

things of the Lord,' while 'those who have wives are solicitous for the things of the world.'} By resigning all domestic attachments, they released themselves from every impediment to their zeal, like the wrestlers at the Olympic games, who, by throwing off the incumbrances of dress, secured complete freedom to their motions."

\* 1 Cor. vii. 37, 38, &c.

† 1 Cor. vii. 31, 32.

(From the *Pittsburg Catholic*.)

### PROTESTANT INCONSISTENCY.

To those who have not marked the history of the past to what artifices Protestantism can have recourse when any of its cherished principles gives symptoms of decay, and when it becomes necessary to re-instate them by abusing Catholic doctrine, it may seem unaccountable with what tenacity the organs of the party hold on the time-worn accusation, that Catholics are the greatest enemies of the Bible. It has been clearly proved, that to Catholicity alone the Christian world is indebted for the preservation of the Bible—that the sacred volume was transcribed through successive labors of Catholic priests and Catholic monks—that when the art of printing afforded facilities for the multiplication of books, the church eagerly seized upon this improvement, and issued several editions of the Bible, in a language the most universal in Europe, and all this before the era of the pretended reformation. It is evident also to every one who takes the trouble of enquiring, that at the present day the Bible is universally circulated amongst Catholics, that it is read, studied, and revered more than other book in existence. But we might as well admit that all these facts were false, for the accusation made against us is too fruitful a theme for the whining declamations of the "spare, oh spare the Bible-men," that they should be required to give it up, no matter what amount of testimony may be adduced to disprove it. The Catholic is an enemy to the Bible? yes, because he believes that Bible like the true church is but one—because he believes that it cannot convey to him a thousand conflicting truths at the same time, because he holds that its true signification could not have been left to be determined by the ignorance or caprice of every erring understanding—because he does not allow every motely superstructure of error to base itself on the authority of that divine book. If this is to be an enemy to the Bible we plead guilty, but as well might the citizen who admits the necessity of having the laws of our country explained and enforced by competent judges, be declared an enemy to our free institutions.

Let us see, however, for a moment, how these professed lovers of the Bible carry out their views

of respect for what it teaches. With the dead letter of what they are pleased to term the entire Scriptures as a starting point, you may become a Presbyterian, Methodist, Quaker, Baptist, Ranter, Jumper, Muggletonian or Southcotonian, or wander at pleasure through any of the by-ways of modern Sectarianism, you may reject with Luther some portions of the inspired volume as compositions "of straw," and others as entirely unworthy of an inspired penman. You may torture and twist the plain and obvious meaning of texts, to make them suit the peculiar opinions which chance or inclination may have suggested; but while you justify all these proceedings by the divine right of private judgment—you hold the Scriptures accountable for the truth of your heterogeneous creed—you are no enemy to the Bible! Nor is this merely a deduction of theory, it is fully established by the facts which every day obtrude themselves on our notice. There are at present scattered over the Christian world, more than four hundred distinct religious sects, each necessarily professing one or more doctrines of error, and each basing its errors on the authority of the Word of God. Yet, although all in turn may be visited with the anathemas of their less tolerant brethren, they are all regarded as genuine friends and supporters of the Bible. But if, as Catholics, we attempt to prove that the Bible can have only one right meaning; if we attempt to show the importance and necessity of arriving at that meaning; if we deduce from the constitution of the human mind, and from the vain and fruitless efforts of three centuries, the absolute impossibility of attaining that object without the assistance of some unerring authority, we are immediately assailed as the greatest enemies of the Word of God, and too often so successfully, that we have known more than one pious Protestant who believed that Catholics had the utmost dread of reading or seeing the Bible. To any one, however, who allows not himself to be imposed upon by false and flippant assertion, it is clear that when the principles of Protestantism are stripped of the cant intended to hide their deformity, they are essentially opposed to the real respect which is due to the Sacred Scriptures, since they render them accountable for the hallucinations of every misguided intellect. Did not these principles give a charter to the pretensions of the Socinian, the Unitarian, and the Rationalist? Did they not give birth to Deism and Atheism, monsters unknown to Christendom before the reformation? Did not Voltaire himself attempt to justify his rejection of revelation from the very facts recorded in the scriptures? And did not Protestant principles justify him in so doing? For if he had a divine right to investigate the doctrines contained