



POETRY.

STANZAS.

"What is our life? It is even a vapor, which appears but for a little time, and then vanishes away."

As bubbles on the mountain stream, Pass swift away; As clouds live in sunset gleam, And then decay;

As meteors, on a summer eve, Blaze forth and die, And on the heavens no traces leave Where they pass'd by;

As that fair star, whose light once fell Upon us here, Has nothing left on high to tell That it was there;

Thus from the face of earth shall I Pass soon, to be Forgot, like thousand things that lie, Asleep in memory.

MISCELLANEOUS.

For the S. R. Telegraph.

THE EPISCOPAL CONTROVERSY.

TO THE REV. SEPTIMUS TESTON, VA.

Rev. and dear Sir,—I thank you for your kind letter of the 9th inst. You inform me that some of your Episcopal neighbors have begun again to repeat the charge brought against me by Dr. Cooke of Kentucky, seven or eight years ago, and which I thought I had effectually refuted soon after it was made. The charge is, that in my "Letters on the Christian Ministry," in reference to the Episcopal controversy, published thirty years ago, I garbled and misrepresented the testimony of several of the Fathers in a very gross and irreparable manner. This charge, you tell me, is now revived & spoken of by some Episcopalians in your neighborhood; and that you have been recently informed that a diocesan Bishop of that denomination has "reiterated the statement with unqualified confidence." I can assure you, my dear Sir, that this charge is a cruel slander, and as silly as it is slanderous. To convince of this every one who is willing to know the truth, nothing more will be necessary than a very brief statement of facts.

In my "Letters on the Christian Ministry," published a little more than thirty years ago, and addressed to the people of my pastoral charge in the city of New York, I undertook to repel the repeated and violent attacks of several Episcopal writers against the Presbyterian church. These attacks, in which our ministry and ordinances were denounced as "idolatrous and unchristian," as a church denied, were carried on for more than two years before I wrote a word in reply. My work was purely defensive. And as I wished to comprehend in a single small volume all that I had to say, as well as the testimony from the Fathers, as that from scripture, I was, of course, compelled to be very brief on every branch of the subject. Especially in detailing the testimony of the Fathers of the first three centuries, it was not possible to do more than to give a specimen of their manner of speaking on the subject. To this testimony I devoted eighty-six duodecimo pages; giving four quotations from Clement Romanus; ten from Ignatius; nine from Irenaeus; two from Justin Martyr; ten from Clement Alexandrian; and ten from Tertullian; five from Cyprian; besides large citations from Jerome, Hilary, Chrysostom, and several other earlier and later Fathers. In making these quotations I professed not to give the whole of the testimony of these Fathers, but to give a fair specimen of the passages commonly adduced in their favor by Episcopalians, as well as those which Presbyterians consider as sustaining their cause. This I pledge I fairly and honestly redeemed. Every candid reader, who is familiar with this controversy, will find in my pages the great mass of the strongest citations on which Prelatists are wont to rely in vindicating their claim. I verify thought them, and certainly think now, that I gave a fair and fuller account of that part of the testimony of the Fathers which Episcopalians are wont to quote in support of their claim, than I ever met with in one of that denomination in attempting to state the claims and the corresponding testimony on the Presbyterian side. With this, however, Dr. Cooke was by no means satisfied. He insisted that there were some other passages in the Fathers referred to, still more strongly in favor of the Episcopal claim, which I did not quote, and this alleged omission he made the ground of heavy complaint, and of a most serious charge of uncharitable and dishonest purpose. But this he probably would have done, had I quoted the whole of all that is found in all the Fathers on the subject in question, unless I had also added his comments on the citations. That there is no want either of charity or decorum in this supposition, will appear evident to any one who will attend for a moment to what he has been actually capable of doing. One of his most clamorous complaints of unfairness and dishonest management on my part, is founded on the following fact. Having occasion to notice, in one part of my Letters, the Episcopal assertion, that diocesan bishops succeed the Apostles in their presiding and governing station in the church, I observed, that there is not a syllable or hint which looks like this to be found in the New Testament; and that none of the earlier Fathers contain the remotest intimation of the kind. On the contrary, I stated, that Ignatius, one of the highest uninspired authorities among Episcopalians, frequently and strongly declares that Presbyters succeed in the place of the Apostles. At this assertion Dr. Cooke was greatly revolted, and stigmatized it as a gross and irreparable misrepresentation of the testimony of Ignatius; and asked, in the most delirious strain, how I could dare to conceal the fact, that Ignatius distinguishes so clearly between Bishops and Presbyters, and always gives the priority to the former? Will you believe it, my dear Sir, that in the very work concerning which Dr. Cooke complains so heavily, I had quoted in full the very passages which he cites to establish this fact, and of the omission of which he complains? The following is a specimen of what I gave without stint or reserve—"Study to do all things in divine concord;—your Bishop presiding in the place of God; your Presbyters in the place of the council of the Apostles; and your Deacons most dear to me, being intrusted with the ministry of Jesus Christ, &c."—And again—"Without your Bishop you should do nothing. Also be subject to your Presbyters, as to the apostles of Jesus Christ, our hope."—And again—"Follow your Bishop as Jesus Christ, the Father; and the Presbytery (or Presbyters) as the apostles." These passages make a part of the large quotations which I made from Ignatius when treating of the general subject;—but when I had occasion to establish the fact, that the Father never speaks of the Bishops as successors of the Apostles, but generally of the Presbyters as standing in this place; then I only quoted those parts of the above passages which are printed in Italics. This is one of my chief crimes in Dr. Cooke's eyes. Because I did not again quote in one place that which I had fairly and fully given in another, he charges me with dishonest artifice and concealment! Whether this charge ought to be ascribed to want of discernment, want of memory, or want of candor, I will not undertake to determine; but surely no fair or honorable mind will fail to be deeply revolted by such conduct.

Equally unfounded and slanderous is another charge made by Dr. Cooke, in regard to the same Ignatius. In quoting the Epistle of Ignatius to Polycarp, I represent that Father as exhorting the Polycarp to be acquainted by name with all the members of his church, not even neglecting the servant men and maids; and I employ this fact as an argument to show that Polycarp was not a diocesan, but a parochial bishop; in other words, that the title of Bishop, in the time of Ignatius, designated not our Episcopal brethren with one voice acknowledged as standing in the apostolic church,—the Pastor of a single congregation. With this statement Dr. Cooke professes to be

greatly scandalized; and charges me with grossly misrepresenting Ignatius, and deceiving my readers. But why? Did I not give precisely the same extract from Ignatius that he has himself given, and the ipsissima verba of archbishop Wake's translation, which he also adopts? But my comments on the extract from the venerable Father offend Dr. Cooke. I must, forsooth, not only quote the Fathers as he quotes them; but I must also interpret them, and comment on them as he does, or be charged with misrepresenting them! This is too much! I gave my readers every opportunity of judging whether my comments were fair and legitimate or not. But every one is dishonest who dares to differ from Dr. Cooke!

But I have been more recently abused and vilified, in regard to Ignatius, by some still more weak and uncharitable assailants. The ground of this abuse is, that in my "Letters on the Christian Ministry," I represent the Epistles of that Father as probably interpolated, and as of very suspicious authenticity; while, four years afterwards, in my "Letters on Unitarianism," I speak of those Epistles as, "in the main, the real work of the Father whose name they bear." These statements have been represented as wholly inconsistent with each other, and as indicating an entire want of fairness and candor. Nothing but gross ignorance of the history of those Epistles, could prompt any one to make the charge of inconsistency between the statements above cited. That copies of the most learned divines, of different denominations, in the Protestant world, have expressed the opinion that even the shorter Epistles of Ignatius have been tampered with, and are unworthy of entire credit, every well-informed man knows; and this is all I said. On the other hand, that my statement in the later publication is considered as equally true by the great mass of divines equally learned, I take for granted none will deny. The following extract from the remarks of a learned and zealous Episcopalian who writes a series of papers in favor of Prelacy in the "Christian Observer," of London, will at once explain and establish what I mean. "In these Epistles," says the writer, "we have the testimonies of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, marshalled with unreasoning exactness, and repeated with importunate anxiety. There appear, moreover, so many symptoms of contrivance, and such studied uniformity of expression, that these compositions will surely not be alleged by any capable and candid advocate for primitive Episcopacy, without great hesitation; by many they will be entirely rejected. I do not mean to insinuate that the whole of these Epistles is a forgery. On the contrary, many parts of them afford strong internal evidence of their own genuineness; but with respect to the particular passages which affect the present (i. e. the Episcopal) dispute, there is not a single passage which I would venture to alledge. The language, at the earliest, is that of the fourth century. Christian Observer, l. p. 723.

Resolvd. 10. That every minister belonging to this Presbytery, be directed to read these resolutions to their respective charges, at an early day.

Resolvd. 11. That a copy of the above resolutions be forwarded to the Editors of the Watchman and Telegraph, for publication in their papers.

Resolvd. 12. That the Synod of Virginia, be requested, at its next meeting, to divide the Lexington Presbytery, by a line commencing at the intersection of the Alleghany mountain, with the southern boundary of Pendleton county, and thence along the top of the mountain to the northern boundary of Giles county, and thence a long the dividing line between Giles and Monroe counties to New River, and organize the ministers and churches west of that line, into a Presbytery to be known by the name of the Kanawha Presbytery.

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