

ions, certainly not by him written, and not written before his death, we have a right to look to the public and practical operations of that divinely founded church, for evidence of the revelations and authority which she received from Christ. The traditional history of the church, while propounding the revelations of Christ, and administering the spiritual government instituted for the preservation and propagation of the christian religion in its purity, must furnish the very highest order of evidence to show the faith and principles, with which men became christians and continued christians. To appeal to the mere written word of God, without any standard to settle its meaning, may allow the appellant an open field for endless disputation, and an escape, amid the mazes of arbitrary interpretation, for his fondly conceived and novel theories; but it will not suffice to indicate or confound *heresy*, to prevent or heal the wounds of schism, or to settle doubts and controversies about what men shall believe and do, in order to be saved.

This appeal is made with as much confidence by Arians, Socinians, Universalists, Mil'eries, and Deists, as by those Protestant sects which pretend to be more orthodox. The impartial inquirer for truth, must therefore perceive the necessity of some sufficient means to settle and determine the true intention of Christ, and the import of his divine revelations; and without a direct individual revelation from God himself, which he cannot be foolish enough to expect, he can find no evidence so rational, respectable and conclusive, as the solemn authoritative acts of the church, and the Catholic faith and practice of its members, in each successive generation and age, and in every country of the world, from the period of its foundation to the present time.

When questions arise among the citizens of the United States, with regard to the fixed fundamental principles of that justly revered constitution, bequeathed to us by the founders of our republic, we rationally try them by the writings and comments of those great men who first administered our government; and we consider the practical operation of the government in the past, as a safe commentary on the principles of the constitutional law; and the decisions of this tribunal are respected throughout the whole republic as final and conclusive.— Why, then, shall not the practical operation of the church of Christ, and the writings of the eminent doctors and fathers of the early ages, be held as rational and convincing evidence, of the nature of the principles and truths of that sublime constitution, which has been left by the Redeemer and his Apostles, to secure the valuable and imperishable blessings of religion? And why shall the decisions of that tribunal, which Christ instituted and commanded us to respect and obey, not be considered final and conclusive, with regard to any questions which

may arise? The man, who would pretend to understand the constitution of the United States in a sense *adverse* to the continued practice of the government, and to the unanimous testimony, furnished by the writings and commentaries of the most profound statesmen and lawyers of our country in times past, would be looked upon as eminently presumptuous; it not as entirely insane. And why shall modern reformers, with novel theories and views about the Christian law and faith; be more esteemed, when found opposed to the continued practice of the church, and to the unanimous testimony of the eminent writers and fathers, whose genius, talents, and very names, have been in veneration for ages?

We cannot undertake to array all these testimonies; since to do so, volumes would be necessary. Some of the early fathers have written volumes in vindication of this single point concerning the authority of the Church. Among these, are; *Tertullian, St. Cyprian, St. Augustin, St. Jerome, St. Vincent of Lerins, &c.* But we may set down a few of these testimonies, which are direct and conclusive.

The current number of the *Westminster Review*, in a "Postscript on the Session," refers to the abandoned "Educational clauses of the Factory Bill," and gives the following extracts from "A Catechism for the use of Young Persons of the Church of England: compiled from Authentic Sources," which the writer introduces with these remarks;—*Dublin Pilot.*

We have selected a few passages from this work, arranging them under their proper heads that our readers may judge for themselves of the difference, if they can find any, between ancient Popery and the modern fashionable creed. For ourselves we can only say that we have never met with an educated Roman Catholic who would explain the doctrines of his church in any other sense than that given in the answers to the following questions:—

REVERENCE FOR IMAGES.

Q. What puts us in-mind that Christ became man, and suffered on the cross?

A. The very making the sign of the cross, or reverently beholding that sacred emblem.

Q. Why, then, do we place crosses in and on our churches?

A. To put us in mind that God the Son became man, and died upon the cross for us.

Q. Are pictures and holy symbols allowable in church?

A. Yes, for they movingly represent to us the life and passion of our blessed Lord and other doctrines of our most holy faith.

Q. Is there any idolatry in honoring the saints and angels?

A. No; provided we honor them only with an inferior honor; as the friends and creatures of God; not as gods, nor with God's honor.

THE DOCTRINE OF PURGATORY.

Q. What is the fifth article?

A. "He descended into hell, the third day He rose again from the dead."

Q. What means "He descended into hell?"

A. That part of hell called Hades.

Q. What do you mean by Hades?

A. I mean a place of rest, where the souls of saints who died before Christ were detained.

DEVOTION TO THE SAINTS AND THE VIRGIN MARY.

Q. Have we, then, any communion with the saints in heaven?

A. Yes; we communicate with them as our fellow-members under the same Head, Jesus Christ; they feeling for us and assisting us in all holy and kind offices, and we giving thanks to God for their good examples, honoring them for their virtues, and holding spiritual communion with them.

Q. Is it any disrespect to God to remember the Saints with reverence and honor?

A. Quite the reverse; inasmuch as we glorify and adore God in and through them; for even the greatest Saints are indebted for all goodness to Him alone.

Q. Do we keep any other days besides the Feast of the Purification of the blessed Virgin Mary which reminds us at once of our Lord and of His blessed mother?

A. Yes; the Feast of the Annunciation of our Lady on the 25th of March.

Q. Are there any other days, though not publicly observed, named in the Calendar of our Church?

A. Yes; there are several days in honour of the blessed Virgin Mary—her Visitation, on the 2d of July; her Nativity on the 8th of September; and her Conception, on the 8th of December; with many days of holy martyrs, virgins, bishops, &c.

Q. How shall we keep these festivals?

A. We should endeavor to make ourselves acquainted with the persons or events commemorated, and allow none of them to pass by without thinking of them.

DUTY OF CONFESSION.

Q. Does our Church encourage the people to seek counsel of the clergy?

A. Yes; for the disburdening of conscience and the quieting of scruples and doubts, especially before Holy Communion.

INFALLIBILITY OF THE CHURCH; AND DUTY OF A RIGHT OBSERVANCE OF ALL FEASTS AND FESTIVALS.

Q. What do you mean when you say, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church?"

A. I mean that Christ has left a society behind Him on earth to be what He was; and that in the Sacraments we obtain Communion with him through that Society.

Q. To whom has Christ given the power to forgive sins?

A. To the Apostles and their successors, the Bishops and Priests of His church.

Q. Are we bound to obey the commandments of His church?

A. Yes; because Christ has said to the pastors of the church, "He that heareth you, heareth Me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me."—*Luke x: 16.*

Q. Why does the church command us to fast and abstain?

A. To humble us before God for our sins, and keep our bodies in subjection.

Q. Will not a Christian then feel himself bound to do more in this way than to comply with the mere rule?

A. Without doubt, health permitting.

Q. Are persons in bad or weak health obliged to fast or abstain, or, again, very young persons?

A. No; in all such cases the rule is relaxed; children, for instance, keep Abstinence days when seven years old, but Fasting-days not till they come of full age.—*New England Reporter.*

SCANDAL.—We have read with deep affliction the following statement:—

"On Saturday evening, at sun set, a ceremony of unusual interest took place at the Catholic Cemetery. The Masonic lodge in our city known as "*Le Foyer Macconique*," (the Masonic Focus) assembled in great force in that consecrated ground and proceeded to lay the foundation-stone of a large and splendid monument, destined to receive the earthly remains of the brothers of that order. The occasion was commemorated by Mr. B. A. Canon, Grand Master of the Lodge, who, in a brief, but eloquent discourse, explained the object of the assemblage, the sacred mission of free masonry, and all the culture of all the finest and noblest feelings which it promotes. Judge Preux also offered some appropriate and excellent remarks; and the ceremony terminated by a collection in favor of the widows and orphans of deceased members of the Lodge.—*N. O. Bee.*

The faithful at large may be at a loss to understand how this desecration of a Catholic Cemetery took place. The prominent character in the scene is one of the Trustees of the Cathedral, whose proceedings are fresh in the memory of our readers: Abusing the office which they hold, and the sanction of the civil law, some of these men trample under foot all the laws of the Catholic Church, of which they profess to be members; set at nought the censures which she has inflicted on such of her children as enter into the Masonic fraternity; and the High priest of reason, as if in mockery of the solemn rites whereby the resting place of the faithful is consecrated, stands over the tomb prepared for those, whom she expressly excludes from the privileges of Christian burial. The mission of the Christian ministry is set aside: the divine words of Christ; "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you;" are forgotten; to give place to eulogies of a secret institution, whose excellence must be believed by the uninitiated on the affirmation of the adepts.

How long the faithful of New Orleans will suffer such things to be acted in their name, we know not; how far may be extended the abused patience of the excellent bishop, whose heart is rent by these scandals, we cannot say; but no better means could be devised to mark the office of *Marguilliers* with an anti Catholic and anti-Christian character, than an exhibition such as has been made. If honor and magnanimity be the characteristics of the Masonic fraternity, let not the members claim the privileges of the church, whose laws and censures they disregard, and let them not shew their courage by outraging Religion, because her ministers have no arms but prayer for the defence of our consecrated precincts.—*Catholic Herald.*

The Bishop of Exeter, addressing the clergy the other day, said to them, "avoid extempore preaching, for it is a mark of a conceited or idle disposition."