

Your "friend" begins his last and longest letter by a comparison of the Protestant with the Romanist rule of faith ; and the conclusion which he reaches is evidently most satisfactory to himself. What it would be to others, who really understand the questions at issue, is quite another thing. This each thoughtful reader will decide for himself.

He speaks of three rules of faith as existing amongst Protestants in the following manner :—

"Of the three rules of faith. I. The Socinian rule of faith, they hold that *reason* is the interpreter of that divine revelation" (the Bible) ; II. "Private inspiration," which he says is "the rule of faith adopted by the Anabaptists, the Quakers, the Moravian Brothers, and the Methodists, which consists that God inspires each one of them" ; III. "The Bible, which is your third false rule of faith."

The above, to go no farther, shows that your "friend" needs very much to be enlightened on that on which he seeks to enlighten you ; and that ere he attempted to instruct a Protestant on the subject of his faith he should have become more fully informed on that subject himself. But this is one of many instances, ever and anon occurring, which shows a remarkable defectiveness of knowledge of the leading characteristics of the Protestant faith on the part of Romanists ; and it forces upon us, Protestants, the conclusion that either they will not do justice to themselves in studying it, or that they purposely misrepresent it in order to prejudice all minds they can influence against it. But this they should know is no way to advance the interests of *truth* ; and he certainly must feel that he has a bad cause to uphold who resorts to it.

Of Socinians or Unitarians, and their rule of faith, Protestants might well excuse themselves from making any reference, much less a defence ; for with them, in their faith and religious life, the Protestant proper can have no bonds of sympathy or union. But as their rule of faith, as it is called, is held up as strikingly improper, and as their condition is supposed to be confirmatory of that conclusion, I will bestow upon it a passing notice. And in doing so, I observe, there are two extremes in the religious world on this very subject, reason, in interpreting the Word of God. The Socinian is at one point, and the Romanist at the other. The one gives too great a scope for reason, the other too little. For instance, the Socinian presumes to bring to the bar of his reason the *nature* of certain truths with which his reason, or that of any finite creature, is altogether incompetent to deal. Were he to employ his reason with the *statements*, simply, of such Scriptures as, for instance, those profoundly mysterious truths of the plurality of persons in the Godhead, the hypostatical union of natures in the person of Christ, &c., then would reason have its true and legitimate field of action, and no exception could consistently lie against him. For, assuredly, God Himself appeals to the use of reason in man, and calls for its exercise in a number of instances ; indirectly, in His many remonstrances and counsels given for thoughtful consideration and action ; and, directly, when, as in Isaiah 1 : 18 He says : "Come now, and let us *reason* together, saith the Lord."

Nor does the Romish hierarchy fail to recognize the existence and use of reason when by argument, supported by Scriptural quotations, they would sustain

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