

system of nature, and every part of it. The gradual development of our faculties, the gradual, though slow progress of knowledge, has enabled us to penetrate into a few of the secrets of nature. Every discovery has paved the way to new ones, and were the world to last millions of years, we should still discover more, and yet be obliged to own that we have scarcely got one drop out of an ocean. This world, sir, which we so much admire will pass away, notwithstanding all its beauties and perfections. It was created, we believe, for the use of man during his mortal life, to afford him a comfortable and happy existence. But, sir, man is not created for this visible world alone; his body was formed of clay, and his soul, his immortal soul, is the image of God, the breath of the most high: "And the Lord God breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul." Gen. ii. 7. We believe that the soul of man was created for everlasting happiness, and that created to the image of God, we are to rest forever in the bosom of God. With St. Augustine we exclaim, "thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, "and our hearts are restless, until they rest in thee."

We believe that, although created to the image of God, we may defile in ourselves that image, and thus remove ourselves from our original destination. We believe that we shall only then attain the object of our destination, if we try to keep up in ourselves that image undefiled, or in other words, if we try to be and to become more and more similar to our Creator: "be perfect (says our Saviour) as also your heavenly Father is perfect." Matt. v. 48. We believe then, that in order to become ripe for Heaven, we must try to keep ourselves pure and undefiled, show the most perfect obedience to our Creator, the most perfect submission of our heart and understanding, practice humility, chastity, justice, and above all, the most perfect charity; that is, we must love God above all things, and our neighbour as ourselves. The will of God must be always the only rule of our conduct; we must love what he loves, hate what he hates, and, with due proportion, do as he does; consequently, we must consider sin as the greatest of all evils, and be willing to sacrifice even life itself, rather than offend our Creator, by a wilful transgression of his commandments. As Almighty God is infinitely just, infinitely good to all men, even to the worst of men; so must we be strictly just and charitable to all men, even to our enemies, without distinction of believer or unbeliever, Christian, or Jew, or Mahometan or Heathen, &c. In short, sir, we believe, that in order to become Saints in Heaven, we must lead a holy life upon earth, and that all the external acts of religion which we practice, can never afford a substitute for a holy and virtuous life. We believe, and teach from all the Catholic pulpits in the whole world, that confidence in external acts of religion, unsupported and unaccompanied by the practice of virtue, is a most abominable presumption, and real superstition.

To convince you, sir, that such is the real belief of Catholics, I refer you to all the Catholic catechisms, prayer books, meditations, sermons,

in short, to all the spiritual books of any kind, that ever were published in any part of the Catholic world. Being provided with books of that kind, from almost every Catholic country in Europe, I readily offer them to any person, curious to ascertain the doctrine of Catholics on so important a subject, on which misrepresentation has created so many prejudices. What more common, indeed, than to hear it said, that a Catholic, or if you choose, a Papist, puts so much confidence in his Priest, that it matters little to him whether he commits sin or not, for after having broken all the commandments of God, he thinks he has nothing to do, but to confess his sins to the Priest, and behold, from the gulf of perdition he leaps at once into Paradise!

Catholics, then, among whom there are thousands and thousands of men, eminent for their genius and learning, men of the most transcendent talents, celebrated in all the different branches of literature, and what is much better, famed for the most genuine, the most heroic virtues; Catholics then, I say, are believed, or at least represented, to be most brutally stupid! But let us proceed.

We believe that man, originally created to the image of God, has in a great measure defiled that sacred image by tasting the forbidden fruit. We believe, that in consequence of that sin, which we call original sin, man fell under the curse of God, was not only driven out of the earthly paradise, but what is infinitely worse, forfeited his right and title to the happiness of Heaven; and we believe that it was not in the power of man, to offer to the irritated justice of God, a satisfaction adequate to the offence. As the malice or iniquity of an offence must, in a measure, be determined by the degree of dignity and elevation of that being to whom the offence is given, God being infinite in power, dignity, and perfection, the offence must be in some measure infinite in its malice; man, on the other hand, being limited, can have nothing to offer by way of reparation or satisfaction, but what is limited in its value, and of course not adequate as a satisfaction. The wrath and the justice of God demanded a victim; all mankind must be sacrificed, must suffer, and their sufferings must be infinite, which they cannot be unless they last forever; or a being, equal to the offended Creator, must step forward and pay the ransom. As every act of an infinite being is of infinite value, one word, one sigh, from such a being, would be an adequate satisfaction. Here then is the pivot upon which turns the whole Catholic Religion, with all its profound mysteries. Mankind being doomed to eternal torments, and not being able to satisfy God's infinite justice, within any limited period, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, equal to his Father, burning with zeal for his glory, and with love to man, offers himself as the victim of God's infinite justice. The ransom is accepted, and a new chance of heaven is offered to man.

The main point to be explained now is, in what manner we believe that Jesus Christ has accomplished the redemption of man. This will of course, exhibit all that Catholics believe of the

Church of Christ, of the Christian Religion, and all its mysteries.

We believe that Jesus Christ, in order to become a victim of propitiation for our sins, assumed human nature, which being united to his divine nature, formed one person. As God, he could not suffer; by becoming a real man, assuming a real human soul, and a real human body, he made himself liable to sufferings; and by being God his sufferings became of infinite value, and, of course adequate as a satisfaction.

We believe that Jesus Christ was conceived in the womb of the spotless Virgin Mary, by the power and operation of the Holy Ghost. Luc. i. 35.

We believe that Jesus Christ, immolating himself for our sins, acted in the capacity of a Priest—a Priest being the minister of a sacrifice; we believe that he is both High Priest and Victim.—Heb. v. 7, 8, 9, and 10.

Mankind having fallen by original sin, into a wonderful state of depravity, the light of reason being almost extinguished, their understanding perverted, (witness the many ridiculous and abominable systems taught by their wise men and philosophers,) their hearts corrupted and given up a prey to all the passions, Jesus Christ came not only to satisfy for our sins, and by that means to open for us the gates of Heaven, but he also came to show, both by word and example, what means we must take in order to obtain Heaven.

We believe that in Jesus Christ we have a perfect example and pattern of a holy life, and an infallible teacher of salvation.

We believe that in the gospel is recorded a part, and indeed a very small part; of what Christ did and preached during his visible existence on earth. John xxi. 25.

We believe the authors of these gospels to have been inspired by the Holy Ghost, and therefore we believe every word contained in them, as proceeding from the fountain of truth.

As we believe the gospel of Christ to be a divine book, so we believe that none but a divine authority can expound the same. We shudder at the idea of bringing that divine book before the tribunal of limited or corrupted reason, and we candidly confess that, although we were provided with a greater share of wisdom and knowledge than Solomon possessed, we should still be unequal, of ourselves, to the task of understanding and explaining the gospel, or other parts of holy writ. In this we are confirmed by St. Peter, who says that "no prophesy of the Scripture is made by private interpretation." 2 Peter i. 20.

As we believe that holy Scripture is the word of God, so we believe that holy Scripture misrepresented, is not the word of God, but the word of corrupted man; and that Scripture is often misrepresented, we are obliged to believe, from the assertion of St. Peter, who tells us, that the unlearned and unstable wrest the Scriptures to their own perdition. 2 Peter, iii. 16; and likewise from our own observations: for, as common sense tells us, that the Holy Ghost cannot be the author