

by explaining every thing you inquire about, it would make a book instead of a letter. She says all the village is as anxious as you are to hear about Roman Catholics. For you have just got a new curate, who does so many strange things, and has so many new ways, that you are all wondering 'what sort of a Christian he is.' And Mrs W. says that old Mary was quite frightened, and said the people were quite a 'Pusey,' which, she says, she believes is something about Gay Fawkes, but she does not know at all what it is; but that you said he was a very good man, and is doing more for the spiritual good of the parish than has ever been done since you can remember; and that is pretty long too, seeing you are in your 'eighty-one.' And Mrs W. says he likes very much to come and chat with you, and to hear about your old family, and the good old customs at the Hall, for he seems to like every thing that is old and ancient. And she says you make him explain to you the meaning of his new ways in the Church, which he says are very old ways. And that he encourages all the old people to keep up their customs; and praised Mary very much for always curtseying before the altar when she passed it, though she says, that if it has any thing to do with Popery, she thinks she had better leave it off. But it was her poor grandmother's custom, and she learnt it of her. So you see I know all about you, and long to know more. And to deserve to know about your new old customs, I will tell you still more of ours.

I was very glad the new curate had explained about making the sign of the cross, and some other things, as I have things of much more importance to write about; and it seems such a waste of time to explain things, and try to show why we practise this or that custom, when really people by their own common sense ought to see that it is right to do so. What, for instance, can be so natural as to mark on our body the sign of the cross, as a remembrance of our blessed Lord's dying on the cross for us? And yet some people required as much explanation of this, and as many reasons given for doing it, as if it were something superstitious, or even idolatrous. But in the same way as your curate has shown you, that this one custom is only a devout action, performed for the honour of God, and in remembrance of the 'dying of our Lord Jesus,' which St Paul says we ought always to bear about with us; so I hope to show you that every thing which the Roman Catholic Church allows her children to do, or teaches them they must do, is solely and entirely for the honour of God, and for the practice of love to him. You will not see this all at once, for these customs and manners have been so long laid aside in England, that the meaning of them is forgotten; and bad men whose interest it was, many years ago, to diminish religious feeling in England, first got these practices to be laid aside, and then gave them another meaning, often turned them into ridicule, and made foolish verses and proverbs about them. So

that no one knows any thing about their true signification, or why the Church practises them. Some things they call superstitious, which have nothing whatever to do with superstition; not seeming to know the real meaning of the word superstition, which in truth has to do with the devil; and all the practices which the Church allows, have to do with God; and are all used as means to excite to pray, or to remind to pray, or to aid to pray, or to remind of some one or other of God's mercies to us, or to unite us in praying for the members of some society to which we belong. The Roman Catholic Church abhors superstition, and is most vigilant in preventing her children from practising any thing that can tend in any way towards it. No Roman Catholic may go to a gipsy, for instance, to have his fortune told, or seek to find any thing out by consulting cunning men, or astrologers, as very respectable people often do in England. I was told by a friend a short time before I left England, that there are astrologers now in London, who have constantly carriages at their door. And I knew many persons who shunned what they called ill omens. A very clever and pious lady I have seen look quite alarmed at having three candles alight in the same room. Many will not begin any new work on a Friday, or travel, &c. because it is an unlucky day. A magpie alone, is thought an omen ill enough to prevent any thing being undertaken for some hours after seeing it. Now these things are superstitious. And these, or any thing like them, no Roman Catholic dare practise.

I had rather not answer your questions yet about the Virgin Mary, and saints, and all such things, because I had purposely avoided all mention of them in my last letter, in order, first, to show you the fruits and flowers of the church's magnificent garden, that you might judge for yourself, whether it were possible that such could grow on corrupted trees and plants. And when I have shown you a few more of these rich productions, and introduced you to some of the grand and solemn means by which such good things are produced, I will then talk to you about saints, and images, and beads, and candles; as you will then see, that they are also used as means to assist in the culture of our spiritual garden, in the same way as binding to stems with thin and delicate bands, and watering with a gentle hand, are useful to preserve alive the vigour which plants have already derived from the rich soil and fine situation wherein they grow.

I have already told you that the ground and foundation of every thing with Roman Catholics is CHRIST.

God hath very highly exalted Him, and the church, following out the mind of God, very highly exalts Him, giving His as a name to be above every name. The name of Jesus: this is the first name her infants are taught to lisp, and the last they are trained to utter, in the agony of death—Jesus. There is life, and light, and love, and