

clearly acknowledged by the Calvinists of France, in two of their synods. The synod of Pontiers, held A. D. 1560 has the following words:

"The bread of the Lord's Supper ought to be administered to those who cannot drink wine, upon their making a protestation that it is not out of contempt, when they also obviate all scandal, by bringing the Cup as near to their mouth as they possibly can." Synod of Poitiers, chap. 12. Article 14 of the Lord's Supper.

The same was again approved and confirmed by the Synod la Rochelle, A. D. 1571.

After all I have said, dear sir, you will conceive that Catholics are not guilty of superstition, in believing as they do, on the subject of the Lord's Supper and the Mass.

"They are compelled to believe so, by the combined weight of heavenly and earthly authority which overrules the dictates and judgment of our corrupted senses, and of our weak and limited reason; and to all the arguments of human reason, or, if you choose, philosophy, we answer with St. Paul. "Our faith does not stand on the wisdom of man, but on the power of God." 1 Cor. ii. 5.

I must confess, that I am less surprised to see a person [with the Socinians] rejecting all mysteries, than to see him admit one and reject another, though the latter is perhaps more clearly expressed in the written word than the former.

Although I detest the impiety of the Socinian, yet I cannot but acknowledge his consistency; and should I ever have the misfortune (which God in his tender mercy forbid) to forsake the unerring guide which now overawes and silences my reason into perfect submission, and should I ever become so much blinded by a more than diabolical pride, as to make my limited and corrupted reason the sole arbiter of my faith, I think it would suggest to me the rejection of all mysteries, of every thing incomprehensible to that reason, and thus lead me at once into the paths of Socinianism. The same reason that would suggest to me the absurdity of eating the flesh of Christ, would likewise suggest the absurdity of three distinct persons in the divinity, which is essentially one:

If you cast your eyes around you, (without travelling many miles from home,) do you not see, in many respectable members of society, the deplorable consequences of trusting to the light of reason, and refusing submission to unerring authority. Do you not perceive in many of those whose reason has been developed by a liberal education, a perfect indifference (if not a kind of contempt) for the mysteries in general, and even in particular for those very mysteries, which by all societies are considered the fundamental principles of Christianity. In proportion as the powers of their understanding have been improved, they seem to have acquired a greater right to set up their reason as a judge over the divine mysteries, and thus to abuse the noblest gift of God to purposes of impiety.

The whole system of the Christian religion, the greatest of all the works of God, one and indivisible, must be believed in the whole and in all its parts, neither does it require less impiety to re-

ject one part of that divine system, known to be revealed by Jesus Christ, than to reject the whole. Now sir, from what you see before your eyes, I mean the rejection, both in principle and practice, of so many mysteries, by those who are more enlightened than the rest of their neighbours; and this is only a natural consequence of making limited reason the arbiter of faith; from what you see, how long do you suppose, will it be until faith will be entirely extinct? Will the present generation of children, after coming to the age of maturity, remember that their parents were Christians? Will the next generation even enjoy the benefit of baptism? I am acquainted with many youths of both sexes who, although born of protestant parents never received the benefit of baptism. Why so? Because their protestant parents, guided by the light of reason, could not see into the necessity of baptism, and thus probably judged it an idle ceremony. Thus is the child's eternal fate left to rest on the private opinions of their parent, and thus is the eternal fate of thousands of children left to rest on the private opinions of their parents on religious mysteries, as if our merciful God had left us in a state of uncertainty in those matters principally, in which certainty is absolutely necessary.

After this digression, which a sincere zeal for the salvation of souls has occasioned, I shall continue to explain a few remaining articles of catholic faith. Having explained the Catholic doctrine of the Mass, this leads me to the catholic doctrine of

#### PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD, AND PURGATORY.

What has induced the gentlemen of the pretended reformation, to discard purgatory from their creed and renounce the practice of praying for the deceased, I am at a loss to know. To any men of information, it must be notorious, that the belief and the practice are older than Christianity, are almost universal, and far from being impervious to human reason must, upon a candid examination, meet the approbation of reason.

The Catholic Church, the supreme tribunal of our faith, teaches, that "there is a Purgatory, a place of temporal punishment after death; and that the souls therein detained, are helped by the prayers of the faithful, and especially by the holy sacrifice of the Mass." Council Trident. Sess. 25. Decret. de Purg. This decree of the Church in general council met, is sufficient for a Catholic, to regulate his faith on the present subject, and convince him more forcibly of the existence of a Purgatory, and of the usefulness of prayers for the dead than all the arguments drawn from scripture, or from reason. Still it is a satisfaction to a Catholic already convinced by the authority of the Church, to find that even the plain words of scripture, and the plainest dictates of reason, are in perfect unison with the declaration of the Church. Long before the coming of Christ, the people of God prayed and offered sacrifice for the dead. Witness the collection of money made by Judas Maccabeus, the defender of God's sanctuary; "and making a gath-

ering, he sent twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem, for sacrafice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection:—it is, therefore, a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins," 2 Macchab. xii. 43.

46. I know dear sir, that your reformation rejects the Maccabees, but you will permit me to observe that this rejection, made by modern reformers, can bear no weight, when made in opposition to antiquity, in opposition to the universal Church, the only one extant at the time of the pretended reformation.

In the earliest ages of Christianity we find the holy fathers quoting the Maccabees as well as other scriptures. Witness St. Clement of Alexandria, *Lib. 6 Stromat*; Origen *Lib. 2. de Principiis*, cap. 1.; St. Cyprian *Lib. exhortatione Martyris*; St. Jerom. cap. 23, *Isa*; St. Augustine *lib. 8 de Civitate Dei*, cap. 36: St. Isidore *Hispalensis* says, "the books of the Maccabees, although separated by the Hebrews as apocrypha, are by the Church of Christ honoured and proclaimed as divine books." *Lib. 6*. The general Council of Trent, Sess. 4, declares the two Maccabees to be divine books.

But I will suppose the above passage from the Maccabees to bear no weight; the belief of a middle state is supported by many other texts of the old and new testaments.

"Thou also by the blood of thy testament, hast sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit, wherein is no water." Zach. ix. 11.

That pit cannot be hell, as out of hell there is no redemption. Consequently it must be a place of temporal punishment, from which redemption is had by the blood of the testament.

"Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day of the Lord shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is. If any man's work abide, which he has built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work burn he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire." Cor. iii. 13, 14, 15.

This text hardly requires any comment. From it it appears plainly, that although the works of man have been substantially good and pleasing to Almighty God, yet on account of many deformities, the effects of human frailty and corruption, man must be cleansed by a purging and punishing yet saving fire, before he can be admitted into that sanctuary, into which "nothing defiled can enter," Apocalypse xxi. 27.

"But I say unto you that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall render an account for it in the day of judgment." Matt. vi. 38. Dear sir, you will hardly say, that every idle word will consign man to the everlasting punishment of hell; if so, who will be saved? There must then be some temporal punishments prepared after this life for trifling faults, which we call venial sins.

According to the same evangelist there are sins that "shall not be forgiven neither in this world, nor in the world to come." Matt. xvi. 32. These