

belong to a Church true by descent, though corrupted by Roman or popish superstitions. A bad man is still a man, and you may refuse to associate with him before he reforms,—but still you will never permit him so to style himself a man as to imply that you yourself are an inhuman being.

Pure in its doctrine, apostolic in its discipline, and edifying in its ceremonies, this Catholic and Apostolic Church diffused its blessings, and preserved its purity for many hundred years. In the middle ages it existed, still working good and administering grace according to the exigence of the times; emitting a ray of light when all around was dark. But the surrounding ignorance and gloom prevented the detection of various corruptions and disfigurements which by degrees crept into it, until, in the sixteenth century the sun of learning having dawned upon Europe, its defects in this country, began to betray themselves too obviously to be any longer tolerated. Of these defects, so far as the English branch of the Church was concerned, the Bishops of the Church of England, as I have before stated, by degrees became aware, and while they venerated the fabric which Apostles had reared, and of which Christ himself was the chief corner-stone, they carefully removed the incrustations which disfigured it, and sweeping away the rubbish by which it had been overlaid, displayed the real rock upon which it had been built. Thus was the Catholic and Apostolic Church, of which we profess our belief in the creeds, rescued in England from popish domination; and (reformed or brought back to its primitive purity, dignified in its simplicity) it retained the ministry in regular succession from the Apostles, and a ritual and liturgy which can themselves in great part be traced back to the Apostolic age.

Although causelessly to separate from such a Church must be a schismatical act, yet we do not uncharitably pronounce sentence of condemnation upon those who have, by circumstances over which they have no control, been brought up without its pale. In error, of course, we believe them to be, but certainly not in such error from that circumstance as to endanger their salvation? and if we suppose them, as we must do, to lack our privileges, this ought only to make us respect them the more, if at any time we find them (with fewer advantages) surpassing us in godliness. We do not confine God's grace and favour to the Church, for we remember that though Job was not a member of the then Church of God, still he was a man eminently pious and highly favoured; we remember, that though Balaam was not in the Church, yet he was an inspired prophet; we remember that Jethro also, the father-in-law of Moses, though not a proselyte to Israel (and the Church at that time was confined to the Israelites) was yet a servant of God; we remember, that the Rechabites were actually commended by God at the very time He passed censure upon those who were then his Church—the people Israel.

Remembering all this, we say not other denominations of Christians are cast out from the mercy of God through the Saviour because they belong not to the Church; all that we say is, that it does not follow that these concessions must render void the divine appointment of the Church, the divine command to all nations, and of course to all mankind, to be united with it, or the Scriptural evidence for episcopacy as the divinely sanctioned organisation of its ministry,—and we contend, that a treasure having been committed to us, we are not to undervalue it lest we should offend others, but are to preserve it in its purity, and in all its integrity to transmit it to our children and our children's children.

And let me ask, is not the privilege of belonging to a Church thus orthodox in its doctrine, and true by descent, thus both Catholic and Protestant, a privilege for which we should be deeply grateful to the providence and grace of God? And will not the account we shall have to render, be awful, if we neglect, despise, or forego the advantages thus placed within our reach?

Let us ever remember, that the primary object for which the Church was instituted by Christ, its author and finisher, and for which the apostolic succession of its ministers was established,—that the primary object for which, through ages of persecution, and ages of prosperity, and ages of darkness, and ages of corruption, and ages of reformation; and

ages of Latitudinarianism, and now in an age of rebuke and blasphemy, now when we have fallen on evil days and evil tongues, the primary object for which the Church has still been preserved by a providential care, marvellous sometimes if not miraculous in our eyes, was and is to convey supernaturally the saving merits of the atoning blood of the Lamb of God, and the sanctifying graces of his Holy Spirit to the believer's soul. In the Church it is, that the appointed means are to be found by which that mysterious union with Christ is promoted in which our spiritual life exists,—in her it is, that the third Person of the blessed Trinity abideth for ever, gradually to change the hearts of sinful man, and to make that flesh which He thus abideth,—gradually to prepare us for heaven, while our ascended Saviour is preparing heaven for us. And oh! my brethren! what a privilege it is to have this well of living waters in which you may wash and be clean! You know that you are sinful creatures, very far gone from righteousness; you know that your condition is such, that you cannot turn and prepare yourselves by your own natural strength and good works to faith and calling upon God; you know that by nature you cannot love the Lord your God with all your heart, and soul, and strength; you cannot discharge the various duties of your various situations in life; you know that whatever your condition now may be, the hour must come of affliction and sorrow, of sickness and sadness, the inevitable hour of death; and the Church is instituted to convey to you pardon upon your repentance; and grace in time of need; it is instituted to instruct you in your ignorance, to comfort you in your sorrows, to elevate you in your devotions, to bring you into communion with your Saviour, your sanctifier, your God; to prepare you for the hour of death, yea, for the day of judgment; and this she chiefly does through the sacraments of the Gospel, and other divinely appointed ordinances of religion, if of them you will but avail yourselves.

But this is not all; while the Church thus ministers grace to individuals, it is part of her business to preserve, hand down, and proclaim the truth, the whole truth, as it is in Jesus. And our duty, therefore, it is—especially, if we happen, by God's providence, to be called to situations of influence, rank, or authority—by all the means in our power to increase her efficiency in this respect, to place her on the watch-tower, that her voice may be heard through the length and the breadth of the land; our duty it is, to take care that her faith be preserved intact and pure; our duty it is, to vindicate her from the glosses of ignorance, and the misrepresentations of prejudice and malice; our duty it is, clearly to define, and zealously to maintain, those peculiar doctrines and that peculiar discipline, which have always marked, and do still continue to mark, the distinction between the Church of Christ, administered under the superintendence of chief Pastors or Bishops who have regularly succeeded to the Apostles, from those sects of Christianity which exist under self-appointed teachers.

Against the Church the world seems at this time to be set in array. To be a true and faithful member of the Church requires no little moral courage. Basely to pretend to belong to her, while designing mischief against her in the heart, this is easy enough; but manfully to contend for her because she is the Church, a true Church, a pure Church, a holy Church, this is difficult to those who court the praise of men, or fear the censure of the world. May the great God of heaven, may Christ the great Bishop and Shepherd of souls, who is over all things in the Church, put it, my brethren, into your hearts and minds to say and feel (as I do), 'As for me, and my house, we will live in the Church, we will die in the Church, and if need shall be, like our martyred forefathers, we will die for the Church.'

*Impure Thoughts.*—Give no entertainment to the beginnings, the first motions; and secret whisperings of the spirit of impurity. For if you totally suppress it, dies. If you permit the furnace to breathe its smoke and flame out of any vent, it will rage to the consumption of the whole. The cockatrice soonest crushed in the shell, betwixt it grows, turns to a serpent, and a dragon, and a devil.—*Epis. Ric.*

## DEATH BED OF HANNAH MORE.

From her Memoirs by Roberts.

As the life of Hannah More approached its termination, her thoughts often travelled to far off scenes, and seemed sometimes to be lost in view of eternity. The forces that kept the citadel of her mind to be gradually disappearing, except those thoughts and holy certainties which still sustained her spirits, and suffered neither sadness nor distress to intrude upon her last hours. Amid all her wanderings she was coherent and consistent on whatever had immediate relation to the place to which she was going.

Upon one occasion, says the faithful friend who was always about her dying bed, 'in the early of her illness, I read to her the office for the visitation of the sick, and the burial service in the Book of Common Prayer. She was still and engaged while I was reading, with her hands clasped in devotion. Some of the verses in the Psalms, also, had begun them, she would finish, exclaiming, 'How beautiful, how sweet—delighting in taste and touching the heart.' The fifty-first Psalm was continually on her lips: 'Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.'

When the prison-doors were open, and her was on the point of escaping to its true home, there a thick veil was spread over the world she was leaving, no look of regret, but one of sweet sympathy with its trials and sorrows was often cast behind her, nor could the awful change which awaited her lodge from her heart that love of souls which had supported her through so many years of bodily suffering in her various works of Christian beneficence. Prayer was the last thing that lived in her,—her breath was prayer; and in the vital energy of her pining petitions, her affectionate friends and the Church administered to her wants and soothed her conflict were earnestly commended to the great Advocate of repentant sinners. The lady, who had taken such kind care of her, and was kneeling at her bedside, was thus addressed by her shortly before her departure: 'I love you, my dear child with all my heart and strength, and my whole mind. It will be pleasant to you twenty years hence to remember that I said this on my death-bed. I near me and with me as much as you can, will I may last out a few days—how long does the doctor think I shall live?' She always, says this lady, 'bestowing blessings on those around her, and wishing they should meet in a happier world—in an eternal and glorious world,' and when she was told some presents made in her name to those who were employed in her service, with a smile almost amounting to a laugh, she exclaimed, 'I am glad and glad of it.' Adverting to her own frame of suffering, she said, 'I hope my temper is not peevish or troublesome; and on being answered that it was temper of an angel, she said, 'Oh, no, not of an angel! but of a very highly favoured servant of Lord my Saviour.'

The Psalms and other passages of Scripture were perpetually breaking from her lips; and it seemed extraordinary to those who were about her, that memory, which had let almost every terrestrial impression slip away, had kept the registry of her devout recollections unobliterated and unimpaired. The loins of her mind were girdled up, and her heart braced as it were to meet without amazement a strange and awful encounter which was approaching. Like one preparing for a great expedition, all impediments were thrown aside, all but the necessary elements to set up her tabernacle in the place of destination and final rest.

She was sometimes, says Miss Frowd, painfully conscious of the disturbed and confused state of her mind. One day she put her hand to her head, and exclaimed, 'I am all confusion, I seem quite to have lost my understanding.' My mind is shaking; her hand before her eyes; 'I used to be certain my friends and be agreeable to them, shed tears, they are tears of gratitude, and from a sense of my unworthiness.'

To be concluded in next No.