

THE CHURCH.

The following passages from a French Tract entitled "Commentary on Mr. Grouset's Defence of the Church against Protestants." The writer is the Rev. N. Roussel, author of the religion of money, and many other pungent writings.

"What is the meaning of the word 'church' in the New-Testament, whence it is taken? This word has two distinct meanings: it designates either the church in a particular place, as Corinth or Ephesus, or the church of Jesus Christ. It is evident that if promises are made to the church, it is to the general church of Jesus Christ, and not to the particular church of Paris or Geneva. The first question to be asked then is this: Where is the church of Jesus Christ? It seems to me that since it is the church of Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ is a member of it; but, Jesus Christ is in heaven. It seems to me too that the apostles, chosen by Jesus Christ himself, as Peter, Paul and John belong to this church; but Peter, Paul and John are also in heaven. Then I conclude that a part of the church of Jesus Christ is in heaven. In the second place, it is said in the New-Testament that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect. 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. We must then believe that wherever the Holy Scriptures are distributed, there may be men divinely taught, convinced, corrected and instructed, and who, consequently, make part of the church of Jesus Christ. So that wherever there is a Bible, there may be a Christian; but, there are Bibles in all parts of the globe; then in all parts of the globe there may be members of the church of Jesus Christ. 3dly. Jesus Christ has said that the gates of hell shall not prevail against his church; we may then hope that, to the end of the world, the church of Jesus Christ continuing upon earth, there are still members of this church to be born. Then another portion of the church of Jesus Christ is in our descendants, for ages to come. To sum up the preceding: The church of Jesus Christ is—1. in heaven, this is the fairest portion, having Jesus Christ and his apostles at its head; 2. upon earth, this is the feeblest portion, for at the moment I am writing there is upon the earth but one generation of Christians; 3. lastly, in succeeding ages which, being unlimited in their number, may contain hundreds of generations. But if the part which is in heaven is the fairest, that which is to be born the most numerous; the part of the church of Jesus Christ which is upon the earth is the smallest and humblest; it is a mere link in the chain connecting past and future Christians. The part of the church of Jesus Christ which is upon earth is but a part, and so cannot appropriate to itself the promises made to the whole church."

"Remark further that, as we have already said, the part of the church of Jesus Christ which is upon earth is scattered over all points where the Holy Scriptures are found, and that this dispersion does not allow it to form one body, a visible whole, placed in London or Paris. Therefore no church of London or Paris can arrogate to itself exclusively the promises made to the church of Jesus Christ."

"The churches of London or of Paris, like the churches of Corinth or of Ephesus, are local churches, and like Corinth and Ephesus, they may disappear. So that it is not to them that the promises are made, because against them the gates of hell prevail. Such a local church there is, once powerful, mistress of the world, now powerless abroad, despised at home. Every day it grows weak, it fails, it dies; the gates of hell have prevailed against it; it is not the church of Jesus Christ. Once its chiefs made nations and kings tremble by their anathemas, now the power of this chief is so broken, that in his own States rival churches exist. The gates of hell have prevailed against this church, it is not the church of Jesus Christ. For three centuries another church has arisen by the side of the other and has drawn off already a third part of its members. Then the gates of hell have prevailed against it, it is not the church of Jesus Christ. Is this to say that this rival church is itself of Jesus Christ? No; but in each of these two particular churches of Rome or of Geneva, there may be some members who make part of the true church of Jesus Christ. The result of all which is: that the church of Jesus Christ, partly in heaven, partly in future generations, and partly scattered over the earth, cannot be a visible church; and no church of Rome, of

Paris, or of London, can appropriate to itself in particular the promises and prerogatives which are only made to the church in general, that is to say, to all true Christians."

Christ the sole Head of the Church.

In the various churchyards and solitudes throughout Scotland, where the martyrs sleep, there is not one stone upon which it is not engraved that he who rests beneath died for Christ's headship and royal office in his house. Our Church has also borne witness against the Prelacy of the Church of England, which putteth one minister of Christ over another; and we maintain that the ministers are of equal order and dignity, lying side by side in the right hand of one common Bishop. We have borne testimony likewise against the supremacy of the man of sin, ever standing for the purity of the ministers of the Gospel. In which, her faithful and true testimony, the Church of Scotland is borne out more completely by this vision than by all other books which have been written. For Christ, in addressing the members of the Churches, proceeded upon the principle that they are equally honoured of Him, and equally dear to Him; and with equal respect doth He give them instruction with regard to their ministerial charges. Such is the substance and intention of the first vision, to claim for Christ the sole dignity of universal Bishop and Head of the Church; and, if possible, to prevent all priests and all kings from usurping that divine name and dignity.—Rev. Edward Irving's Exposition of the Revelation.

[From the New-York Recorder.]

When He takes them by the Hand, they let go of Everything.

I was sitting in the Broadway Tabernacle in the midst of a large company last May.—We had been drawn together to witness the exhibition of the pupils of the Asylum for the Blind. The interest felt in this exhibition had, as usual, crowded that large building long before the appointed hour. At length, when the patience of many was well nigh exhausted, one of the teachers entered from an adjoining room, followed by the pupils. The one nearest the teacher was a little girl whose interesting countenance could not fail to awaken a lively sympathy in her behalf. She stepped cautiously along, and ascended the few steps leading to the stage on which the exhibition was to be made, and then the teacher took her by the hand and led her to a seat. As I was looking on with mingled emotions of sympathy for the blind, and of gratitude that so much had been done to relieve them, the words of the prophet came to my mind: "And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not." And just as my thoughts were thus turned from the scene before me to the contemplation of a world of blind sinners, and to God as reaching forth his hand to lead them, an apparently thoughtless young man said to his companion, by my side, "Just see how the little ones let go of everything as soon as he takes them by the hand." Aye, thought I, that is it. It is just to let go of everything, and placing our hand in the outstretched hand of our Father, and we shall be led in ways which we have not known—ways of peace, of pleasantness, of safety. I will not detail the experience of that hour, further than to say it was, I think, one of the happiest of my life. It seemed to me an unspeakable privilege to be thus led in every step by the hand of God. I wondered how I could ever ask for anything more than the assurance that He was leading me.

Reader, have you ever felt yourself to be spiritually blind? Do you feel yourself to be so now? Then does the God of heaven condescend to offer to be your guide. You have only with confiding trust to yield yourself up to him, to place your hand in his, and he will bring you by a way that you have not known to a seat among the just made perfect on high.

Talk of Heaven.

On a rough, rocky promontory on the coast of Maine, stood a single house partly inclosed by a growth of dark, stunted evergreen. It was a stormy night in December, that we were called to visit that abode. The wind howled around the lonely dwelling, and the falling snow driven by the tempest, the surrounding darkness, together with the loud voice of the ocean dashing against the rocks, combined to render the night almost terrible. We urged our way through the storm, and guided by a light dimly burning within, approached that dwelling, now the house of death. Alas! we

sighed, is not earth sufficiently drear, and this place of all others sufficiently desolate, that death must seek to make it more so by dragging its inhabitants down to the grave to cover them with the clods of the valley? We, however, entered that house, and the scene was changed. How blest, thought we, to die and exchange this world of clouds and storms for that bright abode where the inhabitants need no candle, neither light of the sun; but clouds and darkness are unknown. That dying room was indeed the house of God and the gate of heaven. There lay a young, accomplished wife and mother in her prime and beauty on a bed of death. She was in the very arms of the King of Terrors; but to her death had lost its sting, and she was happy. By faith she leaned on her Saviour and was safe. Cheerfully her husband and two tender babes were resigned into the hand of the Father of mercies; and now she only desired a quick and easy passage to her heavenly home. Nothing remained for her but to cross the narrow flood that separated her desert strand from the peaceful shores of Canaan. It did the heart good to read in her peaceful, happy countenance of the power of faith,—the bliss of heaven. Never shall we forget, as she turned on us her dying eyes all radiant with the light of the upper world, and with a sweet imploring voice, said to us, "Talk—talk of heaven." Oh, how we felt the need of being able to comply with that request! But a cold, unfeeling Christian is poorly prepared to talk of heaven in a manner suited to such circumstances.

And now, though more than eight years have since passed away, we have never ceased to feel the importance of being prepared to enter the room of the dying saint, and profitably talk of heaven.—Ib.

Mansions in Heaven.

"In my Father's house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you." So said the Saviour when about to leave his disciples.—How suited are these words to us in this state of our pilgrimage! In a world where sin and sorrow abound, we need strong consolation. The objects of earth do not meet our wants; they are not substantial enough to bear up our hopes. Its houses are empty, its riches, at best, perish with the using, its pleasures do not satisfy; days of darkness come; disappointed in our expectations, and wearied with the burden of sin, we look beyond the present, and sigh for a better portion. How anxiously do we look out from this dark and troubled state, to the calm, serene sunshine of heaven! Heaven! that land of brighter hopes and purer joys—that home of the soul—the end and consummation of all human hopes! How have the pilgrims of earth, generation after generation, fixed their eyes upon it! What countless multitudes now on the earth are anxiously looking to its everlasting habitations! All hope to do so: some confidently expect it. But who of all these multitudes shall finally reach those blissful abodes? Shall you reader? Shall I? God alone knows. One thing is certain, that many, very many, will come short. For broad is the road that leads to death, and many there be that go in thereat, while straight is the gate, and narrow the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.—N. Y. Observer.

Submission to the loss of Children.

On the death of a child Matthew Henry records in his diary:— "My desire is to be sensible of the affliction and yet patient under it; it is a rod, a smarting rod; God calls my sins to remembrance, the coldness of my love to God, abuse of spiritual comforts; it is a rod in the hand of my Father, I desire in it to see a father's authority, who may do what he will; and a father's love, who will do what is best. We resigned the soul of the child to him that gave it; and if the little ones have their angels, doubted not of their ministrations in death. We have hopes, through grace, that it is well with the child. Little children in heaven, we look upon as the milky-way, the individuals scarce discernible, but altogether beautifying the heavens. We spent the day in sorrow for our affliction, our friends sympathizing with us, one day committing the immortal soul to God, this day the body to the dust of the earth, as it was. I am in deaths often; Lord, teach me how to die daily. I endeavored, when the child was put into the grave, to act faith upon the doctrine of the resurrection, believing in him who quickeneth the dead."—Family Scrap Book.

Manner in Preaching.

There is an incident stated of Rev. Samuel Williard, one of the early ministers of the Old South, in Boston, so much to our purpose, that the recital of it may not be out of place. Mr. W. possessed an agreeable delivery and harmonious voice, and as a natural consequence was generally admired. His son-in-law, the minister of Eastham, occasionally preached for him, whose sermons were excellent, but much injured by the badness of his manner. Having preached on one occasion one of his best discourses to the congregation of his father-in-law, in his usual unhappy manner, it excited great dissatisfaction. Several persons waited on Mr. Williard, and begged the gentleman might not be invited into the pulpit again. To this request Mr. Williard made no reply; but he desired his son-in-law to lend him the discourse, which being left with him, he delivered it without alteration to his people a few weeks after. The hearers were delighted, and requested a copy for the press. "See the difference," said they, "between yourself and your son-in-law. You have preached a sermon on the same text which he did, but his was intolerable, and yours was excellent."

The World not to be Trusted.

If, in the season of health, we strive to shake the world off, it will most tenaciously cling to us; but when, in the hour of death, we would cling to the world, it will unfeelingly shake us off. Hence, as the separation must some time take place, unless we shake it off now, it will shake us off hereafter. Most men, to their cost, wait for the latter alternative; but those who adopt the former find, to their surprise and joy, that they have removed out of their way one of the chief difficulties of dying. No one ever yet travelled with alacrity to the kingdom of heaven with the world lying heavily on his back or his heart; this incumbrance once laid aside, the journey is performed with comparative ease. This is a thought worth pondering by the pilgrims of earth.—They need little baggage for their journey—the less of this kind they have, the better.—Presbyterian.

The End of Dishonesty.

Men have only looked upon the beginning of a career, when they pronounce upon the profitableness of dishonesty. Many a ship goes gaily out of the harbour which never returns again. That only is a good voyage which brings home the rich-freighted ship.—God explicitly declares that an inevitable curse of dishonesty shall fall upon the criminal himself, or upon his children: "He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor. His children are far from safety, and they are crushed in the gate. Neither is there any to deliver them: The robber swalloweth up his substance."—Rev. H. W. Beecher.

Work for all.

It is a fundamental error, a practical heresy of most pernicious influence, to consider the conversion of souls as merely ministerial work. This is Popery and Puseyism which would restrict the conveyance of renewing grace to the medium of priestly hands and sacramental channels. Against this the whole church of God ought to rise up in the attitude of firm resistance. As an honour—and it is one of the brightest and richest that can light upon the head of mortal or immortal—the work of saving souls is as truly and as legitimately within the reach of the pious pauper in the work-house, or the godly child in a Sunday school, or the religious maid servant in a family, as within the grasp of the mitred prelate.—James A. James.

A Striking Thought.

"The death of an old man's wife," says Lamartine, "is like cutting down an ancient oak that has long shaded the family mansion. Henceforth the glare of the world, with its cares and vicissitudes, falls upon the widower's heart, and there is nothing to break their force, or shield him from the full weight of misfortune. It is as if his right hand was withered—as if the wing of his cage was broken, and every movement that he made brought him to the ground. His eyes are dim and glassy, and when the film of death falls over him, he misses those accustomed tones which might have soothed his passage to the grave."