

is preferable to the abuses, which, at a later period, have altered its primitive institutions, tarnished its lustre, and depraved its Pontiffs."

This is the opinion of a Roman Catholic writer in the nineteenth century. And if he had added that the present Romish Church commenced only at that time, upon the almost ruin of the primitive church, he would have done justice to the subject. At that time commenced the reign of lust for power, lust for gold, hypocrisy, cruelty, ignorance, superstition, worshipping of angels, worshipping of relics, worshipping of men, ignorance of God and everything that was good, and an universal prevalence of evil.

"The ultramontane theologians have distinguished two ages of the church, as they call it, the age of childhood and of weakness, when either persecuted or protected by princes, it was necessary that it should tolerate their rule, and that it should pursue those evangelical principles established to provide for the necessities of such a period. Secondly, the age of vigour and power, since which the church has subdued nations, covered their people with its shadow, and reigning over immense regions, has crowned and governed kings. Bossuet appears to be ashamed of this doctrine. 'What,' he says, 'when Jesus sends you forth a sheep, he charges you to be lambs only till such time as you may be sufficiently strong to become wolves!—What, Jesus confines himself to giving you the council to disguise yourselves in sheepskins, in order to deceive and to subdue the princes when you shall approach under such a mask!

"What you wish the gospel to become but a manuel of hypocrisy and imposture! and you measure the prosperity of the church ~~but~~ by the opulence of its ministers—~~but~~ by the pomp of its chief potentate, and the terror of which the paraphernalia of the Pontifical Sovereignty inspires the nations and their rulers with—when the glory of Christianity is confined to rendering men holy, to rectifying their religious ideas, and to regenerating their moral habits,—when its influence but consists in civilizing the people, enlightening their chiefs, and in establishing concord in the bosom of families or of provinces,—when the priests cause themselves to be revered only by their superior knowledge, their talents, and their virtues, it is then His church appears to you childish and imperfect, and you bitterly lament its weakness. But when, after the seventh century, you at length behold the chief pastor of the flock of Jesus Christ, threaten Emperors—excommunicate them, CURSE THEM, LEAD THEIR SUBJECTS TO REVOLT, AUTHORIZE OR COMMAND DISOBEDIENCE, INDUCE ANARCHY, AND KINDLE AND PERPETUATE CIVIL WAR; then you recognize the church, then behold it according to your doctrine in all its lustre, in all its power,—and such is the high destiny to which you wish it may have been appointed by its founder.