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Poetry.

DEAN ALFORD'S FUNERAL HYMNS.

The following beautiful hymns were composed by the late Dr. Alford, Dean of Canterbury; and were sung at his funeral:

HYMN I.

Jesus, when I fainting lie,
And the world is flitting by,
Hold thou up mine head:
When the cry is "Thou must die,"
And the dread hour draweth nigh,
Stand by my bed!

Jesus, when the worst is o'er,
And they tear me from the door,
Meet the sorrowing throng:
"Weep not!" let the mourner hear;
Widow's woe and orphan's tear
Turn into song.

Jesus! in the last great day,
Come Thou down and touch my clay,
Speak the word, "Arise!"
Friend to glad some friend restore
Living, praising evermore,
Above the skies!

HYMN II.

Ten thousand times ten thousand,
In sparkling raiment bright
The armies of the ransomed saints
Throng up the steep of light:
'Tis finished—all is finished,
Their fight with death and sin!
Fling open wide the golden gates,
And let the victors in!

What rush of Hallelujahs
Fills all the earth and sky!
What ringing of a thousand harps
Bespeaks the triumph nigh;
O Day, for which creation
And all its tribes were made:
O joy, for all its former woes
A thousandfold repaid!

O then what raptured greetings—
On Canaan's happy shore,
What knitting severed friendships up,
Where partings are no more!
Then eyes with joy shall sparkle,
That brimmed with tears of late:
Orphans no longer fatherless,
Nor widows desolate.

Bring near thy great salvation,
Thou Lamb for sinners slain,
Fill up the roll of Thine elect,
Then take thy power and reign.
Appear, Desire of Nations,
Thine exiles long for home;
Shew in the heaven Thy promised sign,
Thou Prince and Saviour come!

Dean Alford was buried at St. Martin's Church, which stands on a hill in the outskirts of Canterbury, and is one of the oldest churches in England. It is built largely of Roman bricks, and occupies the site of the building where Austin preached some twelve hundred years ago.

The service was a most impressive and touching one. The city officials, and seventy-six clergymen and church dignitaries were present. There were also ten Nonconformist ministers. Twenty-four of the Cathedral choir, and a large number of laymen were also in attendance. The first of the above hymns was sung in the Cathedral, and the other at the grave.

The London Daily News remarks:

"By his opinions Dean Alford belonged to what is called the Evangelical school of the Church of England; yet it was from this section of the Church that proceeded a series of attacks which troubled the serenity of the later years of his life. The Dean was, above all things, a man of truth, and the fidelity with which he maintained conclusions to which he had been led in the course of conscientious study, exposed him to attacks intended to narrow the sphere of his influence. The intelligent opinion of the public in the end did justice to him; and he has died at a time when it seemed likely that his labours would be more fruitful than at any previous period of his life."

The following extract from a notice of the Dean's last days, is from a Canterbury paper:

"Some two months ago, just when the deceased Dean had attained his sixtieth year, he at the earnest solicitation of his brother, a physician in London, submitted to a consultation of other eminent medical men, whose united diagnosis was such that he was strictly enjoined to cease from mental labour—to take more and earlier rest at night, and to abstain from unnecessary reading. It was not only that the brain had been over-taxed and the strain upon the mind had prejudiced the general physique, but there were symptoms that the heart was also to some degree affected. The Dean, although it cost him many a pang to give up his much-loved literary work, resolved to obey his doctors, and devoted more of his time to rest and relaxation, his relaxation being the cultivation of art in painting and music. He was cheerful and happy. On the Saturday evening preceding his death he took his place in the chorus of the Harmonic Union, but left before it was concluded, and was observed to put his hand to his side tightly as he hurried down the room. On Sunday however he took part in the morning service at the Cathedral, and preached the sermon in the afternoon. On Monday, about mid-day, although feeling poorly, he attended the Committee meeting of the newly instituted Permanent Relief Fund, but in the evening it was whispered at the Harmonic Union meeting that he was evidently too unwell to be expected to be in his place at the performance. Still on Tuesday he was not so ill but that he took great interest in the performance to take place in the evening, and was very anxious that his daughter who was visiting him should be present, and so he able to report to him on her return how the music ("The May Queen" and "Acis and Galatea") had been given, and whether the young ladies engaged and the new tenor of the Cathedral Choir had succeeded in pleasing the audience."

During the last night of the Dean's life his mind wandered a good deal. The subject of Bible Revision was the one uppermost, and he spoke of it again and again.

An editorial article in the London Freeman (Baptist) concludes by saying: "We take a sorrowful leave of the late Dean of Canterbury. He had earned our gratitude by services rendered to us in the study of the New Testament. He had won our confidence by his manly and brave advocacy of whatever he esteemed to be right and true. He had commanded our respect by the manner in which he bore himself in the high places of the Establishment, never sinking the Christian in the Churchman, and always acting a part worthy of himself. He had taught our heart to love him for his simplicity, friendliness, and ever enduring charity. The grave has closed upon his mortal remains. We shall miss him often and much. Baptists as we are, we too claim a place among the mourners at his tomb, and with unfeigned sorrow, drop a tear of regret at the loss we have sustained, while we thank God for Dr. Alford, Dean of Canterbury."

Religious.

For the Christian Messenger.

THE CHURCH OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

(Concluded.)

"The relation of the Church to the State" is discussed in this volume*, by the Rev. Eustace Rogers Conder, M. A. It is a fair and elaborate statement of the question. We quote Mr. Conder's concluding remarks:—

"God works ever from the root upwards, from the hidden centre to the surface, from the little life-cell to the complex organism. No number of ungodly men, placed them under what institutions you will, can possibly make a Christian nation. To call them such is to deceive ourselves with fair words. Even though all the members of the government were personally true Christians, this would go a very little way if the bulk of the people were unchristian. The moral power of the strongest government is very limited if it is not in

* Eccelesia: Church Problems considered, in a series of Essays. Edited by Henry Robert Reynolds, D. D., President of Chesham College, Fellow of University College, London.

sympathy with the nation. Of what use is it to talk of establishing religion, when a government cannot so much as establish truth and honesty? As well talk of establishing the west wind, the sunshine, or the dew. But were that promise accomplished, 'Thy people shall be all righteous,' were the bulk of the nation such that in every business from the polling-booth and the market up to the cabinet, in every company from the Court down to the cottage and workshop, the first question were not, 'What is politic, customary, for the interest of the party, for the gain of the few?' but, 'WHAT IS RIGHT?'—then it will be seen that the Gospel is as able to bless a nation as ever was the law. The Lord Jesus will take the helm of that nation into his own hand. Such a nation will not dream of 'establishing religion,' but religion will establish the nation, and righteousness will exalt it. Its officers will be peace and its exactors righteousness. Violence will no more be heard in its land, wasting nor destruction within its borders. The day will have dawned, whose glory is indeed dim compared with the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory beyond: but the promise of which is, nevertheless, the most precious inheritance and only hope of the nations of mankind." p. 238.

The Editor of the volume contributes an Essay on "The forgiveness and absolution of sins." The style is rather technical than free and flowing, and the Essay will not prove so attractive, we think, as from the importance of the subject, is desirable.

The Essay by the Rev. R. W. Dale, M. A., on "the doctrine of the Real Presence and of the Lord's Supper," is exhaustive. Theologians will read it with deep interest. Whether our readers generally will accept the positions in the following passage, we cannot tell; but we commend it to their serious consideration:—

"In the eagerness with which Protestant controversialists have maintained that the Bread and Wine are only symbols, it has been forgotten that if they are symbols, they symbolize something. Such exaggerated attention has been concentrated on the visible signs, the truth has been reiterated with such earnestness that the signs are only signs, that we have come to think that the Service has no spiritual value. It is time that we remembered who it was that instituted the Rite, and what He himself said when He distributed the Elements."

"If it had been instituted by ourselves to commemorate Christ, the whole service and not the Elements alone, would have been merely symbolic. To recur to the old illustration: if a soldier in the ranks of a besieging army hands a great key to his own general, the act is symbolic as well as the key. It is simply the expression of the confidence and hope of a man having no authority to surrender the city, that the city will soon be taken. It is a mere dramatic ceremony. We can imagine circumstances in which it would be very effective; circumstances in which it would stir the courage and fire the ardour of those who had become weary of the siege; but its whose value and force would lie in its effect upon the imagination and emotions of those who witnessed it. But when the governor of the city does the same thing, the act is a mere dramatic ceremony no longer. Its value does not lie in the impressiveness and scenic solemnity with which it may be accompanied. It represents a real transfer of power. And so when Christ gives us bread, and says, 'This is my Body,' it is not a mere dramatic ceremony—deriving all its worth from its didactic meaning or its 'impressive' power. His Body is actually given. 'The Bread which we break' is 'the Communion of the Body of Christ.' 'The Cup of blessing, which we bless' is 'the Communion of the Blood of Christ.' The elements are the key surrendering possession of the city; the book conferring his dignity on the abbot; the staff transferring authority to the bishop; the ring ratifying the vow of marriage; the 'seal,' to use the

language of our fathers, of the covenant of grace.

"With this conception of the Service, it is possible to account for the mysticism and superstition which gathered about it in very early times. It justifies all the various expressions used of the Rite in the New Testament. It gives an adequate meaning to the words of institution. It rescues the great Christian Ordinance from the merely technical character with which it is regarded by many Protestants, and inspires it with life and power. It is a protection against the superstitions of Rome." p. 387.

There should surely be a medium between a bald (which may prove to be a cold) commemoration, and a superstitious or idolatrous observance.

The Rev. Henry Allon's Essay on "The worship of the Church" is suggestive in many important respects. We have much yet to learn on this subject.

We fully agree with him in his remarks on the Psalter:—

"All the Hebrew psalms are not lyrics, and the collection was not intended as a Church psalter. It is a national collection of devotional poetry, made up of at least five smaller collections—a long and gradual accumulation, completed and put into its present form after the Captivity. It contains many pieces, neither written as songs nor meant to be with music; these we read for edification, just as we read the Book of Job." p. 439.

"For both individuals and Churches," Mr. Allon observes, "there is but one valid law, viz. that so far as is practicable, each shall embody its worship in such modes and forms as are the best adapted to its own life. Of worship itself there is but one great use and end,—that it bring a brotherhood of men to the feet and heart of the great Father in heaven—there to speak to the eager sympathy of his love, all their adoration, and all their desire." p. 462.

The Rev. Guinness Rogers, B. A., writes on "the Congregationalism of the Future." This is one of the most interesting and most difficult of the "Church Problems" of the present age. Progress is our motto, in every department of knowledge, of life, and of society. The question is, How far are we to look for progress in religion? Are modern ideas and tastes, which are re-shaping every thing, to be applied to this subject? Is Christianity progressive? If so, what becomes of the authority of the Bible?

The Christian system comprises truth and practice. Truth is a revelation from God. It is an inspired account of his character, government, and dealings with men, and, as such, is fixed and unalterable. There can be no progression here. We cannot know more of God than he has told us. And we are bound to believe all he has told us. The only improvement we can look for is in the matter of interpretation. If we understand Bible truth better than those who lived three hundred years ago, it is because by the aid of advanced criticism we are able to interpret the book more accurately. The book is just what it was at the beginning, and the system it reveals is, like our Divine Lord, "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." And we must be very careful, when we present the results of our inquiries in the style which modern thought affects, lest we disguise the truth, or hide it from view, by the new-fangled or cumbersome dress which we put upon it.

Christianity includes practice as well as truth. God has enjoined on us to worship and serve him. Some of his commands are direct and positive, and they must be literally obeyed. We have no power to alter, add, or omit. In other respects, we have only general directions or examples, and are left at liberty to vary the mode of observance. If we have not a precept, we must search for a precedent: should that fail us, we must fall back on principles, taking special care, however, that all our arrangements are made in harmony with the spirit and design of the Gospel.

The manner in which members should be received into a Church is a case in point. We gather from the New Testament that the candidate for fellowship must be a believer;—then, that he must make profession of his belief, in baptism;—after which he may be united with those who have also made such a profession, and who constitute a Church. But we are without any instruction as to the manner in which application is to be made to the Church, or the steps to be taken by the Church in order to obtain satisfaction respecting the sincerity of the candidate's belief. We have a free choice of means and expedients. Mr. Rogers states, that in the Congregational Churches of England the candidate is required to make a personal and public profession before the Church, and that this requirement deters many from applying for fellowship. He would have this altered in the "Congregationalism of the Future." We think he is right. In fact, there is no exact and rigid uniformity among ourselves. We have seen members received into Baptist Churches by personal profession—by written statement—and by the report of the Pastor or of brethren, who have made proper inquiries. There being no law, the object may be accomplished in different ways. But nothing must be done that with interfere with the spirituality of the Christian system, or facilitate the introduction of persons into our Churches who do not afford satisfactory evidence of being "born of the Spirit."

Mr. Rogers remarks (p. 503), that "Congregationalists have been divided into two separate communities by difference as to a mere rite—a difference which, under a dispensation of the Spirit, must surely be regarded as of very secondary importance." He refers to the two denominations, the Independents and Baptists, who agree in every thing, baptism excepted. We are sorry that he speaks so disparagingly of Baptism. "A mere rite!" Why it is one of the two ordinances which the Lord Jesus Christ has commanded his people to observe, and which, being a positive command, must be observed, both as to subject and mode, as has been directed.

The Rev. Dr. Mullens, who was many years a Missionary in Calcutta; and is now Foreign Secretary of the London Missionary Society, was certainly the fittest man to write an Essay on "Modern Missions and their results." The task has been well executed. We regret, however, that he has completely ignored the Baptists. He refers to Dr. Carey, and to the success of the Karen Mission; but no one would gather from his account that Dr. Carey was a Baptist, or that the Karen Mission is a Baptist Mission.

C.

CONFESSIONS AND COVENANTS.

Our attention has been called to an editorial article which appeared in a recent issue of the Canadian Baptist. The information given in it respecting the New Hampshire Confession may be of interest to our readers. The article is in reply to some discussion of the subject which had appeared in that paper:

"We should be sorry indeed, if the Baptists anywhere, and especially in Canada, indicated any tendency to put any Confession or Covenant, any Articles or Constitution in the place of the Word of God. That word, pure and unadulterated, must always be our sole law-giver and text-book. We yield to none in this respect whether they are 'princes' or peasants. But while this great principle stands untouched, we hold that 'summaries' of Baptist views and practices, whether these are called 'Confessions' or 'Articles,' are both convenient and useful. If men unacquainted with the distinctive principles of the Baptists, should ask, 'What are your views?' it would be useful to them, and honourable to the Baptists, if we could put into their hands a carefully drawn statement with scriptural refer-