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The Jubilee; June 1852

OR,

# WHAT I SAW AND HEARD

IN LONDON,

ON THE

15TH AND 16TH OF JUNE, 1852.

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AUTHOR OF "AMERICA AND THE AMERICAN CHURCH."

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### ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following little narrative was written immediately after the conclusion of the services held in St. Paul's Cathedral on the 16th of June, and while the impression of those services was yet fresh in the memory and feelings. That it may assist in perpetuating that impression, is the sincere desire of the Author.

London, June 17, 1852.

## WHAT I SAW AND HEARD,

&c.

As human beings, we are interested in all that tends to promote the friendly intercourse of the inhabitants of our globe. Hence it is that, if we are but moderately enlightened, we cannot help feeling gratified when we hear of the establishment of highways in the desert, the construction of extensive lines of railroad, the extension of steam navigation on the ocean, and the increasing efficiency of the electric telegraph. Hence also, in 1851, the Great Exhibition, independently of its direct claims on our attention, was hailed as a probable means of promoting the friendly intercommunication of nations hitherto separated. I was myself one of the many thousands to whom this idea imparted a charm of its own, in addition to the many material wonders of the "Crystal Palace."

If then the peaceful intercourse of nations be thus an object of peculiar interest, how much more interesting does that object become when viewed in connexion with Christian principles? "God hath made of one blood all nations for to dwell upon the face of the whole earth." At the period of the Nativity of the Divine Author of Christianity, angelic hosts exclaimed, "Peace on earth: good will to men." Nor is there any good reason to believe that peace can be firmly and permanently established among nations, excepting on the safe foundation of Christian truth.

For my own part, if I was attracted to London by the Great Exhibition of 1851, I was much more powerfully drawn to the metropolis by the expected services in Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's at the close of the Jubilee Year in 1852. I had acted for many years as a missionary in the western world, while the American Church was in a state of great feebleness compared with its present attitude. I knew that, during the ten years which had elapsed since I left America, that Church had nearly doubled its bishops, its clergy, and its laity; and I was particularly desirous of seeing the blessed spectacle of English, American, Scottish, and Colonial Bishops uniting in worship and in the expression of a common faith within the time-honoured walls of the glorious Abbey Church of Westminster.

Away then from the Wiltshire Downs: away from the shepherds and the flocks, and from old Stonehenge, that monument of primæval adoration and superstition. A few short hours, and, thanks to the mighty power of steam, I am in the midst of London, and hear on every side the ceaseless din of the metropolis of the world.

But, amidst the multiplicity of surrounding objects,

I observe placards announcing, in large capitals, that the Jubilee Services will take place at Westminster Abbey on the following day, that the Bishop of Western New York will preach at St. James's, Piccadilly, on the same evening, and that the Bishop of Michigan will in like manner officiate at St. Paul's on the 16th.

At once the question occurs to the mind, What will the Londoners think of this mention of American Bishops? Some will perhaps imagine that New York and Michigan are English colonies, to which the Queen has sent out two Bishops, to preside over the Church in those distant regions. Others, who know better, will be aware that New York and Michigan are States of the American Republic, but will be sorely puzzled to conceive how Bishops can exist in a country where there is no royal supremacy, no king or queen, or nobility. Some, perhaps, to remove their difficulties, may have recourse to books, and may even consult my own book, entitled "America, and the American Church." They will then find that every American Bishop is elected by the clerical and lay members of his diocese, and is afterwards consecrated, or ordained to the episcopal office, by three American Bishops. If they inquire by whom those three Bishops were consecrated, they will find that each of them was consecrated by three others; and, again, each of those by three others, until going backward through the Church of England, as existing subsequently, and prior, to the Reformation, the inquirer finds himself in Apostolic times, and thus stumbles on the doctrine, or rather on the fact, of the Apostolic Succession.

Having provided myself with tickets of admission to the Abbey and to the Cathedral, I stationed myself at the west door of the former, at nine o'clock on the morning of Tuesday the 15th, in the midst of a crowd of persons awaiting the opening of the gates. At a quarter past nine, precisely, the janitor appeared with his keys, and immediately afterwards the multitude, hitherto pent up, swept like a torrent into the venerable building. In a few seconds I was established in a seat within the choir, immediately in front of the pulpit; and around me, north, south, east, and west, I observed thousands pressing in with looks replete with eagerness and interest.

Let me now for a few minutes survey the glorious pile. How appropriate its architecture! How well fitted to lofty and religious thoughts! The monuments, too, from the position which I occupy, suggest historic recollections of a pleasing nature. The repairs and alterations recently effected within the building are of a character which tends to render it an outward type of what I trust the Church of England itself is becoming, namely, a purified, restored, and thoroughly efficient institution.

Let me next glance at the persons assembled, who have now quietly seated themselves wherever seats are to be found, and who in other situations are patiently standing. I see before me a good specimen of the middle and upper classes of English society. The clergy are here, as might be expected, in very considerable numbers. There is a peculiarity about their appearance which distinguishes them from any other clergy in Christendom. I will add also that there is a certain absence of pretence, a freedom, an intelligence, an air of refinement, which indicate that they are generally trustworthy and educated men, adapted to influ-

ence and guide society, if not to govern it. Besides the clergy, I see many titled and influential persons among the more devout laity of the Church of England: I notice, for example, a nobleman whose name is identified with the well-known sayings: "Victory or Westminster Abbey;" "England expects every man to do his duty."

But the clock strikes ten. A burst of music peals on high through the vaulted arches, announcing that the Bishops are approaching. Every eye is turned to the entrance to the choir. And now the procession slowly enters. And what a procession! Such a procession as the Anglican Church has never before witnessed. Jerusalem and Michigan; Bombay and Sodor and Man; Madras and Western New York; Ripon and St. Asaph; Edinburgh and Gloucester; Oxford and Argyll; Salisbury and Glasgow and Moray and Ross; his Grace of Canterbury closing the line of the apostolic brotherhood. As they advance, the assembled thousands rise up in token of respect. Well may they show respect. Men that have hazarded their lives for the Gospel; men that have spent their early days in patient study; men that have faced an angry world for Christ's sake, are in that goodly company. Two of these Bishops belong to the once persecuted Church of Scotland-a Church persecuted under the same authority which legalized the Church in England. Two of these Bishops are citizens of the United States, republicans by education as well as by allegiance, and free from what are considered by some the trammels of Royal Supremacy, and the union of Church and State. Some of them are Colonial Bishops, who endure the disadvantages of both the voluntary system and of an

establishment, without enjoying the real advantages of either. And the remainder are Bishops of the Church which at present is happily established in England, but which may again be called to go through the fire of persecution as in the times of old.

While that procession of Bishops advances towards the sacrarium, let us inwardly pray for them, and for the 108 Bishops of the Anglican communion, whom they may be considered to represent.

And now the worship of God proceeds according to the venerable Liturgy of the Church of England. The music and the voices of the choristers are sweet; but, after all, the actual words of the service are its principal charm. These words are heard alike with delight in English Cathedrals and in the rude temples of the American or Australian forests. They are the words of our own mother tongue—good and holy words, whether said, or sung, or merely spoken. The service which I now hear performed with so many splendid accessories, I have known, in the total absence of such advantages, to soften—yes, even to melt, the hearts of rough men in the western wilds.

But the prayers are over, and the Bishop of Oxford takes his place in the pulpit. His text speaks of the building of the second temple of Jerusalem, the tears of the old men and the joy of the young. His words are weighty, forcible, and eloquent. He takes a retrospect of the past efforts of the Church of England, and points out the errors, the defects, and the short-comings which have materially impeded the progress of the work. Above all, he specifies the divisions which have hindered our missionary labours, and delayed the conversion of the nations. Yet he does not forget that

God has given us many encouragements, and he eloquently alludes to the presence of the American, Scottish, and Colonial Bishops as affording an earnest of more widely-extended exertions hereafter, exertions conducted with increased system and unity, and with greater confidence in Church principles and in the promises of our Almighty Head. He calls particular attention to the fact, that wherever the true system of Christ's Church has been preached and practised in its fulness, the most abundant success has generally resulted.

The sermon was followed by the Holy Communion, when not far from a thousand persons communicated, and a collection of between four and five hundred pounds was taken up. The Archbishop consecrated the elements, and administered to the English, Scottish, American, and Colonial Bishops. The Bishops then administered to the Clergy, and the Bishops and Clergy to the Laity. Amid the deep feeling which pervaded the assembly, it seemed as if the "Gorham case," the "Hampden consecration," and other sorrowful subjects were for the time forgotten. Yet besides confessing our faults as individuals, we could not but confess our sins and negligences as a Church, while we were led fervently to implore the assistance, and to supplicate for the presence, of that Holy Comforter without whom we cannot continue in safety.

While leaving the church, I heard an English Bishop exclaim, "We have indeed had a glorious day." Afterwards I met with the two American Bishops, whom I had not seen since 1841. Time had produced changes in their countenances, but had in

no respect diminished the manly vigour and energy which distinguished their earlier years. Of this we had full proof in the services at St. James's, Piccadilly, and at St. Paul's Cathedral.

St. James's is not the most interesting of churches to the lovers of Christian architecture. Yet it contained a goodly congregation at eight in the evening, when Divine Service was celebrated, and a sermon preached by Dr. De Lancey, Bishop of Western New York. The discourse was eminently clear and practical, and was founded upon the promise of God, that "from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, his name shall be great among the gentiles." Bishop De Lancey has been signally blessed in his episcopate, and has seen the Church committed to his charge rapidly increasing in numbers and in strength. Generally speaking, about one-half of the persons confirmed by him are converts from various sectarian denominations. Dissent of every kind has had the utmost freedom of expansion in Western New York; fanaticism has prevailed in its most exaggerated forms; and now, when folly and extravagance have done their worst, the Church has stepped in to rescue and to save.

The Jubilee is over. The 150th year of the existence of the Gospel Propagation Society has passed away. But as the 15th of June was the termination of the 150th year, so the 16th is the beginning of the 151st. Let us go then to St. Paul's, to attend the 151st anniversary of our venerable Society.

There stands the Cathedral, vast in its outlines, black and dismal in its colour, yet classically graceful in its proportions. It is now half-past two o'clock, and already a crowd is collected at the northern door-

way. The door opens, the crowd rushes in; every individual must hasten and secure a good place, for the ear as well as the eye must be consulted on the present occasion.

There is a want of historic association in St. Paul's Cathedral, which is rendered the more striking by the previous services in the Abbey. The style of architecture, too, is not so suggestive of Christian ideas. Still it must be acknowledged that, after all deductions are made, St. Paul's is a dignified and noble temple.

The congregation soon becomes densely crowded. There are not perhaps equal indications of subdued feeling as in Westminster Abbey. The people have more generally the air of those who have come to see a striking spectacle. The noble organ now peals forth its thunders, and the English, Scottish, Colonial and American Bishops enter in procession, passing up the vast length of the nave to their places in the choir. The Archbishop of Canterbury takes his appropriate place, and is fronted by the Lord Mayor of London in his robes of office. The Bishop of London occupies his throne, with the Bishop of Michigan on his left. Welcome to St. Paul's, good and fearless Bishop M'Coskry!

The service with its elaborate music is over. Bishop M'Coskry appears in the pulpit, repeats the "bidding prayer," and takes as his text "All ye are brethren." Matt. xxiii. 8. He declares that by blood men are one, but that Christians are one in Christ. They become members of Christ in holy Baptism, wherein alone Regeneration is effected. Yet to those who sin after baptism, conversion and renewal are necessary; and that not only once, but often: for without holi-

ness no man shall see God. The preacher then proceeds to show that the English and American Churches are one in Christ, as the two nations are one in origin and descent. He gives a brief sketch of the history of the Church in America. He speaks of the advantages which God has bestowed on the English and on the Americans. Americans, he tells us, have acquired California and Oregon; and, he adds, as a matter of course, that they will soon possess themselves of Mexico. The isles of the Pacific will shortly be in the possession of the English and the Americans. The English language will be the prevailing tongue over the entire globe. Here in old England is the "Jerusalem" at which American and Colonial prelates will meet to take counsel with the Apostles. Let the kindred nations to which they belong work together for Christ and his Church, and when another Jubilee comes round, the walls of St. Paul's Cathedral may witness a gathering of our united hosts, such as at present we can barely imagine.

This is an imperfect outline of a vigorous sermon delivered in a tone of voice which seemed to fill the entire Cathedral. Every eye was intently fixed on the preacher; and when the discourse was concluded, and the choir burst forth in Handel's magnificent Hallelujah Chorus, the climax was complete, and the effect was overpowering. I noticed a gentleman apparently "unused to the melting mood," who was fairly overcome, and wept like a child. It may indeed be doubted whether such a sermon has often been heard within St. Paul's.

All is, however, ended. That powerful voice no longer echoes through the vast building. The Halle-

lujah and the thunder of the organ are heard no more. The congregation disperses; the gates are closed, and St. Paul's is again silent.

But may the lessons which we have received this week never be forgotten.

Let those of us who belong to the Church of England bear in mind that we belong not to a mere insular establishment, but to a Catholic Church, which, whether established or unestablished, possesses equal claims on our allegiance and on our filial duty. Let us endeavour, each in his sphere, to increase the efficiency of our Mother Church, and to avail ourselves of our numerous advantages, remembering that to whom much is given, of them much will be required. Away with the cowardly and temporizing policy by which we have been too much governed, in England, in America, and in the Colonies. Away with all dependence on any arm of flesh, whether that arm be attached to a sovereign, to a legislature, or to a democratic multitude. Let us earnestly ask for unity among ourselves, avoiding all occasions of offence, and seeking all opportunities of removing difficulties and scandal. We have seen that Bishops can be assembled from Europe, Asia, Africa, and America: we have witnessed the fact of such an assembly. May we not also hope to see, ultimately, a synod of the entire Anglican Church, which, in dependence on the Holy Spirit, shall set itself in earnest to the great work of adapting the Church to the exigencies of its situation, and of promoting its efficiency and extension?

Let the Papist learn from our recent gathering that the Church to which we belong is not, as he falsely alleges, a mere function of the State. Was it the State that appointed—is it the State that maintains the prelates of Michigan and Western New York, and the 33 Bishops and 1700 Clergy whom they represent? Is it not certain that our Church in Scotland and America, and even in some of our Colonies, exists, not as a function of the State, but, notwithstanding the State's neglect, mismanagement, and even direct opposition?

Let the merely half Churchman learn, that, so far as the Church has grown, it has grown upon the old Apostolic foundations. Let him learn that the succession of Bishops from the earliest times is a fact, and that a departure from the divinely authorized rule is sooner or later followed by destruction, while adherence to it can bring a Church out of the worst of circumstances, and render it a praise in the earth.

Let those of us who have been discouraged by the assertion of Erastian principles in some quarters take comfort from reflecting that our Reformed Church has already extended itself beyond the reach of any one human government. Henceforth it will be led to look more and more within itself for the development of its resources and for the direction of its energies.

Let us all resolve to be more liberal in our contributions, more active in our exertions in behalf of the Society for Propagating the Gospel. Let us attempt and expect great things, aiming at nothing less than the subjugation of the whole world to the yoke of Christ. Let us cherish this spirit in our children, with the hope that each succeeding generation may advance further and further in Christian devotedness and holy zeal.

Few of us will live to see another Jubilee; but our

offspring may witness a celebration far more deep in its interest, far more glorious in its historic recollections than that at which we have just assisted. Again may the noble walls of our Abbey and our Metropolitan Cathedral re-echo the voices of prelates in whom the apostolic succession is combined with apostolic labours and apostolic graces. And may those voices speak of unity effected, of entire nations converted, of the isles of the sea rejoicing in Christ, of Ethiopia stretching forth her hands unto God, of the wilderness and the solitary place rejoicing, and the desert blossoming as the rose. May they tell that many have run to and fro, and knowledge has been increased, that every valley has been exalted, and every mountain and hill made low, and that the crooked places have been made straight, and the rough places plain, and that all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of God. May they declare an accomplished fact, when they unite in that triumphant anthem, "Hallelujah: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever, King of kings, and Lord of lords. Hallelujah."

THE END.

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