

'T WAS YESTERDAY.

"'T was yesterday" familiar sound,
Heard of as idle breath;
Yet prophet-like to all around,
It spoke of woe and death!
A mourner by the past it stands,
In mystic mantle of decay,
Shrouds in the night of years its hands,
And grasps all life away!

High from the boundless vault of time
The stars of empire veer;
"'T was yesterday" they beamed sublime,
The nightier in their sphere.
"'T was yesterday" revealed to Fate
The rival crowns of centuries flown.
Show'd where a phantom sat in state
Upon the Caesar's throne.

Sceptre and robe were cast aside!
The ghastly bones stood bare;
The rust fed on the gauds of pride,
The worm held council there.
Nor answer would the phantom give,
But to our constant prayer replied—
"Thus 'twill be said of all that live,
That 'yesterday' they died."

Ah! where are Greece's conquests now,
The triumphs of her lute!
Dust rests on the Homeric brow,
Her genius now is mute.
Where are the glorious hearts that fought
For freedom in the "pass of Gore?"
Gone—where the mightiest names are sought—
With "yesterday" of yore!

We hope—but what we hope, the shroud
Wraps from our weeping sight;
We aim at stars and clasp the cloud,
Seek day, and find but night.
Ah! who with life's dread cares would cope,
If 'twere not for the Faith sublime,
Which sees the Arrarat of Hope
Above the floods of Time!

What, then, is "Yesterday?" A key
To wisdom most divine!
It is the hall of Memory,
Where Fame's bright trophies shine;
The spiritual home of things,
Where intellect immortal beams,
Which lends to Thought its holiest wings,
Inspires the noblest themes!

A drop that mirrors forth a world,
Then mingles with the earth;
A star from Time's vast empire har'd,
Slow falling from its birth;
A presence with the sacred past
To warn our spirits of delay,
Which saith, "proud man, to-day thou hast—
Use well thy little day!"

From the Catholic Advocate.

THE TRUE CHURCH.

[CONTINUED.]

It is the boast of Protestants to admit nothing but what the scriptures teach, and hence to convict them on the ground they select themselves, and, as it were, to foil them with the very weapons in which they confide for victory. Catholic writers are accustomed to say to them "you admit the scriptures to be the word of God; we know that you cannot prove the divine inspiration of these books, because you obtained them from our Church, and the testimony of our Church is necessary to establish the fact that they are divinely inspired. But inasmuch as you admit this fact, we will confute you from the very testimony of these sacred writings, and

prove that the church of Christ, which you oppose, received from her Divine Founder a promise of infallibility while accomplishing the great work which she was appointed and commissioned to perform." "Take care," cry out our opponents in alarm, "you are about to be involved in your famous vicious circle; you will prove the Church to be infallible by the scriptures, and prove the divine inspiration of the scriptures by the testimony of an infallible Church."

This specious sophism may be dissolved by the simple statement, that the existence of the Church; its organization, its constitution, and its authoritative and successful operation in fulfilling the work for which it was commissioned by its Divine Founder can be proved to him who denies the scriptures to be *divinely inspired*; but who will necessarily admit the historical antiquity and authenticity of these writings. Like other facts, it can be proved by historical evidence, that an extraordinary personage, Jesus Christ, preached Christianity, and founded the Church in which Christianity has been taught and professed; and that the writings, preserved by this Church, were written at the time and by the persons specified, and are truly authentic documents. The fact of their authenticity is distinct from that of their Divine inspiration. It is on these grounds that we meet and convince the infidel. If then this Church, which has existed perpetually since the time of its foundation by Christ, teach that the scriptures are inspired by God, and are testimonials of her attributes, prerogatives, and doctrines, and contain the history of the works performed by her Divine Founder, as well as of the first events of her own existence; where is the vicious circle? The rational and liberal of mankind, who look to the evidence of history, and are not blinded by prejudice, do not hesitate to acknowledge, that upon the character and testimony of the Catholic Church, as upon the foundation stone, reposes the character of the bible and the true titles of the christian system. From the Catholic church, they admit that the scriptures have been received, and if she be proved a corrupt and incredible witness, there can be no religious certitude. Hence it was with portentous meaning that the Apostle called the Church "the pillar and ground of truth." If the pillar be shattered, or the ground become a treacherous marsh, what will be the fate of truth? And even if there be, between the Church and the Scriptures, a mutual testimony, and the one uphold the other, does this constitute a vicious circle? When the Redeemer referred to the scriptures, saying: "These are they which give testimony of me," in order that he might confound the unbelieving Jews, who admitted the scriptures while they rejected Christ, was he too guilty of arguing in a vicious circle? But enough concerning this subterfuge of error, which is held up as a blind to conceal the confusion of defeat.

We might retort upon Protestants the charge of using a vicious circle. They are asked to prove the divine inspiration of the scripture, they tell us that the scrip-

tures prove themselves to be divinely inspired. When this is denied, they endeavour to make out that the Holy Spirit enlightens men to perceive that the scriptures are of divine inspiration. They prove the illumination of the Holy Spirit by the scriptures, and prove the scriptures by the illumination of the Holy Spirit. They know nothing of the Holy Spirit except from the scriptures, and by the Holy Spirit they know the scriptures. That is, they take for granted what they are required to prove. Upon this point Protestantism must be always at fault.

Availing ourselves therefore, of the admission of Protestants that the scriptures are divinely inspired, we have the right to prove to them by the scriptures, the infallible authority of the Church, and when the demonstration is complete and impregnable, they have no right to evade its force, by asking us, how we show that the scriptures are divinely inspired. The force of our demonstration, grows up out of the mutual admission of the first position, that the scriptures are to be consulted as God's word.

In the scriptures, and particularly in the New Testament, we find proofs direct, clear and conclusive to establish the fact, that the Church of Christ was constituted the unerring, infallible guide of mankind in the concerns of salvation. Jesus Christ selected from his followers twelve men whom he invested with high powers and commissioned as his Apostles. Of these twelve, he appointed one, St. Peter, as the chief of the rest. When the names of these twelve are mentioned, St. Matthew emphatically says of the one appointed as the chief, "The first, Simon, who is called Peter."* And we find, from St. John, that Simon was not called Peter, until he was chosen by Christ as an Apostle, and he then received this name, because he was to be "the first," and because upon him, as upon a rock, Christ declared that he would build his Church. "And Jesus looking upon him, said: thou art Simon, the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is interpreted Peter."† "Thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my Church."‡

It was then with great significance, that St. Matthew, in naming the twelve divinely commissioned ministers of Christ who were chosen to propagate the faith and plant the Church, states that Simon, who is called Peter, is *the first*, for his name was changed from Simon to Peter, by Christ, to indicate his supremacy, and to show the important place which he should occupy in the Church.

Consistently with this view, we find the name of Peter, at all times brought forward prominently by the sacred writers, when the other Apostles are merely referred to, in general terms, as being with Peter. Thus we read "Peter and the eleven," "Peter and those with him," &c. Also, when the Saviour paid tribute, he did so for himself and Peter.

No person, who has examined the scripture with attention, can deny that the

Apostle Peter was chosen by Christ, in a particular manner, to aid him in the great work of man's salvation. A French writer* has taken the pains to collate the passages wherein the name Peter is introduced into the New Testament, and has found this Apostle named in thirty-two passages. He says "that of these 32 passages, there are 27, where Peter is named first, 3, where he is named last, but where evidently the last rank is the most worthy, and only two in which he is not brought forward first. Of these two, one is the passage where St. John says, that "Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew, and Peter," but at this time neither Andrew nor Peter had been chosen Apostles.

The other place, in which Peter is not first named, is this of St. Paul: "And when they had known the grace that was given to me, James, and Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars,"† &c.

Here we find the name of Cephas second, but, first, there is a doubt among the learned, whether or not the Cephas here mentioned, was the Apostle Cephas or Peter. Among others of the ancients, Clement of Alexandria, thought it was not St. Peter. 2ndly. It is shown from some ancient manuscripts, that the reading has been altered, and in place of "James, Cephas, and John," we should read "Cephas, James, and John."‡ Marnachius proves from ancient copies, that in this text Peter was first named. Sabbathier maintains that he was first named in the ancient Italian version. And Grotius, though a Protestant, testifies that this is the reading in the version of Alexandria.§

Cardinal Perronius, in his response to the King of England, also proves its fact from the Greek edition of Complutum. He and Liberman also show that St. John Chrysostom, St. Augustine, and St. Jerome in their comments on the epistle to Galatians, used the copies referred to by Marnachius, and gave the reading "Cephas, James, and John."¶ Theodoret does the same in his 15th chapter on the epistle to the Romans.

The scriptures, therefore, make Peter invariably to give to Peter the most prominent and important place.

Moreover it is undeniable that our Saviour gave up to Peter the care of his whole spiritual flock. After exacting from the Apostle by name and in express terms, a profession of love, he says to him, "Feed my sheep, feed my lambs."**

But if Peter was the first, and was particularly selected to be chief ruler, or shepherd, the rest were commissioned to co-operate with him in the high and holy duties of the pastoral charge. And though Christ professedly "built his Church on Peter," the rest were placed with him in the foundation of the mighty temple of the Lord, of which "Jesus Christ was himself the chief corner stone."††

*The Bishop of Bayonne in his demonstration of Catholic truth.

†John, c. 1, v. 44

‡Gallatians, c. 2, v. 9

§See Liberman, Theol. 2 tom. p. 104

*Acts, c. xx, v. 28

¶John, c. xxi, v. 15

†Ephesians, c. 2, v. 20

*Matth. c. x, v. 2

†John, c. 1, v. 42

‡Matth. c. xvi, 22