

Attachment to the Church of God.

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# A SERMON

PREACHED IN THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. JAMES,

TORONTO,

ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12TH, 1853,

AT THE VISITATION

OF

THE RIGHT REVEREND THE LORD BISHOP

OF THE DIOCESE OF TORONTO.

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PRINTED BY REQUEST OF THE SYNOD.

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BY THE

REVEREND HENRY PATTON,

RURAL DEAN AND RECTOR OF CORNWALL.

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## ATTACHMENT TO THE CHURCH OF GOD.

### A VISITATION SERMON.



#### PSALM CXXXVII. VERSES 5 AND 6.

“If I forget thee, O! Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth: if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.”

In a Book abounding with many chapters of touching tenderness, and of powerful appeals to the deepest sympathies of the human heart, few Psalms in the whole collection can surpass the 137th for the affecting beauty of its pathetic language. How few and simple the words, yet how deep the fountains of grief disclosed in the opening verse:—“By the rivers of Babylon there we sat down, yea we wept when we remembered Zion.” The souls of the captive exiles of Judea, like the Prophet’s mystic roll, were filled with lamentations and mourning and woe. Borne away by hostile hands far from their beloved country; far from their holy and beautiful City, with its hallowed Temple, and groaning under the ruthless hand of tyranny, their thoughts revert with melancholy tenderness to their fondly cherished Zion. Oppressed with the crushing recollection of their sorrows, the singers of Israel had become dumb; their now neglected harps were hung upon the willows; the souls of the captives could no more delight in song. Their insulting captors had indeed required of them mirth; saying (as if in mockery of their sacred grief), “Sing

us one of the songs of Zion." Then indeed "the iron entered into their soul," the bitter taunt had touched a chord of woe, that stirred up the deep fountains of grief within them. The thought of Zion, with all its hallowed associations and affecting remembrances, rushed like a flood upon the soul and brought forth the indignant remonstrance, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" With hearts oppressed with woe, how could the unhappy captives indulge in mirth, or how could they profane the holy Psalms composed by Israel's King in praise of Israel's God and for the Temples' holy worship by making them minister to the pleasure of Babylonish Idolaters? The thought was not to be endured, and therefore apostrophizing their beloved Zion, they burst forth into the impassioned language of the text: "If I forget thee O! Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

But what, it may be demanded, was the meaning of this firm resolve; this fervent, energetic burst of feeling? Did it merely mean that with patriotic affection the unhappy captives loved their country? that in thinking of Zion, they thought of homes made desolate and of possessions from which they had been cruelly severed? It might no doubt refer in part to these, but, be assured, the language had a deeper meaning still. The name of Zion was connected with holier and more sacred associations than these. The name recalled the sad remembrance of the religious privileges which they had lost, and they mourned with bitter anguish their deprivation, in being so far removed from the hallowed courts of Zion's sacred Temple. They mourned because that Temple no longer existed. The hand of the spoiler had been laid upon it, and their "holy and their beautiful house, where their fathers praised God, was burned up with fire; and all their pleasant things were laid waste." Remorse for past neglect of their religious advantages, mingled no doubt with

grief for their loss, and both combined to give intensity to their re-awakened love for Zion and its holy solemnities. Under the influence of these feelings they now solemnly resolve never again to forget Jerusalem; never to forget its once glorious Temple; its sacred services, its time-honored institutions and all its hallowed associations, but to prefer the interests of Zion; the prosperity of their Church; the honor, glory and worship of the God of Israel, before all earthly considerations; yea, even above their chief joy. In this sense therefore would we chiefly understand the glowing, energetic resolve of the text; and in this sense, but with an application to the Church of Christ, would we propose it for the adoption of every member of our spiritual Zion, "The Church of the living God, the pillar and the ground of truth." And oh! that the glowing language, the high resolve, and the holy sentiments of the text, when applied to our spiritual Zion, might find a responsive echo in the heart of every Churchman, and that all "the children of Zion" would feel an interest in her welfare commensurate in some degree with the variety and magnitude of those blessings which God, through her, dispenses to all his faithful people. But, as this deep concern for her interests and devoted attachment to our spiritual Zion should arise from no blind or ignorant devotion, but should be founded upon an enlightened conviction of her many excellences, which may well justify such attachment; and as it is, moreover, fitting and proper that we should be at all times able to render "a reason for the hope that is within us," it may form at this time a suitable and profitable occupation to "walk about Zion, and go around about her, and tell the towers thereof, to mark well her bulwarks and consider her palaces;" or, in other words, to consider briefly,—

1st.—A few of the many reasons which we might advance in vindication of the love and strong attachment which we entertain for our spiritual Zion, the Church of Christ; and to point out,—

2ndly.—Some of the modes by which we may best evince that love.

But while inviting you, my Reverend Brethren, to accompany us in this walk around the walls of our beloved Zion; believe me, my Brethren, I have neither the presumption nor the vanity to suppose that I shall be able to point out any new beauties to the observation of those, all of whom may be justly supposed to have at least equal, while many have far superior knowledge to that enjoyed by the preacher, of every tower and turret of our spiritual Jerusalem.

My object is rather, as the apostle Peter says, (2 Peter, iii. 1,) “To stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance,” and to put you in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.”

Moreover, we cannot forget that the present differs from ordinary Visitations, inasmuch as not only are the Clergy here assembled, at the call of their beloved Bishop, to receive his Episcopal Charge, and listen to his godly counsels; but a goodly number of our Brethren of the Laity are also here assembled with us, to confer together for the advancement and prosperity of our common Zion. And, forasmuch as we are well assured that our Brethren of the Laity feel equally with ourselves the deepest interest in all that affects the weal or woe of our common Mother, we invite them also to accompany us in our walk about Zion; or, in less figurative language, we beseech *their* attention also to a brief consideration,—

1st.—Of a few of the many reasons which might be urged in vindication of the love and strong attachment which we entertain for our spiritual Zion, the Church of Christ.

(1). First, then, before all other considerations, we love and the *Church*, because she is the Spouse of Christ; the Bride of the Lamb; and as such, is honored, loved, and cherished by her heavenly Bridegroom. When therefore we love the Church, the Bride, we conceive that we are also loving and honoring Christ, the Bridegroom; who himself so “loved the Church,



as to give himself for it ; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word ; that he might present it to himself a glorious Church ; not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing ; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Ephes. 5, 25-7). May the Church, the Bride of the Lamb, daily become more and more worthy of the Saviour's love. "Awake then, awake ; put on thy strength O Zion ; put on thy beautiful garments O Jerusalem, the holy City."\* "The king's daughter is all glorious within ; her clothing is of wrought gold."† Awake, then, Church of the Redeemed ; put on thy wedding garment of holiness ; go forth to meet thy Bridegroom, "arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints ;"‡ and in God's good time shall be accomplished the prophetic vision of the gifted Seer of the apocalypse, "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready ; blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb."§

(2). But, again : We love the Church because she is the divinely constituted instrumentality for the salvation of immortal souls.

The one grand object for which "God became manifest in the flesh" was to save a ruined world. For this purpose Christ left the realms of glory ; assumed our nature ; suffered, agonized, and died upon the Cross. "He became flesh, that we might become spirit. He became the Son of Man, that we might become the Sons of God. He became sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. He died that we might live. He took our nature upon Him, that we might take His nature upon us. He came from heaven to earth, that we might ascend from earth to heaven."|| And He established His Church to be the honored instrument of carrying into effect His wondrous purposes of love and mercy

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\* Is. lii. 1. † Ps. xlv. 13. ‡ Rev. xix. 8. § Rev. xix. 7, 9. || Skelton.

to our fallen race. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."\* How glorious the Mission! how honorable the office of the Church! To evangelize the world; to win souls to Christ; to nurture, discipline and train them for a glorious immortality; to burnish them as jewels meet for their master's diadem: such is the office of the Church. The Church Militant, the Kingdom of Grace upon earth, thus prepares immortal souls for the Church triumphant, the Kingdom of Glory in Heaven. Who, then, would not love the Church, for the honor which her Lord has put upon her? "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O City of God"† Be earnest then in the fulfilment of thy divine mission. Publish abroad the glad tidings of salvation. Proclaim "the faithful saying, worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."‡ "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain: O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength, lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, (yea say unto the whole world) Behold your God!"§

(3). Once more: We love that portion of the Church to which it is our great privilege to belong, because we believe her to be a true, living and sound branch of the one only "Catholick and Apostolick Church." Observe, Brethren, we claim not to be exclusively THE Church—i. e. the whole Church, or body of Christ. The body has many members; the tree has many branches: and we claim to be a true branch, a living and fruit-bearing branch of that goodly vine, planted by the Redeemer 1800 years ago. Other branches there are, of which some are more or less sound than others; but with them, on this occasion, we have no further concern than to say, with the holy Apostle, "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, Amen."|| But our business, at present, is only with that Branch of the Universal Church, in

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\* Mark, xv. 16. † Ps. lxxxvii. 3. ‡ 1 Tim. i. 15. § Is. lx. 9. || Ephes. vi. 24.

which by the Providence and the grace of God, we, my Reverend Brethren, have been called to minister; and which we, if honest men, must conscientiously believe to be—with reference to the Evangelical purity of her doctrines, the efficacy of her means of grace, and the constitution of her ministry—the most Scriptural and perfect Branch on earth. It is only as we thus believe of her, that we can really and truly love her.

(4.) Again, therefore, we love our Church, for the Evangelical purity of her doctrines, which proclaim, with all fulness, the fall of man; his alienation from God; and his restoration and redemption only and solely through Jesus Christ our Lord. Our Church, believing with the holy Apostle St. Paul that the “Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith that is in Christ Jesus,”\* derives all her Articles of Faith immediately from the word of God. She goes not to tradition, whose streams in the lapse of ages may have become muddy and impure; but she goes at once to the fountain head, and draws refreshing waters immediately from the wells of salvation. Her language upon this point is too plain to be misunderstood, and, thank God, it is too plain to be perverted. Thus speaks the Church in the 6th of her 39 Articles: “Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an Article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.” The consequence of a faithful adherence to the letter, and to the spirit of this Article is, that the doctrines of our Church are truly Evangelical, because truly Scriptural. But, though the Church thus wisely regards Holy Scripture as the only infallible rule of Faith, yet she has not acted so unwise a part as to reject the assistance to be derived in the interpretation of Scripture from the writings of those godly and learned men, who lived the nearest to the

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\* 2 Tim. iii. 15.

apostolic age. On the contrary, she has gratefully availed herself of their pious labours, believing them to be, to say the very least, competent witnesses to the truth as it was then believed by the whole Catholic Church. This concurrent witness of antiquity, is nowhere more visible, than in our admirable Liturgy, embracing as it does, those glorious standards of faith, the *three* primitive Creeds. And thus the Liturgy of our Church, besides its other claims upon our love and admiration as an unrivalled formulary of devotion, becomes invested also with a very high degree of importance, when regarded as a witness of "the Faith once delivered to the Saints."

(5.) But, again, we love our Zion, because of the abundance and efficacy of those means of grace which the Almighty has entrusted to her, our spiritual mother, to enable her to bring up her "children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," until by God's blessing upon our faithful use of these means, "we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."\* But here, Brethren, so glorious an array of spiritual blessings and privileges opens to our enraptured view, that "the time would fail me" to expiate on so fruitful a topic. Scarcely, indeed, dare we indulge ourselves the gratification of bestowing upon them the briefest notice, as they pass in review before us.

First in rank, because usually the first in the order of our spiritual life, is the Holy Sacrament of Baptism, the gate of the fold; the vestibule of the Temple; the Porch of the Church; the God appointed ordinance, "wherein we are made members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven." Being thus "regenerate, and grafted into the body of Christ's Church," with what pious care does our spiritual mother watch over us, while passing through the several stages of childhood and youth. How

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\* Ephes. iv. 13.

carefully does she instruct us in the nature and extent of our baptismal privileges and our baptismal obligations, in our duty towards God, and our duty towards our neighbour, in that admirable compendium of Christian teaching, the Church Catechism. When preparing to enter more immediately upon the great struggle and battle of life, how earnestly does she seek to fortify and strengthen the minds of her youthful members against the seductions of the world, the flesh, and the devil, by means of the apostolic Ordinance of Confirmation. How solemnly in that sacred rite does she employ the ministry of her Chief Pastor, the Bishop of the Church, who invokes God's blessing upon the youthful candidates in this most fervent and comprehensive prayer—"Defend, O Lord, these thy servants with thy heavenly grace, that they may continue thine forever, and daily increase in thy holy Spirit more and more until they come unto thy everlasting kingdom." As they require still more abundant means of grace, what a rich banquet of love does she spread upon the table of the Lord for those who are "hungering and thirsting after righteousness." In the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, she "strengthens and refreshes the souls" of her faithful children, "with the body and blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper." Again: with what anxious care does our spiritual mother seek our advancement in personal holiness, by the ministry of the word in the ordinance of public preaching, which has so often proved a blessed instrument in the hands of the Almighty for the conversion of sinners, and the comfort and edification of the people of God? More especially has she provided for all her children in their public devotions an admirable form of sound words, in that unrivalled Liturgy, which may justly challenge the admiration of every sober-minded Christian. The prayers of the Church are not only Scriptural in language, but they breathe in every line the spirit of piety and true devotion. Simple, yet sublime;

chastened, yet fervent; they who enter into their holy spirit; they who feel in their hearts what they utter with their lips, may undoubtedly "pray with the spirit, and pray with the understanding also." Again: in the various conditions of mortality, the Church accompanies, guides, conducts and comforts her children, through every stage of human life. In the hour of joy she accompanies to the Altar, and blesses with most solemn benedictions, those who are entering into the holy estate of matrimony. She realizes that Communion of Saints, by uniting in public prayer "for all those who are any ways afflicted or distressed in mind, body, or estate;" and by returning thanks for those who have experienced any special mercy, and more particularly for those who "have been delivered from the great pain and peril of childbirth." In the hour of sickness she sends her ministering servants with messages of peace and comfort to the pious sufferer, whom she exhorts to "look unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." She casts a halo of light around the dark valley of the shadow of death; and sheds upon the darkness of the sepulchre the radiant glories of immortality. She forsakes us not even after death, until she has seen the tabernacle of the flesh deposited in its final resting place, pronouncing over it the solemn and affecting language, "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust;" and comforting the hearts of the survivors in the sublimest service that man has ever framed. After so many tokens of her maternal care, should we not be the most ungrateful of mortals, if we did not love our spiritual mother, if we were not ever ready to say from the overflowings of filial affection, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

(6.) But again, we regard it as a prominent feature amongst the various claims which the Church has upon the affection of her members, that she possesses in her three-fold orders of

Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, a ministry, originally of divine appointment. The Church herself declares, "That it is evident unto all men diligently reading the Holy Scriptures and ancient authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been these orders of ministers in Christ's Church;" and hence the members of our Communion may have the fullest assurance in believing, that they who administer to them the Holy Sacraments have undoubted authority, regularly transmitted from the great Head of the Church, through the unbroken line of Apostolical Succession, and that it is by virtue of this authority alone, thus derived, that they would dare to minister the Ordinances of Christ's Church. Some, indeed, may affect to speak disparagingly of this argument; while others may even ridicule the idea of such a succession in the Ministry. But this we may well anticipate from those who are conscious to themselves, that *they*, at least, have no such succession."— "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the childrens' teeth are set on edge." If, my Brethren, but one link in that golden chain of Apostolical Succession had ever been lost or broken, then Christ's promise to be with the ministers of His Church to the end of time must have failed; the gates of Hell must have prevailed against the Church of Christ; and the succession in the Ministry, thus interrupted, must either have been since miraculously renewed; or there exists not at this moment a valid Ministry upon earth. Brethren, whatever others may think or say upon this subject, let us for ourselves most gratefully acknowledge, that by God's great mercy and goodness, we belong to a Church, which can satisfactorily prove (when occasion requires) the great fact, which a needful brevity has constrained us to assume; viz., that the Ministry of the Church is such as the Apostles themselves established, and that from them it has been derived to us, through the channel of an unbroken line of Episcopal succession.

(7.) But in summing up the claims of our Zion to the love and warm affection of all her children, we add this as the

chiefest blessing, the crowning excellency, and strongest claim of all, that we should love her, because God Himself has loved her, and more especially of late, has blessed her, by granting an increase of zeal; a greater efficiency; a more extended sphere of usefulness; and corresponding expansive powers; which have been so wonderfully developed in various portions of the globe. Wherever we direct our eyes we behold abundant proofs, that our Reformed Branch of the Catholic Church is, by God's blessing, "enlarging the place of her tent, and stretching forth the curtains of her habitation." In England, wonderful within a few years has been the revival of Church principles; wonderful the increase of zeal, devotion and faithfulness, to the cause of Christ and His Church; and very wonderful the increased blessings which God has bestowed upon the Church; blessings felt in the hearts of many thousands, and the fruits of which are apparent, in numberless acts of munificence and liberality in the support of the benevolent Societies and institutions of the Church; the erection of numberless new Churches; and increased zeal for the salvation of immortal souls. She has indeed been constrained to mourn over the sad defection and apostacy of some few of her gifted sons, whose perversion has caused her to rejoice with trembling, but upon the whole she has abundant cause to "thank God, and take courage." In Ireland, the Almighty is displaying the wonders of His grace and mercy. A great work is going on, chiefly through the agency of the Church. Many thousands have, within the last three years, renounced the errors of Rome, and have embraced the true faith, as it is held by our Reformed Branch of the Church Catholic; and, blessed be God, the work of Reformation is still advancing. In Scotland there exists an ancient remnant of the true Israel. This long down-trodden portion of our Zion, "persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed,"\* has heard a voice saying, "Arise, shine, for thy

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\* 2 Cor. iv. 9.



light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.”\* A recent pamphlet informs us, “that her prospects of extension are every day becoming brighter and brighter. New congregations are springing up in various directions, and fresh energies are put forth to meet the circumstances of the times.”†

In the sister Branch of our beloved Zion in the United States, we behold the Church extending her influence on every side. Thirty-two Bishops, with 1700 Clergymen of the inferior orders, are doing the Lord’s work with zeal, and “the Lord is among them, as in the holy place of Sinai.”‡ Again, in every Colony of the British Empire, and in the vast Eastern regions subject to her sway, the Church is taking deep root; and in almost every portion of her widely extended dominions, our Zion is now established in her full integrity. There are now twenty-six Colonial and Missionary Bishops, and the number is increasing from year to year. Our Reformed Branch of Christ’s Holy Church numbers now about 110 Bishops, and about 25,000 Clergymen, while her lay members are counted by millions. Nor has our own Diocese failed to keep pace with the onward progress of all around us. Notwithstanding the great discouragements we have met with of late, and the heavy blows, dealt in part by those whom we had a right to look to as amongst our truest friends; still the Church has, by God’s blessing, prospered in our land in a manner that may justify our adoption of the Psalmist’s grateful language: “The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.” Fifty years ago, there were but four Clergymen in this Diocese, there are now 150 standard-bearers of the Lord of Hosts, headed by a veteran warrior of the Cross, who has himself for 50 years as Deacon, Priest and Bishop, in this Diocese, bravely borne the glorious banner “of Evangelic truth, and Apostolic order.” For, as the preacher

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\* Is. lx. 1.

† History of the Church in Scotland by Rev. J. Alexander.

‡ Ps. lxxviii. 17.

§ The annual meeting of the Diocesan Church Society, June 1, 1853.

remarked at a recent Anniversary,§ the present is the 50th or the Jubilee ministerial year of our venerated Diocesan, an event already in part commemorated, by the foundation in Trinity College of a “Bishop Strachan Jubilee Scholarship;” but which it is designed still more worthily to commemorate, by “the Bishop Strachan Jubilee Fund,” the primary object of which will be, the completion of the building of that noble monument of Christian principle; a work happily begun through the pious zeal and untiring energy of our venerable Diocesan, and which, we trust, will be no less happily completed in every part, during his Episcopate; the term of which, may God in mercy to His Church, still further prolong. Few men have lived to see greater changes take place in the Church, or the country of their adoption, than have been witnessed by this venerable Septuagenarian. Few, and thinly scattered over a vast extent of country, were the members of our Communion, when he was ordained Deacon in 1803, while in this, the Jubilee of his ministry, we number at least a quarter of a million. Well may he say, when contrasting the present with the past. “what hath God wrought?”\*—Through His blessing, “the little one has become a thousand, and the small one a strong nation.”†

Brethren, let this brief retrospect of God’s dealings with us serve to strengthen our attachment to our beloved Zion, and confirm in our hearts the firm resolve expressed in the glowing language of the text: “If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning: if I do not remember thee let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.”

But in thus exhorting you to love your spiritual mother, shall it be objected to us that we seek to put the Church in the *place* of Christ; *before* Christ; or *above* Christ? God forbid. We repudiate the thought. We deny the truth of the charge. No; let Christ be *before* and *above* all the

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\* Numbers xxiii. 23.

† Is. lx. 22.

Institutions of Christ ; as “ he that buildeth the house hath more honor than the house.”\* We love the Church, but we love the Saviour more. “ We speak concerning Christ and the Church.”† Christ first ; and then the Church, as reflecting on earth the glory of Christ. And need we an apology for the love we bear the Church ? We appeal “ to the Law and to the Prophets.” The law reveals the glories of God’s ancient Church ; the costly Tabernacle in the wilderness ; the splendours of the Temple on Mount Sion ; the cloud, the symbol of the Divine presence overshadowing the mercy seat ; the sacred ministry of Divine appointment, with its three-fold offices of High Priest, Priest and Levite ; its costly round of rites, ceremonies and sacrifices, and all these but types or figures of Christ, and the Church, whose future glories were moreover foreshadowed in the glowing language of the Prophets. For, in the eloquent language of a gifted Prelate of our sister Church,† we bid you “ unfold the scroll of prophecy, and mark the splendours which the glories of Messiah’s Kingdom throw upon its radiant page. Hear how the psalmist, ‘ on the height of this great argument,’ transcends his loftiest strain. What other subject wakes such notes of triumph from Isaiah’s sounding strings ? And when Ezekiel, Micah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, attain to an unwonted rapture, it is the coming glory of Messiah’s Kingdom (the Christian Church) that fills and fires their song.” Need we, my Brethren, a higher precedent for the love we bear the Church ? We remember that incident recorded in the life of our Redeemer which brought to the recollection of His disciples that it had been written of him : “ The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.” Need we a further warrant for such love ? Is she not “ the Church of God, which He purchased with His blood ?” And did not the Saviour “ love the Church, and give Himself for it,” and should not the disciples

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\* Hebs. iii. 3.

† Bishop Doane.

imitate the example of their Lord, by loving that which was the object of *His* supreme regard ?

But, having thus (we trust) most amply vindicated the love we entertain for Zion, we proceed to point out—

2nd.—Some of the modes by which we may best evince that love.

In the first place, I would respectfully suggest, that we, my Reverend Brethren, may do this very effectually by seeking to promote such attachment to the Church, and her institutions, among the people by God's providence committed to our pastoral care. And here I gladly introduce the language of another American Prelate, and one who certainly has never, to my knowledge, been accused of being too High a Churchman. The present Bishop of Ohio thus spake in one of his Episcopal Charges: “ Such *attachment* is the bond of *unity*. The Church, as a Church, can have no stability, no force without it. To promote such attachment, without bigotry or formality; to make it enlightened as well as affectionate; and then to use it, not as a substitute for, but as a very important auxiliary to the direct influence of Divine truth upon the heart, and the steadfastness of Christian character, is a very considerable matter in the duties of the Ministry, too little valued indeed, but with the permanent importance of which I am more and more impressed, by every new lesson of experience and observation. Inward and spiritual ties are not enough for the holding together of the several parts of the *outward* and visible Church. They may all remain, and yet the Church, as a visible Society, be broken in pieces, and her influence as conservative, and promotive of the Gospel, be almost destroyed. Where such attachment does not exist, there is no bond of peace. To set little value upon it, because it is not Religion, is as foolish as to despise the fencing of the corn-field, because it is not the grain. Not to promote it for fear of promoting sectarianism, is as if you should not educate your children to love their home and their

parents' laws, lest they look with too little kindness on others. No, my Brethren, if we would promote the spirit of vital godliness in the world, we must promote it in connexion with, and by means of that only body, the Church, which the Lord has built as the earthly house of its tabernacle in this wilderness. You may as well expect your minds to be in health, while your bodies are diseased, as that the Spirit of Religion will flourish, while the *Body* of Religion, the *visible* Church, is disordered." (Charge in 1836.)

Happy, my Brethren, would it be for the Church, if all her professed members would adopt and act upon the principles so forcibly enunciated in this quotation.

(2). But, again. We may effectually manifest our attachment to the Church, by the frequency, fervency and earnestness of our prayers to God on her behalf. No blessing can be upon the work of our hands; no exertions of ours can be expected to prosper; unless they "be sanctified by the word of God and prayer." But powerful with God is the prayer of faith. Let us then, dear Brethren, be fervent in prayer to Almighty God, for a blessing upon Zion, the City of our solemnities. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee." Pray that God's abundant blessing may crown with success every effort made for her advancement; her greater usefulness and efficiency. Pray that through her agency, "God's ways may be known upon earth, his saving health among all nations." Pray that she may be the honored instrument of converting millions of immortal souls; of translating them from the kingdom of darkness, into the glorious light and liberty of the children of God. Finally, pray "for the good estate of the Catholic Church, that it may be so guided and governed by God's good spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith, in unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life." And the

mention of "unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace," reminds us, my Reverend Brethren, that—

(3). We may further manifest our love to the Church and her Divine head, by promoting, to the utmost of our power, her internal peace, union, harmony and love. "Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God." Peace was the legacy left by Christ to his Church, and He must take delight in beholding His children living at peace and dwelling in harmony, love and godly concord. "Jerusalem should be built as a City that is at unity in itself." But, alas! such is not entirely the case, and herein is one chief hindrance to the greater prosperity and usefulness of the Church. "We stand not fast with one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel." And where this perfect unity does not exist, the energies of the Church are proportionably crippled, and her success hindered. May God, the Author of peace, make us all to be of one mind in the house of our spiritual mother. Or, if differences of opinion there must be, let us at least exercise mutual charity and forbearance. If we cannot agree on all other points, we may at least agree to love one another, and to respect each other's conscientious opinions or convictions. Let us, then, eschew all unseemly strife and contention. Let us avoid all reviling and bitterness, all bandying of names and titles of reproach. Let us shun the shibboleths of mere party. Remembering the admonition, "Sirs, ye are Brethren;" and the exhortation, "See that ye fall not out by the way;" let us carefully avoid every thing that may tend to exasperate existing differences, and let us gladly embrace every opportunity of drawing more closely the bonds of brotherly affection, "forbearing one another in love," for, "behold how good and joyful a thing it is, Brethren, to dwell together in unity."

(4). But, further still, we may all manifest the love we bear the Church, by the liberality with which we consecrate some portion of our substance to her support. Every object con-

nected with her advancement, prosperity and greater efficiency, should meet from all her members a liberal and a cheerful support, in proportion to the importance of the particular object, and in proportion, also, to the means with which the Almighty may have severally blessed us. If all the members of the Church would but act upon the Scriptural principle, of consecrating a tenth of their incomes to God's glory and the advancement of the Redeemer's Kingdom, what a noble fund would the Church then possess! A fund sufficient for every emergency, and adequate to meet every requirement. Dear Brethren, let us all remember that what we have is not our own; that we are but stewards of God's bounties; that it is required of stewards that a man be found faithful, and that shortly we shall be required to render in an account of our stewardship to that God who cannot be deceived. May this solemn consideration induce us all often and seriously to ask, if in the disposition of our goods we are careful to render unto God His portion? "Let every man give, according as he purposeth in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver."

(5). But yet, again: We may manifest the love we bear our spiritual mother by not only giving of our substance to her support, but also by consecrating to her service, as occasion may arise, some portion of our *time*, and by contributing the benefit of our wisdom, prudence or experience, when called upon, and invited to deliberate and take counsel for her welfare. And it is for this purpose, in part, that so many of the members of the body of Christ are at this time assembled.

For to day we, my Reverend Brethren, are met together to listen to the godly counsels of our Right Reverend Father in God, while to-morrow (if the Almighty should mercifully spare us), both Clergy and Laity will meet under the Presidency of their Bishop, to confer on matters affecting the interests of

our spiritual Jerusalem. May God's Holy Spirit preside over our deliberations, and grant that all our proceedings may be distinguished by moderation, brotherly kindness, sound judgment, and an earnest desire to advance God's glory and the interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom. A few weeks ago, we fondly hoped that the Bill, then before the Imperial Parliament, for the regulation of the Church in the Colonies, would immediately become a Law; that our Conference of to-morrow would assemble under its provisions; and that thus the results of our deliberations would have all the weight and authority which the sanction of the Law could impart to them. Had such been the case, our discourse this day would have borne more special reference to so important an event, and to the various topics which our altered position would naturally suggest. But we have been once more doomed to disappointment. The permissive power legally to meet in solemn Conference of Bishops, Clergy and Laity, to pass rules and regulations for the better management of our internal economy and discipline, a power possessed by even the most inconsiderable sects around us, has again been withheld from us, who are supposed to form an integral portion of the Church of the Empire. Let us hope that another session of the Imperial Parliament may not be allowed to pass away, without witnessing the enactment of a law, granting our reasonable and just Petition. When such shall be the case, our Lay Brethren may then have frequent occasions of displaying their attachment to the Church, by devoting, as already remarked, some portion of their time, their talents and their experience to her service, in those Synodical Assemblies which will then, no doubt, be of regular recurrence at stated periods.

(7). But, finally, Reverend and Dear Brethren, we may manifest our love to Zion, by seeking to become more holy ourselves, and by striving to the utmost of our power to promote holiness of heart and life among those committed



to our pastoral care. And this, after all, will prove one of the most effectual tokens of love to the Church and her Divine Author, when we can exhibit to the world the *purity* of our *faith*, by the holiness of our lives: when we can prove the greatness of our privileges, the excellency and glory of Zion, by the purifying influence which her holy doctrines, her Christ-appointed Sacraments, and her other means of grace, exercise in forming our characters more like that of our Divine Redeemer, and thus making us more meet for the inheritance of the Saints in light. The more steadily we ourselves advance in holiness, and the more influence we have with our hearers, in persuading them also to become holy, the more surely shall we be promoting the zeal, glory, beauty, excellency and prosperity of the Church. It were but a vain boast to say, "The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord" are we; to glory in our spiritual privileges and religious advantages; unless by the holiness of our lives we could also prove that we had derived spiritual improvement from them. "Holiness becometh thy house, O Lord, forever." The most glorious perfection of the Church is, that she should become glorious in holiness. But the holiness of the Church greatly consists in the holiness of her children. Their holiness becomes hers. But to become holy, we must live constantly under the sanctifying influences of God's holy Spirit; for "without Him, nothing is strong, nothing is Holy." And blessed be God the Saviour has promised the aid of the Holy Spirit to all who seek His gracious and all-sufficient help. Let us all, then, earnestly implore His Divine assistance, that our path may henceforth be "as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day;" until at length, through the merits and mercies of our crucified Lord, we may be translated from the Church Militant here on earth to the surpassing joys of the Church triumphant in glory, there to abide with God forever.

And "now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abun-

dantly above all that we can ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

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