

14. "Indeed, I grant Christ is not wronged in his mediation; it is no impiety to say, as they of the Roman Church do, holy Mary pray for me; holy Peter pray for me," p. 119. And again I see absurdity in nature, no incongruity unto analogy of faith, no repugnance at all to sacred scripture, much less impiety, for any man to say, holy angel guardian pray for me."

It is true, The same Protestant Bishop seems in another place to express a doubt whether the saints can hear or know our prayers.

"Could I come at them," he says, "or certainly inform them of my state, without any question, or more ado, I would readily and willingly say, holy Peter, blessed Paul, pray for me; recommend my case unto Christ Jesus our Lord. Were they with me, by me, in my kenning, I would run with open arms and fall upon my knees, and with affection desire them to pray for me."

The only difficulty then with this good Bishop is his uncertainty whether the saints can have any knowledge of the petitions made to them; but this difficulty seems to be completely removed by the declaration of scripture, that there is joy in Heaven at the conversion of a sinner. St. Augustine (*Lib. de Cura pro Mort. c. 26.*) moves the same difficulty, confessing it above the reach of his reason, to understand how the saints relieve those that call upon them. Yet he, with all the holy fathers and doctors of the Church, maintains that the saints do certainly assist us, and intercede for such as call upon them.

Divine mysteries, as I have already observed, always offer difficulties to the human understanding. The present difficulty however, is not altogether insuperable to human reason; on the contrary, dear sir, the Catholic belief on the present subject must, on examination, meet the approbation of reason.

Would it not be unreasonable, even impious, to assert that the saints and angels, assisted with the light of grace and glory, do not know as much as infernal spirits, who are deprived of both. Now sir, it is certain that evil spirits have a knowledge of us, and in a great measure know not only our actions, but even our thoughts.

"The accuser of our brethren, the Devil, is cast forth, who accused them before our God day and night." Apoc. xii. 10.

How could Satan know the disposition of Job, as appears he did in some measure, when he tried his utmost to make him fall away from the service of God? How can the Devil go about like a roaring lion (1 Pet. v. 8.) seeking whom he may devour, if he has no knowledge at all of the inward dispositions of men?

How did the same evil spirit know that our Saviour was fasting, when he tempted him to change stones into bread? Matt. iv. 8.

"The Devil cometh, says Christ, and taketh the word out of their hear, lest believing, they should be saved." Luke viii. 12.

The Devil then can see into the hearts of men; even has the power to take the word out of us, and to put evil in its place.

In what manner evil spirits receive their knowledge, to exercise their power, I do not understand; but pray is it unreasonable to believe, that heavenly spirits, by the light of grace and glory, know as much, at the very least, as evil spirits without that light?

Is it unreasonable to believe, that blessed spirits have at least as much power in protecting man, as infernal spirits in destroying man? Is it unreasonable to believe, that the blessed spirits who surround the throne of God, have at least as much zeal for the salvation of man, as infernal spirits for his damnation? Finally is it unreasonable to suppose that the blessed in heaven, are as able and willing to plead in our behalf, as evil spirits are to accuse us?

The secrets of hearts have been in many instances known to mortals. Thus Eliseus in his house knew the king's intention to take his head. Kings iv. 6; thus, the same Eliseus knew what passed between his servant Giegi and Naaman, when himself was absent. Kings iv. 5.

St. Peter knew the sacrilegious fraud acted privately between Ananias and Saphira. Acts v. What was possible for feeble mortals, by the light of grace, should that be impossible for the blessed saints, who have both the light of grace and glory of whom St. Paul says, "they see and know God face to face, even as they themselves are known." 1 Cor. xiii. Much more might be said on the subject: enough has been said to convince the candid reader, that Catholics are not guilty of superstition, in honouring those whom God himself chooses to honour, and in expecting much from the intercession and protection of those blessed angels and saints, who surround the throne of God, and whose thoughts, desires, affections, charity, zeal &c. are in perfect unison with God's holy will and infinite charity.

It can be no superstition then, to believe that the saints desire our salvation, because God desires it. It can be no superstition to believe that the saints know our thoughts and desires (which even the Devils know,) the scripture declaring that the repentance of the sinner on earth causes joy among the blessed in Heaven. Luc. xv.

It can be no superstition to expect much from the protection of those, who by the spirit of God, are declared to be appointed ministering spirits for our salvation. Heb. 1, and who are again declared to have power, and to be rulers of nations. Apoc. ii. It can be no superstition to apply to the intercession of those, who in holy writ are declared intercessors in our behalf. Zach. i. & ii. Mach. xv. It can be no superstition to believe, that the intercession of the saints of heaven will be of more avail towards deciding the fate of men and nations, than the intercession of ten mortals would have been in deciding the fate of a city. Gen. xviii. or the intercession of one man. (Job) in deciding the fate of his three friends.

Permit me, dear sir, to ask you one question; Are you very certain, that the Lord, whose decrees are inscrutable, has not perhaps made your salvation dependant on the intercession of some certain

saint, or saints? Are you altogether certain, that your own prayers will prove sufficient to obtain now, and in your last hour, a full application of the merits of your dying Saviour? the Lord, it is true, is merciful beyond expression, but he calls himself a jealous God. Are you certain, that the Lord is not offended, that his wrath is not kindled to the highest degree, at seeing those neglected and despised upon earth, whom he so much exalts and honours in heaven?

Are you certain that those will ever be associated in the enjoyment of eternal glory, to the blessed saints in Heaven, that had no communication with them on earth?

The Apostles creed *I believe in God &c.* makes mention of the *communion of Saints* which is the ninth article of said creed. Pray, which Church is it that really, and not in words alone, holds and believes the communion of Saints in every sense of the word.

Forgive me, dear sir if my zeal for the salvation of my Protestant fellow-mortals causes me sometimes to overstep the bounds of my subject, and of my original plan, which was to exculpate Roman Catholics from the guilt of superstition.

To be continued.

From the Catholic Press.

BISHOP FISHER'S EXECUTION

MR. Editor—Dodd in his Church History, gives the following very affecting and edifying account of the execution of Bishop Fisher, victim of the Reform of England. He copies from Dr. Fuller's Protestant History.

"After the Lieutenant of the Tower had received the writ for his execution because it was then very late and the prisoner asleep, he was loth to deprive him of his rest. But in the morning before five of the clock he came to him in his chamber and finding him yet asleep, waking him he told him he was come to him on a message from the King, and his pleasure was that he should suffer that forenoon. Well, quoth the Bishop, if this be your errand, you bring me no great news: for I have looked a long time for that message, and I most humbly thank his majesty, that it pleases him to rid me from all this wordly business; yet let me, by your patience, sleep an hour or two, for I have slept very ill this night (not for any fear of death I thank God) but my reason of by great infirmity and weakness. The King's pleasure is farther, said the lieutenant, that you shall use as little speech as may be especially of any thing touching his majesty whereby the people should have any cause to think of him, or his proceeding, otherwise than well. For that said he, you shall see me order myself as by God's grace neither the King, nor any man else shall have occasion to mislike my words. With which answer the lieutenant departed from him: and so the prisoner falling again to rest slept soundly two hours and more; and after he was awakened called to his man to help him up but first commanded him to take away his shirt of hair (which he customarily wore) and to convey it privately out of the house; and instead thereof to buy