

A  
**SERMON,**

PREACHED IN

SAINT GEORGE'S CHURCH, KINGSTON,

On Thursday the 23d of August, 1832,

AT THE

VISITATION

OF

*The Hon'ble and Rt. Rev'd the Lord Bishop of the Diocess.*

BY

THE REV. R. D. CARTWRIGHT, A. M.

ASSISTANT MINISTER,

And Chaplain to the Lord Bishop of Quebec.



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TO  
The Hon. and Rt. Rev.  
THE LORD BISHOP OF QUEBEC,  
THE VES. G. O. STUART, L. L. D. ARCHDEACON,  
AND  
The Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Kingston,

The following SERMON, published in compliance with their request, and in  
deference to their opinion, is respectfully dedicated

By their faithful servant,

R. D. CARTWRIGHT

## A SERMON, &c.

“Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves.”—St. Matthew, 10th c. part of v. 16.

The most important features in the provision which a merciful God has made, for the maintenance and propagation of the Truth of the Gospel, are the institution of a visible Church and the appointment of a standing Ministry,—of an order of men peculiarly set apart, to preach the Word, administer the Sacraments, and oversee the Spiritual state of the Brethren.

The Holy Spirit it is true does not confine Himself to any particular mode, or instrument, in his operations on the heart: various are the means. He continually employs to confirm the weak disciple, alarm the careless professor, and awaken the hardened sinner. Still if the testimony of experience be admitted, the labours of the Christian Minister have at all times been blessed with the greatest measure of success, in enlarging the fold of the Great Shepherd, and reclaiming the wandering sheep. So necessary indeed does such provision seem to the very existence of the Church as a visible Society, that the Spiritual wants of men must have compelled them to have had recourse to it, although there had been no positive nor divine appointment. There have certainly been found some enthusiasts in different ages of the Church, who have de-

precatcd the instruction of any set of men as derogating from that general outpouring of the spirit, which the Prophets represent as the glorious feature of the Kingdom of Messiah. Almost all Christians however are unanimous in their opinion of the necessity and advantage of Church union, and a regularly ordained Ministry. With them the question is not, whether any ordination be necessary, but what ordination can claim the sanction of Primitive and Apostolic authority.—The Great Head of the Church however did not leave this advantage, and necessity, to be collected from the result of experience alone. He himself after earnest prayer chose a few out of many disciples, as the builders up of his future Church, and consecrated them to the work of the Ministry by the most solemn ordination. This Commission He afterward renewed before He left the world, adding a gracious promise to be with them by the blessing of the Spirit to the end of time. To these chosen Apostles their Lord delegated the power of choosing others as fellow labourers with them—“As my Father hath sent me even so send I you.” Invested thus solemnly with this authority, they first choose Matthias into their number, and afterwards, when the field of their labours was extended, they ordained Elders in every Church, for the work of the Ministry, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ. And as St. Paul by the imposition of his hands set apart Timothy in a particular manner to oversee the Church in Ephesus, and Titus in Crete,—so we also believe the other Apostles

delegated, to certain fit and faithful men, the commission to send labourers into the harvest of the Lord:—<sup>5</sup> we believe that this was a peculiar privilege not possessed by others, nor, as history shews, ever exercised by any, but these successors of the Apostles, till the Church of Geneva, at first from necessity, and afterwards from, (as we conceive,) an erroneous view of Scripture, substituted for the Episcopal, the Presbyterian form of Government.† But without passing any further opinion upon those other National Churches, who have seen fit to depart from what we conceive to have been the primitive order, we should never cease to rejoice that we have been called to the Ministry by a Church that has ever continued, as well Apostolic in government, as Scriptural in doctrine. But while we do so rejoice let it be with trembling—how can it ever be otherwise? Can we forget what a precious charge is entrusted to us, the souls of men, “whom Christ bought with his death and for whom he shed his blood”‡ Can we fail to remember that if we depend merely on the authority of our office however great, and however acknowledged, we grossly deceive ourselves? Men will despise us, unless they perceive that we are anxious to be ourselves, “examples of believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity,” “giving attention to reading, to exhortation, to doc-

\* Thus Mark was left at Alexandria by St. Peter; Polycarp at Smyrna by St. John.

† See the preface of Jeremy Taylor’s “Episcopacy Asserted,” also, sections 14, 15, 16, 18, 35, 37, 51. &c. ‡ Ordination Service.

trine.”\* But it is not only personal contempt that wo’d follow Pastoral neglect—we thereby endanger the souls of our flock as well as our own. It is truly a most momentous consideration for a Minister that so much depends upon the honest discharge of that duty which devolves upon him as “a steward of the mysteries of God”; that interests of such magnitude, as the eternal condition of Immortal Beings, may be affected for good or for evil by his labour. For is it too much to affirm, that a material difference is soon perceptible in the same, or different congregations, according to the different characters of the Ministers appointed to watch over them? As a general truth is it not undeniable, that the spiritual state of the flock will soon testify with tolerable accuracy, whether their Preacher has alarmed their fears, and roused them by his faithful exhortation to set about the great work of salvation in earnest, or only flattered that fatal peace, in which the soul is ever too prone to slumber?

The Importance of the personal character of a Minister to the success of his Ministry may indeed be at once inferred from the earnest and affectionate exhortations given by St. Paul to his beloved disciples, Timothy, and Titus, and the prudence and cautious discrimination enjoined upon them, in the ordination of Priests, and Deacons. Our Lord himself, when he sent forth the Twelve to preach to the lost sheep of the House of Israel, though he knew so well their fitness, and the spirit and temper of their minds, yet suffered them not

\* 1st Timothy, 4th c. v. 12, 13.

to depart to their work, without a solemn charge on the nature and difficulty of their labours. The whole chapter before us abounds with faithful admonitions to the Apostles as to the dangers that were to be expected by them, and the spirit with which they were to meet them.

Of these admonitions given by him, who knew what was in man, for the conduct of the Preachers of His Gospel—there is none that more demands our attention than that contained in the text ; the importance of this precept has in every age of the Church been painfully proved by the disastrous consequences of its neglect, “ Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves.” The union of prudence and circumspection, with simplicity and meekness here enjoined, is a most essential feature in the character of a minister of Jesus Christ : It is one too which our Church has largely insisted on in her ordination ceremonial, and in particular in that solemn charge, which she delivers to the candidates for the Priesthood ; she has required moreover from every one whom she admits to that order, that “ they maintain and set forward as much as lieth in them quietness peace and love among all Christian people and especially among those who are or shall be committed to their charge.”\* And perhaps there are no set of men, certainly no body of Ministers, who, from their peculiar situation, have so much need to govern themselves uniformly by the rule of the text, as the Ministers of the Church of England in this Colony.

\* Ordination Service.



Called to exercise our spiritual functions in an infant country, we miss those aids, which so greatly relieve the labours of the Parochial Minister in England. There, (at least in the country Parishes), the people are almost all his own ; he is kept back by no fears that a jealous suspicion may accuse him of an interested interference, a spirit of party proselyting ; he feels assured that he is every where welcome ; he knows and is known by his flock. The Ritual of the Church also is familiar to all ; and altogether the duty of the English Parish Priest has much, at least in outward circumstances, to render it even picturesque and delightful. Here we possess no such advantages ; (for advantages I know from my own personal experience they are of no trifling value.) In the Ministers of the Church of England in this country, much circumspection is often requisite lest our proffered services be misconstrued into a mere attempt to win over strangers to our communion. There exists among some, we cannot fail to observe, a strong feeling against the Church as a favoured body ; who scruple not to impute illiberal and selfish motives to her Clergy, because they contend on principle for that endowment which, (there can be little doubt,) is legally her's ; but of which it is now attempted to deprive her by agitation, intimidation, and those other means, which in these days of confusion and false principle are unhappily too generally employed to carry any measure that may be deemed expedient.\*

\* The following from the charge of the present Bishop of Durham plainly shews the workings of that evil leaven, which seems to be pervading the

Here then are we called on to exercise a prudent discretion, to manifest a spirit of meekness toward those who oppose themselves. We owe it to ourselves, and to the Church, to endeavour to make it appear more and more, that our zeal is for the salvation of souls, not for party aggrandizement. We are called on to convince them, if possible, that in main-

whole world, and every where threatens to destroy the peace and order of Society.

“The engines chiefly set at work, in these times, to effect any great changes, political or ecclesiastical, are *agitation* and *Intimidation*. These having been already successfully applied to more than one great subject of popular excitement, the same are now put in motion, to accelerate the downfall or the degradation of the Established Church; and the confidence of those who so apply them betrays itself in a tone of defiance, and even of anticipated triumph, as if the deed were really achieved. The spirit of really malignant warfare is rarely to be softened by overtures of compromise or concession. These for the most part will be regarded as indications of weakness, timidity, or self-reproach, and will stimulate only to farther aggressions. One security being yielded, the surrender of another, and another, is demanded; that the victim of conciliation may become so much an easier prey to the despoiler. It is indeed hard measure which is dealt out to us in this respect. If we seem to be tenacious of what has had the sanction of time, and experience, and long established rights and usages, the cry of bigotry, selfishness, and blind attachment to things no longer fit to be retained, is instantly raised. If on the other hand, we shew a readiness to take some part with the crusaders against antiquity, so far, at least, as to institute modified and cautious measures of improvement, without putting the whole to hazard—then comes the taunt “*habet confidentem rem*”; we are treated as acknowledging our delinquency, and only proposing imperfect attempts at renovation, for the purpose of inducing others to stop short of the consummation really wanted. To stem these different currents no less firmness than discretion, no less caution than vigour, will be requisite. The charge consigned to us is too precious to be bartered away for popularity, or to be yielded from mere deference to public feeling. With the confidence which conscious rectitude inspires, yet with such circumspection as befits the most resolute in such a cause, must every proposition be weighed and every step be taken. Too eager a spirit of conflict may lead to rash encounters, embarrassing, rather than advantageous, to the cause it is intended to uphold. Enough however there is in such times as these to occupy the thoughts and call forth the exertions of every one among us, whatever be his post or station,” &c.

taining the rights and property of the Church of England, we are guided by a principle of integrity ; that as stewards we should be unfaithful to our trust did we tamely suffer the Church to be despoiled of her patrimony, did we not strive to leave uninjured to our successors in the Ministry, that provision which was given for their support as well as our own. Much may be done in this way with conscientious opponents to allay ill feeling, and produce a mutual good understanding, even though we fail in persuading them to agree altogether with us in this view of our duty. Might not this be attempted oftener than it is ? Certainly we are bound as far as in us lies, to live in harmony with all men, and to make any sacrifice for the sake of peace, but a sacrifice of principle, for truth and justice must be maintained, let who will be offended. If when we have done all, we unhappily find our efforts unavailing, let us still be content to bear patiently undeserved imputations, knowing that our intentions at least no man taketh from us.

In this country you, my Rev. Brethren, must often have been pained to observe such a lamentable indifference among too many as to the importance of Church union. We continually meet with numbers signally blind to the guilt of schism, who attach themselves to no regular society of Christians, and seem to think it perfectly immaterial, whether they belong to this or that communion, or to any. Nor is this error confined to those who are without. Too many professed members of our own Church are very far from

attaching sufficient importance to this subject ; they wander themselves, and suffer their children to stray, “ tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine,”\* and thus undermine that attachment to the Church, and that personal regard to their Minister, which it is so essential to preserve. This feeling is readily taken advantage of by others, who are anxious to increase their numbers ; and we are often called to exercise no trifling forbearance toward these uncourteous meddlers, who intrude among our flocks, and sometimes by insinuations, that we preach not the Gospel, or are inattentive to the spiritual wants of our people, endeavour to beguile and lead away the unwary and unstable. I would not be understood as asserting, that this is always done from a hostile feeling towards the Church of England ; neither am I disposed to deny to many of these the praise of a godly zeal, that may well provoke our emulation. But it is our duty calmly yet fearlessly to oppose these attempts to draw away our members ; and when they who make the attempt are influenced by Christian motives, they will, if we are discreet in our opposition, yield to us ; if they are not so influenced, we are more than ever bound to withstand their encroachments.

With these persons we may not unfrequently be called into argument, or we may perhaps see necessary to defend ourselves from those imputations, either personal against ourselves, or general against the Church, which are occasionally thrown out. But in

\* Ephesians 4 c. 14 v.

controversies of a religious nature much caution is particularly requisite, lest we should be provoked to give utterance to what serves but to engender or to feed the angry passions, and induce us rather to endeavour to make our opponent appear ridiculous, than to manifest the sincerity of our own conduct, or the strength of our cause. It was the advice of the excellent and pious Hooker to those who are engaged in such disputes, either verbally, or by writing, ever to bear in mind, "that there will come a time, when *three words* uttered with charity and meekness shall receive a far more blessed reward, than *three thousand volumes* written with disdainful sharpness of wit."\*

It does not appear that many persons seriously object to the doctrines of our communion, where they are known. As far as my own personal knowledge can warrant me in speaking, I have generally found most of those, who were at all acquainted with them, ready to acknowledge the purity of our Creed as contained in the Articles of the Church, and to do justice to that form of sound words in which the Liturgy is clothed. There are a few who accuse us of too close resemblance in some minor points to the Church of Rome; while on the other hand the members of that Church denounce us as heretical and schismatical. These objections however are so trivial that they can scarcely call forth any feeling of displeasure, or require much self command; neither are they new; and may they be at once replied to in the language of two of our best and

\* Preface to Eccl. Polity. § 2.

oldest defenders. With Jewell we may say to one, "we have separated it is true from the Church of Rome, but we have not separated from the Primitive Church, we have not separated from the Apostles, we have not separated from Christ."\* If reproached we may answer in those words with which he meets all the abuse so abundantly poured upon our early Reformers. "We thank God that our cause is such, that they, though they wish it, cannot cast any opprobrium upon us, which may not be equally cast upon the Holy Fathers, upon the Prophets, upon the Apostles, upon Peter, upon Paul, upon Christ himself."† With those on the other hand, who object that we retain some things that bear too great affinity to the Church of Rome, we may safely use the words of Hooker; "those exceptions taken against our Form, whosoever doth measure by *number*, must needs be greatly out of love with a thing that hath so many faults: whosoever by *weight* cannot choose but esteem very highly of that wherein the the wit of so scrupulous adversaries hath not hitherto observed any defect, which themselves can seriously think to be of moment."‡ But these are not points likely to try our patience or forbearance. We can only regret "that things of principle excellency should be thus bitten at by men whom God hath

\* *Apologia Ecclesie Anglicanæ.*

† "Nos vero Deo optimo maximo gratias agimus, eam eam esse causam nostram, in quam isti quum cuperent, nullam contumeliam possent dicere, quæ non eadem in Sanctos Patres, in Prophetas, in Apostolos, in Petrum, in Paulum, in Christum ipsum torqueri possit."

‡ *Eecl. Pol. Book 5. § 27.*

endued with graces, both of wit and learning for better purposes.”\* But we may safely let our Liturgy and Articles speak for themselves, and speak they will. If the public service and ministrations of the Church of England are at all properly performed, they will of themselves gradually remove that “causeless dislike which some have conceived of them,” because they are not familiar with them, and many who now entertain a prejudice against them will be brought to confess in the words of that judicious defender above quoted, “that when uttered with true devotion and zeal of heart, they afford to God himself that glory, that aid to the weakest sort of men, to the most perfect that solid comfort which is unspeakable.”† It is our duty to recommend our service to those who know it not. Its external mode of worship is comely, and may be by a little attention rendered attractive : it is a handmaid of no mean value ; and by prudence and moderation in explaining it, many will soon learn to esteem it as it deserves ; but this must depend in a great degree upon ourselves, if therefore they see us inattentive to the advantage we possess in our Ritual, and careless in conforming to it, we cannot expect that they will be disposed to treat it with much respect.

The observations I have hitherto offered, apply rather to our intercourse with members of other communions ; and in this country where it so frequently happens that a Clergyman has to form a congregation instead of succeeding to one already prepared to receive

\* Eccl. Pol. Book 5. § 41.

† Eccl. Pol. Book 6. § 35.

his spiritual admonitions, as he has often to labour among those who have long been unused to, or are wholly ignorant of our forms, though the children many of them of members of the Church, it is of the highest importance that a favourable impression be created towards us. The increase of the Church in this Colony mainly depends upon its Clergy; and while we lament the thinness of our ranks, and regret that so many are thereby precluded from access to our ministrations, who would otherwise most gladly share them, we cannot fail to reflect that a greater responsibility is thereby laid upon us, who are already engaged in the vineyard, to approve ourselves workmen, that need not to be ashamed.

But it is not merely towards our fellow Christians of different persuasions from our own, that we are continually called on to exercise the wisdom, and forbearance, commanded by our Lord: both in our private intercourse among our own flocks, and in our more public pastoral duties, we ever find attention to this caution more necessary, if possible, than elsewhere.

For what situation is there in life, in what office can any human being possibly be engaged, that requires, to its efficient discharge, such varied qualifications, such a combination of zeal and prudence, of firmness and gentleness? Who is more called to acquaint himself with the varieties of human character, than a Minister of Christ? The qualifications he needs are truly numerous, and the duties which rest upon him are indeed arduous. Heber, who well knew, and



himself possessed in an eminent degree, all those qualities of heart and understanding necessary for the work of the Ministry, has so well expressed the different manner with which a Clergyman should meet the different members of his flock, that I cannot forbear transcribing the passage, more especially as it applies with singular propriety to our situation in this country. Speaking of a Chaplain in India, he says "he must be no uncourtly recluse, or he will lose his influence over the higher ranks of congregation. He must be no man of pleasure, or he will endanger their souls and his own." "He must be a scholar, a man of cultivated mind, for in many of his hearers, (wherever he is stationed,) he will meet with a degree of knowledge, IF NOT refinement, and a spirit of fastidious criticism, which a Parochial Minister in England does not often encounter." "He must condescend to simple men, for here as elsewhere the majority will *in general* be the poor and uneducated."\* And certainly it requires no small degree of personal circumspection, and jealous watchfulness, that there may be nothing in our example, or conversation, that may cause others to offend, or give occasion to those who seek occasion against us. It sometimes requires no inconsiderable share of prudence, as well as charity, to endear ourselves to our poorer brethren, without appearing to neglect the rest of our charge, or to be acceptable to the rich, without appearing to mix with too much freedom in the pleasures of society.

\* Charge to the Clergy in India, page 7. One sentence slightly varied.

Constituted as men are, it is scarcely ever possible to find any congregation however small, but what there will be divisions, caused by diversity of opinions, or opposition of interests, more especially in this country, where the spirit of speculation so widely prevails. To make peace is a delightful office ; one well becoming the Minister of Christ ; one which he is solemnly bound to perform ; but painful experience soon convinces him, who attempts it, that the part of an arbitrator is one, that requires the greatest caution and discretion. If by any slight inadvertency of expression, or in any other way, a suspicion be once raised, that we are not perfectly impartial ; we render the work of reconciliation ten-fold more difficult, and sometimes fail altogether ; besides incurring the charge, (however sincerely we may disclaim it), of being partial and unjust, and thus lay the foundation of a coldness, which perhaps no after attention on our part can ever wholly remove.

But it is in our more immediate pastoral duties, that we are made to feel the value of this injunction of our Lord. "To speak the truth in love," is the great essential of public, and private admonition. To reprove sin without needless severity, to comfort the penitent without undue indulgence, to inspire gratitude and affection even while exposing the enormity and danger of a life spent in disobedience to Christ, requires a mind at once enlightened and benevolent, fully impressed with the awful nature of sin, and burning with love to the Redeemer, and the souls whom He died to

redeem. It is remarkable how this appears in the ministerial conduct of St. Paul. The Apostle seems to put his whole soul into his work ; and while he never failed to speak the truth boldly without any sinful compromise, it is easy to observe a tenderness of heart, joined with a true knowledge of human nature, in all his preaching, and writings. Thus when at Athens, he with the most consummate readiness takes advantage of an accidental circumstance in their idolatry, to persuade his audience that there is only one true God, and to draw them to his spiritual worship.\* Though he had been three years at Ephesus, yet neither Demetrius, nor the interested craftsmen could prove that he was a blasphemer of their goddess ;† a convincing argument of the judicious nature of St. Paul's teaching. The Apostle prudently avoided whatever had a tendency to engage the passions or prejudices of men on the side of error, but on the contrary by moderation and skilful address, sought to render them auxiliary to the reception of the truth. Now as has been well observed by a living writer "many preachers take to themselves the satisfaction expressed by St. Paul, that he 'had not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God,' whose *manner* of declaring it bears very little resemblance to that of the Apostle." "He leaves us no example of an unqualified statement of a truth difficult to be understood, with a hardy unconcern for the expression it might leave on the

\* Acts, c. 17, v. 23.

† Acts, c. 19, v. 37.

minds of his hearers.” If this mode were more closely studied, and more generally imitated, would not the effects soon become manifest?

Again, is there not such a thing as “rightly dividing the word of truth”? giving to all their meat in due season? May we not comfort, when we ought to alarm, and alarm when we ought to comfort? May we not on the one hand break the bruised reed by harsh and injudicious treatment; and on the other may we not sooth and lull with the promises of Scripture, when we ought to announce the terrors of the Lord, to lift up our voice like a trumpet, to shew the people their sin? May we not by partial, or ill timed declaration, even of undeniable truth, produce fatal mistakes? May we not so preach grace, as to lead men to continue in sin that grace may abound? or may we not so preach the fruits of grace as that men may altogether keep out of sight the principle from which all must proceed, and so found upon their works a delusive and ruinous confidence? “And who is sufficient for these things?”

I am sensible my Reverend Brethren that many more observations might be drawn from the text, peculiarly applicable did time permit me to enlarge further upon the subject. I am fully aware that those I have ventured to offer possess little of novelty, little to claim your attention. I feel that there are many present

\* Sumner's Apostolical preaching, chap. 3, pages 122 and 135.

To this excellent work I cannot forbear in this place acknowledging my great obligations. I strongly recommend it to the attention of all my younger Brethren, and especially all those who are candidates for the Ministry.

† See Wardlaw's Sermons.

from whom I ought rather to receive instruction than attempt to offer it. I can only express my regret that this season of such unusual distress, in which the afflicting hand of God has been so heavy upon us, combined with the pressure of an additional and extensive pastoral charge, should have left me so little leisure to prepare for this interesting occasion. Would that we could oftener meet, to take sweet counsel together for our mutual edification and encouragement, to strengthen and uphold each other in the discharge of our duty, and confirm our love as Brethren ! Such is our condition in this country, that never were the aids of union and concert more essential to any. We need all that assistance that is to be derived from a combined and united system of operation among our body. But first, and above all, we need the prayers of each other, and of our flocks. A work like our's that requires such various endowments, such a spirit of diligent love and unwearied vigilance, can only be performed through the strength and excellency of God, and in his strength only can we go forth with any hope of success. If we are the sentinels of the Gospel, and would be faithful to the Captain of our salvation we must be clothed in the armour of light, having on the breast-plate of righteousness, taking the shield of faith, and the sword of the spirit ; we must be "mighty in the Scriptures." These are the arms which, under the blessing of the Great Head of the Church, will ensure us the victory, and enable us to approve ourselves in the sight of God and men; and without these arms we

neither can, nor ought to stand.\* Whatever may be the difficulties, which now oppose themselves to our progress; whatever we may have to contend against; let the obstacles in our way serve rather to animate than dishearten us. And have we not a blessed encouragement to persevere, in the increase of our truly Apostolic Church throughout the world? If we look to the East, we behold her planted in the peninsula of India, and “flourishing like a goodly cedar tree.” If we turn our eyes nearer home to the West, we trace her in the neighbouring country, “stretching out her branches unto the *sea*, and her boughs unto to the *river*.”† And may we not anticipate the time when the hills of this land will also be covered with her shadow? May we not already hail the near approach of that day, when it may be said of her, in the words of him, who will in after ages be remembered by the grateful and converted Hindoo, as one of the Fathers of the Anglo-Indian Church,

————— “she spreads her peopled reign  
“From far Euphrates *o’er* the Western **Main**.”‡

Which may the Lord hasten in his time. In the mean while let all her members with one heart and one mouth entreat the Lord of the vineyard, that he would send into his harvest an increasing succession of zealous and faithful labourers, and that our venerable and Apostolic Church, which, like the House of the Rechabites, cleaveth steadfastly to the institutions of her fathers, may never want a man to stand before God forever.

\* See Magee on the Atonement, Preface. † Psalm 80 ‡ Heber’s Palestine.