

for it among those families where every species of moral persecution, and personal calumnies of the grossest description against the unsullied character of the catholic clergy of this city, are practised in order to stagger the faith of poor ignorant servants. Seek for it among those persons who having been appointed guardians to catholic children, prevent them from practising their religion. Here, Sir, you will find the spirit of proselytism. You will find it again in the tract societies. But in the catholic institutions of this province you will look for it in vain. And so far are enlightened Protestants, for I speak not of men whose minds are warped by low vulgar prejudice,—So far are enlightened protestants from fearing the proselytism of these institutions, that, had the gentlemen of the college the means of undertaking a double course of studies, one in the English and the other in the French language, there is not perhaps a single respectable protestant youth in Montreal, that would not be confided to their care. I myself, Sir, know even a gentleman, who acts in Canada in the character of Minister of one of the reformed churches, who declares that he is too well aware of the honorable character of these institutions to be uneasy about their proselytism, and who has actually concurred in placing the son of a friend in one of them.

I have said enough—more than enough to caution an enlightened and well informed public against the erroneous ideas of the Canadian Courant. Did his paper circulate merely in the lower province, in which these institutions are known, it might not have been necessary to notice his remarks. But as it circulates in other parts, it is but justice to prevent distant persons from contracting unfounded prejudices against our estimable institutions.

This motive will also, I hope, plead my excuse with you, Mr. Editor, for occupying so much space in your excellent paper. I am, Sir,

A CATHOLIC,

And an admirer of

Catholic Education.

ORIGINAL.

THE CATHOLIC RITES AND CEREMONIES EXPLAINED.

Few, even of Catholics, and none but those who have turned their particular attention to the subject; are aware of the instructive import, or the deep and interesting meanings, which the Catholic Church attaches to her sacred rites and ceremonies. For, let unphilosophical and ever-blundering reformists say what they please; the mind of man acquires all its knowledge from without through the medium of the bodily senses; particularly those of the sight and hearing; and it is truly astonishing that our Bible-reading, and scripture-judging sectaries have never discovered in that sacred book what is the most obvious and constantly recurring evidence in it; that God instructs his people: reveals to them his purposes in their regard; and opens to them a distant prospect, or affords them an immediate intimation, or a record-

ing memorial of his redeeming dispensation, in the outward rites, signs, and emblematical ceremonies, which he himself prescribed and enjoined to be observed in the worship of his church. What were else all the levitical ordinances, but so many spiritually significative and predictive figures?

It is evident too that, as all his true worshippers are but one family; of which, as in the prayer, which he himself has taught us, he owns himself THE FATHER; all in that family, to avoid confusion disorder, misunderstanding; and, what we daily witness among protestant enthusiasts of so many denominations, the most ridiculously whimsical and irrational extravagancies; ought to use, in addressing him, the same external rites; either such, as he himself has deigned to institute; or those ordained by that authority, which he has sanctioned and promised always to inspire; that universal Church, which he commands us all to hear, or be accounted as heathens and publicans. Indeed, it was by swerving from the originally established and instructive rites of God's worship, that mankind fell into all the extravagancies and horrors of idolatry.

They are the rites and ceremonies of God's only Church, (if that be she, whom the Saviour founded;) the chief meanings of which we here propose laying before the christian public. After those observed in the celebration of the mass; on which, in our first number, we made a few short explanatory observations; the most permanently uniform and important, as being of the Saviour's more immediate appointment; are those observed in the administration of the seven sacraments; transmitted down to us from the time of the apostles: who, doubtless, were directed as to the manner of their administration by Christ himself, in the many conversations which he held with them, after his resurrection, concerning the kingdom of God; Acts, 1, 3. by which title he often designates, the Church his kingdom here on earth.

BAPTISM.

The first of these sacraments is baptism, which makes us the adopted children of God through Jesus Christ: heirs indeed of God, says Saint Paul; and fellow heirs of Jesus Christ. Rom. 8, 16, 17. Till we receive this sacrament, we are but the children of the carnal Adam, born in sin; and therefore by nature children of wrath; Eph. 2, 3. and devoted to destruction. By it we are born again of water and the Holy Ghost: John, 3, 5, and fitted, as children of the spiritual Adam, Christ, the regenerator of our race, to enter the kingdom of God; that is, his Church here on earth, and his kingdom hereafter in heaven; nor can any of the other sacraments, save the Eucharist, and that unworthily, be validly administered to those not so born again; and adopted into the family of God. This then is the most necessary of all the sacraments; and therefore has God made it, in the case of necessity, the simplest and easiest to be administered of any: the minister being any one; man, woman, or child come to the use of reason: the matter only water: and the words, while pouring the water on the unbaptized, so few, that the shortest memory

may retain them: viz. *I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* Its vast importance and regenerating effects are what the Church alludes to in her baptismal ceremonies.

And first, the water is the external cleansing sign of the internal cleansing grace. It is the Jewish purification, or the legal figure fulfilled by the Saviour; who has annexed to the outward purifying symbol, the water applied to the body; the inward purifying grace applied to the soul; for he is master to annex his grace to whatever condition he pleases: as he annexed life and bliss to our obedient forbearance to eat the forbidden fruit; and death and misery as the consequences of our disobedience in eating against his command.

This much every Catholic knows. But there is a much deeper meaning in this external sign than the generality of Christians are aware of: for an allusion is thereby made to the death of the carnal Adam, and of his sinful progeny, all buried in the waters of the deluge: and of a new race rescued from the waters by their sole surviving progenitor, the just Noah: who, under the direction of God, built the ark, in which the small remnant of mankind were saved: that is, in the spiritual sense, Jesus Christ, the Man-God, the sole just of our race: for whose sake it is spared from utter destruction: and from whom is to spring forth, a new and holy generation: he, who under the direction of God, his heavenly father; (for in this sense also was the carpenter's son) built the spiritual ark, his church, which rides secure the universal deluge; and brings forth from the midst of the overwhelming waters the only portion of mankind which is snatched from utter destruction. It is to this mystery that Saint Paul alludes thus:—*Know you that all we, who are baptized in Christ Jesus, are baptized in his death? For we are buried together with him, by baptism into death: that as Christ is risen from the dead, by the glory of the father; so we also may walk in the newness of life, &c.* Rom. 6, 3, &c. He therefore was the first seen, like Noah, to enter the waters, followed by all his rescued, spiritual progeny. On him too, while in the water, as on Noah, while in the ark, descended the mystic dove: the messenger of peace, restored through him to our redeemed race: and the voice of the paternal deity was heard aloud declaring him his beloved Son. Thus was shewn forth to us, in a sensible manner, the trinity of persons in that God, in whose name all to be saved, must be baptized: the eternal father speaking from on high: the filial deity incarnate standing in the water below; and the Holy Ghost in the visible form of a dove, hovering intermediate between. This sensible manifestation of the Godhead was, according to the great Saint Basil, (Hom. 2, in Psal. 29) predicted clearly in the words of the psalmist; *The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of Majesty has thundered.*

Another prefiguring emblem of baptism, (the first and most necessary of all the sacraments,) was the rainbow, set up by God in the clouds of heaven, the watery sign of his merciful covenant with Noah and his whole posterity. And, as