a Church, not only expressive of the qualities just mentioned, but which has particular relation to age, wisdom, prudence, and experience. It is certainly in allusion to the Elders of Israel, that Christian Pastors have obtained that name. Exod. iii. 16.—Num. xi. 16. Every part of the description given us of the qualifications of a Pastor, evidently supposes some advancement in age or in the qualities of age. He must have a good report of them that are without. * * * *

Such a character is not usually acquired in youth; it is the fruit of some standing in society. He must be such a one as rules his own house well, having his children in subjection, with all gravity. To be the father of children capable of admonition, and under proper government, not only supposes some advancement in life, but also the exercise of such qualities, as authority, wisdom, prudence, patience, gentleness, and meekness, without which no man can be fit for the Pastoral office. "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?" * * * *

The same evils, or say defects in his character, which allow his children, and others under his immediate care, to do what is right in their own eyes, will, in process of time, bring anarchy into the Church of God, if he is a ruler in it.

It is also said, that a Pastor must not be a *novice*; that is, one newly converted. The reason is obvious—such a one wants that knowledge, growth in graces, and experience, which fit a person for so important an office. One advanced in years may, indeed be a novice; but it is plain that the Apostle, by asserting that a novice ought not to be a Pastor, means to say, that a Pas-

for, ought to be a respectable, established Christian character, which cannot be said of young men who know as yet little experimentally of the way of God. We must then conclude that the Elders of the first Church were such for respectability, wisdom, and experience, as Paul teaches Timothy and Titus they ought to be. Nor does it appear that the Pastoral office will be properly filled, till attention be paid to what the Holy Spirit says respecting Pastors in these respects.

However, it does not seem proper to say, that a man could not be a pastor without being the father of a family. The spirit of the Apostle's rule is, that he be a man of wisdom, prudence, and respectability. Nevertheless, it is surely best, that pastors of churches be the heads of families in preference to others, if their qualifications are in other respects equal, that, as examples to the flock, they may practise every relative duty. It is certainly preposterous to reverse, as is generally done, the Apostle's rule: instead of appointing fathers in Christ to the Elder's office, it is common to find novices in it, who have almost every thing to learn, especially as to the government of a church of Christ.— Let them have all the gifts and experience which their age and standing admit, yet they are in danger of being lifted up with pride; and falling into the snare of the devil. It is lamentable to relate how such have fallen a prey to precipitancy, self-will, affectation, love of novelty, and a haughty overbearing turn, which a few years experience in the way of the Lord would have discovered and cured. * * * * *

Moreover, it is peculiarly hurtful when such are set over churches singly and alone. A church indeed must be very ill-managed, when its important affairs are put into the hands of one ruler, and that ruler a novice. It is, indeed, surprising how any who value the right management of Christ's house should fall into this error. Similar conduct in the common affairs of men would justly be the subject of ridicule. Would any master of a vessel commit the helm into the hand of an unskilful seaman? or would government set a raw undisciplined officer at the head of an army? * * * * *

Nor can it be supposed that this turning of things upside down, would ever have been thought of, except that, both in idea and in fact, preaching had been accounted nearly the whole duty of the elder's office. Let our young brethren preach the gospel of Christ as much as in them lies, and do all the good which their gifts will admit; but let us have men of experience, wisdom, prudence, patience, and humility, to take the oversight of our souls in the ways of God.

If it be said, "There are young men who possess all the qualities of advanced age and experience." Well, if that appear, which it is presumed very rarely occurs, we know of no objection against such occupying the Elders office. It is necessary, how-

ever, to repeat, that it is very seldom these qualities are found, except in persons somewhat advanced in age and in the way of God. * * * *

An Elder must excel in humility, meekness, and patience; not lifted up with pride, but patient. He must be calm and dispassionate: "not self-willed, not soon angry, no brawler, no striker, but sober and just." He must be temperate in the enjoyment of lawful objects, and dead to the pleasures, profits, and honors of this world. "Not given to wine; not greedy of filthy lucre; not covetous, but temperate, and given to hospitality." He must also possess a considerable degree of Spirituality of mind; love to the cause and people of Christ; "vigilant, holy, a lover of good men—holding fast the faithful word;" feeding the flock, watching for souls, and supporting the weak. In a word, his faith and conversation are to be such, that the saints over whom he presides, may with joyful imitation follow them; "whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." * *

IV. To fit a man for the Elder's office, it is necessary that he also possess gifts for teaching and ruling. He must be "apt to teach," "able by sound doctrine both to exhort and convince the gainsayers." The gift of teaching necessarily implies an extensive acquaintance with the word of God. "All Scriptures is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. Knowledge of the Scriptures is indispensably necessary for an Elder of a Church. If he does not generally excel those over whom he presides, it is by no means likely that he will edify their souls. This is another powerful reason why a Pastor should not be one lately converted. Young Christians certainly do understand the things that belong to their salvation; but the Bible is not learned in many of its parts in a short time. It needs study, much meditation, and prayer. * *

It is not, all the learning that this world can afford, that can make up the want of being taught in the faithful word. It is an extensive knowledge of the Scriptures, which renders a man "apt to teach." By sound doctrine contained in them, he is both to exhort and convince the gainsayers. Mighty in the Scriptures is a quality that can by no means be wanting in the Elder of a Christian Church. * * * *

V. Gifts for ruling must also be possessed. "If a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" The endowment for ruling is not that artful cunning whereby men may project and execute plans to manage and cajole those under their care. No. If this be the wisdom of management for which any man is famous, he is unworthy of the Elder's office. Christ rules over an enlightened and willing people. The authority which Elders have over their

brethren in the Lord, must resemble his in this particular.— Their gifts for government must be the open, tender, patient, wise, prudent, and authoritative care which a loving parent exercises towards his children. And if a man does not discover these qualities in the management of his own house, how shall he govern the church of God? * * * *

Before concluding these remarks on the qualifications for the Elder's office, it is necessary to observe, that although none is fit for it, altogether destitute of any of them, yet that it is seldom found that any one possesses them all in the same degree.— Some possess one or more of them eminently, and are not destitute of the rest, although not conspicuous for them in any great degree: others excel in those very qualifications for which these are not conspicuous, while they are not altogether deficient in the other qualities. That a person does not possess them all in an equal degree is no reason for rejecting him; it only discovers the necessity of having others joined with him in office, who may excel in those qualifications for which he is by no means remarkable.

It is also worthy of notice that Churches may labour under great ignorance of the qualifications proper for their edification, by an improper comparison of their state with that of other Churches. * * * *

It is obvious, at first sight, that such are the different situations of the Churches of Christ, that a man might be an able and useful Elder in one Church, that could scarcely occupy that office with any propriety in another. And this, it is presumed, will ever be the case, so long as there is such a disparity of improvement between one Church and another. I mean improvement chiefly in literature and civilized life. * * *

And here it is worthy of deep attention, that whenever Christ gathers together a Church, he will amply bestow on that Church, within itself, all those gifts proper for its own edification, and the diffusion of the knowledge of salvation in the place which that Church occupies, if attention be paid to the mutual exercise of all the gifts in it for edification. If this remark be founded in truth, as the author firmly believes it is, then, instead of Churches grasping at men of the first talents, if they have any hope of obtaining them, their manifest duty is to look up to Jesus, who has ascended on high to give gifts to men, that they themselves may come behind in no gift proper for their own edification, or the diffusion of the truth in the place which he has assigned them. * * * *

In judging, then, of the qualifications fit for the Elders office, let it be carefully noticed, that *each* Church of Christ is to judge of qualifications proper, not for *another* Church, but for *itself*. If this be well attended to, and if it be a fact that Jesus bestows on *every* Church of his, by a due attention to the exercise of gifts for mutual edification, every qualification necessary for

its improvement. then the inference is plain, that every Church, after due time has been taken to ascertain which of its members excel most in the qualifications fit for the Elder's office, ought to chose such persons for that office. And we may rest assured, that these, in the end, will be found the most useful Pastors that that Church could have obtained. But this subject requires a greater degree of attention.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER,

ON THE RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT.

DEAR FRIEND,

I have often admired that dedication to the POPE, which is prefixed to a piece of Sir RICHARD STEELE's, entitled, *The account of the state of the ROMAN CATHOLIC Religion throughout the World, &c.*—"Your Holiness," says the writer, "is not, perhaps, aware how near the Churches of us Protestants have at length come to those privileges and perfections which you boast of as peculiar to your own. The most sagacious persons have not been able to discover any other difference between us, as to the main principle of all doctrine, government, worship, and discipline, but this one—that you CANNOT err in any thing you determine, and we never DO. This is, in other words, you are infallible, and we always in the right. We cannot but esteem the advantage to be exceedingly on our side, in this case, because we have all the benefits of INFALLIBILITY, without the absurdity of pretending to it, and without the uneasy task of maintaining a point so shocking to the understanding of mankind."

This is not a libel—this is a satire—the worst is, this satirical stroke is true. The Church of Rome refuses the Scriptures to the people—some Protestant Churches grant the sight of the book, but retain the meaning. Can you see any difference?—Search or not search, read or not read, the SENSE is FIXED—it is at the PERIL of your preferment to vary.

Whence Church governors pretend to derive this right, does not signify. It can neither be derived from the nature of Christianity, the doctrine or practice of Christ or his Apostles, the condition of man in a state of nature, his condition as a member of society subject to magistracy. * * * *

No mean can be lawful in itself, which destroys the end for which it was appointed. Now the end to be obtained is the establishment of Christianity. But how can the depriving men of the right of private judgment be a lawful mean of obtaining that end, seeing Christianity is personal obedience to the laws of Christ, arising from a conviction of their excellency, and their

connection with certain facts, of whose certainty *evidence* is given, which evidence, to be received, must be examined? Christianity proposes truths of speculation, and truths of practice. If men can examine and ascertain the first by proxy, why not *obey* the last in the same manner? But who can love or fear, believe or hope, by substitution!

If to deny the right of private judgment be destruction of the nature of Christianity in general, it is more remarkably so of the Christianity of reformed Churches. The right of private judgment is the very foundation of the reformation, and without establishing the former in the fullest sense, the latter can be nothing but a faction in the state, a schism in the Church. * *

The Reformers were not to blame for exercising the right of private judgment themselves—their fault was a denial of the same right to others. They had the highest authority for what they did, deriving it from the doctrine and example of Christ and his Apostles.

Take one, two, or more, of our Saviour's doctrines, and ask, what magic can there be in *subscribing them without examination*? Himself never proposed such a thing, but on the contrary, exhorted his hearers to *search the Scriptures*—a strange impertinence, unless the right of private judgment be allowed.

Nor did he only exhort the people to judge for themselves, but he also warned his Disciples not to usurp that right. "Call no man your Father upon the earth, neither be ye called masters."—Neither *impose* your opinions upon others, nor suffer them to impose theirs upon you.

Had Jesus Christ considered the right of private judgment in any unlawful light, he would have first instructed Herod, or Caiphas, or some of the principal Rabbies, and by them he would have converted the nation. But instead of that, he condemns the doctrines of Church governors, and addresses his sermons *ad populum*, gives it as a proof of his mission, that *the gospel was preached to the poor*, and constantly protects his followers in the exercise of the right of private judgment. * * *

The Apostles, worthy followers of such a Master, went into all nations, preaching a doctrine which no Church governors upon earth believed. Did they deny the right of private judgment?—If they had, their expeditions would have been in the Quixotic style. Did St. Paul write to Corinth, "I speak as to wise men: judge ye what I say?" Did he write to Rome, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind?" Every body understood this. The populace at Birea, men and women, "searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so." The students at Athens desired to know *what the new doctrine was*, of which the Apostle spake, for the purpose of *search*, no doubt. The magistrates, at Gallio, declared themselves, *no judges in such matters*. And hence the amazing success of his preaching; He reasoned

in the synagogue every Sabbath day. Who can account for all this, without the right of private judgment ?

Consider the condition of man in a state of nature, and you will readily grant either that a right of determining for himself, is no man's or every man's right. Viudicate the right to one, and you do it to two; to two hundred, to two thousand, to the whole world: for all, in a state of nature, are on a level. There is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, prince nor subject—the right of one, argued from his nature, is the right of all.—Whether men forfeit this right in a state of society, is another question.

A Christian not only cannot, but ought not if he could, dispose of this right, because not only he cannot be a Christian without its exercise, but all the purposes of civil government may be answered without it. The power of the magistrate is an article of importance enough to demand a particular discussion; but I would only inquire for the present, whether, if this right, or advantage of private judging, had been denied to other classes of men, the world would not have sustained infinite damage ?

Choose of the mechanical arts, or of the sciences, which you please; place it in the state it was seven hundred, or five hundred, or two hundred years ago; let its then present state be defined, its *ne plus ultra* (Its utmost bounds) determined; let all future search be prohibited, and what an innumerable multitude of useful discoveries are men deprived of ? * * *

Has not all Europe pitied the fate of Copernicus, and Galileo, the fathers of modern Astronomy? The first kept the work near forty years, before he dared to publish it, and died immediately after it was presented; the persecution he dreaded, being the supposed cause. As to Galileo, he was charged with heresy: first, for affirming that the sun was in the centre: second, that the earth was not in the centre, but had a diurnal motion. His works were burnt, and himself imprisoned. Upon being released, was enjoined a penance, of repeating once a week, for three years, the seven penitential psalms; as if the seven penitential psalms said any thing about Galileo's crime. But these are some of the fruits of denying the right of private judgment. The Pope, the sole judge, was pleased to think that these discoveries in Geography and Astronomy, clashed with certain doctrines established in the Church. What a condition would all Christendom have been in by this time, had not this extravagant claim been denied, and the right of private judgment established, in arts and sciences!—All the received systems of Music, Astronomy, Physic, and all other arts and sciences, were originally private opinions! Probably they would have been so still, had the inventors been prohibited publishing, or the public from examining and receiving them. But now mankind form into societies, impart their own discoveries, offer rewards to other inven-

obrs, or improvers of arts and sciences! And what follows? what might be expected—the perfection of science! * * *

The word of Revelation, like the works of nature, presents objects to view; but objects to be examined and understood; and how can this be, without the right of private judgment? You say the scriptures give a perfect account of the nature of God—the nature of men—the vanity of the life that now is—and the certainty of another life that is to come! But how is another man to know this, unless you will allow him to examine and determine for himself? It may be a perfect rule—it may be a subordinate rule—it may be a false rule—it may be no rule at all, for any thing he knows, who must not examine, or if he examines, must not determine! For to retain the meaning is to retain the book; and there is no real difference, in denying the examination, and denying the conclusion. You know the story of Father Fulgentio, preaching at Venice, on Pilate's question, "What is truth?" He told his hearers, that at last, after many searches, he had found it out; and held out a NEW TESTAMENT, and said that THERE *it was* IN HIS HAND! And then he put it in his pocket, and coldly said, "*the book is PROHIBITED.*" Now what great difference would there have been, if he had said, you may read the book, but its true meaning is prohibited! * *

An objection is, that this will open a door for all sorts of heresies, and the truth will be oppressed, and disappear. Indeed! And is truth such a timorous, cowardly thing? What idle fears are these! Should an honest man be taxed with dissoluteness and impiety, and should any propose to him a fair trial before impartial judges, would he be frightened at it, think you?—Christianity is not to be loaded with calumnies—she is so already—her *only hope is a fair trial!* * * * * *

CUMBERLAND RIVER, March 31, 1835.

A. CAMPBELL, TO DR. JAMES H. OTEY,
BISHOP OF TENNESSEE.

LETTER 2;

My Dear Sir,

Though Bishop Onderdonk inscribes upon his banner, "*To the Law and to the Testimony,*" when he comes to the great and main issue—to the very jet of the controversy about *Diocesan Bishops*—he gravely says, "The NAME Bishop, which now designates the highest grade in the ministry, is not appropriated to that office in Scripture. That name is there given to the middle order (Elders) or Presbyters; and all that we read in the New Testament concerning Bishops (including, of course, the word

overseers and oversight, which have the same derivation) is to be regarded as pertaining to that middle grade." (Page 12.) The Law and the Testimony, then, are on one side, and Mr. Onderdonk on the other. The word *Bishop*, in the New Testament, represents not the office for which he pleads: for he candidly says in that book, it means no more than an Elder of the Church. But he adds, "The highest grade is there found in those called *Apostles*." Apostles, Bishops, and Deacons are the three grades found in the New Testament—the three Episcopal grades are called Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons.

But the most remarkable concession which the Bishop makes, and one which does the highest honor to his candor, remains to be quoted. "It was *after* the apostolic age," says he, "that the name *Bishop* was taken from the second order and appropriated to the first, as we learn from Theodoret, one of the Fathers."—(Page 12.)

These concessions are, in my judgment, fatal to the cause of three orders of officers in the Christian Church, and fatal especially to the cause of Diocesan Episcopacy. Only, my dear Sir, consider how much is contained in the facts stated. The facts are—

1. *Bishop* and *Elder* represented the same office in the apostolic age.

2. After the apostolic age Elders lose the name *Bishop*, or it is taken from them altogether; and

3. Those divinely called Apostles being dead, a class of officers occupy their place under the name which was violently taken from the Elders; and now the *Bishop* is a successor, not of the first Bishops, but of the Apostles! Of what use, then, is "the law" or "the testimony," seeing the names are changed, and a new appropriation unknown in that volume, has superseded the sacred style?

Had your friend Doctor Onderdonk, or, rather, those who introduced this new arrangement of three orders, retained the ancient names of Apostles, Bishops, and Deacons, instead of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons, the debate would have been simplified, the assumption would have been no less plausible, and the main issue would have been much more intelligible to the common people.

I cannot agree with the author of "Episcopacy tested by Scripture," that "the name is not worth a line of controversy." The world is deceived by names and governed by names. Call a shilling a crown, a captain a king, a master a lord, and there is an end to all honesty and intelligibility. If your Bishops are Apostles, your Deacons Evangelists, and your Elders Priests, you need not quote one passage from the New Testament.—Bishop Onderdonk appears to have been sensible of this, or to have felt the babelism of his style; and, therefore, admonishes

his readers that "the name is not worth a line of controversy!!" If this be true of the name, it is true of the thing." Shall we say that the difference between a *bishop of a church*, and the *bishop of a state* is not worth a line of controversy!!

"A rose," you'll say, "under any other name will smell as sweet." True; but will an Apostle, under the name *Bishop*, or a Bishop under the name *Pope*, be as acceptable and intelligible to one who makes his appeal exclusively to the law and the testimony? Our maxim is, Call Bible things by Bible names—for it is always safe; and in all important matters if the name is not in the Bible, the idea which it exactly represents will not be found there. Call Timothy and Titus *Diocesan Bishops*, and we now would understand them in the full import of these words; but as they are not so designated by the Apostles, we are confident that the designation suits not their work nor office, more than the word *Sultan* designates the Governor of Pennsylvania.

But it is not because a new name has been adopted, that we demur. This would have been comparatively innocent and harmless. You may call the thing called *rose*, by a new name; you may call it *dulcissima*, if you please; but should you take its appropriate name and apply it to a poppy, you would bewilder and distract, and might grossly deceive the whole community.

In my first letter to you I had occasion to say that all your writers, as far as known to me, assume that succession in office, by regular descent from the Apostles, is a part, an essential part of the Christian institution, and essential to the valid administration of its ordinances. But this is not the only assumption in the ground work of Diocesan Episcopacy. You assume *three orders* in the Primitive Church, making the Apostles themselves an order in the Church distinct from the Bishops and Deacons. If this should prove an assumption, it will be as fatal to the constitution of your Church as the preceding. Might not one say, there are *seven orders* in the Church—Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Teachers, Directors, Bishops, Deacons, for the same reason that Bishop Onderdonk asserts three? The Apostles were in and of themselves all orders—not one of three, but three in one. They were for a time Bishops, Deacons, and every thing else that the Church in its infancy required.—They served tables in Jerusalem, and distributed to every one as he had need. They presided in the congregations, and performed all the duties afterwards distributed amongst the Bishops, Deacons, and Brethren.

Indeed, when the nature of a community—of any community—is better understood than it yet generally appears to be, it will be unnecessary to elaborate arguments to shew that there never can be in any society but two distinct offices in reference to its usefulness and happiness—the office of *presiding*, i. e. instructing and directing; and the office of *ministering*, i. e. of ex-

ecuting all the wishes of the community. No two words better express these two offices than the words selected in the New Institution ;—*Bishops* and *Deacons*, or *Overseers* and *Ministers*.—Many individuals may partake of one or both of these offices, according to the dimensions and relations of the community ; but how numerous soever the persons employed, the *offices* are but two.

Our, and all political governments in civilized countries, have three departments—the Legislative, the Judicial, and the Executive. In the Christian community Jesus is Lawgiver and Judge—his Apostles announce his laws and statutes—and the Executive part is all that belongs to the ordinary Communities, built upon the foundation, *not of Bishops and Deacons*, but of Apostles and Prophets—Jesus himself the chief corner.

That the Apostles have successors in some sense, is also assumed by all the descendants of the Roman Hierarchy. Now with us, who take the Bible alone, a *successor in office* necessarily fills the place of his predecessor. John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, John Q. Adams, and Andrew Jackson, were constitutional successors of George Washington, first President of the United States. Did not they all fill the same office ? Where they not all functionaries of the same authority ? So of all the governors of all constitutional states—Magistrates, Judges, Presidents of Universities, &c. &c. If, then, you, my dear sir, and all your co-ordinate Diocesan Bishops, are successors of the Apostles, you must fill the same office and possess the same authority. You cannot claim one branch of their authority, and disclaim all the other parts and duties of their office. You are, or are not, their successors *in office*. You are not half successors, or mere fragments of Apostles, but you are *Apostles of Christ* as Paul and Peter.

Bishop Onderdonk most unfortunately alludes to a secondary application of the word *Apostle*, without seeming to discover that it nullifies all his pretensions. Persons that carried alms or contributions from one community to another, are called "*the Apostles*" of that community, or of those Communities which sent them. Of this you will find unequivocal evidence, 2. Cor. viii. 23. Phil. ii. Successors of such Apostles we still have, and successors in full. But Bishop Onderdonk cannot even claim to be the successor of any of these. Did these Apostles ordain ? How, then, will the Bishop's conclusion stand ?—"Apostles were distinguished from the Elders, because they were *superior* to them in ministerial power and rights." p. 13.

The matter, as you may readily perceive, stands thus:—The word *Apostle* means no more than one sent from, or by another, *on any business whatever*. Of Apostles we have *three orders*, if you please, in the New Institution:—

1. Jesus Christ is the *Apostle of God*, and his only *Apostle* direct to the world. John xvii. 3, 8, 18, 21. xx. 21.

2. The twelve attendants, eye and ear witnesses of the Messiah, whom he commissioned first to the Jews ; and Paul, whom he commissioned to the Gentiles, are the Apostles of Jesus Christ.

3. Those sent by men, by the Apostles of Jesus Christ, by the Congregations of Christ--are also Apostles of men—Apostles of Apostles—Apostles of Churches. Of these were such agents as Timothy, Titus, Sylvanus, Andronicus, Junia, and the *apostoloi toon ecclesioon*, found in the Epistles.

The last class may have successors, but not by Ordination, but from Mission. Jesus Christ, God's Apostle to the world, had no successor—has no Vicar. The twelve Apostles of the Lamb—the Apostles of Christ, have no successors. *The Apostles appointed by them, or by men, or by one or more Churches, never were an order by themselves ; and, therefore, could have no successors by descent and ordination.* We have still such officers amongst us—when any thing is to be done abroad, which the Bishops and Deacons cannot perform, because extra-official to their duties—they being *permanent and stationary* officers of one single Congregation.

I have too much confidence in your good sense and discrimination, and especially in your Biblical attainments, to doubt that you will preceive the Doctor's argument is in ruins, the above remarks and observations being founded on incontrovertible facts and documents, obvious to all men of intelligence, who will examine a Greek New Testament, or a good translation.

As these Letters may be read by many persons of limited information and attainments, and as I intend, before I dismiss the subject, to examine every thing of note advanced by your brethren on this question ; and also to make all men see what is the *Scriptural order* of the Christian Communities called Churches—I will beg your indulgence to my otherwise too great plainness of speech. And should you on any point differ from me, or think my arguments inconclusive, it will give me great pleasure to lay before my readers any thing you may have the goodness to write on the subject.

Most respectfully, I remain, &c.

CECIL.—The simple and unprejudiced study of the Bible is the death of religious extravagance. Many read it under a particular bias of mind. They read books written by others under the same views. Their preaching and conversation run in the same channel. If they could awake themselves from this state, and come to read the whole Scriptures, from every thing which they could find there, they would start as from a dream—amazed at the humble, meek, forbearing, holy, heavenly character, of the simple Religion of the Scriptures to which in a greater or less degree, their eyes had been blinded.

" I WILL THINK ABOUT IT."

Well, that is better than nothing, for thought often begets feeling, feeling conviction, conviction conversion, and conversion leads to God.

You will think about it! And is that all you will do? Had you mountains of gold or hills of silver, they would be lighter than vanity, when balanced against the value of the soul. Its price is above rubies, whether it is measured by the cost of its redemption, the eternity of its duration, or its boundless capacities of pleasure or pain.

Have you half a million at stake, and it were doubtful whether you would gain or lose it, would you do nothing but think about it! Or were you invited by an Angel to spend next week in heaven, there to eat of the tree, and drink of the water of life, there to behold uncreated glory, and sing the "new song," would you do nothing more? You have more than half or a whole million at stake, and the probability is that you will lose all. Next week you may be a glorified spirit, or a spirit lost; and all you will do is to think about it!

Felix did just so. He thought while Paul preached, he thought after he sent him away, and he thinks still. O, could you hear him think. "How have I hated instruction and despised reproof?"

And so did the rich young man. Christ told him to sell what he had, to give to the poor, and follow him. But he thought of his morality, of his money and went away sorrowful. He went away to think about it. And there was another rich man who thought. He thought about his farms, and his fruits, of pulling down his small barns and building greater. He thought of much goods, and of many years, of ease, of eating, and drinking, and being merry. And he thought of his Soul just enough to promise it what was not his own, just as Satan promised Jesus. And God thought too. He thought to call him a fool, and demand his Soul that very night.

And you will think about it! I know you will. But when? While it is an excepted time, and a day of Salvation? While God calls, Christ invites, the Spirit strives, and Conscience warns, while

" Mercy is found and peace is given!"

When? When disease has turned your cheek pale; dimmed the luster of your eye; weakened if not destroyed your mind, and is fast cutting the cords of life?

You will think about it! I know it. And I wish you to do it while thought will be of real value. A convict on being removed from one prison to another, was asked, how he liked his new home. Not at all was the reply. Are you not clothed and fed as well here? Yes, better. Is your labor harder? No,

not so hard. Are you not treated with kindness? Yes. Then why not like it? Because I am allowed to speak to no one. I go to the table to sit and think. I go about my work all day to think. And at night the iron door shuts me in my solitary cell to think! think!! think!!! and I cannot endure it.

Ah! he should have thought, before an iron necessity compelled him so to do. And so should you think seasonably, and act too. It will be sad thinking in the prison of woe.

“Death at the farthest can’t be far:

Ah! think before thou die.”

BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

Animal man, natural man, (*psuchicos anthropos.*) This term is first found in 1 Cor. ii. 14. and is rendered the natural man, contrasted with the spiritual man. It occurs only six times in the Christian Scriptures, and is translated in the common version by the following words, 1 Cor. ii. 14. *natural*. 1 Cor. xv. 44. twice in this verse, and once in verse 46, in connexion with body, translated *natural*. James iii. 15. translated *sensual*. Jude xix. applied to persons, *sensual*. It is three times applied to the body, which is certainly *animal*; once to wisdom, which is not natural wisdom; and twice to the whole person. Parkhurst defines it as signifying animal or sensual—as opposed to spiritual, and cites 1 Cor. ii. 14. James iii. 15. and Jude xix. in proof of this. His second and last meaning of it is animal, opposed to spiritual or glorified, and quotes 1 Cor. xv. 44, 46. as proof. We prefer *animal*, in the passage first quoted, for the animal man there spoken of, is supposed to be destitute of all knowledge which comes by *revelation*, and withal so sensual as to despise it. Locke also prefers animal to natural, in this passage, and defines this animal and spiritual man, in the following terms:—“The *animal* is opposed to the *spiritual* man, the one signifying a man who has no higher principles to build on than those of natural reason; the other, a man that founds his faith and religion on divine revelation.”

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

BERLIN, TENNESSEE.

The reformation is still moving onward in this section. I have planted another Congregation this year. They number about 50, mostly new converts. The Churches at Berea and Cedar Creek are doing well. They come together on the first day of every week, to sing praise, offer up thanksgivings and prayers, to read the Living Oracles, break the loaf, and remember the poor.

J. E. SPEER.

THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES.

Do they, indeed, surround our path, the high,
 The Holy ones, the Spirits whom we call
 Departed, are they often by our side,
 At golden morn, or in the still, deep night !
 They who have wash'd their robes, once all impure,
 White in atoning blood, who walk on high
 The Sapphire streets of heaven, and with sweet voices
 Join in celestial song—do they come down,
 From thrones and palaces of light, to linger
 Invisible, 'mid scenes of former love ?
 Or from celestial hills look down to view
 The homes that once were their's of this dim earth ?
 Yes, they do mark our footsteps, as we glide
 On to their happy bowers ; oh ! when we turn,
 And look with eyes of fondness on the world—
 The world of vanity—they pity us,
 And wonder how we can, how once they could,
 Bestow such love on its poor transient shades !
 Perchance into our softened hearts they whisper
 Some tale of real joy, or picture fair,
 To our mind's eye, some scene of other lands,
 To win us back to heaven ; and then their task,
 Their holy task, fulfilled, they spread their wings,
 And, swifter than a sunbeam, dart again
 Up to its blessed shores. But when they mark
 The beings whom they loved as their own souls,
 With steady foot, and heavenward gazing eye,
 Their upward course pursuing, gladness thrills
 Even through their happy bosoms.

Not alone

Do human spirits hover round this earth,—
 Angelic creatures, all unseen, are walking
 Amid our dwellings oft ; their holy footsteps
 From many a peril guard us, and their eyes
 Behold our conduct—oh ! how strange they think it
 That beings, with immortal souls like ours,
 Should idly waste their energies sublime
 On poorest trifles, and forget the prize
 Of everlasting joy, to hunt some bauble,
 Some very vanity ! How they admire
 The riches of that wisdom ; infinite,
 And boundless love, that at so high a cost
 Reclaimed such wretched creatures from their choice ;
 And freely gave them, holiness and heaven !
 But think my soul, of Him, that higher witness,
 Who ever compasseth thy path, whose eye
 Surveys thine inmost thoughts, and penetrates
 The dark recesses of thy deepest heart,
 Thy Saviour and thy Judge ! oh, let his presence
 Dwell in thy ever, ever wakeful consciousness !

We get a glimpse of true wisdom, and know how we should
 live, perhaps an hour before we die.