

# The Catholic.

Quod semper; quod ubique; quod ab omnibus

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## ORIGINAL.

### ON THE UNREASONABLENESS OF BEING OFFENDED AT THE SEVERITY OF OUR STRICTURES ON THE VARIOUS SYSTEMS OF PROTESTANTISM.

We are aware that many have felt sore at the severity of our strictures on the various systems of their protestant belief; and have accused us of a want of charity for our dissenting brethren. Does charity then oblige us, besides loving the person, to love also his persuasion, however false and dangerous it may be? Or, if we see him labouring under some fatal delusion, are we not rather in charity bound, to do all we can to undeceive him? Common sense bids us distinguish between the *person* and the *persuasion*: between the person, whom whatever he be, (as created to the image of God, redeemed with the Blood of Jesus Christ, and a fellow creature, descended from the same common parents,) we are bound to love as ourselves; and the *persuasion*, which if proved erroneous, and inductive to endless misery, it were madness not to reject, and execrate and expose to the execration and rejection of all our Brethren. Or whom should we account most our friends; Those who seeing us in imminent danger, of which we are not aware, decline warning us of it, lest they should too much shock our feelings and disturb our momentary comfort; nay, who from selfish and interested motives, encourage us to proceed in our dangerous career: or those who in their eagerness to save us, rush forward at the risk of displeasing us, to our timely rescue: pointing out to us the hidden evil; and, in the last extremity, *pulling us out of the fire*, as the apostle St. Jude expresses it? *v. 23.*

Instead then of condemning us as uncharitable for shewing them, without respect of persons, their dangerous errors; our dissenting brethren ought to consider, as truly charitable, for so indeed it is meant, our disinterested endeavour to win them from the *broad and easy way, which leads to destruction*, and place them on the *straight and narrow path conducting unto life*. *Matt. 7, 13, 14.* To be sure, in doing so, we may hurt their feelings; disturb their quiet and mortify their pride. But to

matters of eternal moment should not everything else give place? And if we ought, even on the *Sabbath day* to help our neighbour's Ox or ass out of a pit, *Luke 14, 5,* how much greater at all times must be our obligation to help our neighbour himself out of the pit of error, into which his *blind guides* have led him? *Matt. 15 14.*

That such guides, whose *living* here entirely depends on their keeping up the general delusion; should be offended at our exposure in the light of truth of their dark and deep deceptions, is very natural; and nothing to be wondered at. But what interest can their followers have in being misled? Or why should they take it so amiss to be set right in a matter of such mighty moment as that, on which their eternal salvation depends? Is it that their pride is hurt at being thought mistaken, or capable of being so, in their religious opinions? But it is with them a fundamental article of their religion that each and all of them are *fallible*, and may be in error. It annoys them too, no doubt, to be so importuned to quit the smooth and downward road, on which they glide along so easy towards the precipice; and to enter upon the rugged, straight and uphill path, *which leads to life*; so derided by their hireling teachers; *by whom, as St. Peter says, the way of truth shall be evil spoken of, 2 Pet. 2. 2.* To be sure, if all they covet here on earth, is the liberty to live and think as they please; that liberty, (a very unscriptural one however, is granted them to the fullest extent, by the indulgent sects of the day. They are spared by thee, every painful and humbling duty of religion. From fasting, abstinence and every penitential exercise; such as a St. Paul thought it necessary to *chastise his body with, in order to bring it under subjection, 1 Cor. 9, 27.* they are wholly exempted; as well as from the humbling obligation of confession, *James, 5, 16:* neither are they tied down in matters of faith to more than what they themselves consider worthy of being believed; nor ever obliged to *capitulate their understandings in obedience to Christ, 2 Cor. 10, 5.* If with so little trouble to themselves they could gain the kingdom of heaven, well might they scout our warnings & admonitions & feel even indignant at our importunities. But let them remember the words

of the Saviour: *the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and only the violent shall carry it away, Matt. 11, 12.*

## TO THE PUBLIC.

The yearly term, for which we engaged to edit the *Catholic* being now expired; we feel ourselves for the present, not well able to continue it any longer. Our view in undertaking such a publication was, by familiarizing our Catholic brethren with the invincible proofs of our holy religion, to confirm them in the faith; & render them, in the midst of its enemies, what St. Peter exhorts us all to be, *always ready to satisfy every one, who asketh us a reason of the hope which is in us. 1. Pet. 3. 15.* The number also of anticatholic publications, daily starting up around us, seemed to render some such undertaking indispensable; in order to shew forth the ignorant prejudice, or determined malignity, with which their editors persevere in misrepresenting and calumniating the only Church of the Saviour's institution; the Church of all ages and nations and the one from which all the others have apostatized.—We thought it therefore incumbent upon us, to endeavor at silencing these hired organs of the lying spirit: who, though forced, like the devils in the gospel, to proclaim Jesus Christ *the Son of God, Matt. 9, 29,* yet labour to make him pass for an arrant impostor, whose word is not to be relied upon; that word, which he himself assured us *should never pass away, though heaven and earth should pass away. Matt. 24, 25.* That word had solemnly declared that *the gates of hell should never prevail against his Church. Matt. 16, 18.* But they have notwithstanding set themselves to prove to you that *the gates of Hell* very soon prevailed against her: nay, that she herself, whom her divine founder commanded us *to hear, or be accounted as heathens and publicans; Matt. 19, 17,* has become the very *gate of Hell*, a sink of idolatry and of sinful abomination: that *neither he himself nor his holy spirit had, remained with her, or her pastors, teaching them all truth, according to his promise: Matt. 23, 20.—John 14, 26.—15, 26.—16, 13. &c.* that, had it not been for Martin Luther, Jesus Christ would have, long ere now,