

the practice of offering for the dead, but it is clear that the inference to be drawn from it is just the reverse, on the principle that *the exception proves the rule*. It certainly prohibits the act of offering for those who died in *mortal sin*, and were unworthy to receive "the sacrifice" *during their lives*; but surely this very prohibition implies that *all others* are proper subjects for the oblations and sacrifices of the Church. It is the doctrine of the Church, that there is no redemption from hell, and therefore she never prays for the souls in perdition. To *this case alone* the Canon applies; and therefore it teaches that the ordinary rule of oblations for the dead, includes all her departed members, who were supposed, while alive, to be worthy of being admitted to the holy communion. But another objection has been derived from a passage in the Treatise "on the Three Habitations," which are described as Heaven, Earth, and Hell, without any mention of Purgatory*. It has been frequently argued from this passage, that St. Patrick did not hold the doctrine of Purgatory, or he would not have omitted it here. But, in the first place, as remarked before, it is now generally agreed, that this is not a genuine Work of St. Patrick. But further, there is nothing in it contrary to the Catholic doctrine, as the writer is not referring to any *temporary* place of purification in the intermediate state, which is only visited by a certain *part* of the human race, but to the *permanent* habitation of the good and bad, to which they will be finally consigned in the other world; nor does he say that *all* the just are admitted to heaven *immediately* after death, which is the great question in dispute; so that this Tract, whoever might have written it really affords no argument on either side.

As to the Invocation of Saints, we have already observed an instance of it incidentally mentioned by St. Patrick, as practised by himself; and it is a singular fact, that Ussher himself, while trying to prove that the ancient Irish Church held Protestant doctrines, entirely omits all allusions to this subject, thus tacitly admitting the general prevalence of the practice. We find that an ancient Life of St. Bridget, written in the 7th Century, in Irish verse, often invokes her in the course of it, and concludes with these words—"there are two holy Virgins in Heaven, who may undertake my protection, *Mary, and Bridget, on whose patronage let us depend.*" Again, we find that Dungal, a most learned Irishman, formally defended this and other Catholic doctrines,

* S. Patricii Opuscula, p. 280.