

the Church. We shall endeavour 1st to demonstrate the correctness of the proposition ; and 2nd, to indicate the reflections that naturally flow from it, on the occasion of laying the foundation of a house of God.

1. When Peter made the solemn confession, " Lord, to whom shall we go ? Thou hast the words of eternal life ; and we believe and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God ;" the Lord answered, " Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonas, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee, thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Thus, our Lord himself will be the foundation of His Church. Faith in Him as the Son of God, shall bear all, pervade all, bind together all. Peter and his fellow-apostles rest immediately upon this foundation-stone, and on them again repose we all, who through their word have become believers. And thus is light thrown upon the Apostle's language, " Ye are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord." The apostles abode strictly by this ordinance of the Lord. Jesus Christ, his cross and resurrection, formed the sum and substance of their whole preaching : it was upon this that they founded all their doctrines and all their admonitions : it was upon this foundation that they built the Christian Church : it was not man's wisdom, but the grace of God in Christ Jesus, that they proclaimed wherever they appeared as the ambassadors of Christ. And thus it was that their preaching had such a captivating effect, such astonishing results ; it was not human but Divine truth that they had been commissioned to proclaim ! In this consciousness of the truth and divinity of their preaching, they shrunk before no sufferings or afflictions. Not because they preached the doctrine of a Supreme Being,—not because they preached the duty of universal love,—not because of these things did they meet with persecution from the enemies of the Saviour ; but it was the doctrine of Christ crucified which was a stumbling-block to Jews and foolishness to heathens. But for the sake of Jesus Christ they joyfully submitted to every sort of ignominy, testifying only with so much the more steadfastness and zeal that the stone which the builders had rejected was become the head stone of the corner, and that other foundation could no man lay than that which was laid, which was Jesus Christ. That He, the Son of God, came into the world to save sinners, is the cardinal and fundamental truth of the Christian Church, for it is only through it that man can be transformed into a new creature, and his earthly essence be transfigured into a heavenly one. Without Christ, communion with God is unattainable by sinful man ; for no man cometh to the Father but through Him. Without Christ the best sermon remains but human wisdom, void of Divine power to enlighten, to