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ON THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.

THE beauty and tenderness of the Gospel, so graciously accommodated to the wants and longings of the human heart, has sometimes been the cause of engendering in the minds of weak professors an opinion derogatory to the law of Moses. Hence, in comparing the two revelations, they dwell upon the awful and solemn character of the Deity, so frequently described by the prophets, and contrasting their sublime conceptions with the more endearing titles of Father, Friend, and Benefactor, by which he is represented in the New Testament, they are apt to draw conclusions unfavourable to the Law. They consider such conclusions justified, from the nature and tenure of these two revelations—the Law is a dispensation of justice—the Gospel of mercy. Under the former, there is no promise of reward, except the condition of perfect obedience be fulfilled; but as no man is able to perform this condition, all become liable to the punishment of transgressors. The Law offers no reprieve, no means of escape, no plea of mitigation; and being just, holy, and good, it can never be repealed.

But under the Gospel, the most tender invitations are given, and the most earnest solicitude for our salvation, manifested: which proceeding from love and mercy, appear easy of acceptance, and attended with the most precious advantages. According to many, the Law seems harsh and forbidding, and unworthy of the greatest and best of Beings, and the Gospel, on the other hand, altogether lovely. As both proceed from the same benevolent Creator, the Christian who is desirous of worshipping God from the understanding, as well as from the heart, is anxious to ascer-

tain the marks of divinity belonging to each, and is unwilling to admit any conclusion from the Law, which appears unworthy of that all-wise, all-powerful and merciful God by whom it was promulgated.

In doing this, he is assisted by considering, that the separation of the Israelites and the pure religion committed to them, was a step in the sublime scheme of the redemption of man by Jesus Christ; and although this revelation was confined to a clear view of the Majesty of God, his Sovereignty, infinite wisdom, and glory, it bears striking marks of the divine mercy, and many proofs of his tender regard for the children of men. Nor are we rashly to infer that this mercy was confined to those who lived under the Law, or that the penalty was rigidly executed upon the disobedient; for we have the best grounds for believing that the wonderful efficacy of the Sacrifice on the cross, applied to all the sons and daughters of Adam, as well those who were born before as those who live after the ascension of our Saviour. Agreeable to this, we find that the same conditions were required for acceptance, under every dispensation of revealed religion. Every true believer, as well as Abraham, was accepted; and every true penitent, as well as David, pardoned. The truth is, that the Gospel offers no new method of acceptance with God from what is contained in the Old Testament; but only explains the promises, and points out the purposes of God, in a clearer manner. "The same righteousness of God was the object of Faith—the same Divine mercy, through the very same medicine, was the source of forgiveness—and the same exercise of faith and repentance in sincerity, was demanded in every period." The moral Law is as much in force now, as it was in the days of Moses and David. To pronounce it, therefore, rigid and inflexible; and the Gospel mild, easy, and remedial, is to consider them distinct, and having no connection: but the Law was subservient to the Messiah's advent, and though attended with many rites and ceremonies which made it galling and burdensome, it was a wise and necessary appointment.

This view of the subject, reconciles the two dispensations, and shews them to be parts of the same glorious scheme for the salvation of mankind. It satisfies the doubts and misgivings of those who consider the ancient heathens hardly dealt with, and those born of Christian parents since

the Ascension of our Lord, especially favoured. For, when our Lord is represented as having died for the whole human race, doubts and difficulties vanish—we see all nations, whether Jew or Gentile, Christian or heathen, deriving the most precious benefits from this blessed Sacrifice, and no other distinction remaining between them than those which proceed from their own conduct, and that gradual extension of light which appears to direct the ways of God to man. This sublime conception reconciles in our minds the glorious perfections of God, which having been melted down and presented before us in the character of our Redeemer, have their divine effulgence so much softened, as to become the objects of pious imitation.

Hence the Christian perceives no discordancy between the Gospel and the Law—for righteousness has been always as it is now, of grace and not of works. They are in truth one and the same dispensation: and if God in the Old Testament appears surrounded with the more awful perfections of his sovereignty, it is not to be inferred that he was less placable and merciful than he is under the Gospel, but that mankind were not prepared to behold him in all his beauty. The God of the Christian and of the Jew, is the same blessed, unchangeable, and gracious Creator, whose goodness, tenderness, mercy, and love, are for ever promoting the happiness of the children of men.

Instead, therefore, of feeling any reluctance at reading the Bible, and the sublime descriptions of Jehovah with which it abounds, the devout Christian derives from the perusal the greatest consolation. He beholds the just and upright at all times under the special protection of God, who knoweth their days, as King David beautifully expresses it, and gives them an inheritance for ever.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MADRASS SCHOOL IN NEW BRUNSWICK, FOR THE YEAR 1820.

MUCH has been lately said upon the propriety of confining the religious instruction given to children, to those practical moral precepts so beautifully set forth in the Holy Scriptures. It has been said, that they are incapable of understanding the doctrines of the Gospel, and that to call

their attention to matters so sublime, is rather to bewilder than improve.

We must confess that we have never been satisfied with this reasoning, because there appears but a very few things to be taught which persons at an early age may not comprehend, if any sort of pains be taken in their instruction: and if there be some doctrines beyond our comprehension, it is a disadvantage (if it can really be called so) under which they labour in common with all their Christian brethren.

The perusal of the Gospel, certainly presents all those doctrines which have given offence, but so connected with facts, as cannot fail of having a salutary effect upon the most tender minds. Nor will any way of calling their attention to divine truth, be found more efficacious or better calculated to make a lasting impression upon their hearts. The natural simplicity of youth, its curiosity, its singleness of heart, are admirably fitted for the reception of Christian principles: but, by teaching some and concealing others, we build upon a foundation that can never stand.

It is indeed impossible to instruct our children in the duties which they ought to discharge, without opening to them the sacred volume, and discovering to them those wonderful mysteries of divine love, which angels cannot fully comprehend. If they demand an explanation of what they read, will it be sufficient to desire them to wait till they grow older, for as yet they are unable to understand? To an inquisitive mind, such an answer, frequently repeated, would be like the chilling blast which destroys the blossoms of the spring, or it would beget suspicions of the most dangerous tendency. In either case great evil would arise: enquiry would be repressed, or doubts and misgivings awakened. How much better to give them every light on the subject that we possess: and if the feebleness of their minds prevent them from comprehending what in maturer years they will easily understand, is it not wiser on such occasions to show them, from familiar examples and illustrations, that the knowledge they wish for, even about the most common things, cannot always be given them, but that they must sometimes be satisfied with very limited information, or wait until they have made themselves masters of some intermediate portion of history or science?

The opinion which we are combatting, has obtained the approbation of persons of considerable name, who have condemned, in the most unqualified manner, our teaching

what they are pleased to call the dogmas of our religion, and exhorted us to teach pure morality only. It is not however so easy to comply with this injunction, as they suppose; and though thousands have acted upon it, and infidelity has increased, it has uniformly failed, and the children so taught, have grown up equally destitute of morals and religion.

But let us see what is the result of teaching youth morality only; and let us place the matter in the most favourable point of view: we shall suppose a family to be well regulated in all its arrangements; that the children are orderly in their behaviour, kindly affectionate one towards another, that they are obedient and eager to do well; yet errors will be committed, and difficulties will arise. Upon what principles are they to be called upon to repent and amend? How shall we touch their hearts? Shall we remind them of the presence of God; that they are accountable beings, and must soon appear before him? From this we are prohibited; for the perfections of God are incomprehensible. Shall we exhort them to pray for the remission of their sins, and strength to conquer temptation? This holy exercise, which, efficacious as it always is when sincerely discharged, embraces as great mysteries as any part of Christianity. The beneficial effects of sincere prayer, all devout Christians have experienced; but the way in which it operates, is far beyond our comprehension. Those therefore who confine their children to what is commonly called morality, in order to be consistent, must exclude them from a knowledge of the one true God, and from the benefit of prayer.

There are some children of so gentle and happy a disposition, that they seem to pass along with great innocence and affection; but what will this avail, unless founded upon Christian principles? Their parents and instructors pass away, and they are left to themselves. How shall they withstand temptation—upon what is their dependance?—Alas, they cannot stand for a moment; for youth cannot be taught morality, without founding it upon truths as difficult of comprehension as any which religion proposes; and, consequently, if this be the true reason for keeping them ignorant of the leading doctrines of Christianity, it falls to the ground. Why then should we divide the truth? “Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for such is the kingdom of God.” In the mode of teaching

them, much discretion becomes necessary, and much, to succeed, must be exercised. Our blessed Lord had compassion upon his disciples, and spared their infirmities: and the Apostle declares, that the believing Hebrews have need of milk, and not of strong meat; because they were unskilful in the word of righteousness: and consequently in teaching children the truths of Christianity, those which are easy ought to precede such as are more difficult of comprehension: but let no air of mystery attend your instructions, no fears of giving disgust or overpowering their understandings. In as far as human agency is concerned, the same skill that enables us to teach the arts and sciences, proceeding from self evident to difficult principles in a regular gradation, will prove the best in teaching religion; always recollecting that though we may plant and Apollos water, it is God alone that can give the increase.

It was wisely observed by the learned translator of the Alcoran, that those Christians laboured under a great error, who sought to convert the followers of Mahomet, by giving up or explaining away some of the principal and distinguishing doctrines of the Gospel: and in the same manner shall we err, if, in conducting the religious education of our children, we conceal from their view those parts of our faith which may seem contrary to human ideas of fitness, or may seem difficult to comprehend. Such was not the conduct of the Apostles. They preached Christ crucified.—They gloried in confessing their faith in a person who had died the death of a malefactor. From the whole, therefore, it appears abundantly manifest that we ought not to divide the word of God, nor diminish nor add any thing thereto, and that no sound morality can ever be taught to those who are ignorant of the doctrines peculiar to the religion of Jesus.

Having disposed of this sophism, which hath gained a most dangerous currency among professing Christians, we proceed to the more immediate subject of this paper.

About nine years ago the attention of the public was called by the present Bishop of Peterborough, Dr. Marsh, to the education of the poor; and with the more earnestness and effect, as he clearly proved that the system which was then rapidly prevailing, had for its basis the false principle which we have endeavoured to expose. And surely no plan was ever better adapted to unhinge the great principles of religious belief, to eradicate from the human mind

all the tenets of Christianity, and to encourage the spirit of Deism. The friends of religion and good order were roused by this forcible appeal, to the danger which menaced every civil and religious institution, from consigning the tender minds of the rising generation to teachers who acknowledge no creed, who deny the divine authority of our revealed religion, and neglect to inculcate on the susceptible minds of their pupils any one of the great foundations of human hope in this world and in that which is to come. A national society was therefore established, for promoting the education of the poor in the principles of the established Church; and such has been its rapid progress, that nearly 1500 schools have been established in Great Britain, at which more than 200,000 children are now taught. The number of Schools is still multiplying with astonishing rapidity through Great Britain; and the great importance of educating the children of the poor in the principles of the Established Church, has been so strongly felt, that His Majesty, while Prince Regent, was pleased to confer on the Society a distinguished mark of his Royal favour, in granting it a Charter of Incorporation. The fixed and permanent character which this instrument confers, will, it is confidently anticipated, prove to the Society a source of essential strength, and materially enlarge its means of carrying into effect its important objects; while the pleasing hope is indulged that its continuance is now ensured, to confirm and perpetuate to future generations those invaluable blessings, with the successful diffusion of which to the present generation it has so auspiciously begun.

Nor is the diffusion of this system from the National Society, confined to Great Britain; it is successfully extending to all her dependencies, in the most distant parts of the world. Schools have been for some time established at Halifax and Quebec; and the Report now on our table, furnishes an account of one which has been recently formed at the City of St. John, in the Province of New Brunswick, incorporated by the name of The Governor and Trustees of the Madrass School in New Brunswick. The Legislature, duly appreciating the great advantages that must result to the Province from such an institution, granted the sum of seven hundred and fifty pounds to the Corporation, towards its support, throughout the Province.—The Central School is to be always kept and held in the

City of St John, and the benefits of the institution are to be extended to every other part of the Province, from time to time, and as often as the funds and means of the Corporation may enable them to do so. It is pleasing to see our fellow Colonists enjoying the fruits of this excellent system of instruction, and still more pleasing to behold them within our own reach. A few years ago, the inhabitants of Kingston, with a degree of generous public spirit not often equalled, established a School on the Madrass system, which they continue to support with zeal and diligence.— This is the only one which has been yet formed in this Province, and the Society which upholds it has been granted an Act of Incorporation, by which it will be enabled to pursue with more energy and success the great and glorious work which it has undertaken. But we are happy to find, from the Upper Canada Gazette, that the benefits of this excellent system are no longer to be confined to Kingston, and that His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, Sir Peregrine Maitland, has brought out a gentleman, at a great expence, to form a National School at York. This gentleman, who has been strongly recommended by the Hon. Mr. Wilberforce, has already commenced his labours, and is not only capable of teaching the children of York, but likewise of training grown up persons to become Masters in all parts of the Province where they may be required. It will be of great advantage for all the Schools that may be established in the different Districts, to connect themselves with the Central, at York, which it is presumed will be enabled to give them occasional assistance, and thus strengthen their hands and give effect to their labours.

We anticipate the greatest benefits from the general diffusion of the National System throughout the Province, and are convinced that our excellent Governor could not have conferred a more precious gift upon us, than by giving effect to its introduction. “And all who wish well to the cause of true religion, that jewel whose safest casket is the National Church,” ought to make every exertion to second his benevolent purpose, and “by so doing, they will take the best means, aided by divine grace, not only of banishing profaneness and infidelity out of the land, but of preventing that dreadful confusion which is to be feared from those many causeless divisions which weaken and disturb the peace of the Church; and of bringing about in the place thereof such a godly union and concord, that as there is

but one body, and one spirit, and one hope of our calling—one Lord, one faith, one baptism—one God and Father of us all: so we may be all of one heart, and one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity.”

ON THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

[The following Letter from Lower Canada, much good sense, and is therefore inserted. The sentiments of the Editor on the matter it discusses, will be found in pages 363-4, Vol. I.]

MR. RECORDER,

I HAVE been a constant reader of your useful publication since its commencement. It gives me much pleasure that one of its character is now circulating in this extensive country, where none of a religious nature had existed before your's began. I hope it will be the means of doing much good, of making people more acquainted with the doctrines of Christianity, and holy in their lives.

Some months ago, you gave us a very interesting account of the different Missionary Societies, established in England, that have actively and zealously engaged in propagating the Gospel through the world. The success which has accompanied the exertions of the London Missionary Society in the South Sea islands, is wonderful. In what real good has been effected by its Missionaries, I rejoice; but, at the same time, I am not friendly to the principles on which it was formed and is still conducted: Its members and supporters belong to every denomination of Protestants. As a body, they do not, and cannot, agree in any mode of Church government, except in maintaining the inutility of saying any thing on the subject; and, on that account, they send no plan of the Christian Church to the heathen, but only what they consider the *glorious Gospel*, leaving their converts to draw from the Scriptures such a plan of Church government as fancy and circumstances may suggest. This lax principal was adopted, it is said, for the purpose of bringing together a vast variety of characters that could not otherwise co-operate in matters of religion. And it must be confessed that it

has had an amazing influence on the sentiments of the Christian world. . It has given rise to an incredible number of Societies, who glory in having no respect to SECT or DENOMINATION; and from Societies, it has naturally extended to individuals, insomuch that the conduct of many is thereby regulated; and the highest character that is now given, is, such a person is liberal in his sentiments, and has no regard for sect or denomination. This conduct, however, though it be dignified with the epithets liberal, charitable, and conciliatory, is, notwithstanding, a positive relinquishment of a great and most important part of Divine Revelation. When Missionary Societies undertake to send out Missionaries who are not of this, or of that Church, but from a body of men who are separate from every Church, and cannot agree in this simple question, what is the Church? they actually sacrifice to what they consider zeal, charity and liberality, principles of divine authority and obligation, which the Apostles and the primitive Church never for once thought of doing. Whetever they went preaching the Gospel, they laid down and taught the constitution of the Christian Church as having emanated from a source equally authentic and divine as the Gospel itself. In proof of this assertion, we may refer to St. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. "Go ye therefore, 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." It must strike any attentive reader of Scripture, that the Apostles were required by this commission, not only to make disciples by teaching them the doctrines of Christianity, and receiving them into their number by baptism, but also to teach them *to observe* all things whatever he had commanded them. From the terms of the commission, it will, I think, very naturally follow that Jesus Christ included the government of his Church among the "all things" which he said he had commanded them. If so, Jesus Christ revealed to his Apostles the constitution of his Church, previous to the time when he honoured them with this commission, not to one only, but to the whole number, as the event shews; for the same thing was taught in all the Churches of Judea, and copied by the Churches at Thessalonica; I. Thess. ii. 14. "For ye, brethren, become followers of the Churches of God which in Judea are in Christ Jesus." The Churches in Judea were planted by the very persons who received the commission of Jesus Christ from his own mouth.

The Apostle St. Paul, who was not of their number at that time, planted the Church of the Thessalonians after the model that was exhibited in Judea; and if we take his own word for it, he did the same in all Churches, wherever he went, "And so ordained I in all Churches." "We have no such custom, neither the Churches of God." I. Cor. vii, 17, xi. 16. What the Apostles taught in their day, was conscientiously followed by the primitive Church, during at least, the first three or four centuries. Jesus Christ therefore did institute the constitution and government of his Church—gave it in charge to the Apostles—commanded them to put it in practice, which they faithfully obeyed during their time on earth, and were followed by the primitive Church for several centuries.

Indeed every Society, whether literary, political or religious, must be governed by some laws. Those, therefore, who say that there is no specific plan of Church government laid down in the New Testament, represent the Church as being on a more contemptible footing than any other Society whatever. No Society can exist without laws for its government. But if the most part of what Bible and Missionary Societies teach us on that subject be true, Jesus Christ and his Apostles must have left the Church in a most wretched condition—indeed. This however is the mistake of the Societies in question; as it is plain and undeniable, that the great head of the Church instituted a specific plan of sacred polity, and his Apostles recorded the great outlines of the same in the New Testament. I have already taken notice of the commission that was given to the Apostles, and shewn that it comprehended the institution of Church government; and in addition to that, I will now refer to another passage which confirms what I there said: "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you; and when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." St. John, xx 21, 22, 23. The resemblance here between the mission of Jesus Christ and that of his Apostles, is limited to the authority he gave them to make disciples whom they were to teach and govern; as it would be very absurd to suppose that, because Jesus Christ came to seek and to save sinners, the Apostles, or any set of men, must therefore be Saviours and Redeemers also. Besides coming to die for us, and to make atone-

ment for our sins, Jesus Christ was sent of God to call men to repentance, to receive them into his service, to declare unto them the will of God, to govern them by his precepts, and to commission others to promulge his doctrines. Accordingly, he performed all these duties of his high office; and the manner in which he performed them is given us at large in the four Gospels. As the Father sent him to call men to repentance, to govern the disciples, and to send out labourers into his vineyard; even so he sent out the Apostles, invested with power to teach all nations, to receive them into fellowship with themselves by baptism, and to govern them according to what our Lord had commanded them. The power he gave them to govern, is expressed in the 23d verse of the chapter last quoted, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained" The Apostles, by virtue of their commission, went every where preaching the gospel of the kingdom. They baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. They taught the disciples to observe the ordinances of their Divine Master, and sent others to labour in the vineyard. To select one example; St. Paul ordained Timothy to execute the same office which he did himself; 2 Tim. i. 6 "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands." The following passages will shew that Timothy was invested, after his ordination by the Apostle, with as much authority in the Church, as the Apostles were themselves. "As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went unto Macedonia, that though mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine." 1 Tim. i. 3. "Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren." 1 Tim. i. 1. "Against an elder raise not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all that others also may fear." 19. 20. "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partakers of other men's sins." 22. "And the things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." 2 Tim. ii. 2. "Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord, that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers."—14. From these passages, it appears that Timothy had, in common with the Apostles, power to lay hands on, or in other words, to ordain, Elders.

or Presbyters, to receive accusation against them, to rebuke, censure and expel them as the case might require,—a power which was not vested in any Presbyter or deacon, as such ; but in the Apostles alone, and those commissioned by them as Timothy and Titus were, to exercise spiritual authority over the Presbyters and deacons. The exhortations, charges and directions quoted from the Epistle to Timothy, were not addressed to the Elders, or Presbyters and deacons, ordained by him, but to him alone, and to such persons after him, as are invested with the same power that was vested in him ; neither is there any passage in all the New Testament, which can prove that mere Elders are required to lay hands in ordination, receive accusations, give charge concerning doctrines, censure or expel their equals in office. This power of government was entirely confined to the Apostles, and to the persons that were appointed to succeed them in the same office ;—a power which to this day remains in the regular succession of those guides of the flock, and sent to exercise the same, as Christ was sent of God. To them is the promise given, “So, I am with you, always even to the end of the world,” Hence it appears that the Apostles were authorised to confer the power of feeding and governing the flock of Christ, on others who should succeed them, because without the same power which they had successively derived from persons who were really and truly possessed of it, Presbyters or elders cannot on Scripture grounds either ordain, rebuke, censure or expel offenders, who have the same authority with themselves, (and all Presbyters, are on a parity with one another,) from the society of the faithful. This then being the case, as the Epistles to Timothy and Titus fully prove, how can a heterogeneous assemblage of men of discordant opinions, of no acknowledged scriptural authority send to the heathen but what, from the nature of the thing itself, must be a defective, if not a corrupt, Gospel ? They cannot, however well meaning many of its members and supporters may be, do it in conformity to the laws instituted by Jesus Christ for the government of his Church ; inasmuch as private men, men without authority in the congregation of Christ’s flock, assume powers and functions which never were vested in them by any competent authority. Besides, when they act in the capacity of a Missionary society, they professedly and openly act without the pale of what they themselves consider the Church, and thereby proclaim to the world, that Jesus Christ has left no govern-

ment for his flock, but left it on a more loose footing than any other society whatever. They come out of their various churches, as if the Church of Christ were not competent to propagate the Gospel. They do this, because they do not know what the Church of Christ is, because they cannot agree in the simple question, *What is the Church?* and then assume a new character—a character which is neither Christian nor political, but an extraordinary indescribable mixture of arrogant assumption of power and vain glory. The Gospel which this mixture sends out, is not pretended to be sent by the Church of Christ, but by a society of human formation and of mere human authority—a society that affects to lay aside the government of Christ's House, and to substitute confusion and anarchy in its place.

Let us now suppose that the principles on which the London Missionary Society, and all other Societies of a similar character are formed and conducted, were fully related to an intelligent heathen, the following train of ideas, I think, would very forcibly obtrude on his mind. "These strangers from afar, certainly bring to our ears, doctrines and precepts which are far superior to every thing we knew before; but to us, poor heathens, who have never been favoured with the opportunities and privileges they have had, of cultivating our minds, and of becoming acquainted with the attributes and will of the Great Spirit that made and governs the world, there can be no certainty, that what these strangers teach is true. For let me tell you, my brethren, the people who have sent these strangers to our shores, whose ancestors for more than 1700 years have had in possession what they call the will of the Great Spirit, written in a book, and that book in the hands of every one of them; yet after all, as I am credibly informed, even at this advanced period of the world, are not agreed among themselves, in regard to the Laws and institutions which the Great Spirit gave for the government of such of us as shall turn from our ancient gods to the religion which they would have us to embrace. This fact looks at least to me, as if the doctrines which they teach were not true; or, if they are true, that they are so utterly unintelligible as to discourage us from having any thing to do with them, since the people, who have for ages been studying them, have not yet agreed, not only in the most essential articles of their creed, but they have not even agreed in the mere outward form, so as to be united in one body."

Thus far I suppose the heathen would proceed, without departing in the least from the dictates of what natural reason would suggest, and here I leave him, observing, that when Christians act, as they ought to do, within the pale of the Church of Christ, this kind of reasoning can have no place. For the Church has power from the Lord to send out labourers to his vineyard, invested with authority to administer the word and sacraments, not a defective, but the whole blessed, Gospel, and plant the Church according to Apostolic institution. Now, where can we find this primitive and Apostolic mode of propagating the Gospel, and promoting religion, on so divine and scriptural a foundation as in those venerable Societies in England; the one, for propagating the Gospel in foreign parts, and the other, for promoting Christian Knowledge? In these Societies, the Church sends the Missionary out with the Bible in his hand, accompanied with the Liturgy, and other Books of sound Divinity and fervent but pure devotion, teaching and shewing how the faithful in all ages, have worshipped the God of their fathers, and understood and practised the faith once delivered to the Saints. It is none of her characteristics to glory in distributing the Bible without note or comment, but to manifest her maternal care and solicitude that people should understand what they read and become wise unto salvation.

TITUS.

Lower Canada, July 16th, 1820.

THE PENITENT SON.

(FROM BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.)

DEATH brings to those who have been long dreading its approach, by the bed-side of one tenderly beloved, a calm in which nature feels most gracious relief from the load of sorrow. While we yet hear the faint murmurs of the unexpired breath, and see the dim light of the unclosed eyes—we watch in agony all the slightest movements of the sufferer, and to save the life of friends or parent, we ourselves would gladly die. All the love of which our hearts are capable, belongs then but to one dearest object; and things,

which perhaps a few days before were prized as the most delightful of earth's enjoyments, seem, at that awful crisis, unworthy even of the affections of a child. The blow is struck, and the sick-bed is a bier. But God suffers not the souls of them who believe, to fall into an abyss of despair. The being, whom for so many long years we have loved and revered,

"Has past through nature to eternity,"

and the survivors are left behind in mournful resignation to the mysterious decree.

Life and death walk through this world hand in hand. Young, old, kind, cruel, wise, foolish, good and wicked—all at last patiently submit to one inexorable law. At all times, and in all places, there are the watchings, and weepings, and wailings, of hearts severed, or about to sever. Yet look over landscape or city—and though sorrow, and sickness, and death, be in the groves and woods, and solitary places among the hills—among the streets and the squares, and the magnificent dwellings of princes; yet the great glad spirit of life is triumphant, and there seems no abiding place for the dreams of decay.

Sweet lonesome cottage of the Hazel Glen! Even now is the merry month of May, passing brightly over thy broomy braes; and while the linnet sings on earth, the lark replies to him from heaven. The lambs are playing in the sunshine over all thy verdant knells, and infant shepherd and sheperdess are joining in their glee. Scarcely is there a cloud in the soft cerulean sky—save where a gentle mist ascends above the dark green sycamore, in whose shade the solitary dwelling sleeps! This little world is filled to brim with happiness—for grief would be ashamed to sigh within the still enclosures of these pastoral hills.

Three little months ago, and in that cottage we stood together—son, daughter, grandchild, pastor, and friend—by the death-bed of the Elder. In thought are we still standing there; and that night of death returns upon me, not dark and gloomy, but soft, calm, and mournful, like the face of heaven just tinged with moonlight, and here and there a solitary star.

The head of the old man lay on its pillow stiller than in any breathing sleep, and there was a paleness on his face that told the heart would beat no more. We stood motionless, as in the picture, and looked speechlessly on each other's countenance. "My grandfather has fallen asleep," said

the loving boy, in a low voice, unconsciously using, in his simplicity, that sublime scriptural expression for death—The mother, unable to withhold her sobs, took her child by his little hand, and was leading him away, when at once the dreadful truth fell upon him, and he knew that he was never again to say his prayers by the old man's knees. "Oh! let me kiss him—once only—before they bury him in the cold earth;" and in a moment the golden curls of the child were mixed with the grey hairs of the lifeless shadow. No terror had the cold lips for him; and closely did he lay his cheek so smooth to those deep wrinkles, on which yet seemed to dwell a last loving smile. The father of the boy gazed piteously upon him, and said unto himself "Alas! he hath no love to spare for me, who have so long forgotten him. Jamie—my little Jamie! cried he now aloud, "thou wouldst not weep so were I to die—thou wouldst not kiss so thy own father's lips if they were, as these are, colder and whiter than the clay!" The child heard well, even where he lay on the bosom of that corpse, the tremulous voice of his father; and nature stirring strongly within his heart towards him of whose blood he was framed, he lifted up his sullied face from the unbeating bosom, and gently stealing himself away from the bed, rushed into his parent's arms, and lay there delivered up to all the perfect love of childhood's forgiving heart. All his father's frowns were forgotten—his sullen looks—his stern words—his menaces, that had so often struck terror to his wondering soul—his indifference—his scorn—and his cruelty.—He remembered only his smiles, and the gentlest sounds of his voice; and happy now, as in heaven, to feel himself no more neglected or spurned, but folded, as in former sweetest days, unto the bosom of his own kind father, the child could bear to turn his eyes from that blessed embrace, towards the dead old man, whom, an hour ago, he had looked on as his only guardian on earth besides God, and whose gray hairs, he had, even as an orphan, twined round his very heart. "I do not ask thee, Jamie, to forget thy grandfather—no, we too will often speak of him, sitting together by the ingle, or on the hill-side,—but I beseech thee not to let all thy love be buried with him in the grave—and to keep all that thou canst for thy wretched father." Sighs, sobs, tears, kisses, and embraces, were all the loving child's reply. A deep and divine joy had been restored to him, over whose loss often had his pining childhood wept. The beauty of his fa-

ther's face revived—It smiled graciously upon him, as it did of old, when he was wont to totter after him—to the sheep-fold—and to pull primroses beneath his loving eye, from the mossy banks of the little sparkling burn! Scarcely could the child believe in such blessed change. But the kisses fell fast on his brow—and when he thought that the accompanying tears were shed by his own father, for the unkindness sometimes shewn to his child, he could not contain those silent self-upbraidings, but with thicker sobs blessed him by that awful name, and promised to love him beyond even him who was now lying dead before their eyes. “I will walk along with the funeral—and see my grandfather buried, in our own burial place, near where the Tent stands at the Sacrament—Yes, I will walk, my father, by your side—and hold one of the strings of the coffin—and if you will only promise to love me for ever as you now do, and used always to do long ago, I will strive to think of my grandfather without weeping—aye—without shedding one single tear:”—and here the child, unaware of the full tenderness of his own sinless heart, burst out into an uncontrollable flood of grief. The mother, happy in her sore affliction, to see her darling boy again taken so lovingly to her husband's heart, looked towards them with a faint smile,—and then, with a beaming countenance, towards the expired saint; for she felt that his dying words had restored the sanctities of nature to her earthly dwelling. With gentle hand, she beckoned the Pastor and myself to follow her—and conducted us away from the death-bed, into a little parlour, in which burned a cheerful fire, and a small table was spread with a cloth whiter than the snow—“You will stay in our cottage all night—and we shall all meet together again before the hour of rest!” and so saying, she calmly withdrew.

There was no disorder or disarray in the room in which we now sat. Though sickness had been in the house, no domestic duties had been neglected. In this room the Patriarch had, every evening for forty years, said family prayers—and the dust had not been allowed to gather there, though sickness had kept him from the quiet nook in which he had so long delighted. The servant, with sorrowful but composed features, brought to us our simple meal, which the Pastor blessed, not without a pathetic allusion to him who had been removed—and another, more touching still, to them who survived him. That simple but most fer-

vent aspiration seemed to breathe an air of comfort through the house that was desolate—but a deep melancholy yet reigned over the hush, and the inside of the cottage, now that its ancient honour was gone, felt forlorn as its outside would have done, had the sycamore, that gave it shade and shelter, been felled to the earth.

We had sat by ourselves for about two hours, when the matron again appeared: not as when we had first seen her, wearied, worn out, and careless of herself, but calm in her demeanour, and with her raiment changed, serene and beautiful in the composure of her faith. With a soft voice she asked us to come with her again to the room where her father lay—and thither we followed her in silence.

The body of the old man had been laid out by the same loving hands that so tenderly ministered to all its wants and wishes when alive. The shroud in which he was now wrapped, had been in the cottage for many a long year; and white as it was, even as the undriven snow, scarcely was it whiter than the cheeks and the locks now bound in its peaceful folds. To the eyes of my childhood the Elder's face had sometimes seemed, even in its benignity, too austere for my careless thoughts, impressed as it ever was with an habitual holiness. But all such austerity, if indeed it had been ever there, death had now removed from that silent countenance. His last moments had been blessed by his son's contrition—his daughter's love—his grandchild's pity—his pastor's prayers. And the profound peace which his parting spirit had enjoyed, left an expression on his placid features, consolatory and sublime.

The Penitent Son was sitting at the bed-side. We all took our places near him, and for a while remained silent, with eyes fixed on that countenance from which beamed the best memories of earth, and the loftiest hopes of heaven.

“Hear,” said the humbled man; “how the thaw is bringing down the loosened torrents from the hills! even so is my soul flowing within me!”—“Aye, and it will flow, till its waters are once more pure and bright as a summer stream,” said the Pastor with a benign voice. “But art thou sure that my father's forgiveness was perfect?” “Yes, William, it was perfect. Not on his death-bed only, when love relents towards all objects glimmering away from our mortal eyes, did the old man take thee into his heart; but, William, not a day, no, not an hour, has passed over these his silver hairs, in which thy father did not forgive thee, love

thee, pray for thee unto God and thy Saviour. It was but last Sabbath that we stood together by thy mother's grave in the kirk yard, after divine worship, when all the congregation had dispersed. He held his eyes on that tomb stone, and said, "O Heavenly Father, when, through the merits of the Redeemer, we all meet again, a family in heaven, remember thou, O Lord, my poor lost William; let these drops plead for him, wrung out from his old father's broken heart!" The big tears, William, plashed like the drops of a thunder shower on the tomb stone—and, at the time, thy father's face was whiter than ashes—but divine assurance came upon his tribulation—and as we walked together from the burial place, there was a happy smile about his faded eye, and he whispered unto me, "My boy has been led astray, but God will not forget that he was once the prop and pillar of his father's house. One hour's sincere repentance will yet wipe away all his transgressions." When we parted, he was, I know it, perfectly happy—and happy no doubt, he continued until he died. William! many a pang hast thou sent to thy father's heart; but believe thou this, that thou madest amends for them all at the hour of his dissolution. Look, the smile of joy, at thy deliverance, is yet upon his face."

The son took his hands from before his eyes—gazed on the celestial expression of his father's countenance—and his soul was satisfied.

"Alas! alas!" he said in a humble voice, "what is reason, such poor, imperfect, miserable reason as mine, to deal with the dreadful mysteries of God! Never since I forsook my Bible has the very earth ceased to shake and tremble beneath my feet. Never, since I spurned its aid, have I understood one single thought of my own bewildered heart! Hope, truth, faith, peace, and virtue, all at once deserted together. I began to think of myself as of the beasts that perish; my better feelings were a reproach or a riddle to me, and I believed in my perplexity, that my soul was of the dust." Yes! Alice, I believed that thou too wert to perish utterly, thou and all thy sweet babies, like flowers that the cattle hoofs tread into the mire, and that neither thou nor they were ever, in your beauty and your innocence, to see the face of the Being who created you."

Wild words seemed these to that high-souled woman, who for years had borne with undiminished, nay, augmented affection the heaviest of all afflictions, that of a

husband's alienated heart, and had taught her children the precepts and doctrines of that religion which he in his delusion had abandoned. A sense of the fearful danger he had now escaped, and of the fearful wickedness, brought up from the bottom of her heart all the unextinguishable love that had lain there through years of sorrow—and she went up to him and wept on his bosom. “Oh! say it not, that one so kind as thou could ever believe that I and my little ones would never see their Maker—they who were baptized in thine own arms, William, by that pious man, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost!” “Yes, my Alice! I feared so once—but the dismal dream is gone. I felt as if the ground on which this our sweet cottage stands, had been undermined by some fiend of darkness—and as if it were to sink down out of sight with all its thatched roof so beautiful—its cooing pigeons—its murmuring bee-hives—and its blooming garden. I thought of the generations of my forefathers that had died in the Hazel Glen—and they seemed to me like so many shadows vainly following each other along the hills. My heart was disquieted within me; for the faith of my childhood was intertwined with all my affections—with all my love for the dead and the living—for thee, Alice, and our children, who do all resemble thee both in beauty and innocence, whether at thy bosom, or tottering along the green sward, and playing with the daisies in the sun. Such thoughts were indeed woven through my heart, and they could not be torn thence but by a heavy hand. Alice! the sight of thee and them drove me mad; for what sight so insupportable to one who has no hope in futurity as the smiles and tears of them he loves in his distraction!”

He who spake was no common man—no common man had been his father. And he gave vent to his thoughts and feelings in a strain of impassioned eloquence, which, though above the level of ordinary speech, may not unfrequently be heard in the cottage of the Scottish peasant, when the discourse is of death and judgment. All the while he was speaking, the wife kept her streaming eyes close to his face—the gray-haired Pastor beheld him with solemn looks—the mortal remains of his father lay before him—and, as he paused, there rose the sound of the snow-swollen flood.

“I call the Almighty to witness,” said the agitated man, rising from his seat, and pacing along the floor, “that these hands are yet unstained by crime. But oh! how much

longer might they have so continued? Why need the unbeliever care for human life? What signifies the spilling of a few drops of useless blood? Be the grave, once thought to be the final doom of all—and what then is the meaning of the word crime? Desperate and murderous thoughts assailed me by myself in solitude. I had reasoned myself, as I thought, out of my belief in revelation—and all those feelings, by which alone faith is possible, at the same time died away in my heart, leaving it a prey to the wretchedness and cruelty of infidelity. Shapes came and tempted me on the moors—with eyes and voices like, but unlike the eyes and voices of men. One had a dagger in its hand—and though it said nothing, its dreadful face incited me to do some murder. I saw it in the sunlight—for it was the very middle of the day—and I was sitting by myself on the wall of the old sheepfold, looking down in an agony, on the Hazel Glen where I was born, and where I had once been so happy. It gave me the dagger—and laughed as it disappeared. I saw and felt the dagger distinctly for some minutes in my hand, but it seemed to fall down among the heather, and large blots of blood were on my fingers. An icy shivering came over me, though it was a sunny day and without a cloud, and I strove to think that a brain fever had been upon me. I lay for two days and nights upon the hill—and more than once I saw my children playing on the green beside the water-fall, and rose to go down to put them to death—but a figure in white—it might be thou, Alice, or an angel, seemed to rise out of the stream, and quietly to drive the children towards the cottage, as thou wouldst a few tottering lambs.”

During all this terrible confession, the speaker moved up and down the room—as we are told of the footsteps of men in the condemned cell, heard pacing to and fro during the night preceding the execution. “Lay not such dreadful thoughts to the charge of thy soul,” said his wife, now greatly alarmed. “Hunger, and thirst, and the rays of the sun, and the dews of the night, had indeed driven thee into a ruelful fever; and God knows, that the best of men are often like demons, in a disease!” The Pastor, who had not dared to interrupt him during the height of his passion, now besought him to dismiss from his mind all such grievous recollections, and was just about to address himself to prayer, when an interruption took place, most pitiable and affecting.

The door, at which no footstep had been heard, slowly and softly opened, and in glided a little ghost, with ashy face and open eyes, folded in a sheet, and sobbing as it came along. It was no other than that loving child walking in its sleep, and dreaming of its grandfather. Not one of us had power to move. On feet that seemed, in the cautiousness of affection, scarcely to touch the floor, he went up to the bedside, and kneeling down, held up his little hands, palm to palm, and said a little prayer of his own, for the life of him who was lying dead within the touch of his balmy breath. He then climbed up into the bed, and laid himself down, as he had been wont to do, by the old man's side.

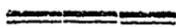
"Never," said the Pastor, "saw I love like this." And he joined his sobs to those that were fast rising from us all at this insupportable sight. "Oh! if my blessed child should awake," said his mother, "and find himself beside a corpse so cold, he will lose his senses—I must indeed separate him from his dead grandfather." Gently did she disengage his little hands from the shrouded breast, and bore him into the midst of us in her arms. His face became less deadly white—his eyes less glazedly fixed—and drawing a long, deep, complaining sigh, he at last slowly awoke, and looked bewilderedly, first on his mother's face, and then on the other figures sitting in silence by the uncertain lamp-light. "Come, my sweet Jamie, to thine own bed," said his weeping mother. The husband followed in his love; and at midnight the Pastor and myself retired to rest; at which hour, every room in the cottage seemed as as still as that wherein lay all that remained on earth of the Patriarch and the Elder.

It was on May-day that, along with my venerable friend, I again visited the cottage of the Hazel Glen. A week of gentle and sunny rain had just passed over the scenery, and brought all its loveliness into life. I could scarcely believe that so short a time ago the whiteness of winter had shrouded the verdant solitude. Here and there, indeed, a patch of snow lay still unmelted, where, so lately the deep wreaths had been drifted by the storm. The hum of insects even was not unheard; and through the glitter of the stream, the trout was seen leaping at its gaudy prey, as they went sailing down the pools with their expanded wings. The whole Glen was filled with a mingled spirit of pleasure and of pensiveness.

As we approached the old sycamore, we heard behind us the sound of footsteps, and that beautiful boy, whom we had so loved in his affliction, came up to us with a smiling face, and with his satchel over his shoulder. He was returning from school, for the afternoon was a half holiday, and his face was the picture of peace and innocence. A sudden recollection assailed his heart, as soon as he heard our voices, and it would have been easy to have changed his smiles into tears. But we rejoiced to see how benignly nature had assuaged his grief, and that there was now nothing in memory, which he could not bear to think of, even among the pauses of his pastimes. He led the way happily and proudly, and we entered once more the cottage of the Hazel Glen.

The simple meal was on the table, and the husband was in the act of asking a blessing, with a fervent voice. When he ceased, he and his wife rose to bid us welcome, and there was in their calm and quiet manner an assurance that they were happy. The children flew with laughter to meet their brother, in spite of the presence of strangers, and we soon sat down all together at the cheerful board. In the calm of the evening, husband and wife walked with us down the Glen, as we returned to the Manse; nor did we fear to speak of that solemn night, during which, so happy a change had been wrought in a sinner's heart. We parted in the twilight, and on looking back at the Hazel Glen, we beheld a large beautiful star shining right over the cottage.

EREMUS.



REASONS FOR ATTACHMENT TO THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

(From the Christian Observer.)

In a period, like the present, of innovation and speculation—when what is venerable and approved too often, for that very reason, becomes suspected, and when it requires considerable firmness to stand the charge of prejudice and bigotry with which those who hold fast “the good old way” are not unfrequently assailed—it becomes the duty of every individual to be able to give a reason, not generally for

“the hope that is in him” as a Christian, but also for his adherence and attachment to that particular church, of which he professes himself a member. I am conscious that there is nothing of novelty in the following survey of reasons for attachment to the Church of England; but I have thrown them together, in the hope that considerations which have proved satisfactory to my own mind may not be without their effect on the minds of others, and under the idea that it conduces in no common degree to comfort and usefulness, to be fully persuaded that our connexion with the church is not a matter of habit, or of authority, but founded on a conviction that there are substantial grounds of preference for our choice.

It is almost superfluous to remark, that in no human institution can we expect perfection: our grounds of preference must, therefore, be principally founded on comparison, as taken with other churches, or with the disadvantages that would arise from a change: and it is chiefly to the danger and disposition of the present day—which is not that of preferring to the church any old and existing mode of dissent, but of attempting to strike out a new, and, as it is supposed, a purer and more scriptural mode of worship—that the following remarks are directed.

By the young and inexperienced in religion, the blemishes of existing establishments are so keenly descried, while their advantages are so little understood—the yet untried evils of separation are so little apprehended—the sin of schism; of leaving the bosom of a church, blessed of God through a series of many generations; is so inadequately considered—there is so much of what is congenial to the remaining sinfulness of the heart, in the excitement, the opposition, the misrepresentation, which are to be encountered, and parried, and disregarded, in the progress of a step of this kind—that while it is quite obvious to all around, that if not a desire to attract notice, at least an undue self-confidence and contempt of the judgment of others, is leading the subjects of the experiment into error, they appear to themselves to be actuated solely by a conscientious desire for truth, and by a regard for our Saviour’s injunction, “Call no man master, upon earth.” The experience of a few years will probably teach them, when too late, that influence and opportunities of usefulness, never to be recovered, have been lost; occasions of offence, never to be removed, have been given, in the vain attempt after a perfection and purity of

doctrine and discipline unattainable in this world, in whatever quarter or connexion it may be sought.

The purpose of a church is to afford the means of edification to her spiritual members, and of instruction and conversion to those who are her members only by outward profession. It cannot be denied, that the Church of England effects both; and in a manner, as I conceive, better calculated to promote humility of heart and growth in religion, than any other communion: for in it the Christian grows up into Christ with less observation and human excitement than in most other churches. For the very constitution of dissenting communities, eminent piety procures notice and advancement; those who are remarkable for their attainments in religion, obtain on that account respect and influence; and while the human heart remains what, ever since the fall of Adam, it has been, is it to be wondered at if, especially with the young convert, pride and self-complacency should begin to spring up with luxuriance in this genial sunshine? It has accordingly been often remarked by clergymen respecting those of whom they had hoped well, that an exchange of the meekness and lowliness of the Christian character, for a greater or less degree of spiritual pride and presumption, has been a frequent result of the transition from the obscure station in their own church, to the more conspicuous one to which they were raised, in some smaller and more exclusive community.

It is with me a circumstance of no inconsiderable weight on this question, that God has been pleased to place our church in the exalted station which she at present occupies; a fact, the more remarkable, because on looking back at the history of that church, and reviewing the many scenes of persecution in which she has been concerned, we should scarcely, reasoning without a knowledge of the issue, have expected to find such a result. That high station she must either retain or lose. If she retain it, and continue, as God in his providence has hitherto constituted her, the great medium of instruction to the people at large, is it not the duty of all who desire to retain the blessings of a scriptural ministry, to strengthen her by their prayers and attendance? If she lose it, what confusions, jealousies, and separations, may not ensue? How much of all that is contrary to what is recorded of the infant church, in Acts, ix. 31, when "the churches had rest, and were edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were

multiplied!" Rest, Paley remarks, is the enjoyment of age; and, as in natural, so in spiritual things, the blessings of peace, of stillness, of leisure to commune with our own heart, are seldom valued as they deserve to be by the young Christian. It is not *within*, but without and around him, that his fervent spirit usually desires to exert itself. Little aware of the extent of Christian holiness, of that world within, as well as without, which is to be denied and mortified; of that deceitfulness of the heart, doctrinally assented to, but very little understood in the early stages of a religious progress; he looks around him for some theatre on which to exhibit his spiritual strength, and to try his newly acquired weapons.

But it may be objected, that the enquiries which terminate in secession, are not entered upon from the love of controversy or novelty, but are forced, as it were, upon the mind; and if conscience protest against a practice as unscriptural, is not her voice to be listened to; I reply: Satan may assume the appearance of an angel of light: we should therefore, beware, lest he beguile us by his subtlety: we should examine well our motives. May no secret bias toward individuals, who may have taken this step before us—no latent dissatisfaction with religious advantages, perhaps inferior to those formerly possessed, influence our minds? Have experience, observation, an acquaintance with the devices of Satan, and the deceitfulness of our own hearts, qualified us to determine upon a question not always of easy decision, but in which conflicting duties, and apparently counter injunctions, render calmness of feeling, clearness of judgment, a single eye to the will of God, and an implicit dependence on Divine direction, necessary, in order to make a right choice? Is it likely that these should be the qualifications of youth and inexperience? Are they not almost exclusively the attainments of the tried and matured Christian? And yet, if they are indispensably requisite to form a right judgment on the question, is not the want of them in itself an imperative reason for delay? Can the advantages to be obtained, even in a purer form of worship, compensate for the anxieties and offences occasioned by a separation? Can a church, in which have been nurtured and edified some of the holiest men that ever existed—our Hookers, our Herberts, our Leightons, our Beverages—really be essentially and fundamentally in error, so as to render necessary a separation from it, in the face of the continual exhortations

to unity and peace with which the Scriptures abound? If the energies of our renewed nature, instead of being directed to the mere circumstantials and machinery of religion, were duly intent on bringing every thought into captivity to the Gospel of Christ, and crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts, how little time or inclination would be left for doubtful disputations; how much more should we adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour; how much greater peace should we enjoy with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Again, if we look at those who, in our own times, have thought a separation from the church necessary, do we see such an increase of usefulness, of peace, and of charity, as to encourage us to follow their example? Do not too many, on the contrary, lamentably correspond to the Apostle's expression, "ever learning, and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth?" Do we not see too many fluctuating, and disunited among themselves? as, indeed, must ever be the case when men will yield nothing for the sake of peace, and order, and security, the silent growth, and tranquil beauty of our Zion; a state, the tendency of which we may learn from the terms in which it is hailed by an acute, though unhappily free-thinking writer,* who speaks with delight of an era "free from every mixture of absurdity, imposture, and fanaticism; when the teachers of each little sect, finding themselves almost alone, would be obliged to respect those of almost every other sect, and the concessions which they would mutually find it both agreeable and convenient to make to one another, might, in time, probably reduce the doctrine of the greater part of them to that pure and rational religion, such as wise men have, in all ages of the world, wished to see established; but such as positive law has never yet established, and probably never will establish in any country. Because, with regard to religion, positive law always has been, and probably always will be, more or less influenced by popular superstition and enthusiasm. This plan of ecclesiastical government, or, more properly speaking, of no ecclesiastical government, was what the sect called Independents—a sect, no doubt, of very wild enthusiasts—proposed to establish in England, towards the close of the civil war. If it had been established, though of a very unphilosophical origin, it would probably, by this time, have

* Adam Smith, Vol. III. book 5, ch. 1.

been productive of the most philosophical good temper and moderation, with regard to every sort of religious principle!"

But are our reasons for attachment to the church only the negative ones of its being established, and of the evils that would result from a separation? Far from it. Not only is our judgment convinced, but our affections secured. We feel a filial veneration for the formularies which we have so often used with comfort and advantage: we love to pray in the words in which our forefathers prayed, and in which so many fellow-worshippers are still calling "on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both theirs and ours." Nor is this mere bigotry, but the natural, and in this instance beneficial, effect of the principle of association inherent in the human mind. "I never enter a Gothic church," says the late Mr. Cecil, "without feeling myself impressed with something of of this idea: Within these walls have been resounded for centuries by successive generations, Thou art the King of glory, O Christ." The fervency with which the soul may have accompanied an extempore prayer, can with difficulty be retraced in subsequent meditation: but a liturgy affords facilities for embodying and recalling the impressions of our happier moments; its words are enriched to aged Christians by being the representatives of their past experience; many delightful records are associated with them of hours when those words softened and soothed their hearts. In a liturgical form of worship, there is also less dependence upon man, and more upon the spirit of God, in helping our infirmities, than in extempore prayer; and if there are occasions when the adaptation of which extempore prayer admits, is desirable, a liturgy has advantages, which, on the whole, greatly overbalance this partial convenience. It serves as a guard against the danger of what may be called praying to the times; and yet so capable is it, from that comprehensiveness of expression sometimes objected to, of application to individual feelings and wants, that I have often, when entering into the church service with a mind pre-occupied by peculiar circumstances, been unexpectedly touched with the unpremeditated suitableness of some part of it to the subject which engaged me, and felt it to be "meet for all hours and every mood of man." And while it brings back the mind to those spiritual blessings which need to be petitioned for by all Christians, at all times, it does it in reality in a manner less formal than could be accomplished by any other mode; for the formality of a form of prayer, where the same

blessings are repeatedly to be supplicated, is less observable, than an attempt to vary the expression of the same idea in extempore prayer. Another advantage of a liturgical form of worship is, that it affords no room for display on the one side, or criticism on the other. Few can have attended, even occasionally, at places of worship where extempore prayer is employed, without having felt themselves pained and offended by the way in which the petitions and expressions of the prayer are frequently animadverted upon. A liturgy cuts off all opportunity for this. The retention of so much ceremony as is maintained in our forms of public worship, is an objection sometimes openly, and not less often silently, made: but ceremonies are not now what they were in the days of our second Charles; when toleration was unknown, and violence scarcely left reason or conscience any scope for excuse, or allowed them to decide upon the real degree of importance due to those trifles (for trifles many of them were) for which some of our forefathers unwillingly separated themselves from the church. That which when voluntarily acceded to is unfelt, becomes a burden too heavy to be borne when imposed on the conscience.

I will only add, that I am quite sure that a preponderating attachment to the Church of England is entirely consistent with a cordial respect and regard for all, of whatever denomination, who "love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity;" and while I think that every member of our church has reason to apply to himself the words of the Psalmist, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places," still I would always desire to recollect that "although here we are nurtured and cultivated in different pastures and enclosures, there is, after all, but one Shepherd and Husbandman, and there will be at last but one harvest."

T. B. P.

INFANT BAPTISM.

THE Editor of the Upper Canada Gazette has transmitted us a very good humoured letter which had been sent to him, on the subject of Infant Baptism. The writer, a respectable old gentleman, is very severe in his strictures on our sentiments upon that important subject; but it appears

from his letter that he had not seen the paper inserted in our first Number of Vol. 2. which might have made a favourable impression on his mind.

“I am grieved, afflicted, and sorrowful,” says this correspondent on Infant Baptism, “to think that a gentleman of your ability should come all the way from England, that great place of renown, and bring nothing with you to place among us but Infant Baptism.” This paragraph shews that he has not studied the subject with sufficient care; he will therefore be surprised to learn that during the first sixteen centuries of the Christian Church, there was no such denomination as the Baptists, and that during all that period Infant Baptism was universal. This fact is attested by Ecclesiastical History.

He makes no distinction between the Baptism of St. John and that ordained by our Saviour, though they were not the same in substance. The Baptist had not the power of baptising with the Holy Ghost, nor in the name of the Son, who was not yet received into Glory. He baptised with water, to repentance and amendment of life.

That the institutions were very different, is manifest from the practice of St. Paul, who baptised those again who had been baptised according to the baptism of St. John, because he deemed it insufficient.

There is not one example in Scripture in favor of the Baptists. That of our Saviour going to be baptised of St. John, does not apply:—1st. Because the two baptisms are essentially different.—2dly. Because Christ needed not repentance, but was baptised to show his readiness to comply with God’s righteous precepts, and to testify the truth of St. John’s mission.—3dly. Because, were it applicable, all Christians must be baptised to St. John’s baptism as well as Christ’s, and not until they attain the same age of thirty years.

It is to be farther observed, that all the examples in Scripture, are in favor of infant baptism. No grown up persons were baptised but such as had been Jews and heathens, but the sons and daughters of converts were all baptised in their infancy: accordingly, we are told of households that were baptised.

“Religious privileges, though external and relative,” says Dr. Williams, “are the gifts of God; and it behoves parents and Ministers to reflect on what authority they revoke them. They should have more weighty reasons, than those which

are founded on doubtful inferences, from supposed silence. What evidence is there in the Apostles' practice, that they excluded infants from the relative privileges of their parents? By Divine grace they were included in the Mosaic Law; and where is the Divine Law that now debars them? In vain shall we look into the law of baptism, or to Apostolic practice, for any exclusive clause, or any unfavorable token."



THE WIDOW OF THE CITY OF NAIN.

[*From the Antijacobin Review.*]

"THE Widow of the City of Nain," a subject that will ever interest the Christian affections; as for her the Divine Founder clothed himself with omnipotence, to perform a deed that would elicit wonder from humanity;—no less than to raise the dead! to re-illumine the eye glazed by death; to give currency to the blood to run again through the usual, flagged channels; to exchange the paleness of the dead cheek for the former ruddiness; to extend the lifeless hand once more to afford help and succour to a mother, and once more to issue sound from the mouth to comfort and soothe. In short, to exchange sorrow for joy; affliction for pleasure; to give a lost, an only child, to an only, a widowed parent. What a picture! We think we see the whole group—the real mourners in the bearers, as with measured, silent pace, they walk towards the grave, their hearts inditing the affectionate actions of the dutiful son: the joy and comfort of an equally affectionate mother! We see the mother, not with fictitious woe, but with declining eyes filled with real sorrow. We note—we trace her footsteps. She follows all that was valuable in the world to her; has neither eye nor ear for external objects! She walks through a desert, a wilderness; hears, indeed, her fellow creatures as they pass her; but sound only affects her—her treasure, or all that is left of it, is before her: there is her world, and she is about to lose it for ever! But no; one comes with majesty and benignity united. We think we see the God-man gazing upon the affecting procession. He knew there was real mourning—he knew the heart. "He groaned in the

spirit;" "His spirit was troubled." He stepped, filled with commiseration and benevolence for the *entirely* bereaved widow, out of the path, to the head of the procession, and commanded them to stand still! What majesty must have been in his manner; as in his exterior there was none: for the son of Joseph the carpenter was poor! What awful solemnity in his tone; how penetrating, how effectual; or he would have been deemed a madman, to stop the procession of the dead, to trifle with its solemnities, and be justly liable to punishment from the law, for delaying the carriage of a body out of the city which might have been infectious! No, the Deity must have been visible; for we hear of, we read of no dissent; all was obedience:—they stood still—still! Awful the pause—awful the moment—apprehensive the mother! The "Resurrection and the Life" then with a loud voice, a voice assured of the completion—the fulfilment of its command, said—"Young man, I say unto thee, Arise." Mighty the action, divine the deed! The dead arose! Wonder rose on wonder with the astonished, panic-struck funeral attendants; The Mother again embraced a living Son, the Son a happy Mother! We think we see the adoration of the multitude; the most engaged, the Mother and Son! We perceive the benign smile of the Creator! The adoration was mixed with awe; we read "And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and that God hath visited his people." Such is the passage chosen for the Poem before us: a passage worthy the skill of the most admirable painter; the lyre of the most celebrated master. But to our review.

In "The Widow of the City of Nain," there are many beauties, though they do not abound: yet the poet is a real child of genius. He must not expect all at once to arrive at his full stature: a little more to "brood over chaos," and his creations will be more finished—more admirable. We wish to see him again; perhaps he will shew his mind enriched with *substantial* beauties: with attractions for riveted regard. Our feelings are elate when we see new and original blossoms of mind: it is a kingdom: and to the man, the woman, or the child, who can discover additional properties in it, we have the extended hand of good will and high regard. We commend youthful talent, and, therefore, address it. Let not the immature painter be dismayed: fathers of the art, once fearfully placed their efforts in the

academic hall of the public: commendation gave them assurance: and assurance propelled them to perfection!

As an essay, this Poem, "The Widow of the City of Nain," is excellent: our readers will be of a similar opinion. For their immediate notice we shall extract a little: and then recommend his "Poems," where he seems to have lost his rhyinical fears, and his (few) errors of imagery.

The afflicted widow and mother having uttered a long and sad complaint, concludes with—

"————— ' since he has gone
' I ask no earthly hope —be thou,
' Oh Israel's God! my portion now:
' And, when the pangs of memory prey
' On my cold heart, be thou my stay,
' And teach my sinking heart to say,
' 'It is the Lord—His will be done."

"She ceased—upon the green hill's brow
A cloud of dust was gathering now:
Hark! through the light air echoing loud
The murmurs of a mingled crowd.
Onward the tumult rolls—'tis near—
They listen, mute with breathless fear:
Is it the lordly Roman's car?
The pomp and pageantry of war:
Where Zion's sons must swell the train,
Offoes their inmost souls disdain?
Or those bold warriors—wild, yet free—
The rebel bands of Galilee?
No—they are brethren—and that cry
Is the glad shout of victory:
'Tis high Hecanna's loud acclaim,
'Tis royal David's honoured name.
And now they wind the steep descent—
The glance, in swift inquiry bent,
Wandered o'er all, but fixed on one—
Circled by numbers, yet alone.
Robed in the garb of poverty,
Nor king, nor priest, nor warrior he;
Yet—why they knew not—in his mien
A lofty loftiness was seen:
A more than mortal majesty,
That daunted while it fix'd the eye.
The countless throng that round him pressed,
To hush their songs of praise addressed;
Not thus had Abram's seed adored,
A heathen chief—an earthly lord.
They come—they meet—but, ere they part

One gracious, pitying look he cast
On that pale mourner—marked her tear,
And bade her 'weep, not;—to the bier
He turned—but, ere he spoke his will,
Each trembled with a sudden thrill
Of conscious awe—the train stood still!
“The mourner—speechless and amazed,
On that mysterious stranger gazed.
If young he were, ’twas only seen
From lines that told what once had been;—
As if the withering hand of Time
Had smote him ere he reached his prime.
The bright rose on his cheek was faded;
His pale fair brow with sadness shaded—
Yet through the settled sorrow there
A conscious grandeur flashed—which told
Unswayed by man, and uncontrolled,
Himself had deigned their lot to share,
And borne—because he willed to bear,
Whate'er his being, or his birth,
His soul had neyer stooped to earth;
Nor mingled with the meaner race,
Who shared or swayed his dwelling place:
But high—mysterious—and unknown,
Held converse with itself alone;
And yet the look that could depress
Pride to its native nothingness;
And bid the specious boaster shun
The eye he dared not gaze upon,
Superior love did still reveal—
Not such as man for man may feel—
No—all was passionless and pure—
That godlike majesty of woe,
Which counts its glory to endure—
And knows not hope nor fear below;
Nor aught that sail to earth can bind,
But love and pity for mankind:
And in his eye a radiance shone—
Oh! how shall mortal dare essay
On whom no prophet's vest is thrown,
To paint that pure celestial ray?
Mercy, and tenderness, and love,
And all that finite sense can deem
Of him who reigns enthroned above;—
Light—such as blest Bahab's dream,
When to the awe-struck Prophet's eyes,
God bade the star of Judah rise—
There heaven in living lustre glowed—
There shone the Saviour—there the God.
Oh ye—to whom the dying Lord
Your sorrows—not his own—deplored:
Thou, on whose guilt the Saviour cast
A look of mercy—'twas his lot
Ye—who beheld when Jesus died,

Say ye—for none can tell beside,
 How matchless grace, and love divine,
 In that immortal glance would shine.
 And she too felt and owned its power
 To soothe in that despairing hour;
 Her pulse beat quick—and to her heart
 A ray of rapture seem'd to dart:—
 The cloud that hung upon her brow
 Wore off—and all was comfort now;—
 And why? she thought not on the dead—
 Her sight on Him was riveted,
 Whose look such peace and glory shed:—
 So the wan captive, o'er whose cell
 No solitary sunbeam fell;
 When years and years have lingered by,
 Restored to light and liberty,
 Fixes his first enraptured gaze
 Upon the bright sun's living rays.
 * Short space he stood—his living eyes
 To heaven a moment rais'd—he spoke—
 These words the solemn silence broke:
 ' Young man, I say to thee, arise !'

“ Where is thy victory, oh Death ?
 A nobler, mightier arm than thine
 Has shook the dark abodes beneath,
 And bade the grave her prey resign.
 Jesus, thy victor and thy Lord,
 Has rent thy once resistless sword:
 Foll' tyrant of the fatal brow,
 Where are thy vaun'd triumphs now ?
 He moves—he breathes—he lives—he wakes—
 Swift as the vivid lightning breaks
 Through the black tempest's murky night,
 His eye unclosed to life and light;
 The crimson to his pale cheek rustled—
 To his cold heart the life blood gusted,
 And circled quick through every vein,
 And waked the fluttering pulse again.
 Round his closed lips—still un-faced
 Had fix'd the smile with which he died;
 Death's marble look so well it graced,
 One only charm seem'd still denied—
 'Twas life—and what are all beside ?
 Where is that mortal paleness fled ?
 Is that the cold smile of the dead ?
 Away ! thou ' busy fiend ' Despair,
 'Tis life itself that kindles there.
 'Tis life ! by that almighty word
 His mortal being is restored.
 And reason flashes to his brain,
 And mind and memory wake again.
 Whatever in other worlds he saw
 Man knows not—none can ever know—

But peace—and joy—and holy awe
 Sull lightened lingering on his brow,
 And o'er his face a lustre shed—
 Not of the living, or the dead.
 ' Where am I? whither are ye fled
 ' Fair visions of celestial light,
 ' That seem'd to hover o'er my head
 ' Oh! bear me with you in your flight.
 ' Can this be earth—and must I deem
 ' 'Twas all an unsubstantial dream?
 ' 'Tis strange—light faded from mine eye,
 ' And on my brow such darkness fell
 ' As none have ever lived to tell.
 ' That last mysterious agony
 ' Which throbs—and man has ceased to be;
 ' The frame is clay—the soul is free.
 ' I deemed this change had passed on me,
 ' And my light spirit soared on high,
 ' I know not where—from memory
 ' All passed with life's returning breath;—
 ' Yet still I feel, if such be death,
 ' 'Tis blessedness to die.
 ' But speak—what means this sable bier,
 ' This funeral train—whence came I here?
 ' Ha! thou too, mother—thou so near,
 ' And I beheld thee not— * * * * *
 * * * * *

“ Did Nature's last convulsive thrill
 Press heavy on her beating brow,
 That gentle voice had soothed her still—
 And yet she hears not—heeds not now—
 She heard in hope, and holy dread,
 The awful words that raised the dead:
 She saw the spirit kindle o'er
 His pale cold cheek—she saw no more—
 Rushed she not forth to clasp her son?
 No! to that high and holy One
 Urged with restless zeal she turned,
 Her breast with strung emotions burned—
 As lowly at his feet she knelt,
 Well might her throbbing bosom melt
 With faith and love, till now unfelt:
 'Twas God himself she gazed upon.
 Her favoured soul was given to see,
 The pure incarnate Deity
 And speech and sight and spirit failed
 Before the Godhead, though 'twas veiled
 Burning with gratitude and love,
 For utterance long in vain she strove:
 At length she spoke—“ My God! my Lord!
 ‘ Oh! for that mercy all divine
 ‘ Which deigned to visit guilt like mine,
 ‘ For ever be thy name adored.
 ‘ To thee let ransomed Zion bow,
 ‘ Her King, her promised Saviour, Thou!”

Lucy Clare having been misled, we commence a story no less interesting.

THE SISTERS.

"Honour and shame from no condition rise:
"Act well your part—there, all the honour lies."

In an obscure village in the county of Chester, separated from Wales only by the river Dee, lived Walter and Rebecca Jones. They were an industrious and happy couple, comfortably supported by their mutual industry and frugality. Their lives were regulated by the dictates of their Bible, which was the constant companion of their evenings' leisure. Their days of labour were spent in active exertion; and their Sundays in attendance upon the church, reading, and kind intercourse with their neighbours. Though these humble cottagers had no other means of support than what their daily toil afforded, yet, by their prudent management, and regular habits, they were sufficiently provided for, and their clothing was neat and clean. They had only one child—a little girl, called Rebecca, after her mother—who was carefully instructed in the ways of modesty, humility, and submission. Perhaps they could have dizen'd her out in some more showy-printed frock, or gaudier ribbon, than she always wore; but they had too just an estimate of their own situation in life, and of the one for which their child was destined, to inspire her young mind with a love of finery, which they saw too many of their neighbours had the folly to encourage in their children. Little Rebecca accompanied her father and mother to church in a dark calico frock, of tidiest appearance and plainest make; the gloss on her comfortable green coat was the only smartness her dress evinced; and a black silk bonnet, and tippet, had been worn uninjured, and without change, every Sunday for the last two years,—thus exhibit-

ing, in their humble state, the two leading virtues of industry and moderation.

It was on one of the dark nights of December, they were seated by their cheerful fire, and comforted by its friendly warmth, when the simple lesson of content and gratitude, with which they were impressing the mind of their child for the business of such a home, was interrupted by a deep groan from without, succeeded by the piteous cry of an infant. Little Rebecca looked with affright on her parents, and left her low chair to creep to the side of her mother. Walter immediately arose, and hasten'd to open the door, on the threshold of which lay a woman, apparently expiring, and under her an almost stifled infant. Rebecca had followed her husband, and, as he raised the woman, she drew the poor baby from beneath her. The compassionate man carried the sufferer to a bed on the same floor on which they were sitting; and the kindness of this charitable couple supplied all her wretched situation required: warmth, and a little nourishment cautiously administered, revived her. The infant had been given to their daughter, and, cherished by the fire, it had fallen asleep on the knee of its little nurse; who was very proud in having such a charge confided to her care.

The woman was too ill to be left alone during the night, or to be entrusted with the child; therefore the charitable Rebecca determin'd to remain with her, and the infant was comfortably consign'd to the massy oaken cradle, which had often lulled her little Rebecca to sleep, as it had done her father before her, and which was the only inheritance he could boast from his ancestors.

The worthy and truly christian people did not hesitate to bestow all the assistance and consolation in their power, upon a fellow-creature in dis-

press; neither did they calculate how much better Farmer Davies, or the Widow Price, could afford to give, than they could; they only were anxious to perform their duty in the best manner they were able.

The unfortunate object of their compassion continued very ill all the following day: towards the evening her recollection and senses returned, and her kind hostess thought her better. Walter said, "Fetch her the child: it will do a mother's heart good to see how it is come about." The poor patient groaned, as from mental agony; and when the baby was brought to her, she hid her eyes with the bed-clothes. Walter and Rebecca looked upon each other in silent surprise, and thought it a strange sight, that a mother should refuse to look upon her child. "Ah!" said the poor sufferer, "you know not what a wicked creature you have taken into your house: but do not send me away; let me die in your bed, as I feel I soon must—But I will tell you my sad story; and if you think there is any hope in heaven for me, do not abandon me in my dying hour."

Here the little Rebecca entered the room, and crept close to her father.

"I was born of honest parents," said the woman, "whose first wish was to see me humble and industrious. As soon as I could be made useful, I was sent to service; and my master and mistress were worthy people: but a love of dress was my ruin; it had been the earliest inclination of my mind; and not satisfied with clothes that were suited to my station, or that my wages would supply, I abused the confidence my mistress's generous nature had placed in me; and on the discovery of my dishonesty was dismissed. Not daring to apply for a character, and still devoted to finery, I sought not to retrieve the reputation I had lost, but formed my associations amongst the most abandoned of my sex, joined in their depravity, and partook of their ruin. My health and peace of mind were gone

for ever; for, depraved as were my habits, the virtuous instructions of my parents would rise to my remembrance, and sting me to the heart. My father disowned me; my mother had died broken hearted: the reproaches of my conscience drove me from my country, and I became a vagrant.—But now," said the guilt-stricken creature, "now the worst is to be told: it is my dying confession, and must be made. About six months ago, my wandering habits led me into the south; and as I was loitering about a gentleman's pleasure-grounds, I observed two young women, apparently upper servants, who were deeply engaged in examining a parcel containing muslin, ribbon, and other articles of unmade finery. An infant handsomely dressed was laid down upon the grass, whilst the servant to whose care it was given was showing her purchases to her acquaintance. A small plantation screened me from their view. The clothes of the child tempted me, but to gain them alone was impossible, I therefore seized on the infant, and, darting through the trees, hurried from the place, not resting all the night, and secreting myself during the day in woods or obscure villages; not daring to enter a town, or take the high road, as I did not doubt the most active search would be made for me. Day after day, I continued to hasten from the scene of my wickedness, and a horror such as I had never before known accompanied me. As I had now travelled many miles undiscovered, I ventured to dispose of those clothes that had seduced me to so vile an act; and I easily found purchasers, who, contented to gain a cheap bargain, asked no questions. The gold clasps that were in the shoes I did not at that time risk the disposal of, lest the engraving upon them should lead to my discovery. Six months of misery and apprehension thus passed. Wretch as I am, I never treated the little creature I had thus injured with further cruelty; my heart, depraved as it was, had not every avenue

closed to pity ; the innocent's smiles would oft soothe and soften it to better feelings. Sometimes a gleam of penitence would cross my mind ; and I have thought to seek the place from whence I took it, and throw myself on the mercy of its parent ; but a fear of premature discovery has deterred me. The little mone. I had gained was soon expended : I determined to beg my way to Ireland, where detection would be less likely to follow me ; but yesterday as I approached this village, fatigue and famine overcame me : night came on ; my strength was failing fast ; a light from his cottage encouraged me to try its charity.—You know the rest," said the poor object faintly. "Oh, do not turn me out of door ! let me die in a bed. I was born of good parents ; let me not perish on the high road. Speak, good people : is there any hope in heaven for me ?"

Walter and Rebecca looked at each other : a deed so atrocious had never entered their imaginations. Rebecca drew her child to her, as though she feared one so wicked might steal her away. But the misery of the woman recalled her attention and compassion, and Walter with simple eloquence attempted to comfort her : "Let not your heart be cast down," said he ; "you do not die with your wickedness imputed of : we have a merciful Judge, in whom we trust : he knows your thoughts and your penitence. You are not so bad as you might have been—there are greater crimes than your : you might have destroyed the child when it became burthensome to you, yet you treated it with kindness, think upon this, and thank God that he did not quite abandon you. We will pray for you, and ourselves : we have nothing to repent of. Endeavour to compose yourself : you shall stay her, till you are better. If it please God to spare your life, you will amend it ; if not, he will accept your sincere intention ; and if you die, you shall have decent burial."

The woman lifted up her hands and eyes to heaven, and her lips

moved in silent prayer. After a moment she turned towards them, and they saw her countenance was greatly changed. "The child!" she faintly said. Rebecca took it from the cradle, and presented it to her. Emotions of various kinds covered her dying face, but affection rested on it. "Canst thou," she said, "forgive thy cruel enemy?" The poor innocent appeared to recollect her face, and smiled. "O, God forgive me too," she almost inarticulately added ; and sinking on the bed, drew the face of the child to her dying cheek, and held it in convulsive grasping. To her last words the cottagers had added a solemn amen : they saw she was dying, and took the helpless babe away.

In laying out the body, the gold clasps she had spoken of were found sewed within the lining of her stays : they were large and handsome ; and in the inside of one was engraven, "For the dear Maria, and on each, the cipher V. An event so strange occupied all their conversation. "We will apply," said Walter, "to the parish, to bury the poor creature ; but what must we do with the child?" "Ay!" said Rebecca, "what indeed, Walter?" and she looked in his face for an explanation of his thoughts. "It is a sweet child," he said, "and born perhaps of good parents ; it would be a pity to send it to the work-house—yet we have nothing but what we work for. What do you think Rebecca?"—"It will not take much to keep this little thing," replied the benevolent woman : "let us try at least, dear Walter ; we can but give it up if we are not able. It is so pretty!—it is just the age, and I think something like my little Walter that is dead ;" and the fond mother wept.

Her husband, who had never seen her unhappy since he married her, without seeking to remove the cause, said, "Do not grieve, we will keep the child at all events ; we shall not be the poorer for it : perhaps it may live to complete our old age.

(To be continued.)