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OCT 19 1932

PLAIN REASONS
FOR
LOYALTY,
ADDRESSED TO
PLAIN PEOPLE.

BY J. K.

COBOURG, U. C.
R. D. CHATTERTON PRINTER.
1838.

PLAIN REASONS FOR LOYALTY,

ADDRESSED TO PLAIN PEOPLE.

The fall of Kings,
The rage of nations and the crush of states
Move not the man, who, from the world escap'd
In still retreats and flowery solitudes,
To Nature's voice attends from month to month,
And day to day, through the revolving year;
Admiring sees her in her every shape;
Feels all her sweet emotions at his heart;
'Takes what she liberal gives nor thinks of more.

Thomson.

Here then we see the whole weight of the Gospel and of its divine Author, thrown into the scale of lawful authority. Here we see that the Christian religion comes in as a most powerful auxiliary to the civil magistrate, and lends the entire force of its sanctions to the established government of every country; an advantage of infinite importance to the peace and welfare of society.—
Bishop Porteus.

I sit, while I write, beneath one of those lofty drooping elms, which,—having been spared from the general havoc of their sylvan brethren,—are to be found here and there, erect in single beauty, relieving the eye after it has been wearied by gazing on extended masses of unbroken foliage. It stands on a ridge, in the midst of an open country; and when seen from a distance on a summer's evening, with a sky as yet glowing with a thousand inimitable tints, it displays so minutely all its tracery, branches, and even leaves, that it appears as if it would be no difficult task to count them. But the day is as yet in all its meridian splendour. The shrill, cheerful chorus of the grasshoppers rings in my ears. The echoes of the flail mingle with the softer murmur of the breeze that waltzes with the leaves over my head; and every-where and sight proclaims that the sand has still some hours to run, before the hum of industry and the voice of creation will be mute.

Rich, various, and beautiful is the landscape on which I gaze. At my feet the country descends into a gentle slope: on this sec-

ceeds a narrow fertile valley, with a stream winding through it, that waters the meadow, turns the wheel of the mill, and contributes alike to the sustenance and health of man, the cool refreshment of the panting cattle, the growth of manufactures, and the promotion of agriculture. Beyond the valley the ground ascends into a gentle undulation. Fields that have consigned their produce to the barn, lie denuded of their wealth, but dotted here and there with browsing cattle. A range of woods, with many a crested eminence wrapped in the blue haze of an autumnal day, terminates my view. The frost has not yet scattered the colours of the rainbow over the forest, but there is nothing like sameness in the glorious landscape. Orchards, laden with reddening fruit—the white farm-house with its commodious outbuildings,—the country inn flanked by a long line of Lombardy poplars, which here need not droop for want of Italian skies,—the towering mill with its pointed angles—and the broad Ontario stretching to the right,—are objects that successively attract the eye, as it travels with human restlessness in search of novelty and variety.

Now I turn my head, and perceive that the picture is incomplete, for I have not yet introduced into it, a pleasing scene of the unfinished harvest,—the sheaves that you cannot look on without thanking God for your daily bread, and the rising stack on which they will shortly be piled. Alongside the gathered and gathering treasures of the present year, the husbandman is committing to the rich fallow the promise of the next; and my mind is at once regaled with the sight of a present plenty, and the prospect of its undiminished succession.

To whom do these woods and meadows, these streams and valleys, these smiling homesteads, these flocks and herds belong? Does their possessor reside in some baronial hall, the rural king of his surrounding tenantry? Or is the soil the property of a few, while the many rise up early and lie down late, and eat the bread of carefulness? The inequalities of condition and wealth,—the characteristics of an old and densely peopled country,—are not as yet known in UPPER CANADA. If with a feeling natural to an old countryman I regret the absence of the lordly castle and its surrounding domain, which has descended in an unbroken line from heir to heir since the Norman conquest, or even from an earlier date, I miss that sight so painful to an English eye,—the *Parish Workhouse*. If I look abroad and search in vain for a thousand

mansions and picturesque villas, the abodes of elegant comfort and lettered indolence, I am compensated by the air of plenty and independence that enwraps with a moral beauty even the unseemly proportions of an unpainted Canadian farm-house. If I cannot discover the English cottage peering "from its nook of leaves" and flowers, I repay myself for the disappointment by gazing on the rude log-hut, the *freehold* of its tenant, and by reflecting that within there smokes a board laden with viands, which a labourer in England would hope in vain to procure. If in fine I do not behold the extreme wealth of England, I am not saddened by its extreme poverty; if there are fewer gentlemen, there are fewer poor men; if there is less to excite the ambitious, there is more to reward the industrious.

The humblest and most uneducated labourer who emigrates to this Province from the mother country, is able, by the honest sweat of his brow, to raise himself to the rank of an independent farmer in the course of a very few years. From the renter of a cottage, and the possessor of a single pig, he is converted into the master of two hundred acres, of a comfortable dwelling, barns, cattle and horses. Instead of a smock-frock he wears the finest broadcloth. His English meal of potatoes, rarely diversified by a piece of meat, is here succeeded by the varied produce of the farm,—fish from the lake or stream,—venison and feathered game from the forest. The value and the beauty of his lot grow together; he comes to it a wilderness of wood, and, in less than a score of years, the stumps decay, the features of his land assimilate to those of English scenery, and he enjoys the solid sweets of Canadian independence blended with the loveliness of his native spot. If he be a man with natural powers at all above the common, the House of Assembly and Legislative Council are open to his ambition; and I could point in either of those bodies to more than one respectable member, who commenced the world with but axe, or saw in hand, and who had not to wait till life was nearly upon the lees, before he gathered riches in private, and in public obtained the confidence of his Sovereign and the people. When the reaper Death comes with sickle in hand to lay him low, he falls in season, a full and ripened shock; his last moments are embittered by no anxieties on account of the temporal welfare of his family; and it gladdens him even in the expiring hour to think that his wife will not be driven out like Naomi, a houseless wanderer in search of sustenance, or his daughters be compelled like

Ruth to gather and glean among the sheaves in the barley-field of a Boaz.

It is not to be denied that there are hundreds and thousands of farmers in Upper Canada, enjoying in no slight degree the happy condition of life which I have attempted to describe. Yet of this class, how many were engaged in the rebellion of last winter! How many now wander about in the United States, penniless, homeless outcasts! How many lament in prison, with unavailing anguish, the folly and the guilt of their unnatural conduct! In a few weeks another winter will be at hand; and as the present is a time of violent political excitement within our borders, and as there is ground for apprehending that foreign invaders will again infest our shores, and invite the Queen's subjects to join them in the work of plunder, slaughter and revolution,—it may not be unprofitable to say a few plain words which may arm the unwary with a defence against such a temptation.

The commands of God, the dictates of reason, and the peace and welfare of Society require that every man should yield a cheerful obedience to the lawful authority and established government of the country. Extreme cases of cruelty or wickedness on the part of rulers may justify a people's rising up against them, but to make the justification complete, the mis-government must be of an insufferable kind, notorious, and manifest to every eye; all constitutional and peaceful remedies must first have been frequently resorted to; and even after these two conditions have been found to exist there must be a third,—all human probability of success. None but a raving enthusiast, or a downright wicked man, can say that the British Government is an intolerable servitude, or that whatever defects may exist in the Constitution cannot be remedied by the gradual yet resistless influence of public opinion. The true test of a good government is to be found in these questions:—Do I enjoy my own property, and the reward of my own labours without molestation or hindrance? Am I allowed the free exercise of my own religion? Is there any legal objection to my obtaining the highest office of state, that a subject can fill? Are not the laws impartially administered as betwixt man and man? If every honest individual would put these questions to himself, when invited to combine in opposing the measures of government, we should have less faction and more virtue. Falsehood, detected by such a simple touchstone as this, would fall a blunted weapon from the hand of the democratic agitator: and the people no longer

deceived by his wiles, or inflamed by his passionate appeals, would enlarge the stock of national virtue, by quietly discharging the duties of their respective stations, away from the turmoil and dangerous excitement of politics.

There are three powerful considerations that ought to insure the loyalty of every Canadian Farmer. The general happiness of the country under its present form of government,—his obligations as a subject,—and his duty as a Christian.

The famous Lord Burleigh, who was the wisest prime-minister that Queen Elizabeth or any other Sovereign ever had, once paid a visit to Bernard Gilpin, a most excellent and active clergyman living in the North of England. He was so delighted with the zeal, the piety, the charity and the wisdom of his entertainer, that when he came to the top of a neighbouring hill, and looked down on the happy abode he had just left, he stood buried for a long while in profound thought, till at last with a sigh,—drawn forth no doubt by a reflection on the cares of state to which he was about to return,—he exclaimed, “there is the enjoyment of life indeed! who can blame that man for not accepting a bishopric! what doth he want to make him greater, or happier, or more useful to mankind!” Now let any man go to some eminence in the neighbourhood of his dwelling, whence he can command a view of the surrounding country, and if he be at all given to virtuous meditation, or at all grateful for the mercies so abundantly showered upon him, he will exclaim, as he gazes upon the familiar dwelling of each neighbour one after another, “This is the enjoyment of life indeed! how foolish must that man be, who owns yon beautiful farm, to trouble himself with thwarting the government that secures to him such a pressed-down and overflowing measure of peace and plenty! What doth he want to make him greater or happier, or more useful to mankind! He is great, because he is the monarch of a fruitful spot, and independent of the world; he is happy because occupation insures him health, and exempts him from temptation; he is useful to mankind, because out of the superfluity of what he raises, he contributes to the wants and comforts of his fellow-subjects, and augments the general resources of the country!” Truly the man who upon a glorious sunny day in September, can behold his barns running over with the produce of his farm, and his waggons bringing in load after load, the tribute of a bountiful harvest, and can turn his looks in no direction, without proofs of God’s unbounded good-

ness in providing for the wants of his creatures, and who, after this, can lend himself to the schemes of any needy and unprincipled wretch, denouncing the tyranny and wickedness of the government, must be either a very weak, or a very wicked and ungrateful person. He knows that, generally speaking, the people are happy and contented, and yet for some fancied grievance, which does not come near his dwelling, or affect him in the slightest degree,—he will stir up rebellion against his anointed Sovereign,—invite the foreigner to visit his native or adopted country with fire and sword,—and shed without compunction the blood of his loyal and unoffending neighbour.

Besides the inducements to Loyalty which are to be found in the general happiness enjoyed under our present form of government, we are bound by the obligations of the social compact to submit to the ruling power under which we are born, or voluntarily place ourselves. The social compact is an agreement entered into between the governor and the governed, and imposes duties on both which cannot, on any pretence, be avoided. The Sovereign in England, on his accession to the throne, swears to observe the laws of the realm : and in this Province the Lieutenant Governor, the Sovereign's representative, swears faithfully to discharge the office which has been entrusted to him. On the other hand, the subject takes an oath of allegiance ; which in some cases is done in express words before an appointed magistrate, *but which is equally binding on all persons of either sex whether taken by word of mouth or not.* This solemn obligation is in the following words :

“ I do sincerely promise and swear, that I will be faithful, and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Victoria, as lawful Sovereign of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and of this Province dependent on, and belonging to the said Kingdom ; and that I will defend Her to the utmost of my power against all Traitorous Conspiracies or attempts whatsoever which shall be made against Her Person, Crown and Dignity ; and that I will do my utmost endeavour to disclose and make known to Her Majesty, Her Heirs and Successors, all Treasons and Traitorous conspiracies and attempts which I shall know to be against Her or any of them : and all this I do swear without any equivocation, mental evasion, or secret reservation, and renouncing all pardons and dispensations from any Person or Power whatsoever to the contrary—So help me God.”

There are Acts of Parliament specially requiring that persons holding certain offices under government, should take this oath within a limited time, not that they were not bound by it before. *but* because that, in a solemn and emphatic manner, they may be

reminded of the allegiance, to which, if it be possible, they are bound by a stronger tie on becoming the King's Servants. In Upper Canada this allegiance is, generally, due to the Lieutenant Governor, who represents the person of the Queen; and therefore factiously to oppose his administration, and to endeavour to bring him into odium and contempt, is to violate the oath of allegiance, and consequently to be guilty of the sin of perjury.—Every native-born subject is bound by this oath, unto the day of his death; and so is every foreigner, who sojourns here for a time, or who becomes a settled inhabitant of the Province. It may perhaps be objected as unreasonable that a person should be bound by an oath which he has never taken; but to this I reply, that the oath does not create but only confirms allegiance,—and that there are certain duties, such as obedience to parents, and submission to government,—our political parent,—the sense of which is implanted in us by nature, and of the binding force of which we become conscious on the first dawn of reason.

My concluding reason in favour of loyalty is the plainest of all; it is most legibly written in the following New-Testament texts, which ought to be painted in large characters on the walls of every common School House within the Province, and still more durably imprinted on the heart of every one who strives to deserve the glorious title of a Christian:—

OUR SAVIOUR.

“Render unto Cæsar (the Roman Emperor) the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things which are God's.”

ST. PETER.

“Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; whether it be unto the King as supreme; or unto Governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well.”

ST. PAUL.

“Be subject to principalities and powers, and obey magistrates.

“Ye must needs be subject not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.”

“Render therefore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour.”

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.”

“Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.”

To these words of Scripture, so clear in themselves, no human explanation can impart any additional force; and with them therefore I conclude. If these plain and unpretending Reasons should be anywise instrumental in preventing a single person from committing the heinous sin of Disloyalty, or of bringing him back, if gone astray, into the pleasant and peaceful path of allegiance and subordination, it would fill the writer with a purer and more solid joy, than the realization of his most ambitious day-dream.

J.K.

Cobourg, 15th September, 1838.