

THE CATHOLIC.

QUOD SEMPER, QUOD UBIQUE, QUOD AB OMNIBUS CREDITUM EST — WHAT ALWAYS, AND EVERY WHERE, AND BY ALL IS BELIEVED.

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THE CATHOLIC

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Original.

ON THE CATHOLIC'S BELIEF IN TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

THE Catholic's belief in the real presence of Jesus Christ's humanity and divinity in the Eucharistic sacrifice and Sacrament, is the most trying test of his entire reliance on God's word, and the most perfect act of homage we can pay to his divine voracity. By it, as the Apostle says, "we bring into captivity our understanding in obedience to Christ."—2 Cor. 10, 5. And, by admitting on his word, this most inconceivable mystery, we acknowledge every thing else by him revealed, however incomprehensible. It is the complete acknowledgment of his infallible truth and Omnipotence; of his power to create, change, modify and transform whatever, however, whenever and wherever he pleases. Such a faith as this it is becoming the creature to have of the Creator; and, to deny him such a power were nothing less than blasphemy. Has he then revolted to us this mystery? Yes, and in the clearest, strongest, and more frequently recurring terms than any other of his revealed mysteries. And why? Because it is opposed to all our senses, but *the hearing*. "But Faith" saith St. Paul, "cometh by the hearing; and hearing by the word of Christ; Rom. x, 17. Let me then but know what God has spoken, and I implicitly believe whatever he has said; for nothing is more true than the word of truth itself.

Our belief in this mystery more than anything besides, is calculated to fill the human heart with overflowing gratitude and love to a God, so merciful and good; so stupendously condescending as to dwell in the midst of those, "who meet together in his name;" MAT. xviii, 19; who declares it to be "his delight to be with the children of men;" Prov. viii, 31. Who assures us that he would be with his pastors teaching at all times, "even to the end of the world;" MAT. xxviii, 20; not as God only, for God is always everywhere, therefore, as man, as well as God; as the *Jesus of Nazareth*, who appeared to Saul on his way to Damascus; ACTS ix, 5. Who, when about as man, to quite his mortal state, and shed his precious blood for our redemption; bequeaths *His all* to us, like a dying parent, in *his last will and testament*. And what is this *all* bequeathed to us? His humanity, which is all he took of ours, united with his divinity. This is all he had to give, though the Lord and master of all that is. But with himself, who is the source of all perfection, he gives us every thing desirable. Could the Omnipotent himself afford a greater pledge of his love to man, than this most precious possible, and all surpassing legacy? Could a greater proof than this be given of the innate dignity of the human being with whom the Deity deigns to unite himself so closely, even here on earth, not only with our nature in his incarnation, but with each of us; so as himself to say, "that I may be in you, and you in me;" JOHN xlv, 20; as closely as the branch is connected with the vine. "I am the vine," says he, "ye are the branches;" JOHN xv, 5. Our belief in this mystery of love impresses us with the most lively sense and firm conviction of the Saviour's infinitely satisfactory and meritorious atonement for the sins of mankind, which could not only regain for us the lost favour of our Maker, and our forfeited eternal bliss, but could win for us in our present imperfect state a nearer kindred with him than is granted to the very angels. They are his friends, and the glorious princes of his heavenly household. We are his brethren, if so that we lose not this dignity by sin—

He has cast down the proud in the persons of those mighty spirits who rebelled; and has raised up the weak and lowly in their stead; and by his assumption of our human nature, and his close connection with us in this adorable sacrament; he has imparted to the children of Adam, adopted through him the children of God, a dignity far exceeding that once enjoyed in heaven by Lucifer and his fallen host. How the thought of this ought to encourage us in the observance of his precepts, in carefully avoiding the vices he prohibits, and diligently practicing the virtues he recommends; knowing that otherwise we not only lose the whole benefit of our redemption, but that we shall be subjected to never ending punishment, great in proportion to our long enduring ingratitude, and to the number and enormity of our crimes.

In this mystery, therefore, we give to God the strongest test of our reliance on his word, and receive in return the surest pledge of his love for us. In it is opened to us the sweetest source of charity and reciprocated affection between the creature and its God, when the soul can say, with the spouse in the Canticle, "My beloved to me, and I to my beloved;" CANT. ii, 16. Neither can there be a greater incitement to the practice of every virtue, nor a greater deterrent from every vice, than what is afforded to the practical believer in this most endearing and adorable mystery, in which, like the beloved Apostle, we are permitted to recline upon the bosom of the Saviour; to drink our fill at the fountain head of sanctity, and catch the glow of charity at the furnace of divine love.

Original.

ON REASON.

*And they shall not need the light of the lamp,
nor the light of the sun; for the Lord God
shall enlighten them.—ApoC. xxii, 5.*

'Tis Reason sole, Truth's never fading ray,
That yields 'immortals' bliss th' Eternal Day.
Not all those luminaries bright, that roll
Wide scatter'd round our Globe from pole to pole;
The flaming sun by day, the moon by night,
Fresh trimming at his ray her borrow'd light;
With stars innum'rous, twinkling o'er the sky,
Might e'er with her compar'd, in beauty vie.
Theirs, all is transient, and to space confin'd:
Here, boundless, streaming from th' eternal mind.
And were the whole of this material world
Back reeling, whence it sprung, to nothing hurl'd,
With undiminish'd lustre, still would shine
Her radiance, streaming from its source divine.
Would millions, then, no further change that know,
Than change of bliss, still feel her vital glow,
As fresh delighting objects they pursue,
And joyful prospects op'ning on their view.
E'en here, so from her centre far remov'd,
On man is reason's influence pow'ful prov'd;
Though all her noontide blaze in twilight guise,
He, through his prison's chinks but dim descries.
'Tis she calls forth, unfolds and nurses kind
The infant beds of knowledge in his mind,
Till genius, art and science flourish gay,
And bear their fruits full ripen'd in her ray.
Not on the fragrant lap of flow'ry spring,
Does Sol such gaily varied blossoms fling:
Does summer bid, o'er plenty so profuse,
Swell with his flourish'd tints and fresh'ning dews.
Or autumn, bent beneath his mellow store,
To winter o'er such heap'd provision pour;
As all that decks the mental blooming scene,
Rear'd and matur'd in reason's ray serene.

Wald by her dawn, the intellectual pow'rs
Start sudden from their trance, like vernal flow'rs;
With genial warmth, for gradual bright'ning day,
Their bloom expands, and shows more glowing gay;

Til perfect all, with ev'ry virtue fair,
Round clustering various, owns her plastic care;
Not perishable doom'd, like those that blow,
Sol's fading race, successive here below.
As from her downy nest on fluttering wings,
Rous'd by the dawn, the lark sweet warbling springs,
Still high and higher winds her airy way,
And pours, far distant heard, her matin lay:
Call'd up by reason's ray, so genius soars,
And truth's abstracted regions keen explores;
Wide o'er the ideal vast excursive glides;
Weighs, measures all observ'd compounds, divides,
New combinations and proportions spies,
And o'er endless, varying harmonies.

Or through the world material wings his flight,
As Newton, those and marks its wonders bright.
Along the void each wand'ring orb pursues;
Its distance scans; its size and swiftness views
What motive pow'r so urges its career?
And what restrictive checks its headlong sphere?
Like tireless courser 'mid the boundless space,
True to the goal that winds his rapid race:
Or, on his native earth, should he pursue
His fond research, still wonders, op'ning new
In reason's ray, more bright than solar blaze,
Fix, at each step, his fond admiring gaze.
Whether the mead, with flow'ry verdure clad,
He loves to trace, or seeks the forest's shade:
The rocky mountain's airy steep ascends;
Or down the vale his musing footsteps bend;
In water, earth or air, each object spies—
Its nature scans; its use and virtue tries:
On brittle bark the wat'ry waste explores,
And works his trackless way to distant shores:
Collects what wealth their realms remote afford,
Earth's tribute due to man, her sovereign Lord.
In all his bold attempts, 'tis reason's ray
That rousing prompts, and lights him on his way:
And were that ray withheld of light divine,
In vain, for him, yon solar orb would shine.

Original.

ON MAN'S PRONENESS TO ERROR SINCE HIS FALL.

It was man's original misfortune to have believed the devil, the father of falsehood, when he promised him, on condition of his transgressing God's command, more knowledge than God had given him; the knowledge of good and evil. "Yon shall thus," said he, "become as gods knowing both good and evil; GEN. iii. The consequence was, that by yielding to the fiend's temptation, he lost the knowledge of good, which God alone, the source and author of all true knowledge and goodness could give; and acquired the knowledge of evil, brought upon him and all his posterity by the enemy's prevailing temptation. Ever since the human mind has been overclouded with ignorance, which, with the domineering sway of the unruly passions no longer subject to him, who had refused subjection to his God; has proved the woeful and exhaustless source of all the evil and misery, temporal and eternal, to which mankind is exposed. Our innocent infantine, but sure dependence on our Maker for all information has been thus depraved. We seek for knowledge in ourselves, where it is not to be found; and will not like the guileless, unsuspecting child, rely on the word of the teaching parent. But as the Saviour has said, "unless you become as little children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven." We confide not in the word of God with which he still deigns to direct our understanding; but judging for ourselves according to our own blind caprice, we act, as if relying on the tempter's promise, that we should become "as gods knowing good and evil." How then could the world but err, while turning away from the light of truth, it preferred groping its way amid the murky mazes of its own ignorance.

[See last page.]