

# THE CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINE.

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FEBRUARY, 1841.

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## THE ANGLICANS IN IRELAND.

AN influential clergyman stated, some years ago, in the *Dublin Christian Examiner*, that when he was a young man, he was riding out one day with the bishop, and happening to meet a number of his clergy equipped and mounted for the chase, the only remark made by the venerable successor of the apostles was, that if they wore hats instead of caps, it would be more becoming their sacred profession. Such were the notions of clerical propriety then prevalent in Ireland! A shooting, hunting, gambling, swearing, Sabbath-breaking, profligate clergy, wasted, in luxury and dissipation, the tithes wrung by their proctors and bailiffs from an impoverished peasantry, who devoutly regarded them as the most pestilent of heretics.

In spite, however, of the oppressions and the example of such a clergy, and all the malign influences that depressed the Irish people, they gradually emerged from ignorance and poverty; and guided, at length, by a leader, whose prudence and perseverance were equal to his intensely Irish eloquence and ardour, they began to put forth a moral power in their own defence, to which the Protestant Establishment had been hitherto a stranger. They read the papers, pondered statistics, attended public meetings, passed resolutions, and felt the new-born power of freedom and knowledge stirring in their hearts. The brand of slavery gradually wore out of their brow. They no longer crouched and trembled in the presence of their masters, as they had been wont; nor did they nearly so often run into seditious conspiracies, and perpetrate those deeds of atrocity and treachery, into which a high-minded, uneducated, and hopeless people have been driven by the short-sighted policy of partial and tyrannical rulers. The gentry, as well as the clergy, were roused and alarmed by this change in the spirit and demeanour of the peasantry, which they justly ascribed to the influence of Mr. O'Connell and the Catholic Association. The national mind,

## CHRISTIAN COUNSELS AND CONSOLATIONS.

CONDENSED FROM OLD AUTHORS.

THE following article is abridged from a paper of the Rev. William Traill, minister of Borthwick, and eldest son of the celebrated Rev. Robert Traill, one of the faithful confessors of the Church of Scotland. He prepared it at the request of a lady, for her own private use, "at Borthwick, Dec. 12, 1708." As it was not originally designed for the press, so it is but loosely written. This attempt to condense his useful, holy thoughts into fewer words, it is hoped will be acceptable to the devout readers of the Congregational Magazine, who may be supposed to desire some articles addressed to the heart and conscience, as well as to the understanding.

## NECESSARY AND EXCELLENT ADVICE ABOUT SOME DUTIES.

1. *As to Worship.*—Frequency, rather than length, seems desirable in all acts of private devotion, excepting in cases of extraordinary solemnity. This is sanctioned by Scripture precept and example. "Seven times a day do I praise thee"—"Evening, and morning, and noon, will I praise and cry aloud." Psalm cxix. 164; lv. 17.

Reading of the Scriptures, with meditation, should be intermixed with your devotions. Better pray three or four times, when you get an hour or two for such duties, than to spend all the time in one address without intermission. As ideas are not well conceived without the use of words, so employ your voice in a subdued tone, which you will find most conducive to attention, seriousness, and fervour. Lifting up the voice in closet prayer is contrary to the secrecy our Lord enjoined, and has a show of ostentation which is greatly to be avoided. Improve occasional opportunities for prayer, and especially seek it when excited by sudden anger, fear, grief, or joy. Strive then to compose your spirit by pouring out your heart before God. Likewise after the commission or discovery of some new infirmity or sin, or when you are called to enter upon any new business of weight or moment.

2. *As to your frame of mind.*—Labour to escape from soul trouble, not so much because it is terrible as because it is sinful. Seek to have the heart established by grace, and to maintain an equal, constant frame of mind, that you may not be soon cast down and affrighted by an unexpected affliction, nor be suddenly puffed up by unlooked-for success. Guard against all passion, and speaking hastily and unadvisedly; but think awhile upon the thing that vexes you before you utter your mind upon it, and when you speak, say not all you think, and be sure not to make the worst of the matter, which only inflames the heart, and excites the feelings. "A fool uttereth all his mind, but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards."—"The heart of the wise

teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips." Prov. xxix. 11 ; xvi. 23.

Put a hopeful construction upon those providences that appear to be sad, dark, and threatening, and do not suspect the kindness of God when cross dispensations occur. Believe that "He hath done all things well," and "that all things work together for good to them that love" him. Remember that "all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his counsel and his testimonies." Mark vii. 37 ; Rom. viii. 28 ; Psalm xxv. 10.

Often, with all solemnity, put your heart into your hand, and pray that God will not suffer you to deceive yourself, nor provoke him. "Search me, O God, and know my heart." Psalm cxxix. 23. And when you seek to try the sincerity of your faith, love, and other graces, mind to distinguish between the marks of strong faith and of true faith, however weak. If in self-examination your mind is dark and your decision difficult, do not lose time by trying to settle the truth and sincerity of your experience in former times, but set about a direct act of faith upon Christ Jesus, choosing him, and depending upon him as a full, sufficient, and only Saviour for poor lost sinners. Seek to realize anew your own sinfulness and misery, and with a humbled and penitent heart cast yourself again at his feet. Remember your dependence upon the Holy Spirit, and seek "a supply of the spirit of Christ Jesus," (Phil. i. 19,) to work fresh and large discoveries of sanctifying and saving grace, and to refresh your soul amidst all the labours and sorrows of this militant state.

3. *As to the practice of duty.*—Follow Christ, by taking up the cross that he has appointed for you, and by faith lean upon him for strength and succour, to bear you up under its burden from day to day. Observe your daily deficiencies and short-comings, and press forward that you may know more of the spirit, life, and power of every duty. Keep constant watch against your easily-besetting sins, and take heed that, by a sudden surprisal, they do not prevail against you. Particularly inquire whether you are not tempted to unbelief, and calling in question almost every truth—whether you are not sinfully jealous of the love of God to your soul, after the multiplied evidences of his care—whether affected diffidence, impatient haste, rash and uncharitable censures of others, are not found in your heart—whether you regard the proper season for every duty, and daily labour to "redeem the time"—whether in circumstances of difficulty you ask yourself, what would my Lord and Saviour have done in this case? and do likewise—whether you mind his own blessed rule, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Learn to remember your latter end, "to die daily"—adventure upon nothing but what appears to be your duty, both lawful and seasonable, and such as you would adventure upon, if you had but a day to live.

4. *As to your converse with others.*—Study to be doing good, or getting good, in every company. Have most intercourse with the godly, but make your visits short, lest they should become trifling. When you receive a visit, lead the conversation, that time be not lost by idle, vain, unprofitable gossip. Then you will be presently quit of your company, if they are carnal, and they will not soon trouble you again; or you will improve the visit by calling forth from Christian visitors things that are for edification. Let not, however, your fidelity lead to rudeness. “Be ye courteous,” and in all the civilities of life let no one excel you.

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### A CRITICAL INQUIRY INTO THE MODE OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

EVERY thing great is made up of parts which are themselves small. The world is composed of atoms. The character of a good man is the result of actions and influences which, considered separately, may be of little consequence, but altogether they produce the momentous difference which there is between the righteous and the wicked. Our confidence in the reports of travellers, and in the records of history, is the effect of many slight evidences, yet it is often free from uncertainty. By most persons the existence of the great wall of China, and the landing in this island of Julius Cæsar, are as firmly believed as the facts which have come under their own observation; but this strong conviction is the effect of many proofs, each of which, if taken alone, would be of little value, though, taken together, they amount to demonstration. In regard to the most important of all matters, the truth of revelation, our faith does not depend on the strength of any one argument, but on the combined strength of hundreds and of thousands. Nor do we derive our belief of any of the great doctrines of the Gospel from a consideration of a single passage in the Bible, though one interpreted by the aid of others may fully exhibit it, but from an investigation of many. He who adopts any other course may find it an easier and shorter way, but cannot be assured that it will lead him to the truth. The infallibility of the Pope, or the church, or of any man or body of men, would, no doubt, afford much relief from the labour of collecting and comparing texts, facts, and arguments; but then, all such supposed infallibility is only a delusion.

In nothing is the necessity of valuing little things more obvious than in the study of ancient languages. We scarcely ever meet with any single evidence concerning the meaning of a word, that is by itself conclusive: but a combination of arguments, which separately are of little worth, will often leave no more room for doubt in respect to the meaning