

hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.' The answer was an inspiration—he had 'heard and learned of the Father'—and therefore it was absolute, it was enough, it was a confession to which nothing could be added, and from which nothing could be taken away. It was sufficient for its purpose, it would bear the weight of building upon, and therefore our Lord now could add these confirmatory words, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' And then, as a special recognition of Peter's part in this great confession, our Lord adds the words, 'I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven'—prerogatives and privileges, as we have seen, extended only a little later to the entire apostolic body, and in which the Church of Rome has just the same interest, but no more, with any other portion of the Catholic Church in Christendom. As Bengel pertinently puts it—*Quid hæc ad Romam?*

There can be no Church apart from building upon this Apostolic foundation. To quote again Peter's own words, 'There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby they can be saved'; and to quote the Apostle Paul, 'Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.'

But let us see the nature of this Confession as affording a foundation for the building up of the Church of God. The words involve the acknowledgment at once of the Office and the Person of Christ. Our Lord builds this Church of His upon His Messiahship and His Godhead. (1) 'Thou art the Christ.' These words of Peter involved the truth that Jesus the Son of Man, now standing before him, was the Seed of the woman—that particular Being whom God had promised from the beginning, and whom He had led His people to expect. It involved the conclusion that all types and prophecies had met and were fulfilled in Him; that He, and no other, was the promised Redeemer that should come into the world; that therefore there was room for no other. And (2) this Confession involved the truth of the Godhead of the Saviour, that He was the Son of the Living God. Higher than this the faith of Peter could not soar. Less than this would have afforded no stable foundation to build upon. It was not the confession of some abstract doctrine, such as the unity of the Godhead, or Justification by Faith, or the Fatherhood of God, or the confession of some ideal personage, or of some spiritual abstraction, but the confession of a Person at once human and Divine. 'Thou art the Christ,' the historical Redeemer, the Saviour that should come into the world. 'Thou art the Son of the Living God,' the Word that was from the beginning with God, and that 'was God,' 'very God of very God, begotten, not made, who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man.' This is the Christ of Peter's confession, and it is on this all-sufficient foundation that our Lord declares He will build His Church.

Let us see, then, in our Lord's words to Peter, His acknowledgment and ratification of the Apostle's great confession. It was as much as if He had said, 'Thou hast confessed me, and now I will confess thee; thou hast owned me, and now I will own thee. Thou art Peter, thou art a living stone, hewn out and built upon me, the living Rock. Thou art a true Petros of Me who am the Divine Petra, and whosoever would be a lively stone, a true Peter, must copy thee in this thy true confession of Me, the living Rock; for upon this Rock, that is upon Myself, believed and confessed to be both God and man, I will build my Church' (See *Woodsworth in loco*). The above is practically the final utterance of St. Augustine on the subject.

Of the other two passages relied upon by the Roman Church in support of its extraordinary claim, we have now time only to observe that the passage in St. Luke (xxii. 32) is for the first time quoted as supporting the Petrine claim in a letter of Pope Pelagius II. A. D. 586, and the meaning thus put upon it was repudiated by the Bishops, whom the Pope addressed. As regards St. John xxi. 16-17, the common Patristic explanation is, that it denotes only the restoration of St. Peter to the place from which he had fallen by his three fold denial, and that no new grant of any kind was then conferred.

CORRESPONDENCE.

(The name of Correspondent must in all cases be enclosed with letter, but will not be published unless desired. The Editor will not hold himself responsible, however, for any opinions expressed by Correspondents.)

THE ESSENTIALS OF CHRISTIANITY IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

To the Editor of the Church Guardian:

SIR,—I was well pleased to read your selected article from the *Living Church* under the above heading in your last week's issue, as it came in very apropos in support of an exactly identical suggestion that I made at the last meeting of the Protestant Committee of the Council of Public Instruction, which is, you are aware, composed of all the leading Protestant denominations. I regret, however, to have to add that my suggestion was not received with the cry 'that's it exactly,' as the writer in the *Living Church* seems to anticipate that such a suggestion would be received. On the contrary I could not even get a seconder. What possible objection there can be on the part of any body of professing Christians to the Apostle's Creed, I cannot conceive. They all profess that a belief or creed is necessary to salvation, and most of them contend that the different denominations are but different battalions of the same army fighting under one banner, although, if this be so, it may be remarked that they are very badly disciplined, for as often as not they are found fighting one another instead of the common enemy. But admitting this to be the case why should there be any hesitation in designating the Banner under which they profess to fight? It will not do to say that they all believe in the Bible for belief was a requisite for salvation long before the Bible had any existence. Moreover, the Bible is not a creed, but rather the history of the creed. Neither will it do to say that a Christian is one who believes in Jesus Christ, for many of the Atheistical writers profess to believe that some such person once existed, and even the Unitarians, Mahomedans and Mormons believe in Him in a certain sense. A creed must be more specific than that. The question is can you give a better description of the essential requisite for the belief of a Christian than that contained in the Apostle's Creed? Is it unscriptural in any particular, if so, in what particular? If erroneous in any particular, surely in this enlightened XIXth Century, the leading Christians of the different denominations should be able to amend any such error, so as to be accepted by all. If, however, this should be found to be impossible then we would have to change the formula from 'Believe and be saved' into 'Believe in any denomination and be saved,' which is practically the Roman Catholic doctrine. But then what becomes of the invisible Catholic Church that so many profess to believe in? However in suggesting the Apostle's Creed, I did so because I thought that no Christian could possibly object to anything therein, but if I am mistaken on that point I am perfectly willing to substitute any other creed that may be universally agreed upon provided that it contains all the essentials of Christianity so distinguished from these matters on which a difference of opinion may be

allowed to exist, and which are the foundation of our different denominations. What I desire is that in this Christian country the Christian religion, or as it is styled in our school laws the Protestant Faith, should be officially recognized in our Public schools, indeed, this was held to be necessary, by the judgment of our Courts in order that a school should be held to be a legally constituted public school. I am thankful, however, to be able to admit that the Protestant Committee has made considerable progress in this direction during the last five years. We have now the Bible on our list of authorized text books, and under the title of Scripture History, a good deal of religion may be, though not necessarily, incidentally taught; and under this head also the scholars in the elementary schools are required to commit to memory the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments. Again by our regulations, as lately amended (159, 160), the school during the first half hour has to be opened by reading a portion of Scripture, followed by the Lord's Prayer and instruction given in morals and Scripture History to which is added the injunction, 'but no denominational teaching shall be given in such school.' I presume this means, although it does not say so, that no catechism, or articles of faith drawn up by any denomination shall be taught; otherwise it would be difficult to understand what religious teaching could remain after eliminating the teaching of the 150 sects, each professing to be founded on the Bible. In one sense the foregoing resolution would be right enough as it would never do to leave such teaching to the discretion of the teacher. But what I am now contending for is not denominational teaching, but the official recognition of that essential Christian teaching, which is, or ought to be, common to all Christian denominations, and which I would provide for by the Apostle's Creed, or some substitute therefor. Again, believing as I do, that all morals must necessarily be founded on religion, I strongly object to them being dissociated therefrom, as they are by our regulations. What better code of morals can be found than the Ten Commandments, supplemented with the Saviour's summary thereof. It is true that the scholars have to learn these by heart under our present regulations, but learning these as a lesson in Scripture history is a very different thing from receiving them as a part of every Christian's Creed.

No one who reads through our regulations but must be impressed with the feeling that the question of religion is one that had to be handled very delicately, with the necessary result that all practical good therefrom is almost eliminated, and you may be sure that the scholars are not slow to appreciate this. There are those who favor the exclusion of all religion from our public schools, on the ground that the Church and Sunday school are amply sufficient for this purpose. If the children attended these in the same numbers as they do the schools, there might be some force in this pretention; although it must be remembered that the Church and Sunday school of the present day are the very institutions that foster denominationalism. In this age, when there appears to be such a general desire for union, what better commencement could be made than bringing up the rising generation in such a way that they could not fail to learn that after all we were all one in essentials.

Moreover there is another objection to confining religious instruction to the Sunday. We have now a great deal too much of mere Sunday religion. What the world has to learn is that religion belongs just as much to every day of the week as it does to the Sunday; and no better way could be desired to attain this object than the teaching of practical religion on every week day in the schools.

I am aware that I am at present in a hopeless minority in respect to my views on education. Although I think I can recognize signs