

EXCLUSIVE SALVATION.

A lady (says the *Catholic Herald*) recently passed from the Episcopalians to some other sect, and wrote to her former pastor for a certificate of her good standing in the communion from which she withdrew. Her request was granted, but a letter on Church unity accompanied the certificate, in which the necessity of belonging to the Church is urged in no equivocal terms:

"You say that 'a certificate is necessary to enable you to join a Church;' and, a little further on, you express the hope that I 'will not consider you as having strayed from the fold, by connecting yourself with the—— Church. Such expressions, my dear Madam, (I say it with all the tenderness for your feelings and with perfect respect,) are a painful index of the infiniteness of knowledge in our times. I am a witness that your Christian intelligence would not suffer from a comparison with that of most of my acquaintance, and, yet, the above quotation discloses more errors in doctrine than there are members in the sentence. In the first place, the Scriptures know nothing of a Church, but *the Church*. It is '*the Church of the living God*,' which is declared to be 'the pillar and ground of the truth;' (1 Tim. iii. 15.) so, likewise it is '*the Church of God*, which he hath purchased with his own blood,' Acts xx. 28,) which the elders of Ephesus were commanded to feed. Then, again, if you ever belonged to the Church, you were joined on to it by means of the holy sacrament of baptism, and can never join it again; since your baptism, if it be Christian baptism, can never be repeated: 'One Lord one Faith one baptism,' (Eph. iv. 5.) is the divine constitution of the Church; and therefore, although 'a certificate' may be necessary to enable you to join a Church, it is wholly unnecessary to enable you to join, or continue your function with, *the Church*. And, by the way, this requiring a certificate, is an example of what is every day seen to be true, that those who preach up the largest liberty, are themselves, not unfrequently, the aiders and abettors of tyranny. But, once more you speak of 'connecting yourself with a Church.' Now, in apostolic times, we hear never a word of any similar transaction. Then, 'the Lord added to the Church, daily, such as should be saved;' (Acts ii. 38,) and believers 'were then added to the Lord, multitudes, both of men and women. (Acts v. 14.) And this adding by the Lord, and being added was, in every case, effected once for all through the sacrament of baptism. (Acts ii. 41: viii. 18; iv. 18; xvi. 33,) 'whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive baptism, rightly, are grafted into the Church.'

Far be it from me, to dissuade you from seeking to be connected with the Church. Let me rather encourage you herein; But that you may do so, understandingly, I desire to call your attention to the following proposition; the truth of which, I shall endeavor, as briefly as possible, to establish; viz., *Church-membership is the ONLY REVEALED way of salvation.*

In proof of this, I might call your attention to the first opening of the Christian dispensation, under the immediate superintendence of the apostles; where three thousand souls, 'as it were with one mouth,' confessed the faith of Christ; all of whom 'were added unto them;' (Acts ii. 47.) that is, to the apostles. Or I might call your attention to the last verse of the same chapter, wherein it is written, that 'the Lord added to the Church, daily, such as should be saved;' or yet again, to the 42d verse, whence, we learn that they who gladly received the word, in the first instance, were subsequently no less diligent to continue steadfast in the apostles' fellowship, as a means of salvation, than in the apostles' doctrine. Or I might remind you of that which St. Paul, many years later, taught the Ephesians; namely, that 'Christ is the Saviour of the body, which is *this Church*,—the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.'

But why seek to accumulate proof, upon a point which is evident upon even the surface of Scripture, that 'it may be affirmed without hesitation, that there is not a single instance in the New Testament, of a believer who was not *externally* united with the rest, in the profession of Christianity?' Even Calvin, whom you will acknowledge to be good authority, says, 'Beyond the bosom of the Church, no remission of sins is to be hoped for, nor any salvation.' And this was 'no private interpretation' of his; but a holding fast of the traditions which he had received.' For of the early fathers, who 'were of one mind' on this subject, Cyprian, the martyr, may be cited. 'That man,' says he, 'cannot have God for his Father, who is not the Church for his mother. If any one could escape the deluge, out of Noah's ark, he who is out of the Church may also escape.' And to add one other testimony, Augustine says, 'No one cometh to salvation and eternal life, except he who hath Christ for his head, *except* he who is in his body, *the Church*.'

Now, let me remind you, that up to this point, I have simply endeavored to establish the fact, that Church membership is the only revealed way of salvation. Whether there be one or many Churches; whether, if but one, it be visible or invisible; or whether, if but one and visible, the various sects calling themselves Christians, are severally branches of the one visible Church,—these, you will perceive, are distinct questions; which, be they answered affirmatively or negatively, affect not, in the slightest degree, the truth of my first proposition. Indeed, thus far, I am sustained by the testimony of Quakers even, who affirm, that 'out of the Church there is no salvation,' although they maintain, absurdly enough, that 'there may be members of this Catholic Church among heathens, Turks, and Jews.'

FREE CHURCH.

To the Editor of the Boston Pilot.—SIR:—Your correspondent '*Jerome*,' does not seem quite satisfied with your explanation of a free church, although you gave the meaning of the words. I cannot, therefore, but charitably pre-suppose, that he wishes prosperity to such an establishment, and that his anxiety for a more explicit definition of the terms '*free church*' arises, simply from a pious apprehension of our want of energy or unanimity to forward so useful and so laudable an object. Will you then, have the kindness to inform

him, that the word, Church, in the English language is derived from the Saxon word *Cire* or *Cyric*, and is properly defined the visible society of the faithful, united by the profession of the same faith, and by the participation of the same sacraments, instituted by Jesus Christ, its visible head. Under the authority of lawful pastors, and principally of the visible head of the Church, the successor of St. Peter, and vicar of our Lord Jesus Christ. By the figure *Synecdoche*, the word Church signifies a house consecrated to the worship of God, in some of which houses or churches there are pews held by private individuals, to which those who are not proprietors or have not permission cannot, nor ought not, to have free access indiscriminately, as being the lawful property of others, hence, the terms free Church, where there are no pews, nor private seats, where every one gives towards his support, what his conscience freely dictates, is contrasted with the above establishment, and I think very properly. The most illiterate understand the general meaning of the term *free Church*. Such is the proper use of language.

While, therefore, I freely avow my predilection for a free Church, which is evidently much needed in this city, I am very far from censuring the piety or the integrity of some of the most learned and eminent dignitaries of the Church, who, from the exigencies of the times or from other wise and prudent motives, have tolerated the long established custom of having pews in churches; and I will not hesitate to say, that it not only marks a lack of piety and Christian charity, but is a manifestation of consummate arrogance to censure the individuals concerning whose motives or mode of action we have not the means of forming a correct opinion, and even if we had, would not feel competent to do so honestly or charitably. If charity and good feeling be the motives which actuated your correspondent in requiring a second explanation, I hope from the above he will come at our meaning of the terms, free Church; if not, I beg to postpone any further remarks of mine, for that which may tend more immediately to the public good than a mere name.

J. B. McMAHON, P. M.

Boston, Dec. 27, 1842.

ON FORTITUDE.

The life of St. Gregory Nazianzen supplies us with an affecting trait of Christian magnanimity. A young Arian equally fanatical and brave, had sworn to kill St. Gregory, then Patriarch of Constantinople, whom he regarded as the most formidable enemy of his sect; and being regardless of consequences he resolved to execute his project in open day in the Bishop's own palace, while surrounded by his friends. He easily got admittance to St. Gregory who was then sick and in bed. The champion of heresy advanced slowly, his hand on his sword; but at the sight of the chamber, poor as that of an anchorite, of those woollen garments, and of the poor couch, on which was reclining a Bishop, who to the piety of a saint joined the genius of a poet, the young man became

involuntarily affected, he let drop the sword from his trembling hand, and betrayed himself by his confession and his sighs. What is the matter, asked Gregory, with composure: why these tears, and for whom was that sword unsheathed? The youth was silent. "Do you not see," said a nobleman, who was present, "that the wretch came to take away your life?" let the assassin be seized! "Stop," cried out St. Gregory; "whosoever first lays hands on him is my enemy." Come, poor child, added he, as he beckoned him to approach; "come hither and may God preserve you from evil, as he has preserved me from you! I pardon you with all my heart, and you shall quit my palace as freely as you have entered it." "Father," exclaimed the Arian with emotion, as he solemnly laid his hand on his heart, "from this moment I am a Catholic!"

The above extracts are taken from that excellent work by the *Abbe Ormsi*, called the *Flowers of Heaven*, which is now translated into English, and for sale at the Book-Store of the Editor of the Pilot.

J. B. McMAHON.

RELIGIOUS MADNESS.—Dr Copland in his Dictionary of Practical Medicine treats of the causes of insanity, and observes:—

"That religious insanity is much less common in Romanists than in Protestants, and especially Protestant dissenters, cannot be doubted by any one whose sphere of observation has enabled him to form any opinion on the matter. Dr. Hallaran (*Pract. Obs. on Insanity*, Cork, 1813, p. 32) states, that in the Lunatic Asylum at Cork, in which the admissions of Romanists are about ten to one of Protestants, no instance has occurred, within his recollections of mental derangement in the former from religious enthusiasm; but that several dissenters from the established Church have been so affected. The reason of this difference is obvious. The ministers of the Romish Church will not allow the mind of their flocks to distrust points of doctrine and discipline, or to fall into these doubts, which distract the minds of those who are wavering their opinions, or entertain entire liberty of conscience."

The fact here avowed by unsuspected observers, is not satisfactorily explained by the dominion which the priesthood is supposed to exercise over faith. It must necessarily be referred to the certainty which the Catholic has of the truths of revelation proposed by the Church, the pillar and the ground of truth. His mind reposes in the tranquil enjoyment of divine truth, whilst the Protestant is a wanderer in the wilderness, wherein he plods his weary way for a time, confident of a favorable issue, and then disheartened by disappointment; until at length bewildered and distracted he loses the hope and control of his mind. The late Dr. Parish, whose professional and personal character was so deservedly eminent, left his written testimony of the composure observable in Catholics when about to die, after they have received the sacraments of the Church. As the dimmed eye still looked towards the crucifix, the Doctor stood astonished at the tranquil hope that sustained the expiring mortal: and he avowed that neither infidel, nor Jew, nor Christian of any other denomination, not even his loved "Friends," showed ordinarily the same degree of humble and calm confidence. It is the peace of God that preserves the mind and heart. Why do men neglect to secure it!—*Catholic Herald*.

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