

SERMON
AT
THE CONSECRATION
OF
LORD BISHOP OF NEWFOUNDLAND
AND THE
BISHOP OF TORONTO.

Price 1s. 6d.

A S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT

LAMBETH PALACE, ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 4, 1839,

BEFORE THE MOST REV. HIS GRACE THE

LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY,

THE RIGHT REV. THE LORD BISHOPS OF

LONDON, CHICHESTER, AND NOVA-SCOTIA;

AT THE

CONSECRATION

OF THE

LORD BISHOP OF NEWFOUNDLAND,

AND THE

LORD BISHOP OF TORONTO;

AND

PUBLISHED BY THE COMMAND OF HIS GRACE THE
LORD ARCHBISHOP.

BY

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TO THE RIGHT REVEREND
THE LORDS BISHOPS OF NEWFOUNDLAND
AND OF TORONTO.

MY LORDS,

I gladly use the permission you have given me to inscribe the following Sermon, such as it is, to your Lordships. We shall none of us, I think, soon forget the impressive circumstances of the day on which it was delivered. The associations of the place and of the occasion, the solemn beauty of the service itself, and the paternal and apostolical demeanour of the Archbishop, who principally performed it, if all these were affecting to others, what must they have been to yourselves!

That his Grace may live long, adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour; and that you, my Lords, may be enabled well and truly to fulfil

the fresh compact you have now entered into with the same blessed Redeemer, is the prayer of one, who remains, with thanks for the kind proofs of your regard, which he has received,

Ever your Lordships' humble and
faithful servant and friend,

EDWARD SCOBELL.

14, *Blandford Street, Portman Square,*
August 5th, 1839.

S E R M O N .

ISAIAH vi. 1—3.

“ I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory !”

IN this record of the especial designation of the great Evangelical Prophet to his sacred office, a vision is unfolded to us of an awful, and at the same time of a very instructive character. It is a passage of Scripture apparently well adapted to assist a humble minister, like him who now addresses this august assembly, in bringing out the purposes of the present peculiar and solemn occasion

May that merciful God, who never upbraideth the prayer which his own grace helps to be sincere, not withhold from us his blessing.

The prophet brings us into the very presence of Jehovah, and edifies the Christian Church by a lively description of the worship paid by the glorious inhabitants of the temple of heaven to the Lord God Almighty: "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up: and his train filled the temple." Here we witness an exhibition in the courts above, of what has pervaded every religious dispensation of God upon earth; viz. distinction, order, discipline, reverence. We see a throne—a high throne—a throne lifted up; and upon that station of empire sitteth "the Ancient of Days"—Creator—Governor—Supreme! Thus is illustrated to us the sovereignty of God, in which every contemplation of the Deity, deep and incomprehensible as in all ways it is, must clearly and inevitably terminate. Into this is to be resolved every difficulty that baffles the powers of finite intellects, either in creation, or providence; the distribution of our portions for good or for evil, temporal or spiritual. The great struggle of the natural man against his Maker, has ever been for sovereignty. Man wishes to be independent. He seems never to have forgotten the original promise of Satan, "Ye shall be as gods!" But

“cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?”
 “The Lord God omnipotent reigneth!” He alone is exalted, Sovereign of spirit, as well as of matter; Sovereign Director of every movement of mind and heart; Author and Finisher of every event! (let him that readeth understand;) and turning all events to his own glory, and to the good of them that love Him. “Who will say unto Him, What doest thou?”

Upon this throne of his sovereignty Isaiah “saw the Lord sitting! and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims.” Now in this view there is not only supremacy, but subordinacy: a *train*, and it filled the temple; each in his proper place; and the seraphim occupied the stations assigned them. What would mankind be without disposition and order?—mankind in its most aggregated masses; in its kingdoms; in its societies; even in its private and domestic families? What are they all, unless Discipline, which should not be confined to colleges and halls, moved over them, as once did the Spirit of God upon the face of the waters, giving a beauty to the appearance, and a life and power to every energy? It is a law and principle of heaven sent down to the earth. Heaven itself stands entire (I speak with veneration,) but by discipline and degree. “Hear, O Israel: the

Lord our God is one Lord." "Ye cannot serve two masters." And yet there are angels and archangels, principalities and powers, and all the company of heaven, each one in his several sphere of duty ; and the only interruption we ever heard of to the harmony of that happy region, was from the erection of a banner in opposition to God's!

And is it likely to suppose, reasoning from analogy only, that when Jesus Christ established his Gospel, the object of which was to bring down heaven to earth, and to raise man again from earth to heaven,—the great principles of, I might almost say, eternity, would be neglected? I know that the kingdom of God in its personal establishment, and in that secret, vital witness, which it confers on every individual, of his share in the life and blood of the Redeemer, must be *within* us. We have Christ's own authority for that. But at the same time we believe in one catholic and apostolic church—an outward church—a *visible* kingdom: God's means to work out his purposes. And, accordingly, what see we there? The same unity of design; the same variety of instruments; the same regulated gradation; every man in his own order. "There is one glory of the sun; and another glory of the moon; and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star

in glory." First, there is God in Christ, the Head of the Church, and under him apostles and bishops; then priests, then deacons, and then the congregation—the train that filleth the temple:—all having need of each other; all stirring up the gift that is in them; all trading with the talents, to the use of which they have been called. And thus “the whole body, fitly joined together, and compacted by that, which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”

And is not the expediency, as well as the order of this, manifest? Does it not seem fit that there should be deacons? probationary workers in the ministry,—to serve tables—to search out the poor—the ignorant—the miserable;—to go out into the highways, and gather together as many as they find, and instruct, and invite, and compel them to come in? And does it not seem fit that the priest, the presbyter, should stand, especially, in the house of God, more fully commissioned to receive the guests, to preach the word with higher authority, to apply the sacraments, and to offer the golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints? And is it not right, even to human judgment,

that over these local ministers, there should be a general Superior—a captain, a director, an overseer, a shepherd to the flock, a father in God? Is it not probable that unity of action will thus be better ensured, christian fellowship promoted, the Church's public welfare officially watched over, advice given, diligence encouraged, irregularities corrected, and a succession of ministers duly commissioned?—for no man taketh this honour to himself! Nay, Christ glorified not himself to be made an high-priest! Are not all these things likely, in the nature of things, to conduce to edifying? Now, this is the very constitution which God has appointed; and thus the Church *is* ordained, *is* carried on, *is* edified; working in the beauty of holiness pardon, and peace, and life,—in every humble soul that is made willing by grace, in the day of his power, to hear that teaching voice.

But, remember, the Church must not be idolized. When Christ appointed the twelve, he neither invested *them*, nor authorised them to invest others, with spiritual despotism. If the Church honour itself, its honour is nothing. It is Christ's presence that alone gives any church its authority, its beauty, its efficacy. "I in you, and you in me," is as true of the Church, as of individuals. Christ is the head of the

body, the Church, which is subject to him. In him only the Church lives, and moves, and has its being.

But, on the other hand, the Church must not be undervalued. In Christ the Church *does* live, *does* move, and has actually a being. It has a commission; it has authority; it has privileges. It is a witness; a teacher; an administrator. It has a trust given to it in the great work of winning souls to Christ; and Christ, at his coming, will require his own with usury.

But then, remember again, the Church must abide by the covenant. I say not that ordinances in the hands of an unworthy minister of a true church, are unblest. A faithful church sanctifies all its ministers in their ministrations. But, if a *church* be unworthy, then its ministers cannot plead the covenant. And what is the covenant?—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the *gospel*, teaching them to observe whatsoever things I have commanded you. And lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." That is the covenant. If, then, the gospel is preached in its integrity, and the law of Christ taught, as Christ himself taught it,—then Christ is *with* that church. But, if the gospel be not preached—if the law, either of faith or practice, be perverted, or mutilated, or

kept back, or unscripturally added to ; and souls be plunged into error, and the free course of the word and of truth be impeded—openly, systematically, by a church *as* a church,—then it would not appear, that until this tyranny be overpast, any church can claim from this promise of Christ the full blessing which it contains! O Lord, thou wilt not leave thyself without a witness! sanctify us with thy truth. Thy word is truth. “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

But I return to the prophet’s vision. In this heavenly assembly, the Lord sitting upon the throne, above it stood the seraphim : beings mysterious and unknown to us ; but clearly more than ordinary servants of the sovereign, for they are placed in a position of eminence, and near to the seat of the Almighty. Now, mark their gesture. Each one had six wings ; and, “with twain he covered his face!” emblem of humility. And, chosen vessel though he be, it well becomes every minister of God to be humble.

The apostle says, “that a bishop lifted up with pride, falleth into the condemnation of the devil.” The fool in ignorance, or in distance from God, may say in his heart with Pharaoh, Who is the Lord? But the nearer we approach, and the better we acquaint ourselves with our Maker, the deeper will be our veneration, and the more

shall we shrink from his brightness. The higher we are elevated to duties in his Church, and the more precious our vestment of responsibility in his service, the lower shall we lie in the dust before him, and fear, and wonder, and adore. Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him? If angels veil themselves with their wings, shall man lift up his eyes to heaven in boldness? man so sinful; man so frail! man to whom, however high his rank, or exalted his office,—belong, if merit be his plea, shame and confusion of face!

But observe. “With twain he covered his *feet*.” Every teacher of the blessed gospel enters upon a course of arduous duty. He has a race to run, a faith to keep, a warfare to endure. “This is the way, walk therein!” and although, by God’s grace, he goes on his way rejoicing in the main, yet he never goes unaccompanied by his cross; which he takes up, in weight and duration as the Lord willeth. “If a man desire the office of a bishop,” writes the apostle, “he desires a good work.” But surely, we may add, it is a work of *labour*, though a labour of *love*. Whosoever contemplates even a portion of the apostolical requisites for the pastoral charge, may thence infer the high estimate and the difficult character of it: blameless, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, apt to teach, temperate, not greedy of filthy lucre, patient, peaceable, ruling his own

house well, of good report, given to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine, to meditation. And, thanks be to the grace that inspires the heart, the rulers of our own Church possess, in every essential, the divine requirements. They are instant, in season and out of season. They preach the word; they rebuke; they reprove; exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. But still, we must not forget this, that “with twain the seraph covered his *feet*.” A goodly lesson is here. We walk indeed, but our best deeds are nothing worth. We abjure every pretension of our own. Does God’s servant expect thanks, because he has done the things that were commanded him? I trow not. When he has done all, he says, I am an unprofitable servant. I have done that which was our duty to do. “I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live. Yet, not I: but Christ liveth in me. And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

But once more: “With twain he did fly.” Here still appears the christian servant. Although he knows his unworthiness; although he feels his frailty, his poverty, his corruption;—yet, still he is his Master’s; not his own, but bought with a price—and therefore, he is up and is doing. What his hand findeth to do, he doeth

with all his might. As an ambassador of Christ, he is in labours abundant; in journeyings often; in perils of waters; in perils by the heathen; in perils in the wilderness; in perils amongst false brethren; in weariness and painfulness; in watchings often:—besides those things that are without, that which comes, says St. Paul, “upon me daily, the care of all the Churches.” But withal, he enters on the work with readiness: he is willing: willing to act, willing to suffer. Most gladly would he spend and be spent in the cause of his Master,—he is ready with St. Paul, to be made all things to all men, that he might by all means save some. With twain of their wings the seraphim did fly. And they cried and said, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of Hosts!” The Father of an infinite Majesty! His honourable, true and only Son! Also the Holy Ghost, the Comforter! (Heavenly testimony to the great mystery of Revelation.) And they cried *unitedly*, in unity of form and in unity of Spirit. Behold, how good and joyful a thing it is, brethren, to dwell together in unity. And they cried *transmissively*: “*One* cried unto *another* and said:” typical of that song of sacred harmony, and that witnessing form of sound words, which, at once catholic and experimental, has been given down from saint to saint in the successive ages of the gospel, as it were an hand-

maid to the Bible! “So that all may grow together unto a holy temple in the Lord, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets; Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone,” of all truth that is in him.

And now, my Right Rev. Superiors,—you, to whom this especial occasion is more peculiarly personal, suffer for a moment the word of exhortation. I am sensible that I can inform you in nothing;—I can instruct you in nothing. I can only stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: even which I would not presume to do, but for the ministerial position I am here permitted at present to occupy. It has pleased Providence to summon you to a high station in his visible Church. Hasten, we pray thee, O Lord, thy kingdom! And we would humbly hope, that we perceive the arm of the Lord awakening for his people. He turneth the hearts of rulers and nations, as seemeth best to his godly wisdom, sometimes as the heart of one man. We see with joy the increasing exertions which the Church is now making, both in its ministry and its laity, (for the Church is of the two,) to the glory of God. The root of Jesse seems more manifest as an ensign among the people. The sound is going out more into all lands: and going out more loudly, more clearly, more efficiently. The Church seems moving again in her

native strength. She sends out her boughs to the sea, and her branches to the river. And this appears in no way more gratifying than in the appointing of bishops to the churches of our colonies in foreign lands. Without a bishop, a church's arm, if church it can be called, is cramped and shortened. Without a bishop, a church has no power, present and at hand, of ordination, in most, if not in all cases a vital requisite : it has no controlling power, no adjusting, concentrating, uniting energy. It is virtually divided and individualised : a body without its guiding eye ; a pillar truly, but a pillar of cloud, and not of fire ! not a burning and a shining light, as it should be.

But, then, a bishop, to be effective, should be over a diocese within his episcopal grasp, and within his bodily powers : a diocese that he can visit without risk of health and life ;—which he can view ; which he can be acquainted with,—and personally influence and manage.

To a diocese thus improved, as I understand, and thus more rightly divided, the Lord has called you, Right Rev. Fathers.

And yet it is probable, that with a christian diffidence of your own powers, your minds may shrink from the arduous eminence. When you contemplate, with the seraphim, the divine holiness, that perfect holiness, which, while it is the

security of the Church, and the love of the Church, —should also be the cause of its fearful apprehension! when you reflect upon the liabilities, the burdens, the difficulties of your prominent post,—you may be tempted to say, “Who is sufficient for these things?” And well we *may* say so, high or low in the Church: and *he* will say it most sincerely, who has examined most seriously his own weak and imperfect nature.

The prophet felt the very same at his appointment. “Then said I, woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips: and mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.” But God exalteth the humble and meek. “Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar. And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged!”

And, blessed be his name, the Saviour says the same, or better, to every trembling and fearful servant now: “My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” If the shepherd of the Lord can but say, in its sincerity and completeness, “Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee!” then, our God remembereth the promise, which he made to our fathers, “Thus saith the Lord

that created thee, O Jacob, and that formed thee, O Israel; fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine! When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers; they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour." It was a seraph that touched Isaiah's lips with a live coal: Christ himself shall come to his elect under the gospel covenant, and baptize them with the Holy Ghost, and with fire. And, O Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

Then shall his chosen servant hear the voice of the heavenly Sovereign with gladness. Then shall he go his way into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise. And when the Lord saith, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us? Who will feed my sheep? Who will feed my people with my rod, the flock of mine heritage, which dwell solitarily in the wood, in the midst of Carmel? Who will build a house for my name, and raise up for me a plant of renown? and I will put my words in thy mouth, and I will cover thee with the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth,

and say unto Zion, thou art my people!" Then, saith the good minister of Christ and of the cross, he that before was weak, and timorous, and hesitating amidst the conflict of his own imaginations—"Here am I, send me!" Henceforth, "old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." The service of Jesus is perfect freedom. "Most gladly, therefore, now, will he rather glory in his infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake, for when he is weak, then is he strong!" "Be with me, blessed Master," says the servant of the Gospel, entering upon his course, "Do *Thou* forsake me not, and all shall be well. If the Lord be for us, who can be against us?" "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea rather is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God; who maketh intercession for us." "Lord, I am ready to go with thee both into prison and to death." For "who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to

separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Go forth, then, Right Reverend Fathers, in this divine, this evangelical, this invincible resolution of the great apostle of the Gentiles, to the churches to which you are appointed. “The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.” Go forth,—and let that spirit also be in you which was in Christ Jesus: meek, patient, charitable, bold, persevering; full of christian love, full of holy consolation; and, then, like him, ye shall assuredly go forth, conquering and to conquer. Be ye holy, for holy is our God. Grave upon a plate of pure gold—“**HOLINESS TO THE LORD!**” that it may be upon the mitre; upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be:” For “without holiness, *no man,*” either of ministers, or of congregations, “shall see the Lord!” Go forth, leaning only on the bosom of your Lord, and trusting alone to the power of his grace. His grace shall give you boldness, with fervent zeal, constantly to preach the gospel; and to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but “the truth, as it is in Jesus.” We preach not ourselves, but Christ crucified.

Lift up your voice with strength; lift it up; be not afraid. Set up the standard towards

Zion, viz. justification by faith, sanctification of life; freedom from the law, as a covenant of works—inviolable obligation to it as a rule of life: pardon and grace for every sinner that repenteth; the free gift of salvation upon all men (since Christ gave himself a ransom for all) unto justification of life. For the Spirit and the Bride say, Come, and let him that heareth, say, Come; and let him that is athirst, come. And, whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely; where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all in all!

And although a vast and trackless ocean shall roll between us, yet the Church of Christ is never divided in spirit. The Church here shall have saintly communion with the Churches of your distant dominion. The mother in her mansion will not forget her daughter in the wilderness. Prayer shall be made unceasingly in the Church for you. And, if we never meet again in this world—if that be the counsel which God will bring to pass—may we assemble at last around the great white throne, and our names be found written in the Lamb's book of life.

Finally, brethren, farewell! May "the God

of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”