

of the sufficiency of Scripture. It makes the Bible in itself considered, virtually a sealed book, or a book of riddles, whose sense, if sense it have, only a few adepts can make out. Nothing could be more hostile to that sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures which Presbyterians profess to assert as their fundamental principle.* These contradictions can surprise no one at all acquainted with sectarianism. Iniquity and error must ever of necessity contradict themselves. Only justice and truth can be always consequent and self-consistent.

But let us pass to the examination of the Scripture testimony by which the Presbyterian divines attempt to prove that the written word contains everything necessary and is the sole rule of faith and practice. The passage adduced is the same which was previously brought forward, and which we examined in our former article, namely, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," &c.; only it is now produced with the addition of the words, "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." What more inapposite or more inadequate to their purpose could they possibly allege?—The holy Apostle is here instructing his disciple Timothy, not giving directions to Christians generally. He speaks, moreover, of the Old Testament, the only Scriptures Timothy could have known from his childhood, since a great part of the New Testament was not written till after St. Paul wrote this epistle, and the part which was written had, most likely, not yet been collected into a volume. If, then, the text quoted proves anything to the purpose, it proves too much; for it proves that the old Testament alone is sufficient, which Presbyterians would be as loath to admit as we. Such a conclusion might, indeed, be acceptable to Jews: but even Presbyterians must reject it at once. Then, again, the text by no means asserts or maintains the sufficiency of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, or of the New, or of both together. It simply indicates the Scriptures, and especially those of the Old Testament, the only Scriptures the Holy Apostle is then speaking of, as an excellent means of perfecting the man of God,—that is, the clergyman the bishop, or pastor of souls,—of thoroughly furnishing him for every good word and work. All this is true, and does not in the least suppose that the Scriptures contain everything necessary and are of themselves alone sufficient for every purpose. It simply supposes that the clergymen will acquire perfection by the perusal and study of the Sacred Scriptures. If we exhort a young orator to study Demosthenes, and tell him that this study will perfect him as an orator, and furnish him with proper models for every species of composition, we by no means assert or imply that Demosthenes will absolutely suffice for every thing, and that there will be no need of Greek grammar and lexicon, without which, perchance, Demosthenes might be a sealed book. Hence, this text, adduced by Presbyterians to prove that the Scriptures alone are sufficient for every thing, and are the sole rule of faith and practice, proves nothing to their purpose. It is one of those illusory and nugatory proofs with which this Confession of Faith abounds, and merely proves either the want of ingenuousness and strict integrity on the part of its framers, or the great difficulty they found in drawing "good and necessary consequences" from the words of Scripture.

But, leaving this text, we turn to the consideration of the Scriptural authorities adduced for rejecting Catholic traditions. The pertinency and force of these authorities consist in a species of trick; which is anything but ingenuous, and is altogether unworthy the character, we were about to say, even of Presbyterians. We are told that the Scriptures are so complete, that nothing is to be added to them "by the traditions of men,"—just as if any Catholic held that traditions of men were to be taken as the word of God! If the question turned on traditions of men, traditions broached and set up, after the Apostles, by

*The Christian reader will readily understand we here neither deny nor mean to deny the necessity of divine grace, to enable one to make an act of faith meritorious in the sight of God. But an act of faith is one thing, and ascertaining the meaning of a text of Scripture quite another thing.

men who gave out their own visions, fancies, expositions for the word of God, we should be as ready, to say the least, to discard them as Presbyterians. We grant, nay, earnestly contend, that all such traditions are to be discarded, and this is one reason why we do, and must discard Presbyterianism itself,—palpably a mere tradition of men, first concocted full 1500 years after Christ and his holy Apostles. These are not the traditions Catholics assert and contend for. Catholics say Christ and his Apostles taught men, *viz. ecc.* many things which were not committed to writing, but which have been preserved faithfully in the doctrine and practice of the Church, according to the admonition of the holy Apostle Paul.—"Stand firm, brethren, and hold the traditions you have learned, whether by word or by our epistle." 2 Thess. ii. 14. These traditions are not the traditions of men, but an integral part of the revealed word,—the revelations and teaching of God (traditely) without writing as they transmit language, and various practices and habits, which no one finds first, if at all, in books, but which every one learns long before opening a book.

If the Presbyterians had the candour to acknowledge these facts, or if their readers were aware of them, they would see, at a glance, that the passages adduced do not in the least impugn Catholic traditions. Those passages simply condemn traditions of men,—not traditions transmitted by men, but traditions which are of human origin, and which Catholics have always been and are, the first and most strenuous to condemn.—The first text adduced is from St. Paul. "Though we, or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you let him be accursed." The Presbyterian divines bring forward this passage as expressly condemning all traditions; but no selection could be more unfortunate for them. It not only says nothing against traditions, but is an awful denunciation of Presbyterianism, and an express command to all who would adhere to the gospel of our Lord to hold it accursed. These divines would represent this text to mean, If any body holds any doctrine to be divinely revealed not written in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments let him be accursed. therefore let Papists who hold traditional doctrines, be accursed. Yet there is no scholar but would be ashamed to pretend that this is the real meaning; and even Presbyterians themselves, if they would examine the context, would, on this point, agree with us. The Galatians had been converted to Christ by the Apostle St. Paul, who had taken great pains to make them understand that the Mosaic ceremonies were not only unnecessary, but, if observed in a Jewish spirit, and considered a necessary part of Christianity, even superstitious. Some Jewish teachers went among them, and persuaded them to embrace these same ceremonies as necessary, and thus caused them to turn again to the weak and poor elements of the law. They observed days and months and years, and wished again to come under the Law. (iv. 9, 10, 21.)—On learning this the Apostle wrote to them in terms of mingled holy indignation and burning charity. "I wonder that you are so soon removed from him who called you to the grace of Christ to another gospel which is not another, only there are some who trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel to you than that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed." The meaning of St. Paul is clearly, If any body, even an angel from heaven, come to preach to you the necessity of Jewish observances, let him be accursed; and, in a more general sense, if any one, even an angel, preach to you any doctrine contrary to that which we have preached, let him be accursed. That this is his meaning, and that the one given in the confession is absurd, must be manifest to all who reflect that St. Paul says nothing here of a gospel written, but speaks simply of a gospel preached,—that the Four Gospels were not then written,—certainly not that of St. John, which was not then written till many years afterwards,—and, that many other portions of the Scriptures were also as yet unwritten, as learned Presbyterians are themselves aware and admit. If the Presbyterian interpretation of the text were admitted, we should be required to reject every writing of the Apostles posterior to the