

On the tenth day after the Pope's death, the Dean of the Sacred College sings the Solemn Mass of the Holy Spirit in the same chapel of the choir wherein the Funeral Mass was celebrated. After the Gospel, a preacher, previously appointed by a Pontifical Brief, ascends the pulpit, and addresses a grave and solemn allocution to the Cardinals, to exhort them to give promptly a holy and zealous pastor to the Church of Jesus Christ. At the end of the Mass, the Cardinals meet again in the sacristy, in order to take the last steps. From that meeting they pass in procession to the place of the Conclave. They shut themselves up in the chapel of the palace, with no assistants but the Masters of Ceremonies, and the Secretary of the Sacred College. The Apostolical Constitutions and the Laws of the Conclave for the election of the Pope are read, and all the Cardinals swear obedience to them.

TENETS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH FAIRLY EXPLAINED.

The author of the following pages claims no other than the merit of compilation. To attempt any thing original in point of Christian Faith, would soon lead to falsehood and heresy; for the tenets of faith are not like the principles of any natural science, which being essentially imperfect are always subject to improvement, and therefore to change. Religion with its principles, came pure and perfect from the hands of God; improvement is consequently impossible, and the greatest and highest authorized exertion which man can make is to explain, defend, or enforce the principles of this divine dispensation. What is perfect cannot be improved.

The object of the author is two-fold: He wishes that this little treatise may be useful to his Catholic and to his dissenting brethren. The former may perhaps in some degree, be instructed in their religion, they may see that the tenets of their faith rest on solid grounds, that they are not real objects of ridicule; that they have often been misrepresented, and that from their reasonableness they merit not only their theoretical, but their practical assent. Interested polemics, and interested ministers, have frequently misrepresented these tenets. Learning the real nature of our creed from this fair and unbiassed exposition, our dissenting brethren may perhaps throw away some of their prejudices, and view Catholicity through a purer medium. The following pages treat of those tenets which are most odious in the eyes of those who dissent from us. Hence the author calls them 'the most important tenets of the Catholic Church' without wishing however to insinuate, that in themselves they are more important than the other articles of our creed. All are equally important in

themselves, because they are all revealed truths but the disagreement of the different Christian societies in regard to those, which form the subject of this tract, attaches a superiority of relative importance to those which are here discussed.

The well known exposition of Catholic faith by the eminent French Divine, Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux, has been of great service to the author. His plan is nearly the same, and his object identical with those of that very able and very eminent man. It is recorded of this exposition, that when it made its appearance in France, the Calvinists immediately charged the author with having betrayed his church. They said that when Rome saw his work, the thunders of the Vatican would be levelled against him. But how great was their surprise, when the Pope approved of the work, and complimented the author in two successive briefs, when Cardinals and Bishops vied with each other in applauding the author and his work.

Bossuet's exposition was principally intended for the Calvinists—the author of these sheets thinks that the plan might be extended. Bossuet's object was not to prove the expounded tenet—the author of the following pages thinks, that a succinct proof would often be useful. So far he attempts to gain the same ends by different means. But he is very far from intending to insinuate, that the following is an improvement of Bossuet's exposition. He has not such presumption—he would be willing to move within the penumbra even of a theologian of inferior merit to that of the great Bishop of Meaux.

The eminent modern controvertist, Lingard, has also been of service to him, and he deems it honourable to be indebted to such a character; for he considers it honourable to have derived any advantages from a model of theological knowledge eloquent diction, and superior acquirements. Having premised these observations, he commits the rest to the public, believing that he can claim at least one merit, that attaches with such peculiar grace to the two Divines mentioned above, to wit, that of having fairly explained the Catholic tenets and of not having betrayed the principles of his Church.

CHAPTER I.

OF EXCLUSIVE SALVATION.

The belief of the Catholic Church on the subject of exclusive salvation has been much and frequently misrepresented by the enemies of her creed.—They have long believed that this church in the plenitude of her uncharitableness has doomed, and still dooms to certain reprobation, all those who do not profess her code of faith.

Without converting, in support of this tenet, to